The Manual of Epictetus

Translated out of Greek into French, and now into English, conferred with two Latin translations. Whereunto are annexed annotations, and also the apothegs of the same author.

Translated by James Sanford (1567) — modern-spelling edit

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A modern-spelling edition. James Sanford's 1567 translation has been re-spelled throughout according to present-day orthography, and the printer's abbreviations (y^{e}, y^{u}, and the macron contractions) have been expanded; but his vocabulary and grammar are left untouched, so the archaic forms — thou, thee, thy, thine, ye, doth, hath, shalt, and the -eth / -est endings — are all retained. Sanford's marginal notes are gathered as numbered footnotes; his "Annotations" follow the chapters they gloss.

Source: Early English Books Online (EEBO-TCP), University of Michigan, text A00301 (STC 10425).

Cap. 1. What things are in man, and what are not.

Of all things which are,[1] some are in us, some are not. In us are Opinion, Endeavour, Desire, Eschewing, and briefly all that which is our work. In us are not our Body, Possessions, Honours, Sovereignties,[2] and summarily all

[1] A division of things.

[2] The natural condition of things.

that which is not our work. Then the things which are in us are free and frank by nature, and cannot be prohibited, impeached, nor taken away. But such things as are not in us, be servile, feeble, and may be prohibited, impeached and taken away, as things unto other men belonging, and not ours.

Cap. 2. Of the damage which proceedeth of taking the one for the other, and of the profit in good Judgement.

If the things which are frank and free, thou shalt esteem and judge servile, and the things which are not ours, thou think proper, thou shalt be sorrowful, thou shalt be troubled, thou shalt find thyself encumbered, and shalt miscontent thyself with God and men. But if thou think only the things thine, which truly are thine, and the things other men's, which truly are other men's, no man will constrain thee, no man will hinder thee, thou shalt blame nobody, thou shalt accuse nobody, thou shalt do nothing against thy will, no man shall hurt thee, and moreover thou shalt have no enemy. For in nothing which is hurtful thou canst not be persuaded.[3]

Cap. 3. That other men's matters must be omitted, our own must be seen unto, and that we cannot do both.

Then if thou desire such things, remember that thou oughtest not, being greatly moved and troubled, to take them in hand: but either altogether thou oughtest to reject them,[4] or for a time lay them aside, and before all things to be careful over thyself. But if thou desire

[3]The effects of a good and evil judgement.

[4]Our consideration is to be stirred up and a diligent preparation to be used.

these things, that is to rule, to be rich, to have thine to prosper, peradventure thou shalt not aspire to all these things,[5] because thou dost desire also the chiefest. So by no manner of means thou art able to attain unto the things which give felicity and liberty to man.

Annotations

All these things) That is rule, riches, etc. *because thou dost desire the chiefest*) that is, these things which Philosophy giveth, Liberty, tranquillity of the mind, and security.

Cap. 4. How we ought to behave ourselves in every sharp imagination.

In any strong and sharp Imagination,[6] thou must accustom thyself immediately to consider, that this is nothing else but Imagination, and that indeed it is not as thou deemest. Afterward search it out, and examine it, with these rules which thou hast.

First and principally by this, whether the thing concern the things which are in us, or the things which are not. And if it be of the things which are not in us, have incontinently this in remembrance: *That belongeth nothing to me.*

[5] One cannot serve virtue and vanity.

[6] We must refrain our consent before the matter be plainly perceived.

Cap. 5. What thing it is that one ought to desire, and one ought to flee.

Call to remembrance,[7] that the promise and the end of desire is, enjoying of the thing desired: and that the promise and end of eschewing is not to fall into that, which one ought to flee: He then which cometh not to enjoy, but is deprived of the promise of his desire, is not happy, but unfortunate, and whoso falleth on that which he declineth, is miserable. If then only thou decline that which is not agreeable to the nature of the things which are in us, thou shalt never chance into that, which thou shalt flee. But if thou thinkest to exempt thyself from sickness, death, or from poverty, or altogether shun them, thou shalt find thyself unhappy.[8] Wherefore thou must set apart all the eschewing, and avoiding of such things as are not in us, and transpose these into them which are against the nature of things, which be in us. As touching desire, thou must altogether set it aside at this present. For if thou covet the things which are not in our power, it must needs be, that thou be frustrate. How and after what sort thou must desire the things which are in us, thou art yet uncertain. As for endeavour and refraining of the mind, use it slightly with reason, and a rested deliberation.

Annotations

Promise of desire, It is a certain feigning of desire speaking with a man. To the unlearned sort the words should be more plain, if he had thus spoken: when thou dost desire any thing, have a confidence to obtain it, and to have thy desire, etc. *that which is not agreeable to the nature of the things which are in us,* Against these things verily

[7] A vain flight from discommodities maketh a man miserable, and a depriving of desires maketh a man unfortunate.

[8] One newly entered in the doctrine of virtue ought not to take too much upon him.

do repugn, false opinion, naughty and corrupt appetite, all the perturbations of the mind, which the Stoic Philosophers would have to be in man's power: not so peradventure that they appear not (for that were more beseeming God than man) but that they obey reason. *Transpose these into them which are against the nature of things which be in us.* These words seem unto the unlearned obscure, which had been more lighter and easy, if he had written thus: To abhor false opinions, foolish and evil desires, dishonesty, and disworship. For as thou mayest flee these things, so thou mayest eschew them.

Cap. 6. How we ought to esteem the things wherein we take pleasure, or which bring us profit.

In every thing, which doth either delight thee,[9] or which are profitable unto thee, or which thou lovest, thou must diligently consider the quality, beginning at the least things. If thou love a pot, say in this manner: I love a pot, the same being broken, thou shalt not disquiet thyself, for thou didst well know, that he was fragile and brittle. Likewise if thou love thy son, or thy wife, say that thou dost love a man: if one or other chance to die thou shalt not be troubled, because thou didst consider well that he was mortal.

Annotations

If thou love a pot, Albeit Epictet, as a despiser of riches, bringeth forth examples of vile things, as of baths, lettuce, and other of that sort: yet Simplicius hath a more apt word: If thou handle or toss a pot: that is, a brittle thing that cannot abide or suffer tossing, or hitting against the walls, as glass, whereof Publian saith, For-

[9]The nature of the thing dearly loved is to be considered.

tune is as brittle as glass, which when it shineth, it is broken. Peradventure he alluded to Diogenes' Tun.

Cap. 7. How a man ought to take a matter in hand that we may be void of perturbation, and first by meditation.

When thou dost take any thing in hand,[10] thou must set before thy eyes the quality thereof: as if thou wilt go to the baths, consider with thyself diligently all that which may happen, and what they do. Some cast water, some are driven out of their places, some do a thing to the rebuke of another, and in the mean season other pick and steal. In doing this thou shalt more certainly and constantly bring thy matter to pass, if finally thou say I will bathe myself, and observe thy purpose unto nature agreeable, and semblably in all things thou shalt not do amiss. For after this sort if any harm befall while thou art in the bath, this saying shall be in a readiness: I would not only observe this, but also would not swerve from my purpose which is agreeable unto nature, which I shall not perform, if I take displeasantly the things which happen and befall.

Cap. 8. How to put away our perturbations, through the consideration of the nature of such things, as trouble us.

The things do not trouble men, but the opinions which they conceive of them, as for example: death is not terrible (then it would have so seemed to Socrates) but because the opinion of death is terrible,[11] death seemeth terrible. Then when we are brought in the briers, or be

[10]The circumstances of every business are to be considered.

