
De finibus bonorum et malorum Documentation

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Press, vol. XVII, second (revised) edition, 1931***

Marcus Tullius Cicero

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CHAPTER 1

Bill Thayer's Notes

1.1 Cicero: de Finibus

1.1.1 The text

The edition transcribed here is that of the Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, vol. XVII, second (revised) edition, 1931; Latin text with facing English translation by H. Harris Rackham. It is in the public domain pursuant to the 1978 revision of the U. S. Copyright Code, because the copyright expired and was not renewed at the appropriate time, which would have been in 1958 or 1959. (Details [here](#) on the copyright law involved.)

As usual, I retyped the text rather than scanning it: not only to minimize errors prior to proofreading, but as an opportunity for me to become intimately familiar with the work, an exercise which I heartily recommend. (Well-meaning attempts to get me to scan text, if successful, would merely turn me into some kind of machine: gambit declined.)

In the table of contents below, all the Books are shown on blue backgrounds; red backgrounds would indicate that my transcription was still not proofread. The header bar at the top of each webpage will remind you with the same color scheme. Should you spot an error, please do [report](#) it, of course: and my thanks in this connection to Sherrylyn Branchaw, who did just that, catching quite a few slipups of mine and bringing our transcription closer to perfection.

I'll probably also put the Latin onsite at some point, but not urgently: it's already online at [Latin Library](#). Details on the technical aspects of the layout of [my own site](#) follow the Table of Contents.

Table 1: Table of Contents

	The Loeb Editor's Introduction
Liber I	Book 1: Exposition of Epicureanism
Liber II	Book 2: Arguments against Epicureanism
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Liber IV	Book 4: Arguments against Stoicism
Liber V	Book 5: The New Academy and Cicero's view

1.1.2 Notes and *Apparatus Criticus*

The notes in the translation are included here; and although on the Latin side, the Loeb edition provides no comprehensive *apparatus criticus*, it occasionally marks a variant or a crux: I'll be including these as well.

CHAPTER 2

The Loeb Editor's Introduction

The *de Finibus Bonorum et Malorum* is a treatise on the theory of Ethics. It expounds and criticizes the three ethical systems most prominent in Cicero's day, the Epicurean, the Stoic and that of the Academy under Antiochus. The most elaborate of Cicero's philosophical writings, it has had fewer readers than his less technical essays on moral subjects. But it is of importance to the student of philosophy as the only systematic account surviving from antiquity of those rules of life which divided the allegiance of thoughtful men during the centuries when the old religions had lost their hold and Christianity had not yet emerged. And the topics that it handles can never lose their interest.

The title 'About the Ends of Goods and Evils' requires explanation. It was Aristotle who put the ethical problem in the form of the question, What is the Τλο or End, the supreme end of man's endeavour, in the attainment of which his Good or Well-being lies? For Aristotle, *Telos* connoted not only 'aim,' but 'completion'; and he found the answer to his question in the complete development and right exercise of the faculties of man's nature, and particularly of the distinctively human faculty of Reason. The life of the Intellect was the Best, the Chief Good; and lesser Goods were Means to the attainment of this End. Thus was introduced the notion of an ascending scale of Goods, and this affected the interpretation of the term *Telos*. *Telos* came to be understood as denoting not so much the end or aim of endeavour as the end or extreme point of a series, the topmost good. To this was naturally opposed an extreme of minus value, the topmost, or rather bottommost, evil. Hence arose the expressions τλο γαθον, τλο κακον, 'End of Goods, of Evils,' which occur in Philodemus, *Rhetoric* I, 218.8 ff. (Südhans), and are translated by Cicero *finis bonorum et malorum*. As a title for his book he throws this phrase into the plural, meaning 'different views as to the Chief Good and Evil.'¹ Hence in title and to some extent in method, the *de Finibus* may be compared with such modern works as Martineau's *Types of Ethical Theory* and Sidgwick's *Methods of Ethics*.

¹ This use of the plural occurs in *Academica* II.132, 'omnibus eis finibus bonorum quos exposui malorum finis esse contrarios'; although *ib.* II.114, 'fines bonorum et malorum instituas', means 'finem bonorum et finem malorum,' and some scholars so interpret the phrase in the present titles: see Philippson *Philologische Wochenschrift*, 1913, p613 (published after the first edition of this book had gone to press) and *ib.* 1923, p11.

Cicero belongs to a type not unknown in English life, that of the statesman who is also a student and a writer. From his youth he aspired to play a part in public affairs, and the first step towards this ambition was to learn to speak. He approached Greek philosophy as part of a liberal education for a political career, and he looked on it as supplying themes for practice in oratory. But his real interest in it went deeper; the study of it formed his mind and humanized his character, and he loved it to the end of his life.

In his youth he heard the heads of the three chief Schools of Athens, Phaedrus the Epicurean, Diodotus the Stoic, and Philo the Academic, who had come to Rome to escape the disturbances of the Mithradatic War. When already launched in public life, he withdrew, at the age of 27 (79 B.C.), to devote two more years to philosophy and rhetoric. Six months were spent at Athens, and the introduction to *de Finibus* Book V gives a brilliant picture of his student life there with his friends. No passage more vividly displays what Athens and her memories meant to the cultivated Roman. At Athens Cicero attended the lectures of the Epicurean Zeno and the Academic Antiochus. Passing on to Rhodes to work under the leading professors of rhetoric, he there met Posidonius, the most renowned Stoic of the day. He returned to Rome to plunge into his career as advocate and statesman; but his Letters show him continuing his studies in his intervals of leisure. For many years the Stoic Diodotus was an inmate of his house.

Under the Triumvirate, as his influence in politics waned, Cicero turned more and more to literature. His earliest essay in rhetoric, the *de Inventione*, had appeared before he was twenty-five; but his first considerable works on rhetoric and on political science, the *de Oratore*, *de Republica*, and *de Legibus*, were written after his return from exile in 57. The opening pages of *de Finibus* Book III give a glimpse of his studies at this period. In 51 he went as Governor to Cilicia; and he wrote no more until the defeat of Pompey at Pharsalus had destroyed his hopes for the Republic.

After his reconciliation with Caesar and return to Rome in the autumn of 46, Cicero resumed writing on rhetoric. In February 45 came the death of his beloved daughter Tullia, followed soon after by the final downfall of the Pompeians at Munda. Crushed by public and private sorrow, he shut himself up in one of his country houses and sought distraction in unremitting literary work. He conceived the idea, as he implies in the preface to *de Finibus*, of rendering a last service to his country by bringing the treasures of Greek thought within the reach of the Roman public. Both his *Academica* and *de Finibus* were compiled in the following summer; the latter was probably presented to Brutus, to whom it is dedicated on his visit to Cicero in August 45 (*ad Att.* XIII.44). Seven months later Brutus was one of the assassins of Caesar. In the autumn of 44 Cicero flung himself again into the arena with his attack on Antony, which led to his proscription and death in December 43.

Excepting the *de Oratore*, *de Republica* and *de Legibus*, the whole of Cicero's most important writings on philosophy and rhetoric belong to 46-44 B.C. and were achieved within two years. Such a mass of work so rapidly produced could hardly be original, and in fact it made no claim to be so. It was designed as a sort of encyclopaedia of philosophy for Roman readers. Cicero's plan was to take each chief department of thought in turn, and present the theories of the leading schools upon it, appending to each theory the criticisms of its opponents. Nor had his work that degree of independence which consists in assimilating the thought of others and recasting it in the mould of the writer's own mind. He merely chose some recent hand-book on each side of the question under consideration, and reproduced it in Latin, encasing passages of continuous exposition in a frame of dialogue, and adding illustrations from Roman history and poetry. He puts the matter frankly in a letter to Atticus (XII.52): "You will say, 'What is your method in such compositions?' They are mere transcripts, and cost comparatively little labour; I only supply the words, of which I have a copious flow." In *De Finibus* (I.6) he rates his work a little higher, not without justice, and claims to be the critic as well as the interpreter of his authorities.

This method of writing was consonant with Cicero's own position in philosophy. Since his early studies under Philo he had been a professed adherent of the New Academy, and as such maintained a sceptical attitude on questions of knowledge. On morals he was more positive; though without a logical basis for his principles, he accepted the verdict of the common moral conscience of his age and country. Epicureanism he abhorred as demoralizing. The Stoics repelled him by their harshness and narrowness, but attracted him by their strict morality and lofty theology. His competence for the task of interpreting Greek thought to Rome was of a qualified order. He had read much, and had heard the chief teachers of the day. But with learning and enthusiasm he combined neither depth of insight nor scientific precision. Yet his services to philosophy must not be underrated. He introduced a novel style of exposition, copious, eloquent, impartial and urbane; and he created a philosophical terminology in Latin which has passed into the languages of modern Europe.

The *de Finibus* consists of three separate dialogues, each dealing with one of the chief ethical systems of the day. The exponents of each system, and the minor interlocutors, are friends of Cicero's younger days, all of whom were dead when he wrote; brief notes upon them will be found in the Index. The rôle of critic Cicero takes himself throughout.

The first dialogue occupies Books I and II; in the former the Ethics of Epicurus are expounded, and in the latter refuted from the Stoic standpoint. The scene is laid at Cicero's villa in the neighbourhood of Cumae, on the lovely coast a little north of Naples. The spokesman of Epicureanism is L. Manlius Torquatus, a reference to whose praetorship (II.74) fixes the date of the conversation at 50 B.C., shortly after Cicero's return from his province of Cilicia. A minor part is given to the youthful C. Valerius Triarius.

In the second dialogue the Stoic ethics are expounded (in Book III) by M. Cato, and criticized (in Book IV) from the standpoint of Antiochus by Cicero. Cicero has run down to his place at Tusculum, fifteen miles² from town, for a brief September holiday, while the Games are on at Rome; and he meets Cato at the neighbouring villa of Lucullus, whose orphan son is Cato's ward. A law passed by Pompey in 52 B.C. is spoken of (IV.1) as new, so the date falls in that year; Cicero went to Cilicia in 51.

The third dialogue (Book V) goes back to a much earlier period in Cicero's life. Its date is 79 and its scene Athens, where Cicero and his friends are eagerly attending lectures on philosophy. The position of the "Old Academy" of Antiochus is maintained by M. Pupius Piso Calpurnianus, and afterwards criticized by Cicero from the Stoic point of view; the last word remains with Piso. The others present are Cicero's brother and cousin, and his friend and correspondent Titus Pomponius Atticus, a convinced Epicurean, who had retired to Athens from the civil disorders at Rome, and did not return for over twenty years.

In Book I the exposition of Epicureanism probably comes from some compendium of the school, which seems to have summarized (1) Epicurus's essay *On the Telos*, (2) a *résumé* of the points at issue between Epicurus and the Cyrenaics (reproduced I.55 ff.), and (3) some Epicurean work on Friendship (I.65-70).

The Stoic arguments against Epicurus in Book II Cicero derived very likely from Antiochus; but in the criticism of Epicurus there is doubtless more of Cicero's own thought than anywhere else in the work.

The authority of Stoicism relied on in Book III was most probably Diogenes of Babylon, who is referred to by name at III.33 and 49.

In Books IV and V Cicero appears to have followed Antiochus.

Alexander the Great died in 323 and Aristotle in 322 B.C. Both Epicurus and Zeno, the founder of Stoicism, began to teach at Athens about twenty years later. The date marks a new era in Greek thought as in Greek life. Speculative energy had exhausted itself; the schools of Plato and Aristotle showed little vigour after the death of their founders. Enlightenment had undermined religion, yet the philosophers seemed to agree about nothing except that things are not what they appear; and the plain man's mistrust of their conclusions was raised into a system of Scepticism by Pyrrho. Meanwhile the outer order too had changed. For Plato and Aristotle the good life could only be lived in a free city-state, like the little independent Greek cities which they knew; but these had now fallen under the empire of Macedon, and the barrier between Greek and barbarian was giving way. The wars of Alexander's successors rendered all things insecure; exile, slavery, violent death were possibilities with which every man must lay his account.

Epicureanism and Stoicism, however antagonistic, have certain common features corresponding to the needs of the period. Philosophy was systematized, and fell into three recognized departments, Logic, Physics, and Ethics; and for both schools the third department stood first in importance. Both schools offered dogma, not speculation; a way of life for man as man, not as Greek citizen. Both abandoned idealism, saw no reality save matter, and accepted sense

² fifteen *Roman* miles: 23 km.

experience as knowledge. Both studied the world of nature only in order to understand the position of man. Both looked for a happiness secure from fortune's changes; and found it in peace of mind, undisturbed by fear and desire. But here the rival teachers diverged: Epicurus sought peace in the liberation of man's will from nature's law, Zeno in submission to it;³ and in their conceptions of nature they differed profoundly.

Formal Logic Epicurus dismissed as useless, but he raised the problem of knowledge under the heading of Canonic. The *Canon* or measuring-rod, the criterion of truth, is furnished by the sensations and by the $\pi\theta\eta$ or feelings of pleasure and pain. Epicurus's recognition of the latter as qualities of any state of consciousness and as distinct from the sensations of sight, hearing, etc., marks a notable advance in psychology. The sensations and the feelings determine our judgment and volition respectively, and they are all 'true,' *i.e.*, real data or experience. So are the $\pi\rho\omicron\lambda\psi\epsilon\iota$, or 'preconceptions' by which we recognize each fresh sensation, *i.e.*, our general concepts; for these are accumulations of past sensations. It is in $\pi\omicron\lambda\psi\epsilon\iota$, 'opinions,' *i.e.*, judgments about sensations, that error can occur. Opinions are true only when confirmed, or, in the case of those relating to imperceptible objects (*e.g.* the Void), when not contradicted, by actual sensations. Thus Epicurus adumbrated, however crudely, a logic of inductive science.

His Natural Philosophy is touched on in *de Finibus*, I, c. vi. It is fully set out in the great poem of Cicero's contemporary, Lucretius, who preaches his master's doctrine with religious fervor as a gospel of deliverance for the spirit of man. Epicurus adopted the Atomic theory of Democritus, according to which the primary realities are an infinite number of tiny particles of matter, indivisible and indestructible, moving by their own weight through an infinite expanse of empty space or Void. Our perishable world and all that it contains consists of temporary clusters of these atoms interspersed with void. Innumerable other worlds beside are constantly forming and dissolving. This universe goes on of itself: there are gods, but they take no part in its guidance; they live a life of untroubled bliss in the empty spaces between the worlds. The human soul like everything else is material; it consists of atoms of the smallest and most mobile sort, enclosed by the coarser atoms of the body, and dissipated when the body is dissolved by death. Death therefore means extinction.

Thus man was relieved from the superstitions that preyed upon his happiness, — fear of the gods and fear of punishment after death. But a worse tyranny remained if all that happens is caused by inexorable fate. Here comes in the doctrine of the Swerve, which Cicero derides, but which is essential to the system. Democritus had taught that the heavier atoms fell faster through the void than the lighter one, and so overtook them. Aristotle corrected the error; and Epicurus turned the correction to account. He gave his atoms a uniform vertical velocity, but supposed them to collide by casually making a slight sideway movement. This was the minimum hypothesis that he could think of to account for the formation of things; and it served his purpose by destroying the conception of a fixed order in Nature. The capacity to swerve is shared by the atoms that compose the human soul; hence it accounts for the action of the will, which Epicurus regards as entirely undetermined. In this fortuitous universe man is free to make his own happiness.

In Ethics Epicurus based himself on Aristippus, the pupil of Socrates and founder of the School of Cyrene. With Aristippus he held that pleasure is the only good, the sole constituent of man's well-being. Aristippus had drawn the practical inference that the right thing to do is to enjoy each pleasure of the moment as it offers. His rule of conduct is summed up by Horace's *Carpe diem*. But this *naïf* hedonism was so modified by Epicurus as to become in his hands an entirely different theory. Its principal tenets are: that the goodness of pleasure is a matter of direct intuition, and is attested by natural instinct, as seen in the actions of infants and animals; that all men's conduct does as a matter of fact aim at pleasure; that the proper aim is to secure the greatest balance of pleasure over pain in the aggregate; that absence of pain is the greatest pleasure, which can only be varied, not augmented, by active gratification of the sense; that pleasure of the mind is based on pleasure of the body, yet that mental pleasure may far surpass bodily in magnitude, including as it does with the consciousness of present gratification the memory of past and the hope of future pleasure; that 'unnatural and unnecessary' desires and emotions are a chief source of unhappiness; and that Prudence, Temperance or self-control, and the other recognized virtues are therefore essential to obtain a life of the greatest pleasure, though at the same time the virtues are of no value save as conducive of pleasure.

³ *Et mihi res non me rebus subiungere conor*, says Horace of his lapses from Stoicism into Cyrenaicism.

This original, and in some respects paradoxical, development of hedonism gave no countenance to the voluptuary. On the contrary Epicurus both preached and practised the simple life, and the cultivation of the ordinary virtues, though under utilitarian sanctions which led him to extreme unorthodoxy in some particulars. Especially, he denied any absolute validity to Justice and to Law, and inculcated abstention from the active duties of citizenship. To Friendship he attached the highest value; and the School that he founded in his Garden in a suburb of Athens, and endowed by will, was as much a society of friends as a college of students. It still survived and kept the birthday of its founder in Cicero's time.

Epicurus is the forerunner of the English utilitarians; but he differs from them in making no attempt to combine hedonism with altruism. '*The greatest happiness of the greatest number*' is a formula that has no counterpart in antiquity. The problem that occurs when the claims of self conflict with those of others was not explicitly raised by Epicurus. But it is against the egoism of his Ethics at least as much as against its hedonistic basis that Cicero's criticisms are really directed.

The Stoics paid much attention to Logic. In this department they included with Dialectic, which they developed on the lines laid down by Aristotle, Grammar, Rhetoric, and the doctrine of the Criterion. The last was their treatment of the problem of knowledge. Like Epicurus they were purely empirical, but unlike him they conceded to the Sceptics that sensations are sometimes misleading. Yet true sensations, they maintained, are distinguishable from false; they have a 'clearness' which compels the 'assent' of the mind and makes it 'comprehend' or grasp the presentation as a true picture of the external object. Such a 'comprehensible presentation,' *καταληπτικὴ φαντασία*, is the criterion of truth; it is 'a presentation that arises from an object actually present, in conformity with that object, stamped on the mind like the impress of a seal, and such as could not arise from an object not actually present.' So their much-debated formula was elaborated in reply to Sceptical critics. If asked how it happens that false sensations do occur — *e.g.*, that a straight stick half under water looks crooked — the Stoics replied that error only arises from inattention; careful observation will detect the absence of one or other of the notes of 'clearness.' The Wise Man never 'assents' to an 'incomprehensible presentation.'

In contradiction to Epicurus, the Stoics taught that the universe is guided by, and in the last resort is, God. The sole first cause is a divine Mind, which realizes itself periodically in the world-process. But this belief they expressed in terms uncompromisingly materialistic. Only the corporeal exists, for only the corporeal can act and be acted upon. Mind therefore is matter in its subtlest form; it is Fire or Breath (spirit) or Aether. The primal fiery Spirit creates out of itself the material world that we know, and itself persists within the world as its heat, its 'tension,' its soul; it is the cause of all movement, and the source of life in all animate creatures, whose souls are detached particles of the world-soul.

The notion of Fire as the primary substance the Stoics derived from Heracleitus. Of the process of creation they offered an elaborate account, a sort of imaginary physics or chemistry, operating with the hot and cold, dry and moist, the four elements of fire, air, earth and water, and other conceptions of previous physicists, which came to them chiefly through the Peripatetics.

The world-process they conceived as going on according to a fixed law or formula (*λγo*), effect following cause in undeviating sequence. This law they regarded impersonally as Fate, or personally as divine Providence; they even spoke of the Deity as being himself the Logos of creation. Evidences of design they found in the beauty of the ordered world and its adaptation to the use and comfort of man. Apparent evil is but the necessary imperfection of the parts as parts; the whole is perfectly good.

As this world had a beginning, so it will have an end in time; it is moving on towards a universal conflagration, in which all things will return to the primal Fire from which they sprang. The causes that operated before must operate again; once more the creative process will begin, and all things will recur exactly as they have occurred already. So existence goes on, repeating itself in an unending series of identical cycles.

Such rigorous determinism would seem to leave no room for human freedom or for moral choice. Yet the Stoics maintained that though man's acts like all other events are fore-ordained, his will is free. Obey the divine ordinance

in any case he must, but it rests with him to do so willingly or with reluctance. To understand the world in which he finds himself, and to submit his will thereto — herein man's well-being lies.

On this foundation they reared an elaborate structure of Ethics. Their formula for conduct was 'To live in accordance with nature.' To interpret this, they appealed, like Epicurus, to instinct, but with a different result. According to the Stoics, not pleasure but self-preservation and things conducive to it are the objects at which infants and animals aim. Such objects are 'primary in the order of nature'; and these objects and others springing out of them, viz., all that pertains to the safety and the full development of man's nature, constitute the proper aim of human action. The instinct to seek these objects is replaced in the adult by deliberate intention; as his reason matures, he learns (if unperverted) to understand the plan of nature and to find his happiness in willing conformity with it. This rightness of understanding and of will (the Stoics did not separate the two, since for them the mind is one) is Wisdom or Virtue, which is the only good; their wrongness is Folly or Vice, the only evil. Not that we are to ignore external things: on the contrary, it is in choosing among them as Nature intends that Virtue is exercised. But the attainment of the natural objects is immaterial; it is the effort to attain them alone that counts.

This nice adjustment of the claims of Faith and Works was formulated in a series of technicalities. A scale of values was laid down, and on it a scheme of conduct was built up. Virtue alone is 'good' and 'to be sought,' Vice alone 'evil' and 'to be shunned'; all else is 'indifferent.' But of things indifferent some, being in accordance with nature, are 'promoted' or 'preferred' (προηγμένα), as having 'worth' (ξα), and these are 'to be chosen'; others, being contrary to nature, are 'de-promoted' (ποπροηγμένα) as having 'unworth' (παξα, negative value), and these are 'to be rejected'; while other things again are 'absolutely indifferent,' and supply no motive for action. To aim at securing 'things promoted,' or avoiding their opposites is an 'appropriate act' (καθκον): this is what the young and uncorrupted do by instinct. When the same aim is taken by the rational adult with full knowledge of nature's plan and deliberate intent to conform with it, then the 'appropriate act' is 'perfect,' and is a 'right action' or 'success' (κατρθωμα).⁴ Intention, not achievement, constitutes success. The only 'failure,' 'error' or 'sin' (the term μρτημα includes all these notions) is the conduct of the rational being who ignores and violates nature.

In identifying the Good with Virtue and interpreting Virtue by the conception of Nature, the Stoics were following their forerunners the Cynics; but they parted company with the Cynics in finding a place in their scheme for Goods in the ordinary sense. For though they place pressure among things 'absolutely indifferent,' their examples of things 'promoted' — life, health, wealth, etc. — are pretty much the usual objects of man's endeavour. Hence, whereas the Cynics, construing 'the natural' as the primitive or unsophisticated, had run counter to convention and even to decency, the Stoics in the practical rules deduced from their principles agreed in the main with current morality, and included the recognized duties to the family and the state.

But their first principles themselves they enunciated in a form that was violently paradoxical. Virtue being a source of inward righteousness they regarded as something absolute. Either a man has attained to it, when he is at once completely wise, good and happy, and remains so whatever pain, sorrow, or misfortune may befall him; or he has not attained to it, in which case, whatever progress he has made towards it, he is still foolish, wicked and miserable. So stated, the ideal was felt to be beyond man's reach. Chrysippus, the third head of the school, confessed that he had never known a Wise Man. Criticism forced the later Stoics to compromise. The Wise Man remained as a type and an ensample;⁹ but positive value was conceded to moral progress, and 'appropriate acts' tended to usurp the place that strictly belonged to 'right acts.'

The last system to engage Cicero's attention, that of his contemporary Antiochus, is of much less interest than the two older traditions with which he ranges it.

Within a century of the death of its founder Plato, the Academy underwent a complete transformation. Arcesilas, its head in the middle of the third century B.C., adopted the scepticism that had been established as a philosophical system by Pyrrho two generations before, and denied the possibility of knowledge. He was accordingly spoken of as

⁴ Cicero inevitably obscures the point in rendering καθκον by *officium*. To say that *fungi officio*, 'to do one's duty,' is not *recte facere* makes the doctrine sound more paradoxical than it really was.

the founder of a Second or New Academy. His work was carried further a century afterwards by Carneades. Both these acute thinkers devoted themselves to combating the dogmas of the Stoics. Arcesilas assailed their natural theology with shafts that have served for most subsequent polemic of the kind. On the basis of philosophic doubt, the New Academy developed in Ethics a theory of reasoned probability as a sufficient guide for life.

The extreme scepticism of Carneades led to a reaction. Philo, who was his next successor but one, and who afterwards became Cicero's teacher at Rome, reverted to a more positive standpoint. Doing violence to the facts, he declared that the teaching of the Academy had never changed since Plato, and that Arcesilas and Carneades, though attacking the Criterion of the Stoics, had not meant to deny all possibility of knowledge. The Stoic 'comprehension' was impossible, but yet there was a 'clearness' about some impressions that gives a conviction of their truth.

The next head, Antiochus, went beyond this ambiguous position, and abandoned scepticism altogether. Contradicting Philo, he maintained that the true tradition of Plato had been lost, and professed to recover it, calling his school the 'Old Academy.' But his reading of the history of philosophy was hardly more accurate than Philo's. He asserted that the teachings of the older Academics and Peripatetics and of the Stoics were, in Ethics at all events, substantially the same, and that Zeno had borrowed his tenets from his predecessors, merely concealing the theft by his novel terminology.

The latter thesis is argued in *de Finibus*, Book IV, while Book V gives Antiochus's version of the 'Old Academic and Peripatetic' Ethics, which he himself professed. His doctrine is that Virtue is sufficient for happiness, but that in the highest degree of happiness bodily and external goods form a part. The Stoics will not call the latter 'goods,' but only 'things promoted'; yet really they attach no less importance to them.

Antiochus could only maintain his position by ignoring nice distinctions. The Ethics of Aristotle in particular seem to have fallen into complete oblivion. Aristotle's cardinal doctrines are, that well-being consists not in the state of virtue but in the active exercise of all human excellences, and particularly of man's highest gift of rational contemplation; and that though for this a modicum of external goods is needed, these are but indispensable conditions, and in no way constituent parts, of the Chief Good.

The fact is that philosophy in Cicero's day had lost all precision as well as originality. It must be admitted that *de Finibus* declines in interest when it comes to deal with contemporary thought. Not only does the plan of the work necessitate some repetition in Book V of arguments already rehearsed in Book IV; but Antiochus's perversion of preceding systems impairs alike the criticism of the Stoics and the presentation of his own ethical doctrine.

The text of this edition is founded on that of Madvig, whose representatives have kindly permitted use to be made of the latest edition of his *de Finibus*, dated 1876. Madvig first established the text of the book; and it is from no lack of appreciation for his Herculean labours that I have ventured here and there to modify his results, whether by adopting conjectures suggested in his notes, or by preferring MSS. readings rejected by him, or conjectures made by other scholars and in one or two places by myself. In supplementing Madvig's work I have derived much help from the Teubner text of C. W. F. Müller, 1904.⁵ Madvig's punctuation I have altered throughout, both to conform it with English usage and also occasionally to suggest a different connexion of thought.

Departures from Madvig's text (referred to as Mdv.) are noted at the foot of the page. So also are MSS. variants of importance for the sense; in such places the readings of the three best MSS. and of the inferior group are usually given. But no attempt is made to present a complete picture of the state of the MSS., for which the student must go to Madvig.

The best MSS. of *de Finibus* are: A, Palatinus I, 11th c., which ends soon after the beginning of Book IV; B, Palatinus II; and E, Erlangensis, 15th c. These three form one family, within which B and E are more closely related. The other MSS. known to Madvig form a second family, inferior in general to the former, though, as Müller points out, not to be entirely dispensed with. Both families according to Madvig descend from a late and already considerably corrupted archetype.

⁵ A new Teubner text by Schiche appeared in 1915.

The earliest edition is believed to have been printed at Cologne in 1467. Madvig's great commentary (Copenhagen, 1839, 1869, 1876) supersedes all its predecessors. There is a small annotated edition, largely based upon Madvig, by W. M. L. Hutchinson (London, 1909).

English translations are those of Samuel Parker (*Tully's Five Books de Finibus, or Concerning the Last Objects of Desire and Aversion, done into English by S. P., Gent., revised . . . by Jeremy Collier, M. A., London, 1702*; page-heading, *Tully of Moral Ends*; a 2nd edition published by Bliss, Oxford, 1812); of Guthrie (London, 1744); of Yonge (in Bohn's series, 1848); and of J. S. Reid (Cambridge, 1883, now out of print). The first of these, and the German version of Kirchmann in the Philosophische Bibliothek (1868), I have consulted occasionally, the former with pleasure, but neither with much profit.⁶

The fullest treatment in English of the subjects dealt with in *de Finibus* will be found in Zeller's *Stoics, Epicureans and Sceptics* and *Eclectics*. Zeller's monumental work requires supplementing especially in regard to Stoicism. Recent books of value are Arnold's *Roman Stoicism*, Hicks's *Stoic and Epicurean*, and Bevan's *Stoics and Sceptics*. Reid's edition of *Academica* is a mine of information about Cicero's philosophical work. For the sources, a selection for beginners is Adam's *Texts to Illustrate Greek Philosophy after Aristotle*.

I must express my gratitude to my friend Miss W. M. L. Hutchinson for reading the proofs of my translation and doing much to improve it. Nor can I forget my debt to the late Dr. James Adam, whose lectures on *de Finibus* first aroused my interest in ethical theory.

In revising this work for re-issue I had the advantage of consulting the late Professor J. S. Reid's learned commentary on Books I and II, published 1925. For Books III-IV.43, I derived valuable aid from his MS. notes, kindly lent me by Mrs. Reid, and for the rest from his published translation; of course neither can be assumed to represent his final views. The loss of a complete edition from so great a Ciceronian and student of the post-Aristotelian schools is much to be deplored. The Latin text is unaltered save for a few trifling corrections.

H. R.

1930.

2.1 The Author's Notes:

⁶ A text and French translation by Jules Martha was published 1928-30 (Société d'édition 'les belles Lettres,' Paris); this text is based on A for Books I-IV and for Books IV, V, on R (Rottendorffianus, 12th c., closely related to A, and collated by Schiche for his Teubner edition, 1915). Both Martha and Schiche place only limited confidence in B and E.

CHAPTER 3

Book I

My dear Brutus, — The following essay, I am well aware, attempting as it does to present in a Latin dress subjects that philosophers of consummate ability and profound learning have already handled in Greek, is sure to encounter criticism from different quarters. Certain persons, and those not without some pretension to letters, disapprove of the study of philosophy altogether. Others do not so greatly object to it provided it be followed in dilettante fashion; but they do not think it ought to engage so large an amount of one's interest and attention. A third class, learned in Greek literature and contemptuous of Latin, will say that they prefer to spend their time in reading Greek. Lastly, I suspect there will be some who will wish to divert me to other fields of authorship, asserting that this kind of composition, though a graceful recreation, is beneath the dignity of my character and position.

To all of these objections I suppose I ought to make some brief reply. The indiscriminate censure of philosophy has indeed been sufficiently answered already in the book¹ which I wrote in praise of that study, in order to defend it against a bitter attack that had been made upon it by *Hortensius*. The favourable reception which that volume appeared to obtain from yourself and from others whom I considered competent to sit in judgment encouraged me to embark upon further undertakings; for I did not wish to be thought incapable of sustaining the interest that I had aroused. The second class of critics, who, however much they approve of philosophy, nevertheless would rather have it less eagerly prosecuted, are asking for a restraint that it is not easy to practise. The study is one that when once taken up admits of no restriction or control. In fact, the attitude of the former class, who attempt to dissuade us from philosophy altogether, seems almost less unreasonable than that of those who would set limits to what is essentially unlimited, and expect us to stop halfway in a study that increases in value the further it proceeds.

If Wisdom be attainable, let us not only win but enjoy it; or if attainment be difficult, still there is no end to the search for truth, other than its discovery. It were base to flag in the pursuit, when the object pursued is so supremely lovely. Indeed if we like writing, who would be so churlish as to debar us from it? Or if we find it a labour, who is to set limits to another man's exertions? No doubt it is kind of Chremes in Terence's play to wish his new neighbour not

To dig or plough or any burden bear:²

¹ This book was called *Hortensius*, and formed an introduction to Cicero's philosophical writings. Fragments only are extant.

² Terence, *Heautontimorumenos*, I.1.17.

for it is not industry in general, but toil of a menial kind, from which he would deter him; but only a busybody would take exception to an occupation which, like mine, is a labour of love.

A more difficult task therefore is to deal with the objection of those who profess a contempt for Latin writings as such. What astonishes me first of all about them is this, — why should they dislike their native language for serious and important subjects, when they are quite willing to read Latin plays translated word for word from the Greek? Who has such a hatred, one might almost say for the very name of Roman, as to despise and reject the *Medea* of Ennius or the *Antiope* of Pacuvius, and give as his reason that though he enjoys the corresponding plays of Euripides he cannot endure books written in Latin? What, he cries, am I to read *The Young Comrades* of Caecilius, or Terence's *Maid of Andros*, when I might be reading the same two comedies of Menander?

With this sort of person I disagree so strongly, that, admitting the *Electra* of Sophocles to be a masterpiece, I yet think Atilius's poor translation of it worth my while to read. 'An iron writer,' Licinius called him; still, in my opinion, a writer all the same, and therefore deserving to be read. For to be entirely unversed in our own poets argues either the extreme of mental inactivity or else a refinement of taste carried to the point of caprice. To my mind no one can be styled a well-read man who does not know our native literature. If we read

Would that in forest glades —³

just as readily as the same passage in the Greek, shall we object to having Plato's discourses on morality and happiness set before the reader in Latin?

And supposing that for our part we do not fill the office of a mere translator, but, while preserving the doctrines of our chosen authorities, add thereto our own criticism and our own arrangement: what ground have these objectors for ranking the writings of Greece above compositions that are at once brilliant in style and not mere translations from the Greek originals? Perhaps they will rejoin that the subject has already been dealt with by the Greeks already. But then what reason have they for reading the multitude of Greek authors either that one has to read? Take Stoicism: what aspect of it has Chrysippus left untouched? Yet we read Diogenes, Antipater, Mnesarchus, Panaetius, and many others, not least our friend Posidonius. Again, Theophrastus handles topics previously treated by Aristotle, yet he gives us no small pleasure all the same. Nor do the Epicureans cease from writing as the spirit moves them on the same questions on which Epicurus and the ancients wrote. If Greek writers find Greek readers when presenting the same subject in a different setting, why should not Romans be read by Romans?

Yet even supposing I gave a direct translation of Plato or Aristotle, exactly as our poets have done with the plays, would it not, pray, be a patriotic service to introduce those transcendent intellects to the acquaintance of my fellow-countrymen? As a matter of fact, however, this has not been my procedure hitherto, though I do not feel I am debarred from adopting it. Indeed I expressly reserve the right of borrowing certain passages, if I think fit, and particularly from the philosophers just mentioned, when an appropriate occasion offers for so doing; just as Ennius regularly borrows from Homer, and Afranius from Menander. Nor yet shall I object, like our Lucilius,⁴ to all the world's reading what I write. I only wish his Persius were alive today! and still more Scipio and Rutilius, in fear of whose criticism Lucilius protests that he writes for the public of Tarentum, Consentia and Sicily. This no doubt is neat enough, like the rest of Lucilius; but there were not such learned critics in his day, to tax his best efforts; and also his writings are in a lighter vein: they show consummate wit, but no great erudition.

³ The opening of Ennius's *Medea Exsul*, cp. Euripides, *Medea* 3 f.

⁴ Lucilius, the satirist, 148B.C., avowed that he wrote for the moderately learned like Laelius, not for great scholars like Persius: 'Persium non curo legere, Laelium Decimum volo' (Cic. *de Or.* 2.25). In the next sentence here Cicero seems to refer to some other passage of Lucilius, in which he put his claims still lower and professed to write for illiterate provincials, not for cultured noblemen like Scipio Africanus Minor and P. Rutilius Rufus.

I, however, need not be afraid of any reader, if I am so bold as to dedicate my book to you, who rival even the Greeks as a philosopher. Still, you yourself challenged me to the venture, by dedicating to me your delightful essay *On Virtue*. But I have no doubt that the reason why some people take a dislike to Latin literature is that they have happened to meet with certain illiterate and uncouth productions which are bad Greek books in worse Latin versions. I have no quarrel with these persons, provided that they also refuse to read the Greek writers on the same subjects. But given a noble theme, and a refined, dignified and graceful style, who would not read a Latin book? Unless it be some one ambitious to be styled a Greek out-and-out, as Albucius was greeted by Scaevola when the latter was prisoner at Athens.

I am again referring to Lucilius, who relates the anecdote with much neatness and point; he puts the following excellent lines into the mouth of Scaevola:

“You vow’d, Albucius, that to suit ye
‘Twas as a Greek we must repute ye;
‘Roman’ and ‘Sabine’ being names
Your man of ton and taste disclaims!
You scorn’d to own your native town, —
Which bore such captains of renown
As Pontius and Tritannus bold,
Who in the van Rome’s ensigns hold.
And so, at Athens when I lay,
And your respects you came to pay,
My worship, humouring your freak,
Gave you good-morrow straight in Greek,
With ‘Chaire, Titus!’ ‘Chaire,’ bawl
Guards, aides-decamp, javelinmen and all!
— Hence comes it that Albucius hates me,
Hence as his bitterest foe he rates me.”

Mucius’s sarcasm was however deserved. But for my part I can never cease wondering what can be the origin of the exaggerated contempt for home products that is now fashionable. It would of course be out of place to attempt to prove it here, but in my opinion, as I have often argued, the Latin language, so far from having a poor vocabulary, as is commonly supposed, is actually richer than the Greek. When have we, that is to say when have our competent orators or poets, at all events since they have had models to copy, ever lacked any of the resources either of the florid or the chaste style?

In my own case, just as I trust I have done my duty, at the post to which the Roman people appointed me, by my political activities, and the toils and dangers I have undergone, so it is assuredly incumbent on me also to use my best endeavours, with such zeal, enthusiasm and energy as I possess, to promote the advancement of learning among my fellow-countrymen. Nor need I be greatly concerned to join issue with any who prefer to read Greek, provided that they actually do read it and do not merely pretend to do so. It is my business to serve those who desire to enjoy literature in both languages, or who, if books in their own are available, do not feel any great need of Greek ones.

Those again who would rather have me write on other subjects may fairly be indulgent to one who has written much already — in fact no one of our nation more — and who perhaps will write still more if his life be prolonged. And even were it not so, anyone who has been a careful student of my philosophical writings will pronounce that none of them are better worth reading than the present treatise. For what problem does life offer so important as all the topics of philosophy, and especially the questions raised in these volumes — What is the End, the final and ultimate aim, which gives the standard for all principles of well-being and of right conduct? What does Nature pursue as the thing supremely desirable, what does she avoid as the ultimate evil? It is a subject on which the most learned philosophers disagree profoundly; who then can think it derogatory to such esteem as each may assign to me, to investigate what is the highest good and the truest rule in every relationship of life?

Are we to have our leading statesmen debating such topics as whether the offspring of a female slave is to be considered as belonging to the party who has hired her, Publius Scaevola and Manius Manilius upholding one opinion and Marcus Brutus the contrary (not but what such discussions raise nice points of law, as well as being of practical importance for the business of life; and we read and shall continue to read with pleasure the treatises in question and others of the same nature); and shall these questions which cover the entire range of conduct be neglected? Legal subjects are no doubt more popular, but philosophy is unquestionably richer in interest. However, this is a point that may be left to the reader to decide. In the present work we believe we have given a more or less exhaustive exposition of the whole subject of the Ends of Goods and Evils. The book is intended to contain so far as possible a complete account, not only of the views that we ourselves accept, but also of the doctrines enunciated by all the different schools of philosophy.

To begin with what is easiest, let us first pass in review the system of Epicurus, which to most men is the best known of any. Our exposition of it, as you shall see, will be as accurate as any usually given even by the professed adherents of his school. For our object is to discover the truth, not to refute someone as an opponent.

An elaborate defence of the hedonistic theory of Epicurus was once delivered by Lucius Torquatus, a student well versed in all the systems of philosophy; to him I replied, and Gaius Triarius, a youth of remarkable learning and seriousness of character, assisted at the discussion.

Both of these gentlemen had called to pay me their respects at my place at Cumae. We first exchanged a few remarks about literature, of which both were enthusiastic students. Then Torquatus said, "As we have for once found you at leisure, I am resolved to hear the reason why you regard my master Epicurus, not indeed with hatred, as those who do not share his views mostly do, but at all events with disapproval. I myself consider him as the one person who had discerned the truth, and who has delivered men from the gravest errors and imparted to them all there is to know about well-being and happiness. The fact is, I think that you are like our friend Triarius, and dislike Epicurus because he has neglected the graces of style that you find in your Plato, Aristotle and Theophrastus. For I can scarcely bring myself to believe that you think his opinions untrue."

"Let me assure you, Torquatus," said I, "that you are entirely mistaken. With your master's style I have no fault to find. He expresses his meaning adequately, and gives me a plain intelligible statement. Not that I despise eloquence in a philosopher if he has it to offer, but I should not greatly insist on it if he has not. But his matter I do not find so satisfactory, and that in more points than one. However, 'many men, many minds':⁵ so it is possible that I am mistaken." "What is it, pray," he said, "to which you take exception? For I recognize you as a just critic, provided you really know what his doctrines are."

"Oh," said I, "I know the whole of Epicurus's opinions well enough, — unless you think that Phaedrus or Zeno did not tell me the truth. I have heard both of them lecture, though to be sure they convinced me of nothing but their own devotion to the system. Indeed I regularly attended those professors, in company with our friend Atticus, who for his part had an admiration for them both, and a positive affection for Phaedrus. Every day we used to discuss together in private what we had heard at lecture, and there was never any dispute as to what I could understand; the question was, what I could accept as true."

"Well then, what *is* the point?" said he; "I should very much like to know what it is that you disagree with." "Let me begin," I replied, "with the subject of Natural Philosophy, which is Epicurus's particular boast. Here, in the first place, he is entirely second-hand. His doctrines are those of Democritus, with a very few modifications. And as for the latter, where he attempts to improve upon his original, in my opinion he only succeeds in making things worse. Democritus believes in certain things which he terms 'atoms,' that is, bodies so solid as to be indivisible, moving about in a vacuum

⁵ Terence, *Phormio* 454. <http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/ter.phormio.html>

of infinite extent, which has neither top, bottom nor middle, neither centre nor circumference. The motion of these atoms is such that they collide and so cohere together; and from this process result the whole of the things that exist and that we see. Moreover, this movement of the atoms must not be conceived as starting from a beginning, but as having gone on from all eternity.

Epicurus for his part, where he follows Democritus, does not generally blunder. Still, there is a great deal in each of them with which I do not agree, and especially this: in the study of Nature there are two questions to be asked, first, what is the matter out of which each thing is made, second, what is the force by which it is made; now Democritus and Epicurus have discussed the question of matter, but they have not considered the question of force or the efficient cause. But this is a defect shared by both; I now come to the lapses peculiar to Epicurus. He believes that these same indivisible solid bodies are borne by their own weight perpendicularly downward, which he holds is the natural motion of all bodies;

but thereupon this clever fellow, being met with the difficulty that if they all travelled downwards in a straight line, and, as I said, perpendicularly, no one atom would ever be able to overtake any other atom, accordingly introduced an idea of his own invention: he said that the atom makes a very tiny swerve, — the smallest divergence possible; and so are produced entanglements and combinations and cohesions of atoms with atoms, which result in the creation of the world and all its parts, and of all that in them is. Now not only is the whole of this affair a piece of childish fancy, but it does not even achieve the result that its author desires. The swerving is itself an arbitrary fiction; for Epicurus says the atoms swerve without a cause, — yet this is the capital offence in a natural philosopher, to speak of something taking place uncaused. Then also he gratuitously deprives the atoms of what he himself declared to be the natural motion of all heavy bodies, namely, movement in a straight line downwards, and yet he does not attain the object for the sake of which this fiction was devised.

For, if all the atoms swerve, none will ever come to cohere together; or if some swerve while others travel in a straight line, by their own natural tendency, in the first place this will be tantamount to assigning to the atoms their different spheres of action, some to travel straight and some sideways; while secondly (and this is a weak point with Democritus also) this riotous hurly-burly of atoms could not possibly result in the ordered beauty of the world we know. It is also unworthy of a natural philosopher to deny the infinite divisibility of matter; an error that assuredly Epicurus would have avoided, if he had been willing to let his friend Polyaenus teach him geometry instead of making Polyaenus himself unlearn it. Democritus, being an educated man and well versed in geometry, thinks the sun is of vast size; Epicurus considers it perhaps a foot in diameter, for he pronounces it to be exactly as large as it appears, or a little larger or smaller.

Thus where Epicurus alters the doctrines of Democritus, he alters them for the worse; while for those ideas which he adopts, the credit belongs entirely to Democritus, — the atoms, the void, the images,⁶ or as they call them, *eidōla*, whose impact is the cause not only of vision but also of thought; the very conception of infinite space, *apeiria* as they term it, is entirely derived from Democritus; and again the countless numbers of worlds that come into existence and pass out of existence every day. For my own part I reject these doctrines altogether; but still I could wish that Democritus, whom every one else applauds, had not been vilified by Epicurus who took him as his sole guide.

