

BOOK XVIII

LIBER OCTAVUS DECIMUS

I

Disputationes a philosopho Stoico et contra a Peripatetico, arbitro Favorino, factae; quaesitumque inter eos quantum in perficienda vita beata virtus valeret quantumque esset in his quae dicuntur extranea.

- 1 FAMILIARES Favorini erant duo quidam non in-
celebres in urbe Roma philosophi. Eorum fuit unus
- 2 Peripateticae disciplinae sectator, alter Stoicae. His
quondam ego acriter atque contente pro suis utrim-
que decretis propugnantibus, cum essemus una
omnes Ostiae cum Favorino, interfui. Ambulaba-
- 3 mus autem in litore, cum iam advesperasceret,
aestate anni novi.¹
- 4 Atque ibi Stoicus censebat et vitam beatam ho-
mini virtute animi sola et miseriam summam malitia
sola posse effici, etiamsi cetera bona omnia quae cor-
poralia et externa appellarentur virtuti deessent,
- 5 malitiae adessent. Ille contra Peripateticus miseriam
quidem vitam vitiis animi et malitia sola fieri con-
cedebat, sed ad complendos omnes vitae beatae
numeros virtutem solam nequaquam satis esse
existimabat, quoniam et corporis integritas sani-
tasque et honestus modus formae et pecunia familiaris² et bona existimatio ceteraque omnia corporis et
fortuna bona necessaria viderentur perficiendae
vitae beatae.

¹ nova, *Salmasius*; novi, ω ; molli, *Damsté*.

² fortunae et pecuniae reiue familiaris, *Madvig*; res familiaris, *Damsté*; but cf. iii. 17. 1.

BOOK XVIII

I

Discussions held by a Stoic philosopher and in opposition by a Peripatetic, with Favorinus as arbiter; and the question at issue was, how far virtue availed in determining a happy life and to what extent happiness was dependent on what are called external circumstances.

THERE were two friends of Favorinus, philosophers of no little note in the city of Rome; one of them was a follower of the Peripatetic school, the other of the Stoic. I was once present when these men argued ably and vigorously, each for his own beliefs, when we were all with Favorinus at Ostia. And we were walking along the shore in springtime, just as evening was falling.

And on that occasion the Stoic maintained¹ that man could enjoy a happy life only through virtue, and that the greatest wretchedness was due to wickedness only, even though all the other blessings, which are called external, should be lacking to the virtuous man and present with the wicked. The Peripatetic, on the other hand, admitted that a wretched life was due solely to vicious thoughts and wickedness, but he believed that virtue alone was by no means sufficient to round out all the parts of a happy life, since the complete use of one's limbs, good health, a reasonably attractive person, property, good repute, and all the other advantages of body and fortune seemed necessary to make a perfectly happy life.

¹ III. 56, Arn.

ATTIC NIGHTS OF AULUS GELLIUS

- 6 Reclamabat hoc in loco Stoicus et, tamquam duas
ille res diversas poneret, mirabatur, quod, cum essent
malitia et virtus duo contraria, vita misera et beata
quoque aequae contraria, non servaret in utrisque vim
7 et naturam contrarii et ad miseriam quidem vitae
conficiendam satis valere malitiam solam putaret, ad
praestandam vero beatam vitam non satis solam esse
8 virtutem diceret. Atque id maxime dissidere neque
convenire dicebat, quod qui profiteretur vitam nullo
pacto beatam effici posse si virtus sola abesset, idem
contra negaret, beatam fieri vitam cum sola virtus
adesset, et quem daret haberetque virtuti absentem
honorem, eundem petenti atque praesenti adimeret.
- 9 Tum Peripateticus perquam hercule festive: "Rogo
te," inquit, "cum bona venia respondeas an existi-
mes esse vini amphoram, cum abest ab ea unus
10 congius?" "Minime," inquit, "vini amphora dici
11 potest ex qua abest congius." Hoc ubi accepit
Peripateticus, "Unus igitur," inquit, "congius am-
phoram facere dici debet, quoniam, cum deest ille
unus, non fit amphora vini et, cum accessit, fit
amphora. Quod si id dicere absurdum est, uno
congio solo fieri amphoram, itidem absurdum est
una sola virtute vitam fieri beatam dicere, quoniam,
cum virtus abest, beata esse vita numquam potest."¹
- 12 Tum Favorinus aspiciens Peripateticum, "Est qui-

¹ possit, or quamquam for quoniam, *Skutsch*.

