

## BOOK IV.

## ON OTHER PERTURBATIONS OF THE MIND.

I. I HAVE often wondered, Brutus, on many occasions, at the ingenuity and virtues of our countrymen; but nothing has surprised me more than their development in those studies, which, though they came somewhat late to us, have been transported into this city from Greece. For the system of auspices, and religious ceremonies, and courts of justice, and appeals to the people, the senate, the establishment of an army of cavalry and infantry, and the whole military discipline, were instituted as early as the foundation of the city by royal authority, partly too by laws, not without the assistance of the Gods. Then with what a surprising and incredible progress did our ancestors advance towards all kind of excellence, when once the republic was freed from the regal power! Not that this is a proper occasion to treat of the manners and customs of our ancestors, or of the discipline and constitution of the city; for I have elsewhere, particularly in the six books I wrote on the Republic, given a sufficiently accurate account of them. But while I am on this subject, and considering the study of philosophy, I meet with many reasons to imagine that those studies were brought to us from abroad, and not merely imported, but preserved and improved; for they had Pythagoras, a man of consummate wisdom and nobleness of character, in a manner, before their eyes, who was in Italy at the time that Lucius Brutus, the illustrious founder of your nobility, delivered his country from tyranny. As the doctrine of Pythagoras spread itself on all sides, it seems probable to me that it reached this city; and this is not only probable of itself, but it does really appear to have been the case from many remains of it. For who can imagine that, when it flourished so much in that part of Italy which was called *Magna Græcia*, and in some of the

largest and most powerful cities, in which, first the name of Pythagoras, and then that of those men who were afterward his followers, was in so high esteem; who can imagine, I say, that our people could shut their ears to what was said by such learned men? Besides, it is even my opinion that it was the great esteem in which the Pythagoreans were held, that gave rise to that opinion among those who came after him, that King Numa was a Pythagorean. For, being acquainted with the doctrine and principles of Pythagoras, and having heard from their ancestors that this king was a very wise and just man, and not being able to distinguish accurately between times and periods that were so remote, they inferred, from his being so eminent for his wisdom, that he had been a pupil of Pythagoras.

II. So far we proceed on conjecture. As to the vestiges of the Pythagoreans, though I might collect many, I shall use but a few; because they have no connection with our present purpose. For, as it is reported to have been a custom with them to deliver certain precepts in a more abstruse manner in verse, and to bring their minds from severe thought to a more composed state by songs and musical instruments; so Cato, a writer of the very highest authority, says in his *Origins*; that it was customary with our ancestors for the guests at their entertainments, every one in his turn, to celebrate the praises and virtues of illustrious men in song to the sound of the flute; from whence it is clear that poems and songs were then composed for the voice. And, indeed, it is also clear that poetry was in fashion from the laws of the Twelve Tables, wherein it is provided that no song should be made to the injury of another. Another argument of the erudition of those times is, that they played on instruments before the shrines of their Gods, and at the entertainments of their magistrates; but that custom was peculiar to the sect I am speaking of. To me, indeed, that poem of Appius Cæcus, which Panætius commends so much in a certain letter of his which is addressed to Quintus Tubero, has all the marks of a Pythagorean author. We have many things derived from the Pythagoreans in our customs, which I pass over, that we may

not seem to have learned that elsewhere which we look upon ourselves as the inventors of. But to return to our purpose. How many great poets as well as orators have sprung up among us! and in what a short time! so that it is evident that our people could arrive at any learning as soon as they had an inclination for it. But of other studies I shall speak elsewhere if there is occasion, as I have already often done.