[11]A wise man is without complaint.

troubled, or that we do bewail our own state, let us not blame others but ourselves, that is to say our opinions.[12]

Annotations

Death is not terrible, If either the soul be extinguished with the body, or be transferred and carried into a better place. But if thou shalt be punished for thy offences, it is a dangerous matter, and a hard case, except thou be fenced with the buckler of true piety.

Cap. 9. The reason and proof of the former precept with an assignation of three sorts of men.

The unlearned accuseth other in his own proper fault. He that beginneth to have knowledge accuseth himself. The learned accuseth neither another, neither himself.

Annotations

The unlearned, That is he, which considereth not what things are his own, and what are another man's: who requireth all things to be done according to his will and pleasure, that which neither may be done, neither perhaps ought not. *Himself* for he doth acknowledge his fault, and also is intentive and diligent about it, lest that he stumble again at the same stone: that is, lest that he claim or attribute other men's right to himself.

[12]We are troubled with opinions, not with the things themselves.

Cap. 10. That the glory in exterior and outward things is vain.

Glory not in thyself for the excellency of another thing.[13] It should be tolerable, if a horse advancing himself should say: I am fair. But thou when in boasting thyself, thou dost say, I have a fair horse: remember that thou dost glorify thyself for the beauty which is in the horse.[14] What hast thou then? Nothing besides the use of opinion.

Therefore when in the use of opinion thou shalt govern thyself according to nature, then thou shalt have wherewith to vaunt thyself, for in any commodity which is thine, thou wilt glorify thyself.

Annotations

The use of opinion, This seemeth obscure to the unlearned. But it is even as he should say: In all things we ought not to follow appetite, or the common opinion, but the judgement of reason. For to use well opinion, is nothing else than to judge well of all things, and to obey reason, not affection.

Cap. 11. What outward things are granted us, and how we should use them, by a similitude.

Even as in Navigation,[15] when men make their abode at any haven, if the Mariner goeth to land for fresh water, and it happeneth that incidently by the way, he thinketh to gather cockles or oysters, yet nevertheless he ought

[13]We must vaunt in the riches of the mind, and not in the gifts of fortune.

[14]The use of opinion is proper unto man.

[15]We ought in all things principally to be mindful of God.

to have regard of the ship, and oftentimes to look back, whether the Master calleth: and if he call thee, leave all behind, and return to the ship, lest that thou being bound like a beast, be not drawn by force to the ship. Even so it is, in the course of our life, as if for a cockle or an oyster, there be given us a wife and a child, or other things, which we hold dear, and wherein we take pleasure, they ought not to put us from our purpose unto nature agreeable: But if the master do call, run unto the ship, leaving these things behind, not looking back towards them. But if thou be old, go never far from the ship, lest that thou being called, do fail, and that thou be not constrained. For he which willingly followeth not necessity, by force and maugre his teeth she draweth him.

Annotations

Lest that thou being called dost fail. He speaketh not of the outward power, but of the imbecility and weakness of the might: which the greater it shall be when age cometh on us, with more few things the mind is to be occupied: for because it is very difficult to be void of these, and to fulfil that which Philosophy commandeth. A single person (if other things be correspondent) may be in his life time contented with a little, and die with a more patient mind. A wife, children, and family, do more trouble and disquiet the husband and father, being as well in good health, as sick, than his life. I understand the ship, either to be Philosophy, or the trade of our life: the ruler and master of the Ship to be GOD: to whom when he calleth, whoso obeyeth not either is entreated as a slave, or else is utterly forsaken.

Cap. 12. How we may enjoy outward things without fault or trouble.

Wish not that the thing which is done,[16] be done according to thy pleasure and will. But wish that it be done, even as it is done, and thou shalt be happy. Sickness is an impediment of the body, not of thy purpose, except thou wilt thyself.[17] Halting is an impediment of the leg or foot, and not of thy purpose, and so consider in every inconvenience which may befall, and thou shalt find the impediment to appertain to another, and not to thee.

Annotations

Halting is an impediment of the foot, not of thy purpose. But thou wilt say when thou art purposed to go a journey (namely if thou want a horse, or a wagon) halting hindereth thee. Epictet will answer and say: If thou shalt follow my precepts, thou shalt begin no journey, which thou art not able to achieve. So the more and greater the impediments of the body shall be, so much the more thou shalt suppress appetite, and shalt take fewer things in hand. But thou dost say, that this is the impediment of purpose, and therefore very troublesome. Epictet denieth it to be an impediment, to desire nothing rashly and in vain: but affirmeth it to be the proper part and office of a Philosopher. Verily, even a fool doth understand this, that it is better to make appetite obey reason, than to burn in vain desires. *The impediment to appertain to another and not to thee*) If he would grant the foot to be a part of the body, (neither doth he deny it) and the body to be part of man (which he seemeth to deny) when his foot is postered and shackled, the body is also cumbered, the body being cumbered, man himself at least wise partly is cumbered, but if the body be the instrument of man, doubtless it cannot be denied, but that the

[16] We must not covet in vain, that which is impossible.

[17] A well framed mind is disturbed with nothing.

instrument being mutilate and unperfect, the work shall be more unperfect and unmeet. For thou shalt have the overthrow, if thy Sword or Dagger lack hilts and handle.

Cap. 13. Of the remedies which we have against all accidents.

In every accident thou must incontinently consider what puissance and strength thou hast to withstand that which is happened.[18] If any mischief befall unto thee, thou shalt find virtue which is good and wholesome, as against voluptuousness, continency. If labour be offered thee, thou shalt find strength: if wrong, patience: and if thou shalt thus accustom thyself, thou shalt never be troubled with imaginations.

Annotations

Thou shalt not be troubled with imaginations) That is, thou shalt never be overcome and subdued with pleasure and sorrow, but shalt conquer naughty desires, and affections, by the help of wisdom and virtue.

Cap. 14. What manner of men we ought to show ourselves, when we lose outward worldly goods.

Never say that thou hast lost any thing,[19] but that thou hast restored it. If thy son die, he is restored. Thy livelihood is taken away, hast thou not restored it? But he which deprived thee of it, is an ill man. What matter

[18]The power of the mind ought to resist adversity and naughty desires.

[19]We do never lose our goods, but restore them, to him of whom we received them, that is to God.

maketh it to thee, by whom he which gave it, hath eftsoons taken it? Have a care and regard to all things, keeping and using them (during the time only that thou hast them in thy custody) as things unto other men belonging, even as the wayfaring man doth to his lodging.

Cap. 15. That a man ought not to lose the quietness of mind, for exterior and worldly things.

If thou wilt profit thyself,[20] let pass these cogitations. If I shall not be careful of my affairs, I shall not have wherewith to live. If I correct not my servant, he will be naught. For it is far better to famish without sorrow and fear, than to live in abundance with a troubled mind. And it is much better, that the servant should be faulty, than thou which art his master unhappy. Then thou must begin with the least things, the Oil is spilt, the Wine is stolen. Consider with thyself, that quietness and security of the mind cost thee so much: for nothing is freely gotten. If thou call thy servant, imagine it may so fall out, that he heareth thee not, or hearing thee, to do nothing which thou wouldest have him do. But that he is not worth so much, that for him thou shouldst be troubled.

Annotations

It is far better to famish, etc. It may be asked not without a cause whether so great constancy may agree with man's nature, that it may suffer and endure extreme hunger?

[20]The garnishing of the mind is to be regarded above all things.