“Turn next to the second division of philosophy, the department of Method and of Dialectic, which is termed *Logikē*. Of the whole armour of Logic your founder, as it seems to me, is absolutely destitute. He does away with Definition; he has no doctrine of Division or Partition;⁷ he gives no rules for Deduction or Syllogistic Inference, and imparts no method for resolving dilemmas or for detecting Fallacies of Equivocation. The Criteria of reality he places in

⁶ Epicurus explained sight as being caused by the impact on the eye of films or husks which are continually being thrown off from the surface of objects. These ‘images,’ penetrating to the mind through the pores of the body, also caused mental impressions.

⁷ In Greek Logic *διαρρεσι*, the method of defining a species by dividing and subdividing a genus: cp. *Bk II. § 26*.

sensation; once let the senses accept something as true that is false, and every possible criterion of truth and falsehood seems to him to be immediately destroyed. . . .

...⁸ He lays the very greatest stress upon that which, as he declares, Nature herself decrees and sanctions, that is the feelings of pleasure and pain. These he maintains lie at the root of every act of choice and of avoidance. This is the doctrine of Aristippus, and it is upheld more cogently and more frankly by the Cyrenaics; but nevertheless it is in my judgment a doctrine in the last degree unworthy of the dignity of man. Nature, in my own opinion at all events, has created and endowed us for higher ends. I may possibly be mistaken; but I am absolutely convinced that the Torquatus who first won that surname did not wrest the famous necklet from his foe in the hope of getting from it any physical enjoyment, nor did he fight the battle of the Vesperis against the Latins in this third consulship for the sake of pleasure. Indeed in sentencing his son to be beheaded, it would seem that he actually deprived himself of a great deal of pleasure; for he sacrificed his natural instincts of paternal affection to the claims of state and of his military office.

“Then, think of the Titus Torquatus who was consul with Gnaeus Octavius; when he dealt so sternly with the son who had passed out of his paternal control through his adoption by Decius Silanus — when he summoned him into his presence to answer to the charge preferred against him by a deputation from Macedonia, of accepting bribes while prisoner in that province — when, after hearing both sides of the case, he gave judgment that he found his son guilty of having conducted himself in office in a manner unworthy of his ancestry, and banished him for ever from his sight, — think you he had any regard for his own pleasure? But I pass over the dangers, the toils, the actual pain that all good men endure for country and for friends, not only not seeking pleasure, but actually renouncing pleasures altogether, and preferring to undergo every sort of pain rather than be false to any portion of their duty. Let us turn to matters seemingly less important, but equally conclusive.

What actual pleasure do you, Torquatus, or does Triarius here, derive from literature, from history and learning, from turning the pages of the poets and committing vast quantities of verse to memory? Do not tell me that these pursuits are in themselves a pleasure to you, and that so were the deeds I mentioned to the Torquati. That line of defence was never taken by Epicurus or Metrodorus, nor by any one of them if he possessed any intelligence or had mastered the doctrines of your school. Again, as to the question often asked, why so many men are Epicureans, though it is not the only reason, the thing that most attracts the crowd is the belief that Epicurus declares right conduct and moral worth to be intrinsically and of themselves delightful, which means productive of pleasure. These worthy people do not realize that, if this is true, it upsets the theory altogether. If it were admitted that goodness is spontaneously and intrinsically pleasant, even without any reference to bodily feeling, then virtue would be desirable for its own sake, and so also would knowledge; but this Epicurus by no means allows.

“These then,” said I, “are the doctrines of Epicurus that I cannot accept. For the rest, I could desire that he himself had been better equipped with learning (since even you must recognize that he is deficient in that liberal culture which confers on its possessor the title of an educated man) or at all events that he had not deterred others from study. Although I am aware that he has not succeeded in deterring you.”

I had spoken rather with the intention of drawing out Torquatus than of delivering a discourse of my own. But Triarius interposed, with a smile: “Why, you have practically expelled Epicurus altogether from the philosophic choir. What have you left to him except that, whatever his style may be, you find his meaning intelligible? His doctrines in Natural Philosophy were second-hand, and in your opinion unsound at that; and his attempts to improve on his authority only made things worse. Dialectic he had none. His identification of the Chief Good with pleasure in the first place was in itself an error, and secondly this also was not original; for it had been said before, and said better, by Aristippus. To crown all you added that Epicurus was a person of no education.”

⁸ The interpretation is here uncertain, and probably more than one sentence has been lost.

“Well, Triarius,” I rejoined, “when one disagrees with a man, it is essential to say what it is that one objects to in his views. What should prevent me from being an Epicurean, if I accepted the doctrines of Epicurus? especially as the system is an exceedingly easy one to master. You must not find fault with members of opposing schools for criticizing each other’s opinions; though I always feel that insult and abuse, or illtempered wrangling and bitter, obstinate controversy are beneath the dignity of philosophy.”

“I am quite of your mind,” said Torquatus; “it is impossible to debate without criticizing, but it is equally impossible to debate properly with illtemper or obstinacy. But I have something I should like to say in reply to all this, if it will not weary you.” “Do you suppose,” said I, “that I should have said what I have, unless I wanted to hear you?” “Then would you like me to make a rapid review of the whole of Epicurus’s system, or to discuss the single topic of pleasure, which is the one main subject of dispute?” “Oh,” I said, “that must be for you to decide.” “Very well then,” said he, “this is what I will do, I will expound a single topic, and that the most important. Natural Philosophy we will postpone; though I will undertake to prove to you both your swerve of the atoms and size of the sun, and also that very many errors of Democritus were criticized and corrected by Epicurus. But on the present occasion I will speak about pleasure; not that I have anything original to contribute, yet I am confident that what I say will command even your acceptance.” “Be assured,” I said, “that I shall not be obstinate, but will gladly own myself convinced if you can prove your case to my satisfaction.”

“I shall do so,” he rejoined, “provided you are as fair-minded as you promise. But I prefer to employ continuous discourse rather than question and answer.” “As you please,” said I. So he began.

“I will start then,” he said, “in the manner approved by the author of the system himself, by settling what are the essence and qualities of the thing that is the object of our inquiry; not that I suppose you to be ignorant of it, but because this is the logical method of procedure. We are inquiring, then, what is the final and ultimate Good, which as all philosophers are agreed must be of such a nature as to be the end to which all other things are means, while it is not itself a means to anything else. This Epicurus finds in pleasure; pleasure he holds to be the Chief Good, pain the Chief Evil.

This he sets out to prove as follows: every animal, as soon as it is born, seeks for pleasure, and delights in it as the Chief Good, while it recoils from pain as the Chief Evil, and so far as possible avoids it. This it does as long as it remains unperverted, at the prompting of Nature’s own unbiased and honest verdict. Hence Epicurus refuses to admit any necessity for argument or discussion to *prove* that pleasure is desirable and pain to be avoided. These facts, he thinks, are perceived by the senses, as that fire is hot, snow white, honey sweet, none of which things need be proved by elaborate argument: it is enough merely to draw attention to them. (For there is a difference, he holds, between formal syllogistic proof of a thing and a mere notice or reminder: the former is the method for discovering abstruse and recondite truths, the latter for indicating facts that are obvious and evident.) Strip mankind of sensation, and nothing remains; it follows that Nature herself is the judge of that which is in accordance with or contrary to nature. What does Nature perceive or what does she judge of, beside pleasure and pain, to guide her actions of desire and of avoidance?

Some members of our school however would refine upon this doctrine; these say that it is not enough for the judgment of good and evil to rest with the senses; the facts that pleasure is in and for itself desirable and pain in and for itself to be avoided can also be grasped by the intellect and the reason. Accordingly they declare that the perception that the one is to be sought after and the other avoided is a notion naturally implanted in our minds. Others again, with whom I agree, observing that a great many philosophers do advance a vast array of reasons to prove why pleasure should not be counted as a good nor pain as an evil, consider that we had better not be too confident of our case; in their view it requires elaborate and reasoned argument, and abstruse theoretical discussion of the nature of pleasure and pain.

“But I must explain to you how all this mistaken idea of reprobating pleasure and extolling pain arose. To do so, I will give you a complete account of the system, and expound the actual teachings of the great explorer of truth, the master-

builder of human happiness. No one rejects, dislikes or avoids pleasure itself, because it is pleasure, but because those who do not know how to pursue pleasure rationally encounter consequences that are extremely painful. Nor again is there anyone who loves or pursues or desires to obtain pain of itself, because it is pain, but because occasionally circumstances occur in which toil and pain can procure him some great pleasure. To take a trivial example, which of us ever undertakes laborious physical exercise, except to obtain some advantage from it? But who has any right to find fault with a man who chooses to enjoy a pleasure that has no annoying consequences, or one who avoids a pain that produces no resultant pleasure?

On the other hand, we denounce with righteous indignation and dislike men who are so beguiled and demoralized by the charms of the pleasure of the moment, so blinded by desire, that they cannot foresee the pain and trouble that are bound to ensue; and equal blame belongs to those who fail in their duty through weakness of will, which is the same as saying through shrinking from toil and pain. These cases are perfectly simple and easy to distinguish. In a free hour, when our power of choice is untrammelled and when nothing prevents our being able to do what we like best, every pleasure is to be welcomed and every pain avoided. But in certain emergencies and owing to the claims of duty or the obligations of business it will frequently occur that pleasures have to be repudiated and annoyances accepted. The wise man therefore always holds in these matters to this principle of selection: he rejects pleasures to secure other greater pleasures, or else he endures pains to avoid worse pains.

“This being the theory I hold, why need I be afraid of not being able to reconcile it with the case of the Torquati my ancestors? Your references to them just now were historically correct, and also showed your kind and friendly feeling towards myself; but all the same I am not to be bribed by your flattery of my family, and you will not find me a less resolute opponent. Tell me, pray, what explanation do you put upon their actions? Do you really believe that they charged an armed enemy, or treated their children, their own flesh and blood, so cruelly, without a thought for their own interest or advantage? Why, even wild animals do not act in that way; they do not run amok so blindly that we cannot discern any purpose in their movements and their onslaughts. Can you then suppose that those heroic men performed their famous deeds without any motive at all?

What their motive was, I will consider later on: for the present I will confidently assert, that if they had a motive for those undoubtedly glorious exploits, that motive was not a love of virtue in and for itself. — He wrested the necklet from his foe. — Yes, and saved himself from death. — But he braved great danger. — Yes, before the eyes of an army. — What did he get by it? — Honour and esteem, the strongest guarantees of security in life. — He sentenced his own son to death. — If from no motive, I am sorry to be the descendant of anyone so savage and inhuman; but if his purpose was by inflicting pain upon himself to establish his authority as a commander, and to tighten the reins of discipline during a very serious war by holding over his army the fear of punishment, then his action aimed at ensuring the safety of his fellow-citizens, upon which he knew his own depended.

And this is a principle of wide application. People of your school, and especially yourself, who are so diligent a student of history, have found a favourite field for the display of your eloquence in recalling the stories of brave and famous men of old, and in praising their actions, not on utilitarian grounds, but on account of the splendour of abstract moral worth. But all of this falls to the ground if the principle of selection that I have just mentioned be established, — the principle of forgoing pleasures for the purpose of getting greater pleasures, and enduring pains for the sake of escaping greater pains.

“But enough has been said at this stage about the glorious exploits and achievements of the heroes of renown. The tendency of all the virtues to produce pleasure is a topic that will be treated in its own place later on. At present I shall proceed to expound the essence and qualities of pleasure itself, and shall endeavour to remove the misconceptions of ignorance and to make you realize how serious, how temperate, how austere is the school that is supposed to be sensual, lax and luxurious. The pleasure we pursue is not that kind alone which directly affects our physical being with a delightful feeling, — a positively agreeable perception of the senses; on the contrary, the greatest pleasure

according to us is that which is experienced as a result of the complete removal of pain. When we are released from pain, the mere sensation of complete emancipation and relief from uneasiness is in itself a source of gratification. But everything that causes gratification is a pleasure (just as everything that causes annoyance is a pain). Therefore the complete removal of pain has correctly been termed a pleasure. For example, when hunger and thirst are banished by food and drink, the mere fact of getting rid of uneasiness brings a resultant pleasure in its train. So generally, the removal of pain causes pleasure to take its place.

Epicurus consequently maintained that there is no such thing as a neutral state of feeling intermediate between pleasure and pain; for the state supposed by some thinkers to be neutral, being characterized as it is by entire absence of pain, is itself, he held, a pleasure, and, what is more, a pleasure of the highest order. A man who is conscious of his condition at all must necessarily feel pleasure or pain. But complete absence of pain Epicurus considers to be the limit and highest point of pleasure; beyond this point pleasure may vary in kind, but it cannot vary in intensity or degree.

Yet at Athens, so my father used to tell me when he wanted to air his wit at the expense of the Stoics, in the Ceramicus there is actually a statue of Chrysippus seated and holding out one hand, the gesture being intended to indicate the delight which he used to take in the following little syllogism: 'Does your hand want anything, while it is in its present condition?' Answer: 'No, nothing.' — 'But if pleasure were a good, it would want pleasure.' — 'Yes, I suppose it would.' — 'Therefore pleasure is not a good.' An argument, as my father declared, which not even a statue would employ, if a statue could speak; because though it is cogent enough as an objection to the Cyrenaics, it does not touch Epicurus. For if the only kind of pleasure were that which so to speak tickles the senses, an influence permeating them with a feeling of delight, neither the hand nor any other member could be satisfied with the absence of pain unaccompanied by an agreeable and active sensation of pleasure. Whereas if, as Epicurus holds, the highest pleasure be to feel no pain, Chrysippus' interlocutor, though justified in making his first admission, that his hand in that condition wanted nothing, was not justified in his second admission, that if pleasure were a good, his hand would have wanted it. And the reason why it would not have wanted pleasure is, that to be without pain is to be in a state of pleasure.

"The truth of the position that pleasure is the ultimate good will most readily appear from the following illustration. Let us imagine a man living in the continuous enjoyment of numerous and vivid pleasures alike of body and of mind, undisturbed either by the presence or the prospect of pain: what possible state of existence could we describe as being more excellent or more desirable? One so situated must possess in the first place a strength of mind that is proof against all fear of death or of pain; he will know that death means complete unconsciousness, and that pain is generally light if long and short if strong, so that its intensity is compensated by brief duration and its continuance by diminishing severity.

Let such a man moreover have no dread of any supernatural power; let him never suffer the pleasures of the past to fade away, but constantly renew their enjoyment in recollection, — and his lot will be one which will not admit of further improvement. Suppose on the other hand a person crushed beneath the heaviest load of mental and of bodily anguish to which humanity is liable. Grant him no hope of ultimate relief in view; also give him no pleasure either present or in prospect. Can one describe or imagine a more pitiable state? If then a life full of pain is the thing most to be avoided, it follows that to live in pain is the highest evil; and this position implies that a life of pleasure is the ultimate good. In fact the mind possesses nothing in itself upon which it can rest as final. Every fear, every sorrow can be traced back to pain;⁹ there is no other thing besides pain which is of its own nature capable of causing either anxiety or distress.

"Pleasure and pain moreover supply the motives of desire and of avoidance, and the springs of conduct generally. This being so, it clearly follows that actions are right and praiseworthy only as being a means to the attainment of a life of

⁹ *i.e.* pain of body: *dolorem* here has its strict sense.

pleasure. But that which is not itself a means to anything else, but to which all else is a means, is what the Greeks term the *Telos*, the highest, ultimate or final Good. It must therefore be admitted that the Chief Good is to live agreeably.

“Those who place the Chief Good in virtue alone are beguiled by the glamour of a name, and do not understand the true demands of nature. If they will consent to listen to Epicurus, they will be delivered from the grossest error. Your school dilates on the transcendent beauty of the virtues; but were they not productive of pleasure, who would deem them either praiseworthy or desirable? We esteem the art of medicine not for its interest as a science but for its conduciveness to health; the art of navigation is commended for its practical and not its scientific value, because it conveys the rules for sailing a ship with success. So also Wisdom, which must be considered as the art of living, if it effected no result would not be desired; but as it is, it is desired, because it is the artificer that procures and produces pleasure.

(The meaning that I attach to pleasure must by this time be clear to you, and you must not be biased against my argument owing to the discreditable associations of the term.) The great disturbing factor in man’s life is ignorance of good and evil; mistaken ideas about these frequently rob us of our greatest pleasures, and torment us with the most cruel pain of mind. Hence we need the aid of Wisdom, to rid us of our fears and appetites, to root out all our errors and prejudices, and to serve as our infallible guide to the attainment of pleasure. Wisdom alone can banish sorrow from our hearts and protect us from alarm and apprehension; put yourself to school with her, and you may live in peace, and quench the glowing flames of desire. For the desires are incapable of satisfaction; they ruin not individuals only but whole families, nay often shake the very foundations of the state.

It is they that are the source of hatred, quarrelling and strife, of sedition and of war. Nor do they only flaunt themselves abroad, or turn their blind onslaughts solely against others; even when prisoned within the heart they quarrel and fall out among themselves; and this cannot but render the whole of life embittered. Hence only the Wise Man, who prunes away all the rank growth of vanity and error, can possibly live untroubled by sorrow and by fear, content within the bounds that nature has set.

Nothing could be more useful or more conducive to well-being than Epicurus’s doctrine as to the different classes of the desires. One kind he classified as both natural and necessary, a second as natural without being necessary, and a third as neither natural nor necessary; the principle of classification being that the necessary desires are gratified with little trouble or expense; the natural desires also require but little, since nature’s own riches, which suffice to content her, are both easily procured and limited in amount; but for the imaginary¹⁰ desires no bound or limit can be discovered. 14

If then we observe that ignorance and error reduce the whole of life to confusion, while Wisdom alone is able to protect us from the onslaughts of appetite and the menaces of fear, teaching us to bear even the affronts of fortune with moderation, and showing us all the paths that lead to calmness and peace, why should we hesitate to avow that Wisdom is to be desired for the sake of the pleasures it brings and Folly to be avoided because of its injurious consequences?

“The same principle will lead us to pronounce that Temperance also is not desirable for its own sake, but because it bestows peace of mind, and soothes the heart with a tranquillizing sense of harmony. For it is temperance that warns us to be guided by reason in what we desire and avoid. Nor is it enough to judge what it is right to do or to leave undone; we also need to abide by our judgment. Most men however lack tenacity of purpose; their resolution weakens and succumbs as soon as the fair form of pleasure meets their gaze, and they surrender themselves prisoners to their passions, failing to foresee the inevitable result. Thus for the sake of a pleasure at once small in amount and unnecessary, and one which they might have procured by other means or even denied themselves altogether without

¹⁰ *inanis* hollow, vain, unreal, as the opposite of ‘natural’ (cf. § 53 and *Bk II. § 26*), means ‘based on a false idea of what is good or necessary’: *α δ (τὸν πῖθον) ὅτε φυσικὰ ὅτε ναγκαίαι, ἀλλὰ παρὰ κενὸν δεῖξάν γινόμεναι*. *Diogenes Laertius* 10.149

pain, they incur serious disease, or loss of fortune, or disgrace, and not infrequently become liable to the penalties of the law and of the courts of justice.

Those on the other hand who are resolved so to enjoy their pleasures as to avoid all painful consequences therefrom, and who retain their faculty of judgment and avoid being seduced by pleasure into courses that they perceive to be wrong, reap the very highest pleasure by forgoing pleasure. Similarly also they often voluntarily endure pain, to avoid incurring greater pain by not doing so. This clearly proves that Intemperance is not undesirable for its own sake, while Temperance is desirable not because it renounces pleasures, but because it procures greater pleasures.

“The same account will be found to hold good of Courage. The performance of labours, the undergoing of pains, are not in themselves attractive, nor are endurance, industry, watchfulness, nor yet that much lauded virtue, perseverance, nor even courage; but we aim at these virtues in order to live without anxiety and fear and so far as possible to be free from pain of mind and body. The fear of death plays havoc with the calm and even tenor of life, and to bow the head to pain and bear it abjectly and feebly is a pitiable thing; such weakness has caused many men to betray their parents or their friends, some their country, and very many utterly to ruin themselves. So on the other hand a strong and lofty spirit is entirely free from anxiety and sorrow. It makes light of death, for the dead are only as they were before they were born. It is schooled to encounter pain by recollecting that pains of great severity are ended by death, and slight ones have frequent intervals of respite; while those of medium intensity lie within our own control: we can bear them if they are endurable, or if they are not, we may serenely quit life’s theatre, when the play has ceased to please us. These considerations prove that timidity and cowardice are not blamed, nor courage and endurance praised, on their own account; the former are rejected because they beget pain, the latter coveted because they beget pleasure.

“It remains to speak of Justice, to complete the list of the virtues; but this admits of practically the same treatment as the others. Wisdom, Temperance and Courage I have shown to be so closely linked with Pleasure that they cannot possibly be severed or sundered from it. The same must be deemed to be the case with Justice. Not only does Justice never cause anyone harm, but on the contrary it always adds some benefit, partly owing to its essentially tranquillizing influence upon the mind, partly because of the hope that it warrants of a never-failing supply of the things that uncorrupted nature really needs. And just as Rashness, Licence and Cowardice ever torment the mind, ever awaken trouble and discord, so Unrighteousness, when firmly rooted in the heart, causes restlessness by the mere fact of its presence; and if once it has found expression in some deed of wickedness, however secret the act, yet it can never feel assured that it will always remain undetected. The usual consequences of crime are, first suspicion, next gossip and rumour, then comes the accuser, then the judge; many wrongdoers have even turned evidence against themselves, as happened in your consulship.

And even if any think themselves well fenced and fortified against detection by their fellowmen, they still dread the eye of heaven, and fancy that the pangs of anxiety night and day gnawing at their hearts are sent by Providence to punish them. But what can wickedness contribute towards lessening the annoyances of life, commensurate with its effect in increasing them, owing to the burden of a guilty conscience, the penalties of the law and the hatred of one’s fellows? Yet nevertheless some men indulge without limit their avarice, ambition and love of power, lust, gluttony and those other desires, which illgotten gains can never diminish but rather must inflame the more; insomuch that they appear proper subjects for restraint rather than for reformation.

Men of sound natures, therefore, are summoned by the voice of true reason to justice, equity and honesty. For one without eloquence or resources dishonesty is not good policy, since it is difficult for such a man to succeed in his designs, or to make good his success when once achieved. On the other hand, for the rich and clever generous conduct seems more in keeping, and liberality wins them affection and good will, the surest means to a life of peace; especially as there really is no motive for transgressing:

since the desires that spring from nature are easily gratified without doing any man wrong, while those that are imaginary ought to be resisted, for they set their affections upon nothing that is really wanted; while there is more loss inherent in Injustice itself than there is profit in the gains it brings. Hence Justice also cannot correctly be said to be desirable in and for itself; it is so because it is so highly productive of gratification. For esteem and affection are gratifying, because they render life safer and fuller of pleasure. Hence we hold that Unrighteousness is to be avoided not simply on account of the disadvantages that result from being unrighteous, but even far more because when it dwells in a man's heart it never suffers him to breathe freely or know a moment's rest.

"If then even the glory of the Virtues, on which all the other philosophers love to expatiate so eloquently, has in the last resort no meaning unless it be based on pleasure, whereas pleasure is the only thing that is intrinsically attractive and alluring, it cannot be doubted that pleasure is the one supreme and final Good and that a life of happiness is nothing else than a life of pleasure.

¹¹ "The doctrine thus firmly established has corollaries which I will briefly expound.

1. The Ends of Goods and Evils themselves, that is, pleasure and pain, are not open to mistake; where people go wrong is in not knowing what things are productive of pleasure and pain.
2. Again, we aver that mental pleasures and pains arise out of bodily ones (and therefore I allow your contention¹² that any Epicureans who think otherwise put themselves out of court; and I am aware that many do, though not those who can speak with authority); but although men do experience mental pleasure that is agreeable and mental pain that is annoying, yet both of these we assert arise out of and are based upon bodily sensations.
3. Yet we maintain that this does not preclude mental pleasures and pains from being much more intense than those of the body; since the body can feel only what is present to it at the moment, whereas the mind is also cognizant of the past and of the future. For granting that pain of body is equally painful, yet our sensation of pain can be enormously increased by the belief that some evil of unlimited magnitude and duration threatens to befall us hereafter. And the same consideration may be transferred to pleasure: a pleasure is greater if not accompanied by any apprehension of evil.

This therefore clearly appears, that intense mental pleasure or distress contributes more to our happiness or misery than a bodily pleasure or pain of equal duration.

4. But we do not agree that when pleasure is withdrawn uneasiness at once ensues, unless the pleasure happens to have been replaced by a pain: while on the other hand one is glad to lose a pain even though no active sensation of pleasure comes in its place: a fact that serves to show how great a pleasure is the mere absence of pain.
5. But just as we are elated by the anticipation of good things, so we are delighted by their recollection. Fools are tormented by the memory of former evils; wise men have the delight of renewing in graceful remembrance the blessings of the past. We have the power both to obliterate our misfortunes in an almost perpetual forgetfulness and to summon up pleasant and agreeable memories of our successes. But when we fix our mental vision closely on the events of the past, then sorrow or gladness ensues according as these were evil or good.

"Here is indeed a royal road to happiness — open, simple, and direct! For clearly man can have no greater good than complete freedom from pain and sorrow coupled with the enjoyment of the highest bodily and mental pleasures. Notice then how the theory embraces every possible enhancement of life, every aid to the attainment of that Chief Good

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This chapter appears to be an unintelligent transcript of a summary of the Epicurean answers to the following Cyrenaic criticisms:

1. pleasure is sometimes rejected, owing to mental perversion,
2. all pleasure is not bodily,
3. bodily pleasures are stronger than mental ones,
4. absence of pain is not pleasure,
5. memory and anticipation of pleasure are not real pleasures.

¹² See § 25 above.

which is our object. Epicurus, the man whom you denounce as a voluptuary, cries aloud that no one can live pleasantly without living wisely, honourably and justly, and no one wisely, honourably and justly without living pleasantly.

For a city rent by faction cannot prosper, nor a house whose masters are at strife; much less then can a mind divided against itself and filled with inward discord taste any particle of pure and liberal pleasure. But one who is perpetually swayed by conflicting and incompatible counsels and desires can know no peace or calm.

Why, if the pleasantness of life is diminished by the more serious bodily diseases, how much more must it be diminished by the diseases of the mind! But extravagant and imaginary desires, for riches, fame, power, and also for licentious pleasures, are nothing but mental diseases. Then, too, there are grief, trouble and sorrow, which gnaw the heart and consume it with anxiety, if men fail to realize that the mind need feel no pain unconnected with some pain of body, present or to come. Yet there is no foolish man but is afflicted by some one of these diseases; therefore there is no foolish man that is not unhappy.

Moreover, there is death, the stone of Tantalus ever hanging over men's heads; and superstition, that poisons and destroys all peace of mind. Besides, they do not recollect their past nor enjoy their present blessings; they merely look forward to those of the future, and as these are of necessity uncertain, they are consumed with agony and terror; and the climax of their torment is when they perceive too late that all their dreams of wealth or station, power or fame, have come to nothing. For they never attain any of the pleasures, the hope of which inspired them to undergo all their arduous toils.

Or look again at others, petty, narrow-minded men, or confirmed pessimists, or spiteful, envious, illtempered creatures, unsociable, abusive, brutal; others again enslaved to the follies of love, impudent or reckless, wanton, headstrong and yet irresolute, always changing their minds. Such failings render their lives one unbroken round of misery. The conclusion is that no foolish man can be happy, nor any wise man fail to be happy. This is a truth that we establish far more conclusively than do the Stoics. For they maintain that nothing is good save that vague phantom which they entitle Moral Worth, a title more splendid than substantial; and say that Virtue resting on this Moral Worth has no need of pleasure, but is herself her own sufficient happiness.

“At the same time this Stoic doctrine can be stated in a form which we do not object to, and indeed ourselves endorse. For Epicurus thus presents his Wise Man who is always happy: his desires are kept within bounds; death he disregards; he has a true conception, untainted by fear, of the Divine nature; he does not hesitate to depart from life, if that would better his condition. Thus equipped he enjoys perpetual pleasure, for there is no moment when the pleasures he experiences do not outbalance the pains; since he remembers the past with gratitude, grasps the present with a full realization of its pleasantness, and does not rely upon the future; he looks forward to it, but finds his true enjoyment in the present. Also he is entirely free from the vices that I instanced a few moments ago, and he derives no inconsiderable pleasure from comparing his own existence with the life of the foolish. More, any pains that the Wise Man may encounter are never so severe but that he has more cause for gladness than for sorrow.

Again, it is a fine saying of Epicurus that ‘the Wise Man is but little interfered with by fortune: the great concerns of life, the things that matter, are controlled by his own wisdom and reason’; and that ‘no greater pleasure could be derived from a life of infinite duration than is actually afforded by this existence which we know to be finite.’ Logic, on which your school lays such stress, he held to be of no effect either as a guide to conduct or as an aid to thought. Natural Philosophy he deemed allimportant. This science¹³ explains to us the meaning of terms, the nature of predication,

¹³ Epicurus discarded the orthodox Logic (cp. § 22), but attacked some of its problems in the light of his Natural Philosophy: e.g. denying necessity in Nature, he denied the Law of the Excluded Middle (*Academica* 2.97, and see W. M. L. Hutchinson, *de Finibus* p234). The ‘criterion’ or test of truth he treated under the head of ‘Canonic’ (κανν, regula, a measuringrod). Being based on his theory of sensation (§ 21), ‘Canonic’ was ranged under ‘Physic’ (Diogenes Laertius, 10.30). [*a*] It made the senses infallible, and the sole source of knowledge; and it gave rules for testing

and the law of consistency and contradiction; secondly, a thorough knowledge of the facts of nature relieves us of the burden of superstition, frees us from fear of death, and shields us against the disturbing effects of ignorance, which is often in itself a cause of terrifying apprehensions; lastly, to learn what nature's real requirements are improves the moral character also. Besides, it is only by firmly grasping a well-established scientific system, observing the Rule or Canon that has fallen as it were from heaven so that all men may know it — only by making that hope always to stand fast in our belief, unshaken by the eloquence of any man.

On the other hand, without a full understanding of the world of nature it is impossible to maintain the truth of our sense-perceptions. Further, every mental presentation has its origin in sensation: so that no certain knowledge will be possible, unless all sensations are true, as the theory of Epicurus teaches that they are. Those who deny the validity of sensation and say that nothing can be perceived, having excluded the evidence of the senses, are unable even to expound their own argument. Besides, by abolishing knowledge and science they abolish all possibility of rational life and action. Thus Natural Philosophy supplies courage to face the fear of death; resolution to resist the terrors of religion; peace of mind, for it removes all ignorance of the mysteries of nature; self-control, for it explains the nature of the desires and distinguishes their different kinds; and, as I showed just now, the Canon or Criterion of Knowledge, which Epicurus also established, gives a method of discerning truth from falsehood.

“There remains a topic that is preeminently germane to this discussion, I mean the subject of Friendship. Your school maintains that if pleasure be the Chief Good, friendship will cease to exist. Now Epicurus's pronouncement about friendship is that of all the means to happiness that wisdom has devised, none is greater, none more fruitful, none more delightful than this. Nor did he only commend this doctrine by his eloquence, but far more by the example of his life and conduct. How great a thing such friendship is, is shown by the mythical stories of antiquity. Review the legends from the remotest ages, and, copious and varied as they are, you will barely find in them three pairs of friends, beginning with Theseus and ending with Orestes. Yet Epicurus in a single house and that a small one maintained a whole company of friends, united by the closest sympathy and affection; and this still goes on in the Epicurean school. But to return to our subject, for there is no need of personal instances:

I notice that the topic of friendship has been treated by Epicureans in three ways.

1. Some have denied that pleasures affecting our friends are in themselves to be desired by us in the same degree as we desire our own pleasures. This doctrine is thought by some critics to undermine the foundations of friendship; however, its supporters defend their position, and in my opinion have no difficulty in making good their ground. They argue that friendship can no more be sundered from pleasure than can the virtues, which we have discussed already. A solitary, friendless life must be beset by secret dangers and alarms. Hence reason itself advises the acquisition of friends; their possession gives confidence, and a firmly rooted hope of winning pleasure.

And just as hatred, jealousy and contempt are hindrances to pleasure, so friendship is the most trustworthy preserver and also creator of pleasure alike for our friends and for ourselves. It affords us enjoyment in the present, and it inspires us with hopes for the near and distant future. Thus it is not possible to secure uninterrupted gratification in life without friendship, nor yet to preserve friendship itself unless we love our friends as much as ourselves. Hence this unselfishness does occur in friendship, while also friendship is closely linked with pleasure. For we rejoice in our friends' joy as much as in our own, and are equally pained by their sorrows.

Therefore the Wise Man will feel exactly the same towards his friend as he does towards himself, and will exert himself as much for his friend's pleasure as he would for his own. All that has been said about the essential connexion of the virtues with pleasure must be repeated about friendship. Epicurus well said (I give almost his exact words): ‘The same creed that has given us courage to overcome all fear of everlasting or long-enduring evil hereafter, has discerned that friendship is our strongest safeguard in this present term of life.’

the validity of inference from sensation, which are a crude adumbration of a Logic of Induction.

2. Other Epicureans though by no means lacking in insight are a little less courageous in defying the opprobrious criticisms of the Academy. They fear that if we hold friendship to be desirable only for the pleasure that it affords to ourselves, it will be thought that it is crippled altogether. They therefore say that the first advances and overtures, and the original inclination to form an attachment, are prompted by the desire for pleasure, but that when the progress of the intercourse has led to intimacy, the relationship blossoms into an affection strong enough to make us love our friends for their own sake, even though no practical advantage accrues from their friendship. Does not familiarity endear to us localities, temples, cities, gymnasia and playing-grounds, horses and hounds, gladiatorial shows and fights with wild beasts? Then how much more natural and reasonable that this should be able to happen in our intercourse with our fellowmen!
3. The third view is that wise men have made a sort of compact to love their friends no less than themselves. We can understand the possibility of this, and we often see it happen. Clearly no more effective means to happiness could be found than such an alliance.

“All these considerations go to prove not only that the theory of friendship is not embarrassed by the identification of the Chief Good with pleasure, but also that without this no foundation for friendship whatsoever can be found.

“If then the doctrine I have set forth is clearer and more luminous than daylight itself; if it is derived entirely from Nature’s source; if my whole discourse relies throughout for confirmation on the unbiased and unimpeachable evidence of the senses; if lisping infants, nay even dumb animals, prompted by Nature’s teaching, almost find voice to proclaim that there is no welfare but pleasure, no hardship but pain — and their judgment in these matters is neither sophisticated nor biased — ought we not to feel the greatest gratitude to him who caught this utterance of Nature’s voice, and grasped its import so firmly and so fully that he has guided all sane-minded men into the paths of peace and happiness, calmness and repose? You are pleased to think him uneducated. The reason is that he refused to consider any education worth the name that did not help to school us in happiness.

Was he to spend his time, as you encourage Triarius and me to do, in perusing poets, who give us nothing solid and useful, but merely childish amusement? Was he to occupy himself like Plato with music and geometry, arithmetic and astronomy, which starting from false premises cannot be true, and which moreover if they were true would contribute nothing to make our lives pleasanter and therefore better? Was he, I say, to study arts like these, and neglect the master art, so difficult and correspondingly so fruitful, the art of living? No! Epicurus was not uneducated: the real philistines are those who ask us to go on studying till old age the subjects that we ought to be ashamed not to have learnt in boyhood.” Thus concluding, he added: “I have explained my own view, but solely with the object of learning what your verdict is. I have never hitherto had a satisfactory opportunity of hearing it.”

The Loeb Editor’s Notes:

Thayer’s Note:

CHAPTER 4

Book II

Upon this they both looked at me, and signified their readiness to hear me. So I began: "First of all, I beg of you not to imagine that I am going to deliver you a formal lecture, like a professional philosopher. That is a procedure which even in the case of philosophers I have never very much approved. Socrates, who is entitled to be styled the father of philosophy, never did anything of the sort. It was the method of his contemporaries the Sophists, as they were called. It was one of the Sophists, Gorgias of Leontini, who first ventured in an assembly to 'invite a question,' that is, to ask anyone to state what subject he desired to hear discussed. A bold undertaking, indeed, I should call it a piece of effrontery, had not this custom later on passed over into our own school.

But we read how Socrates made fun of the aforesaid Gorgias, and the rest of the Sophists also, as we can learn from Plato. His own way was to question his interlocutors and by a process of cross-examination to elicit their opinions, so that he might express his own views by way of rejoinder to their answers. This practice was abandoned by his successors, but was afterwards revived by Arcesilas, who made it a rule that those who wished to hear him should not ask him questions but should state their own opinions; and when they had done so he argued against them. But whereas the pupils of Arcesilas did their best to defend their own position, with the rest of the philosophers the student who has put a question is then silent; and indeed this is nowadays the custom even in the Academy. The would-be learner says, for example, 'The Chief Good in my opinion is pleasure,' and the contrary is then maintained in a formal discourse; so that it is not hard to realize that those who say they are of a certain opinion do not actually hold the view they profess, but want to hear what can be argued against it.

We are adopting a more profitable mode of procedure, for Torquatus has not only told us his own opinion but also his reasons for holding it. Still, for my part, though I enjoyed his long discourse very much, I believe all the same that it is better to stop at point after point, and make out what each person is willing to admit and what he denies, and then to draw such inferences as one desires from these admissions and so arrive at one's conclusion. When the exposition goes rushing on like a mountain stream in spate, it carries along with it a vast amount of miscellaneous material, but there is nothing one can take hold of or rescue from the flood; there is no point at which one can stem the torrent of oratory.

"However, in philosophical investigation a methodical and systematic discourse must always begin by formulating a preamble like that which occurs in certain forms of process at law, 'The issue shall be as follows'; so that the parties

to the debate may be agreed as to what the subject is about which they are debating.

This rule is laid down by Plato in the *Phaedrus*,¹ and it was approved by Epicurus, who realized that it ought to be followed in every discussion. But he failed to see what this involved. For he says that he does not hold with giving a definition of the thing in question; yet without this it is sometimes impossible for the disputants to agree what the subject under discussion is; as, for example, in the case of the very question we are now debating. We are trying to discover the End of Goods; but how can we possibly know what the nature of this is, without comparing notes as to what we mean, in the phrase 'End of Goods,' by the term 'End' and also by the term 'Good' itself?

Now this process of disclosing latent meanings, of revealing what a particular thing is, is the process of definition; and you yourself now and then unconsciously employed it. For you repeatedly defined this very notion of End or final or ultimate aim as 'that to which all right actions are a means while it is not itself a means to anything else.' Excellent so far. Very likely had occasion arisen you would have defined the Good itself, either as 'the naturally desirable,' or 'the beneficial,' or 'the delightful,' or just 'that which we like.' Well then, if you don't mind, as you do not entirely disapprove of definition, and indeed practise it when it suits your purpose, I should be glad if you would now define pleasure, the thing which is the subject of the whole of our present inquiry."

"Dear me," cried Torquatus, "who is there who does not know what pleasure is?" Who needs a definition to assist him to understand it?" "I should say that I myself was such a person," I replied, "did I not believe that as a matter of fact I do fully understand the nature of pleasure, and possess a well-founded conception and comprehension of it. As it is, I venture to assert that Epicurus himself does not know what pleasure is, but is uncertain about it. He is always harping on the necessity of carefully sifting out the meaning underlying the terms we employ, and yet he occasionally fails to understand what is the import of the term 'pleasure,' I mean, what is the notion that corresponds to the term."

Torquatus laughed. "Come, that is a good joke," he said, "that the author of the doctrine that pleasure is the End of things desirable, the final and ultimate Good, should actually not know what manner of thing pleasure itself is!" "Well," I replied, "either Epicurus does not know what pleasure is, or the rest of mankind all the world over do not." "How so?" he asked. "Because the universal opinion is that pleasure is a sensation actively stimulating the percipient sense and diffusing over it a certain agreeable feeling."

"What then?" he replied; "does not Epicurus recognize pleasure in your sense?" "Not always," said I; "now and then, I admit, he recognizes it only too fully; for he solemnly avows that he cannot even understand what Good there can be or where it can be found, apart from that which is derived from food and drink, the delight of the ears, and the grosser forms of gratification. Do I misrepresent his words?" "Just as if I were ashamed of all that," he cried, "or unable to explain the sense in which it is spoken!" "Oh," said I, "I haven't the least doubt you can explain it with ease. And you have no reason to be ashamed of sharing the opinions of a Wise Man—who stands alone, so far as I am aware, in venturing to arrogate to himself that title. For I do not suppose that Metrodorus himself claimed to be a Wise Man, though he did not care to refuse the compliment when the name was bestowed upon him by Epicurus; while the famous Seven of old received their appellation not by their own votes, but by the universal suffrage of mankind."

Still, for the present I take it for granted that in the utterance in question Epicurus undoubtedly recognizes the same meaning of 'pleasure' as everyone else. Every one uses the Greek word *hēdonē* and the Latin *voluptas* to mean an agreeable and exhilarating stimulation of the sense." "Well then," he asked, "what more do you want?" "I will tell you," I said, "though more for the sake of ascertaining the truth than from any desire to criticize yourself or Epicurus." "I also," he replied, "would much rather learn anything you may have to contribute, than criticize your views." "Do you remember, then," I said, "what Hieronymus of Rhodes pronounces to be the Chief Good, the standard as he conceives it to which all other things should be referred?" "I remember," said he, "that he considers the End to be freedom from pain." "Well," said I, "what is the same philosopher's view about pleasure?"

¹ *Phaedrus* 237B.

"He thinks that pleasure is not desirable in itself." "Then in his opinion to feel pleasure is a different thing from not feeling pain?" "Yes," he said, "and there he is seriously mistaken, since, as I have just shown, the complete removal of pain is the limit of the increase of pleasure." "Oh," I said, "as for the formula 'freedom from pain,' I will consider its meaning later on; but unless you are extraordinarily obstinate you are bound to admit that 'freedom from pain' does not mean the same as 'pleasure.'" "Well, but on this point you will find me obstinate," said he; "for it is as true as any proposition can be." "Pray," said I, "when a man is thirsty, is there any pleasure in the act of drinking?" "That is undeniable," he answered. "Is it the same pleasure as the pleasure of having quenched one's thirst?" "No, it is a different kind of pleasure. For the pleasure of having quenched one's thirst is a 'static' pleasure, but the pleasure of actually quenching it is a 'kinetic' pleasure." "Why then," I asked, "do you call two such different things by the same name?"

"Do you not remember," he replied, "what I said just now, that when all pain has been removed, pleasure may vary in kind but cannot be increased in degree?" "Oh, yes, I remember," said I; "but though your language was quite correct in form, your meaning was far from clear. 'Variation' is a good Latin term; we use it strictly of different colours, but it is applied metaphorically to a number of things that differ: we speak of a varied poem, a varied speech, a varied character, varied fortunes. Pleasure too can be termed varied when it is derived from a number of unlike things producing unlike feelings of pleasure. If this were the variation you spoke of, I could understand the term, just as I understand it without your speaking of it. But I cannot quite grasp what you mean by 'variation' when you say that when we are free from pain we experience the highest pleasure, and that when we are enjoying things that excite a pleasant activity of the senses, we then experience an active or 'kinetic' pleasure that causes a variation of our pleasant sensations, but no increase in the former pleasure that consists in absence of pain—although why you should call this 'pleasure' I cannot make out."

"Well," he asked, "can anything be more pleasant than freedom from pain?" "Still," I replied, "granting there is nothing better (that point I waive for the moment), surely it does not therefore follow that what I may call the negation of pain is the same thing as pleasure?" "Absolutely the same," said he, "indeed the negation of pain is a very intense pleasure, the most intense pleasure possible." "If then," said I, "according to your account the Chief Good consists entirely in feeling no pain, why do you not keep to this without wavering? Why do you not firmly maintain this conception of the Good and no other?"

What need is there to introduce so abandoned a character as Mistress Pleasure into the company of those honourable ladies the Virtues? Her very name is suspect, and lies under a cloud of disrepute—so much so that you Epicureans are fond of telling us that we do not understand what Epicurus means by pleasure. I am a reasonably good-tempered disputant, but for my own part when I hear this assertion (and I have encountered it fairly often), I am sometimes inclined to be a little irritated. Do I not understand the meaning of the Greek word *hēdonē*, the Latin *voluptas*? Pray which of these two languages is it that I am not acquainted with? Moreover how comes it that I do not know what the word means, while all and sundry who have elected to be Epicureans do? As for that, your sect argues very plausibly that there is no need for the aspirant to philosophy to be a scholar at all. And you are as good as your word. Our ancestors brought old Cincinnatus from the plough to be dictator. You ransack the country villages for your assemblage of doubtless respectable but certainly not very learned adherents.

Well, if these gentlemen can understand what Epicurus means, cannot I? I will prove to you that I do. In the first place, I mean the same by 'pleasure' as he does by *hēdonē*. One often has some trouble to discover a Latin word that shall be the precise equivalent of a Greek one; but in this case no search was necessary. No instance can be found of a Latin word that more exactly conveys the same meaning as the corresponding Greek word than does the word *voluptas*. Every person in the world who knows Latin attaches to this word two ideas—that of gladness of mind, and that of a delightful excitation of agreeable feeling in the body. On the one hand there is the character in Trabea who speaks of

‘excessive pleasure of the mind,’² meaning gladness, the same feeling as is intended by the person in Caecilius who describes himself as being ‘glad with every sort of gladness.’ But there is this difference, that the word ‘pleasure’ can denote a mental as well as a bodily feeling (the former a vicious emotion, in the opinion of the Stoics, who define it as ‘elation of the mind under an irrational conviction that it is enjoying some great good’), whereas ‘joy’ and ‘gladness’ are not used of bodily sensation.

