

THE EPISTLES OF SENECA

rerum omnium sapiens, non exitum spectat. Initia in potestate nostra sunt; de eventu fortuna iudicat, cui de me sententiam non do. "At aliquid vexationis adferet, aliquid adversi." Non damnat¹ latro, cum occidit.

- 17 Nunc ad cotidianam stipem manum porrigis. Aurea te stipe implebo, et quia facta est auri mentio, accipe quemadmodum usus fructusque eius tibi esse gratior possit. "Is maxime divitiis fruitur, qui minime divitiis indiget." "Ede," inquis, "auctorem." Ut scias quam benigni simus, propositum est aliena laudare; Epicuri est aut Metrodori aut alicuius ex
18 illa officina. Et quid interest quis dixerit? Omnibus dixit. Qui eget divitiis, timet pro illis. Nemo autem sollicito bono fruitur; adicere illis aliquid studet. Dum de incremento cogitat, oblitus est usus. Rationes accipit, forum conterit, kalendarium versat; fit ex domino procurator. VALE.

XV

SENECA LVCILIO SVO SALVTEM

- 1 Mos antiquis fuit usque ad meam servatus aetatem, primis epistulae verbis adicere: "Si vales bene est, ego valeo." Recte nos dicimus: "Si philosopharis,
¹ damnat Gronovius; damnatur MSS.; dominatur Schweighäuser. Haase, followed by Hense, indicates a lacuna after *occidit*.

^a Epicurus, *Ep.* iii. p. 63. 19 Usener.

^b Named *kalendarium* because interest was reckoned according to the Kalends of each month.

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regards the reason for all his actions, but not the results. The beginning is in our own power; fortune decides the issue, but I do not allow her to pass sentence upon myself. You may say: "But she can inflict a measure of suffering and of trouble." The highwayman does not pass sentence when he slays.

Now you are stretching forth your hand for the daily gift. Golden indeed will be the gift with which I shall load you; and, inasmuch as we have mentioned gold, let me tell you how its use and enjoyment may bring you greater pleasure. "He who needs riches least, enjoys riches most."^a "Author's name, please!" you say. Now, to show you how generous I am, it is my intent to praise the dicta of other schools. The phrase belongs to Epicurus, or Metrodorus, or some one of that particular thinking-shop. But what difference does it make who spoke the words? They were uttered for the world. He who craves riches feels fear on their account. No man, however, enjoys a blessing that brings anxiety; he is always trying to add a little more. While he puzzles over increasing his wealth, he forgets how to use it. He collects his accounts, he wears out the pavement in the forum, he turns over his ledger,^b--in short, he ceases to be master and becomes a steward. Farewell.

XV. ON BRAWN AND BRAINS

The old Romans had a custom which survived even into my lifetime. They would add to the opening words of a letter: "If you are well, it is well; I also am well." Persons like ourselves would do

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- bene est." Valere autem hoc demum est. Sine hoc aeger est animus. Corpus quoque, etiam si magnas habet vires, non aliter quam furiosi aut phrenetici
 2 validum est. Ergo hanc praecipue validitudinem cura, deinde et illam secundam, quae non magno tibi constabit, si volueris bene valere. Stulta est enim, mi Lucili, et minime conveniens litterato viro occupatio exercendi lacertos et dilatandi cervicem ac latera firmandi; cum tibi feliciter sagina cesserit et tori creverint, nec vires umquam opimi bovis nec pondus aequabis. Adice nunc, quod maiore corporis sarcina animus eliditur et minus agilis est. Itaque quantum
 3 Multa secuntur incommoda huic deditos curae; primum exercitationes, quarum labor spiritum exhaurit et inhabilem intentioni ac studiis acrioribus reddit. Deinde copia ciborum subtilitas impeditur. Accedunt pessimae notae mancipia in magisterium recepta, homines inter oleum et vinum occupati, quibus ad votum dies actus est, si bene desudaverunt, si in locum eius, quod effluxit, multum potionis altius ieiunio¹ iturae regesserunt. Bibere et sudare vita cardiaci est.
 4 Sunt exercitationes et faciles et breves, quae corpus et sine mora lassent et tempori parcant, cuius praecipua ratio habenda est: cursus et cum aliquo

¹ *ieiunio* Madvig; *in ieiuno* pPb; *in ieiunio* L¹.

^a *i.e.*, the prize-ring; the contestants were rubbed with oil before the fight began.

^b *Cardiacus* meant, according to Pliny, *N.H.* xxiii. 1. 24, a sort of dyspepsia accompanied by fever and perspiration. Compare the man in Juvenal v. 32, who will not send a spoonful of wine to a friend ill of this complaint.

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well to say: "If you are studying philosophy, it is well." For this is just what "being well" means. Without philosophy the mind is sickly, and the body, too, though it may be very powerful, is strong only as that of a madman or a lunatic is strong. This, then, is the sort of health you should primarily cultivate; the other kind of health comes second, and will involve little effort, if you wish to be well physically. It is indeed foolish, my dear Lucilius, and very unsuitable for a cultivated man, to work hard over developing the muscles and broadening the shoulders and strengthening the lungs. For although your heavy feeding produce good results and your sinews grow solid, you can never be a match, either in strength or in weight, for a first-class bull. Besides, by overloading the body with food you strangle the soul and render it less active. Accordingly, limit the flesh as much as possible, and allow free play to the spirit. Many inconveniences beset those who devote themselves to such pursuits. In the first place, they have their exercises, at which they must work and waste their life-force and render it less fit to bear a strain or the severer studies. Second, their keen edge is dulled by heavy eating. Besides, they must take orders from slaves of the vilest stamp,—men who alternate between the oil-flask^a and the flagon, whose day passes satisfactorily if they have got up a good perspiration and quaffed, to make good what they have lost in sweat, huge draughts of liquor which will sink deeper because of their fasting. Drinking and sweating,—it's the life of a dyspeptic!^b

Now there are short and simple exercises which tire the body rapidly, and so save our time; and time is something of which we ought to keep strict account.