III. The study of philosophy is certainly of long standing with us; but yet I do not find that I can give you the names of any philosopher before the age of Lælius and Scipio, in whose younger days we find that Diogenes the Stoic, and Carneades the Academic, were sent as ambassadors by the Athenians to our senate. And as these had never been concerned in public affairs, and one of them was a Cyrenean, the other a Babylonian, they certainly would never have been forced from their studies, nor chosen for that employment, unless the study of philosophy had been in vogue with some of the great men at that time; who, though they might employ their pens on other subjects—some on civil law, others on oratory, others on the history of former times—yet promoted this most extensive of all arts, the principle of living well, even more by their life than by their writings. So that of that true and elegant philosophy (which was derived from Socrates, and is still preserved by the Peripatetics and by the Stoics, though they express themselves differently in their disputes with the Academics) there are few or no Latin records; whether this proceeds from the importance of the thing itself, or from men's being otherwise employed, or from their concluding that the capacity of the people was not equal to the apprehension of them. But, during this silence, C. Amafinius arose and took upon himself to speak; on the publishing of whose writings the people were moved, and enlisted themselves chiefly under this sect, either because the doctrine was more easily understood, or because they were invited thereto by the pleasing thoughts of amusement, or that, because there was nothing better, they laid hold of what was offered them. And after Amafinius, when many of the same sentiments had written much about them, the *Pythagoreans*

spread over all Italy: but that these doctrines should be so easily understood and approved of by the unlearned is a great proof that they were not written with any great subtlety, and they think their establishment to be owing to this.

IV. But let every one defend his own opinion, for every one is at liberty to choose what he likes: I shall keep to my old custom; and, being under no restraint from the laws of any particular school, which in philosophy every one must necessarily confine himself to, I shall always inquire what has the most probability in every question, and this system, which I have often practised on other occasions, I have adhered closely to in my Tusculan Disputations. Therefore, as I have acquainted you with the disputations of the three former days, this book shall conclude the discussion of the fourth day. When we had come down into the Academy, as we had done the former days, the business was carried on thus:

*M.* Let any one say, who pleases, what he would wish to have discussed.

*A.* I do not think a wise man can possibly be free from every perturbation of mind.

*M.* He seemed yesterday's discourse to be free from grief; unless you agreed with us only to avoid taking up time.

*A.* Not at all on that account, for I was extremely satisfied with your discourse.

*M.* You do not think, then, that a wise man is subject to grief?

*A.* No, by no means.

*M.* But if that cannot disorder the mind of a wise man, nothing else can. For what—can such a man be disturbed by fear? Fear proceeds from the same things when absent which occasion grief when present. Take away grief, then, and you remove fear.

The two remaining perturbations are, a joy elate above measure, and lust; and if a wise man is not subject to these, his mind will be always at rest.

*A.* I am entirely of that opinion.

*M.* Which, then, shall we do? Shall I immediately crowd all my sails? or shall I make use of my oars, as if I were just endeavoring to get clear of the harbor?

A. What is it that you mean, for I do not exactly comprehend you?

V. M. Because, Chrysippus and the Stoics, when they discuss the perturbations of the mind, make great part of their debate to consist in definitions and distinctions; while they employ but few words on the subject of curing the mind, and preventing it from being disordered. Whereas the Peripatetics bring a great many things to promote the cure of it, but have no regard to their thorny partitions and definitions. My question, then, was, whether I should instantly unfold the sails of my eloquence, or be content for a while to make less way with the oars of logic?

A. Let it be so; for by the employment of both these means the subject of our inquiry will be more thoroughly discussed.

M. It is certainly the better way; and should anything be too obscure, you may examine that afterward.

A. I will do so; but those very obscure points you will, as usual, deliver with more clearness than the Greeks.

M. I will, indeed, endeavor to do so; but it well requires great attention, lest, by losing one word, the whole should escape you. What the Greeks call *πάθη* we choose to name perturbations (or disorders) rather than diseases; in explaining which, I shall follow, first, that very old description of Pythagoras, and afterward that of Plato; for they both divide the mind into two parts, and make one of these partake of reason, and the other they represent without it. In that which partakes of reason they place tranquillity, that is to say, a placid and undisturbed constancy; to the other they assign the turbid motions of anger and desire, which are contrary and opposite to reason. Let this, then, be our principle, the spring of all our reasonings. But notwithstanding, I shall use the partitions and definitions of the Stoics in describing these perturbations; who seem to me to have shown very great acuteness on this question.