However pleasure according to the usage of all who speak good Latin consists in the enjoyment of a delightful stimulation of one of the senses. The term ‘delight’ also you may apply if you like to the mind (‘to delight’ is said of both mind and body, and from it the adjective ‘delightful’ is derived), so long as you understand that between the man who says

So full am I of gladness
That I am all confusion,

and him who says

Now, now my soul with anger burns,

one of whom is transported with gladness and the other tormented with painful emotion, there is the intermediate state:

Though our acquaintanceship is but quite recent,³

where the speaker feels neither gladness nor sorrow; and that similarly between the enjoyment of the most desirable bodily pleasures and the endurance of the most excruciating pains there is the neutral state devoid of either.

“Well, do you think I have properly grasped the meaning of the terms, or do I still require lessons in the use of either Greek or Latin? And even supposing that I do not understand what Epicurus says, still I believe I really have a very clear knowledge of Greek, so that perhaps it is partly his fault for using such unintelligible language. Obscurity is excusable on two grounds: it may be deliberately adopted, as in the case of Heraclitus,

The surname of the Obscure who bore,
So dark his philosophic lore;⁴

or the obscurity may be due to the abstruseness of the subject and not of the style—an instance of this is Plato’s *Timaeus*. But Epicurus, in my opinion, has no intention of not speaking plainly and clearly if he can, nor is he discussing a recondite subject like natural philosophy, nor a technical subject such as mathematics, but a lucid and easy topic, and one that is generally familiar already. And yet you Epicureans do not deny that we understand what pleasure *is*, but what he means by it; which proves not that we do not understand the real meaning of the word, but that Epicurus is speaking an idiom of his own and ignoring our accepted terminology.

For if he means the same as Hieronymus, who holds that the Chief Good is a life entirely devoid of trouble, why does he insist on using the term pleasure, and not rather ‘freedom from pain,’ as does Hieronymus, who understands his own meaning? Whereas if his view is that the End must include kinetic pleasure (for so he describes this vivid sort of pleasure, calling it ‘kinetic’ in contrary with the pleasure of freedom from pain, which is ‘static’ pleasure), what is he really aiming at? For he cannot possibly convince any person who *knows himself*⁵—anyone who has studied his own nature and sensations—that freedom from pain is the same thing as pleasure. This, Torquatus, is to do violence to the senses—this uprooting from our minds our knowledge of the meaning of words ingrained. Who is not aware that

² Cicero quotes the verse also *Tusc.* 4.35 <<http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/cicero/tusc4.shtml#35>> ‘_and *ad Fam.* 2.9.2 <<http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/cicero/fam2.shtml#9>>’ (where he also refers to the following phrase from Caecilius Statius): it appears to have run ‘ego voluptatem animi nimiam summum esse errorem arbitror.’

³ The first quotation is from an unknown comic writer; the second from Caecilius Statius, who makes a ‘heavy father’ say ‘Nunc enim demum mihi animus ardet, nunc meum cor cumulat ira’ (quoted in full by Cicero *pro Cael.* 37; the third is from Terence, *Heautontim.*, l. 1, cf. I § 3 above: Chremes’ mild interest in his new neighbour, the Self-Tormentor, is rather oddly instanced as an illustration of the neutral state of emotion intermediate between mental pleasure and pain.

⁴ The quotation is possibly from Lucilius.

⁵ A reminiscence of the maxim *γνθι σεαυτον*, ‘know thyself,’ inscribed on the temple of Apollo at Delphi.

the world of experience contains these three states of feeling: first, the enjoyment of pleasure; second, the sensation of pain; and third, which is my own condition and doubtless also yours at the present moment, the absence of both pleasure and pain? Pleasure is the feeling of a man eating a good dinner, pain that of one being broken on the rack; but do you really not see the intermediate between those two extremes lies a vast multitude of persons who are feeling neither gratification nor pain?"

"I certainly do not," said he; "I maintain that all who are without pain are enjoying pleasure, and what is more the highest form of pleasure." "Then you think that a man who, not being himself thirsty, mixes a drink for another, feels the same pleasure as the thirsty man who drinks it?"

At this Torquatus exclaimed: "A truce to question and answer, if you do not mind. I told you from the beginning that I preferred continuous speeches. I foresaw this kind of thing exactly; I knew we should come to logic-chopping and quibbling." "Then," said I, "would you sooner we adopted the rhetorical and not the dialectical mode of debate?" "Why," he cried, "just as if continuous discourse were proper for orators only, and not for philosophers as well!" "That is the view of Zeno the Stoic," I rejoined; "he used to say that the faculty of speech in general falls into two departments, as Aristotle had already laid down; and that Rhetoric was like the palm of the hand, Dialectic like the closed fist; because rhetoricians employ an expansive style, and dialecticians one that is more compressed. So I will defer to your wish, and will speak if I can in the rhetorical manner, but with the rhetoric of the philosophers, not with the sort which we use in the law-courts. The latter, as it employed a popular style, must necessarily sometimes be a little lacking in subtlety.

Epicurus however, Torquatus, in his contempt for dialectic, which comprises at once the entire science of discerning the essence of things, of judging their qualities, and of conducting a systematic and logical argument,—Epicurus, I say, makes havoc of his exposition. He entirely fails, in my opinion at all events, to impart scientific precision to the doctrines he desires to convey. Take for example the particular tenet that we have just been discussing. The Chief Good is pleasure, say you Epicureans. Well then, you must explain what pleasure is; otherwise it is impossible to make clear the subject under discussion. Had Epicurus cleared up the meaning of pleasure, he would not have fallen into such confusion. Either he would have upheld pleasure in the same sense as Aristippus, that is, an agreeable and delightful excitation of the sense, which is what even dumb cattle, if they could speak, would call pleasure; or, if he preferred to use an idiom of his own, instead of speaking the language of the

Danaans one and all, men of Mycenae,
Scions of Athens,⁶

and the rest of the Greeks invoked in these anapaests, he might have confined the name of pleasure to this state of freedom from pain, and despised pleasure as Aristippus understands it; or else, if he approved of both sorts of pleasure, as in fact he does, then he ought to combine together pleasure and absence of pain, and profess *two* ultimate Goods.

Many distinguished philosophers have as a matter of fact thus interpreted the ultimate good as composite. For instance, Aristotle combined the exercise of virtue with well-being lasting throughout a complete lifetime; Callipho united pleasure with moral worth; Diodorus to moral worth added freedom from pain. Epicurus would have followed their example, had he coupled the view we are now discussing, which as it is belongs to Hieronymus, with the old doctrine of Aristippus. For there is a real difference of opinion between them, and accordingly each sets up his own separate End; and as both speak unimpeachable Greek, Aristippus, who calls pleasure the Chief Good, does not count absence of pain as pleasure, while Hieronymus, who makes the Chief Good absence of pain, never employs the name pleasure to denote this negation of pain, and in fact does not reckon pleasure among things desirable at all.

"For you must not suppose it is merely a verbal distinction: the things themselves are different. To be without pain is one thing, to feel pleasure another; yet you Epicureans try to combine these quite dissimilar feelings—not merely under

⁶ From some tragedy unknown.

a single name (for that I could more easily tolerate), but as actually being a single thing, instead of really two; which is absolutely impossible. Epicurus, approving both sorts of pleasure, ought to have recognized both sorts; as he really does in fact, though he does not distinguish them in words. In a number of passages where he is commending that real pleasure which all of us call by the same name, he goes so far as to say that he cannot even imagine any Good that is not connected with pleasure of the kind intended by Aristippus. This is the language that he holds it discourse dealing solely with the topic of the Chief Good. Then there is another treatise containing his most important doctrines in a compendious form, in which we are told he uttered the very oracles of Wisdom. Here he writes the following words, with which you, Torquatus, are of course familiar (for every good Epicurean has got by heart the master's *Kuriai Doxai* or Authoritative Doctrines, since these brief aphorisms or maxims are held to be of sovereign efficacy for happiness). So I will ask you kindly to notice whether I translate this maxim correctly:

'If the things in which sensualists find pleasure could deliver them from the fear of the gods and of death and pain, and could teach them to set bounds to their desires, we should have no reason to blame them, since on every hand they would be abundantly supplied with pleasures, and on no side would be exposed to any pain or grief, which are the sole evil.' "

At this point Triarius could contain himself no longer. "Seriously now, Torquatus," he broke out, "does Epicurus really say that?" (For my own part, I believe that he knew it to be true, but wanted to hear Torquatus admit it.) Torquatus, nothing daunted, answered with complete assurance: "Certainly, those are his very words. But you don't perceive his meaning." "Oh," I retorted, "if he means one thing and says another, I never shall understand his meaning. But what he understands he expresses clearly enough. If what he here says is that sensualists are not to be blamed provided they are wise men, he is talking nonsense. He might as well say that parricides are not to be blamed provided they are free from avarice and from fear of the gods, of death and pain. Even so, what is the point of granting the sensual any saving clause? Why imagine certain fictitious persons who, though living sensually, would not be blamed by the wisest of philosophers for their sensuality, provided they avoided other faults?

All the same, Epicurus, would not you blame sensualists for the very reason that their one object in life is the pursuit of pleasure of any and every sort, especially as according to you the highest pleasure is to feel no pain? Yet we shall find profligates in the first place so devoid of religious scruples that they will 'eat the food on the paten,'⁷ and secondly so fearless of death as to be always quoting the lines from the *Hymnis*:⁸

Enough for me six months of life, the seventh to Hell I pledge!

Or if they want an antidote to pain, out comes from their phial the great Epicurean panacea, 'Short if it's strong, light if it's long.'⁹ Only one point I can't make out: how can a man at once be a sensualist and keep his desires within bounds?

"What then is the point of saying 'I should have no fault to find with them if they kept their desires within bounds'? That is tantamount to saying 'I should not blame the profligate if they were not profligate.' He might as well say he would not blame the dishonest either, if they were upright men. Here is our rigid moralist maintaining that sensuality is not in itself blameworthy! And I profess, Torquatus, on the hypothesis that pleasure is the Chief Good he is perfectly justified in thinking so. I should be sorry to picture to myself, as you are so fond of doing, debauchees who are sick at table, have to be carried home from dinner-parties, and next day gorge themselves again before they have recovered from the effects of the night before; men who, as the saying goes, have never seen either sunset or sunrise; men who run through their inheritance and sink into penury. None of us supposes that profligates of that description live pleasantly. No, but men of taste and refinement, with first-rate chefs and confectioners, fish, birds, game and the like of the choicest; careful of their digestion; with

Wine in flask

Decanted from a new-broach'd cask, . . .

⁷ Apparently proverbial for shameless gluttony. The patella was used for offerings of food made to the household gods.

⁸ A comedy by Caecilius Statius, translated from the Greek of Menander.

⁹ Cf. I § 40.

as Lucilius has it,

Wine of tang bereft,
All harshness in the strainer left;

with the accompaniment of dramatic performances and their usual sequel, the pleasures apart from which Epicurus, as he loudly proclaims, does not what Good is; give them also beautiful boys to wait upon them, with drapery, silver, Corinthian bronzes, and the scene of the feast, the banqueting-room, all in keeping; take profligates of this sort; that these live well or enjoy happiness I will never allow.

The conclusion is, not that pleasure is not pleasure but that pleasure is not the Chief Good. The famous Laelius, who had been a pupil of Diogenes the Stoic in his youth and later of Panaetius, was not called 'the Wise' because he was no judge of good eating (for a wise mind is not necessarily incompatible with a nice palate), but because he set little store by it.

Dinner of herbs, how all the earth
Derides thee and ignores thy worth!
Tho' Laelius, our old Roman sage,
Shouted thy praises to the age,
Our gourmands one by one arraigning.

Bravo, Laelius, 'sage' indeed. How true the lines:
'O bottomless gulf of gluttony,
Publius Gallonius,' cried he,
'You're a poor devil, truth to tell,
Who never in your life dined well,
No, never once, although you pay
A fortune for a fish away,
Lobster or sturgeon Brobdingnagian.'¹⁰

The speaker is a man who, setting no value on pleasure, declares that he who makes pleasure his all in all cannot dine well. Observe, he does not say Gallonius never dined pleasantly (which would be untrue), but never well. So strict and severe is the distinction he draws between pleasure and good. The conclusion is that though all who dine well dine pleasantly, yet he who dines pleasantly does not necessarily dine well. Laelius always dined well.

What does 'well' mean? Lucilius shall say,

Well-cook'd, well-season'd,
ah, but now the principal dish:

with a deal
Of honest talk,

and the result:

a pleasant meal;

for he came to dinner that with mind at ease he might satisfy the wants of Nature. Laelius is right therefore in denying that Gallonius ever dined well, right in calling him unhappy, and that too although all his thoughts were centred on

¹⁰ This passage of Lucilius is alluded to by Horace *Sat.* 2.2.46, where it appears that Gallonius was an auctioneer, notorious for having introduced acipenser (sturgeon?) to Roman tables.

the pleasures of the table. No one will deny that he dined pleasantly. Then why not 'well'? Because 'well' implies rightly, respectably, worthily; whereas Gallonius dined wrongly, disreputably, basely; therefore he did not dine well. It was not that Laelius thought his 'dinner of herbs' more palatable than Gallonius's sturgeon, but that he disregarded the pleasures of the palate altogether; and this he could not have done, had he made the Chief Good consist in pleasure.

"Consequently you are bound to discard pleasure, not merely if you are to guide your conduct aright, but even if you are to be able consistently to use the language of respectable people. Can we possibly therefore call a thing the Chief Good with regard to living, when we feel we cannot call it so even in regard to dining? But how says our philosopher? 'The desires are of three kinds, natural and necessary, natural but not necessary, neither natural nor necessary.' To begin with, this is a clumsy division; it makes three classes when there are really only two. This is not dividing but hacking in pieces. Thinkers trained in the science which Epicurus despised usually put it thus: 'The desires are of two kinds, natural and imaginary;¹¹ natural desires again fall into two subdivisions, necessary and not necessary.' That would have rounded it off properly. It is a fault in division to reckon a species as a genus.

Still, do not let us stickle about form. Epicurus despises the niceties of dialectic; his style neglects distinctions; we must humour him in this, provided that his meaning is correct. But for my own part I cannot cordially approve, I merely tolerate, a philosopher who talks of setting bounds to the desires. Is it possible for desire to be kept within bounds? It ought to be destroyed, uprooted altogether. On your principle there is no form of desire whose possessor could not be morally approved. He will be a miser—within limits; an adulterer—in moderation; and a sensualist to correspond. What sort of a philosophy is this, that instead of dealing wickedness its death-blow, is satisfied with moderating our vices? Albeit I quite approve the substance of this classification; it is the form of it to which I take exception. Let him speak of the first class as 'the needs of nature,' and keep the term 'desire' for another occasion, to be put on trial for its life when he comes to deal with Avarice, Intemperance, and all the major vices.

"This classification of the desires is then a subject on which Epicurus is fond of enlarging. Not that I find fault with him for that; we expect so great and famous a philosopher to maintain his dogmas boldly. But he often seems unduly eager to approve of pleasure in the common acceptance of the term, for this occasionally lands him in a very awkward position. It conveys the impression that there is no action so base but that he would be ready to commit it for the sake of pleasure, provided he were guaranteed against detection. Afterwards, put to the blush by this conclusion (for the force of natural instinct after all is overwhelming), he turns for refuge to the assertion that nothing can enhance the pleasure of freedom from pain. 'Oh but,' we urge, 'your *static* condition of feeling no pain is not what is termed pleasure at all.'—'I don't trouble about the name,' he replies.—'Well, but the thing itself is absolutely different.'—'Oh, I can find hundreds and thousands of people less precise and troublesome than yourselves, who will be glad to accept as true anything I like to teach them.'—'Then why do we not go a step further and argue that, if not to feel pain is the highest pleasure, therefore not to feel pleasure is the greatest pain? Why does not this hold good?'—'Because the opposite of pain is not pleasure but absence of pain.'

"But fancy his failing to see how strong a proof it is that the sort of pleasure, without which he declares he has no idea at all what Good means (and he defines it in detail as the pleasure of the palate, of the ears, and subjoins the other kinds of pleasure, which cannot be specified without an apology),—he fails, I say, to see that this, the sole Good which our strict and serious philosopher recognizes, is actually not even desirable, inasmuch as on his own showing we feel no need of this sort of pleasure, so long as we are free from pain! How inconsistent this is!

If only Epicurus had studied Definition and Division, if he understood the meaning of Predication or even the customary use of terms, he would never have fallen into such a quandary. As it is, you see what he does. He calls a thing pleasure that no one ever called by that name before; he confounds two things that are distinct. The 'kinetic' sort of pleasure (for so he terms the delightful and so to speak sweet-flavoured pleasures we are considering) at one moment

¹¹ See note on *Bk. I* § 45.

he so disparages that you would think you were listening to Manius Curius, while at another moment he so extols it that he tells us he is incapable even of imagining what other good there can be. Now that is language that does not call for a philosopher to answer it,—it ought to be put down by the police. His morality is at fault, and not only his logic. He does not censure profligacy, provided it be free from unbridled desire, and from fear of consequences. Here he seems to be making a bid for converts: the would-be roué need only turn philosopher.

“For the origin of the Chief Good he goes back, I understand, to the birth of living things. As soon as an animal is born, it delights in pleasure and seeks it as a good, but shuns pain as an evil. Creatures as yet uncorrupted are according to him the best judges of Good and Evil. That is the position both as you expounded it and as it is expressed in the phraseology of your school. What a mass of fallacies! Which kind of pleasure will it be that guides a mewling infant to distinguish between the Chief Good and Evil, ‘static’ pleasure or ‘kinetic’?—since we learn our language, heaven help us! from Epicurus. If the ‘static’ kind, the natural instinct is clearly towards self-preservation, as we agree; but if the ‘kinetic,’ and this is after all what you maintain, then no pleasure will be too base to be accepted; and also our new-born animal in this case does not find its earliest motive in the highest form of pleasure, since this on your showing consists in absence of pain.

For proof of this, however, Epicurus cannot have gone to children nor yet to animals, which according to him hold a mirror up to nature; he could hardly say that natural instinct guides the young to desire the pleasure of freedom from pain. This cannot excite appetite; the ‘static’ condition of feeling no pain exerts no driving-power, supplies no impulse to the will (so that Hieronymus also is wrong here); it is the positive sensation of pleasure and delight that furnishes a motive. Accordingly Epicurus’s standing argument to prove that pleasure is naturally desired is that infants and animals are attracted by the ‘kinetic’ sort of pleasure, not the ‘static’ kind which consists merely in freedom from pain. Surely then it is inconsistent to say that natural instinct starts from one sort of pleasure, but that the Chief Good is found in another.

“As for the lower animals, I set no value on their verdict. Their instincts may be wrong, although we cannot say they are perverted. One stick has been bent and twisted on purpose, another has grown crooked; similarly the nature of wild animals, though not indeed corrupted by bad education, is corrupt of its own nature. Again in the infant the natural instinct is not to seek pleasure; its instinct is merely towards self-regard, self-preservation and protection from injury. Every living creature, from the moment of birth, loves itself and all its members; primarily this self-regard embraces the two main divisions of mind and body, and subsequently the parts of each of these. Both mind and body have certain excellences; of these the young animal grows vaguely conscious, and later begins to discriminate, and to seek for the primary endowments of Nature and shun their opposites.

Whether the list of these primary natural objects of desire includes pleasure or not is a much debated question; but to hold that it includes nothing else but pleasure, neither the limbs, nor the senses,¹² nor mental activity, nor bodily integrity nor health, seems to me to be the height of stupidity. And this is the fountain-head from which one’s whole theory of Goods and Evils must necessarily flow. Polemo, and also before him Aristotle, held that the primary objects were the ones I have just mentioned. Thus arose the doctrine of the Old Academy and of the Peripatetics, maintaining that the End of Goods is to live in accordance with Nature, that is, to enjoy the primary gifts of Nature’s bestowal with the accompaniment of virtue. Callipho coupled with virtue pleasure alone; Diodorus freed om from pain. . . . In the case of all the philosophers mentioned, their End of Goods logically follows: with Aristippus it is pleasure pure and simple; with the Stoics, harmony with Nature, which they interpret as meaning virtuous or morally good life, and further explain this as meaning to live with an understanding of the natural course of events, selecting things that are in accordance with Nature and rejecting the opposite.

¹² *i.e.* soundness of the limbs and of the senses.

Thus there are three Ends that do not include moral worth, one that of Aristippus or Epicurus, the second that of Hieronymus, and the third that of Carneades; three that comprise moral goodness together with some additional element, those of Polemo, Callipho and Diodorus; and one theory that is simple, of which Zeno was the author, and which is based entirely on propriety, that is, on moral worth. (As for Pyrrho, Aristo and Erillus, they have long ago been exploded.) All of these but Epicurus were consistent, and made their final ends agree with their first principles,—Aristippus holding the End to be Pleasure, Hieronymus freedom from pain, Carneades the enjoyment of the primary natural objects.

Whereas Epicurus, if in saying that pleasure was the primary object of attraction, he meant pleasure in the sense of Aristippus, ought to have maintained the same ultimate Good as Aristippus; or if he made pleasure in the sense of Hieronymus his Chief Good, should he at the same time have allowed himself to make the former kind of pleasure, that of Aristippus, the primary attraction?

“The fact is that when he says that the verdict of the senses themselves decides pleasure to be good and pain evil, he assigns more authority to the senses than the law allows to us when we sit as judges in private suits. We cannot decide any issue not within our jurisdiction; and there is not really any point in the proviso which judges are fond of adding to their verdicts: ‘if it be a matter within my jurisdiction,’ for if it was not within their jurisdiction, the verdict is equally invalid with the proviso omitted. What does come under the verdict of the senses? Sweetness, sourness, smoothness, roughness, proximity, distance; whether an object is stationary or moving, square or round.

A just decision can therefore only be delivered by Reason, with the aid in the first place of that knowledge of things human and divine, which may rightly claim the title of Wisdom; and secondly with the assistance of the Virtues, which Reason would have to be the mistresses of all things, but you considered as the handmaids and subordinates of the pleasures. After calling all of these into council, she will pronounce first as to Pleasure, that she has no claim, not merely to be enthroned alone in the seat of our ideal Chief Good, but even to be admitted as the associate of Moral Worth. As regards freedom from pain her decision will be the same.

For Carneades will be put out of court, and no theory of the Chief Good will be approved that either includes pleasure or absence of pain, or does not include moral worth. Two views will thus be left. After prolonged consideration of these, either her final verdict will be that there is no Good but moral worth and no Evil but moral baseness, all other things being either entirely unimportant or of so little importance that they are not desirable or to be avoided, but only to be selected or rejected; or else she will prefer the theory which she will recognize as including the full beauty of moral worth, enriched by the addition of the primary natural objects and of a life completed to its perfect span. And her judgment will be all the clearer, if she can first of all settle whether the dispute between these rival theories is one of fact, or turns on verbal differences only.

“Guided by the authority of Reason I will now adopt a similar procedure myself. As far as possible I will narrow the issue, and will assume that all the simple theories, of those who include no admixture of virtue, are to be eliminated from philosophy altogether. First among these comes the system of Aristippus and the Cyrenaic school in general, who did not shrink from finding their Chief Good in pleasure of the sort that excites the highest amount of actively agreeable sensation, and who despised your freedom from pain.

They failed to see that just as the horse is designed by nature for running, the ox for ploughing, and the dog for hunting, so man, as Aristotle observes, is born for two purposes, thought and action: he is as it were a mortal God. The Cyrenaics held on the contrary that this godlike animal came into being, like some dull, half-witted sheep, in order to feed and to enjoy the pleasure of procreation,—a view that seems to me the climax of absurdity.

So much in answer to Aristippus, who considers pleasure in the only sense in which we all of us employ the term to be not merely the highest but the sole pleasure that exists. Your school holds a different view. However, as I said, Aristippus is wrong. Neither man's bodily conformation nor his surpassing mental faculty of reason indicates that he was born for the sole purpose of enjoying pleasure. Nor yet can we listen to Hieronymus, whose Chief Good is the same as is occasionally, or rather only too frequently, upheld by yourselves, freedom from pain. If pain is an evil, to be without this evil is not enough to constitute the Good Life. Let Ennius say if he likes that

Enough, and more, of good
Is his who hath no ill;¹³

but let us reckon happiness not by the avoidance of evil but by the attainment of good. Let us seek it not in the idle acceptance whether of positive delights, like Aristippus, or of freedom from pain, like Hieronymus, but in a life of action or of contemplation.

"The same arguments can be urged against the Chief Good of Carneades, which he advanced less from a desire to adopt it himself than to use it as a weapon in his battle with the Stoics; though it is such that if added to Virtue it may be thought to be of importance and to be likely to augment the sum total of Happiness, which is the one subject of our inquiry. Whereas those who join with Virtue either pleasure, the one thing she values least, or freedom from pain, which even though it is devoid of evil yet is not the Chief Good, make a not very acceptable combination; nor yet can I understand why they go to work in so cautious and niggardly a fashion. You would think they had to purchase the commodity which is to be added to virtue. To begin with they choose the cheapest things they can find to add, and then they each dole out one only, instead of coupling with moral worth all the things initially approved by Nature.

Aristo and Pyrrho thought all these things utterly worthless, and said, for example, that there was absolutely nothing to choose between the most perfect health and the most grievous sickness; and consequently men have long ago quite rightly given up arguing against them. For in insisting upon the unique importance of virtue in such a sense as to rob it of any power of choice among external things and to deny it any starting-point or basis, they destroyed the very virtue they desired to cherish. Again, Erillus, in basing everything on knowledge, fixed his eyes on one definite Good, but this not the greatest Good, nor one that could serve as the guide of life. Accordingly Erillus himself has long ago been set aside; since Chrysippus no one has even troubled to refute him.

"Accordingly your school remains; for there is no coming to grips with the Academics, who affirm nothing positively, and despairing of a knowledge of certain truth, make up their minds to take apparent probability as their guide.

Epicurus however is a more troublesome opponent, because he is a combination of two different sorts of pleasure, and because besides himself and his friends there have been so many later champions of his theory, which somehow or other enlists the support of that least competent but most powerful adherent, the general public. Unless we refute these adversaries, all virtue, all honour, all true merit must be abandoned. Thus, when all the other systems have been discarded, there remains a duel in which the combatants are, not myself and Torquatus, but Virtue and Pleasure. This contest is by no means scouted by so penetrating and so industrious a writer as Chrysippus, who considers that the rivalry between pleasure and virtue is the cardinal issue in the whole question of the Chief Good. My own view is that, if I can succeed in proving the existence of Moral Worth as a thing essentially and for itself desirable, your entire system at once collapses. Accordingly I will begin by defining, with such brevity as the occasion demands, the Nature of Moral Worth; and then, Torquatus, I will proceed to deal with each of your points, unless my memory should happen to fail me.

"By Moral Worth, then, we understand that which is of such a nature that, though devoid of all utility, it can justly be commended in and for itself, apart from any profit or reward. A formal definition such as I have given may do something to indicate its nature; but this is more clearly explained by the general verdict of mankind at large, and by the aims and actions of all persons of high character. Good men do a great many things from which they anticipate no

¹³ From Ennius's tragedy *Hecuba*, cf. Euripides, *Hec.* 627 *κενο λβιτατο τ κατ' μαρ τυγχνει μηδν κακν.*

advantage, solely from the motive of propriety, morality and right. For among the many points of difference between man and the lower animals, the greatest difference is that Nature has bestowed on man the gift of Reason, of an active, vigorous intelligence, able to carry on several operations at the same time with extreme speed, and having, so to speak, a keen scent to discern the causes and effects of things, to draw analogies, combine things separate, connect the future with the present, and survey the entire field of the subsequent course of life. It is Reason moreover that has inspired man with a relish for his kind; she has produced a natural conformity both of language and of habit; she has prompted the individual, starting from friendship and from family affection, to expand his interests, forming social ties first with his fellow-citizens and later with all mankind. She reminds him that, as Plato puts it in his letter to Archytas,¹⁴ man was not born for self alone, but for country and for kindred, claims that leave but a small part of him for himself.

Nature has also engendered in mankind the desire of contemplating truth. This is most clearly manifested in our hours of leisure; when our minds are at ease we are eager to acquire knowledge even of the movements of the heavenly bodies. This primary instinct leads us on to love all truth as such, that is, all that is trustworthy, simple and consistent, and to hate things insincere, false and deceptive, such as cheating, perjury, malice and injustice. Further, Reason possesses an intrinsic element of dignity and grandeur, suited rather to require obedience than to render it, esteeming all the accidents of human fortunes not merely as endurable but also as unimportant; a quality of loftiness and elevation, fearing nothing, submitting to no one, ever unsubdued.

These three kinds of moral goodness being noted, there follows a fourth kind, possessed of equal beauty, and indeed arising out of the other three. This is the principle of order and restraint. From recognizing something analogous to this principle in the beauty and dignity of outward forms, we pass to beauty in the moral sphere of speech and conduct. Each of the three excellences mentioned before contributes something to this fourth one: it dreads rashness; it shrinks from injuring anyone by wanton word or deed; and it fears to do or say anything that may appear unmanly.

“There, Torquatus, is a full, detailed and complete scheme of Moral Worth, a whole of which these four virtues, which you also mentioned, constitute the parts. Yet your Epicurus tells us that he is utterly at a loss to know what nature or qualities are assigned to this Morality by those who make it the measure of the Chief Good. For if Morality be the standard to which all things are referred, while yet they will not allow that pleasure forms any part of it, he declares that they are uttering sounds devoid of sense (those are his actual words), and that he has no notion or perception whatever of any meaning that this term Morality can have attached to it. In common parlance ‘moral’ (honourable)¹⁵ means merely that which ranks high in popular esteem. And popular esteem, says Epicurus, though often in itself more agreeable than certain forms of pleasure, yet is desired simply as a means to pleasure.

Do you realize how vast a difference of opinion this is? Here is a famous philosopher, whose influence has spread not only over Greece and Italy but throughout all barbarian lands as well, protesting that he cannot understand what Moral Worth is, if it does not consist in pleasure; unless indeed it be that which wins the approval and applause of the multitude. For my part I hold that what is popular is often positively base, and that, if ever it is not base, this is only when the multitude happens to applaud something that is right and praiseworthy in and for itself; which even so is not called ‘moral’ (honourable) because it is widely applauded, but because it is of such a nature that even if men were unaware of its existence, or never spoke of it, it would still be worthy of praise for its own beauty and loveliness. Hence Epicurus is compelled by the irresistible force of instinct to say in another passage what you also said just now, that it is impossible to live pleasantly without also living morally (honourably).

What does he mean by ‘morally’ now? The same as ‘pleasantly’? If so, does it amount to saying that it is impossible to live morally unless you—live morally? Or, unless you make public opinion your standard? He means then that he cannot live pleasantly without the approval of public opinion? But what can be baser than to make the conduct of the Wise

¹⁴ Plato, Epistle IX.

¹⁵ Here as elsewhere no translation can convey the double meaning of the word *honestum*, ‘honourable,’ used as an equivalent of *τ καλόν*, ‘the morally beautiful or good.’

Man depend upon the gossip of the foolish? What therefore does he understand by 'moral' in this passage? Clearly, nothing but that which can be rightly praised for its own sake. For if it be praised as being a means to pleasure, what is there creditable about this? You can get pleasure at the provision-dealer's. No,—Epicurus, who esteems Moral Worth so highly as to say that it is impossible to live pleasantly without it, is not the man to identify 'moral' (honourable) with 'popular' and maintain that it is impossible to live pleasantly without popular esteem; he cannot understand 'moral' to mean anything else than that which is right,—that which is in and for itself, independently, intrinsically, and of its own nature praiseworthy.

"This, Torquatus, accounts for the glow of pride with which, as I noticed, you informed us how loudly Epicurus proclaims the impossibility of living pleasantly without living morally, wisely and justly. Your words derived potency from the grandeur of the things that they denoted; you drew yourself up to your full height, and kept stopping and fixing us with your gaze, as if solemnly asseverating that Epicurus does occasionally commend morality and justice. Were those names never mentioned by philosophers we should have no use for philosophy; how well they sounded on your lips! Too seldom does Epicurus speak to us of Wisdom, Courage, Justice, Temperance. Yet it is the love that those great names inspire which has lured the ablest of mankind to devote themselves to philosophical studies.

The sense of sight, says Plato, is the keenest sense we possess, yet our eyes cannot behold Wisdom; could we see her, what passionate love would she awaken! And why is this so? Is it because of her supreme ability and cunning in the art of contriving pleasures? Why is Justice commended? What gave rise to the old familiar saying, 'A man with whom you might play odd and even in the dark'? This proverb strictly applies to the particular case of honesty, but it has this general application, that in all our conduct we should be influenced by the character of the action, not by the presence or absence of a witness.

How weak and ineffectual are the deterrents you put forward,—the torture of a guilty conscience, and the fear of the punishment that offenders incur, or at all events stand in continual dread of incurring in the end! We must not picture our unprincipled man as a poor-spirited coward, tormenting himself about his past misdeeds, and afraid of everything; but as shrewdly calculating profit in all he does, sharp, dexterous, a practised hand, fertile in devices for cheating in secret, without witness or accomplice.

Don't suppose I am speaking of a Lucius Tubulus, who when he sat as praetor to try charges of murder made so little concealment of taking bribes for his verdict that next year the tribune of the plebs, Publius Scaevola, moved in the plebeian assembly for a special inquiry. The bill passed the plebs, and the senate commissioned the consul Gnaeus Caepio to hold the investigation; but Tubulus promptly left the country, and did not venture to stand his trial, so open was his guilt.

"It is not therefore a question of a rascal merely, but of a crafty rascal, like Quintus Pompeius when he disowned the treaty he had made with the Numantines; nor yet of a timid, cowardly knave, but of one who to begin with is deaf to the voice of conscience, which it is assuredly no difficult matter to stifle. The man we call stealthy and secret, so far from betraying his own guilt, will actually make believe to be indignant at the knavery of another; that is what we mean by a cunning old hand.

"I remember assisting at a consultation which Publius Sextilius Rufus held with his friends on the following matter. He had been left heir to Quintus Fadius Gallus. Fadius's will contained a statement that he had requested Sextilius to allow the whole of his estate to pass to his daughter. Sextilius now denied the arrangement, as he could do with impunity, for there was no one to rebut him. Not one of us believed his denial; it was more probable that he should be lying, as his pocket was concerned, than the testator, who had left it in writing that he had made a request which it had been his duty to make. Sextilius actually went on to say that, having sworn to maintain the Voconian law,¹⁶ he would

¹⁶ Presumably a reference to the customary oath to maintain the laws, taken on assuming an office of state. The Voconian law prohibited a woman from being left heir to an estate. It was evaded by bequeathing the estate to a friend who had promised to hand it on to the intended heiress.

not venture to break it, unless his friends thought he ought to do so. I was only a young man, but many of the company were persons of high consideration; and every one of these advised him not to give Fadia more than she was entitled to get under the Voconian law.¹⁷ Sextilius kept a handsome property, not a penny of which he would have touched had he followed the advice of those who placed honour and right above all considerations of profit and advantage. Do you therefore suppose that he was afterwards troubled by remorse? Not a bit of it. On the contrary, the inheritance made him a rich man, and he was thoroughly pleased with himself in consequence. He thought he had scored heavily: he had won a fortune, not only by no illegal means, but actually by the aid of the law. And according to your school it is right to try to get money even at some risk; for money procures many very delightful pleasures.

“Therefore just as those who hold that things right and honourable are desirable for their own sake must often take risks in the cause of honour and morality, so Epicureans, who measure all things by pleasure, may properly take risks in order to obtain considerable pleasures. If a large sum of money or a great inheritance is at stake, inasmuch as money procures a great many pleasures, your Epicurus, if he wishes to attain his own end of Goods, will have to act as Scipio did, when he had the chance of winning great renown by enticing Hannibal back to Africa. To do so, he risked enormous dangers. For honour and pleasure was the aim of that great enterprise. Similarly, your Epicurean Wise Man, when stirred by the prospect of some considerable gain, will fight to the death, if need be, and with good reason.

Do circumstances allow his crime to go undetected, so much the better; but if found out, he will make light of every penalty. For he will have been schooled to make light of death, of exile, even of pain itself. The latter indeed you make out to be unendurable when you are enacting penalties for the wicked, but easy to bear when you are maintaining that the Wise Man will always command a preponderance of Good.

“But suppose that our evil-doer is not only clever but also supremely powerful, as was Marcus Crassus,—who however used actually to be guided by his natural goodness; or like our friend Pompeius at the present time, who deserves our gratitude for his upright conduct, since he might be as unjust as he liked with impunity. But how many unrighteous acts are possible which no one would be in a position to censure!

If a friend of yours requests you on his death-bed to hand over his estate to his daughter, without leaving his intention anywhere in writing, as Fadius did, or speaking of it to anybody, what will you do? You no doubt will hand over the money; perhaps Epicurus himself would have done the same; as did Sextus Peducaeus, son of Sextus, a scholar and a gentleman of scrupulous honour, who left behind him a son, our friend of to-day, to recall his father’s culture and integrity. No one knew that such a request had been made to Sextus by a distinguished Roman knight named Gaius Plotius, of Nursia; but Sextus of his own accord went to Plotius’s widow, informed her, much to her surprise, of her husband’s commission, and handed over the property to her. But the question I want to put to you is this: since you yourself would undoubtedly have done the same, do you not see that the force of natural instinct is all the more firmly established by the fact that even you Epicureans, who profess to make your own interest and pleasure your sole standard, nevertheless perform actions that prove you to be really aiming not at pleasure but at duty; prove, I say, that the natural impulse towards right is more powerful than corrupt reason?

Suppose, says Carneades, you should know that there is a viper lurking somewhere, and that some one, by whose death you stand to profit, is about to sit down on it unawares; then you will do a wicked deed if you do not warn him not to sit down. But still your wickedness would go unpunished, for who could possibly prove that you knew? However, I labour the point unnecessarily. It is obvious that, if fair-dealing, honesty and justice have not their source in nature, and if all these things are only valuable for their utility, no good man can anywhere be found. The subject is fully discussed by Laelius in my volumes *On the State*.

¹⁷ The Voconian law appears to have allowed a bequest to a woman, provided it did not exceed the amount that passed to the ‘heres’ proper. Either such a minor bequest had been made to Fadia, or this sentence means she was to get nothing.

“Apply the same test to Temperance or Moderation, which means the control of the appetites in obedience to the reason. Suppose a man yields to vicious impulses in secret,—is it no offence against purity? Or is it not true that an act can be sinful in itself, even though no disgrace attends it? And again, does a brave soldier go into battle and shed his blood for his country upon a nice calculation of the balance of pleasures, or in hot blood and under the stimulus of impulse? Come, Torquatus, if the great Imperiosus were listening to our debate, which of our two speeches about himself would he have heard with greater satisfaction, yours or mine? Me declaring that no deed of his was done for selfish ends, but all from motives of patriotism, or you maintaining that he acted solely for self? And suppose you had wanted to make your meaning clearer, and had said more explicitly that all his actions were prompted by desire for pleasure, pray how do you imagine he would have taken it?

But grant your view; assume if you like that Torquatus acted for his own advantage (I would sooner put it in that way than say ‘for his own pleasure,’ especially in the case of so great a man). Yet what about his colleague Publius Decius, the first of his family to be consul? When Decius vowed himself to death, and setting spurs to his horse was charging into the thickest of the Latin ranks, surely he had no thought of personal pleasure? Pleasure where to be enjoyed or when? For he knew he must die in a moment, aye and he courted death with more passionate ardour than Epicurus would have us seek pleasure. Had not his exploit won praise on its merits, it would not have been copied by his son in his fourth consulship; nor would the latter’s son again, commanding as consul in the war with Pyrrhus, have also fallen in battle, third in succession of his line to give himself a victim for the state.

I refrain from further instances. The Greeks have but a modest list,—Leonidas, Epaminondas, some three or four; but were I to begin to cite the heroes of our race, I should doubtless succeed in making Pleasure yield herself prisoner to Virtue, but—daylight would fall before I had done. Aulus Varius, noted for his severity as a judge, used to say to his colleague on the bench, when after witnesses had been produced still further witnesses were called: ‘Either we have evidence enough already, or I do not know what evidence can be enough.’ Well, I have cited witnesses enough. Why, you yourself, in every way a worthy scion of your stock,—was pleasure the inducement that led you, a mere youth, to wrest the consulship from Publius Sulla? You won that office for your gallant father; and what a consul he was! What a patriot, all his life long and more especially after his consulship! It was with his support that I carried through an affair, which was for all men’s interest rather than my own.¹⁸

“But how well you thought you put your case when you pictured on the one hand a person loaded with an abundance of the most delightful pleasures and free from all pain whether present or in prospect, and on the other one racked throughout his frame by the most excruciating pains, unqualified by any pleasure or hope of pleasure; then proceeded to ask who could be more wretched than the latter or more happy than the former; and finally drew the conclusion that pain was the Chief Evil and pleasure the Chief Good!

“Well, there was a certain Lucius Thorius of Lanuvium, whom you cannot remember; he lived on the principle of enjoying in the fullest measure all the most exquisite pleasures that could possibly be found. His appetite for pleasures was only equalled by his taste and ingenuity in devising them. He was so devoid of superstition as to scoff at all the sacrifices and shrines for which his native place is famous; and so free from fear of death that he died in battle for his country.

Epicurus’s classification of the desires meant nothing to him; he knew no limit but satiety. At the same time he was careful of his health: took sufficient exercise to come hungry and thirsty to table; ate what was at once most appetizing and most digestible; drank enough wine for pleasure and not too much for health. Nor did he forgo those other indulgences in the absence of which Epicurus declares that he cannot understand what Good is. Pain he never experienced at all; had it come to him, he would have borne it with fortitude, yet would have called in a doctor sooner than a philosopher. He had excellent health and a sound constitution. He was extremely popular. In short, his life was replete with pleasure of every variety.

¹⁸ A reference to the suppression of the Catilinarian conspiracy and Cicero’s subsequent exile.

Your school pronounces him a happy man, at least your theory requires you to do so. But I place above him—I do not venture to say whom: Virtue herself shall speak for me, and she will not hesitate to rank Marcus Regulus higher than this typically happy man, as you would call him. Regulus, of his own free will and under no compulsion except that of a promise given to an enemy, returned from his native land to Carthage; yet Virtue proclaims that when he had done so he was happier while tormented with sleeplessness and hunger than Thorius carousing on his couch of roses. Regulus had fought great wars, had twice been consul, had celebrated a triumph; yet all his earlier exploits he counted less great and glorious than that final disaster, which he chose to undergo for the sake of honour and of self-respect; a pitiable end, as it seems to us who hear of it, but full of pleasure for him who endured it. It is not merriment and wantonness, nor laughter or jesting, the comrade of frivolity, that make men happy; those are happy, often in sadness, whose wills are strong and true.

Lucretia outraged by the royal prince called on her fellow-citizens to witness her wrong and died by her own hand. The indignation that this aroused in the Roman people, under the leadership and guidance of Brutus, won freedom for the state; and in gratitude to Lucretia's memory both her husband and her father were made consuls for the first year of the republic. Sixty years after our liberties had been won, Lucius Verginius, a poor man of humble station, killed his maiden daughter with his own hand rather than surrender her to the lust of Appius Claudius, who then held the highest power in the state.

“Either, Torquatus, you must reprobate such actions, or you must give up your championship of Pleasure. But what defence can Pleasure offer, what case can you make out for her, when she will be able to produce no famous men as her witnesses or supporters? On our side we cite in evidence from our records and our annals men who spent their whole lives in glorious toils, men who would not have borne to hear pleasure so much as named; but in your discourses history is dumb. In the school of Epicurus I never heard one mention of Lycurgus, Solon, Miltiades, Themistocles, Epaminondas, who are always on the lips of the other philosophers. And now that we Romans too have begun to treat of these themes, what a marvellous roll of great men will our friend Atticus supply to us from his store-houses of learning!”¹⁹

Would it not be better to talk of these than to devote those bulky volumes to Themista? [a] Let us leave that sort of thing to the Greeks. True we owe to them philosophy and all the liberal sciences; yet there are topics not permitted to us, that are allowable for them. Battle rages between the Stoics and the Peripatetics. One school declares that nothing is good but Moral Worth, the other that, while it assigns the greatest, and by far the greatest, value to Morality, yet still some bodily and external things are good. Here is an honourable quarrel, fought out in high debate! For the whole dispute turns on the true worth of virtue. But when one argues with your friends, one has to listen to a great deal about even the grosser forms of pleasure! Epicurus is always harping upon them!

Believe me then, Torquatus, if you will but look within, and study your own thoughts and inclinations, you cannot continue to defend the doctrines you profess. You will be put to the blush, I say, by the picture that Cleanthes used to draw so cleverly in his lectures. He would tell his audience to imagine a painting representing Pleasure, decked as a queen, and gorgeously apparelled, seated on a throne; at her side should stand the Virtues as her handmaids, who should make it their sole object and duty to minister to Pleasure, merely whispering in her ear the warning (provided this could be conveyed by the painter's art) to beware of unwittingly doing aught to offend public opinion, or anything from which pain might result. ‘As for us Virtues, we were born to be your slaves; that is our one and only business.’