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pondere manus motae et saltus vel ille, qui corpus in altum levat, vel ille, qui in longum mittit, vel ille, ut ita dicam, saliaris¹ aut, ut contumeliosius dicam, fullonius; quouis² libet ex his elige usum rudem, 5 facilem. Quicquid facies, cito redi a corpore ad animum. Illum noctibus ac diebus exerce; labore modico alitur ille. Hanc exercitationem non frigus, non aestus inpediet, ne senectus quidem. Id bonum 6 cura, quod vetustate fit melius. Neque ego te iubeo semper inminere libro aut pugillaribus; dandum est aliquod intervallum animo, ita tamen ut non resolvatur, sed remittatur. Gestatio et corpus concutit et studio non officit; possis legere, possis dictare, possis loqui, possis audire, quorum nihil ne ambulatio quidem vetat fieri.

7 Nec tu intentionem vocis contempseris, quam veto te per gradus et certos modos extollere, deinde deprimere. Quid si velis deinde quemadmodum ambules discere? Admitte istos, quos nova artificia docuit fames; erit qui gradus tuos temperet et buccas edentis observet et in tantum procedat, in quantum audaciam eius patientia et credulitate³ produxeris. Quid ergo? A clamore protinus et a summa contentione vox tua incipiet? Usque eo naturale est paulatim incitari, ut litigantes quoque a sermone incipiunt,⁴ ad vociferationem transeunt.⁵ Nemo statim

¹ *saliaris* Madvig; *salutaris* pLb; *saltaris* P.

² *quouis* Buecheler; *quos* (*quod*) *libet* MSS.

³ *patientia et credulitate* Lipsius; *patientiae credulitate* (*crudelitate*) MSS.

⁴ *incipiunt* Capps; *incipiant* MSS.

⁵ *transeunt* L¹; *transeant* other MSS., Hense.

^a Named from the Salii, or leaping priests of Mars.
^b The fuller, or washerman, cleansed the clothes by leaping and stamping upon them in the tub.

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These exercises are running, brandishing weights, and jumping,—high-jumping or broad-jumping, or the kind which I may call “the Priest’s dance,”^a or, in slighting terms, “the clothes-cleaner’s jump.”^b Select for practice any one of these, and you will find it plain and easy. But whatever you do, come back soon from body to mind. The mind must be exercised both day and night, for it is nourished by moderate labour; and this form of exercise need not be hampered by cold or hot weather, or even by old age. Cultivate that good which improves with the years. Of course I do not command you to be always bending over your books and your writing materials; the mind must have a change,—but a change of such a kind that it is not unnerved, but merely unbent. Riding in a litter shakes up the body, and does not interfere with study; one may read, dictate, converse, or listen to another; nor does walking prevent any of these things.

You need not scorn voice-culture; but I forbid you to practise raising and lowering your voice by scales and specific intonations. What if you should next propose to take lessons in walking! If you consult the sort of person whom starvation has taught new tricks, you will have someone to regulate your steps, watch every mouthful as you eat, and go to such lengths as you yourself, by enduring him and believing in him, have encouraged his effrontery to go. “What, then?” you will ask; “is my voice to begin at the outset with shouting and straining the lungs to the utmost?” No; the natural thing is that it be aroused to such a pitch by easy stages, just as persons who are wrangling begin with ordinary conversational tones and then pass to shouting at the top of their lungs. No speaker cries “Help me,

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- 8 Quiritium fidem inplorat. Ergo utcumque tibi impetus animi suaserit, modo vehementius fac¹ convicium, modo lentius, prout vox quoque te hortabitur, in id latus. Modesta, cum recipies illam revocarisque, descendat, non decidat; media oris via abeat² nec indocto et rustico more desaeviat. Non enim id agimus, ut exerceatur vox, sed ut exerceat.
- 9 Detraxi tibi non pusillum negotii; una mercedula et unum Graecum ad haec beneficia accedet. Ecce insigne praeceptum: “Stulta vita ingrata est et trepida; tota in futurum fertur.” “Quis hoc,” inquis, “dicit?” Idem qui supra. Quam tu nunc vitam dici existimas stultam? Babae et Isionis? Non ita est; nostra dicitur, quos caeca cupiditas in nocitura, certe numquam satiatura praecipitat, quibus si quid satis esse posset, fuisset, qui non cogitamus, quam iucundum sit nihil poscere, quam magnificentum sit plenum esse nec ex fortuna pendere. Subinde itaque, Lucili, quam multa sis consecutus recordare. Cum aspexeris, quot te antecendant, cogita, quot sequantur. Si vis gratus esse adversus deos et adversus vitam tuam, cogita, quam multos antecesseris. Quid tibi cum ceteris? Te ipse antecessisti.

¹ *fac vicinis* MSS. ; Hense condemns *vicinis*.

² *media oris via abeat* Madvig and Buecheler ; *mediatoris sui habeat* L'P.

^a *i.e.*, Epicurus, Frag. 491 Usener.

^b Court fools of the period.

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