

## AGAINST COLOTES, THE DISCIPLE AND FAVORITE OF EPICURUS.

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1. COLOTES, whom Epicurus was wont diminutively and by way of familiarity or fondness, to call Colotaras and Colotarion, composed, O Saturninus, and published a little book which he entitled, "That according to the opinions of the other philosophers one cannot so much as live." This he dedicated to King Ptolemy. Now I suppose that it will not be unpleasant for you to read, when set down in writing, what came into my mind to speak against this Colotes, since I know you to be a lover of all elegant and honest treatises, and particularly of such as regard the science of antiquity, and to esteem the bearing in memory and having (as much as possible may be) in hand the discourses of the ancient sages to be the most royal of all studies and exercises.

2. Not long since therefore, as this book was reading, Aristodemus of Aegium, a familiar friend of ours (whom you well know to be one of the Academy, and not a mere thyrsus-bearer, but one of the most frantic celebrators of Plato's orgies),\* did, I know not how, keep himself contrary to his custom very still all the while, and patiently gave ear to it even to the end. But the reading was scarce well over, when he said: Well then, whom shall we cause

\* See Plato, Phaed. p. 69 C, and Stallbaum's note. Here the proverb occurs, — *Ναρθηκοφόροι μὲν πολλοὶ, Βάκχοι δὲ τε παῦροι*, the thyrsus-bearers are many, but the true priests of Bacchus are few. (G.)

to rise up and fight against this man, in defence of the philosophers? For I am not of Nestor's opinion, who, when the most valiant of those nine warriors that presented themselves to enter into combat was to be chosen, committed the election to the fortune of a lot.

Yet, answered I, you see he so disposed himself in reference to the lot, that the choice might pass according to the arbitrament of the wisest man ;

And th' lot drawn from the helmet, as they wished,  
On Ajax fell.

But yet since you command me to make the election,

How can I think a better choice to make  
Than the divine Ulysses ? \*

Consider therefore, and be well advised, in what manner you will chastise this man.

But you know, replied Aristodemus, that Plato, when highly offended with his boy that waited on him, would not himself beat him, but requested Speusippus to do it for him, saying that he himself was angry. As much therefore may I say to you ; Take this fellow to you, and treat him as you please ; for I am in a fit of choler.

When therefore all the rest of the company desired me to undertake this office ; I must then, said I, speak, since it is your pleasure. But I am afraid that I also shall seem more vehemently transported than is fitting against this book, in the defending and maintaining Socrates against the rudeness, scurrility, and insolence of this man ; who, because Socrates affirmed himself to know nothing certainly, instead of bread (as one would say) presents him hay, as if he were a beast, and asks him why he puts meat into his mouth and not into his ear. And yet perhaps some would make but a laughing matter of this, considering the mildness and gentleness of Socrates ; “ but

\* II. VII. 182 ; X. 243.

for the whole host of the Greeks," that is, of the other philosophers, amongst which are Democritus, Plato, Stilpo, Empedocles, Parmenides, and Melissus, who have been basely traduced and reviled by him, it were not only a shame to be silent, but even a sacrilege in the least point to forbear or recede from freedom of speech in their behalf, who have advanced philosophy to that honor and reputation it has gotten.

And our parents indeed have, with the assistance of the Gods, given us our life; but to live well comes to us from reason, which we have learned from the philosophers, which favors law and justice, and restrains our concupiscence. Now to live well is to live sociably, friendly, temperately, and justly; of all which conditions they leave us not one, who cry out that man's sovereign good lies in his belly, and that they would not purchase all the virtues together at the expense of a cracked farthing, if pleasure were totally and on every side removed from them. And in their discourses concerning the soul and the Gods, they hold that the soul perishes when it is separated from the body, and that the Gods concern not themselves in our affairs. Thus the Epicureans reproach the other philosophers, that by their wisdom they bereave man of his life; whilst the others on the contrary accuse them of teaching men to live degenerately and like beasts.

3. Now these things are scattered here and there in the writings of Epicurus, and dispersed through all his philosophy. But this Colotes, by having extracted from them certain pieces and fragments of discourses, destitute of any arguments whatever to render them credible and intelligible, has composed his book, being like a shop or cabinet of monsters and prodigies; as you better know than any one else, because you have always in your hands the works of the ancients. But he seems to me, like the Lydian, to open not only one gate against himself, but to involve

Epicurus also in many and those the greatest doubts and difficulties. For he begins with Democritus, who receives of him an excellent and worthy reward for his instruction; it being certain that Epicurus for a long time called himself a Democritean, which as well others affirm, as Leonteus, a principal disciple of Epicurus, who in a letter which he writ to Lycophron says, that Epicurus honored Democritus, because he first attained, though a little at a distance, the right and sound understanding of the truth, and that in general all the treatise concerning natural things was called Democritean, because Democritus was the first who happened upon the principles and met with the primitive foundations of Nature. And Metrodorus says openly of philosophy, If Democritus had not gone before and taught the way, Epicurus had never attained to wisdom. Now if it be true, as Colotes holds, that to live according to the opinions of Democritus is not to live, Epicurus was then a fool in following Democritus, who led him to a doctrine which taught him not to live.