“But Epicurus, you will tell me (for this is your strong point), denies that anyone who does not live morally can live pleasantly. As if I cared what Epicurus says or denies! What I ask is, what is it consistent for a man to say who places the Chief Good in pleasure? What reason can you give for thinking that Thorius, or Postumius of Chios, or the master

¹⁹ Atticus wrote historical and biographical miscellanies.

of them all, Orata, did not live extremely pleasant lives? Epicurus himself says that the life of sensualists is blameless, if they are not utter fools—for that is what his proviso, ‘if they are free from fear and from desire,’ amounts to. And, as he offers an antidote for both desire and fear, he virtually offers free indulgence for sensuality. Eliminate those passions, he says, and he cannot find anything to blame in a life of profligacy.

Consequently you Epicureans, by taking pleasure as the sole guide, make it impossible for yourselves either to uphold or to retain virtue. For a man is not to be thought good and just who refrains from doing wrong to avoid incurring harm; no doubt you know the line:

None is good, whose love of goodness —;²⁰

believe me, nothing can be truer. As long as his motive is fear, he is not just, and assuredly as soon as he ceases to fear, he will not be just; and he will not feel fear, if he can conceal his wrong-doing, or is sufficiently powerful to brazen it out; and he will assuredly prefer the reputation without the reality of goodness to the reality without the reputation. So your school undoubtedly preaches the pretence of justice instead of the real and genuine thing. Its lesson amounts to this—we are to despise the trustworthy voice of our own conscience, and to run after the fallible imaginations of other men.

The same applies in the case of the other virtues. Basing them entirely on pleasure you are laying the foundations in water. Why, take the great Torquatus again: can he really be called brave?—for I delight, albeit my flattery, as you put it, is powerless to bribe you, I delight, I say, in your name and lineage; and indeed I have personal recollections of that distinguished man, Aulus Torquatus, who was an affectionate friend of my own, and whose signal loyalty and devotion to me in circumstances that are within universal knowledge²¹ must be familiar to you both; yet for my part, anxious as I am to feel and show a proper gratitude, I would not have thanked him for his friendship had I not known that it was disinterested; unless you choose to say that it was for his own interest in this sense, that it is to every man’s interest to act rightly. If you do say so, we have won our case; for our one principle, our one contention is, that duty is its own reward.

This your great master does not allow; he expects everything to *pay*—to yield its quota of pleasure. But I return to old Torquatus. If it was to win pleasure that he accepted the Gallic warrior’s challenge to single combat on the banks of the Anio, and if he despoiled him and assumed his necklet and the corresponding surname for any other reason than that he thought such deeds became a man, I do not consider him brave. Again, if modesty, self-control, chastity, if in a word Temperance is to depend for its sanction on the fear of punishment or of disgrace, and not to maintain itself by its own intrinsic sacredness, what form of adultery, vice or lust will not break loose and run riot when it is assured of concealment, impunity or indulgence.

“Or what, pray, are we to think of the situation if you, Torquatus, bearing the name you do, and gifted and distinguished as you are, dare not profess before a public audience the real object of all your actions, aims and endeavours, what it is in short that you consider the greatest good in life? In return for what payment or consideration, when not long hence you have attained to public office and come forward to address a meeting (for you will have to announce the rules that you propose to observe in administering justice, and very likely also, if you think good, you will follow the time-honoured custom of making some reference to your ancestors and to yourself), [*b*]—for what consideration then would you consent to declare that you intend in office to guide your conduct solely by pleasure, and that pleasure has been your aim in every action of your life?—‘Do you take me for such an imbecile,’ you exclaim, ‘as to talk in that fashion before ignorant people?’—Well, make the same profession in a law-court, or if you are afraid of the public there, say it in the senate. You will never do it. Why, if not because such language is disgraceful? Then what a compliment to Torquatus and myself, to use it in our presence!

²⁰ An unknown quotation. Mdv. suggests that the sentence ended with *metu colit* or the like.

²¹ *Cp. § 62 above.*

“But let us grant your position. The actual word ‘pleasure’ has not a lofty sound; and perhaps we do not understand its significance: you are always repeating that we do not understand what you mean by pleasure. As though it were a difficult or recondite notion! If we understand you when you talk of ‘indivisible atoms’ and ‘cosmic interspaces,’ things that don’t exist and never can exist, is our intelligence incapable of grasping the meaning of pleasure, a feeling known to every sparrow? What if I force you to admit that I do know not only what pleasure really is (it is an agreeable activity of the sense), but also what you mean by it? For at one moment you mean by it the feeling that I have just defined, and this you entitle ‘kinetic’ pleasure, as producing a definite change of feeling, but at another moment you say it is quite a different feeling, which is the acme and climax of pleasure, but yet consists merely in the complete absence of pain; this you call ‘static’ pleasure.

Well, grant that pleasure is the latter sort of feeling. Profess in any public assembly that the motive of all your actions is the desire to avoid pain. If you feel that this too does not sound sufficiently dignified and respectable, say that you intend both in your present office and all your life long to act solely for the sake of your own advantage,—to do nothing but what will pay, nothing in short that is not for your own interest; imagine the uproar among the audience! What would become of your chances of the consulship, which as it is seems to be a certainty for you in the near future? Will you then adopt a rule of life which you can appeal to in private and among friends but which you dare not openly profess or parade in public? Ah, but it is the vocabulary of the Peripatetics and the Stoics that is always on your lips, in the law-courts and the senate. Duty, Fair-dealing, Moral Worth, Fidelity, Uprightness, Honour, the Dignity of office, the Dignity of the Roman People, Risk all for the state, Die for your Country,—when you talk in this style, we simpletons stand gaping in admiration,—and you no doubt laugh in your sleeve.

For in that glorious array of high-sounding words, pleasure finds no place, not only what your school calls ‘kinetic’ pleasure, which is what every one, polished or rustic, every one, I say, who can speak Latin, means by pleasure, but not even this ‘static’ pleasure, which no one but you Epicureans would call pleasure at all.

Well then, are you sure you have any right to employ our words with meanings of your own? If you assumed an unnatural expression or demeanour, in order to look more important, that would be insincere. Are you then to affect an artificial language, and say what you do not think? Or are you to change your opinions like your clothes, and have one set for indoor wear and another when you walk abroad? Outside, all show and pretence, but your genuine self concealed within? Reflect, I beg of you, is this honest? In my view those opinions are true which are honourable, praiseworthy and noble—which can be openly avowed in the senate and the popular assembly, and in every company and gathering, so that one need not be ashamed to say what one is not ashamed to think.

“Again, how will friendship be possible? How can one man be another man’s friend, if he does not love him in and for himself? What is the meaning of ‘to love’—from which our word for friendship is derived—except to wish some one to receive the greatest possible benefits even though one gleans no advantage therefrom oneself? ‘It pays me,’ says he, ‘to be a disinterested friend.’ No, perhaps it pays you to seem so. Be so you cannot, unless you really are; but how can you be a disinterested friend unless you feel genuine affection? Yet affection does not commonly result from any calculation of expediency. It is a spontaneous growth; it springs up of itself. ‘But,’ you will say, ‘I am guided by expediency.’ Then your friendship will last just so long as it is attended by expediency. If expediency creates the feeling it will also destroy it.

But what, pray, will you do, if, as often happens, expediency parts company with friendship? Will you throw your friend over? What sort of friendship is that? Will you keep him? How does that square with your principles? You remember your pronouncement that friendship is desirable for the sake of expediency. ‘I might become unpopular if I left a friend in the lurch.’ Well, in the first place, why is such conduct unpopular, unless because it is base? And if you refrain from deserting a friend because to do so will have inconvenient consequences, still you will long for his death to release you from an unprofitable tie. What if he not only brings you no advantage, but causes you to suffer loss of property, to undergo toil and trouble, to risk your life? Will you not even then take interest into account, and reflect that each man is born for himself and for his own pleasure? Will you go bail with your life to a tyrant on behalf

of a friend, as the famous Pythagorean²² did to the Sicilian despot? or being Pylades²³ will you say you are Orestes, so as to die in your friend's stead? or supposing you were Orestes, would you say Pylades was lying and reveal your identity, and if they would not believe you, would you make no appeal against your both dying together?

"Yes, Torquatus, you personally would do all these things; for I do not believe there is any high or noble action which fear of pain or death could induce you to forgo. But the question is not what conduct is consistent with your character, but what is consistent with your tenets. The system you uphold, the principles you have studied and accept, undermine the very foundations of friendship, however much Epicurus may, as he does, praise friendship to the skies. 'But,' you tell me, 'Epicurus himself had many friends.' Who pray denies that Epicurus was a good man, and a kind and humane man? In these discussions it is his intellect and not his character that is in question. Let us leave to the frivolous Greeks the wrong-headed habit of attacking and abusing the persons whose views of truth they do not share. Epicurus may have been a kind and faithful friend; but if my opinion is right (for I do not dogmatize), he was not a very acute thinker.

'But he won many disciples.' Yes, and perhaps he deserved to do so; but still the witness of the crowd does not carry much weight; for as in every art or study, or science of any kind, so in right conduct itself, supreme excellence is extremely rare. And to my mind the fact that Epicurus himself was a good man and that many Epicureans both have been and to-day are loyal to their friends, consistent and high-principled throughout their lives, ruling their conduct by duty and not by pleasure,—all this does but enforce the value of moral goodness and diminish that of pleasure. The fact is that some persons' lives and behaviour refute the principles they profess. Most men's words are thought to be better than their deeds; these people's deeds on the contrary seem to me better than their words.

"But this I admit is a digression. Let us return to what you said about friendship. In one of your remarks I seemed to recognize a saying of Epicurus himself,—that friendship cannot be divorced from pleasure, and that it deserves to be cultivated for the reason that without it we cannot live secure and free from alarm, and therefore cannot live agreeably. Enough has been said in answer to this already. You quoted another and a more humane dictum of the more modern Epicureans, which so far as I know was never uttered by the master himself. This was to the effect that, although at the outset we desire a man's friendship for utilitarian reasons, yet when intimacy has grown up we love our friend for his own sake, even if all prospect of pleasure be left out of sight. It is possible to take exception to this on several grounds; still I won't refuse what they give, as it is sufficient for my case and not sufficient for theirs. For it amounts to saying that moral action is occasionally possible,—action prompted by no anticipation or desire of pleasure.

You further alleged that other thinkers speak of wise men as making a sort of mutual compact to entertain the same sentiments towards their friends as they feel towards themselves; this (you said) was possible, and in fact had often occurred; and it was highly conducive to the attainment of pleasure. If men have succeeded in making this compact, let them make a further compact to love fair-dealing, self-control, and all the virtues, for their own sakes and without reward. If on the other hand we are to cultivate friendships for their results, for profit and utility, if there is to be no affection to render friendship, in and for itself, intrinsically and spontaneously desirable, can we doubt that we shall value land and house-property more than friends?

It is no good your once again repeating Epicurus's admirable remarks in praise of friendship. I am not asking what Epicurus actually says, but what he can say consistently while holding the theory he professes. 'Friendship is originally sought after from motives of utility.' Well, but surely you don't reckon Triarius here a more valuable asset than the granaries at Puteoli would be if they belonged to you? Cite all the stock Epicurean maxims. 'Friends are a protection.' You can protect yourself; the laws will protect you; ordinary friendships offer protection enough; you will be too

²² Phintias, pleading for his friend Damon before Dionysius, 'tyrant' of Syracuse; Dionysius pardoned them both and begged to become a third in such a friendship. Cf. *Off.* 3.45.

²³ Cf. *V.63*. Cicero refers to a scene in the *Dulorestes* of Pacuvius, where Thoas King of the Tauri wished to kill whichever of the two captives brought before him was Orestes.

powerful to despise as it is, while hatred and envy it will be easy to avoid,—Epicurus gives rules for doing so! And in any case, with so large an income to give away, you can dispense with the romantic sort of friendship that we have in mind; you will have plenty of well-wishers to defend you quite effectively.

But a confidant, to share your ‘grave thoughts or gay’ as the saying is, all your secrets and private affairs? Your best confidant is yourself; also you may confide in a friend of the average type. But granting that friendship has the conveniences you mention, what are they compared with the advantages of vast wealth? You see then that although if you measure friendship by the test of its own charm it is unsurpassed in value, by the standard of profit the most affectionate intimacy is outweighed by the rents of a valuable estate. So you must love me yourself, not my possessions, if we are to be genuine friends.

“But we dwell too long upon the obvious. For when it has been conclusively proved that if pleasure is the sole standard there is no room left either for virtue or for friendship, there is no great need to say anything further. Still I do not want you to think I have failed to answer any of your points, so I will now say a few words in reply to the remainder of your discourse.

The entire end and aim of philosophy is the attainment of happiness; and desire for happiness is the sole motive that has led men to engage in this study. But different thinkers make happiness consist in different things. According to your school it consists in pleasure, and conversely misery consists solely in pain. Let us then begin by examining what sort of thing happiness as you conceive it is. You will grant, I suppose, that if there is such a thing as happiness, it is bound to be attainable in its entirety by the Wise Man. For if happiness once won can be lost, a happy life is impossible. Since who can feel confident of permanently and securely retaining a possession that is perishable and precarious? yet one who is not sure of the permanence of his goods must inevitably fear lest at some time he may lose them and be miserable.

But no one can be happy who is uneasy about matters of the highest moment. Therefore no one can be happy at all. For we usually speak of a life as a happy one not in reference to a part of it, but to the whole of a lifetime; indeed ‘a life’ means a finished and complete life; nor is it possible to be at one time happy and at another miserable, since he who thinks that he may be miserable will not be happy. For when happiness has once been achieved, it is as permanent as Wisdom itself, which is the efficient cause of happiness; it does not wait for the end of our mortal term, as Croesus in Herodotus’s history was warned by Solon to do.

“It may be rejoined that Epicurus, as you yourself were saying, maintains that long duration can not add anything to happiness, and that as much pleasure is enjoyed in a brief span of time as if pleasure were everlasting.

In this he is grossly inconsistent. He places the Chief Good in pleasure, and yet he says that no greater pleasure would result from a lifetime of endless duration than from a limited and moderate period. If a person finds the sole Good in Virtue, it is open to him to say that the happy life is consummated by the consummation of virtue; for his position is that the Chief Good is not increased by lapse of time. But if one thinks that happiness is produced by pleasure, how can he consistently deny that pleasure is increased by duration? If it is not, pain is not either. Or if pain is worse the longer it lasts, is not pleasure rendered more desirable by continuance? On what ground then does Epicurus speak of the Deity (for so he always does) as happy and everlasting? Take away his everlasting life, and Jove is no happier than Epicurus; each of them enjoys the Chief Good, that is to say, pleasure. ‘Ah but,’ you say, ‘Epicurus is liable to pain as well.’ Yes, but he thinks nothing of pain; for he tells us that if he were being burnt to death²⁴ he would exclaim, ‘How delightful this is!’

Wherein then is he inferior to God, except that God lives for ever? But what good has everlasting life to offer beside supreme and never-ending pleasure? What then is the use of your high-flown language, if it be not consistent? Bodily

²⁴ *I.e.* in the brazen bull of Phalaris, *cf.* *V.80, 85.*

pleasure (and I will add if you like mental pleasure, so long as this, as you hold, is understood to have its source in the body) constitutes happiness. Well, who can guarantee this pleasure for the Wise Man in perpetuity? For the things that produce pleasure are not in the Wise Man's control; since happiness does not consist in wisdom itself, but in the means to pleasure which wisdom can procure. But all the apparatus of pleasure is external, and what is external must depend on chance. Consequently happiness becomes the slave of fortune; yet Epicurus says that fortune interferes with the Wise Man but little!

" 'Come,' you will say, 'these are trivial objections. The Wise Man is endowed with Nature's own riches, and these, as Epicurus has shown, are easy of attainment.' This is excellently said, and I do not combat it; but Epicurus's own statements are at war with each other. He tells us that the simplest fare, that is, the meanest sorts of food and drink, afford no less pleasure than a banquet of the rarest delicacies. For my part, if he said that it made no difference to happiness what sort of food he ate, I should agree, and what is more I should applaud; for he would be telling the truth. I will listen to Socrates, who holds pleasure of no account, when he says that the best sauce for food is hunger and the best flavouring for drink thirst. But I will not listen to one who makes pleasure the sole standard, when while living like Gallonius he talks like Piso the Thrifty; I refuse to believe in his sincerity.

He said that natural wealth is easily won, because nature is satisfied with little. Undoubtedly,—if only you Epicureans did not value pleasure so highly. As much pleasure, he says, is derived from the cheapest things as from the most costly. Dear me, his palate must be as dull as his wits. Persons who despise pleasure in itself are at liberty to say that they value a sturgeon no higher than a sprat; but a man whose chief good consists in pleasure is bound to judge everything by sensation, not by reason, and to call those things the best which are the pleasantest.

However, let us grant his point: let him get the highest pleasures cheap, or for all I care for nothing, if he can; allow that there is as much pleasure to be found in the cress salad which according to Xenophon²⁵ formed the staple diet of the Persians, as in the Syracusan banquets which Plato²⁶ takes to task so severely; grant, I say, that pleasure is as easy to get as your school makes out;—but what are we to say of pain? Pain can inflict such tortures as to render happiness absolutely impossible, that is, if it be true that pain is the Chief Evil. Metrodorus himself, who was almost a second Epicurus, describes happiness (I give almost his actual words) as 'sound health, and an assurance of its continuance.' Can anyone have an assurance of what his health will be, I don't say a year hence, but this evening? It follows that we can never be free from the apprehension of pain, which is the chief Evil, even when it is absent, for at any moment it may be upon us. How then can life be happy when haunted by fear of the greatest Evil?

'Ah but,' he rejoins, 'Epicurus teaches a method for disregarding pain.' To begin with, the mere idea of disregarding that which is the greatest of evils is absurd. But what is this method, pray? 'The severest pain,' says he, 'is brief.' First of all, who do you mean by brief? and secondly, what do you mean by the severest pain? Why, cannot the most intense pain last for several days? You may find it last for months! Unless indeed you mean a seizure that instantaneously kills you. But no one is afraid of such a pain as that. I want you rather to alleviate such agony as I have seen afflicting my excellent and amiable friend, Gnaeus Octavius, son of Marcus; and that not once only or for a short time, but repeatedly and for very long periods. Great heavens, what torments he used to suffer! All his joints felt as if on fire. And yet one did not think of him as miserable, because such pain was not the greatest evil,—only as afflicted. Miserable he would have been if he had lived a life of profligacy and vice surrounded by every pleasure.

"As for your maxim that severe pain is short and prolonged pain light, I cannot make out what it may mean. For I see pains that are at once severe and considerably prolonged; and the truer way to endure them is the other method, which you who do not love moral worth for its own sake are not able to employ. Courage has its precepts and its rules, rules of constraining force, that forbid a man to show womanish weakness in pain. Hence it must be considered a

²⁵ Xen. *Cyropaed.* 1.2.8.

²⁶ Pl. *Ep.* 7 326B, also *Rep.* 404D.

disgrace, I do not say to feel pain (that is sometimes inevitable), but that ‘rock of Lemnos to outrage’²⁷ with the cries of a Philoctetes,

Till the dumb stones utter a voice of weeping,
Echoing his wails and complaints, his sighs and groanings.

Let Epicurus soothe with his spells, if he can, the man whose

Veins and vitals, from the viper’s fang
Envenom’d, throb with pangs of anguish dire

in this way: ‘Philoctetes! If pain is severe, it is short.’ Oh, but he has been languishing in his cave for these ten years past. ‘If it is long, it is light: for it grants intervals of respite.’

In the first place, this is not often the case; and secondly, what is the good of a respite embittered by recent pain still fresh in memory, and tormented by fear of pain impending in the future? Let him die, says Epicurus. Perhaps that were the best course, but what becomes of the maxim about ‘a constant preponderance of pleasure’? If that be true, are you not guilty of a crime in advising him to end his life? Well, then, let us rather tell him that it is base and unmanly to let pain demoralize, crush and conquer one. As for the formula of your sect, ‘Short if it’s strong, light if it’s long,’ it is a tag for copybooks. Virtue, magnanimity, endurance, courage—it is these that have balm to assuage pain.

“But I must not digress too far. Let me repeat the dying words of Epicurus, to prove to you the discrepancy between his practice and his principles: ‘Epicurus to Hermarchus, greeting. I write these words,’ he says, ‘on the happiest, and the last, day of my life. I am suffering from diseases of the bladder and intestines, which are of the utmost possible severity.’ Unhappy creature! If pain is the Chief Evil, that is the only thing to be said. But let us hear his own words. ‘Yet all my sufferings,’ he continues, ‘are counterbalanced by the joy which I derive from remembering my theories and discoveries. I charge you, by the devotion which from your youth up you have displayed towards myself and towards philosophy, to protect the children of Metrodorus.’

When I read this I rank the death-scene of Epicurus on a level with those of Epaminondas and of Leonidas. Epaminondas had defeated the Lacedaemonians at Mantinea, and perceived himself to be mortally wounded. As soon as he opened his eyes he inquired if his shield were safe. His weeping followers told him that it was. He asked, were the enemy routed? Satisfied on this point, he bade them pluck out the spear that pierced his side. A rush of blood followed, and so in the hour of joy and victory he died. Leonidas, king of the Lacedaemonians, had to choose between dishonourable flight and a glorious death; with the three hundred warriors that he had brought from Sparta he confronted the foe at Thermopylae. A great commander’s death is famous; but philosophers mostly die in their beds. Still it makes a difference how they die. Epicurus counts himself happy in his last moments. All honour to him. ‘My joy,’ he writes, ‘counterbalances the severest pain.’

The words of a philosopher, Epicurus, command my attention; but you forget what you logically ought to say. In the first place, if the things in the recollection of which you profess to find pleasure, I mean your writings and discoveries, are true, you cannot really be feeling pleasure. All feelings referable to the body are over for you; yet you have always maintained that no one feels either pleasure or pain except on account of the body. He says ‘I take pleasure in my past feelings.’ What past feelings? If you mean bodily feelings, I notice that it is not the memory of bodily delights, but your philosophical theories, that counterbalance for you your present pains; if mental feelings, your doctrine that there is no delight of the mind not ultimately referable to the body is an error. And secondly, why do you provide for the children of Metrodorus? What standard of bodily pleasure are you following in this signal act (for so I esteem it) of loyalty and duty?

²⁷ Quoted probably from the *Philoctetes* of Attius.

“Yes, Torquatus, you people may turn and twist as you like, but you will not find a line in this famous letter of Epicurus that is not inconsistent and incompatible with his teachings. Hence he is his own refutation; his writings are disproved by the uprightness of his character. That provision for the care of the children, that loyalty to friendship and affection, that observance of these solemn duties with his latest breath, prove that there was innate in the man a disinterested uprightness, not evoked by pleasure nor elicited by prizes and rewards. Seeing so strong a sense of duty in a dying man, what clearer evidence do we want that morality and rectitude are desirable for their own sakes?

But while I think that the letter I have just translated almost word for word is most admirable, although entirely inconsistent with the chief tenets of his philosophy, yet I consider his will to be quite out of harmony not only with the dignity of a philosopher but also with his own pronouncement. For he repeatedly argued at length, and also stated briefly and plainly in the book I have just mentioned, that ‘death does not affect us at all; for a thing that has experienced dissolution must be devoid of sensation; and that which is devoid of sensation cannot affect us in any degree whatsoever.’ The maxim such as it is might have been better and more neatly put. For the phrase, ‘what has experienced dissolution must be devoid of sensation,’ does not make clear what it is that has experienced dissolution.

However in spite of this I understand the meaning intended. What I want to know is this: if all sensation is annihilated by dissolution, that is, by death, and if nothing whatever that can affect us remains, why is it that he makes such precise and careful provision and stipulation ‘that his heirs, Amynomachus and Timocrates, shall after consultation with Hermarchus assign a sufficient sum to celebrate his birthday every year in the month of Gamelion, and also on the twentieth day of every month shall assign a sum for a banquet to his fellow-students in philosophy, in order to keep alive the memory of himself and of Metrodorus’?

That these are the words of as amiable and kindly a man as you like, I cannot deny; but what business has a philosopher, and especially a natural philosopher, which Epicurus claims to be, to think that any day can be anybody’s birthday? Why, can the identical day that has once occurred recur again and again? Assuredly it is impossible. Or can a similar day recur? This too is impossible, except after an interval of many thousands of years, when all the heavenly bodies simultaneously achieve their return to the point from which they started.²⁸ It follows that there is no such thing as anybody’s birthday. ‘But a certain day is so regarded.’ Much obliged, I am sure, for the information! But even granting birthdays, is a person’s birthday to be observed when he is dead? And to provide for this by will—is this appropriate for a man who told us in oracular tones that nothing can affect us after death? Such a provision ill became one whose ‘intellect had roamed’²⁹ over unnumbered worlds and realms of infinite space, without shores or circumference. Did Democritus do anything of the kind? (To omit others, I cite the case of the philosopher who was Epicurus’s only master.)

And if a special day was to be kept, did he do well to take the day on which he was born, and not rather that on which he became a Wise Man? You will object that he could not have become a Wise Man if he had not first of all been born. You might equally well say, if his grandmother had not been born either. The entire notion of wishing one’s name and memory to be celebrated by a banquet after one’s death is alien to a man of learning. I won’t refer to your mode of keeping these anniversaries, or the shafts of wit you bring upon you from persons with a sense of humour. We do not want to quarrel. I only remark that it was more your business to keep Epicurus’s birthday than his business to provide by will for its celebration.

“But to return to our subject (for we were discussing the question of pain, when we digressed to the letter of Epicurus). The whole matter may now be put in the following syllogism: A man undergoing the supreme Evil is not for the time being happy; but the Wise Man is always happy, and sometimes undergoes pain; therefore pain is not the supreme Evil. And again, what is the sense of the maxim that the Wise Man will not let past blessings fade from memory, and

²⁸ This conception is found in Plato, *Timaeus* 39, and was accepted by ancient astronomers, who calculated the period of the Great Year or Perfect Year, as it was called, at 12,954 solar years.

²⁹ Lucretius I.74 omne immensum peragravit mente animoque.

that it is a duty to forget past misfortunes? To begin with, have we the power to choose what we shall remember? Themistocles at all events, when Simonides or some one offered to teach him the art of memory, replied that he would prefer the art of forgetting; ‘for I remember,’ said he, ‘even things I don’t wish to remember, but I cannot forget things I wish to forget.’

Epicurus was a very able man; but still the fact of the matter is that a philosopher who forbids us to remember lays too heavy a charge upon us. Why, you are as great a martinet as your ancestor Manlius,³⁰ or greater, if you order me to do what is beyond my power. What if the memory of past evils be actually pleasant? proving certain proverbs truer than the tenets of your school. There is a popular saying to the effect that ‘Toil is pleasant when ‘tis over’; and Euripides well writes (I will attempt a verse translation; the Greek line is known to you all):

Sweet is the memory of sorrows past.³¹

But let us return to the question of past blessings. If your school meant by these the sort of successes that Gaius Marius could fall back on, enabling him when a penniless exile up to his chin in a swamp to lighten his sufferings by recollecting his former victories, I would listen to you, and would unreservedly assent. Indeed it would be impossible for the happiness of the wise Man to attain its final and ultimate perfection, if all his wise designs and good deeds were to be successively erased from his memory.

But with you it is the recollection of pleasures enjoyed that gives happiness; and those must be bodily pleasures,—for if it be any others, it ceases to be true that mental pleasures all arise from the connection of the mind with the body. Yet if bodily pleasure even when past can give delight, I do not see why Aristotle³² should be so contemptuous of the epitaph of Sardanapalus. The famous Syrian monarch boasts that he has taken with him all the sensual pleasures that he has enjoyed. How, asks Aristotle, could a dead man continue to experience a feeling which even while alive he could only be conscious of so long as he was actually enjoying it? So that bodily pleasures are transient; each in turn evaporates, leaving cause for regrets more often than for recollection. Accordingly Africanus must be counted happier than Sardanapalus, when he addresses his country with the words:

Cease, Rome, thy foes —

and the glorious conclusion:

My toils have won thee battlements secure.³³

His past toils are what he delights in, whereas you bid us dwell upon our past pleasures; he recalls experiences that never had any connection with bodily enjoyment, but you never rise above the body.

“Again how can you possibly defend the dictum of your school, that all mental pleasures and pains alike are based on pleasures and pains of the body? Do you, Torquatus (for I bethink me who it is I am addressing)—do you personally never experience in something for its own sake? I pass over moral worth and goodness, and the intrinsic beauty of the virtues, of which we spoke before. I will suggest less serious matters, reading or writing a poem or a speech, the study of history or geography, statues, pictures, scenery, the games and wild beast shows, Lucullus’s country house (I won’t mention your own, for that would give you a loophole of escape; you would say it is a source of bodily enjoyment); but take the things I have mentioned,—do you connect them with bodily sense? Is there nothing which of itself affords you delight? Persist in tracing back the pleasures I have instanced to the body—and you show yourself impervious to argument; recant—and you abandon Epicurus’s conception of pleasure altogether.

³⁰ See § 60.

³¹ From the lost *Andromeda*: *λλ’ ὁ τοι σωθὺντα μεμυσθαί πινων*; quoted by Plutarch, etc.

³² In a work now lost. The lines referred to run *κεν’ χωσσ’ φαγοῖν κα ββρισα κα συνρωτι τρπν’ παθον· τ δ πολλ κα λβια πντα λλυνται*. (ap. *Athen.* 336A.)

³³ Apparently from the *Annals* of Ennius.

“As for your contention that mental pleasures and pains are greater than bodily, because the mind apprehends all three periods of time, whereas the body perceives only present sensations, surely it is absurd to say that a man who rejoices in sympathy with my pleasure feels more joy than I feel myself. [Pleasure of the mind arises out of sympathy with that of the body, and pleasure of the mind is greater than that of the body; thus it comes about that one who offers congratulations feels more delight than the person congratulated.] But when you try to prove the Wise Man happy on the ground that he enjoys the greatest mental pleasures, and that these are infinitely greater than bodily pleasures, you do not see the difficulty that meets you. For it follows that the mental pains which he experiences will also be infinitely greater than the bodily ones. Hence he whom you maintain to be always happy would inevitably be sometimes miserable; nor in fact will you ever prove him to be invariably happy, as long as you make pleasure and pain the sole standard.

Therefore we are bound, Torquatus, to find some other Chief Good for man. Let us leave pleasure to the lower animals, to whose evidence on this question of the Chief Good your school is fond of appealing. But what if even animals are prompted by their several natures to do many actions conclusively proving that they have some other than pleasure? Some of them show kindness even at the cost of trouble, as for instance in giving birth to and rearing their offspring; some delight in running and roaming about; others are gregarious, and create something resembling a social polity;

in a certain class of birds we see some traces of affection, and also recognition and recollection; and in many we even notice regret for a lost friend. If animals therefore possess some semblance of the human virtues unconnected with pleasure, are men themselves to display no virtue except as a means to pleasure? And shall we say that man, who so far surpasses all other living creatures, has been gifted by nature with no exceptional endowment?

“As a matter of fact if pleasure be all in all, the lower animals are far and away superior to ourselves. The Earth of herself without labour of theirs lavishes on them food from her stores in great variety and abundance; whereas we with the most laborious efforts can scarcely if at all supply our needs. Yet I cannot think that the Chief Good can possibly be the same for a brute beast and for a man. What is the use of all our vast machinery of culture, of the great company of liberal studies, of the goodly fellowship of the virtues, if all these things are sought after solely for the sake of pleasure?

Suppose when Xerxes led forth his huge fleets and armies of horse and foot, bridged the Hellespont, cut through Athos, marched over sea and sailed over land—suppose on his reaching Greece with his great armada some one asked him the reason for all this enormous apparatus of warfare, and he were to reply that he had wanted to procure some honey from Hymettus! surely he would be thought to have had no adequate motive for so vast an undertaking. So with our Wise Man, equipped and adorned with all the noblest accomplishments and virtues, not like Xerxes traversing the seas on foot and the mountains on shipboard, but mentally embracing sky and earth and sea in their entirety—to say that this man’s aim is pleasure is to say that all his high endeavour is for the sake of a little honey.

“No, Torquatus, believe me, we are born for loftier and more splendid purposes. Nor is this evidenced by the mental faculties alone, including as they do a memory for countless facts, in your case indeed a memory of unlimited range; a power of forecasting the future little short of divination; the sense of modesty to curb the appetites; love of justice, the faithful guardian of human society; contempt of pain and death, remaining firm and steadfast when toil is to be endured and danger undergone. These are our mental endowments. But I would also have you consider our actual members, and our organs of sensation, which like the other parts of the body you for your part will esteem not as the comrades merely but actually as the servants of the virtues.

But if even the body has many attributes of higher value than pleasure, such as strength, health, beauty, speed of foot, what pray think you of the mind? The wisest philosophers of old believed that the mind contains an element of the celestial and divine. Whereas if the Chief Good consisted in pleasure as your school avers, the ideal of happiness

would be to pass days and nights in the enjoyment of the keenest pleasure, without a moment's intermission, every sense drenched and stimulated with every sort of delight. But who that is worthy to be called a human being would choose to pass a single entire day in pleasure of that description? The Cyrenaics, it is true, do not repudiate it; on this point your friends are more decent, but the Cyrenaics perhaps more consistent.

But let us pass in review not these 'arts'³⁴ of first importance, a lack of which with our ancestors gave a man the name of 'inert' or good-for-nothing, but I ask you whether you believe that, I do not say Homer, Archilochus or Pindar, but Phidias, Polyclitus and Zeuxis regarded the purpose of their art as pleasure. Then shall a craftsman have a higher ideal of external than a distinguished citizen of moral beauty? But what else is the cause of an error so profound and so very widely diffused, than the fact that he who decides that pleasure is the Chief Good judges the question not with the rational and deliberative part of his mind, but with its lowest part, the faculty of desire? For I ask you, if gods exist, as your school too believes, how can they be happy, seeing that they cannot enjoy bodily pleasures? or, if they happy without that kind of pleasure, why do you deny that the Wise Man is capable of a like purely mental activity?

"Read the panegyrics, Torquatus, not of the heroes praised by Homer, not of Cyrus or Agesilaus, Aristides or Themistocles, Philip or Alexander; but read those delivered upon our own great men, read those of your own family. You will not find anyone extolled for his skill and cunning in procuring pleasures. This is not what is conveyed by epitaphs, like that one near the city gate:

Here lyeth one whom many lands agree
Rome's first and greatest citizen to be.

Do we suppose that many lands agreed that Calatinus was Rome's greatest citizen because of his surpassing eminence in the acquisition of pleasures? Then are we to say that a youth is a young man of great promise and high character, when we judge him likely to study his own interests and to do whatever will be for his personal advantage? Do we not see what a universal upheaval and confusion would result from such a principle? It does away with generosity and with gratitude, the bonds of mutual harmony. If you lend a man money for your own advantage, this cannot be considered an act of generosity—it is usury; no gratitude is owing to a man who lends money for gain. In fact if pleasure usurps the sovereignty, all the cardinal virtues must inevitably be dethroned; and also there are a number of base qualities which can with difficulty be proved inconsistent with the character of the Wise Man, unless it be a law of nature that moral goodness should be supreme.

Not to bring forward further arguments (for they are countless in number), any sound commendation of Virtue must needs keep Pleasure at arm's length. Do not expect me further to argue the point; look within, study your own consciousness. Then after full and careful introspection, ask yourself the question, would you prefer to pass your whole life in that state of calm which you spoke of so often, amidst the enjoyment of unceasing pleasures, free from all pain, and even (an addition which your school is fond of postulating but which is really impossible) free from all fear of pain, or to be a benefactor of the entire human race, and to bring succour and safety to the distressed, even at the cost of enduring the dolours of a Hercules? Dolours—that was indeed the sad and gloomy name which our ancestors bestowed, even in the case of a god, upon labours which were not to be evaded.

I would press my question and drag an answer from you, were I not afraid lest you should say that Hercules himself in the arduous labours that he wrought for the preservation of mankind was acting for the sake of pleasure!"

Here I concluded. "I am at no loss for authorities," said Torquatus, "to whom to refer your arguments. I might be able to do some execution myself, but I prefer to find better equipped champions." "No doubt you allude to our excellent and learned friends Siro and Philodemus." "You are right," he replied. "Very well then," said I; "but it would be fairer to let Triarius pronounce some verdict on our dispute." "I formally object to him as prejudiced," he rejoined with a smile, "at all events on this issue. You have shown us some mercy, but Triarius lays about him like a true Stoic." "Oh," interposed Triarius, "I'll fight more boldly still next time, for I shall have the arguments I have just heard ready to my

³⁴ *i.e.* the virtues, *cf.* IV.4.

hand, though I won't attack you till I see you have been armed by the instructors whom you mention." And with these words we brought our promenade and our discussion to an end together.

The Loeb Editor's Notes:

Thayer's Notes:

CHAPTER 5

Book III

My dear Brutus.—Were Pleasure to speak for herself, in default of such redoubtable advocates as she now has to defend her, my belief is that she would own defeat. Vanquished by the arguments of our preceding Book, she would yield the victory to true Worth. Indeed she would be lost to shame if she persisted any longer in the battle against Virtue, and rated what is pleasant above what is morally good, or maintained that bodily enjoyment or the mental gratification which springs from it is of higher value than firmness and dignity of character. Let us then give Pleasure her dismissal, and bid her keep within her own domains, lest her charms and blandishments put snares in the way of strict philosophical debate.

The question before us is, where is that Chief Good, which is the object of our inquiry, to be found? Pleasure we have eliminated; the doctrine that the End of Goods consists in freedom from pain is open to almost identical objections; and in fact no Chief Good could be accepted that was without the element of Virtue, the most excellent thing that can exist.

Hence although in our debate with Torquatus we did not spare our strength, nevertheless a keener struggle now awaits us with the Stoics. For pleasure is a topic that does not lend itself to very subtle or profound discussion; its champions are little skilled in dialectic, and their adversaries have no difficult case to refute.

In fact Epicurus himself declares that there is no occasion to argue about pleasure at all: its criterion resides in the senses, so that proof is entirely superfluous; a reminder of the facts is all that is needed. Therefore our preceding debate consisted of a simple statement of the case on either side. There was nothing abstruse or intricate in the discourse of Torquatus, and my own exposition was, I believe, as clear as daylight. But the Stoics, as you are aware, affect an exceedingly subtle or rather crabbed style of argument; and if the Greeks find it so, still more must we, who have actually to create a vocabulary, and to invent new terms to convey new ideas. This necessity will cause no surprise to anyone of moderate learning, when he reflects that in every branch of science lying outside the range of common everyday practice there must always be a large degree of novelty in the vocabulary, when it comes to fixing a terminology to denote the conceptions with which the science in question deals.

Thus Logic and Natural Philosophy alike make use of terms unfamiliar even to Greece; Geometry, Music, Grammar also, have an idiom of their own. Even the manuals of Rhetoric, which belong entirely to the practical sphere and to the life of the world, nevertheless employ for purposes of instruction a sort of private and peculiar phraseology.

And to leave out of account these liberal arts and accomplishments, even artisans would be unable to preserve the tradition of their crafts if they did not make use of words unknown to us though familiar to themselves. Nay, agriculture itself, a subject entirely unsusceptible of literary refinement, has yet had to coin technical terms to denote the things with which it is occupied. All the more is the philosopher compelled to do likewise; for philosophy is the Science of Life, and cannot treat its subject in language taken from the street.

Still of all the philosophers the Stoics have been the greatest innovators in this respect, and Zeno their founder was rather an inventor of new terms than a discoverer of new ideas. But if men so learned, using a language generally supposed to be more copious than our own, were allowed in handling recondite subjects to employ unfamiliar terms, how much more right have we to claim this licence who are venturing now to approach these topics for the first time? Moreover we have often declared, and this under some protest not from Greeks only but also from persons who would rather be considered Greeks than Romans,¹ that in fullness of vocabulary we are not merely not surpassed by the Greeks but are actually their superiors. We are therefore bound to do our utmost to make good this claim not in our native arts only but also in those that belong to the Greeks themselves. However, words which the practice of past generations permits us to employ as Latin, *e.g.* the term ‘philosophy’ itself, or ‘rhetoric,’ ‘logic,’ ‘grammar,’ ‘geometry,’ ‘music’ we may consider as being our own; the ideas might it is true have been translated into Latin, but the Greek terms have been familiarized by use. So much for terminology.

As regards my subject, I often fear, Brutus, that I shall meet with censure for writing upon this topic to you, who are yourself so great an adept in philosophy, and in the highest branch of philosophy.² Did I assume the attitude of an instructor, such censure would be deserved. But nothing could be farther from me. I dedicate my work to you, not to teach you what you know extremely well already, but because your name gives me a very comforting sense of support, and because I find in you a most impartial judge and critic of the studies which I share with yourself. You will therefore grant me, as always, your closest attention, and act as umpire of the debate which I held with that remarkable man of genius, your uncle.

I was down at my place at Tusculum, and wanted to consult some books from the library of the young Lucullus; so I went to his country-house, as I was in the habit of doing, to help myself to the volumes I needed. On my arrival, seated in the library I found Marcus Cato; I had not known he was there. He was surrounded by piles of books on Stoicism; for he possessed, as you are aware, a voracious appetite for reading, and could never have enough of it; indeed it was often his practice actually to brave the idle censure of the mob by reading in the senate-house itself, while waiting for the senate to assemble,—he did not steal any attention from public business. So it may well be believed that when I found him taking a complete holiday, with a vast supply of books at his command, he had the air of indulging in a literary debauch, if the term may be applied to so honourable an occupation.

Upon this chance encounter, each of us being equally surprised to see the other, he at once rose, and we began to exchange the usual greetings. “What brings you here?” cried he; “You are from your country-seat, I suppose. Had I known you were there,” he continued, “I should have anticipated you with a visit.” “Yes,” I answered, “the games began yesterday, so I came out of town, and arrived late in the afternoon. My reason for coming on here was to get some books from the library. By the way, Cato, it will soon be time for our friend Lucullus to make acquaintance with this fine collection; for I hope he will take more pleasure in his library than in all the other appointments of his country-house. I am extremely anxious (though of course the responsibility belongs especially to you) that he should have the kind of education that will turn him out after the same pattern as his father and our dear Caepio, and also

¹ Cp. I.8 ff.

² *viz.* Ethics.

yourself, to whom he is so closely related. I cherish the memory of his grandfather³

(and you are aware how highly I esteemed Caepio, who in my belief would to-day be in the front rank, were he still alive). And also Lucullus is always present to my mind; he was a man of general eminence, and united to me in sentiment and opinion as well as by friendship."

"I commend you," rejoined Cato, "for your loyalty to the memory of men who both bequeathed their children to your care, as well as for your affectionate interest in the lad. My own responsibility, as you call it, I by no means disown, but I enlist you to share it with me. Moreover I may say that the youth already seems to me to show many signs both of modesty and talent; but you know how young he is." "I do," said I, "but all the same it is time for him to receive a tincture of studies which, if allowed to soak in at this impressionable age, will render him better equipped when he comes to the business of life." "True, and we will discuss this matter again several times more fully and take common action. But let us sit down," he said, "shall we?" So we sat down.

Cato then resumed: "But what pray are the books that you must come here for, when you have so large a library of your own?" "I have come to fetch some Note-books⁴ of Aristotle," I replied, "which I knew were here. I wanted to read them during my holiday; I do not often get any leisure." "How I wish," said he, "that you had thrown in your lot with the Stoics! You of all men might have been expected to reckon virtue as the only good." "Perhaps *you* might rather have been expected," I answered, "to refrain from adopting a new terminology, when in substance you think as I do. Our principles agree; it is our language that is at variance." "Indeed," he rejoined, "they do not agree in the least. Once pronounce anything to be desirable, once reckon anything as a good, other than Moral Worth, and you have extinguished the very light of virtue, Moral Worth itself, and overthrown virtue entirely."

"That all sounds very fine, Cato," I replied, "but are you aware that you share your lofty pretensions with Pyrrho and with Aristo, who make all things equal in value? I should like to know what your opinion is of them." "My opinion?" he said. "You ask what my opinion is? That those good, brave, just and temperate men, of whom history tells us, or whom we have ourselves seen in our public life, who under the guidance of Nature herself, without the aid of any learning, did many glorious deeds,—that these men were better educated by nature than they could possibly have been by philosophy had they accepted any other system of philosophy than the one that counts Moral Worth the only good and Moral Baseness the only evil. All other philosophical systems—in varying degrees no doubt, but still all,—which reckon anything of which virtue is not an element either as a good or an evil, do not merely, as I hold, give us no assistance or support towards becoming better men, but are actually corrupting to the character. Either this point must be firmly maintained, that Moral Worth is the sole good, or it is absolutely impossible to prove that virtue constitutes happiness. And in that case I do not see why we should trouble to study philosophy. For if anyone who is wise could be miserable, why, I should not set much value on your vaunted and belauded virtue."

