

THE EPISTLES OF SENECA

est catena, quae nos alligatos tenet, amor vitae, qui ut non est abiciendus, ita minuendus est, ut si quando res exiget, nihil nos detineat nec inpediat, quo minus parati simus, quod quandoque faciendum est, statim facere. VALE.

XXVII.

SENECA LVCILIO SVO SALVTEM

I "Tu me," inquis, "mones? Iam enim te ipse monuisti, iam correxisti? Ideo aliorum emendationi vacas?" Non sum tam improbus, ut curationes aeger òbeam, sed tamquam in eodem valitudinario iaceam, de communi tecum malo conloquor et remedia comunico. Sic itaque me audi, tamquam mecum loquar. In secretum te meum admitto et te adhibito mecum
2 exigo. Clamo mihi ipse: "Numera annos tuos, et pudebit¹ eadem velle, quae volueras puer, eadem parare. Hoc denique tibi circa mortis diem praesta: moriantur ante te vitia. Dimitte istas voluptates turbidas, magno luendas²; non venturae tantum, sed praeteritae nocent. Quemadmodum scelera etiam si non sint deprehensa cum fierent, sollicitudo non cum ipsis abit; ita improbarum voluptatum etiam post ipsas paenitentia est. Non sunt solidae, non sunt

¹ After *pudebit* Thomas and Hense² insert *te*.

² *luendas* Pincianus; *lepandas* or *leundas* or *leuaturas* MSS.

EPISTLES XXVI., XXVII.

out is clear. There is only one chain which binds us to life, and that is the love of life. The chain may not be cast off, but it may be rubbed away, so that, when necessity shall demand, nothing may retard or hinder us from being ready to do at once that which at some time we are bound to do. Farewell.

XXVII. ON THE GOOD WHICH ABIDES

“What,” say you, “are you giving me advice? Indeed, have you already advised yourself, already corrected your own faults? Is this the reason why you have leisure to reform other men?” No, I am not so shameless as to undertake to cure my fellow-men when I am ill myself. I am, however, discussing with you troubles which concern us both, and sharing the remedy with you, just as if we were lying ill in the same hospital. Listen to me, therefore, as you would if I were talking to myself. I am admitting you to my inmost thoughts, and am having it out with myself, merely making use of you as my pretext. I keep crying out to myself: “Count your years, and you will be ashamed to desire and pursue the same things you desired in your boyhood days. Of this one thing make sure against your dying day,—let your faults die before you die. Away with those disordered pleasures, which must be dearly paid for; it is not only those which are to come that harm me, but also those which have come and gone. Just as crimes, even if they have not been detected when they were committed, do not allow anxiety to end with them; so with guilty pleasures, regret remains even after the pleasures are over. They are not substantial, they are not trustworthy; even if they

THE EPISTLES OF SENECA

3 fideles ; etiam si non nocent, fugiunt. Aliquod potius bonum mansurum circumspice. Nullum autem est, nisi quod animus ex se sibi invenit. Sola virtus praestat gaudium perpetuum, securum ; etiam si quid obstat, nubium modo intervenit, quae infra feruntur nec umquam diem vincunt."

4 Quando ad hoc gaudium pervenire continget ? Non quidem cessatur adhuc, sed festinetur.¹ Multum restat operis, in quod ipse necesse est vigiliam, ipse laborem tuum inpendas, si effici cupis. Delegationem

5 res ista non recipit. Aliud litterarum genus adiutorium admittit. Calvisius Sabinus memoria nostra fuit dives. Et patrimonium habebat libertini et ingenium ; numquam vidi hominem beatum indecentius. Huic memoria tam mala erat, ut illi nomen modo Vlixis excideret, modo Achillis, modo Priami, quos tam bene² quam paedagogos nostros novimus. Nemo vetulus nomenclator, qui nomina non reddit, sed inponit, tam perperam tribus quam ille Troianos et Achivos persalutabat. Nihilominus eruditus volebat

6 videri. Hanc itaque compendiarum excogitavit : magna summa emit servos, unum, qui Homerum teneret, alterum, qui Hesiodum ; novem praeterea lyricis singulos adsignavit. Magno emisse illum non est quod mireris ; non invenerat, faciendos locavit. Postquam haec familia illi comparata est, coepit con-

¹ *festinetur* Gronovius ; *festinatur* MSS.

² *noverat* after *bene* bracketed by Hense, after Gronovius.

^a *i. e.*, ordinary studies, or literature, as contrasted with philosophy.

^b Compare with the following the vulgarities of Trimalchio in the Satire of Petronius, and the bad taste of Nasidienus in Horace (*Sat.* ii. 8).

^c At the *salutatio*, or morning call. The position of *nomenclator*, "caller-of-names," was originally devoted more strictly to political purposes. Here it is primarily social.

EPISTLE XXVII.

do not harm us, they are fleeting. Cast about rather for some good which will abide. But there can be no such good except as the soul discovers it for itself within itself. Virtue alone affords everlasting and peace-giving joy; even if some obstacle arise, it is but like an intervening cloud, which floats beneath the sun but never prevails against it."