Cap. 16. That for the estimation of the people we ought not abandon virtue.

If thou wilt profit thyself, be not displeased, if for outward things, thou seem to other mad or foolish.[21]

Annotations

If thou wilt profit That is to say in Philosophy and garnishing of the mind. For he understandeth and meaneth that progression, whereby the tranquillity and liberty of the mind is increased. *Be not displeased, if for, etc.* For whoso regardeth not pleasures, riches, and honour, namely if he may obtain them: of all men he is accounted a fool, namely in these days. But in times past divers Philosophers and good men for the love they had to virtue abandoned all worldly wealth and promotions, as Crates, Diogenes, and this our Epictete.

Cap. 17. Against vain glory.

Seek not to seem learned and expert in any thing,[22] and if to any thou dost seem, trust not thyself: for thou knowest it is not easy for a man to keep his purpose agreeable unto nature, and to embrace exterior things, but it must needs be, that he which is careful of one, should be negligent in the other.

[21] We must take patiently the evil opinion of the multitude conceived of us.

[22] It is hard to do many things at once.

Cap. 18. What things we ought to desire, and what we ought not.

If thou wilt have thy wife,[23] thy children, and thy friends to live for ever, thou art a fool. For thou wilt have in thy power the things which are not, and wilt have the things to be thine, which are belonging to other men. And so if thou wilt not have thy servant to offend, thou art a fool, for thou wilt have vice to be no vice. But if thou wilt not be frustrate of that which thou dost desire, this thou mayest do: herein then exercise thyself.

Annotations

For thou wilt have vice to be no vice, He meaneth (as I suppose) that boys and all manner of men, by nature are inclined to vice: and that vices cannot be repelled, but by philosophy which young and tender age is not able to receive.

Cap. 19. What things make us bond, and what free.

He is Master and Lord of any man,[24] to whom (nill he, will he) he may either give or take away. He then which will be free, let him neither desire, nor flee any thing, which is in another man his hand, and power, otherwise of necessity he shall be constrained to serve.

Annotations

He is Master of any man, etc. How many Masters then hath Fortune laid upon us? How many more do we

[23]We do in vain seek to keep those things inviolable, which are not in our power.

[24]Who is a master.

lay upon us, through the insatiable desire of transitory things?

Cap. 20. A rule to elect and choose things present, past, and to come, by a similitude.

Remember that thou must make comparison of thy life to a banquet:[25] where if the meat stand before thee, thou must take it modestly: if he, which doth bring it, do pass by thee, stay him not, or if he be not yet come to thee, be not over greedy thereof: but stay until he come to thee. In like manner thou must dispose thyself, towards thy children, towards thy wife, towards great men, and towards riches, so at length thou shalt be worthy the table of the Gods. But if thou take not that which is set before thee, but dost refuse it: then thou shalt not only be worthy of their table, but to be their companion: for when *Diogenes,* and *Heraclitus* and other like to them did thus, worthily, and of very good right they were divine, and so were accounted.

Annotations

Worthy the table of the Gods) He signifieth, that the despising of outward and worldly things is a certain heavenly thing, and that it maketh a man like to God. *They were divine, and so were accounted.* Arrogantly doubtless, and ignorantly. For how far doth even the excellentest man that ever was differ from the least part of the Godhead?

[25]Such things as are offered are to be taken: such things as are denied us, are not to be desired.

Cap. 21. By what means we must govern our Imagination about such things, as seem to be eschewed.

When thou dost see any man sorrowful,[26] and torment himself either because he hath no tidings of his son, either because he is dead, either because he hath spent all, beware enter not into imagination, that this maketh him unhappy: but have readily in remembrance that it is not the accident, which troubleth him (seeing it tormenteth not another) but his opinion conceived thereof. But if thou fall in talk with him, accommodate thyself to his perturbation, and moreover if the matter so require, weep also with him for company: but take heed that thou sorrow not inwardly.

Cap. 22. That it lieth not in us to choose the state of our life, but to use it even as it chanceth, by a very apt similitude.

Thou must remember that thou art one of the players in an interlude,[27] and must play the part, which the author thereof shall appoint, thou must play be it long, be it short. If he appoint thee to play the beggar, the Cripple, the Prince, or the private person, do it well and wittily, for it lieth in thee to play that part, whereunto thou art appointed, and in another to choose and appoint thee.

[26]We must have regard to humanity in such sort, that the quietness of mind be retained.

[27]We must pass the whole course and time of our life, according to God’s will.

Annotations

Which the authors thereof shall appoint, That is, whether he be a comical, or a tragical Poet? As concerning the very matter the Greek Epigram doth declare.

Which may thus be Englished: What is our life? a gawish game, a sweet delighting play. Then cares in gaming lay aside, or live a miser aye.

Nazianzenus doth almost signify the same, but with a more gravity and piety, in these verses worthy to be had in remembrance.

Which may after this sort be Englished.

Cap. 23. By what means we ought to govern our Imagination, in looking for divers things.

If thou take the croaking of a crow to be unlucky,[28] let not that imagination move thee, but judge immediately in thyself, and say: That portendeth nothing to me, but either to my body, or to my possession, or to my estimation, or to my wife, or to my children: but as touching myself, they signify nothing but good, at least wise if I will: for whatsoever shall chance, it lieth in me to have the profit and commodity of it, if I will.

Annotations

If thou take the croaking, etc. We have instead of divination by flying and crying of birds Astrology: Which if by yearly revolutions and progressions of the stars, it threaten damages and dangers, let us not use Epictet his counsel, but godly prayers.

[28] A wise man taketh profit by every chance.

Cap. 24. How to be unconquerable, being the cause of the former precept, and as it were the conclusion.

Thou mayest be invincible,[29] if thou never enter into battle, for thou art uncertain, whether it lie in thee or no, to have the victory.

Annotations

Thou mayest be unconquerable. This saying dependeth upon the division of things made in the beginning. They are conquered, which covet other men's goods, that is, such as belong to the body, and are placed in fortune's hand. They conquer, which resist naughty opinions and desires, so that they contend according to the law.

Cap. 25. Which is the readiest way to virtue.

Take heed that in following thy imagination thou say at no time,[30] the man is happy, whom thou dost see advanced either to honour, or authority, or renowned: for if the substance of goodness be in the things, which are subject to us, there neither envy, nor emulation taketh any place. Then thy purpose is not to be Emperor,[31] or King, but free, and frank. But unto that thing there is but one certain way, that is, the contempt of such things as are not in us.

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[29]We must take in hand things agreeable to our strength.

[30]He that seeketh for all good things of himself, he doth neither marvel at any man, nor envieth any.

[31]There is one way to liberty: the despising of outward things.

Annotations

For if the substance of goodness, etc. The understanding of this sentence is uttered stoically in dark words. He which seeketh all good things of himself, is of a quiet mind: whoso is of a quiet mind, he doth neither envy, nor emulate. For seeing that lack of pain called in Latin Indolentia excludeth all perturbations:[32] verily it excludeth envy and emulation. But if these affections do rule in any: it is manifestly gathered thereof, that he is far from the tranquillity of the mind, and doth not obey the precepts of Philosophy.

Cap. 26. A solution of them which seem to let the things before mentioned, and how a man should not be angry.

Remember,[33] that he, which taunteth or beateth, is not the author of reproach, but the opinion conceived of the same as reproachful. Then when any doth kindle thee to wrath, understand that thou art moved to anger through thine opinion. Wherefore especially endeavour thyself,[34] that imaginations pluck not consent from thee, for if thou shalt once suppress it for a certain time, thou shalt more easily be thy own Master.