"What you have said so far, Cato," I answered, "might equally well be said by a follower of Pyrrho or of Aristo. They, as you are aware, think as you do, that this Moral Worth you speak of is not merely the chief but the only Good; and from this of necessity follows the proposition that I notice you maintain, namely, that the Wise are always happy. Do you then," I asked, "commend these philosophers, and think that we ought to adopt this view of theirs?" "I certainly would not have you adopt *their* view," he said; "for it is of the essence of virtue to exercise choice among the things in accordance with nature; so that philosophers who make all things absolutely equal, rendering them indistinguishable either as better or worse, and leaving no room for selection among them, have abolished virtue itself."

³ The young Lucullus's grandfather, Q. Servilius Caepio, was quaestor 100 B.C. and died 90 B.C. when Cicero was 16. But the following words seem to refer to a Caepio who, had he not died prematurely, would be in the prime of life when Cicero writes. This must mean the Caepio of the preceding sentence, Lucullus's uncle, who may well have left Cicero as the guardian of his son, as is stated below. We may assume that *avi* is a slip, either of Cicero's or of a copyist's, for *avunculi* (Schütz).

⁴ Cf. *V.12*.

“Excellently put,” I rejoined; “but pray are not you committed to the same position, if you say that only what is right and moral is good, and abolish all distinction between everything else?” “Quite so,” said he, “if I did abolish all distinction, but I do not.”

“How so?” I said. “If only virtue, only that one thing which you call moral, right, praiseworthy, becoming (for its nature will be better understood if it is denoted by a number of synonyms), if then, I say, this is the sole good, what other object of pursuit will you have beside it? or, if there be nothing bad but what is base, dishonourable, disgraceful, evil, sinful, foul (to make this clear also by using a variety of terms), what else will you pronounce worthy to be avoided?” “You know quite well,” he retorted, “what I am going to say; but I suspect you want to catch up something in my answer if I put it shortly. So I won’t answer you point by point. Instead of that, as we are at leisure, I will expound, unless you think it out of place, the whole system of Zeno and the Stoics.” “Out of place?” I cried. “By no means. Your exposition will be of great assistance towards solving the questions we are asking.”

“Then let us make the attempt,” said he, “albeit there is a considerable element of difficulty and obscurity in this Stoic system. For at one time even the terms employed in Greek for its novel conceptions seemed unendurable, when they were novel, though now daily use has made them familiar; what then to you think will be the case in Latin?” “Do not feel the least difficulty on that score,” said I. “If when Zeno invented some novel idea he was permitted to denote it by an equally unheard-of word, why should not Cato be permitted to do so too? Though all the same it need not be a hard and fast rule that every word shall be represented by its exact counterpart, when there is a more familiar word conveying the same meaning. That is the way of a clumsy translator. Indeed my own practice is to use several words to give what is expressed in Greek by one, if I cannot convey the sense otherwise. At the same time I hold that we may fairly claim the licence to employ a Greek word when no Latin word is readily forthcoming. Why should this licence be granted to *ephippia* (saddles) and *acratophora* (jars for neat wine) more than to *proëgmena* and *apoproëgmena*? These latter however it is true may be correctly translated ‘preferred’ and ‘rejected.’ “

“Thanks for your assistance,” he said. “I certainly shall use for choice the Latin equivalents you have just given; and in other cases you shall come to my aid if you see me in difficulties.” “I’ll do my best,” I replied; “but fortune favours the bold, so pray make the venture. What sublimer occupation could we find?”

He began: “It is the view of those whose system I adopt, that immediately upon birth (for that is the proper point to start from) a living creature feels an attachment for itself, and an impulse to preserve itself and to feel affection for its own constitution and for those things which tend to preserve that constitution; while on the other hand it conceives an antipathy to destruction and to those things which appear to threaten destruction. In proof of this opinion they urge that infants desire things conducive to their health and reject things that are the opposite before they have ever felt pleasure or pain; this would not be the case, unless they felt an affection for their own constitution and were afraid of destruction. But it would be impossible that they should feel desire at all unless they possessed self-consciousness, and consequently felt affection for themselves. This leads to the conclusion that it is love of self which supplies the primary impulse to action.

Pleasure on the contrary, according to most Stoics, is not to be reckoned among the primary objects of natural impulse; and I very strongly agree with them, for fear lest many immoral consequences would follow if we held that nature has placed pleasure among the earliest objects of desire. But the fact of our affection for the objects first adopted at nature’s prompting seems to require no further proof than this, that there is no one who, given the choice, would not prefer to have all the parts of his body sound and whole, rather than maimed or distorted although equally serviceable.

“Again, acts of cognition (which we may term comprehensions or perceptions, or, if these words are distasteful or obscure, *katalēpseis*),—these we consider meet to be adopted for their own sake, because they possess an element that so to speak embraces and contains the truth. This can be seen in the case of children, whom we may observe to take pleasure in finding something out for themselves by the use of reason, even though they gain nothing by it.

The sciences also, we consider, are things to be chosen for their own sake, partly because there is in them something worthy of choice, partly because they consist of acts of cognition and contain an element of fact established by methodical reasoning. The mental assent to what is false, as the Stoics believe, is more repugnant to us than all the other things that are contrary to nature.

“(Again,⁵ of the members or parts of the body, some appear to have been bestowed on us by nature for the sake of their use, for example the hands, legs, feet, and internal organs, as to the degree of whose utility even physicians are not agreed; while others serve no useful purpose, but appear to be intended for ornament: for instance the peacock’s tail, the plumage of the dove with its shifting colours, and the breasts and beard of the male human being.)

All this is perhaps somewhat baldly expressed; for it deals with what may be called the primary elements of nature, to which any embellishment of style can scarcely be applied, nor am I for my part concerned to attempt it. On the other hand, when one is treating of more majestic topics the style instinctively rises with the subject, and the brilliance of the language increases with the dignity of the theme.” “True,” I rejoined; “but to my mind, any clear statement of an important topic possesses excellence of style. It would be childish to desire an ornate style in subjects of the kind with which you are dealing. A man of sense and education will be content to be able to express his meaning plainly and clearly.”

“To proceed then,” he continued, “for we have been digressing from the primary impulses of nature; and with these the later stages must be in harmony. The next step is the following fundamental classification: That which is in itself in accordance with nature, or which produces something else that is so, and which therefore is deserving of choice as possessing a certain amount of positive value—*axia* as the Stoics call it—this they pronounce to be ‘valuable’ (for so I suppose we may translate it); and on the other hand that which is the contrary of the former they term ‘valueless.’ The initial principle being thus established that things in accordance with nature are ‘things to be taken’ for their own sake, and their opposites similarly ‘things to be rejected,’ the first ‘appropriate act’ (for so I render the Greek *kathēkon*) is to preserve oneself in one’s natural constitution; the next is to retain those things which are in accordance with nature and to repel those that are the contrary; then when this principle of choice and also of rejection has been discovered, there follows next in order choice conditioned by ‘appropriate action’;⁶ then, such choice become a fixed habit; and finally, choice fully rationalized and in harmony with nature. It is at this final stage that the Good properly so called first emerges and comes to be understood in its true nature.

Man’s first attraction is towards the things in accordance with nature; but as soon as he has understanding, or rather become capable of ‘conception’—in Stoic phraseology *ennoia*—and has discerned the order and so to speak harmony that governs conduct, he thereupon esteems this harmony far more highly than all the things for which he originally felt an affection, and by exercise of intelligence and reason infers the conclusion that herein resides the Chief Good of man, the thing that is praiseworthy and desirable for its own sake; and that inasmuch as this consists in what the Stoics term *homologia* and we with your approval may call ‘conformity’;⁷—inasmuch I say as in this resides that Good which is the End to which all else is a means, moral conduct and Moral Worth itself, which alone is counted as a good, although of subsequent development, is nevertheless the sole thing that is for its own efficacy and value desirable, whereas none of the primary objects of nature is desirable for its own sake.

But since those actions which I have termed ‘appropriate acts’ are based on the primary natural objects, it follows that the former are means to the latter. Hence it may correctly be said that all ‘appropriate acts’ are means to the end of

⁵ This parenthesis has no relevance to the context.

⁶ The Latin is here inadequate; what is meant is apparently that the adult deliberately selects the natural Goods which as a child he pursued instinctively, and that the selection is now an *officium*. If however *cum officio* is the mark of *selectio* at this later stage, Cicero is inaccurate above when he applies *officium* to the instinct of self-preservation and the instinctive choice of natural Goods. On the other hand it is not clear why these should not be included under *kathēkon* ‘appropriate action’ or *officium* as defined at § 58, ‘an act of which a probable account or reason can be given.’

⁷ ‘To live conformably,’ *μολογουμινω ζν*, was Zeno’s formula for the End; it was interpreted as meaning ‘to live on one harmonious plan.’ Cleanthes added, *τ φσει*, ‘to live in conformity with nature.’

attaining the primary needs of nature. Yet it must not be inferred that their attainment is the ultimate Good, inasmuch as moral action is not one of the primary natural attractions, but is an outgrowth of these, a later development, as I have said. At the same time moral action is in accordance with nature, and stimulates our desire far more strongly than all the objects that attracted us earlier. But at this point a caution is necessary at the outset. It will be an error to infer that this view implies *two* Ultimate Goods. For though if a man were to make it his purpose to take a true aim with a spear or arrow at some mark, his ultimate end, corresponding to the ultimate good as we pronounce it, would be to do all he could to aim straight: the man in this illustration would have to do everything to aim straight, and yet, although he did everything to attain his purpose, his ‘ultimate End,’ so to speak, would be what corresponded to what we call the Chief Good in the conduct of life, whereas the actual hitting of the mark would be in our phrase ‘to be chosen’ but not ‘to be desired.’

“Again, as all ‘appropriate acts’ are based on the primary impulses of nature, it follows that Wisdom itself is based on them also. But as it often happens that a man who is introduced to another values this new friend more highly than he does the person who gave him the introduction, so in like manner it is by no means surprising that though we are first commended to Wisdom by the primary natural instincts, afterwards Wisdom itself becomes dearer to us than are the instincts from which we came to her. And just as our limbs are so fashioned that it is clear that they were bestowed upon us with a view to a certain mode of life, so our faculty of appetite, in Greek *hormē*, was obviously designed not for any kind of life one may choose, but for a particular mode of living; and the same is true of Reason and of perfected Reason.

For just as an actor or dancer has assigned to him not any but a certain particular part or dance, so life has to be conducted in a certain fixed way, and not in any way we like. This fixed way we speak of as ‘conformable’ and suitable. In fact we do not consider Wisdom to be like seamanship or medicine, but rather like the arts of acting and of dancing just mentioned; its End, being the actual exercise⁸ of the art, is contained within the art itself, and is not something extraneous to it. At the same time there is also another point which marks a dissimilarity between Wisdom and these arts as well. In the latter a movement perfectly executed nevertheless does not involve all the various motions which together constitute the subject matter of the art; whereas in the sphere of conduct, what we may call, if you approve, ‘right actions,’ or ‘rightly performed actions,’ in Stoic phraseology *katorthōmata*, contain all the factors of virtue. For Wisdom alone is entirely self-contained, which is not the case with the other arts.

It is erroneous, however, to place the End of medicine or of navigation exactly on a par with the End of Wisdom. For Wisdom includes also magnanimity and justice and a sense of superiority to all the accidents of man’s estate, but this is not the case with the other arts. Again, even the very virtues I have just mentioned cannot be attained by anyone unless he has realized that all things are indifferent and indistinguishable except moral worth and baseness.

“We may now observe how strikingly the principles I have established support the following corollaries. Inasmuch as the final aim—(and you have observed, no doubt, that I have all along been translating the Greek term *telos* either by ‘final’ or ‘ultimate aim,’ or ‘chief Good,’ and for ‘final or ultimate aim’ we may also substitute ‘End’)—inasmuch then as the final aim is to live in agreement and harmony with nature, it necessarily follows that all wise men at all times enjoy a happy, perfect and fortunate life, free from all hindrance, interference or want. The essential principle not merely of the system of philosophy I am discussing but also of our life and destinies is, that we should believe Moral Worth to be the only good. This principle might be amplified and elaborated in the rhetorical manner, with great length and fullness and with all the resources of choice diction and impressive argument; but for my own part I like the concise and pointed ‘consequences’ of the Stoics.

⁸ *Effectio* is here taken as equivalent to the Aristotelian *praxis*, as in § 45; but it might be construed as having the sense of ‘effectus’ in *Tusc.* 2.3 *viz.* *ergon* in its wider sense, the product of an art, covering both *praxis*, the actual exercise of the art, which is the product of a ‘practic’ art, and *ergon* in the narrower sense, ‘effectus’ in § 32, the extraneous product of a ‘poiëtic’ or constructive art.

“They put their arguments in the following syllogistic form: Whatever is good is praiseworthy; but whatever is praiseworthy is morally honourable: therefore that which is good is morally honourable. Does this seem to you a valid deduction? Surely it must: you can see that the conclusion consists in what necessarily resulted from the two premises. The usual line of reply is to deny the major premise, and say that not everything good is praiseworthy; for there is no denying that what is praiseworthy is morally honourable. But it would be paradoxical to maintain that there is something good which is not desirable; or desirable that is not pleasing; or if pleasing, not also esteemed; and therefore approved as well; and so also praiseworthy. But the praiseworthy is the morally honourable. Hence it follows that what is good is also morally honourable.

“Next I ask, who can be proud of a life that is miserable or not happy? It follows that one can only be proud of one’s lot when it is a happy one. This proves that the happy life is a thing that deserves (so to put it) that one should be proud of it; and this cannot rightly be said of any life but one morally honourable. Therefore the moral life is the happy life. And the man who deserves and wins praise has exceptional cause for pride and self-satisfaction; but these things count for so much that he can justly be pronounced happy; therefore the life of such a man can with full correctness be described as happy also. Thus if Moral Worth is the criterion of happiness, Moral Worth must be deemed the only Good.

“Once more; could it be denied that it is impossible for there ever to exist a man of steadfast, firm and lofty mind, such a one as we call a brave man, unless it be established that pain is not an evil? For just as it is impossible for one who counts death as an evil not to fear death, so in no case can a man disregard and despise a thing that he decides to be evil. This being laid down as generally admitted, we take as our minor premise that the brave and high-minded man despises and holds of no account all the accidents to which mankind is liable. The conclusion follows that nothing is evil that is not base. Also, your lofty, distinguished, magnanimous and truly brave man, who thinks all human vicissitudes beneath him, I mean, the character we desire to produce, our ideal man, must unquestionably have faith in himself and in his own character both past and future, and think well of himself, holding that no ill can befall the wise man. Here then is another proof of the same position, that Moral Worth alone is good, and that to live honourably, that is virtuously, is to live happily.

“I am well aware, it is true, that varieties of opinion have existed among philosophers, I mean among those of them who have placed the Chief Good, the ultimate aim as I call it, in the mind. Some of those who adopted this view fell into error; but nevertheless I rank all those, of whatever type, who have placed the Chief Good in the mind and in virtue, not merely above the three philosophers⁹ who dissociate the Chief Good from virtue altogether and identified it either with pleasure or freedom from pain or the primary impulses of nature, but also above the other three, who held that virtue would be incomplete without some enhancement, and therefore added to it one or other respectively of the three things I have just enumerated.

But still those thinkers are quite beside the mark who pronounced the ultimate Good to be a life devoted to knowledge; and those who declared that all things are indifferent, and that the Wise Man will secure happiness by not preferring any one thing in the least degree to any other; and those again who said, as some members of the Academy are said to have maintained, that the final Good and supreme duty of the Wise Man is to resist appearances and resolutely withhold his assent to the reality of sense-impressions. It is customary to take these doctrines severally and reply to them at length. But there is really no need to labour what is self-evident; and what could be more obvious than that, if we can exercise no choice as between things consonant with and things contrary to nature, the much-prized and belauded virtue of Prudence is abolished altogether? Eliminating therefore the views just enumerated and any others that resemble them, we are left with the conclusion that the Chief Good consists in applying to the conduct of life a knowledge of the working of natural causes, choosing what is in accordance with nature and rejecting what is contrary to it; in other words, the Chief Good is to live in agreement and in harmony with nature.

⁹ For these various schools see *V.20-23*.

“But¹⁰ in the other arts when we speak of an ‘artistic’ performance, this quality must be considered as in a sense subsequent to and a result of the action; it is what the Stoics term *epigennēmatikon* (in the nature of an after-growth). Whereas in conduct, when we speak of an act as ‘wise,’ the term is applied with full correctness from the first inception of the act. For every action that the Wise Man initiates must necessarily be complete forthwith in all its parts; since the thing desirable, as we term it, consists in his activity. As it is a sin to betray one’s country, to use violence to one’s parents, to rob a temple, where the offence lies in the result of the act, so the passions of fear, grief and lust are sins, even when no extraneous result ensues. The latter are sins not in their subsequent effects, but immediately upon their inception; similarly, actions springing from virtue are to be judged right from their first inception, and not in their successful completion.

“Again, the term ‘Good,’ which has been employed so frequently in this discourse, is also explained by definition. The Stoic definitions do indeed differ from one another in a very minute degree, but they all point in the same direction. Personally I agree with Diogenes in defining the Good as that which is by nature perfect. He was led by this also to pronounce the ‘beneficial’ (for so let us render the Greek *ōphelēma*) to be a motion or state in accordance with that which is by nature perfect. Now notions of things are produced in the mind when something has become known either by experience or combination of ideas or analogy or logical inference. The mind ascends by inference from the things in accordance with nature till finally it arrives at the notion of Good.

At the same time Goodness is absolute, and is not a question of degree; the Good is recognized and pronounced to be good from its own inherent properties and not by comparison with other things. Just as honey, though extremely sweet, is yet perceived to be sweet by its own peculiar kind of flavour and not by being compared with something else, so this Good which we are discussing is indeed superlatively valuable, yet its value depends on kind and not on quantity. Value, in Greek *axiā*, is not counted as a Good nor yet as an Evil; so that however much you increase it in amount, it will still remain the same in kind. The value of Virtue is therefore peculiar and distinct; it depends on kind and not on degree.

“Moreover the emotions of the mind, which harass and embitter the life of the foolish (the Greek term for these is *pathos*, and I might have rendered this literally and styled them ‘diseases,’ but the word ‘disease’ would not suit all instances; for example, no one speaks of pity, nor yet anger, as a disease, though the Greeks term these *pathos*. Let us then accept the term ‘emotion,’ the very sound of which seems to denote something vicious, and these emotions are not excited by any natural influence. The list of the emotions is divided into four classes, with numerous subdivisions, namely sorrow, fear, lust, and that mental emotion which the Stoics call by a name that also denotes a bodily feeling, *hēdonē* ‘pleasure,’ but which I prefer to style ‘delight,’ meaning the sensuous elation of the mind when in a state of exaltation), these emotions, I say, are not excited by any influence of nature; they are all of them mere fancies and frivolous opinions. Therefore the Wise Man will always be free from them.

“The view that all Moral Worth is intrinsically desirable is one that we hold in common with many other systems of philosophy. Excepting three schools that shut out Virtue from the Chief Good altogether, all the remaining philosophers are committed to this opinion, and most of all the Stoics, with whom we are now concerned, and who hold that nothing else but Moral Worth is to be counted as a good at all. But this position is one that is extremely simple and easy to defend. For who is there, or who ever was there, of avarice so consuming and appetites so unbridled, that, even though willing to commit any crime to achieve his end, and even though absolutely secure of impunity, yet would not a hundred times rather attain the same object by innocent than by guilty means?

“Again, what desire for profit or advantage underlies our curiosity to learn the secrets of nature, the mode and the causes of the movements of the heavenly bodies? Who lives in such a boorish state, or who has become so rigidly insensible to natural impulses, as to feel a repugnance for these lofty studies and eschew them as valueless apart from

¹⁰ This section looks as if it had been transferred here by error from the end of § 24 (Reid).

any pleasure or profit they may bring? Or who is there who feels no sense of pleasure when he hears of the wise words and brave deeds of our forefathers,—of the Africani, or my great-grandfather whose name is always on your lips, and the other heroes of valour and of virtue?

On the other hand, what man of honourable family and good breeding and education is not shocked by moral baseness as such, even when it is not calculated to do him personally any harm? who can view without disgust a person whom he believes to be dissolute and an evil liver? who does not hate the mean, the empty, the frivolous, the worthless? Moreover, if we decide that baseness is not a thing to be avoided for its own sake, what arguments can be urged against men's indulging in every sort of unseemliness in privacy and under cover of darkness, unless they are deterred by the essential and intrinsic ugliness of what is base? Endless reasons could be given in support of this view, but they are not necessary. For nothing is less open to doubt than that what is morally good is to be desired for its own sake, and similarly what is morally bad is to be avoided for its own sake.

Again, the principle already discussed, that Moral Worth is the sole Good, involves the corollary that it is of more value than those neutral things which it procures. On the other hand when we say that folly, cowardice, injustice and intemperance are to be avoided because of the consequences they entail, this dictum must not be so construed as to appear inconsistent with the principle already laid down, that moral baseness alone is evil; for the reason that the consequences referred to are not a matter of bodily harm but of the base conduct to which vices give rise (the term 'vice'¹¹ I prefer to 'badness' as a translation of the Greek *kakiā*)."

"Indeed, Cato," said I, "your language is lucidity itself; it conveys your meaning exactly. In fact I feel you are teaching philosophy to speak Latin, and naturalizing her as a Roman citizen. Hitherto she has seemed a foreigner at Rome, and shy of conversing in our language; and this is especially so with your Stoic system because of its precision and subtlety alike of thought and language. (There are some philosophers, I know, who could express their ideas in any language; for they ignore Division and Definition altogether, and themselves profess that they only seek to commend doctrines to which nature assents without argument. Hence, their ideas being so far from recondite, they spend small pains on logical exposition.) So I am following you attentively, and am committing to memory all the terms you use to denote the conceptions we are discussing; for very likely I shall soon have to employ the same terms myself. Well, I think you are quite correct in calling the opposite of the virtues 'vices.' This is in conformity with the usage of our language. The word 'vice' denotes, I believe, that which is in its own nature 'vituperable'; or else 'vituperable' is derived from 'vice.' Whereas if you had rendered *kakiā* by 'badness' ('malice'), Latin usage would point us to another meaning, that of a single particular vice. As it is, we make 'vice' the opposite term to 'virtue' in general."

"Well, then," resumed Cato, "these principles established there follows a great dispute, which on the side of the Peripatetics was carried on with no great pertinacity (in fact their ignorance of logic renders their habitual style of discourse somewhat deficient in cogency); but your leader Carneades with his exceptional proficiency in logic and his consummate eloquence brought the controversy to a head. Carneades never ceased to contend that on the whole so-called 'problem of good and evil,' there was no disagreement as to facts between the Stoics and the Peripatetics, but only as to terms. For my part, however, nothing seems to me more manifest than that there is more of a real than a verbal difference of opinion between those philosophers on these points. I maintain that there is a far greater discrepancy between the Stoics and the Peripatetics as to facts than as to words. The Peripatetics say that all the things which under their system are called goods contribute to happiness; whereas our school does not believe that total happiness comprises everything that deserves to have a certain amount of value attached to it.

"Again, can anything be more certain than that on the theory of the school that counts pain as an evil, the Wise Man cannot be happy when he is being tortured on the rack? Whereas the system that considers pain no evil clearly proves that the Wise Man retains his happiness amidst the worst torments. The mere fact that men endure the same pain more

¹¹ vitium means normally a defect or imperfection rather than a moral failing or vice.

easily when they voluntarily undergo it for the sake of their country than when they suffer it for some lesser cause, shows that the intensity of the pain depends on the state of mind of the sufferer, not on its own intrinsic nature.

Further, on the Peripatetic theory that there are three kinds of goods, the more abundantly supplied a man is with bodily or external goods, the happier he is; but it does not follow that we Stoics can accept the same position, and say that the more a man has of those bodily things that are highly valued the happier he is. For the Peripatetics hold that the sum of happiness includes bodily advantages, but we deny this altogether. We hold that the multiplication even of those goods that in our view are truly so called does not render life happier or more desirable or of higher value; even less therefore is happiness affected by the accumulation of bodily advantages.

Clearly if wisdom and health be both desirable, a combination of the two would be more desirable than wisdom alone; but it is not the case that if both be deserving of value, wisdom *plus* health is worth more than wisdom by itself separately. We deem health to be deserving of a certain value, but we do not reckon it a good; at the same time we rate no value so highly as to place it above virtue. This is not the view of the Peripatetics, who are bound to say that an action which is both morally good and not attended by pain is more desirable than the same action if accompanied by pain. We think otherwise—whether rightly or wrongly, I will consider later; but how could there be a wider or more real difference of opinion?

“The light of a lamp is eclipsed and overpowered by the rays of the sun; a drop of honey is lost in the vastness of the Aegean sea; an additional sixpence is nothing amid the wealth of Croesus, or a single step in the journey from here to India. Similarly if the Stoic definition of the End of Goods be accepted, it follows that all the value you set on bodily advantages must be absolutely eclipsed and annihilated by the brilliance and the majesty of virtue. And just as opportuneness (for so let us translate *eukairia*) is not increased by prolongation in time (since things we call opportune have attained their proper measure), so right conduct (for thus I translate *katorthōsis*, since *katorthōma* is a single right action), right conduct, I say, and also propriety, and lastly Good itself, which consists in harmony with nature, are not capable of increase or addition.

For these things that I speak of, like opportuneness before mentioned, are not made greater by prolongation. And on this ground the Stoics do not deem happiness to be any more attractive or desirable if it be lasting than if it be brief; and they use this illustration: Just as, supposing the merit of a shoe were to fit the foot, many shoes would not be superior to few shoes nor bigger shoes to smaller ones, so, in the case of things the good of which consists solely and entirely in propriety and opportuneness, a larger number of these things will not be rated higher than a smaller number nor those lasting longer to those of shorter duration.

No is there much point in the argument that, if good health is more valuable when lasting than when brief, therefore the exercise of wisdom also is worth most when it continues longest. This ignores the fact that, whereas the value of health is estimated by duration, that of virtue is measured by opportuneness; so that those who use the argument in question might equally be expected to say that an easy death or an easy child-birth would be better if protracted than if speedy. They fail to see that some things are rendered more valuable by brevity as others by prolongation.

So it would be consistent with the principles already stated that on the theory of those who deem the End of Goods, that which we term the extreme or ultimate Good, to be capable of degree, they should also hold that one man can be wiser than another, and similarly that one can commit a more sinful or more righteous action than another; which it is not open for us to say, who do not think that the end of Goods can vary in degree. For just as a drowning man is no more able to breathe if he be not far from the surface of the water, so that he might at any moment emerge, than if he were actually at the bottom already, and just as a puppy on the point of opening its eyes is no less blind than one just born, similarly a man that has made some progress towards the state of virtue is none the less in misery than he that has made no progress at all.

“I am aware that all this seems paradoxical; but as our previous conclusions are undoubtedly true and well established, and as these are the logical inferences from them, the truth of these inferences also cannot be called in question. Yet although the Stoics deny that either virtues or vices can be increased in degree, they nevertheless believe that each of them can be in a sense expanded and widened in scope.¹²

Wealth again, in the opinion of Diogenes, though so important for pleasure and health as to be not merely conducive but actually essential to them, yet has not the same effect in relation to virtue, nor yet in the case of the other arts; for money may be a guide to these, but cannot form an essential factor in them; therefore although if pleasure or if good health be a good, wealth also must be counted a good, yet if wisdom is a good, it does not follow that we must also pronounce wealth to be a good. Nor can anything which is not a good be essential to a thing that is a good; and hence, because acts of cognition and of comprehension, which form the raw material of the arts, excite desire, since wealth is not a good, wealth cannot be essential to any art.

But even if we allowed wealth to be essential to the arts, the same argument nevertheless could not be applied to virtue, because virtue (as Diogenes argues) requires a great amount of thought and practice, which is not the case to the same extent with the arts,¹³ and because virtue involves life-long steadfastness, strength and consistency, whereas these qualities are not equally manifested in the arts.

“Next follows an exposition of the difference between things; for if we maintained that all things were absolutely indifferent, the whole of life would be thrown into confusion, as it is by Aristo, and no function or task could be found for wisdom, since there would be absolutely no distinction between the things that pertain to the conduct of life, and no choice need be exercised among them. Accordingly after conclusively proving that morality alone is good and baseness alone evil, the Stoics went on to affirm that among those things which were of no importance for happiness or misery, there was nevertheless an element of difference, making some of them of positive and others of negative value, and others neutral.

Again among things valuable—*e.g.* health, unimpaired senses, freedom from pain, fame, wealth and the like—they said that some afford us adequate grounds for preferring them to other things, while others are not of this nature; and similarly among those things which are of negative value some afford adequate grounds for our rejecting them, such as pain, disease, loss of the senses, poverty, disgrace, and the like; others not so. Hence arose the distinction, in Zeno’s terminology, between *proēgmena* and the opposite, *apoproēgmena*—for Zeno using the copious Greek language still employed novel words coined for the occasion, a licence not allowed to us with the poor vocabulary of Latin; though you are fond of saying that Latin is actually more copious than Greek. However, to make it easier to understand the meaning of this term it will not be out of place to explain the method which Zeno pursued in coining it.

“In a royal court, Zeno remarks, no one speaks of the king himself as ‘promoted’ to honour (for that is the meaning of *proēgmenon*), but the term is applied to those holding some office of state whose rank most nearly approaches, though it is second to, the royal pre-eminence; similarly in the conduct of life the title *proēgmenon*, that is, ‘promoted,’ is to be given not to those things which are in the first rank, but to those which hold the second place; for these we may use either the term suggested (for that will be a literal translation) or ‘advanced’ and ‘degraded,’ or the term we have been using all along, ‘preferred’ or ‘superior,’ and for the opposite ‘rejected.’ If the meaning is intelligible we need not be punctilious about the use of words.

But since we declare that everything that is good occupies the first rank, it follows that this which we entitle preferred or superior is neither good nor evil; and accordingly we define it as being indifferent but possessed of a moderate

¹² *i.e.* They may be exercised on a larger or smaller scale.

¹³ It is to be remembered that ‘*artes*,’ *technai*, included professions, trades and handicrafts as well as sciences and the fine arts, and it is of the simpler crafts that philosophers, following Socrates, were mostly thinking when they compared and contrasted the other ‘*artes*’ with the ‘*ars vivendi*.’

value—since it has occurred to me that I may use the word ‘indifferent’ to represent their term adiaphoron. For in fact, it was inevitable that the class of intermediate things should contain some things that were either in accordance with nature, or the reverse, and this being so, that this class should include some things which possessed moderate value, and, granting this, that some things of this class should be ‘preferred.’

There were good grounds therefore for making this distinction; and furthermore, to elucidate the matter still more clearly they put forward the following illustration: Just as, supposing we were to assume that our end and aim is to throw a knuckle-bone¹⁴ in such a way that it may *stand* upright, a bone that is thrown so as to *fall* upright will be in some measure ‘preferred’ or advanced’ in relation to the proposed end, and one that falls otherwise the reverse, and yet that ‘advance’ on the part of the knuckle-bone will not be a constituent part of the end indicated, so those things which are ‘preferred’ are it is true means to the End but are in no sense constituents of its essential nature.

“Next comes the division of goods into three classes, first those which are ‘constituents’ of the final end (for so I represent the term *telika*, this being a case of an idea which we may decide, as we agreed, to express in several words as we cannot do so in one, in order to make the meaning clear), secondly those which are ‘productive’ of the End, the Greek *poiētika*; and thirdly those which are both. The only instances of goods of the ‘constituent’ class are moral action; the only instance of a ‘productive’ good is a friend. Wisdom, according to the Stoics, is both constituent and productive; for as being itself an appropriate activity it comes under what I called the constituent class; as causing and producing moral actions, it can be called productive.

“These things which we call ‘preferred’ are in some cases preferred for their own sake, in others because they produce a certain result, and in others for both reasons; for their own sake, as a certain cast of features and of countenance, or a certain pose or movement, things which may be in themselves either preferable or to be rejected; others will be called preferred because they produce a certain result, for example, money; others again for both reasons, like sound senses and good health.

About good fame (that term being a better translation in this context than ‘glory’ of the Stoic expression *eudoxiā*) Chrysippus and Diogenes used to aver that, apart from any practical value it may possess, it is not worth stretching out a finger for; and I strongly agree with them. On the other hand their successors, finding themselves unable to resist the attacks of Carneades, declared that good fame, as I have called it, was preferred and desirable for its own sake, and that a man of good breeding and liberal education would desire to have the good opinion of his parents and relatives, and of good men in general, and that for its own sake and not for any practical advantage; and they argue that just as we desire the welfare of our children, even of such as may be born after we are dead, for their own sake, so a man ought to study his reputation even after death, for itself, even apart from any advantage.

“But although we pronounce Moral Worth to be the sole good, it is nevertheless consistent to perform an appropriate act, in spite of the fact that we count appropriate action neither a good nor an evil. For in the sphere of these neutral things there is an element of reasonableness, in the sense that an account can be rendered of it, and therefore in the sense that an account can also be rendered of its performance; and this proves that an appropriate act is an intermediate thing, to be reckoned neither as a good nor as the opposite. And since those things which are neither to be counted among virtues nor vices nevertheless contain a factor which can be useful, their element of utility is worth preserving. Again, this neutral class also includes action of a certain kind, *viz.* such that reason calls upon us to do or to produce some one of these neutral things; but an action reasonably performed we call an appropriate act; appropriate action therefore is included in the class which is reckoned neither as good nor the opposite.

¹⁴ Tali [*b*], real or artificial, were used as dice; they had four long sides and two pointed ends; of the sides two were broad and two narrow. The talus was said to be *rectus* when lying on a narrow side, and *pronus* when on a broad side. Thus *cadere rectus*, to alight upright when thrown, would be the first stage towards *assistere rectus*, to remain standing upright.

“It is also clear that some actions are performed by the Wise Man in the sphere of these neutral things. Well then, when he does such an action he judges it to be an appropriate act. And as his judgment on this point never errs, therefore appropriate action will exist in the sphere of these neutral things. The same thing is also proved by the following argument: We observe that something exists which we call right action; but this is an appropriate act perfectly performed; therefore there will also be such a thing as an imperfect appropriate act; so that, if to restore a trust as a matter of principle is a right act, to restore a trust must be counted as an appropriate act; the addition of the qualification ‘on principle’ makes it a right action: the mere restitution in itself is counted an appropriate act. Again, since there can be no question but that class of things we call neutral includes some things worthy to be chosen and others to be rejected; therefore whatever is done or described in this manner is entirely included under the term appropriate action. This shows that since love of self is implanted by nature in all men, both the foolish and the wise alike will choose what is in accordance with nature and reject the contrary. Thus there is a region of appropriate action which is common to the wise and the unwise; and this proves that appropriate action deals with the things we call neutral.

But since these neutral things form the basis of all appropriate acts, there is good ground for the dictum that it is with these things that all our practical deliberations deal, including the will to live and the will to quit this life. When a man’s circumstances contain a preponderance of things in accordance with nature, it is appropriate for him to remain alive; when he possesses or sees in prospect a majority of the contrary things, it is appropriate for him to depart from life. This makes it plain that it is on occasion appropriate for the Wise Man to quit life although he is happy, and also of the Foolish Man to remain in life although he is miserable.

For with the Stoics good and evil, as has repeatedly been said already, are a subsequent outgrowth; whereas the primary things of nature, whether favourable or the reverse,¹⁵ fall under the judgment and choice of the Wise Man, and form so to speak the subject-matter, the given material with which wisdom deals. Therefore the reasons both for remaining in life and for departing from it are to be measured entirely by the primary things of nature aforesaid. For the virtuous man is not necessarily retained in life by virtue, and also those who are devoid of virtue need not necessarily seek death. And very often it is appropriate for the Wise Man to abandon life at a moment when he is enjoying supreme happiness, if an opportunity offers for making a timely exit. For the Stoic view is that happiness, which means life in harmony with nature, is a matter of seizing the right moment. So that Wisdom her very self upon occasion bids the Wise Man to leave her. Hence, as vice does not possess the power of furnishing a reason for suicide, it is clear that even for the foolish, who are also miserable, it is appropriate to remain alive if they possess a predominance of those things which we pronounce to be in accordance with nature. And since the fool is equally miserable when departing from life and when remaining in it, and the undesirability of his life is not increased by its prolongation, there is good ground for saying that those who are in a position to enjoy a preponderance of things that are natural ought to remain in life.

“Again, it is held by the Stoics to be important to understand that nature creates in parents an affection for their children; and parental affection is the source to which we trace the origin of the association of the human race in communities. This cannot but be clear in the first place from the conformation of the body and its members, which by themselves are enough to show that nature’s scheme included the procreation of offspring. Yet it could not be consistent that nature should at once intend offspring to be born and make no provision for that offspring when born to be loved and cherished. Even in the lower animals nature’s operation can be clearly discerned; when we observe the labour that they spend on bearing and rearing their young, we seem to be listening to the actual voice of nature. Hence as it is manifest that it is natural for us to shrink from pain, so it is clear that we derive from nature herself the impulse to love those to whom we have given birth.

From this impulse is developed the sense of mutual attraction which unites human beings as such; this also is bestowed

¹⁵ Loosely put for ‘the primary things of nature and their opposites.’

by nature. The mere fact of their common humanity requires that one man should feel another man to be akin to him.¹⁶ For just as some of the parts of the body, such as the eyes and the ears, are created as it were for their own sakes, while others like the legs or the hands also subserve the utility of the rest of the members, so some very large animals are born for themselves alone; whereas the sea-pen,¹⁷ as it is called, in its roomy shell, and the creature named the ‘pinoteres’ because it keeps watch over the sea-pen, which swims out of the sea-pen’s shell, then retires back into it and is shut up inside, thus appearing to have warned its host to be on its guard—these creatures, and also the ant, the bee, the stork, do certain actions for the sake of others besides themselves. With human beings this bond of mutual aid is far more intimate. It follows that we are by nature fitted to form unions, societies and states.

“Again, they hold that the universe is governed by divine will; it is a city or state of which both men and gods are members, and each one of us is a part of this universe; from which it is a natural consequence that we should prefer the common advantage to our own. For just as the laws set the safety of all above the safety of individuals, so a good, wise and law-abiding man, conscious of his duty to the state, studies the advantage of all more than that of himself or of any single individual. The traitor to his country does not deserve greater reprobation than the man who betrays the common advantage or security for the sake of his own advantage or security. This explains why praise is owed to one who dies for the commonwealth, because it becomes us to love our country more than ourselves. And as we feel it wicked and inhuman for men to declare (the saying is usually expressed in a familiar Greek line)¹⁸ that they care not if, when they themselves are dead, the universal conflagration ensues, it is undoubtedly true that we are bound to study the interest of posterity also for its own sake.

“This is the feeling that has given rise to the practice of making a will and appointing guardians for one’s children when one is dying. And the fact that no one would care to pass his life alone in a desert, even though supplied with pleasures in unbounded profusion, readily shows that we are born for society and intercourse, and for a natural partnership with our fellow men. Moreover nature inspires us with the desire to benefit as many people as we can, and especially by imparting information and the principles of wisdom.

Hence it would be hard to discover anyone who will not impart to another any knowledge that he may himself possess; [a] so strong is our propensity not only to learn but also to teach. And just as bulls have a natural instinct to fight with all their strength and force in defending their calves against lions, so men of exceptional gifts and capacity for service, like Hercules and Liber in the legends, feel a natural impulse to be the protectors of the human race. Also when we confer upon Jove the titles of Most Good and Most Great, of Saviour, Lord of Guests, Rallier of Battles, what we mean to imply is that the safety of mankind lies in his keeping. But how inconsistent it would be for us to expect the immortal gods to love and cherish us, when we ourselves despise and neglect one another! Therefore just as we actually use our limbs before we have learnt for what particular useful purpose they were bestowed upon us, so we are united and allied by nature in the common society of the state. Were this not so, there would be no room either for justice or benevolence.

“But just as they hold that man is united with man by the bonds of right, so they consider that no right exists as between man and beast. For Chrysippus well said, that all other things were created for the sake of men and gods, but that these exist for their own mutual fellowship and society, so that men can make use of beasts for their own purposes without injustice. And the nature of man, he said, is such, that as it were a code of law subsists between the individual and the human race, so that he who upholds this code will be just and he who departs from it, unjust. But just as, though the theatre is a public place, yet it is correct to say that the particular seat a man has taken belongs to him, so in the state or in the universe, though these are common to all, no principle of justice militates against the possession of private property.

¹⁶ A reminiscence of Terence, who humorously puts this Stoic tag into the mouth of Chremes as an excuse for his neighbourly curiosity: *Homo sum, humani nil a me alienum puto*, *Heaut.* 25, Cp. I.3, II.14.

¹⁷ A mussel in whose ‘beard’ a small crab is often found entangled. The notion of their partnership is found in Aristotle; Chrysippus introduced it as an illustration in *Ethics*.

¹⁸ *μο θανντο γαα μυχθτω πυρ*: said to have been quoted by Tiberius and Nero.

Again, since we see that man is designed by nature to safeguard and protect his fellows, it follows from this natural disposition, that the Wise Man should desire to engage in politics and government, and also to live in accordance with nature by taking to himself a wife and desiring to have children by her. Even the passion of love when pure is not thought incompatible with the character of the Stoic sage. As for the principles and habits of the Cynics,¹⁹ some say that these befit the Wise Man, if circumstances should happen to indicate this course of action; but other Stoics reject the Cynic rule unconditionally.

“To safeguard the universal alliance, solidarity and affection that subsist between man and man, the Stoics held that both ‘benefits’ and ‘injuries’ (in their terminology, *ōphelēmata* and *blammata*) are common, the former doing good and the latter harm; and they pronounce them to be not only ‘common’ but also ‘equal.’ ‘Disadvantages’ and ‘advantages’ (for so I render *euchrēstēmata* and *duschrēstēmata*) they held to be ‘common’ but not ‘equal.’ For things ‘beneficial’ and ‘injurious’ are goods and evils respectively, and these must needs be equal; but ‘advantages’ and ‘disadvantages’ belong to the class we speak of as ‘preferred’ and ‘rejected,’ and these may differ in degree. But whereas ‘benefits’ and ‘injuries’ are pronounced to be ‘common,’ righteous and sinful acts are not considered ‘common.’²⁰

“They recommend the cultivation of friendship, classing it among ‘things beneficial.’ In friendship some profess that the Wise Man will hold his friends’ interests as dear as his own, while others say that a man’s own interests must necessarily be dearer to him; at the same time the latter admit that to enrich oneself by another’s loss is an action repugnant to that justice towards which we seem to possess a natural propensity. But the school I am discussing emphatically rejects the view that we adopt or approve either justice or friendship for the sake of their utility. For if it were so, the same claims of utility would be able to undermine and overthrow them. In fact the very existence of both justice and friendship will be impossible if they are not desired for their own sake.

Right moreover, properly so styled and entitled, exists (they aver) by nature; and it is foreign to the nature of the Wise Man not only to wrong but even to hurt anyone. Nor again is it righteous to enter into a partnership in wrongdoing with one’s friends or benefactors; and it is most truly and cogently maintained that honesty is always the best policy, and that whatever is fair and just is also honourable,²¹ and conversely whatever is honourable will also be just and fair.

“To the virtues we have discussed they also add Dialectic and Natural Philosophy. Both of these they entitle by the name of virtue; the former because it conveys a method that guards us for giving assent to any falsehood or ever being deceived by specious probability, and enables us to retain and to defend the truths that we have learned about good and evil; for without the art of Dialectic they hold that any man may be seduced from truth into error. If therefore rashness and ignorance are in all matters fraught with mischief, the art which removes them is correctly entitled a virtue.

“The same honour is also bestowed with good reason upon Natural Philosophy, because he who is to live in accordance with nature must base his principles upon the system and government of the entire world. Nor again can anyone judge truly of things good and evil, save by a knowledge of the whole plan of nature and also of the life of the gods, and of the answer to the question whether the nature of man is or is not in harmony with that of the universe. And no one without Natural Philosophy can discern the value (and their value is very great) of the ancient maxims and precepts of the Wise Men, such as to ‘obey occasion,’ ‘follow God,’ ‘know thyself,’ and ‘moderation in all things.’ Also this science alone can impart a conception of the power of nature in fostering justice and maintaining friendship and the

¹⁹ The Cynics cast off the ties of country and family, and proclaimed themselves *Kosmou Polítai*, citizens of the Universe and members of the universal brotherhood of man.

²⁰ Moral and immoral acts (a) viewed for their results for good and ill affect all mankind, (b) viewed in themselves concern the agent only; while in both aspects they do not admit of degree, but are either good or bad, right or wrong absolutely. Whereas things indifferent (*i.e.* everything but moral good and evil) are more or less advantageous or the reverse, both to the person immediately concerned and to the world at large.

²¹ The sense seems here to require utile, ‘useful,’ rather than honestum; unless honestum is intended to mean ‘held in popular esteem,’ and so profitable.

rest of the affections; nor again without unfolding nature's secrets can we understand the sentiment of piety towards the gods or the degree of gratitude that we owe to them.

“However I begin to perceive that I have let myself be carried beyond the requirements of the plan that I set before me. The fact is that I have been led on by the marvellous structure of the Stoic system and the miraculous sequence of its topics; pray tell me seriously, does it not fill you with admiration? Nothing is more finished, more nicely ordered, than nature; but what has nature, what have the products of handicraft to show that is so well constructed, so firmly jointed and welded into one? Where do you find a conclusion inconsistent with its premise, or a discrepancy between an earlier and a later statement? Where is lacking such close interconnexion of the parts that, if you alter a single letter, you shake the whole structure? Though indeed there is nothing that it would be possible to alter.