When will it be your lot to attain this joy? Thus far, you have indeed not been sluggish, but you must quicken your pace. Much toil remains; to confront it, you must yourself lavish all your waking hours, and all your efforts, if you wish the result to be accomplished. This matter cannot be delegated to someone else. The other kind of literary activity^a admits of outside assistance. Within our own time there was a certain rich man named Calvisius Sabinus; he had the bank-account and the brains of a freed-man.^b I never saw a man whose good fortune was a greater offence against propriety. His memory was so faulty that he would sometimes forget the name of Ulysses, or Achilles, or Priam,—names which we know as well as we know those of our own attendants. No major-domo in his dotage, who cannot give men their right names, but is compelled to invent names for them,—no such man, I say, calls off the names^c of his master's tribesmen so atrociously as Sabinus used to call off the Trojan and Achæan heroes. But none the less did he desire to appear learned. So he devised this short cut to learning: he paid fabulous prices for slaves,—one to know Homer by heart and another to know Hesiod; he also delegated a special slave to each of the nine lyric poets. You need not wonder that he paid high prices for these slaves; if he did not find them ready to hand he had them made to order. After collecting this retinue,

THE EPISTLES OF SENECA

vivas suos inquietare. Habebat ad pedes hos, a quibus subinde cum peteret versus, quos referret, 7 saepe in medio verbo excidebat. Suasit illi Satellius Quadratus, stultorum divitum adrosor, et quod sequitur, adrisor, et quod duobus his adiunctum est, derisor, ut grammaticos haberet analectas. Cum dixisset Sabinus centenis milibus sibi constare singulos servos; "Minoris," inquit, "totidem scrinia emisses." Ille tamen in ea opinione erat, ut putaret se scire, quod 8 quisquam in domo sua sciret. Idem Satellius illum hortari coepit, ut luctaretur, hominem aegrum, pallidum, gracilem. Cum Sabinus respondisset: "Et quomodo possum? Vix vivo," "Noli, obsecro te," inquit, "istuc dicere; non vides, quam multos servos valentissimos habeas?" Bona mens nec commodatur nec emitur. Et puto, si venalis esset, non haberet emptorem. At mala cotidie emitur.

9 Sed accipe iam quod debeo et vale. "Divitiae sunt ad legem naturae composita paupertas." Hoc saepe dicit Epicurus aliter atque aliter; sed numquam nimis dicitur, quod numquam satis discitur. Quibusdam remedia monstranda, quibusdam inculcanda sunt.

VALE.

^a *i.e.*, all the ideas that dropped out of the head of Sabinus. The slave who picked up the crumbs was called *analecta*.

^b Epicurus, Frag. 477 Usener.

EPISTLE XXVII.

he began to make life miserable for his guests; he would keep these fellows at the foot of his couch, and ask them from time to time for verses which he might repeat, and then frequently break down in the middle of a word. Satellius Quadratus, a feeder, and consequently a fawner, upon addle-pated millionaires, and also (for this quality goes with the other two) a flouter of them, suggested to Sabinus that he should have philologists to gather up the bits.^a Sabinus remarked that each slave cost him one hundred thousand sesterces; Satellius replied: "You might have bought as many book-cases for a smaller sum." But Sabinus held to the opinion that what any member of his household knew, he himself knew also. This same Satellius began to advise Sabinus to take wrestling lessons,—sickly, pale, and thin as he was. Sabinus answered: "How can I? I can scarcely stay alive now." "Don't say that, I implore you," replied the other, "consider how many perfectly healthy slaves you have!" No man is able to borrow or buy a sound mind; in fact, as it seems to me, even though sound minds were for sale, they would not find buyers. Depraved minds, however, are bought and sold every day.

But let me pay off my debt and say farewell: "Real wealth is poverty adjusted to the law of Nature."^b Epicurus has this saying in various ways and contexts; but it can never be repeated too often, since it can never be learned too well. For some persons the remedy should be merely prescribed; in the case of others, it should be forced down their throats. Farewell.

END OF SAMPLE TEXT



The Complete Text can be found on our CD:
Primary Literary Sources For Ancient Literature
which can be purchased on our Website :
www.Brainfly.net

or

by sending **\$64.95** in check or money order to :
Brainfly Inc.
5100 Garfield Ave. #46
Sacramento CA 95841-3839

TEACHER'S DISCOUNT:

If you are a **TEACHER** you can take advantage of our teacher's discount. Click on **Teachers Discount** on our website (www.Brainfly.net) or **Send us \$55.95** and we will send you a full copy of *Primary Literary Sources For Ancient Literature* **AND** our *5000 Classics CD (a collection of over 5000 classic works of literature in electronic format (.txt))* plus our *Wholesale price list*.

If you have any suggestions such as books you would like to see added to the collection or if you would like our wholesale prices list please send us an email to:

webcomments@brainfly.net