Cap. 27. How to learn, and set our mind in high things.

Set before thy eyes, death, banishment, and all things which seem terrible, but especially death: in so doing,

[32] *[Greek] [Greek]*

[33] No man is hurt, but of himself.

[34] Delay establisheth judgement.

thou shalt not think upon base and vile things, and shalt never be exceeding covetous.

Annotations

And shalt never be exceeding covetous. Syracides affirmeth,[35] that the imagination of death, and God his judgement doth fear us from sin. Which if it do: we are taught to suffer adversity much more patiently, and to despise prosperity, because of their sorrow and profit, which endureth for a little space.[36] So Cicero. All pleasure saith he is to be esteemed as nothing, which when it is past, it is as if there had been none at all. But in great grief of the body and anguish of the mind, one hour seemeth longer than a whole year.

Cap. 28. The second part, wherein he doth point him out which hath already profited. And doth first dissolve such things, as come in ure to the students of Philosophy.

As soon as thou hast determined to lead a perfect life,[37] prepare and address thyself to be scorned and mocked of many, and to hear what they speak of thee, whereof cometh this sudden sageness and gravity? whereof cometh this sadness? lay apart thy sad sour countenance. But yet retain and keep these things which seem best to thee, in such sort, as if this were the front where God hath ordained and placed thee to fight.[38] And if thou persist in the same things, they which before have mocked thee, will have thee in admiration: but if like

[35] Syracides.
[36] Cicero.
[37] A Philosopher ought not to regard the mockery of the people.
[38] Constancy getteth victory.

one fleeing away, thou give over thy enterprise, thou shalt be double as much mocked and scorned.

Annotations

Lay apart thy sad sour countenance. That is, a musing countenance, sad gravity and haughtiness of mind. And it appeareth by this short and quick sentence of Menander,[39] that this was the countenance of Philosophers. They which look stately, say, that Solitariness is meet for meditation.

Cap. 29. That boasting destroyeth the state of a Philosopher, in showing whereunto he ought to lean.

If it chance at any time, that thou give thyself to the things which are not in us, and that thou dost desire to please any man, understand that at the same present thou art fallen from thy state.[40] Wherefore in all things let this suffice thee, to be a Philosopher: But if thou dost covet to seem to any a Philosopher, let it be to thyself, and that shall be sufficient.

Annotations

If it chance at any time that thou give thyself, etc. He forbiddeth the desire of glory, and seeking for ostentation, which affection it will be long before it take place in good and learned men. He would have a Philosopher to keep himself within the limits of his conscience, as an oyster within his shell, and to judge that, the most noble show of his virtue. *Thou art fallen from thy state,* That is to say, thou art vanquished.

[39] Menander.

[40] By this word Philosopher is meant a wise man.

Cap. 30. How to answer to such stays as would hinder a man from wisdom.

Let not these cogitations torment thee,[41] I shall not be in honour nor in place, where I shall be regarded: for if to be without honour is an ill thing, thou canst not be in evil for another thing, no more than in a dishonest thing. Is it in thee to bear rule, or to be bidden to a banquet? No. What is this then, but to be without honour? and how sayest thou, that thou shalt not be esteemed, whom it behoveth to meddle in those things only which are in our power, in which thou mayest bear a great sway and stroke. But thou wilt say I cannot profit my friends. What dost thou call to profit?[42] shall they have no money of thee? neither wilt thou make them citizens of Rome? But who told thee that these things be in us, and other men's works? Who can give to another that he himself hath not? Get it, (say they) that we may have it, also. If I may get it,[43] keeping myself modest, faithful, and valiant, show me the way, and I will get it. If ye think it meet, that I should lose my goods, that you should get such things as are not good, see yourselves how unreasonable and ungrateful you are? But if thou prefer a faithful and sincere friend before money, herein help me, and think it not meet that I should do the things whereby I should lose modesty and fidelity: But I cannot succour nor aid my country.[44] What dost thou call succour and aid? That it shall not have of thee, nor by thy means, fair and sumptuous buildings, nor baths? What then? hath it not shoes by the Shoemaker and Armour by the Armorer? It is sufficient when every vocation doth his work. If thou get it a faithful and modest member, dost thou think, that thou bringest it but a little profit? very great doubtless.

[41]That a Philosopher even of small substance, may much profit the common wealth, by teaching of virtue and his good example.

[42]How a wise man aideth his friends.

[43]We ought to require of every man but such things as he may and ought to perform.

[44]How a wise man helpeth his country.

In so doing thou art not unprofitable to it. In what state shall I be in my country? in that thou mayest, keeping always fidelity and modesty. But if supposing to aid it thou lose modesty and fidelity, what profit shalt thou do to it, which art become impudent and disloyal.

Annotations

Thou canst not be in evil for another thing, This sentence dependeth upon the opinion of the Stoics, that only honesty is good, and only vice is naught. The contempt and despising of me, if I do my duty, is not my vice, therefore neither my evil, but their vice and evil who of a perverse judgement and naughty mind do contemn, despise, and misuse me without cause. *Show me the way,* He signifieth that riches and dignity is gotten by nothing else but by deceit, and for that cause a good man ought to despise them. Neither doth he speak of them, which show themselves unworthy of honour, and they are the cause, that they are not regarded. *A faithful and sincere friend,* Nowadays most men had liefer to have money. Neither do they think that a poor friend may help us in any thing. So are endowed maidens preferred before them, who are chaste, and well brought up, if perhaps there be any such, and do so continue. Wherefore the wooers peradventure are to be pardoned, who in so uncertain a hazard of chastity, and honesty, had rather to abide the unquietness of rich than of poor wives. *Neither hath it Shoes by the Shoemaker, nor Armour by the Armorer.* The sense is: sumptuous buildings, baths, and the city of Rome is no more to be required of a Philosopher, than weapons of the Shoemaker, or Shoes of the Smith: seeing that it is the duty of a Philosopher, to train up his countrymen in virtue, as it is the Shoemaker's duty to make Shoes, and the Smith's, Weapons.

Cap. 31. A continuation of the solution of such things as do hinder him which doth begin to study philosophy and wisdom, in showing that a man should not move himself, for that which chanceth to another and that he hath nothing of another without giving of his own.

Is there any placed before thee at a feast?[45] or was reverence done to him before it was done to thee? or is he preferred before thee in counsel? If these things be good, thou must rejoice, that thy neighbour hath them: if they be ill: then be not sorrowful, because they chanced not to thee. Then remember in giving thy mind to nothing else,[46] but to the things which are in us, thou canst not attain to the like things, which other do in them which are not in us. How may it be done, that a man frequenting not thy house shall have like things as he which haunteth thy house, or he that seeketh not friendship and favour, as he which doth? or he which doth not please and praise thee, as he which doth please and praise thee? Thou shalt be unjust and unsatiable if thou have not paid for such things as thou hast bought, but dost require to have them for nothing. Admit the case I could not buy lettuce for a halfpenny,[47] if any then buy a halfpenny worth of lettuce, and thou dost buy none: think not thyself in worser case and to have less than he, which hath bought lettuce: for as he hath bought so thou hast not given thy halfpenny. Even so it fareth, thou art not bidden to a man's feast, because thou hast not given him as much as his feast cost him. He selleth it for praise, he selleth it for service. Give him then (if thou think it good)

[45]We must envy no man, and rejoice of another's good fortune.

[46]A benefit commonly is given for pleasure and service.