4. Now the first thing he lays to his charge is, that, by supposing every thing to be no more of one nature than another, he wholly confounds human life. But Democritus was so far from having been of this opinion, that he opposed Protagoras the philosopher who asserted it, and writ many excellent arguments concluding against him, which this fine fellow Colotes never saw nor read, nor yet so much as dreamed of; but deceived himself by misunderstanding a passage which is in his works, where he determines that τὸ δέν is no more than τὸ μηδέν, naming in that place the body by δέν, and the void by μηδέν, and meaning that the void has its own proper nature and subsistence, as well as the body.

But he who is of opinion that nothing is more of one nature than another makes use of a sentence of Epicurus, in which he says that all the apprehensions and imagina-

tions given us by the senses are true. For if of two saying, the one, that the wine is sour, and the other, that it is sweet, neither of them shall be deceived by his sense, how shall the wine be more sour than sweet? And we may often see that some men using one and the same bath find it to be hot, and others find it to be cold; because those order cold water to be put into it, as these do hot. It is said that, a certain lady going to visit Berenice, wife to King Deiotarus, as soon as ever they approached each other, they both immediately turned their backs, the one, as it seemed, not being able to bear the smell of perfume, nor the other of butter. If then the sense of one is no truer than the sense of another, it is also probable, that water is no more cold than hot, nor sweet ointment or butter better or worse scented one than the other. For if any one shall say that it seems the one to one, and the other to another, he will, before he is aware, affirm that they are both the one and the other.

5. And as for these symmetries and proportions of the pores, or little passages in the organs of the senses, about which they talk so much, and those different mixtures of seeds, which, they say, being dispersed through all savors, odors, and colors, move the senses of different persons to perceive different qualities, do they not manifestly drive them to this, that things are no more of one quality than another? For to pacify those who think the sense is deceived and lies because they see contrary events and passions in such as use the same objects, and to solve this objection, they teach, — that all things being mixed and confounded together, and yet one nevertheless being more suitable and fitting to one, and another to another, it is not possible that there should in all cases be a contact and comprehension of one and the same quality, nor does the object equally affect all with all its parts, every one meeting only those to which it has its sense commensurate and

proportioned; so that they are to blame so obstinately to insist that a thing is either good or bad, white or not white, thinking to establish their own senses by destroying those of others; whereas they ought neither to combat the senses, — because they all touch some quality, each one drawing from this confused mixture, as from a living and large fountain, what is suitable and convenient, — nor to pronounce of the whole, by touching only the parts, nor to think that all ought to be affected after one and the same manner by the same thing, seeing that one is affected by one quality and faculty of it, and another by another. Let us then seek who those men are which bring in this opinion that things are not more of one quality than another, if they are not those who hold that every sensible thing is a mixture, composed of all sorts of qualities, like a mixture of new wine fermenting, and who confess that all their rules are lost and their faculty of judging quite gone, if they admit any sensible object that is pure and simple, and do not make each one thing to be many?

6. See now to this purpose, what discourse and debate Epicurus makes Polyænus to have with him in his Banquet concerning the heat of wine. For when he asked, “Do you, Epicurus, say, that wine does not heat?” some one answered, “It is not universally to be affirmed that wine heats.” And a little after: “For wine seems not to be universally a heater; but such a quantity may be said to heat such a person.” And again subjoining the cause, to wit, the compressions and disseminations of the atoms, and having alleged their commixtures and conjunctions with others when the wine comes to be mingled in the body, he adds this conclusion: “It is not universally to be said that wine is endued with a faculty of heating; but that such a quantity may heat such a nature and one so disposed, while such a quantity to such a nature is cooling. For in such a mass there are such natures and complex-

ions of which cold might be composed, and which, joined with others in proper measure, would yield a refrigerative virtue. Wherefore some are deceived, who say that wine is universally a heater ; and others, who say that it is universally a cooler." He then who says that most men are deceived and err, in holding that which is hot to be heating and that which is cold to be cooling, is himself in an error, unless he should believe that his assertion leads to the doctrine that one thing is not more of one nature than another. He farther adds afterwards, that oftentimes wine entering into a body brings with it thither neither a calefying nor refrigerating virtue, but, the mass of the body being agitated and disturbed, and a transposition made of the parts, the heat-effecting atoms being assembled together do by their multitude cause a heat and inflammation in the body, and sometimes on the contrary disassembling themselves cause a refrigeration.

7. But it is moreover wholly evident, that we may apply this argument to all those things which are called and esteemed bitter, sweet, purging, dormitive, and luminous, not any one of them having an entire and perfect quality to produce such effects, nor to do rather than to suffer when they are in the bodies, but being there susceptible of various temperatures and differences. For Epicurus himself, in his Second Book against Theophrastus, affirming that colors are not connatural to bodies, but are engendered there according to certain situations and positions with respect to the sight of man, says : " For this reason a body is no more colored than destitute of color." And a little above he writes thus, word for word : " But apart from this, I know not how a man may say that those bodies which are in the dark have color ; although very often, an air equally dark being spread about them, some distinguish diversities of colors, others perceive them not through the weakness of their sight. And moreover, going into a

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