¹ Somewhat less than 6 gallons.

² A little less than 6 pints.

BOOK XVIII. I. 6-12

Here the Stoic made outcry against him, and maintaining that his opponent was advancing two contrary propositions, expressed his surprise that, since wickedness and virtue were two opposites, and a wretched and a happy life were also opposites, he did not preserve in each the force and nature of an opposite, but believed that wickedness alone was sufficient to cause an unhappy life, at the same time declaring that virtue alone was not sufficient to guarantee a happy life. And he said that it was especially inconsistent and contradictory for one who maintained that a life could in no way be made happy if virtue alone were lacking, to deny on the other hand that a life could be happy when virtue alone was present, and thus to take away from virtue when present and demanding it, that honour which he gave and bestowed upon virtue when lacking.

Thereupon the Peripatetic, in truth very wittily, said: "Pray pardon me, and tell me this, whether you think that an amphora¹ of wine from which a congius² has been taken, is still an amphora?" "By no means," was the reply, "can that be called an amphora of wine, from which a congius is missing." When the Peripatetic heard this, he retorted: "Then it will have to be said that one congius makes an amphora of wine, since when that one is lacking, it is not an amphora, and when it is added, it becomes an amphora. But if it is absurd to say that an amphora is made from one single congius, it is equally absurd to say that a life is made happy by virtue alone by itself, because when virtue is lacking life can never be happy."

Then Favorinus, turning to the Peripatetic, said:

ATTIC NIGHTS OF AULUS GELLIUS

- dem," inquit, "argutiola haec qua de congio vini usus es exposita in libris; sed, ut scis, captio magis lepida quam probum aut simile argumentum videri
- 13 debet. Congius enim, cum deest, efficit quidem ne sit iustae mensurae amphora; sed cum accedit et additur, non ille unus facit amphoram, sed supplet.
- 14 Virtus autem, ut isti dicunt, non accessio neque supplementum, sed sola ipsa vitae beatæ instar est et propterea beatam vitam sola una, cum adest, facit."
- 15 Haec atque alia quaedam minuta magis et nodosa, tamquam apud arbitrum Favorinum, in suam uterque
- 16 sententiam conferebant. Sed cum iam prima fax noctis et densiores esse tenebrae coepissent, prosecuti Favorinum in domum, ad quam devertebat, discessimus.

II

Cuiusmodi quaestionum certationibus Saturnalia ludica Athenis agitare soliti simus; atque inibi expressa quaedam sophismatia et aenigmata oblectatoria.

- 1 SATURNALIA Athenis agitabamus hilare prorsum ac modeste, non, ut dicitur, "remittentes animum"—nam "remittere," inquit Musonius, "animum quasi amittere est"—, sed demulcentes eum paulum atque
- 2 laxantes iucundis honestisque sermonum inlectionibus. Conveniebamus autem ad eandem cenam conplusculi, qui Romani in Graeciam veneramus quique easdem auditiones eosdemque doctores cole-
- 3 bamus. Tum qui et cenulam ordine suo curabat, praemium solvendae quaestionis ponebat librum

¹ p. 133, Hense.

² Cf. note on vii. 13. 2.

“This clever turn which you have used about the congius of wine is indeed set forth in the books; but, as you know, it ought to be regarded rather as a neat catch than as an honest or plausible argument. For when a congius is lacking, it indeed causes the amphora not to be of full measure; but when it is added and put in, it alone does not make, but completes, an amphora. But virtue, as the Stoics say, is not an addition or a supplement, but it by itself is the equivalent of a happy life, and therefore it alone makes a happy life, when it is present.”

These and some other minute and knotty arguments each advanced in support of his own opinion, before Favorinus as umpire. But when the first night-lights appeared and the darkness grew thicker, we escorted Favorinus to the house where he was putting up; and when he went in, we separated.

II

What kind of questions we used to discuss when spending the Saturnalia at Athens; and some amusing sophistries and enigmas.

WE used to spend the Saturnalia at Athens very merrily yet temperately, not “relaxing our minds,” as the saying is—for, as Musonius asserts,¹ to relax the mind is like losing it—but diverting our minds a little and relieving them by the delights of pleasant and improving conversation. Accordingly, a number of us Romans who had come to Greece, and who attended the same lectures and devoted ourselves to the same teachers, met at the same dinner-table. Then the one who was giving the entertainment in his turn,² offered as a prize for solving a problem

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