[47]Whoso lacketh commodity lacketh also cost and disquietness.

the price, for the which he sold it thee. But if thou wilt not perform that and take these things, thou art unsatiable and foolish. Hast thou given nothing instead of the feast? Yes marry, for thou hast not praised him, whom thou wouldest, and hast not suffered him in his portly going.

Annotations

If these things be good, Because they are good, they are sorrowful that they could not attain to them: because they be evil, they are glad, that they are chanced to other. *And hast not suffered, etc.* Pride and ambitious salutations of rich men do seem to be understood in this place very troublous to a simple and learned man, in like manner salutations, retinues, praises. But perhaps rich men given to pleasures, going in their pomp, were wont on every side to lean and cleave to Parasites.

Cap. 32. What things are common even according to the will of nature.

The purpose and will of nature,[48] may be judged by these things, in which we differ not one from another: as for example, if a man's servant break his Master's cup or any other thing, incontinently it is said this is a thing which oftentimes chanceth: remember then when thine is broken, that thou be the same manner of man, as thou wert when the other man's cup was broken. And so do in greater things. If a man's child or wife chance to die, there is no man but will say incontinently this is natural. Notwithstanding every man when any of his is dead, he doth lament and bewail pitifully: But we must remember how we are disposed, when we have heard any such thing of others.

[48]We must not judge otherwise of our own misfortune than of other men's.

Cap. 33. How one ought to understand the nature of ill.

Even as the white whereat Archers shoot,[49] is not set there, where it may not be stricken, so it is of the nature of ill in this world, for it is not set out to be embraced, but to be eschewed: as if goodness were set for the white, and evil were all that, where the white were not, besides the white, the Archer hath an ample and large space to shoot from the white: so without the only mark of goodness on every side is placed evil, which is as easy to be done and committed, as it is difficult to hit the white, or to do good.

Cap. 34. We ought not abandon our mind to wrath for injuries done: and how to take in hand our enterprises.

If any deliver thy body to the first he meeteth, it will grieve thee exceedingly: but when thou dost yield thy mind to the first that cometh, as when thou art wronged, thy mind is troubled and heavy, art not thou ashamed?[50] Before thou take any thing in hand, consider first the beginning, and the sequel, and then take it in hand. If thou do not so thou shalt never be certain and sure in thy enterprises, not regarding that which may befall, but after when any dishonest things chance, thou shalt be ashamed.

Annotations

If any deliver thy body to the first he meeteth, He argueth from a lesser thing to a more, after this sort: thou wilt be

[49]It is in our choice whether we will be troubled with the opinion of ill things.

[50]A premeditation and a diligent preparation putteth away ignominy and repentance.

angry with them, which gave power to any to violate thy body (such is the condition of them which are banished) how much more oughtest thou to be angry with thyself, which art wont to give power to every man to hurt thy mind, whereas it lieth in thee not to be hurt of any man at all?

Cap. 35. An effectual example to consider what may befall in every thing which we shall take in hand.

Wilt thou conquer at the plays *Olympia?*[51] And I by the faith of my body: for it is a very honourable thing, but consider well the beginning, and the sequel and then take the matter in hand. Thou must order well thyself, and use necessary meats, abstain from delicate and dainty things, and exercising thyself, according as it is expedient for the time and hour appointed, be it hot or cold, not drinking water or wine, if occasion so require. And briefly thou must commit thyself wholly to the chief of the games as to the Physician in doing that which he shall appoint thee. Afterward enter into fight, and sometime to have thy hand hurt, thy foot out of joint, to swallow down much dust, to receive grievous strokes, and otherwhile after all this to be vanquished. When thou hast considered all these things, if thou be willing, go and fight, otherwise thou shalt be like the little boys which are now wrestlers, now swordplayers, now trumpeters, forthwith players in tragedies. So thou also now a fighter, now a swordplayer, afterward an Orator, at length a Philosopher: but thoroughly nothing at all, but as an Ape thou dost counterfeit and resemble all things, and now one thing shall like thee, now another: for thou hast not done thy enterprise advisedly, in foreseeing the circumstances, but adventurously following a light and cold desire. So the greater number, when they

[51] Temerity is the mother of lightness and inconstancy.

see a Philosopher, or when they hear say that *Socrates* speaketh well, (but who can speak so well as he?) they will incontinently dispute and reason of Philosophy, and search the causes and nature of things. Man first consider the thing, and the quality thereof, and then enterprise it.[52] Afterward try whether thy nature be able to endure that which may happen. Wilt thou be a wrestler? behold thy arms, thy thighs, and thy loins: For nature mother of all things, hath framed every man to some particular thing. Dost thou think that endeavouring thyself about these things thou mayest live as thou hast been accustomed? As to drink so much as thou wert wont, to be angry so much as thou wert wont? Thou must be vigilant, thou must travail, thou must set aside thy proper affairs, thou must be mocked of boys, despised of all the world, and in all things to have least authority, be it in honour, in office, or in judgement, and in all other affairs.[53] Then consider all these things, and look whether in their stead, thou hadst liefer to have rest and liberty, without any perturbation. But if thou hadst not liefer to have it, see that thou take not in hand many things, to the end that (as I have told thee) like little boys, thou be not now a philosopher, now a lawyer, afterward an advocate, lastly the Proctor of *Caesar*. All which things knit in one, can in no wise agree: for it must needs be that thou be either a good or an ill man, that thou addict thyself to interior or exterior things: that thou possess the place of a Philosopher and well advised man, or of a Fool and Idiot.

Annotations

At the plays Olympia. Olympia were plays as running, wrestling, and such other feats of activity accustomably kept in the honour of Jupiter Olympicus, at Pisa and He-

[52]Both the thing and our nature is to be considered and compared together.

[53]Constancy is to be observed.

lides Cities in Greece. *Man first consider,* He signifieth as to wrestling, to leaping and running, all are not meet, so neither to Philosophy, both have need of patience of body and mind. Of which things, whoso is destitute, he shall be rather a counterfeit than a very wrestler and Philosopher. *Thou must be mocked of little boys,*) Verily Philosophers were wont of all men to be despised, but great stout champions were in admiration.

Cap. 36. That duties do arise of nature, and that they are considered how a man should behave himself towards any man, next of the duties towards men.

Duty is measured by mutual affections.[54] If thou have a father, thou must regard and honour him: give place to him in all things, and if he chide or beat thee, endure it. He is a naughty father thou wilt say. Nature hath enjoined us the obedience of the father without mention of good. Art thou not joined by nature with a good father? No, but with a father. Wherefore do thy duty towards him, and consider not what he doth: but do such things, whereby thou mayest keep thy purpose agreeable to nature. No man will hurt thee except thou wilt. Thou shalt be then hurt, when thou shalt think thyself hurt. So thou shalt do the duty of neighbour to neighbour, of Citizen to Citizen, of lord to lord, if thou accustom thyself to consider the mutual affections.

Annotations

By mutual affections. Affections are used as a certain rule to measure duties by.

[54]We must do our duty towards all men, although other men do not their duty towards us.

Cap. 37. What our duties are towards GOD, and how to behave us in his doings.