“Then, how dignified, how lofty, how consistent is the character of the Wise Man as they depict it! Since reason has proved that moral worth is the sole good, it follows that he must always be happy, and that all those titles which the ignorant are so fond of deriding do in very truth belong to him. For he will have a better claim to the title of King than Tarquin, who could not rule either himself or his subjects; a better right to the name of ‘Master²² of the People’ (for that is what a dictator is) than Sulla, who was a master of three pestilential vices, licentiousness, avarice and cruelty; a better right to be called rich than Crassus, who had he lacked nothing could never have been induced to cross the Euphrates with no pretext for war. Rightly will he be said to own all things, who alone knows how to use all things; rightly also will he be styled beautiful, for the features of the soul are fairer than those of the body; rightly the one and only free man, as subject to no man's authority, and slave of no appetite; rightly unconquerable, for though his body be thrown into fetters, no bondage can enchain his soul.

Nor need he wait for any period of time, that the decision whether he has been happy or not may be finally pronounced only when he has rounded off his life's last day in death,—the famous warning so unwisely given to Croesus by old Solon, one of the seven Wise Men; for had Croesus ever been happy, he would have carried his happiness uninterrupted to the pyre raised for him by Cyrus. If then it be true that all the good and none but the good are happy, what possession is more precious than philosophy, what more divine than virtue?”

The Loeb Editor's Notes:

Thayer's Notes:

²² The old title of the dictators at Rome. Cicero plays on the meaning of magister, ‘teacher.’

CHAPTER 6

Book VI

With these words he concluded. “A most faithful and lucid exposition, Cato,” said I, “considering the wide range of your subject and its obscurity. Clearly I must either give up all idea of replying, or must take time to think it over; it is no easy task to get a thorough grasp of a system so elaborate, even if erroneous (for on that point I do not yet venture to speak), but at all events so highly finished both in its first principles and in their working out.” “You don’t say so!” replied Cato. “Do you suppose I am going to allow our suit to be adjourned, when I see you under this new law¹ replying for the defence on the same day as your opponent concludes for the prosecution, and keeping your speech within a three hours’ limit? Though you will find your present case as shaky as any of those which you now and then succeed in pulling off. So tackle this one like the rest, particularly as the subject is familiar; others have handled it before, and so have you repeatedly, so that you can hardly be gravelled for lack of matter.”

“I protest,” I exclaimed, “I am not by way of challenging the Stoics lightly; not that I agree with them entirely, but modesty restrains me: there is so much in their teaching that I can hardly understand.” “I admit,” he said, “that some parts are obscure, yet the Stoics do not affect an obscure style on purpose; the obscurity is inherent in the doctrines themselves.” “How is it, then,” I replied, “that when the same doctrines are expounded by the Peripatetics, every word is intelligible?” “The same doctrines?” he cried. “Have I not said enough to show that the disagreement between the Stoics and the Peripatetics is not a matter of words, but concerns the entire substance of their whole system?” “O well, Cato,” I rejoined, “if you can prove that, you are welcome to claim me as a whole-hearted convert.” “I did think,” said he, “that I had said enough. So let us take this question first, if you like; or if you prefer another topic, we will take this later on.” “Nay,” said I, “as to that matter I shall use my own discretion, unless this is an unfair stipulation, and deal with each subject as it comes up.” “Have it your way,” he replied: “my plan would have been more suitable, but it is fair to let a man choose for himself.”

“My view, then, Cato,” I proceeded, “is this, that those old disciples of Plato, Speusippus, Aristotle and Xenocrates, and afterwards their pupils Polemo and Theophrastus, had developed a doctrine that left nothing to be desired either in fullness or finish, so that Zeno on becoming the pupil of Polemo had no reason for differing either from his master himself or from his master’s predecessors. The outline of their theory was as follows—but I should be glad if you would

¹ Passed by Pompey, 52 B.C., to limit the concluding speeches in lawsuits to two hours for the prosecution and three for the defence, both to be delivered on the same day.

call attention to any point you may desire to correct without waiting while I deal with the whole of your discourse; for I think I shall have to place their entire system in conflict with the whole of yours.

Well, these philosophers observed

1. that we are so constituted as to have a natural aptitude for the recognized and standard virtues in general, I mean Justice, Temperance and the others of that class (all of which resemble the end of the arts, and differ only by excelling them in the material with which they work and in their treatment of it); they observed moreover that we pursue these virtues with a more lofty enthusiasm than we do the arts; and
2. that we possess an implanted or rather an innate appetite for knowledge, and
3. that we are naturally disposed towards social life with our fellow men and towards fellowship and community with the human race; and that these instincts are displayed most clearly in the most highly endowed natures.² Accordingly they divided philosophy into three departments, a division that was retained, as we notice, by Zeno.

One of these departments is the science that is held to give rules for the formation of moral character; this part, which is the foundation of our present discussion, I defer. For I shall consider later the question, what is the End of Goods. For the present I only say that the topic of what I think may fitly be entitled Civic Science (the adjective in Greek is *politikos*) was handled with authority and fullness by the early Peripatetics and Academics, who agreed in substance though they differed in terminology.

“What a vast amount they have written on politics and on jurisprudence! how many precepts of oratory they have left us in their treatises, and how many examples in their discourses! In the first place, even the topics that required close reasoning they handled in a neat and polished manner, employing now definition, now division; as indeed your school does also, but your style is rather out-at-elbows, while theirs is noticeably elegant.

Then, in themes demanding ornate and dignified treatment, however imposing, how brilliant is their diction! On Justice, Temperance, Courage, Friendship, on the conduct of life, the pursuit of wisdom, the career of the statesman,—no hair-splitting like that of the Stoics, no niggling minutiae, but the loftier passages studiously ornate, and the minor topics studiously plain and clear. As a result, think of their consolations, their exhortations, even their warnings and counsels, addressed to men of the highest eminence! In fact, their rhetorical exercises were twofold, like the nature of the subjects themselves. For every question for debate can be argued either on the general issue, ignoring the persons or circumstances involved, or, these also being taken into consideration, on a point of fact or of law or of nomenclature. They therefore practised themselves in both kinds; and this training produced their remarkable fluency in each class of discussion.

This whole field Zeno and his successors were either unable or unwilling to discover; at all events they left it untouched. Cleanthes it is true wrote a treatise on rhetoric, and Chrysippus wrote one too, but what are they like? why, they furnish a complete manual for anyone whose ambition is to hold his tongue; you can judge then of their style, coining new words, discarding those approved by use. ‘But,’ you will say, ‘think how vast are the themes that they essay! for example, that this entire universe is our own town.’³ You see the magnitude of a Stoic’s task, to convince an inhabitant of Circeii that the whole vast world is his own borough! ‘If so, he must rouse his audience to enthusiasm.’ What? a

² This sentence might seem to imply that the three departments of philosophy were

(a) Ethics,

(b) Physics and Logic,

(c) Politics;

but in the following chapters Cicero adopts the normal division,

(a) Logic, *c. IV*,

(b) Physics, *c. V*,

(c) Ethics, *cc. VI foll.*,

with its two subordinate branches of Politics and Rhetoric which are dismissed parenthetically in *c. III*.

³ Cp. *III.64*.

Stoic rouse enthusiasm? He is much more likely to extinguish any enthusiasm the student may have had to begin with. Even those brief maxims that you propounded, that the Wise Man alone is king, dictator, millionaire,—neatly rounded off no doubt as you put them: of course, for you learnt them from professors of rhetoric;—but how bald those very maxims, on the lips of the Stoics, when they talk about the potency of virtue,—virtue which they rate so highly that it can of itself, they say, confer happiness! Their meagre little syllogisms are mere pin-pricks; they may convince the intellect, but they cannot convert the heart, and the hearer goes away no better than he came. What they say is possibly true, and certainly important; but the way in which they say it is wrong; it is far too petty.

“Next come Logic and Natural Science; for the problem of Ethics, as I said, we shall notice later, concentrating the whole force of the discussion upon its solution. In these two departments then, there was nothing that Zeno need have desired to alter; since all was in a most satisfactory state, and that in both departments. For in the subject of Logic, what had the ancients left undealt with? They defined a multitude of terms, and left treatises in Definition; of the kindred art of the Division of a thing into its parts they give practical examples, and lay down rules for the process; and the same with the Law of Contradictories, from which they arrived at genera and species within genera. Then, in Deductive reasoning, they start with what they term self-evident propositions; from these they proceed by rule, and finally the conclusion gives the inference valid in the particular case.

Again, how many different forms of Deduction they distinguish, and how widely these differ from sophistical syllogisms!⁴ Think how almost solemnly they reiterate that we must not expect to find truth in sensation unaided by reason, nor in reason without sensation, and that we are not to divorce the one from the other! Was it not they who first laid down the rules that form the stock-in-trade of professors of logic to-day? Logic, no doubt, was very fully worked out by Chrysippus, but much less was done in it by Zeno than by the older schools; and in some parts of the subject his work was no improvement on that of his predecessors, while other parts he neglected altogether.

Of the two sciences which between them cover the whole field of reasoning and of oratory, one the Science of Topics⁵ and the other that of Logic, the latter has been handled by both Stoics and Peripatetics, but the former, though excellently taught by the Peripatetics, has not been touched by the Stoics at all. Of Topics, the store-chambers in which arguments are arranged ready for use, your school had not the faintest notion, whereas their predecessors propounded a regular technique and method. This science of Topics saves one from always having to drone out the same stock arguments on the same subjects without ever departing from one's notebooks. For one who knows under what general heading a particular case comes, and how to lead up to it, will be able to bring out any argument however far out of sight it lies, and always take a line of his own in debate. The fact is that, although some men of genius attain to eloquence without a system, nevertheless science is a safer guide than nature. A poetic out-pouring of language is one thing, the systematic and scientific marshalling of one's matter is another.

“Much the same may be said about Natural Philosophy, which is pursued both by the Peripatetics and by your school, and that not merely for the two objects, recognized by Epicurus, of banishing superstition and the fear of death. Besides these benefits, the study of the heavenly phenomena bestows a power of self-control that arises from the perception of the consummate restraint and order that obtain even among the gods; also loftiness of mind is inspired by contemplating the creations and actions of the gods, and justice by realizing the will, design and purpose of the Supreme Lord and Ruler to whose nature we are told by philosophers that the True Reason and Supreme Law are conformed.

The study of Natural Philosophy also affords the inexhaustible pleasure of acquiring knowledge, the sole pursuit which can afford an honourable and elevated occupation for the hours of leisure left when business has been finished. Now in the whole of this branch of philosophy, on most of the important points the Stoics followed the Peripatetics, maintaining that the gods exist and that the world is composed of the four elements. Then, coming to the very difficult

⁴ Cp. I.39.

⁵ ‘Inventio,’ Topikē, arranged stock arguments in ‘loci,’ topoi, pigeon-holes as it were of the memory: Cp. V, a.

question, whether we are to believe in the existence of a fifth substance,⁶ as the source of reason and intellect, and also the connected further question which element constitutes the soul, Zeno declared this substance to be fire; next, as to some details, but only a few, he diverged from his predecessors, but on the main question he agreed that the universe as a whole and its chief parts are governed by a divine mind and substance. In point of fullness, however, and fertility of treatment we will find the Stoics meagre, whereas the Peripatetics are copious in the extreme.

What stores of facts they observed and recorded about the classification, reproduction, morphology and life-history of animals of every kind! and again about plants! How copious and wide in range their explanations of the causes and demonstrations of the mode of different natural phenomena! and all these stores supply them with numerous and conclusive arguments to explain the nature of each particular thing. So far then, as far as I at least can understand the case, there appears to have been no reason for the change of name;⁷ that Zeno was not prepared to follow the Peripatetics in every detail did not alter the fact that he had sprung from them. For my own part I consider Epicurus also, at all events in natural philosophy, simply a pupil of Democritus. He makes a few modifications, or indeed a good many; but on most points, and unquestionably the most important, he merely echoes his master. Your leaders do the same, yet neglect to acknowledge their full debt to the original discoverers.

“But leaving this let us now, if you please, turn to Ethics. On the subject of the Chief Good, which is the keystone of philosophy, what precise contribution did Zeno make to justify his disagreeing with his ancestors, the originators of the doctrine? Under this head you, Cato, gave a careful exposition of the Stoics’ conception of this ‘End of Goods,’ and of the meaning they attached to the term; still I also will restate it, to enable us to detect, if we can, what exactly was the novel element contributed by Zeno. Preceding thinkers, and among them most explicitly Polemo, had explained the Chief Good as being ‘to live in accordance with nature.’ This formula receives from the Stoics three interpretations. The first runs thus, ‘to live in the light of a knowledge of the natural sequence of causation.’ This conception of the End they declare to be identical with Zeno’s, being an explanation of your phrase ‘to live in agreement with nature.’

Their second interpretation is that it means the same as ‘to live in the performance of all, or most, of one’s intermediate duties.’⁸ The Chief Good as thus expounded is not the same as that of the preceding interpretation. That is ‘right action’ (as you rendered *kathorthōma*), and can be achieved only by the Wise Man, but this belongs to duty merely inchoate, so to speak, and not perfect, which may sometimes be attained by the foolish. Again, the third interpretation of the formula is ‘to live in the enjoyment of all, or of the greatest, of those things which are in accordance with nature.’ This does not depend solely on our own conduct, for it involves two factors, first a mode of life enjoying virtue, secondly a supply of the things which are in accordance with nature but which are not within our control. But the Chief Good as understood in the third and last interpretation, and life passed on the basis of the Chief Good, being inseparably coupled with virtue, lie within the reach of the Wise Man alone; and this is the account of the End of Goods, as we read in the writings of the Stoics themselves, which was given by Xenocrates and Aristotle. They therefore describe the primary constitution of nature, which was your starting point also, more or less in the following terms.

“Every natural organism aims at being its own preserver, so as to secure its safety and also its preservation true to its specific type. With this object, they declare, man has called in the aid of the arts also to assist nature; and chief among them is counted the art of living, which helps him to guard the gifts that nature has bestowed and to obtain those that are lacking. They further divided the nature of man into soul and body. Each of these parts they pronounced to be desirable for its own sake, and consequently they said that the virtues also of each were desirable for their own sakes; at the same time they extolled the soul as infinitely surpassing the body in worth, and accordingly placed the virtues also of the mind above the goods of the body.

⁶ Aristotle spoke of a fifth sort of matter, ‘body moving in a circle, aetherial, unchanged,’ which was the origin of the heavenly bodies; but he nowhere states that mind is composed of this, but on the contrary always regards mind as incorporeal.

⁷ *i.e.* for Zeno’s school to be called Stoic and not Peripatetic.

⁸ Cp. *III.59*.

But they held that wisdom is the guardian and protectress of the whole man, as being the comrade and helper of nature, and so they said that the function of wisdom, as protecting a being that consisted of a mind and a body, was to assist and preserve him in respect of both. After thus laying the first broad foundations of the theory, they went on to work it out in greater detail. The goods of the body, they held, required no particular explanation, but the goods of the soul they investigated with more elaboration, finding in the first place that in them lay the germs of Justice; and they were the first of any philosophers to teach that the love of parents for their offspring is a provision of nature; and that nature, so they pointed out, has ordained the union of men and women in marriage, which is prior in order of time, and is the root of all the family affections. Starting from these first principles they traced out the origin and growth of all the virtues. From the same source was developed loftiness of mind, which could render us proof against the assaults of fortune, because the things that matter were under the control of the Wise Man; whereas to the vicissitudes and blows of fortune a life directed by the precepts of the old philosophers could easily rise superior.

Again, from the elements given by nature arose certain lofty excellences, springing partly from the contemplation of the secrets of nature, since the mind possessed an innate love of knowledge, whence also resulted the passion for argument and for discussion; and also, since man is the only animal endowed with a sense of modesty and shame, with a desire for intercourse and society with his fellows, and with a scrupulous care in all his words and actions to avoid any conduct that is not honourable and seemly, from these beginnings or germs, as I called them before, of nature's bestowal, were developed Temperance, Self-control, Justice and moral virtue generally in full flower and perfection.

"There, Cato," I said, "is the scheme of the philosophers of whom I am speaking. Having put it before you, I should be glad to learn what reason Zeno had for seceding from this old-established system. Which precisely of their doctrines did he think unsatisfactory: the doctrine that every organism instinctively seeks its own preservation? or that every animal has an affection for itself, prompting it to desire its own continuance safe and unimpaired in its specific type? or that, since the End of every art is some essential natural requirement, the same must be affirmed as regards the art of life as a whole? or that, as we consist of soul and body, these and also the virtues of these are to be taken for their own sakes? Or again, did he take exception to the ascription of such pre-eminence to the virtues of the soul? or to what they say about prudence and knowledge, about the sense of human fellowship, or about temperance, self-control, magnanimity, and moral virtue in general? No, the Stoics will admit that all of these doctrines are admirable, and that Zeno's reason for secession did not lie here.

As I understand, they will accuse the ancients of certain grave errors in other matters, which that ardent seeker after truth found himself quite unable to tolerate. What, he asked, could have been more insufferably foolish and perverse than to take good health, freedom from all pain, or soundness of eyesight and of the other senses, and class them as goods, instead of saying that there was nothing whatever to choose between these things and their opposites? According to him, all these things which the ancients called good, were not good, but 'preferred'; and so also with bodily excellences, it was foolish of the ancients to call them 'desirable for their own sakes'; they were not 'desirable' but 'worth taking'; and in short, speaking generally, a life bountifully supplied with all the other things in accordance with nature, in addition to virtue, was not 'more desirable,' but only 'more worth taking' than a life of virtue and virtue alone; and although virtue of itself can render life as happy as it is possible for it to be, yet there are some things that Wise Men lack at the very moment of supreme happiness; and accordingly they do their best to protect themselves from pain, disease and infirmity.

"What acuteness of intellect! What a satisfactory reason for the creation of a new philosophy! But proceed further; for we now come to the doctrine, of which you gave such a masterly summary, that all men's folly, injustice and other vices are alike and all sins are equal; and that those who by nature and training have made considerable progress towards virtue, unless they have actually attained to it, are utterly miserable, and there is nothing whatever to choose between their existence and that of the wickedest of mankind, so that the great and famous Plato, supposing he was not a Wise Man, lived a no better and no happier life than any unprincipled scoundrel. And this, if you please, is your revised and corrected version of the old philosophy, a version that could not possibly be produced in public life, in the law-courts, in the senate! For who could tolerate such a way of speaking in one who claimed to be an authority on wise

and moral conduct? Who would allow him to alter the names of things, and while really holding the same opinions as everyone else, to impose different names on things to which he attaches the same meanings as other people, just altering the terms while leaving the ideas themselves untouched?

Could an advocate wind up his defence of a client by declaring that exile and confiscation of property are not evils? that they are 'to be rejected,' but not 'to be shunned'? that it is not a judge's duty to show mercy? Or supposing him to be addressing a meeting of the people; Hannibal is at the gates and has flung a javelin over the city walls; could he say that captivity, enslavement, death, loss of country are no evils? Could the senate, decreeing a triumph to Africanus, use the formula, 'whereas by reason of his valour,' or 'good fortune,' if no one but the Wise Man can truly be said to possess either valour or good fortune? What sort of philosophy then is this, which speaks the ordinary language in public, but in its treatises employs an idiom of its own? and that though the doctrines which the Stoics express in their own peculiar terms contain no actual novelty the ideas remain the same, though clothed in another dress.

Why, what difference does it make whether you call wealth, power, health 'goods,' or 'things preferred,' when he who calls them goods assigns no more value to them than you who style exactly the same things 'preferred'? This is why so eminent and high-minded an authority as Panaetius, a worthy member of the famous circle of Scipio and Laelius, in his epistle to Quintus Tubero on the endurance of pain, has nowhere made what ought to have been his most effective point, if it could be shown to be true, namely that pain is not an evil; instead he defines its nature and properties, estimates the degree of its divergence from nature, and lastly prescribes the method by which it is to be endured. So that by his vote, seeing that he was a Stoic, your terminological fatuities seem to me to stand condemned.

"But I want to come to closer quarters, Cato, with the actual system as you stated it; so let us press the matter home, and compare the doctrines you have just enunciated with those which I think superior to yours. Let us then take for granted the tenets that you hold in common with the ancients, but discuss, if you are willing, those about which there is dispute." "Oh," said he, "I am quite willing for the debate to go deeper; to be pressed home, as you phrase it. The arguments you have so far put forward are of the popular order; but I look to you to give me something more out of the common." "What, do you look to me?" said I. "But all the same I will do my best, and if I am short of matter, I shall not shrink from the arguments you are pleased to call popular.

But let it be granted to begin with, that we have an affection for ourselves, and that the earliest impulse bestowed upon us by nature is a desire for self-preservation. On this we are agreed; and the implication is that we must study what we ourselves are, in order to keep ourselves true to our proper character. We are then human beings, consisting of soul and body, and these of a certain kind. These we are bound to esteem, as our earliest natural instinct demands, and out of these we must construct our End, our Chief and Ultimate Good. And, if our premises are correct, this End must be pronounced to consist in the attainment of the largest number of the most important of the things in accordance with nature.

This then was the conception of the end that they upheld; the supreme Good they believed to be the thing which I have described at some length, but which they more briefly expressed by the formula 'life according to nature.'

"Now then let us call upon your leaders, or better upon yourself (for who is more qualified to speak for your school?) to explain this: how in the world do you contrive, starting from the same first principles, to reach the conclusion that the Chief Good is morality of life?—for that is equivalent to your 'life in agreement with virtue' or 'life in harmony with nature.' By what means or at what point did you suddenly discard the body, and all those things which are in accordance with nature but out of our control, and lastly duty itself? My question then is, how comes it that so many things that Nature strongly recommends have been suddenly abandoned by Wisdom?

Even if we were not seeking the Chief Good of man but of some living creature that consisted solely of a mind (let us allow ourselves to imagine such a creature, in order to facilitate our discovery of the truth), even so that mind would not accept this End of yours. For such a being would ask for health and freedom from pain, and would also desire its own preservation, and set up as its End to live according to nature, which means, as I said, to possess either all or most and the most important of the things which are in accordance with nature.

In fact you may construct a living creature of any sort you like, but even if it be devoid of a body like our imaginary being, nevertheless its mind will be bound to possess certain attributes analogous to those of the body, and consequently it will be impossible to set up for it an end of Goods on any other lines than those which I have laid down. Chrysippus, on the other hand, in his survey of the different species of living things states that in some the body is the principal part, in others the mind, while there are some that are equally endowed in respect of either; and then he proceeds to discuss what constitutes the ultimate good proper to each species. Man he so classified as to make the mind the principal part in him; and yet he so defined man's End as to make it appear, not that he is principally mind, but that he consists of nothing else.

But the only case in which it would be correct to place the Chief Good in virtue alone is if there existed a creature consisting solely of pure intellect, with the further proviso that this intellect possessed nothing of its own that was in accordance with nature, as bodily health is.

But it is impossible even to imagine a self-consistent picture of what such a creature would be like.

"If on the contrary they urge that certain things are so extremely small that they are eclipsed and lost sight of altogether, we too admit this; Epicurus also says the same of pleasure, that the smallest pleasures are often eclipsed and disappear. But things so important, permanent and numerous as the bodily advantages in question are not in this category. On the one hand therefore, with things so small as to be eclipsed from view, we are often bound to admit that it makes no difference to us whether we have them or not (just as, to take your illustration, it makes no difference if you light a lamp in the sunshine, or add sixpence to the wealth of Croesus);

while on the other hand, with things which are not so completely eclipsed, it may nevertheless be the case that any difference they do make is not very great (thus, if a man who has lived ten years enjoyably were given an additional month of equally enjoyable life, the addition to his enjoyment, being of some value, would be a good thing, but yet the refusal of the addition does not forthwith annihilate his happiness). Now bodily goods resemble rather the latter sort of things. For they contribute something worth an effort to obtain; so that I think sometimes that the Stoics must be joking when they say that, as between a life of virtue and a life virtue *plus* an oil-flask or a flesh-brush, the Wise Man will prefer the life with those additions, but yet will not be any happier because of them.

Pray does this illustration really hold good? is it not rather to be dismissed with a laugh than seriously refuted? Who would not richly deserve to be laughed at if he troubled about having or not having an oil-flask? But rid a man of bodily deformity or agonies of pain, and you earn his deepest gratitude; even the Wise Man, if a tyrant sent him to the rack, would not wear the same look as if he had lost his oil-flask; he would feel that he had a severe and searching ordeal before him, and seeing that he was about to encounter the supreme antagonist, pain, would summon up all his principles of courage and endurance to fortify him against that severe and searching struggle aforesaid.—Again, the question is not whether such and such a good is so trifling as to be a sort as to contribute to the sum total. In the life of pleasure of which we spoke, one pleasure is lost to sight among the many; but all the same, small as it is, it is a part of the life that is based upon pleasure. A halfpenny is lost to sight amid the riches of Croesus; still it forms part of those riches. Hence the circumstances according to nature, as we call them, may be unnoticed in a life of happiness, only you must allow that they are parts of that happiness.

"Yet if, as you and we are bound to agree, there does exist a certain natural instinct to desire the things in accordance with nature, the right procedure is to add together all these things in one definite total. This point established, it will

then be open to us to investigate at our leisure your questions about the importance of the separate items, and the value of their respective contributions to happiness, and about that eclipse, as you call it, of the things so small as to be almost or quite imperceptible. Then what of a point on which no disagreement exists? I mean this: no one will dispute that the supreme and final End, the thing ultimately desirable, is analogous for all natural species alike. For love of self is inherent in every species; since what species exists that ever abandons itself or any part of itself, or any habit or faculty of any such part, or any of the things, whether processes or states, that are in accordance with its nature? What species ever forgot its own original constitution? Assuredly there is not one that does not retain its own proper faculty from start to finish.

How then came it about that, of all the existing species, mankind alone should relinquish man's nature, forget the body, and find its Chief Good not in the whole man but in a part of man? How moreover is the axiom to be retained, admitted as it is even by the Stoics and accepted universally, that the End which is the subject of our inquiry is analogous for all species? For the analogy to hold, every other species also would have to find its End in that part of the organism which in that particular species is the highest part; since that, as we have seen, is how the Stoics conceive the End of man.

Why then do you hesitate to alter your conception of the primary instincts to correspond? Instead of saying that every animal from the moment of its birth is devoted to love of itself and engrossed in preserving itself, why do you not rather say that every animal is devoted to the best part of itself and engrossed in protecting that alone, and that every other species is solely engaged in preserving the part that is respectively best in each? But in what sense is one part the best, if nothing beside it is good at all? While if on the contrary other things also are desirable, why does not the supremely desirable thing consist in the attainment of all, or of the greatest possible number and the most important, of these things? A Pheidias can start to make a statue from the beginning and carry it to completion, or he can take one rough-hewn by someone else and finish that. The latter case typifies the work of Wisdom. She did not create man herself, but took him over in the rough from Nature; her business is to finish the statue that Nature began, keeping her eyes on Nature meanwhile.

What sort of thing then is man as rough-hewn by Nature? and what is the function and the task of Wisdom? what is it that needs to be consummated by her finishing touch? If it is a creature consisting solely of a certain operation of the intellect, that is, reason, its highest good must be activity in accordance with virtue since virtue is reason's consummation. If it is nothing but a body, the chief things will be health, freedom from pain, beauty and the rest.

But as a matter of fact the creature whose Chief Good we are seeking is man. Surely then our course is to inquire what has been achieved in the whole of man's nature. All are agreed that the duty and function of Wisdom is entirely centred in the work of perfecting man; but then some thinkers (for you must not imagine that I am tilting at the Stoics only) produce theories which place the Chief Good in the class of things entirely outside our control, as though they were discussing some creature devoid of a mind; while others on the contrary ignore everything but mind, just as if man had no body; and that though even the mind is not an empty, impalpable something (a conception to me unintelligible), but belongs to a certain kind of material substance, and therefore even the mind is not satisfied with virtue alone, but desires freedom from pain. In fact, with each school alike it is just as if they should ignore the left side of their bodies and protect the right, or, in the mind, like Erillus, recognize cognition but leave the practical faculty out of account. They pick and choose, pass over a great deal and fasten on a single aspect; so all their systems are one-sided. The full and perfect philosophy was that which, investigating the Chief Good of man, left no part either of his mind or body uncared-for.

Whereas your friends, Cato, on the strength of the fact, which we all admit, that virtue is man's highest and supreme excellence and that the Wise Man is the perfect and consummate type of humanity, try to dazzle our mental vision with virtue's radiance. Every animal, for instance the horse, or the dog, has some supreme good quality, yet at the same time they require to have health and freedom from pain; similarly therefore in man that consummation you speak of attains its chief glory in what is his chief excellence, namely virtue. This being so, I feel you do not take sufficient

pains to study Nature's method of procedure. With the growing corn,⁹ no doubt, her way is to guide its development from blade to ear, and then discard the blade as of no value; but she does not do the same with man, when she has developed in him the faculty of reason. For she continually superadds fresh faculties without abandoning her previous gifts.

Thus she added to sensation reason, and after creating reason did not discard sensation. Suppose the art of viticulture, whose function is to bring the vine with all its parts into the most thriving condition—at least let us assume it to be so (for we may invent an imaginary case, as you are fond of doing, for purposes of illustration); suppose then the art of viticulture were a faculty residing in the vine itself, this faculty would doubtless desire every condition requisite for the health of the vine as before, but would rank itself above all the other parts of the vine, and would consider itself the noblest element in the vine's organism. Similarly when an animal organism has acquired the faculty of sensation, this faculty protects the organism, it is true, but also protects itself; but when reason has been superadded, this is placed in such a position of dominance that all those primary gifts of nature are placed under its protection.

Accordingly each never abandons its task of safeguarding the earlier elements; its business is by controlling these to steer the whole course of life; so that I cannot sufficiently marvel at the inconsistency of your teachers. Natural desire, which they term *hormē*, and also duty, and even virtue itself they reckon among things according to Nature. Yet when they want to arrive at the Supreme Good, they leap over all of these, and leave us with two tasks instead of one, some things we are to 'adopt,' others to 'desire'; instead of including both tasks under a single End.

"But you protest that if other things than virtue go to make up happiness, virtue cannot be established. As a matter of fact it is entirely the other way about: it is impossible to find a place for virtue, unless all the things that she chooses and rejects are reckoned towards one sum-total of good. For if we entirely ignore ourselves,⁹ we shall fall into the mistakes and errors of Aristo, forgetting the things that we assigned as the origins of virtue herself; if while not ignoring these things, we yet do not reckon them in the End or Chief Good, we shall be well on the road towards the extravagances of Erillus, since we shall have to adopt two different rules of life at once. Erillus sets up two separate ultimate Goods, which, supposing his view were true, he ought to have united in one; but as it is he makes them so separate as to be mutually exclusive alternatives, which is surely the extreme of perversity.

Hence the truth is just the opposite of what you say; virtue is an absolute impossibility, *unless* it holds to the objects of the primary instincts as going to make up the sum of good. For we started to look for a virtue that should protect, not abandon, nature; whereas virtue as you conceive it protects a particular part of our nature but leaves the remainder in the lurch. Man's constitution itself, if it could speak, would declare that its earliest tentative movements of desire were aimed at preserving itself in the natural character with which it was born into the world. But at that stage the principal intention of nature had not yet been fully revealed. Well, suppose it revealed. What then? will it be construed otherwise than as forbidding that any part of man's nature should be ignored? If man consists solely of a reasoning faculty, let it be granted that the End of Goods is contained in virtue alone; but if he has a body as well, the revelation of our nature, on your showing, will actually have resulted in our relinquishing the things to which we held before that revelation took place. At this rate 'to live in harmony with nature' means to depart from nature.

There have been philosophers who, after rising from sensation to the recognition of nobler and more spiritual faculties, thereupon threw the senses on one side. Similarly your friends next after the instinctive desires came to behold virtue in all her beauty, and forthwith flung aside all they had ever seen besides virtue herself, forgetting that the whole instinct of appetite is so wide in its range that it spreads from the primary objects of desire right up to the ultimate Ends, and not realizing that they are undermining the very foundations of the graces which they so much admire.

⁹ *i.e.* our own nature.

“In my view, therefore, while all who have defined the End of Goods as the life of moral conduct are in error, some are more wrong than others. The most mistaken no doubt is Pyrrho, because his conception of virtue leaves nothing as an object of desire whatever. Next in error comes Aristo, who did not venture to leave a mere negation, but introduced as the Wise Man’s motives of desire ‘whatever chanced to enter his mind’ and ‘whatever struck him.’ Aristo is better than Pyrrho in so far as he allowed desire of some sort, but worse than the rest because he departed so utterly from nature. Now the Stoics in placing the End of Goods in virtue alone resemble the philosophers already mentioned; but in trying to find a foundation for virtuous action they are an improvement upon Pyrrho, and in not finding this in imaginary ‘things that strike the mind’ they do better than Aristo; though in speaking of certain things as ‘suitable to nature’ and ‘to be adopted for their own sakes,’ and then refusing to include them in the End of Goods, they desert nature and approximate in some degree to Aristo. For Aristo invented his vague ‘things that strike the mind’; while the Stoics, though recognizing, it is true, the primary objects of nature, yet allow no connection between these and their Ends or sum of Goods. In making the primary objects ‘preferred,’ so as to admit a certain principle of choice among things, they seem to be following nature, but in refusing to allow them to have anything to do with happiness, they again abandon nature.

“So far what I have said was to show why Zeno had no grounds for seceding from the earlier authorities. Now let us turn our attention to the rest of my points, unless, Cato, you desire to say anything in reply to this, or unless I have gone on too long already.” “Neither is the case,” he answer, “since I am eager for you to finish your argument, and no discourse of yours could seem to me long.” “Thank you very much,” I rejoined; “for what could I desire better than to discuss the subject of virtue with that pattern of all the virtues Cato?”

But first I would have you observe that the most important of all your doctrines, the head of the array, namely that Moral Worth alone is good and that the moral life is the End of Goods, will be shared with you by all those who make the End of Goods consist of virtue alone; and your view that it is impossible to frame a conception of Virtue if anything beside Moral Worth be counted in it, will also be maintained by the philosophers whom I just now mentioned. To my mind it would have been fairer for Zeno in his dispute with Polemo, whose teaching as to the primary impulses of nature he had adopted, to have started from the fundamental tenets which they held in common, and to have marked the point where he first called a halt and where occasion for divergence arose; not to take his stand with thinkers who did not even profess to hold that the Chief Good, as they severally conceived it, was based on natural instinct, and employ the same arguments and the same doctrines as they did.

“Another point to which I take great exception is that, when you have proved, as you think, that Moral Worth alone is good, you then turn round and say that of course there must be advantages adapted to our nature set before us as a starting point, in exercising choice among which advantages virtue may be able to come into existence. Now it was a mistake to make virtue consist in an act of choice, for this implies that the very thing that is the ultimate Good itself seeks to get something else. Surely the sum of Goods must include everything worth adopting, choosing or desiring, so that he who has attained it may not want anything more. In the case of those whose Chief Good consists in pleasure, notice how clear it is what things they are to do or not to do; no one can be in doubt as to the proper scope of all their duties, what these must aim at and what avoid. Or grant the ultimate Good that I am now upholding, and it becomes clear at once what one’s duties are and what actions are prescribed. But you, who have no other standard in view but abstract right and morality, will not be able to find a source and starting point for duty and for conduct.

In the search for this you will all of you have to return to nature,—both those who say that they follow whatever comes into their mind or whatever occurs to them, and you yourselves. Both will be met by Nature’s very just reply that it is not right that the standard of Happiness should be sought elsewhere while the springs of conduct are derived from herself; that there is a single principle which must cover both the springs of action and the ultimate Goods; and that just as Aristo’s doctrine had been quite discredited, that there is no difference between one thing and another, and nothing whatever to choose between any other things but virtues and vices, so Zeno was mistaken in saying that (a) nothing else but virtue or vice affected even in the smallest degree the attainment of the Chief Good, and (b) although other

things had no effect whatever upon happiness, yet they had some influence upon our desires; just as though desire, if you please, bore no relation whatever to the attainment of the Chief Good!

But what can be more inconsistent than the procedure they profess, to ascertain the Chief Good first, and then to return to Nature, and demand from her the primary motive of conduct or of duty? Considerations of conduct or duty do not supply the impulse to desire the things that are in accordance with nature; it is these things which excite desire and give motives for conduct.

“I now come to those concise proofs of yours which you called ‘consequences.’ I will start with one as concise as anything could be: ‘Everything good is praiseworthy; but everything praiseworthy is morally honourable; therefore everything good is morally honourable.’ What a dagger of lead! Why, who will grant you your major premise? (and if this be granted there is no need of the minor; for if everything good is praiseworthy, then everything good is honourable).

Who, I say, will grant you this, except Pyrrho, Aristo and their fellows, whose doctrines you reject? Aristotle, Xenocrates and the whole of their following will not allow it; because they call health, strength, riches, fame and many other things good, but do not call them praiseworthy. And these, though holding that the End of Goods is not limited to virtue alone, yet rate virtue higher than all other things; but what do you suppose will be the attitude of those who entirely dissociated virtue from the end of Goods, Epicurus, Hieronymus, and also of any supporters of the End of Carneades?

Or how will Callipho or Diodorus be able to grant your premise, who combine with Moral Worth another factor belonging to an entirely different category? Are you then content, Cato, to take disputed premises for granted, and draw from these any conclusion you want? And again, the following proof is a sorites, which according to you is a most fallacious form of reasoning: ‘what is good is to be wished; what is to be wished is desirable; what is desirable is praiseworthy’; and so on through the remaining steps, but I call a halt at this one, for, just as before, no one will grant you that what is desirable is praiseworthy. As for your other argument, it is by no means a ‘consequence,’ but stupid to a degree, though, of course, the Stoic leaders and not yourself are responsible for that: ‘Happiness is a thing to be proud of, whereas it cannot be the case that anyone should have good reason to be proud without Moral Worth.’

The minor premise¹⁰ Polemo will concede to Zeno, and so will his master and the whole of their clan, as well as all the other philosophers that while ranking virtue far above all else yet couple some other thing with it in defining the Chief Good; since if virtue is a thing to be proud of, as it is, and excels everything else to a degree hardly to be expressed in words, Polemo will be able to be happy if endowed solely with virtue, and destitute of all besides, and yet he will not grant you that nothing except virtue is to be reckoned as a good. Those on the other hand whose Supreme Good dispenses with virtue will perhaps decline to grant that happiness contains any just ground for pride; although they, it is true, sometimes represent even pleasures as things to be proud of.

“So you see that you are either making assumptions which cannot be granted or one which even if granted do you no good. For my own part, as regards all these Stoic syllogisms, I should have thought that to be worthy of philosophy and of ourselves, particularly when the subject of our inquiry is the Supreme Good, the argument ought to amend our lives, purposes and wills, not just correct our terminology. Could those concise and pointed arguments which you say you delight in possibly make any man alter his opinions? Here are people all agog to learn why pain is no evil; and the Stoics tell them that though pain is irksome, annoying, hateful, unnatural and hard to bear, it is not an evil, because it involves no dishonesty, wickedness or malice, no moral blame or baseness. He who hears this may or may not want to laugh, but he will not go away any stronger to endure pain than he came.

¹⁰ Viz. that only what is moral is a thing to be proud of.

You however say that no one can be brave who thinks pain an evil. Why should he be braver for thinking it what you yourself admit it to be, irksome and almost intolerable? Timidity springs from facts, not from words. And you aver that if a single letter be altered, the whole system will totter. Well, do you think I am altering a letter or whole pages? Even allowing that the Stoics deserve the praise you gave them for the methodical arrangement and perfect logical connection (as you described it) of their system, still we are not bound to accept a chain of reasoning because it is self-consistent and keeps to the line laid down, if it starts from false premises.

Now your master Zeno deserted nature in framing his first principles; he placed the supreme Good in that intellectual excellence which we term virtue, and declared that nothing but Moral Worth is good, and that virtue cannot be established if among the rest of things any one thing is better than any other; and he adhered to logical conclusions from these premises. Quite true, I can't deny it. But the conclusions are so false that the premises from which they sprang cannot be true.

For the logicians teach us, as you are aware, that if the consequences that follow from a proposition be false, the proposition from which those consequences follow must itself be false. On this is based the following syllogism, which is not merely true, but so evident that the logicians assume is as axiomatic: If A is B, C is D; but C is not D, therefore A is not B. Thus, if your conclusions are upset, your premises are upset also. What then are your conclusions? That those who are not wise are all equally wretched; that the wise are all supremely happy; that all right actions are equal, all sins on a par;—these dicta may have had an imposing sound at first hearing, but upon examination they began to seem less convincing. For common sense, the facts of nature, truth herself seemed to cry aloud that nothing should persuade them that there was actually no difference between the things which Zeno made out to be equal.

“Subsequently your little Phoenician (for you are aware that your clients of Citium originally came from Phoenicia),¹¹ with the cunning of his race, finding he was losing his case with Nature up in arms against him, set about juggling with words. First he allowed the things that we in our school call goods to be considered ‘valuable’ and ‘suited to nature,’ and he began to admit that though a man were wise, that is, supremely happy, it would yet be an advantage to him if he also possessed the things which he is not bold enough to call goods, but allows to be ‘suited to nature.’ He maintains that Plato, even if he be not wise, is not in the same case as the tyrant Dionysius: Dionysius has no hope of wisdom, and his best fate would be to die; but Plato has hopes of it, and had better live. Again, he allows that some sins are endurable, while others are unpardonable, because some sins transgress more and others fewer points of duty; moreover some fools are so foolish as to be utterly incapable of attaining wisdom, but others might conceivably by great effort attain to wisdom.

In all this though his language was peculiar, his meaning was the same as that of everybody else. In fact he set no lower value on the things he himself denied to be good than did those who said they were good. What then did he want by altering their old name? He ought at least to have diminished their importance and to have set a slightly lower value on them than the Peripatetics, so as to make the difference appear to be one of meaning and not merely of language. Again, what do you and your school say about happiness itself, the ultimate end and aim of all things? You will not have it to be the sum of all the things nature needs, but make it consist of virtue alone. Now all disputes usually turn either on facts or on names; ignorance of fact or error as to terms will cause one or the other form of dispute respectively. If neither source of difference is present, we must be careful to employ the terms most generally accepted and those most suitable, that is, those that convey the fact clearly.

Can we doubt that, if the older philosophers are not mistaken on the point of fact, their terminology is the more convenient one? Let us then consider their opinions and return to the question of terminology later.

¹¹ Zeno came from Citium in Cyprus, said to have been the seat of a Phoenician colony; and the Phoenicians were proverbially crafty. Cato superintended the reduction of Cyprus to a Roman province, and Cicero in his Letters speaks of the island as under Cato's protection.

“Their statements are that appetite is excited in the mind when something appears to it to be in accordance with nature; and that all things that are in accordance with nature are worth some value, and are to be valued in proportion to the importance that they severally possess; and that of those things which are in accordance with nature, some excite of themselves none of that appetite of which we have often spoken already, and these are to be called neither honourable nor praiseworthy, while some are those which are objects of pleasure in every living creature, but in man are objects of the reason also;¹² those which are dependent on the reason are called honourable, beautiful, praiseworthy; but the former class are called natural, the class which coupled with things morally worthy render happiness perfect and complete.

They further hold that of all those advantages, which they who call them goods rate no more highly than does Zeno who says they are not goods, by far the most excellent is Moral Worth and what is praiseworthy; but if one is offered the choice between Moral Worth plus health and Moral Worth plus disease, there is no doubt to which of the two Nature herself will guide us; though at the same time Moral Worth is potent, and so overwhelmingly superior to all other things, that no penalties or rewards can induce it to swerve from what it has decided to be right; and all apparent hardships, difficulties and obstacles can be trodden under foot by the virtues with which nature has adorned us; not that these hardships are easily overcome or to be made light of (else where were the merit of virtue?), but so as to lead us to the verdict that these things are not the main factor in our happiness or the reverse.

In fine, the ancients entitle the same things ‘good’ that Zeno pronounced ‘valuable,’ ‘to be adopted,’ and ‘suited to nature’; and they call a life happy which comprises either the largest number or the most important of the things aforesaid: Zeno on the contrary calls nothing good but that which has a peculiar charm of its own that makes it desirable, and no life happy but the life of virtue.

“If, Cato, the discussion is to turn on facts, disagreement between me and yourself is out of the question: since your views and mine are the same in every particular, if only we compare the actual substance after making the necessary changes in terms. Zeno was not unaware of this, but he was beguiled by the pomp and circumstance of language; had he really thought what he says, in the actual sense of the words he uses, what difference would there be between him and either Pyrrho or Aristo? If on the other hand he rejected Pyrrho and Aristo, what was the point of quarrelling about words with those with whom he agreed in substance?

What if those pupils of Plato were to come to life again, and their pupils again in succession, and were to address you in this fashion? ‘As we listened, Marcus Cato, to so devoted a student of philosophy, so just a man, so upright a judge, so scrupulous a witness as yourself, we marvelled what reason could induce you to reject us for the Stoics, whose views on good and evil were the views that Zeno learnt from Polemo here, but who expressed those views in terms at first sight startling but upon examination ridiculous. If you accepted those views on their merits, why did you not hold them under their own terminology? or if you were swayed by authority, could you prefer that nobody to all of us, even to Plato himself? especially when you aspired to play a leading part in the state, and we were the very persons to arm and equip you to protect the state with the highest honour to yourself. Why, it is we who invented political philosophy; and reduced it to a system; its nomenclature, its principles are our creation; on all the various forms of government, their stability, their revolutions, the laws, institutions and customs of states, we have written exhaustively. Oratory again is the proudest distinction of the statesman, and in it you, we are told, are pre-eminent; but how vastly you might have enriched your eloquence from the records of our genius.’ What answer, pray, could you give to these words from such men as those?”