VI. Zeno's definition, then, is this: "A perturbation" (which he calls a *πάθος*) "is a commotion of the mind repugnant to reason, and against nature." Some of them define it even more briefly, saying that a perturbation is *a somewhat too vehement appetite; but by too vehement*

they mean an appetite that recedes further from the constancy of nature. But they would have the divisions of perturbations to arise from two imagined goods, and from two imagined evils; and thus they become four: from the good proceed lust and joy—joy having reference to some present good, and lust to some future one. They suppose fear and grief to proceed from evils: fear from something future, grief from something present; for whatever things are dreaded as approaching always occasion grief when present. But joy and lust depend on the opinion of good; as lust, being inflamed and provoked, is carried on eagerly towards what has the appearance of good; and joy is transported and exults on obtaining what was desired: for we naturally pursue those things that have the appearance of good, and avoid the contrary. Wherefore, as soon as anything that has the appearance of good presents itself, nature incites us to endeavor to obtain it. Now, where this strong desire is consistent and founded on prudence, it is by the Stoics called *βούλησις*, and the name which we give it is volition; and this they allow to none but their wise man, and define it thus: Volition is a reasonable desire; but whatever is incited too violently in opposition to reason, that is a lust, or an unbridled desire, which is discoverable in all fools. And, therefore, when we are affected so as to be placed in any good condition, we are moved in two ways; for when the mind is moved in a placid and calm motion, consistent with reason, that is called joy; but when it exults with a vain, wanton exultation, or immoderate joy, then that feeling may be called immoderate ecstasy or transport, which they define to be an elation of the mind without reason. And as we naturally desire good things, so in like manner we naturally seek to avoid what is evil; and this avoidance of which, if conducted in accordance with reason, is called caution; and this the wise man alone is supposed to have: but that caution which is not under the guidance of reason, but is attended with a base and low dejection, is called fear. Fear is, therefore, caution destitute of reason. But a wise man is not affected by any present evil; while the grief of a fool proceeds from being affected with an imaginary evil, by which his mind is contracted and sunk, since it is not under the do-

minion of reason. This, then, is the first definition, which makes grief to consist in a shrinking of the mind contrary to the dictates of reason. Thus, there are four perturbations, and but three calm rational emotions; for grief has no exact opposite.

VII. But they insist upon it that all perturbations depend on opinion and judgment; therefore they define them more strictly, in order not only the better to show how blamable they are, but to discover how much they are in our power. Grief, then, is a recent opinion of some present evil, in which it seems to be right that the mind should shrink and be dejected. Joy is a recent opinion of a present good, in which it seems to be right that the mind should be elated. Fear is an opinion of an impending evil which we apprehend will be intolerable. Lust is an opinion of a good to come, which would be of advantage were it already come, and present with us. But however I have named the judgments and opinions of perturbations, their meaning is, not that merely the perturbations consist in them, but that the effects likewise of these perturbations do so; as grief engenders a recoil or sudden abandonment of the mind, joy gives rise to a profuse mirth, while lust is the parent of an unbridled habit of coveting. But that imagination, which I have included in all the above definitions, they would have to consist in assenting without warrantable grounds. Now, every perturbation has many subordinate parts annexed to it of the same kind. Grief is attended with enviousness (*invidentia*)—I use that word for instruction's sake, though it is not so common; because envy (*invidia*) takes in not only the person who envies, but the person, too, who is envied—emulation, detraction, pity, vexation, mourning, sadness, tribulation, sorrow, lamentation, solicitude, disquiet of mind, pain, despair, and many other similar feelings are so too. Under fear are comprehended sloth, shame, terror, cowardice, fainting, confusion, astonishment. In pleasure they comprehend malevolence—that is, pleased at another's misfortune—delight, boastfulness, and the like. To lust they associate anger, fury, hatred, enmity, discord, wants, desire, and other feelings of that kind.

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