The principal point of honouring God, is to think well of him, to believe that he is, that he hath created all things, and that well and justly he governeth them:[55] afterward to obey him, accepting all things that he doth, as proceeding of a very good intent. In so doing, thou shalt not blaspheme God, neither shalt thou accuse him of negligence. Thou art not able to do this, otherwise, except thou withdraw thyself from the things which are not in us, and placing good and ill in them which are in us. But if thou esteem any of the things, which are not in us, to be good or ill, thou must of necessity, when thou dost not attain to that which thou wouldest, or when thou dost fall into that which thou dost shun, blame and hate the cause of such an accident which is good. All living creatures have this by nature,[56] that they flee and eschew such things, and seem unto them noisome, and their causes: but contrariwise they search, and marvel at these things which seem to bring profit, and the causes of them. He then which thinketh himself hurt, can take no delight in that which unto him seemeth hurtful. So it is impossible that a man hurt may rejoice. And hereof it cometh to pass that the son doth check the father, when the father maketh him not partaker of the things, which seem good unto him. This is that, which made discord between *Polynices* and *Eteocles,* because they esteemed rule good. For this cause the husbandman, for this cause the Mariner, for this cause the Merchant, for this cause they which lose their wife and children do oftentimes defile and detest God, for whereas utility is,[57] there is also piety. Wherefore he that doth endeavour to desire and

[55]Their religion is nothing worth which do not place felicity in the riches of the mind.

[56]Tull. 1. Offic.

[57]Whereas utility is, there is piety.

flee that, even as he ought, by the same means he observeth and keepeth piety.[58] As touching offerings and oblations let every man do them according to the guise of his country: purely, without superfluity, according to his ability, without negligence or niggardship.

Annotations

Whereas utility is, there is piety, O wonderful sentence, and also wicked to see to: but so applied that it uncovereth the dissimulation of man's mind, and can scarce be nothing more agreeable to religion. *Guise of his country.* Forasmuch as piety consisteth in the mind, he thinketh that we should not much regard ceremonies. Which if it might be persuaded to some men which are in these days, we should live more quietly. It might be persuaded, if we would rather endeavour to live according to religion, than to dispute of religion: if we were rather desirers of the verity than of vanity, that is, of ambition, of emulation, of covetousness, of revengement, and of such like confusions and destructions of the mind, if there be any other.

Cap. 38. What manner of man he ought to be that cometh to a Diviner, and how to use divinations, wherein resteth our duty towards God, and towards ourselves.

If thou desire and seek to know that which is to come of any thing,[59] first thou must understand that thou art ignorant of that shall come, and therefore thou dost go to the Diviner to know it of him. Notwithstanding if thou

[58] He preferreth the rites of a country before the truth.

[59] The diviner is not to be counseled of our duty, but of the success of certain actions.

be wise thou art not ignorant what it is, nor the quality thereof. For if it be among the number of the things which are not in us, truly it is necessary, that it be neither good nor ill. Remove then from thee (if thou go to the Diviner) all desire and eschewing other thou shalt come to him trembling and quaking. But when thou shalt understand, whatsoever shall befall to appertain nothing to thee, and of thee not to be passed upon, thou mayest use it well, and no man shall forbid thee. Therefore go and ask counsel of God, as of him who can give thee very good, and after he hath given thee counsel, remember whom thou hast called to counsel, and whose counsel thou hast despised. Counsel may be demanded of the Diviner (as *Socrates* saith) for such things, whose consideration is referred to the end, the knowledge of which end, occasion cannot be given by any manner of means, nor any art. And therefore thou must not ask counsel of the Diviner, whether thou shalt put thy life in danger for thy country, or for thy friend, if need require, for if he perceive any unlucky sign, it is altogether manifest, that it signifieth death, or some impediment of thy body, or banishment: but reason telleth and persuadeth thee, that thou must put thyself in danger for Country, or for thy friend when need requireth. Give ear then to that which the great Divine *Apollo* saith, who did chase out of his temple, the man, which helped not his friend being in danger of death.

Annotations

Remember whom thou hast called to counsel, It must needs be, that the cunning of the diviners, soothsayers, was in divination very great. Otherwise a man of so great gravity would not have accounted their prophecies, for divine answers.

Cap. 39. Duties towards ourselves, and first of such as tend to the constancy of manners, and what things let it, and chiefly of talk and silence.

Thou must prescribe a rule and fashion,[60] which from henceforth thou shalt observe when thou art alone and when thou art in company. Let silence be kept for the most part: or let necessary things be talked of, and the same in few words. But if the time require thee to speak,[61] speak: but not of all things, not of the combat between fencers, not of running with horses, not of wrestlers, not of meats and drinks triflingly, nor principally of men, in praising or blaming them, or comparing them with others. And if thou be able, change thy familiars' Communication into that which is honest and comely. But if thou be environed with strangers, hold thy peace.

Annotations

Environed with strangers, He understandeth those men, whom because of their estimation and authority he dareth not admonish.

Cap. 40. Of laughing.

Laugh not much,[62] nor at all communication, neither aloud.

[60]We must determine who and what manner of men we will be.
[61]We must rule our tongue.
[62]Laughter.

Cap. 41. Of Oaths.

Swear not,[63] neither make an oath if it be possible for thee. But if thou canst not otherwise do, do it when it shall be needful.

Cap. 42. What conversation may do.

Frequent not the banquets and familiarity of the common sort,[64] and strangers. But if occasion so require, be mindful and take heed that thou become not one of the common sort. And understand thou that he which wrestleth with the defiled, must needs be defiled also.

Cap. 43. Of the use of such things as belong to the body.

As touching the body, take such things as shall be to his use and also be profitable for the mind, as meat, drink, apparel, harbour. But as touching dainty and delicate dishes, thou must altogether reject them, and banish them from thee.

Cap. 44. Of the act of Nature.

Touching Venery we ought as much as is possible, to lead a chaste life before marriage. But if we be constrained, we must take nothing but that which is lawful: notwithstanding reprove them not which use it, in blaming them, and vaunting thyself abroad, that thou dost not use it.

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[63] Oaths.
[64] Banquets.

Annotations

In blaming them. Christian charity commandeth that sinners should be reproved, and obstinate persons to be eschewed.

Cap. 45. Against anger, and what manner of men we should show ourselves towards backbiters.

If any bring thee word,[65] such a man misreporteth and backbiteth thee. Excuse not that which he hath said, but make this answer: he is ignorant of many other great faults, and imperfections which are in me, otherwise, he would not only have said this.

Cap. 46. How to behave ourselves in shows and triumphs.

It is not requisite to frequent often the shows and tournaments.[66] But if at any time occasion requireth, see that thou seem not to favour any man more than thyself, that is, wilt thou only have that done which is done: and him only to conquer, which conquereth? For so thou shalt not be impeached. Abstain thyself altogether from shouting, from consenting countenance, and let not thy gesture be sad and grave, but somewhat merry. At thy return from the shows, talk not much of the things which have been there done or said, seeing they avail nothing to thy amendment.

[65] An ill report is not to be passed upon.

[66] Shows are to be seen with a quiet mind.

Cap. 47. Of the desire of such as go to hear others' communication.

Approach not near them, whom thou seest to commune apart, and be not thou present if it be possible, or as seldom as thou mayest. But if thou be present keep in such wise thy constancy, that thou show thyself void of all perturbations.

Cap. 48. When one hath to speak with a noble personage.

If thou have any thing to do especially with such as are of noble blood,[67] and great authority. Consider what *Socrates* or *Zeno* have done herein, or the wisest man that ever thou didst know, and so thou shalt not be in doubt, how thou must behave thyself.

Annotations

What Socrates or Zeno, That may be gathered out of both their sayings and doings, forasmuch as we have not any thing written of neither of them. But unless thou shalt be endued with the learning and constancy of them both foolish imitation will turn thee to shame. And perhaps they observed not every where a seemliness and grace.