¹² This confused passage is conjecturally remedied by W. M. L. Hutchinson, *de Fin.* p235, who for in sese suggests in stirpe (cp. *V.10* stirpium naturas), and for voluptatem, voluntatem (cp. *Tusc.* *IV.12*). Lastly the clause quae nec honesta nec laudabilia dicantur logically should come immediately after quaeque secundum naturam sint, though Cicero may have carelessly misplaced it. The sentence will then run: ‘Things in accordance with nature, which the Stoics pronounce neither moral nor praiseworthy,

1. in plants excite none of the appetite of which we have often spoken, but
2. in animals excite volition, and particularly
3. in man excite the reason also (*i.e.* are the objects of rational choice).’

“I would beg of you,” replied Cato, “as you had put that speech into their mouths, to be my spokesman also; or rather I would ask you to grant me a moment’s space in which to answer them, if it were not that for the present I prefer to listen to you, and also intend to reply to your champions at another time, I mean when I reply to yourself.”

“Well, Cato, if you wanted to answer truly, this is what you would have to say: that with all respect for the high authority of men so gifted, you had observed that the Stoics had discovered truths which they in those early days had naturally failed to see; the Stoics had discussed the same subjects with more insight and had arrived at bolder and more profound conclusions; first, they said that good health is not desirable but worthy of selection, and that not because to be well is a good, but because it has some positive value (not that any greater value is attached to it by the older school who do not hesitate to call it a good); well then, you couldn’t stand those bearded¹³ old fogies (as we call our own Roman ancestors) believing that a man who lived morally, if he also had health, wealth and reputation, had a preferable, better, more desirable life than he who, though equally good, was, like Alcmaeon in Ennius,

Beset on every side

With sickness, banishment and poverty.

Those men of old then, with their duller wits, think that the former life is more desirable, more excellent, more happy; the Stoics on the other hand consider it merely to be preferred for choice, not because it is a happier life but because it is more adapted to nature. The Stoics we must suppose discerned a truth that had escaped their predecessors, namely that men defiled by crimes and murders are no more miserable than those who though pious and upright in their lives have not yet attained ideal and perfect wisdom.

It was at this point that you brought forward those extremely false analogies which the Stoics are so fond of employing. Of course everybody knows that if there are several people plunged in deep water and trying to get out, those already approaching the surface, though nearer to breathing, will be no more able actually to breathe than those at the bottom. You infer that improvement and progress in virtue are of no avail to save a man from being utterly wretched, until he has actually arrived at virtue, since to rise in the water is of no avail. Again, since puppies on the point of opening their eyes are as blind as those only just born, it follows that Plato, not having yet attained to the vision of wisdom, was just as blind mentally as Phalaris!

“Really, Cato, there is no analogy between progress in virtue and cases such as you describe, in which however far one advances, the situation one wishes to escape from still remains the same until one has actually emerged from it. The man does not breathe until he has risen to the surface; the puppies are as blind before they have opened their eyes as if they were going to be blind always. Good analogies would be these: one man’s eyesight is dim, another’s general health is weak; apply remedies, and they get better day by day; every day the one is stronger and the other sees better; similarly with all who earnestly pursue virtue; they get better, their vices and errors are gradually reduced. Surely you would not maintain that the elder Tiberius Gracchus was not happier than his son, when the one devoted himself to the service of the state and the other to its destruction. But still the elder Gracchus was not a Wise Man; who ever was? or when, or where, or how? Still he aspired to fame and honour, and therefore had advanced to a high point in virtue.

Compare your grandfather Drusus with Gaius Gracchus, who was nearly his contemporary. The former strove to heal the wounds which the latter inflicted on the state. If there is nothing that makes men so miserable as impiety and crime, granted that all who are foolish are miserable, as of course they are, nevertheless a man who serves his country is not so miserable as one who longs for its ruin. Therefore those who achieve definite progress towards virtue undergo a great diminution of their vices.

Your teachers, however, while allowing progress towards virtue, deny diminution of vice. But it is worth while to examine the argument on which these clever people rely for the proof. Their line is this: In the case of arts or sciences

¹³ The early Romans wore beards, whereas for several generations before Cicero it had been usual to shave.

which admit of advancement, the opposite of those arts and sciences will also admit of advance; but virtue is absolute and incapable of increase; therefore the vices also, being the opposite of the virtues, are incapable of gradation. Pray tell me then, does a certainty explain an uncertainty, or does uncertainty disprove a certainty? Now, that some vices are worse than others is certain; but whether the Chief Good, as you Stoics conceive it, can be subject to increase is not certain. Yet instead of employing the certain to throw light on the uncertain, you endeavour to make the uncertain disprove the certain.

Therefore you can be checkmated by the same argument as I employed just now. If the proof that one vice cannot be worse than another depends on the fact that the End of Goods, as you conceive it, is itself incapable of increase, then you must alter your End of Goods, since it is certain that the vices of all men are not equal. For we are bound to hold that if a conclusion is false, the premise on which it depends cannot be true.

“Now what has landed you in this impasse? Simply your pride and vainglory in constructing your Chief Good. To maintain that the only Good is Moral Worth is to do away with the care of one’s health, the management of one’s estate, participation in politics, the conduct of affairs, the duties of life; nay, to abandon that Moral Worth itself, which according to you is the be-all and the end-all of existence; objections that were urged most earnestly against Aristo by Chrysippus. This is the difficulty that gave birth to those ‘base conceits deceitful-tongued,’ as Attius has it.

Wisdom had no ground to stand on when desires were abolished; desires were abolished when all choice and distinction was done away with; distinction was impossible when all things were made absolutely equal and indifferent; and all these perplexities resulted in your paradoxes, which are worse than those of Aristo. His were at all events frank and open, whereas yours are disingenuous. Ask Aristo whether he deems freedom from pain, riches, health to be goods, and he will answer No. Well, are their opposites bad? No, likewise. Ask Zeno, and his answer would be identically the same. In our surprise we should inquire of each, how can we possibly conduct our lives if we think it makes no difference to us whether we are well or ill, free from pain or in torments of agony, safe against cold and hunger or exposed to them. O, says Aristo, you will get on splendidly, capitally; you will do exactly what seems good to you; you will never know sorrow, desire or fear.

What is Zeno’s answer? This doctrine is a philosophical monstrosity, he tells us, it renders life entirely impossible; his view is that while between the moral and the base a vast, enormous gulf is fixed, between all other things there is no difference whatever.

So far this is the same as Aristo; but hear what follows, and restrain your laughter if you can. These intermediate things, says Zeno, which have no difference between them, are still of such a nature that some of them are to be selected and others rejected, while others again are to be entirely ignored; that is, they are such that some you wish to have, others you wish not to have, and about others you do not care.—‘But you told us just now that there was no difference among them.’—‘And I say the same now,’ he will reply, ‘but I mean no difference in respect of virtue and vice.’

“Who, pray, did not know that? However, let us hear what he has to say.—‘The things you mentioned,’ he continues, ‘health, affluence, freedom from pain, I do not call goods, but I will call them in Greek *proëgmena*, that is in your language “brought forward” (though I will rather use “preferred” or “pre-eminent,” as these sound smoother and more acceptable) and on the other hand disease, poverty and pain I do not style evils, but, if you please, “things rejected.” Accordingly I do not speak of “desiring” but “selecting” these things, not of “wishing” but “adopting” them, and not of “avoiding” their opposites but so to speak “discarding” them.’ What say Aristotle and the other pupils of Plato? That they call all things in accordance with nature good and all things contrary to nature bad. Do you see therefore that between your master Zeno and Aristo there is a verbal harmony but a real difference; whereas between him and Aristotle and the rest there is a real agreement and a verbal disagreement? Why, then, as we are agreed to the fact, do we not prefer to employ the usual terminology? Or else let him prove that I shall be readier to despise money if I

believe it to be a 'thing preferred' than if I believe it to be a good, and braver to endure pain if I say it is irksome and hard to bear and contrary to nature, than if I call it an evil.

Our friend Marcus Piso was often witty, but never more so than when he ridiculed the Stoics on this score. 'What?' he said, 'You tell us wealth is not good but you say it is "preferred"; how does that help matters? do you diminish avarice? In what way? If it is a question of words, to begin with, "preferred" is a longer word than "good." '—'That is no matter.'—'Granted, by all means; but it is certainly more impressive. For I do not know the derivation of "good," whereas "preferred" I suppose means "placed before" other things; this implies to my mind something very important.' Accordingly he would maintain that Zeno gives more importance to wealth, by classing it as 'preferred,' than did Aristotle, who admitted wealth to be a good, yet not a great good, but one to be thought lightly of and despised in comparison with uprightness and Moral Worth, and not to be greatly desired; and on Zeno's innovations in terminology generally he would declare that the names he actually gave to the things which he denied to be good or evil were more and less attractive respectively than the names by which we call them. So said Piso, an excellent man and, as you know, a devoted friend to yourself. For my part, let me add a few words more and then finally conclude. For it would be a long task to reply to all your arguments.

"The same verbal legerdemain supplies you with your kingdoms and empires and riches, riches so vast that you declare that everything the world contains is the property of the Wise Man. He alone, you say, is handsome, he alone a free man and a citizen: while the foolish are the opposite of all these, and according to you insane into the bargain. The Stoics call these paradoxa, as we might say 'startling truths.' But what is there so startling about them viewed at close quarters? I will consult you as to the meaning you attach to each term; there shall be no dispute. You Stoics say that all transgressions are equal. I won't jest with you now, as I did on the same subjects when you were prosecuting and I defending Lucius Murena.¹⁴ On that occasion I was addressing a jury, not an audience of scholars, and I even had to play to the gallery a little; but now I must reason more closely.

Transgressions are equal.—How so, pray?—Because nothing can be better than good or baser than base.—Explain further, for there is much disagreement on this point; let us have your special arguments to prove how all transgressions are equal.—Suppose, says my opponent, of a number of lyres not one is so strung as to be in tune; then all are equally out of tune; similarly with transgressions, since all are departures from rule, all are equally departures from rule; therefore all are equal.—Here we are put off with an equivocation. All the lyres equally are out of tune; but it does not follow that all are equally out of tune. So your comparison does not help you; for it does not follow that because we pronounce every case of avarice equally to be avarice, we must therefore pronounce them all to be equal.

Here is another of these false analogies: A skipper, says my adversary, commits an equal transgression if he loses his ship with a cargo of straw and if he does so when laden with gold; similarly a man is an equal transgressor if he beats his parent or his slave without due cause.—Fancy not seeing that the nature of the cargo has nothing to do with the skill of the navigator! so that whether he carries gold or straw makes no differences as regards good or bad seamanship; whereas the distinction between a parent and a mere slave is one that cannot and ought not to be overlooked. Hence the nature of the other upon which the offence is committed, which in navigation makes no difference, in conduct makes all the difference. Indeed in the case of navigation too, if the loss of the ship is due to negligence, the offence is greater with a cargo of gold than with one of straw. For the virtue known generally as prudence is an attribute as we hold of all the arts, and every master craftsman in each branch of art ought to possess it. Hence this proof also of the equality of transgression breaks down.

"However, they press the matter, and will not give way. Every transgression, they argue, is a proof of weakness and instability of character; but all the foolish possess these vices in an equal manner; therefore all transgressions must be equal. As though it were admitted that all foolish people possess an equal degree of vice, and that Lucius Tubulus was

¹⁴ See the remarkable passage in Cicero's *Pro Murena*, 60-66.

exactly as weak and unstable as Publius Scaevola who brought in the bill for his condemnation; and as though there were no difference also between the respective circumstances in which the transgressions are committed, so that the magnitude of the transgression varies in proportion to the importance of the circumstances!

And therefore (since my discourse must now conclude) this is the one chief defect under which your friends the Stoics seem to me to labour,—they think they can maintain two contrary opinions at once. How can you have a greater inconsistency than for the same person to say both that Moral Worth is the sole good and that we have a natural instinct to seek the things conducive to life? Thus in their desire to retain ideas consonant with the former doctrine they are landed in the position of Aristo; and when they try to escape from this they adopt what is in reality the position of the Peripatetics, though still clinging tooth and nail to their own terminology. Unwilling again to take the next step and weed out this terminology, they end by being rougher and more uncouth than ever, full of asperities of style and even of manners.

Panaetius strove to avoid this uncouth and repellant development of Stoicism, censuring alike the harshness of its doctrines and the crabbedness of its logic. In doctrine he was mellower, and in style more lucid. Plato, Aristotle, Xenocrates, Theophrastus and Dicaearchus were constantly on his lips, as his writings show; and these authors I strongly advise you to take up for your most careful study.

But evening is closing in, and I must be getting home. So enough for the present; but I hope we may often renew this conversation.” “Indeed we will,” he replied; “for how could we be better employed? and the first favour I shall ask of you is to listen to my refutation of what you have said. But bear in memory that whereas you really accept all of our opinions save for the difference of terminology, I on the contrary do not accept any of the tenets of your school.” “A parting shot indeed!” said I; “but we shall see.” And with these words I took my leave.

The Loeb Editor’s Notes:

CHAPTER 7

Book V

My dear Brutus,—Once I had been attending a lecture of Antiochus, as I was in the habit of doing, with Marcus Piso, in the building called the School of Ptolemy; and with us were my brother Quintus, Titus Pomponius, and Lucius Cicero, whom I loved as a brother but who was really my first cousin. We arranged to take our afternoon stroll in the Academy, chiefly because the place would be quiet and deserted at that hour of the day. Accordingly at the time appointed we met at our rendezvous, Piso's lodgings, and starting out beguiled with conversation on various subjects the three-quarters of a mile from the Dipylon Gate. When we reached the walks of the Academy, which are so deservedly famous, we had them entirely to ourselves, as we had hoped.

Thereupon Piso remarked: "Whether it is a natural instinct or a mere illusion, I can't say; but one's emotions are more strongly aroused by seeing the places that tradition records to have been the favourite resort of men of note in former days, than by hearing about their deeds or reading their writings. My own feelings at the present moment are a case in point. I am reminded of Plato, the first philosopher, so we are told, that made a practice of holding discussions in this place; and indeed the garden close at hand yonder not only recalls his memory but seems to bring the actual man before my eyes. This was the haunt of Speusippus, of Xenocrates, and of Xenocrates' pupil Polemo, who used to sit on the very seat we see over there. For my own part even the sight of our senate-house at home (I mean the Curia Hostilia, not the present new building, which looks to my eyes smaller since its enlargement)¹ used to call up to me thoughts of Scipio, Cato, Laelius, and chief of all, my grandfather;² such powers of suggestion do places possess. No wonder the scientific training of the memory is based upon locality."³

"Perfectly true, Piso," rejoined Quintus. "I myself on the way here just now noticed yonder village of Colonus, and it brought to my imagination Sophocles who resided there, and who is as you know my great admiration and delight. Indeed my memory took me further back; for I had a vision of Oedipus, advancing towards this very spot and asking in those most tender verses,⁴ 'What place is this?'—a mere fancy no doubt, yet still it affected me strongly."

¹ The senate-house, ascribed by tradition to King Tullus Hostilius, was enlarged by Sulla a year or two before the date of the dialogue.

² Presumably L. Piso Frugi, the 'Man of Worth,' cp. II.90.

³ Greek Mnemonics or memoria technica, said to have been invented by the poet Simonides, cp. II.104, seems to have been based on visual memory; it arranged the subjects to be remembered in *τοποι*, loci. The art was associated with Inventio as a branch of Rhetoric, cp. IV.10.

⁴ Sophocles *Oedipus Coloneus*, 1 f.:

“For my part,” said Pomponius, “you are fond of attacking me as a devotee of Epicurus, and I do spend much of my time with Phaedrus, who as you know is my dearest friend, in Epicurus’s Gardens⁵ which we passed just now; but I obey the old saw:⁶ I ‘think of those that are alive.’ Still I could not forget Epicurus, even if I wanted; the members of our body not only have pictures of him, but even have his likeness on their drinking-cups and rings.”

“As for our friend Pomponius,” I interposed, “I believe he is joking; and no doubt he is a licensed wit, for he has so taken root in Athens that he is almost an Athenian; in fact I expect he will get the surname of Atticus!⁷ But I, Piso, agree with you; it is a common experience that places do strongly stimulate the imagination and vivify our ideas of famous men. You remember how I once came with you to Metapontum, and would not go to the house where we were to stay until I had seen the very place where Pythagoras breathed his last and the seat he sat in. All over Athens, I know, there are many reminders of eminent men in the actual place where they lived; but at the present moment it is that alcove over there which appeals to me, for not long ago⁸ it belonged to Carneades. I fancy I see him now (for his portrait is familiar), and I can imagine that the very place where he used to sit misses the sound of his voice, and mourns the loss of that mighty intellect.”

“Well, then,” said Piso, “as we all have some association that appeals to us, what is it that interests our young friend Lucius? Does he enjoy visiting the spot where Demosthenes and Aeschines used to fight their battles? For we are all specially influenced by our own favourite study.”

“Pray don’t ask me,” answer Lucius with a blush; “I have actually made a pilgrimage down to the Bay of Phalerum, where they say Demosthenes used to practise declaiming on the beach, to learn to pitch his voice so as to overcome an uproar. Also only just now I turned off the road a little way on the right, to visit the tomb of Pericles. Though in fact there is no end to it in this city; wherever we go we tread historic ground.”

“Well, Cicero,” said Piso, “these enthusiasms befit a young man of parts, if they lead him to copy the example of the great. If they only stimulate antiquarian curiosity, they are mere dilettantism. But we all of us exhort you—though I hope it is a case of spurring a willing steed—to resolve to imitate your heroes as well as to know about them.” “He is practising your precepts already, Piso,” said I, “as you are aware; but all the same thank you for encouraging him.” “Well,” said Piso, with his usual amiability, “let us all join forces to promote the lad’s improvement; and especially let us try to make him spare some of his interest for philosophy, either so as to follow the example of yourself for whom he has such an affection, or in order to be better equipped for the very study to which he is devoted. But, Lucius,” he asked, “do you need our urging, or have you a natural leaning of your own towards philosophy? You are keeping Antiochus’s lectures, and seem to me to be a pretty attentive pupil.” “I try to be,” replied Lucius with a timid or rather a modest air; “but have you heard any lectures on Carneades lately? He attracts me immensely; but Antiochus calls me in the other direction; and there is no other lecturer to go to.”

“Perhaps,” said Piso, “it will not be altogether easy, while our friend here” (meaning me) “is by, still I will venture to urge you to leave the present New Academy for the Old, which includes, as you heard Antiochus declare, not only those who bear the name of Academics, Speusippus, Xenocrates, Polemo, Crantor and the rest, but also the early Peripatetics, headed by their chief, Aristotle, who, if Plato be excepted, I almost think deserves to be called the prince of philosophers. Do you then join them, I beg of you. From their writings and teachings can be learnt the whole of liberal culture, of history and of style; moreover they include such a variety of sciences, that without the equipment that they give no one can be adequately prepared to embark on any of the higher careers. They have produced orators, generals and statesmen. To come to the less distinguished professions, this factory of experts in all the sciences has turned out mathematicians, poets, musicians and physicians.”

⁵ Bequeathed by Epicurus as a sort of college to his successors.

⁶ ‘Vivorum meminimus’ occurs in Petronius 43 and 75, of shaking off vain regrets — ‘let the dead bury their dead.’

⁷ This prophecy after the event shows that Cicero’s friend and correspondent derived the name by which he is best known from his long residence at Athens.

⁸ Carneades died 129 B.C., fifty years before the supposed date of this dialogue.

“You know that I agree with you about that, Piso,” I replied; “but you have raised the point most opportunely; for my cousin Cicero is eager to hear the doctrine of the Old Academy of which you speak, and of the Peripatetics, on the subject of the Ends of Goods. We feel sure you can expound it with the greatest ease, for you have had Staseas from Naples in your household for many years, and also we know you have been studying this very subject under Antiochus for several months at Athens.” “Here goes, then,” replied Piso, smiling, “(for you have rather craftily arranged for our discussion to start with me), let me see what I can do to give the lad a lecture. If an oracle had foretold that I should find myself discoursing in the Academy like a philosopher, I should not have believed it, but here I am, thanks to our having the place to ourselves. Only don’t let me bore the rest of you while I am obliging our young friend.” “What, bore me?” said I. “Why, it is I who asked you to speak.” Thereupon Quintus and Pomponius having declared that they wished it too, Piso began. And I will ask you, Brutus, kindly to consider whether you think his discourse a satisfactory summary of the doctrine of Antiochus, which I believe to be the system which you most approve, as you have often attended the lectures of his brother Aristus.

Accordingly Piso spoke as follows: “About the educational value of the Peripatetic system I have said enough, in the briefest possible way, a few moments ago. Its arrangement, like that of most other systems, is threefold: one part deals with nature, the second with discourse, and the third with conduct. Natural Philosophy the Peripatetics have investigated so thoroughly that no region in sky or sea or land (to speak poetically) has been passed over. Nay more, in treating of the elements of being and the constitution of the universe they have established much of their doctrine not merely by probable arguments but by conclusive mathematical demonstration, applying a quantity of material derived from facts that they have themselves investigated to the discovery of other facts beyond the reach of observation.

Aristotle gave a complete account of the birth, nutrition and structure of all living creatures, Theophrastus of the natural history of plants and the causes and constitution of vegetable organisms in general; and the knowledge thus attained facilitated the investigation of the most obscure questions. In Logic their teachings include the rules of rhetoric as well as of dialectic; and Aristotle their founder started the practice of arguing both pro and contra upon every topic, not like Arcesilas, always controverting every proposition, but setting out all the possible arguments on either side in every subject.

The third division of philosophy investigates the rules of human well-being; this too was treated by the Peripatetics, so as to comprise not only the principles of individual conduct but also of the government of states. From Aristotle we learn the manners, customs and institutions, and from Theophrastus the laws also, of nearly all the states not only of Greece but of the barbarians as well. Both described the proper qualifications of a statesman, both moreover wrote lengthy treatises on the best form of constitution; Theophrastus treated the subject more fully, discussing the forces and occasions of political change, and their control as circumstances demand. Among the alternative ideals of conduct they gave the highest place to the life of retirement, devoted to contemplation and to study. This was pronounced to be most worthy of the Wise Man, as most nearly resembling the life of the gods. And these topics they handle in a style as brilliant as it is illuminating.

“Their books on the subject of the Chief Good fall into two classes, one popular in style, and this class they used to call their *exoteric* works; the other more carefully wrought.⁹ The latter treatises they left in the form of note-books. This distinction occasionally gives them an appearance of inconsistency; but as a matter of fact in the main body of their doctrine there is no divergence, at all events among the philosophers I have mentioned, nor did they disagree among themselves. But on the chief object of inquiry, namely Happiness, and the one question which philosophy has to consider and to investigate, whether this lies entirely within the control of the Wise Man, or whether it can be impaired or destroyed by adversity, here there does appear sometimes to exist among them some divergence and uncertainty. This effect is chiefly produced by Theophrastus’s book *On Happiness*, in which a very considerable

⁹ Not only the extant treatises on Ethics but the whole of the extant works of Aristotle, except the recently-discovered *Athenian Constitution*, belong to this latter class.

amount of importance is assigned to fortune; though if this be correct, wisdom alone could not guarantee happiness. This theory seems to me to be, if I may so call it, too enervating and unmanly to be adequate to the force and dignity of virtue. Hence we had better keep to Aristotle and his son Nicomachus; the latter's elaborate volumes on Ethics are ascribed, it is true, to Aristotle, but I do not see why the son should not have been capable of emulating the father.¹⁰ Still, we may use Theophrastus on most points, so long as we maintain a larger element of strength and solidity in virtue than he did.

Let us then limit ourselves to these authorities. Their successors are indeed in my opinion superior to the philosophers of any other school, but are so unworthy of their ancestry that one might imagine them to have been their own teachers. To begin with, Theophrastus's pupil Strato set up to be a natural philosopher; but great as he is in this department, he is nevertheless for the most part an innovator; and on ethics he has hardly anything. His successor Lyco has a copious style, but his matter is somewhat barren. Lyco's pupil Aristo is polished and graceful, but has not the authority that we expect to find in a great thinker; he wrote much, it is true, and he wrote well, but his style is somehow lacking in weight.

"I pass over a number of writers, including the learned and entertaining Hieronymus. Indeed I know no reason for calling the latter a Peripatetic at all; for he defined the Chief Good as freedom from pain: and to hold a different view of the Chief Good is to hold a different system of philosophy altogether. Critolaus professed to imitate the ancients; and he does in fact come nearest to them in weight, and has a flowing style; all the same, even he is not true to the principles of his ancestors. Diodorus, his pupil, couples with Moral Worth freedom from pain. He too stands by himself; differing about the Chief Good he cannot correctly be called a Peripatetic. Our master Antiochus seems to me to adhere most scrupulously to the doctrine of the ancients, which according to his teaching was common to Aristotle and to Polemo.

"Our young friend Lucius is therefore well advised in desiring most of all to hear about the Chief Good; for when you have settled that point in a system of philosophy, you have settled everything. On any other topic, some degree of incompleteness or uncertainty causes no more mischief than is proportionate to the importance of the particular topic on which the neglect has occurred; but uncertainty as to the Chief Good necessarily involves uncertainty as to the principles of conduct, and this must carry men so far out of their course that they cannot know what harbour to steer for. On the other hand when we have ascertained the Ends of things, knowing the ultimate Good and ultimate Evil, we have discovered a map of life, a chart of all the duties;

and therefore have discovered a standard to which each action may be referred; and from this we can discover and construct that rule of happiness which all desire.

"Now there is great difference of opinion as to what constitutes the Chief Good. Let us therefore adopt the classification of Carneades, which our teacher Antiochus is very fond of employing. Carneades passed in review all the opinions as of that Chief Good, not only that actually had been held by philosophers hitherto, but that it was possible to hold. He then pointed out that no science or art can supply its own starting-point; its subject-matter must always lie outside it. There is no need to enlarge upon or illustrate this point; for it is evident that no art is occupied with itself: the art is distinct from the subject with which it deals; since therefore, as medicine is the art of health and navigation the art of sailing the ship, so Prudence or Practical Wisdom is the art of conduct, it follows that Prudence also must have something as its base and point of departure.

Now practically all have agreed that the subject with which Prudence is occupied and the end which it desires to attain is bound to be something intimately adapted to our nature; it must be capable of directly arousing and awakening an

¹⁰ Aristotle's principal work on Ethics is entitled *The Nicomachean Ethics*, to distinguish it from two other treatises ascribed to him, the *Eudemean Ethics* and the *Magna Moralia*. The title may imply that the book was dedicated to, or possibly that it was edited by, Nicomachus; but hardly, *pace* Cicero, that it was written by him, since he died in battle while still a youth. It seems certain that Cicero had never read, or had forgotten, the book, for he entirely ignores its distinctive doctrines. Cp. IV.12 n.

impulse of desire, what in Greek is called *hormē*. But what it is that at the first moment of our existence excites in our nature this impulse of desire—as to this there is no agreement. It is at this point that all the difference of opinion among students of the ethical problem arises. Of the whole inquiry into the Ends of Goods and Evils and the question which among them is ultimate and final, the fountain-head is to be found in the earliest instincts of nature; discover these and you have the source of the stream, the starting-point of the debate as to the Chief Good and Evil.

“One school holds that our earliest desire is for pleasure and our earliest repulsion is from pain; another thinks that freedom from pain is the earliest thing welcomed, and pain the earliest thing avoided; others again start from what they term the primary objects in accordance with nature, among which they reckon the soundness and safety of all the parts of the body, health, perfect senses, freedom from pain, strength, beauty and the like, analogous to which are the primary intellectual excellences which are the sparks and seeds of the virtues. Now it must be one or other of these three sets of things which first excites our nature to feel desire or repulsion; nor can it be anything whatsoever beside these three things. It follows therefore that every right act of avoidance or of pursuit is aimed at one of these objects, and that consequently one of these three must form the subject-matter of Prudence, which we spoke of as the art of life; from one of the three Prudence derives the initial motive of the whole of conduct.

“Now, from whichever Prudence decides to be the object of the primary natural impulses, will arise a theory of right and of Moral Worth which may correspond with one or other of the three objects aforesaid. Thus Morality will consist either in aiming all our actions at pleasure, even though one may not succeed in attaining it; or at absence of pain, even though one is unable to secure it; or at getting the things in accordance with nature, even though one does not attain any of them. Hence there is a divergence between the different conceptions of the Ends of Goods and Evils, precisely equivalent to the difference of opinion as to the primary natural objects.—Others again starting from the same primary objects will make the sole standard of right action the actual attainment of pleasure, freedom from pain, or the primary things in accordance with nature, respectively.

“Thus we have now set forth six views as to the Chief Good. The leading upholders of the latter three are: of pleasure, Aristippus; of freedom from pain, Hieronymus; of the enjoyment of what we have called the primary things in accordance with nature, Carneades,—that is, he did not originate this view but he upheld it for purposes of argument. The three former were possible views, but only one of them has been actually maintained, though that with great vigour. No one has asserted pleasure to be the sole aim of action in the sense that the mere intention of attaining pleasure, although unsuccessful, is in itself desirable and moral and the only good. Nor yet has anyone held that the effort to avoid pain is in itself a thing desirable, without one’s being able actually to avoid it. On the other hand, that morality consists in using every endeavour to obtain the things in accordance with nature, and that this endeavour even though unsuccessful is itself the sole thing desirable and the sole good, is actually maintained by the Stoics.

“These then are the six simple views about the End of Goods and Evils; two of them without a champion, and four actually upheld. Of composite or dualistic definitions of the Supreme Good there have been three in all; nor were more than three possible, if you examine the nature of the case closely.¹¹ There is the combination of Morality with pleasure, adopted by Callipho and Dinomachus; with freedom from pain, by Diodorus; or with the primary objects of nature, the view of the ancients, as we entitle both the Academics and the Peripatetics.

“But it is impossible to set forth the whole of our position at once; so for the present we need only notice that pleasure must be discarded, on the ground that, as will be shown later, we are intended by nature for greater things. Freedom from pain is open to practically the same objections as pleasure.

¹¹ This is obviously incorrect; for formal completeness, Carneades ought to have made *six* composite Ends, by combining Morality with the *pursuit* of each of the three primary objects of desire as well as with their *attainment*; but no doubt at this point he felt the unreality of his scheme and drew back, since Morality, according to Aristippus, Epicurus and the Stoics *was* the pursuit of pleasure, freedom from pain, and the natural goods respectively.

Nor need we look for other arguments to refute the opinion of Carneades; for any conceivable account of the Chief Good which does not include the factor of Moral Worth gives a system under which there is no room either for duty, virtue or friendship. Moreover the combination with Moral Worth either of pleasure or of freedom from pain debases the very morality that it aims at supporting. For to uphold two standards of conduct jointly, one of which declares freedom from evil to be the Supreme Good, while the other is a thing concerned with the most frivolous part of our nature, is to dim, if not to defile, all the radiance of Moral Worth. There remain the Stoics, who took over their whole system from the Peripatetics and the Academics, adopting the same ideas under other names.

“The best way to deal with these different schools would be to refute each separately; but for the present we must keep to the business in hand; we will discuss these other schools at our leisure.

“The calmness or tranquillity of mind which is the Chief Good of Democritus, *euthumia* as he calls it, has had to be excluded from this discussion, because this mental tranquillity is in itself the happiness in question; and we are inquiring not what happiness is, but what produces it. Again, the discredited and abandoned theories of Pyrrho, Aristo and Erillus cannot be brought within the circle we have drawn, and so we have not been concerned to consider them at all. For the whole of this inquiry into the Ends or, so to speak, the limits of Goods and Evils must begin from that which we have spoken of as adapted and suited to nature and which is the earliest object of desire for its own sake; now this is entirely done away with by those who maintain that, in the sphere of things which contain no element of Moral Worth or baseness, there is no reason why any one thing should be preferred to any other, and who consider these things to be absolutely indifferent; and Erillus also, if he actually held that there is nothing good but knowledge, destroyed every motive of rational action and every clue to right conduct.

“Thus we have eliminated the views of all the other philosophers; and no other view is possible; therefore this doctrine of the Ancients must hold good. Let us then follow the practice of the old philosophers, adopted also by the Stoics, and start as follows.

“Every living creature loves itself, and from the moment of birth strives to secure its own preservation; because the earliest impulse bestowed on it by nature for its life-long protection is the instinct for self-preservation and for the maintenance of itself in the best condition possible to it in accordance with its nature. At the outset this tendency is vague and uncertain, so that it merely aims at protecting itself whatever its character may be; it does not understand itself nor its own capacities and nature. When, however, it has grown a little older, and has begun to understand the degree in which different things affect and concern itself, it now gradually commences to make progress. Self-consciousness dawns, and the creature begins to comprehend the reason why it possesses the instinctive appetite aforesaid, and to try to obtain the things which it perceives to be adapted to its nature and to repel their opposites. Every living creature therefore finds its object of appetite in the thing suited to its nature. Thus arises The End of Goods, namely to live in accordance with nature and in that condition which is the best and most suited to nature that is possible.

At the same time every animal has its own nature; and consequently, while for all alike the End consists in the realization of their nature (for there is no reason why certain things should not be common to all the lower animals, and also to the lower animals and man, since all have a common nature), yet the ultimate and supreme objects that we are investigating must be differentiated and distributed among the different kinds of animals, each kind having its own peculiar to itself and adapted to the requirements of its individual nature.

Hence when we say that the End of all living creatures is to live in accordance with nature, this must not be construed as meaning that all have one and the same end; but just as it is correct to say that all the arts and sciences have the common characteristic of occupying themselves with some branch of knowledge, while each art has its own particular branch of knowledge belonging to it, so all animals have the common End of living according to nature, but their natures are diverse, so that one thing is in accordance with nature for the horse, another for the ox, and another for man, and yet in all the Supreme End is common, and that not only in animals but also in all those things upon which nature bestows nourishment, increase and protection. Among these things we notice that plants can, in a sense, perform

on their own behalf a number of actions conducive to their life and growth, so that they may attain their End after their kind. So that finally we may embrace all animate existence in one broad generalization, and say without hesitation, that all nature is self-preserving, and has before it the end and aim of maintaining itself in the best possible condition after its kind; and that consequently all things endowed by nature with life have a similar, but not an identical, End. This leads to the inference, that the ultimate Good of man is life in accordance with nature, which we may interpret as meaning life in accordance with human nature developed to its full perfection and supplied with all its needs.

This, then, is the theory that we have to expound; but if it requires a good deal of explanation, you will receive it with forbearance. For this is perhaps the first time that Lucius has heard the subject debated, and we must make allowance for his youth." "Very true," said I; "albeit the style of your discourse so far has been suited to hearers of any age."

"Well then," he resumed, "having explained what the principle is which determines what things are desirable, I have next to show why the matter is as I have stated. Let us therefore begin from the position which I laid down first and which is also first in the order of reality: let us understand that every living creature loves itself. The fact that this is so admits of no doubt, for indeed it is a fundamental fact of nature, and one that everybody can grasp for himself by the evidence of his senses, so much so that did anyone choose to deny it, he would not get a hearing; nevertheless, so that no step may be omitted, I suppose I ought also to give reasons why it is so.

Yet how can you form any intelligible conception of an animal that should hate itself? The thing is a contradiction in terms. For the creature being its own enemy, the instinctive appetite we spoke of will deliberately set about drawing to itself something harmful to itself; yet it will be doing this for its own sake; therefore the animal will both hate and love itself at the same time, which is impossible. Also, if a man is his own enemy, it follows that he will think good evil and evil good; that he will avoid things that are desirable and seek things that ought to be avoided; but this undeniably would mean to turn the whole of life upside down. A few people may be found who attempt to end their lives with a halter or by other means; but these, or the character of Terence¹² who (in his own words) 'resolved that if he made himself to suffer, he so made less the wrong he did his son,' are not to be put down as haters of themselves.

The motive with some is grief, with others passion; many are rendered insane by anger, and plunge into ruin with their eyes open, fancying all the time that what they do is for their own best interests. Hence they say, and say in all sincerity:

'It is my way; do you do as it suits you.'¹³

Men who had really declared war against themselves would desire to have days of torment and nights of anguish, and they would not reproach themselves and say that they had been misguided and imprudent: such lamentations show that they love and care for themselves. It follows that whenever it is said of a man that he has ruined himself and is his own worst enemy, and that he is tired of life, you may be sure that there is really an explanation which would justify the inference, even from such a case as this, that every man loves himself.

Nor is it enough to say that nobody exists who hates himself; we must also realize that nobody exists who thinks it makes no difference to him what his own condition is. For it will be destructive of the very faculty of desire if we come to think of our own circumstances as a matter of indifference to us, and feel in our own case the absolute neutrality which is our attitude towards the things that are really indifferent.

"It would also be utterly absurd if anyone desired to maintain that, though the fact of self-love is admitted, this instinct of affection is really directed toward some other object and not towards the person himself who feels it. When this is said of friendship, of right action or of virtue, whether correct or not, it has some intelligible meaning; but in the case of ourselves it is utterly meaningless to say that we love ourselves for the sake of something else, for example, for the sake of pleasure. Clearly we do not love ourselves for the sake of pleasure, but pleasure for the sake of ourselves.

¹² Terence *Heautontimorumenos* (The Self-tormentor) 147.

¹³ From the same play, l. 80.

Yet what fact is more self-evident than that every man not merely loves himself, but loves himself very much indeed? For who is there, what percentage of mankind, whose

‘Blood does not ebb with horror, and face turn pale with fear,’¹⁴

at the approach of death? No doubt it is a fault to recoil so violently from the dissolution of our being (and the same timidity in regard to pain is blameworthy); but the fact that practically everybody has this feeling is conclusive proof that nature shrinks from destruction; and the more some people act thus—as indeed they do to a blameworthy degree—the more it is to be inferred that this very excess would not have occurred in exceptional cases, were not a certain moderate degree of such timidity natural. I am not referring to the fear of death felt by those who shun death because they believe it means the loss of the good things of life, or because they are afraid of certain horrors after death, or if they dread lest death may be painful: for very often young children, who do not think of any of these things, are terribly frightened if in fun we threaten to let them fall from a height. Even ‘wild creatures,’ says Pacuvius,

‘Lacking discourse of reason

To look before,’

when seized with fear of death, ‘bristle with horror.’

Who does not suppose that the Wise Man himself, even when he has resolved that he must die, will yet be affected by parting from his friends and merely by leaving the light of day? The strength of natural impulse, in this manifestation of it, is extremely obvious, since many men endure to beg their bread in order that they may live, and men broken with age suffer anguish at the approach of death, and endure torments like those of Philoctetes in the play; who though racked with intolerable pains, nevertheless prolonged life by fowling;

‘Slow he pierced the swift with arrows, standing shot them on the wing,’

as Attius has it, and wove their plumage together to make himself garments.

But do I speak of the human race or of animals generally, when the nature of trees and plants is almost the same? For whether it be, as very learned men have thought, that this capacity has been engendered in them by some higher and diviner power, or whether it is the result of chance, we see that the vegetable species secure by means of their bark and roots that support and protection which animals derive from the distribution of the sensory organs and from the well-knit framework of the limbs. On this matter I agree, it is true, with those who hold that all these things are regulated by nature, because if nature were to neglect them her own existence would be impossible; yet I allow those who think otherwise on this point to hold whatever view they please: whenever I mention ‘the nature of man,’ let them, if they like, understand me to mean ‘man,’ as it makes no difference. For the individual can no more lose the instinct to seek the things that are good for him than he can divest himself of his own personality. The wisest authorities have therefore been right in finding the basis of the Chief Good in nature, and in holding that this instinctive desire for things suited to our nature is innate in all men, because it is founded on that natural attraction which makes them love themselves.

“Having made it sufficiently clear that self-love is an instinct of nature, we must next examine what is the nature of man; for it is human nature that is the object of our investigation. Now it is manifest that man consists of body and mind, although the mind plays the more important part and the body the less. Next we further observe both that man’s body is of a structure surpassing that of other animals, and that his mind is so constituted as not only to be equipped with senses but also to possess the dominant factor of intellect, which commands the obedience of the whole of man’s nature, being endowed with the marvellous faculties of reason, of cognition, of knowledge and of all the virtues. In fact the faculties of the body are not comparable in importance with the parts of the mind. Moreover they are easier to understand. We will therefore begin with them.

¹⁴ From the same passage of Ennius’s *Alcmaeon* as is quoted at IV.62.

“It is manifest how well the parts of our body, and its entire shape, form and attitude are adapted to our nature; and that special conformation of the brow, eyes, ears and other parts which is appropriate to man can be recognized without hesitation by the understanding. But of course it is necessary that these organs should be healthy and vigorous and possessed of their natural motions and uses; no part must be lacking and none must be diseased or enfeebled—this is a requirement of nature. Again, there is also a certain form of bodily activity which keeps the motions and postures in harmony with nature; and any error in these, due to distortion or abnormality of movement or posture,—for example, if a man were to walk on his hands, or backwards instead of forwards,—would make a man appear alienated from himself, as if he had stripped off his proper humanity and hated his own nature. Hence certain attitudes in sitting, and slouching, languishing movements, such as are affected by the wanton and the effeminate, are contrary to nature, and though really arising from a defect of mind, suggest to the eye a bodily perversion of man’s nature.

And so, on the contrary, a controlled and well-regulated bearing, condition and movement of the body has the appearance of being in harmony with nature.

“Turning now to the mind, this must not only exist, but also be of a certain character; it must have all its parts intact and lack none of the virtues. The senses also possess their several virtues or excellences, consisting in the unimpeded performance of their several functions of swiftly and readily perceiving sensible objects.

The mind, on the other hand, and that dominant part of the mind which is called the intellect, possess many excellences or virtues, but these are of two main classes; one class consists of those excellences which are implanted by their own nature, and which are called nonvolitional; and the other of those which, depending on our volition, are usually styled ‘virtues’ in the more special sense; and the latter are the preeminent glory and distinction of the mind. To the former class belong receptiveness and memory; and practically all the excellences of this class are included under one name of ‘talent,’ and their possessors are spoken of as ‘talented.’ The other class consists of the lofty virtues properly so called, which we speak of as dependent on volition, for instance, Prudence, Temperance, Courage, Justice, and the others of the same kind.

“Such is the account, a brief one, it is true, that it was necessary to give of the body and the mind. It has indicated in outline what the requirements of man’s nature are; and it has clearly shown that, since we love ourselves, and desire all our faculties both of mind and body to be perfect, those faculties are themselves dear to us for their own sakes, and are of the highest importance for our general well-being. For he who aims at the preservation of himself, must necessarily feel an affection for the parts of himself also, and the more so, the more perfect and admirable in their own kind they are. For the life we desire is one fully equipped with the virtues of mind and body; and such a life must constitute the Chief Good, inasmuch as it must necessarily be such as to be the limit of things desirable. This truth realized, it cannot be doubted that, as men feel an affection towards themselves for their own sakes and of their own accord, the parts also of the body and mind, and of those faculties which are displayed in each while in motion or at rest, are esteemed for their own attractiveness and desired for their own sake.

From these explanations, it may readily be inferred that the most desirable of our faculties are those possessed of the highest intrinsic worth; so that the most desirable excellences are the excellences of the noblest parts of us, which are desirable for their own sake. The result will be that excellence of mind will be rated higher than excellence of body, and the volitional virtues of the mind will surpass the nonvolitional; the former, indeed, are the ‘virtues’ specially so called, and are far superior, in that they spring from reason, the most divine element in man. For the inanimate or nearly inanimate creatures that are under nature’s charge, all of them have their supreme good in the body; hence it has been cleverly said, as I think, about the pig, that a mind has been bestowed upon this animal to serve as salt and keep it from going bad.

But there are some animals which possess something resembling virtue, for example, lions, dogs and horses; in these we observe not only bodily movements as in pigs, but in some degree a sort of mental activity also. In man, however, the whole importance belongs to the mind, and to the rational part of the mind, which is the source of virtue; and virtue

is defined as the perfection of reason,¹⁵ a doctrine which the Peripatetics think cannot be expounded too often.

“Plants also have a development and progress to maturity that is not unlike that of animals; hence we speak of a vine living and dying, or of a tree as young or old, in the prime of life or decrepit; consequently it is appropriate to suppose that with them as with animals certain things are suited and certain other things foreign to their nature; and that their growth and nurture is tended by a foster-mother, the science and art of husbandry, which trims and prunes, straightens, raises and props, enabling them to advance to the goal that nature prescribes, till the vines themselves, could they speak, would acknowledge this to be their proper mode of treatment and of tendance. In reality, of course, the power that tends the vine, to take that particular instance, is something outside of it; for the vine does not possess force enough in itself to be able to attain its highest possible development without the aid of cultivation.