Cap. 49. How we ought to prepare ourselves, when we go to speak with a man of honour.

When thou wilt go to such a man as is of great honour,[68] presuppose in thy mind, what may chance, that (possibly) thou shalt not be received, that thou shalt be shut

[67] In meetings, we must follow the examples of wise men.
[68] The difficult coming to noble men is to be suffered.

out of doors, that the gate shall not be opened, or that he will not regard thee. Afterward ponder with thyself, if with all these things, it be expedient for thee to go to him: and when thou shalt come before him, suffer and endure that which shall be done, and say not to thyself: I deserve not to be thus entreated: for it is too common a thing to reprove and blame the things which are not in us.

Cap. 50. When we meet with many men, how to frame our communication.

In company speak not overmuch, nor beyond measure, of thy deeds, neither of thy dangers: for it cannot so much content other to hear them as thyself to rehearse them.[69] See also that thou move no laughter by thy communication, for that (I wot not how) engendreth disdain, and also causeth that no reverence is given to thee by them which are present. And very often leadeth thy communication to filthy and dishonest talk:[70] But if it befall, and that the matter and time require it, reprove him that shall use such ribaldry and filthiness. If not, at the least show and declare by silence and shamefastness, that such communication doth displease thee.

Cap. 51. How to resist pleasure.

If thou conceive any pleasure in thy mind,[71] be circumspect (even as in other things) that she beguile thee not, but examine the matter, and take space to deliberate on it. Afterward consider both the times, that is to say, the time wherein thou dost enjoy pleasure, and the time

[69] Laughter is not to be moved.
[70] Ribaldry is to be abhorred.
[71] It is better to despise than to embrace pleasure.

wherein after the enjoying of it thou mayest repent thee for having enjoyed it. And afterward reprove thyself, and consider how well at ease and contented thou shalt be, if thou abstain thyself, and in so doing thou dost commend thyself. But if the matter seem to require thee to do it, beware that her flatteries, her sweetness, and her enticements overcome thee not, but consider how far better it shall be, if thou be able to win the victory of that conflict.

Cap. 52. That we ought not to leave off our good purpose, whatsoever men say.

When thou art resolved to do any thing,[72] and hast not yet done it, refuse not to be seen in doing thereof, although other may judge amiss thereof, for if thou do evil, thou must give over thy work: if thou do well, fear them not who wrongfully, and without cause shall reprove thee.

Cap. 53. Of the honesty that we ought to keep at the table.

Who hath said:[73] it is day, and it is night, taking the proposition severally we ought to agree, but to understand it together, it is not to be received. So at the table to choose for ourselves the greatest, and the best part of the meat, is a great commodity towards the body, but it is against the honest participation that we ought to have at the table. Then if at any time thou be bidden to a banquet,[74] remember that thou must not only have regard to

[72]Our duty ought to move us, and not the communication of the people.

[73]We must not have regard to our own lust but to the Commonalty.

[74]In feasts modesty is to be observed.

the meat, for the profit of thy body: but also to honesty, and to behave thyself at the table, as thou oughtest.

Annotations

Whereas before he compared our life to a feast, let this precept be applied to all the parts of our life: and every where let there not be a respect to our private desire and utility, but of equity and society, and let the will of the feaster, that is God, be considered.

Cap. 54. That we should not undertake more than we are able to do.

If thou have taken more in hand,[75] than thou art able to achieve or bring to pass: thou shalt not bring it to effect, and also hast omitted that which thou wert able to perform.

Cap. 55. That we ought to be circumspect as well to save the mind harmless, as the body.

Even as in going thou dost take heed that thou step not upon a nail,[76] or that thou wrest not thy foot: so in leading thy life take heed, that thou hurt not thy mind, the governess of all thy doings, which if we observe in all things, we shall without danger take them in hand.

[75]We ought to measure our strength in all things.
[76]We must endeavour to have a perfect mind.

Cap. 56. Of the possession of such things as belong to the body.

The body is to every man the form of riches,[77] as the foot is of the shoe. If then in this thou persevere, thou shalt keep the mean: if thou exceed, thou must needs as it were, fall down headlong: as if thou be more curious about the fashion of the shoe, than is needful for the foot, thou wilt make him of gold, after of purple, last of all set with studs of gold: for there is no end of that thing which hath once passed measure.

Cap. 56. For maidens unmarried.

Women after fourteen years of age are called of lovers Ladies:[78] for after this age men (to the end to company with them) endeavour wholly to please them. To obtain then men's good will afterward they become very curious in trimming and decking themselves. Wherefore they must be admonished, that for no other cause we esteem them, but because they are modest, wise and honest, bearing reverence and obedience to their husbands.

Cap. 57. That more care is to be had of the mind than of the body.

To persist and continue in things which belong to the body,[79] for pleasure's sake, as in much exercise, in much trimming, and adorning of the body, is sign of an abject mind, and very much swerving from nature, and also it is a sign of consenting to superfluity: for we embrace pleasure, and rejoice in things which we allow. We must

[77] A few things are sufficient for nature, but infinite substance sufficeth not covetousness.

[78] Modesty in women is more to be regarded, than their beauty.

[79] We must bestow much time in garnishing of the mind, but a little in the body.

think then the exceeding care of the body to be from the purpose: but principally we must be careful of that whereof the body is but the instrument, that is, the mind.

Cap. 58. A precept to learn patience and meekness.

When any hath misused thee either in word or deed, remember that he doth suppose it to be done and said according to his duty. Wherefore it is impossible for him to follow thy advice and counsel, but his own. But if he judge amiss, he is hurt which is deceived. For if any do judge hidden truth to be a lie, the truth hidden is not hurt, but he which shall be deceived. If so be then thou be persuaded, thou shalt show thyself gentle and patient towards him that hath injured thee. And at every thing thou shalt say, it hath so pleased him.

Annotations

He doth suppose it to be done according to his duty. Pletho putteth us in mind of the same,[80] that also we should be blamed, which are able to persuade one thing, and cannot induce others into our opinion. But thou wilt say, oftentimes unreasonable and slanderous men know that such things as they do are dishonest and shameful for them to do. Epictetus maketh answer: they are so much the more worse and miserable: but thou art never the more worse and miserable. But their dishonesty is to me a damage, because they hurt my estimation, because they diminish my substance, because they do afflict my body by violence or witchcraft, because they hinder my commodities? Epictet will make answer, that these are none of thine, but other men's, and to appertain nothing to thee. Whereof much is spoken of before. *The hidden truth,* As it is in Sophocles in Electra, Orestes was

[80] Pletho.

not therefore dead, because he had persuaded himself to bring his bones shut in a coffin to Egisthus and others.

Cap. 59. That all things partly do agree the one with the other, and partly do disagree.

Every thing hath two handles, one whereby it may be carried,[81] the other whereby it may not. If thy brother be ill conditioned, take him not by that whereby he is ill conditioned, for it is the handle whereby he cannot be carried, but take him by that, whereby he is thy brother, and whereby he is nourished with thee, in so doing thou shalt take him by the handle, whereby he ought to be carried.

Cap. 60. That because of knowledge, or having more than other, we cannot infer that we are better.

These words agree not together I am richer than thou,[82] therefore better. I am wiser and better learned than thou art, therefore I am better: but these agree far better. I am richer than thou art, then my possession is better than thine. I am wiser and better learned than thou art, my words then are better than thine, but thou art neither thy possession nor yet thy communication.

Annotations

But thou art neither, etc. Thou wilt say, yea: but because of riches, eloquence, and power, I am much regarded. The same doth Epictet reprove, who thinketh good only

[81]The handle of humanity and not of immanity is to be taken.

[82]We must not triumph of the gifts of fortune, but of the riches of the mind.

wisdom and virtue to be much set by. What man except he were a very naughty and wicked flatterer,[83] hath had Nero the Emperor in great estimation, although besides his riches and Empire, he were eloquent, a Poet, and a Musician? The mind of a perfect man abhorreth to allow those, whose foolishness and dishonesty is known, in what fashion soever honour for a show be given to them, because of the gifts of fortune, and corrupt conversation.

Cap. 61. Of an exact judgement in things.

If any wash himself speedily, say not that he washeth himself naughtily,[84] but speedily. If any drink much, say not that he drinketh naughtily, but much, for if thou know not why he doth it, how dost thou know that he doth naughtily? So it shall chance that we do receive and support the fantasies and imaginations of some, and to other we agree.

Cap. 62. Against glory and ostentation. And first as touching knowledge.

Repute not thyself a Philosopher in any case:[85] neither dispute not much of precepts, but rather put some thing in execution, as at the table, teach not how one should eat his meat, but eat as it behoveth thee.[86] For remember that *Socrates* did so set aside all ostentation. But if at any time these precepts come in question, speak as little as is possible, for it is dangerous to vomit that which the stomach hath not well digested. And if it chance,

[83] Nero.

[84] Not only the deed itself, but the cause of the deed is to be considered.

[85] Philosophy is not to be declared by words, but by deeds.

[86] Nothing must be spoken unadvisedly.

that a man tell thee, that thou knowest nothing, and that it moveth thee not,[87] understand that this is a great entrance of thy work, for the sheep vomiting up their grass, declare not to the Shepherds how much they have eaten, but digesting it within they show without their fine wool and milk. Thou therefore show not, neither utter thy learning to the rude and ignorant: but declare some effects outwardly of that being well digested.

Cap. 63. Against the boasting of sobriety and sufferance.

Glory not thyself to have mortified,[88] impaired, and weakened thy body through abstinence: Neither if thou hast drunken nothing but water, say not at every occasion, I drink nothing but water. But consider how much more abstinent the poor are, who crave alms, suffering and enduring much more than thou. Furthermore consider how many perfections and virtues thou hast not, which other have. But if thou wilt exercise thyself in pain and patience, do it by thyself, and seek not to advertise other of it, as they do who suffering wrong of great men, set images on fire, and say, we are undone, to the end to move and assemble the people. For a bragger is altogether mindful of worldly things, and turneth topsy-turvy the goodness of patience and abstinence, because he determineth the end of them is to have, the good opinion and praise of many.

[87]The Sheep declare by their wool and milk how much they have eaten.

[88]Ostentation is to be eschewed.

Cap. 64. The description of a triple quality or property, that is, of the unlearned, of the Philosopher, and of him that beginneth to learn.

The condition and state of the unlearned is, to look for of himself neither profit nor damage, but of outward things. The state and condition of the philosopher is, to look for of himself all utility and discommodity. The sign of him which beginneth to profit is,[89] that he dispraise no man, that he praise no man, that he complain of no man, that he accuse no man, that he speak nothing of himself, as though he were any body, or knew any thing. When he shall be at any time impeached or disturbed, he blameth none but himself. And if one commend him, he mocketh him covertly which commendeth him, if he be dispraised, he purgeth nor justifieth himself: but liveth like a sick person fearing to move and trouble any thing within him before he be recovered. He setteth apart all appetite, and fleeth the things which are against the nature of them which are in us. He useth a light endeavour about all things, and passeth not whether he be termed a Fool or an Idiot. And (in brief) he watcheth himself, as his Enemy and Spy.

Annotations

That he dispraise no man, That is through curiosity and too much diligence in other men's matters, or provoked through self-love: Epictet commendeth Agrippinus, but why? that other should follow his example. He reproveth other, wherefore? that they should be amended.

[89]The signs of him which profiteth.

Cap. 65. That learning is not only to be expounded but also to live according as it doth prescribe.

If any do vaunt that he can well interpret and expound the sentences of *Chrysippus,*[90] say with thyself, if *Chrysippus* had not written darkly, and obscurely, I should have nothing wherewith to vaunt myself. But *Chrysippus* hath not written, to the end he would be interpreted, but to the end that according to his doctrine we should live. If then I use his precepts, then shall I attain to the goodness of them. But if I marvel at the interpretation, or if I can well interpret it myself, I marvel at the Grammarian, not at the Philosopher, or else play the Grammarian not the Philosopher. But what availeth it to have found written remedies, to understand them well, and being sick thyself not to use them?

Cap. 66. That we ought to persevere in goodness.

Thou must be stable and firm in thy good purpose and deliberation of life,[91] even as in a law. Persevere therefore, even as if in transgressing, thou shouldest incur the crime of impiety. And whatsoever men talk of thee, regard it not, for that belongeth not to thee.

[90]They are Grammarians not Philosophers, which do expound the precepts of wise men, and follow them not.

[91]Precepts are to be obeyed, and words are not to be regarded.

Cap. 67. That we ought not to defer from day to day, for to lead a perfect life.

How long yet wilt thou defer to esteem thyself at any time worthy of these things which are so excellent, and not to transgress one? But if from day to day thou dost defer the time, thou dost not advance but hinder thyself. Then incontinently accustom thyself to live as perfect, and to use well all accidents and chances. And in every thing suppose that the combat is ready for thee, and neglect no time, for that day in the which thou dost not profit, thou dost receive damage. After this manner *Socrates* became the wisest of all. But if thou be not yet *Socrates,* thou oughtest to live as one that would become *Socrates.*

Cap. 68. Three places in Philosophy, and the order of them together.

The first and most necessary place is that which appertaineth to the practice of knowledge:[92] as, not to lie. The second which appertaineth to demonstrations: as, how cometh it to pass that this is demonstration? What demonstration is? what consequence is? what fighting is? what is true? what is false? Therefore the third place is necessary for the second, the second for the first. The most necessary of all, and wherein to rest ourselves is the first. But we do contrary, for we stay ourselves in the third, and therein bestow all our study, and make no account of the first, but are altogether negligent. And how? For we make leasings, and notwithstanding we have well near always no other thing in our mouth, why and wherefore we ought not to lie.

[92] Precepts are better than the cause of precepts, and the Method of demonstrations.

Annotations

Not to lie. And this is the active or moral part. *We should not lie.* This is called the judicial or natural part. *To demonstrations.* This is logic and Rhetoric, whereby we prove and try the truth, and disprove that which is false.

Cap. 69. Three sentences of the ancients to be had in mind. Of the which the first is of Cleanthes, the second of Euripides, the third of Plato.

Let us always have these three things in memory and before our eyes. The first is, Necessity draweth all things (will we nill we) even as God hath appointed, wherefore he which willingly followeth it, is wise. The second is if I recoil and give back, I shall be naught, and spite of my teeth weeping and wailing I must needs follow. But the third, O *Crito,* If it so please god, so be it. *Anytus* truly and *Meletus* may well kill me, but to hurt me, it lieth not in their power.

Annotations

It is marvel that this moral and available saying of Epictetus was omitted, *[Greek] [Greek]*, that is, Bear and Forbear, which be used very often, and doth in a manner comprehend all that whereof mention is made at large in this book.