But suppose the vine to receive the gift of sensation, bestowing on it some degree of appetite and power of movement; then what do you think it will do? Will it not endeavour to provide for itself the benefits which it previously obtained by the aid of the vine-dresser? But do you mark how it will further be concerned to protect its sensory faculties also and all their appetitive instincts, and any additional organs it may have developed? Thus with the properties that it always possessed it will combine those subsequently added to it, and it will not have the same end as the husbandman who tended it had, but will desire to live in accordance with that nature which it has subsequently acquired. And so its End or Good will be similar to, but not the same as, what it was before; it will no longer seek the Good of a plant, but that of an animal. Suppose again that it have bestowed upon it not merely sensation but also a human mind. Will it not result that while its former properties remain objects of its care, these added properties will be far more dear to it, and that the best parts of the mind will be the dearest of all? Will it not find its End or Chief Good in this crowning development of its nature, inasmuch as intellect and reason are far and away the highest of all faculties? Thus there has emerged the final term of the series of objects of desire; thus starting from the primary attraction of nature, by gradual stages of ascent we have arrived at the summit, the consummation of perfect bodily integrity combined with the full development of the mental faculty of reason.

“The plan of our nature being then that which I have explained, if, as I said at the outset, every man as soon as he is born could know himself and could appreciate the powers of his nature as a whole and of its several parts, he would at once perceive the true essence of the thing that is the subject of our inquiry, namely the highest and last of the objects of our desires, and he would be incapable of error in anything. But as it is, our nature at all events at the outset is curiously hidden from us, and we cannot fully realize or understand it; yet as we grow older we gradually or I should say tardily come, as it were, to know ourselves. Accordingly, the earliest feeling of attraction which nature has created in us towards ourselves is vague and obscure, and the earliest instinct of appetite only strives to secure our safety and freedom from injury. When, however, we begin to look about us and to perceive what we are and how we differ from the rest of living creatures, we then commence to pursue the objects for which we are intended by nature.

Some resemblance to this process we observe in the lower animals. At first they do not move from the place where they were born. Then they begin to move, under the influence of their several instincts of appetite; we see little snakes gliding, ducklings swimming, blackbirds flying, oxen using their horns, scorpions their stings; each in fact has its own nature as its guide to life. A similar process is clearly seen in the human race. Infants just born lie helpless, as if absolutely inanimate; when they have acquired a little more strength, they exercise their mind and senses; they strive to stand erect, they use their hands, they recognize their nurses; then they take pleasure in the society of other children, and enjoy meeting them, they take part in games and love to hear stories; they desire to bestow of their own abundance in bounty to others; they take an inquisitive interest in what goes on in their homes; they begin to reflect and to learn, and want to know the names of the people they see; in their contests with their companions they are elated by victory, discouraged and disheartened by defeat. For every stage of this development there must be supposed to be a reason.

¹⁵ This definition of moral virtue and the doctrine above of its superiority to intellectual excellence (the exact opposite of Aristotle's view) are Stoic tenets foisted on the Peripatetics by Antiochus.

It is that human capacity is so constituted by nature that it appears designed to achieve every kind of virtue; hence children, without instruction, are actuated by semblances of the virtues, of which they possess in themselves the seeds, for these are primary elements of our nature, and they sprout and blossom into virtue. For we are so constituted from birth as to contain within us the primary instincts of action, of affection, of liberality and of gratitude; we are also gifted with minds that are adapted to knowledge, prudence and courage, and averse from their opposites; hence there is a reason why we observe in children those sparks of virtue I have mentioned, from which the philosopher's torch of reason must be kindled, that he may follow reason as his divine guide and so arrive at nature's goal. For as I have repeatedly said already, in the years of immaturity when the intellect is weak the powers of our nature are discerned as through a mist; but as the mind grows older and stronger it learns to know the capacity of our nature, while recognizing that this nature is susceptible of further development and has by itself only reached an incomplete condition.

"We must therefore penetrate into the nature of things, and come to understand thoroughly its requirements; otherwise we cannot know ourselves. That maxim was too lofty for it to be thought to have emanated from a human being, and it was therefore ascribed to a god. Accordingly the Pythian Apollo bids us 'learn to know ourselves'; but the sole road to self-knowledge is to know our powers of body and of mind, and to follow the path of life that gives us their full employment.

"Now inasmuch as our original instinct of desire was for the possession of the parts aforesaid in their fullest natural perfection, it must be allowed that, when we have attained the object of our desire, our nature takes its stand in this as its final End, and this constitutes our Chief Good; and that this End as a whole must be desired intrinsically and in and for itself, follows of necessity from the fact that the several parts of it also have already been proved to be desirable for themselves.

"If however anyone thinks that our enumeration of bodily advantages is incomplete owing to the omission of pleasure, let us postpone this question to another time. For whether pleasure is or is not one of the objects we have called the primary things in accordance with nature makes no difference for our present inquiry. If, as I hold, pleasure adds nothing to the sumtotal of nature's goods, it has rightly been omitted. If on the contrary pleasure does possess the property that some assign to it, this fact does not impair the general outline we have just given of the Chief Good; since if to the primary objects of nature as we have explained them, pleasure be added, this only adds one more to the list of bodily advantages, and does not alter the interpretation of the Chief Good which has been propounded.

"So far as our argument has proceeded hitherto, it has been based entirely upon the primary attractions of nature. But from this point on let us adopt a different line of reasoning, namely to show that, in addition to the argument from self-love, the fact that each part of our nature, both mental and bodily, possesses its own peculiar faculty goes to prove that the activity of our several parts¹⁶ is preeminently spontaneous. To start with the body, do you notice how men try to hide a deformed or infirm or maimed limb? They actually take great pains and trouble to conceal, if they possibly can, their bodily defect, or at all events to let it be seen as little as possible; they even undergo painful courses of treatment in order to restore the natural appearance of their limbs, even though the actual use of them will not only not be improved but will even be diminished. [a] In fact, since every man instinctively thinks that he himself in his entirety is a thing to be desired, and this not for the sake of anything else but for his own sake, it follows that when a thing is desired as a whole for its own sake, the parts also of that thing are desired for their own sakes.

Again, is there nothing in the movements and postures of the body which Nature herself judges to be of importance? A man's mode of walking and sitting, his particular cast of features and expression—is there nothing in these things that we consider worthy or unworthy of a free man? Do we not often think people deserving of dislike, who by some movement or posture appear to have violated a law or principle of nature? And since people try to get rid of these defects of bearing, why should not even beauty have a good claim to be considered as desirable for its own sake? For we think imperfection or mutilation of the body things to be avoided for their own sake, why should we not with equal or perhaps still greater reason pursue distinction of form for its own sake? And if we avoid ugliness in bodily

¹⁶ his rebus seems to refer to cuiusque partis naturae, cp. § 44 note, and § 56 'et corpore et animo moveri.'

movement and posture, why should we not pursue beauty? Health also, and strength and freedom from pain we shall desire not merely for their utility but also for their own sakes. For since our nature aims at the full development of all its parts, she desires for its own sake that state of body which is most in accordance with himself; because she is thrown into utter disorder if the body is diseased or in pain or weak.

“Let us consider the parts of the mind, which are of nobler aspect. The loftier these are, the more unmistakable indications of nature do they afford. So great is our innate love of learning and of knowledge, that no one can doubt that man’s nature is strongly attracted to these things even without the lure of any profit. Do we notice how children cannot be deterred even by punishment from studying and inquiry into the world around them? Drive them away, and back they come. They delight in knowing things; they are eager to impart their knowledge to others; pageants, games and shows of that sort hold them spell-bound, and they will even endure hunger and thirst so as to be able to see them. Again, take persons who delight in the liberal arts and studies; do we not see them careless of health or business, patiently enduring any inconvenience when under the spell of learning and of science, and repaid for endless toil and trouble by the pleasure they derive from acquiring knowledge?

For my part I believe Homer had something of this sort in view in his imaginary account of the songs of the Sirens. Apparently it was not the sweetness of their voices or the novelty and diversity of their songs, but their professions of knowledge that used to attract the passing voyageurs; it was the passion for learning that kept men rooted to the Sirens’ rocky shores. This is their invitation to Ulysses (for I have translated this among other passages of Homer):

Ulysses, pride of Argos, turn thy bark
And listen to our music. Never yet
Did voyager sail these waters blue, but stayed
His course, enchanted by our voices sweet,
And having filled his soul with harmony,
Went on his homeward way a wiser man.
We know the direful strife and clash of war
That Greece by Heaven’s mandate bore to Troy,
And whatsoe’er on the wide earth befalls.¹⁷

Homer was aware that his story would not sound plausible if the magic that held his hero immeshed was merely an idle song! It is knowledge that the Sirens offer, and it was no marvel if a lover of wisdom held this dearer than his home. A passion for miscellaneous omniscience no doubt stamps a man as a mere dilettante; but it must be deemed the mark of a superior mind to be led on by the contemplation of high matters to a passionate love of knowledge.

“What an ardour for study, think you, possessed Archimedes, who was so absorbed in a diagram he was drawing in the dust that he was unaware even of the capture of his native city! What genius do we see expended by Aristoxenus on the theory of music! Imagine the zeal of a lifetime that Aristophanes devoted to literature! Why should I speak of Pythagoras, or of Plato, or Democritus? For they, we are told, in their passion for learning travelled through the remotest parts of the earth! Those who are blind to these facts have never been enamoured of some high and worthy study. And those who in this connexion allege that the studies I have mentioned are pursued for the sake of mental pleasure fail to see that they are proved to be desirable for their own sake by the very fact that the mind feels delight in them when no bait of advantage is held out, and finds enjoyment in the mere possession of knowledge even though it is likely to be a positive disadvantage to its possessor.

But what is the point of inquiring further into matters so obvious? Let us ask ourselves the question, how it is we are interested in the motions of the stars and in contemplating the heavenly bodies and studying all the obscure and secret realms of nature; why we derive pleasure from history, which we are so fond of following up, to the remotest detail,

¹⁷ *Odyssey*, 12.184 ff.

turning back to parts we have omitted, and pushing on to the end when we have once begun. Not that I am unaware that history is useful as well as entertaining. But what of our reading fiction, from which no utility can be extracted?

What of our eagerness to learn the names of people who have done something notable, their parentage, birthplace, and many quite unimportant details beside? What of the delight that is taken in history by men of the humblest station, who have no expectation of participating in public life, even mere artisans? Also we may notice that the persons most eager to hear and read of public affairs are those who are debarred by the infirmities of age from any prospect of taking part in them. Hence we are forced to infer that the objects of study and knowledge contain in themselves the allurements that entice us to study and to learning.

The old philosophers picture what the life of the Wise will be in the Islands of the Blest, and think that being released from all anxiety and needing none of the necessary equipment or accessories of life, they will do nothing but spend their whole time upon study and research in the science of nature. We on the other hand see in such studies not only the amusement of a life of happiness, but also the alleviation of misfortune; hence the numbers of men who when they had fallen into the power of enemies or tyrants, or when they were in prison or in exile, have solaced their sorrow with the *pursuit* of learning.

Demetrius of Phalerum, a ruler of this city, when unjustly banished from his country, repaired to the court of King Ptolemy at Alexandria. Being eminent in the very system of philosophy which we are recommending to you, and a pupil of Theophrastus, he employed the leisure afforded by his disaster in composing a number of excellent treatises, not for any practical use of his own, for he was debarred from affairs; but he found a sort of food for his higher nature in thus cultivating his mind. I myself frequently heard the blind expraetor and scholar Gnaeus Aufidius declare that he felt the actual loss of light more than the inconvenience of blindness. Take lastly the gift of sleep: did it not bring us repose for our bodies and an antidote for labour, we should think it a violation of nature, for it robs us of sensation and entirely suspends our activity; so that if our nature did not require repose or could obtain it in some other manner, we should be quite content, inasmuch as even as it is we frequently deny ourselves slumber, almost to the point of doing violence to nature, in the interests of business or of study.

“Even more striking, and in fact absolutely obvious and convincing natural indications are not wanting, more particularly no doubt in man, but also in every living creature, of the presence of a positive craving for constant activity. Perpetual repose is unendurable on any terms. This is a fact that may be readily detected in children of the tenderest age, if I may risk being thought to lay undue stress on a field of observation sanctioned by the older thinkers, all of whom, and my own school more than others, go to the nursery, because they believe that Nature reveals her plan to them most clearly in childhood. Even infants, we notice, are incapable of keeping still. Children of a somewhat more advanced age delight in games involving considerable exertion, from which not even fear of punishment can restrain them. And this passion for activity grows as they grow older. The prospect of the most delightful dreams would not reconcile us to feeling asleep for ever: Endymion’s fate we should consider no better than death.

Observe the least energetic among men: even in a notorious idler both mind and body are constantly in motion; set him free from unavoidable occupations, and he calls for a dice-board, goes off to some sport, or looks for somebody to chat with, seeking at the club or at some trivial social gathering a substitute for higher and more intellectual amusements. Even the wild animals that we keep caged up for our amusement find their captivity irksome, although they are better fed than if they were at large; they miss their natural birthright of free and untrammelled movement.

Hence the abler and more accomplished a man is, the less he would care to be alive at all if debarred from taking part in affairs, although allowed to batten on the most exquisite pleasures. Men of ability either choose a life of private activity, or, if of loftier ambition, aspire to a public career of political or military office, or else they devote themselves entirely to study and learning; and the devotees of learning are so far from making pleasure their aim, that they actually

endure care, anxiety and loss of sleep, in the exercise of the noblest part of man's nature, the divine element within us (for so we must consider the keen edge of the intellect and the reason), they ask for no pleasure and avoid no toil; they are ceaselessly occupied in marvelling at the discoveries of the ancients or in pursuing new researches of their own; insatiable in their appetite for study, they forget all else besides, and harbour not one base or mean thought. So potent is the spell of these pursuits, that even those who profess to follow other Ends of Goods, defined by utility or pleasure, may yet be seen to spend their whole lives in investigating and unfolding the processes of nature.¹⁸ .. _b5c21:

"It is therefore at all events manifest that we are designed by nature for activity. Activities vary in kind, so much so that the more important actually eclipse the less; but the most important are, first (according to my own view and that of those with whose system we are now occupied) the contemplation and the study of the heavenly bodies and of those secrets and mysteries of nature which reason has the capacity to penetrate; secondly, the practice and the theory of politics; thirdly, the principles of Prudence, Temperance, Courage and Justice, with the remaining virtues and the activities consonant therewith, all of which we may sum up under the single term of Morality; towards the knowledge and practice of which, when we have grown to maturity, we are led onward by nature's own guidance. All things are small in their first beginnings, but they grow larger as they pass through their regular stages of progress. And there is a reason for this, namely that at the moment of birth we possess a certain weakness and softness which prevent our seeing and doing what is best. The radiance of virtue and of happiness, the two things most to be desired, dawns upon us later, and far later still comes a full understanding of their nature. 'Happy the man,' Plato well says, 'who even in old age has the good fortune to be able to achieve wisdom and true opinions.'¹⁹ Therefore since enough has been said about the primary goods of nature, let us now consider the more important things that follow later.

In generating and developing the human body, Nature's procedure was to make some parts perfect at birth, and to fashion other parts as it grew up, without making much use of external and artificial aids. The mind on the other hand she endowed with its remaining faculties in the same perfection as the body, equipping it with senses already adapted to their function of perception and requiring little or no assistance of any kind to complete their development; but the highest and noblest part of man's nature she neglected. It is true she bestowed an intellect capable of receiving every virtue, and implanted in it at birth and without instruction embryonic notions of the loftiest ideas, laying the foundation of its education, and introducing among its endowments the elementary constituents, so to speak, of virtue. But of virtue itself she merely gave the germ and no more.

Therefore it rests with us (and when I say with us, I mean with our science), in addition to the elementary principles bestowed upon us, to seek out their logical developments, until our full purpose is realized. For this is much more valuable and more intrinsically desirable than either the senses or the endowments of the body above alluded to; since those are surpassed in an almost inconceivable degree by the matchless perfection of the intellect. Therefore all honour, all admiration, all enthusiasm is directed toward virtue and towards the actions in harmony with virtue, and all such properties and processes of the mind are entitled by the single name of Moral Worth.

"The connotation of all these conceptions and the signification of the terms that denote them, and their several values and natures we shall study later;²⁰ .. _b5c22:

for the present let us merely explain that this Morality to which I allude is an object of our desire, not only because of our love of self, but also intrinsically and for its own sake. A hint of this is given by children, in whom nature is discerned as in a mirror. How hotly they pursue their rivalries! how fierce their contests and competitions! what exultation they feel when they win, and what shame when they are beaten! How they dislike blame! how they covet praise! what toils do they not undergo to stand first among their companions! how good their memory is for those who have shown them kindness, and how eager they are to repay it! And these traits are most apparent in the noblest characters, in which the moral excellences, as we understand them, are already roughly outlined by nature.

¹⁸ A reference to the Epicureans' interest in natural science, illustrated by Lucretius.

¹⁹ Plato, *Laws* 653A.

²⁰ *Viz.* § 67.

But this belongs to childhood; the picture is filled in at the age when the character is fully formed. Who is so unlike a human being as to feel no repulsion at baseness and no approval for goodness? Who is there that does not hate a youth spent in debauchery and wantonness? Who on the contrary would not esteem modesty and orderliness in the young, even though he has no personal concern in them? Who does not hate the traitor Pullus Numitorius of Fregellae, although he did a service to our country? [b] Who does not praise and extol Codrus, the preserver of this city, or honour the daughters of Erechtheus? or loathe the very name of Tubulus? or love the memory of Aristides? Do we forget the strong emotion that we feel when we hear or read of some deed of piety, of friendship or of magnanimity?

But I need not speak of ourselves, whose birth, breeding and education point us towards glory and towards honour; think of the uneducated multitude,—what a tempest of applause rings through the theatre at the words:

I am Orestes,

and at the rejoinder:

No, no, 'tis I, I say, I am Orestes.

And then when each offers a solution to the king in his confusion and perplexity:

Then prithee slay us both; we'll die together:

as often as this scene²¹ is acted, does it ever fail to arouse the greatest enthusiasm? This proves that all men without exception approve and applaud the disposition that not only seeks no advantage for itself, but is loyal and true even to its own disadvantage.

These high examples crowd the pages not only of romance but also of history, and especially the history of our own country. It was we who chose our most virtuous citizen²² to receive the sacred emblems from Ida; we who sent guardians to royal princes;²³ our generals²⁴ sacrificed their lives to save their country; our consuls²⁵ warned the king who was their bitterest enemy, when close to the walls of Rome, to be on his guard against poison; in our commonwealth was found the lady²⁶ who expiated her outraged honour by a self-sought death, and the father²⁷ who killed his daughter to save her from shame. Who is there who cannot see that all these deeds and countless others besides were done by men who were inspired by the splendour of moral greatness to forget all thought of interest, and are praised by us from no other consideration but that of Moral Worth?

“The considerations thus briefly set out (for I have not aimed at such a full account as I might have given, since the matter admitted of no uncertainty), these considerations then lead to the undoubted conclusion that all the virtues, and the Moral Worth which springs from them and inheres in them, are intrinsically desirable.

But in the whole moral sphere of which we are speaking there is nothing more glorious nor of wider range than the solidarity of mankind, that species of alliance and partnership of interests and that actual affection which exists between man and man, which, coming into existence immediately upon our birth, owing to the fact that children are loved by their parents and the family as a whole is bound together by the ties of marriage and parenthood, gradually

²¹ Cf. II.79, note.

²² Publius Cornelius Scipio Nasica, chosen, in obedience to an oracle, as man of blameless life, to receive the image of Cybele, which was brought from Phrygia to Rome 204 B.C.

²³

13. Aemilius Lepidus administered Egypt, on the death of King Ptolemy Epiphanes, 181 B.C., as guardian of his sons.

²⁴ The Decii, cp. II.61.

²⁵

3. Fabricius and Q. Aemilius Papius, 278 B.C., warned Pyrrhus that his physician had offered to poison him.

²⁶ Lucretia, cp. II.66.

²⁷ Virginius, *ibid.*

spreads its influence beyond the home, first by blood relationships, then by connections through marriage, later by friendships, afterwards by the bonds of neighbourhood, then to fellow-citizens and political allies and friends, and lastly by embracing the whole of the human race. This sentiment, assigning each his own and maintaining with generosity and equity that human solidarity and alliance of which I speak, is termed Justice; connected with it are dutiful affection, kindness, liberality, good-will, courtesy and the other graces of the same kind. And while these belong peculiarly to Justice, they are also factors shared by the remaining virtues.

For human nature is so constituted at birth as to possess an innate element of civic and national feeling, termed in Greek *politikon*; consequently all the actions of every virtue will be in harmony with the human affection and solidarity I have described, and Justice in turn will diffuse its agency through the other virtues, and so will aim at the promotion of these. For only a brave and a wise man can preserve Justice. Therefore the qualities of this general union and combination of the virtues of which I am speaking belong also to the Moral Worth aforesaid; inasmuch as Moral Worth is either virtue itself or virtuous action; and life in harmony with these and in accordance with the virtues can be deemed right, moral, consistent, and in agreement with nature.

“At the same time this complex of interfused virtues can yet be theoretically resolved into its separate parts by philosophers. For although the virtues are so closely united that each participates in every other and none can be separated from any other, yet on the other hand each has its own special function. Thus Courage is displayed in toils and dangers, Temperance in forgoing pleasures, Prudence in the choice of goods and evils, Justice in giving each his due. As then each virtue contains an element not merely self-regarding, which embraces other men and makes them its end, there results a state of feeling in which friends, brothers, kinsmen, connections, fellow-citizens, and finally all human beings (since our belief is that all mankind are united in one society) are things desirable for their own sakes. Yet none of these relations is such as to form part of the end and Ultimate Good.

Hence it results that we find two classes of things desirable for their own sakes; one class consists of those things which constitute the Ultimate Good aforesaid, namely goods of mind or body; the latter set, which are external goods, that is, goods that belong neither to the mind nor to the body, such as friends, parents, children, relatives and one's country itself, while intrinsically precious to us, yet are not included in the same class as the former. Indeed, no one could ever attain the Chief Good, if all those goods, which though desirable are external to us, formed part of the Chief Good.

“How then, you will object, can it be true that all things are means to the Chief Good, if friendships and relationships and the other external goods are not part of the Chief Good? The answer is that it is in this way: we maintain these external goods by those acts of duty which spring from the particular class of virtue connected with each. For example, dutiful conduct towards friends and parents benefits the doer from the very fact that such performance of duty is a right action, and right actions take their rise from virtues. And whereas the Wise, under nature's guidance, make right action their aim, on the other hand men not perfect and yet endowed with noble characters often respond to the stimulus of honour, which has some show and semblance of Moral Worth. But if they could fully discern Moral Worth itself in its absolute perfection and completeness, the one thing of all others most splendid and most glorious, how enraptured would they be, if they take such a delight in the mere shadow and reputation of it!

What devotee of pleasure, though consumed by most glowing passions, can be supposed to feel such transports of rapture in winning the objects of his keenest desires, as were felt by the elder Africanus upon the defeat of Hannibal, or by the younger at the overthrow of Carthage? Who ever experienced so much delight from the voyage down the Tiber on the day of the festival²⁸ as Lucius Paulus felt when he sailed up the river leading King Perses captive in his train?

²⁸ The festival of Fors Fortuna, June 24, described by Ovid *Fasti*, 6.774.

Come now, my dear Lucius, build in your imagination the lofty and towering structure of the virtues; then you will feel no doubt that those who achieve them, guiding themselves by magnanimity and uprightness, are always happy; realizing as they do that all the vicissitudes of fortune, the ebb and flow of time and of circumstance, will be trifling and feeble if brought into conflict with virtue. The things we reckon as bodily goods do, it is true, form a factor in supreme happiness, but yet happiness is possible without them. For those supplementary goods are so small and slight in the full radiance of the virtues they are as invisible as the stars in sunlight.

Yet true though it is that these bodily advantages are of but slight importance for happiness, to say that they are of no importance is too sweeping; those who maintain this appear to me to have forgotten those first principles of nature which they have themselves established. Some weight then must be given to bodily goods provided one understands what is the proper amount of weight. The genuine philosopher, who aims at truth and not ostentation, while refusing on the one hand to deny all value to the things which even those high-sounding teachers themselves admit to be in accordance with nature, will on the other hand realize that virtue is so potent, Moral Worth invested so to speak with such prestige, that all those other goods, though not worthless, are so small as to appear worthless. This is the language that a man will hold who while not despising all else but virtue yet extols virtue herself with her own proper praises; in short, this is the full, finished and complete account of the Chief Good.

“From this system all the other schools have endeavoured to appropriate fragments, which each has hoped may pass for original.

Aristotle and Theophrastus often and admirably praised knowledge for its own sake; Erillus, captivated by this single tenet, maintained that knowledge was the Chief Good and that nothing else was desirable as an end in itself. The ancients enlarged on the duty of rising proudly superior to human fortunes; Aristo singled out this one point, and declared that nothing but vice or virtue was either to be avoided or desired. Our school included freedom from pain among the things in accordance with nature; Hieronymus made it out to be the Supreme Good. On the other hand Callipho and later Diodorus, the one having fallen in love with pleasure, and the other with freedom from pain, could neither of them dispense with Moral Worth, which by our school was extolled above all else.

Even the votaries of pleasure take refuge in evasions: the name of virtue is on their lips all the time, and they declare that pleasure is only at first the object of desire, and that later habit produces a sort of second nature, which supplies a motive for many actions not aiming at pleasure at all. There remain the Stoics. The Stoics have conveyed from us not some one or other item, but our entire system of philosophy. It is a regular practice of thieves to alter the marks upon stolen goods; and the Stoics, in order to pass off our opinions as their own, have changed the names, which are the marks of things. Our system therefore is left as the sole philosophy worthy of the student of the liberal arts, of the learned and the eminent, of statesmen and princes.”

After these words he paused, and then added: “How now? Do you think I have made good use of my privilege of having you hear me say over my lesson?” “Why, Piso,” I replied, “you have shown such a knowledge of your theory, on this, as on many other occasions, that I do not think we should have to rely much upon the aid of the Greeks, if we had more frequent opportunities of hearing you. And I was all the more ready to be convinced by you because I remember that your great teacher, Staseas of Naples, a Peripatetic of unquestionable repute, used to give a somewhat different account of your system, agreeing with those who attached great importance to good and bad fortune, and to bodily goods and evils.” “That is true,” said he; “but our friend Antiochus is a far better and far more uncompromising exponent of the system than Staseas used to be. Though I don’t want to know how far I succeeded in convincing you, but how far I convinced our friend Cicero here; I want to kidnap your pupil from you.”

To this Lucius replied: “Oh, I am quite convinced by what you have said, and I think my cousin is so too.” “How now?” said Piso to me, “Has the young man your consent? or would you rather he should study a system which,

when he has mastered it, will lead to his knowing nothing?”²⁹ “Oh, I leave him his liberty,” said I; “but don’t you remember that it is quite open to me to approve the doctrines you have stated? Since who can refrain from approving statements that appear to him probable?” “But,” said he, “can anyone approve that of which he has not full perception, comprehension and knowledge?” “There is no great need to quarrel about that, Piso,” I rejoined. “The only thing that makes me deny the possibility of perception is the Stoics’ definition of that faculty; they maintain that nothing can be perceived except a true presentation having such a character as no false presentation can possess. Here then I have a quarrel with the Stoics, but certainly none with the Peripatetics. However let us drop this question, for it involves a very long and somewhat contentious debate.

It is the doctrine that the Wise Man is always and invariably happy that I would challenge as too hurriedly touched upon by you. Your discourse somehow skimmed past this point. But unless this doctrine is proved, I am afraid that the truth will lie with Theophrastus, who held that misfortune, sorrow and bodily anguish were incompatible with happiness. For it is violently inconsistent to call a man happy and at the same time say that he is overwhelmed with evils. How happiness and misfortune can go together I entirely fail to understand.” “Which position then do you question?” he replied; “that virtue is so potent that she need not look outside herself for happiness? or, if you can accept this, do you deny that the virtuous can be happy even when afflicted by certain evils?” “Oh, I would rate the potency of virtue as high as possible; but let us defer the question of her exact degree of greatness; the only point is now, could she be so great as she is, if anything outside virtue be classed as a good?”

“Yet,” said he, “if you concede to the Stoics that the presence of virtue alone can produce happiness, you concede this also to the Peripatetics. What the Stoics have not the courage to call evils, but admit to be irksome, detrimental, ‘to be rejected,’ and not in accordance with nature, we say are evils, though small and almost negligible evils. Hence if a man can be happy when surrounded by circumstances that are irksome and to be rejected, he can also be happy when surrounded by trifling evils.” “Piso,” I rejoined, “you, if anyone, are a sharp enough lawyer to see at a glance the real point at issue in a dispute. Therefore I beg your close attention. For so far, though perhaps I am to blame, you do not grasp the point of my question.” “I am all attention,” he replied, “and await your reply to my inquiry.”

“My reply will be,” said I, “that I am not at the present asking what result virtue can produce, but what is a consistent and what a self-contradictory account of it.” “How do you mean?” said he. “Why,” I said, “first Zeno enunciates the lofty and oracular utterance, ‘Virtue need not look outside herself for happiness’; ‘Why?’ says some one. ‘Because,’ he answers, ‘nothing else is good but what is morally good.’ I am not now asking whether this is true; I merely say that Zeno’s statements are admirably logical and consistent.

Suppose Epicurus to say the same thing, that the Wise Man is always happy,—for he is fond of ranting like this now and then, and indeed tells us that when the Wise Man is suffering torments of pain, he will say ‘How pleasant this is! how little I mind!—Well, I should not join issue with the man as to why he goes so far astray about the nature of the Good; but I should insist that he does not understand what is the necessary corollary of his own avowal that pain is the supreme evil. I take the same line now against you. As to what is good and what is evil, your account agrees entirely with that of those who have never set eyes on a philosopher even in a picture, as the saying is: you call health, strength, poise, beauty, soundness of every part from top to toe, goods, and ugliness, disease and weakness evils.

As for external goods, you were, it is true, cautious; but since these bodily excellences are goods, you will doubtless reckon as goods the things productive of them, namely friends, children, relations, riches, rank and power. Mark that against this I say nothing; what I say is, if misfortunes which a Wise Man may encounter are as you say evils, to be wise is not enough for happiness.” “Say rather,” said he, “not enough for supreme happiness, but it is enough for happiness.” “I noticed,” I replied, “you made that distinction a little time ago, and I am aware that our master Antiochus is fond of saying the same; but what can be more unsatisfactory than to say that a man is happy but not happy enough?

²⁹ A reference to the scepticism of the New Academy of Arcesilas and Carneades; their doctrines, that certainty was unattainable and that reasonable probability was a sufficient guide for life, are avowed by Cicero in the following sentences.

Any addition to what is enough makes it too much; now no one has too much happiness; therefore no one can be happier than happy."

"Then what is your view," he said, "of Quintus Metellus, who saw three sons consuls, and one of these made censor and celebrating a triumph as well, and a fourth praetor, and who left his four sons alive and well and three daughters married, having himself been consul, censor and augur and having had a triumph? Supposing him to have been a Wise Man, was he not happier than Regulus, who died a captive in the hands of the enemy, from starvation and want of sleep, allowing him also to have been a Wise Man?"

"Why," said I, "do you ask that question of me? Ask the Stoics." "What answer then," he said, "do you think they would give?" "That Metellus is no happier than Regulus." "Well then," said he, "let us start from that." "Still," said I, "we are wandering from our subject. For I am not inquiring what is true, but what each school ought consistently to say. I only wish that they did allow degrees of happiness! then you would see a collapse! For since the Good consists solely in virtue and in actual Moral Worth, and neither virtue nor Moral Worth, as they hold, admits of increase, and since that alone is good which necessarily makes its possessor happy, when that which alone constitutes happiness does not allow of increase, how can anyone possibly be happier than anyone else? Do you see how logical this is? And in fact (for I must confess what I really think) their system is a marvellously consistent whole. The conclusions agree with the first principles, the middle steps with both, in fact every part with every other. They understand what inference follows from and what contradicts a given premise. It is like geometry: grant the premises and you must grant everything. Admit that there is no good but Moral Worth, and you are bound to admit that happiness consists in virtue. Or again conversely: given the latter, you must grant the former.

Your school are not so logical. 'Three classes of goods': your exposition runs smoothly on. But when it comes to its conclusion, it finds itself in trouble; for it wants to assert that the Wise Man can lack no requisite of happiness. That is the moral style, the style of Socrates and of Plato too. 'I dare assert it,' cries the Academic. You cannot, unless you recast the earlier part of the argument. If poverty is an evil, no beggar can be happy, be he as wise as you like. But Zeno dared to say that a wise beggar was not only happy but also wealthy. Pain is an evil: then a man undergoing crucifixion cannot be happy. Children are a good: then childlessness is miserable; one's country is good: then exile is miserable; health is a good: then sickness is miserable; soundness of body is a good; then infirmity is miserable; good eyesight is a good: then blindness is miserable. Perhaps the philosopher's consolations can alleviate each of these misfortunes singly; but how will he enable us to endure them all together? Suppose a man to be at once blind, infirm, afflicted by dire disease, in exile, childless, destitute and tortured on the rack; what is your name, Zeno, for him? 'A happy man,' says Zeno. A supremely happy man as well? 'To be sure,' he will reply, 'because I have proved that happiness no more admits of degrees than does virtue, in which happiness itself consists.'

You draw the line at this; you can't believe that he is supremely happy. Well, but can one believe what you say either? Call me before a jury of ordinary people, and you will never persuade them that the man so afflicted is happy; refer the case to the learned, and it is possible that on one of the two counts you will be doubtful about their verdict, whether virtue has such efficacy that the virtuous will be happy even in the bull of Phalaris: but on the other, they will find without hesitation that the Stoic doctrine is consistent and yours self-contradictory. 'Ah,' says the Academic, 'then you agree with Theophrastus in his great work *On Happiness*?' However, we are wandering from the subject; and to cut the matter short, Piso," I said, "I do fully agree with Theophrastus, if misfortunes, as you say, are evils." "Then don't you think they are evils?" he said.

"To that question," said I, "whichever reply I make, you are bound to be in difficulties." "How so exactly?" he asked. "Because," I replied, "if they are evils, the man who suffers from them will not be happy; and on the other hand if they are not evils, down topples the whole Peripatetic system." "I see what you are at," cried he smiling; "you are afraid of my robbing you of a pupil." "Oh," said I, "you are welcome to convert him if he wants to be converted; for if he is in your fold, he will be in mine."

“Listen then, Lucius,” said Piso, “for I must address myself to you. The whole importance of philosophy lies, as Theophrastus says, in the attainment of happiness; since an ardent desire for happiness possesses us all.

On this your cousin and I are agreed. Hence what we have to consider is this, can the systems of the philosophers give us happiness? They certainly profess to do so. Whether it not so, why did Plato travel through Egypt to learn arithmetic and astronomy from barbarian priests? Why did he later visit Archytas at Tarentum, or the other Pythagoreans, Echecrates, Timaeus and Arion, at Locri, intending to append to his picture of Socrates an account of the Pythagorean system and to extend his studies into those branches which Socrates repudiated? Why did Pythagoras himself scour Egypt and visit the Persian magi? why did he travel on foot through those vast barbarian lands and sail across those many seas? Why did Democritus do the same? It is related of Democritus (whether truly or falsely we are not concerned to inquire) that he deprived himself of eyesight; and it is certain that in order that his mind should be distracted as little as possible from reflection, he neglected his paternal estate and left his land uncultivated, engrossed in the search for what else but happiness? Even if he supposed happiness to consist in knowledge, still he designed that his study of natural philosophy should bring him cheerfulness of mind; since that is his conception of the Chief Good, which he entitles *euthumia*, or often *athambia*, that is freedom from alarm.

But what he said on this subject, however excellent, nevertheless lacks the finishing touches; for indeed about virtue he said very little, and that not clearly expressed. For it was later that these inquiries began to be pursued at Athens by Socrates, first in the city, and afterwards the study was transferred to the place where we now are; and no one doubted that all hope alike of right conduct and of happiness lay in virtue. Zeno having learnt this doctrine from our school proceeded to deal with ‘the same matter in another manner,’ as the common preamble³⁰ to an indictment has it. You now approve of this procedure on his part. He, no doubt, can change the names of things and be acquitted of inconsistency, but we cannot! He denies that the life of Metellus was happier than that of Regulus, yet calls it ‘preferable’; not more desirable, but ‘more worthy of adoption’; and given the choice, that of Metellus is ‘to be selected’ and that of Regulus ‘rejected.’ Whereas the life he called ‘preferable’ and ‘more worthy to be selected’ I term happier, though I do not assign any the minutest fraction more value to that life than do the Stoics.

What is the difference, except that I call familiar things familiar names, whereas they invent new terms to express the same meaning? Thus just as in the senate there is always some one who demands an interpreter,³¹ so we must use an interpreter when we give audience to your school. I call whatever is in accordance with nature good and what is contrary to nature bad; nor am I alone in this: you, Chrysippus, do so too in business and in private life, but you leave off doing so in the lecture-room. What then? do you think philosophers should speak a different language from ordinary human beings? The learned and the unlearned may differ as to the values of things; but when the learned are agreed what each thing’s value is,—if they were human beings, they would adopt the recognized form of expression; but so long as the substance remains the same,—let them coin new words at their pleasure.

“But I come to the charge of inconsistency, or you will say I digress too often. You make inconsistency a matter of words, but I imagined it to be a question of fact. Only let it be clearly grasped, and in this we have the Stoics as our strongest supporters, that such is the power of virtue that all other things, if ranged in contrast with it, are absolutely eclipsed and extinguished; then, as for all the things which they admit to be advantageous and ‘to be adopted’ and ‘selected’ and ‘preferred’ (terms which they define so as to mean possessed of considerable value), when I style these things, which receive so many names from the Stoics, some new and original, like your words ‘promoted’ and ‘degraded,’ some identical in meaning (for what difference is there between ‘desiring’ a thing and ‘selecting’ it? to my ear there is a more sumptuous sound about a thing that is selected, and to which choice is applied),—however, when I call all these things good, the only thing that matters is, how good do I mean, when I call them desirable, the only question is, how desirable? But if on the other hand I do not think them *more* ‘to be desired’ than you ‘to be selected,’ and if I who call them good do not deem them *more valuable* than you who call them ‘promoted,’ all these external

³⁰ This preamble seems to have guarded the plaintiff against being nonsuited on a plea of *chose jugée*, in case that having failed in his suit he chose to bring it in again under a different formula.

³¹ *i.e.* when an audience was given to Greek-speaking envoys.

things will necessarily be overwhelmed and eclipsed by the side of virtue; its radiance will envelop them like the rays of the sun.

But you will say that a life which contains some evil cannot be happy. At that rate a crop of corn^o is not a heavy and abundant crop if you can spy a single stalk of wild oat among it; a business is not profitable if among enormous profits it incurs a trifling loss. Does one principle hold good in everything else, but another in conduct? And will you not judge the whole of life by its largest part? Is there any doubt that virtue plays so far the largest part in human affairs that it obliterates everything else? Well, then, I shall make bold to call the other things in accordance with nature 'goods,' and not cheat them of their old name, rather than excogitate some new one; but I shall place the massive bulk of virtue in the opposite scale of the balance.

Believe me, that scale will weigh down earth and sea combined. It is a universal rule that any whole takes its name from its most predominant and preponderant part. We say that a man is a cheerful fellow; but if for once he falls into low spirits, has he therefore lost his title to cheerfulness for ever? Well, the rule was not applied to Marcus Crassus, who according to Lucilius laughed but once in his life; that did not prevent his having the name of *agelastos*,³² as Lucilius says he had. Polycrates of Samos was called 'the fortunate.' Not a single untoward accident had ever befallen him, except that he had thrown his favourite ring overboard at sea.³³ Did that single annoyance then make him unfortunate? and did he become fortunate again when the very same ring was found in a fish's belly? But Polycrates, if he was foolish (which he apparently was, since he was a tyrant), was never happy; if wise, he was not unhappy even when crucified by Oroetes, the satrap of Darius. 'But,' you say, 'many evils befell him!' Who denies it? but those evils were eclipsed by the magnitude of his virtue.³⁴ .._b5c31:

"Or do you even refuse to let the Peripatetics say that the life of all good, that is of all wise men, men whom every virtue decks, always comprises infinitely more good than evil? Who does say this? The Stoics, you suppose? Not at all; but the very people who measure all things by pleasure and pain, do not these cry aloud that the Wise Man always has more things that he likes than that he dislikes? When therefore so much importance is assigned to virtue by those who confess that they would not raise a hand for the sake of virtue if it did not produce pleasure, what are we to do, who say that the smallest amount you like to mention of mental excellence surpasses all the goods of the body, and renders them completely imperceptible? For who is there who would venture to say that it would become the Wise Man to discard virtue for ever (were this possible) for the sake of securing absolute freedom from pain? Who of our school (which is not ashamed to call evils what the Stoics term 'hardships') was ever known to say that it is better to commit a pleasant sin than to do the painful right?

We think it was scandalous of Dionysius of Heraclea to secede from the Stoics because of a malady of the eyes. As though Zeno had ever taught him that to feel pain was not painful! What he had heard, though he had not learnt the lesson, was that pain was not an evil, because not morally bad, and that it was manly to endure it. Had Dionysius been a Peripatetic, I believe he should never have changed his opinions; the Peripatetics say that pain is an evil, but on the duty of bearing the annoyance it causes with fortitude their teaching is the same as that of the Stoics. And indeed your friend Arcesilas, though he was rather too dogmatic in debate, was still one of us, for he was a pupil of Polemo. When he was racked with the torments of gout he was visited by an intimate friend, the Epicurean Charmides. The latter was departing in distress. 'Stay, I beg of you, friend Charmides,' cried Arcesilas; 'no pain from there has got to here' (pointing to his feet and his breast). Yet he would have preferred to have no pain at all.

"This then is our system which you think inconsistent. I on the other hand, seeing the celestial and divine existence of virtue, excellence so great that where virtue and the mighty and most glorious deeds that she inspires are found, there misery and sorrow cannot be, though pain and annoyance can, do not hesitate to declare that every Wise Man

³² *i.e.* 'unsmiling.'

³³ The story is told by Herodotus, 3.40 foll.

³⁴ *i.e.* on the supposition that he was a Wise Man.

is always happy, but yet that it is possible for one to be happier than another.” “Well, Piso,” said I, “that is a position which you will find needs a great deal of defending; and if you can hold to it, you are welcome to convert not only my cousin Cicero, but also myself.”

“For my part,” remarked Quintus, “I think the position has been satisfactorily defended, and I am delighted that the philosophy whose homely gear I already valued more highly than the estates of the other schools (I deemed her rich enough for me to find in her all that I coveted in our studies), I rejoice, I say, that this philosophy has been found to be also subtler than the rest,—a quality in which she was said by some to be deficient.” “Not subtler than ours at all events,” said Pomponius playfully; but I protest I was most delighted by your discourse. You have expounded ideas that I thought it impossible to express in Latin, and you have expressed them as lucidly as do the Greeks, and in apt language. But our time is up, if you please; let us make straight for my quarters.” At these words, as it was felt there had been enough discussion, we all proceeded to the town to Pomponius’s house.

The Loeb Editor’s Notes:

Thayer’s Notes:

Bibliography

- [a] A misreading of Diogenes, *q.v.*
- [a] The book alluded to seems to be Epicurus's *Neocles* (Diog. Laërt. X.28), dedicated to Themista; she was a disciple of his, and he also wrote her several letters, two of which are specifically mentioned by Diogenes Laërtius (X.5). The daughter of Zoilus of Lampsacus and the wife of Leonteus of Lampsacus (Clement, *Strom.* IV.19); she was, according to Lactantius (*Inst.* III.25), the only woman ever to have been taught philosophy; but Clement (*l.c.*) also mentions "Myia the daughter of Theano the Pythagorean and Arignote, who wrote the history of Dionysius".
- [b] A reference to the praetorian edict; Torquatus is soon to be praetor, which in turn sets the dramatic date of the Book (*Introduction*, p. xvi).
- [a] This passage speaks volumes about the decency of Cicero (and Cicero's idea of Cato), who in this respect is living in a bubble: the hoarding of knowledge is in fact one of the commonest of human vices both individual and corporate. As that realist the elder Pliny would write a century later:

Turpissima causa raritatis (scientiae) quod etiam qui sciunt demonstrare nolunt, tamquam ipsis peritulum sit quod tradiderint aliis.

"The most shameful reason for the poor dissemination of knowledge is that those who know things don't want to present them openly, as if somehow in the process they would lose whatever they shared with others."

(N. H. XXV.16), Thayer's trans.

- [b] For fuller details see the article *Talus* in Smith's Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities.
- [a] This must surely refer to varicose veins and their treatment, which was so excruciatingly painful that Marius, who hardly lacked courage, could only stand to undergo it in one leg: Plut., *Marius* 6.3 and *Sayings of Romans*, Marius, 2, and notes. More personally, although Cicero doesn't tell us outright, he himself seems to have been afflicted with varicose veins and to have been one of those "they" who took great pains to conceal them (Pliny the Elder, *ap. Quintilian*, *Inst. Or.* III.143): Cicero, as is well known, was not as courageous as Marius, and really does believe what he's just told us — the cure is not worth the pain, and who knows, it may make things worse. . . .
- [b] From Smith's *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Biography and Mythology*:
- Q. Numitorius Pullus, of Fregellae, betrayed his native town to the Roman praetor L. Opimius, B.C. 125, when it rose in revolt to obtain the Roman franchise. The town was taken and destroyed by Opimius (Cic. *de Invent.* II.34; comp. Cic. *de Leg. Agr.* II.33; Liv. *Epit.* 60; Vell. Pat. II.6).