

BOOK VII

LIBER SEPTIMUS

I

Quem in modum responderit Chrysippus adversum eos qui providentiam consistere negaverunt.

- 1 QUIBUS non videtur mundus dei et hominum causa institutus neque res humanae providentia gubernari, gravi se argumento uti putant cum ita dicunt: "Si esset providentia, nulla essent mala." Nihil enim minus aiunt providentiae congruere, quam in eo mundo quem propter homines fecisse dicatur tantam
2 vim esse aerumnarum et malorum. Adversus ea Chrysippus cum in libro *Περὶ Προνοίας* quarto disserteret, "Nihil est prorsus istis," inquit, "insubidius,
3 qui opinantur bona esse potuisse, si non essent ibidem mala. Nam cum bona malis contraria sint, utraque necessum est opposita inter sese et quasi mutuo adversoque fulta nisu consistere; nullum
4 adeo contrarium est sine contrario altero. Quo enim pacto iustitiae sensus esse posset, nisi essent iniuriae? aut quid aliud iustitia est quam iniustitiae privatio? Quid item fortitudo intellegi posset, nisi ex ignaviae adpositione? Quid continentia, nisi ex imperantiae? Quo item modo prudentia esset,
5 nisi foret contra imprudentia? Proinde," inquit,

¹ Fr. ii. 1169, Arn.

BOOK VII

I

How Chrysippus replied to those who denied the existence of Providence.

THOSE who do not believe that the world was created for God and mankind, or that human affairs are ruled by Providence, think that they are using a strong argument when they say: "If there were a Providence, there would be no evils." For they declare that nothing is less consistent with Providence than the existence of such a quantity of troubles and evils in a world which He is said to have made for the sake of man. Chrysippus, arguing against such views in the fourth book of his treatise *On Providence*,¹ says: "There is absolutely nothing more foolish than those men who think that good could exist, if there were at the same time no evil. For since good is the opposite of evil, it necessarily follows that both must exist in opposition to each other, supported as it were by mutual adverse forces; since as a matter of fact no opposite is conceivable without something to oppose it. For how could there be an idea of justice if there were no acts of injustice? or what else is justice than the absence of injustice? How too can courage be understood except by contrast with cowardice? Or temperance except by contrast with intemperance? How also could there be wisdom, if folly did not exist as its opposite? Therefore," said he, "why do not the

ATTIC NIGHTS OF AULUS GELLIUS

“homines stulti cur non hoc etiam desiderant, ut veritas sit et non sit mendacium? Namque itidem sunt bona et mala, felicitas et infortunitas, dolor et voluptas. Alterum enim ex altero, sicuti Plato ait, verticibus inter se contrariis deligatum est; si tuleris unum, abstuleris utrumque.”

- 7 Idem Chrysippus in eodem libro tractat consideratque dignumque esse id quaeri putat, *εἰ αἱ τῶν ἀνθρώπων νόσοι κατὰ φύσιν γίνονται*, id est, si¹ natura ipsa rerum vel providentia, quae compagem hanc mundi et genus hominum fecit, morbos quoque et debilitates et aegritudines corporum, quas patiuntur
- 8 homines, fecerit. Existimat autem non fuisse hoc principale naturae consilium, ut faceret homines morbis obnoxios, nunquam enim hoc convenisse naturae auctori parentique omnium rerum bonarum.
- 9 “Sed cum multa,” inquit, “atque magna gigneret pareretque aptissima et utilissima, alia quoque simul adgnata sunt incommoda his ipsis quae faciebat cohaerentia”; eaque non² per naturam, sed per sequellas quasdam necessarias facta dicit, quod ipse
- 10 appellat *κατὰ παρακολούθησιν*. “Sicut,” inquit, “cum corpora hominum natura fingeret, ratio subtilior et utilitas ipsa operis postulavit ut tenuissimis minu-
- 11 tisque ossiculis caput compingeret. Sed hanc utilitatem rei maiorem alia quaedam incommoditas extrinsecus consecuta est, ut fieret caput tenuiter munitum et ictibus offensionibusque parvis fragile.
- 12 Proinde morbi quoque et aegritudines partae sunt,

¹ si added by *J. Gronov*, or by *Otho*.

² neque, *J. Gronov*.

¹ *Phaedo*, 3, p. 60 B.

² *Fr. ii*, 1170, Arn.

BOOK VII. I. 5-12

fools also wish that there may be truth, but no falsehood? For it is in the same way that good and evil exist, happiness and unhappiness, pain and pleasure. For, as Plato says,¹ they are bound one to the other by their opposing extremes; if you take away one, you will have removed both."

In the same book² Chrysippus also considers and discusses this question, which he thinks worth investigating: whether men's diseases come by nature; that is, whether nature herself, or Providence, if you will, which created this structure of the universe and the human race, also created the diseases, weakness, and bodily infirmities from which mankind suffers. He, however, does not think that it was nature's original intention to make men subject to disease; for that would never have been consistent with nature as the source and mother of all things good. "But," said he, "when she was creating and bringing forth many great things which were highly suitable and useful, there were also produced at the same time troubles closely connected with those good things that she was creating"; and he declared that these were not due to nature, but to certain inevitable consequences, a process that he himself calls *κατὰ παρακολούθησιν*. "Exactly as," he says, "when nature fashioned men's bodies, a higher reason and the actual usefulness of what she was creating demanded that the head be made of very delicate and small bones. But this greater usefulness of one part was attended with an external disadvantage; namely, that the head was but slightly protected and could be damaged by slight blows and shocks. In the same way diseases too and illness were created at the same time with

ATTIC NIGHTS OF AULUS GELLIUS

- 13 dum salus paritur. Sicut hercle,” inquit, “dum virtus hominibus per consilium naturae gignitur, vitia ibidem per adfinitatem contraria¹ nata sunt.”

II

Quo itidem modo et vim necessitatemque fati constituerit et esse tamen in nobis consilii iudicii que nostri arbitrium confirmaverit.

- 1 FATUM, quod *είμαρμένην* Graeci vocant, ad hanc ferme sententiam Chrysippus, Stoicae princeps philosophiae, definit: “Fatum est,” inquit, “sempiterna quaedam et indeclinabilis series rerum et catena, volvens semetipsa sese et implicans per aeternos
2 consequentiae ordines, ex quibus apta nexaque est.” Ipsa autem verba Chrysippi, quantum valui memoria, ascripsi, ut, si cui meum istud interpretamentum videbitur esse obscurius, ad ipsius verba animad-
3 vertat. In libro enim *Περὶ Προνοίας* quarto *είμαρμένην* esse dicit *φυσικήν τινα σύνταξιν τῶν ὅλων ἐξ αἰδίου τῶν ἐτέρων τοῖς ἐτέροις ἐπακολουθούντων καὶ μεταπολουμένων ἀπαραβάτου οὐσης τῆς τοιαύτης ἐπιπλοκῆς*.
4 Aliarum autem opinionum disciplinarumque aucto-
5 res huic definitioni ita obstrepunt: “Si Chrysippus,” inquit, “fato putat omnia moveri et regi nec declinari transcendique posse agmina fati et volumina, peccata quoque hominum et delicta non suscensenda neque inducenda sunt ipsis voluntati-

¹ contraria, *Skutsch*; contrariam, *MSS.*

¹ Fr. ii. 1000, Arn.

BOOK VII. I. 12—II. 5

health. Exactly, by Heaven!" said he, "as vices, through their relationship to the opposite quality, are produced at the same time that virtue is created for mankind by nature's design."

II

How Chrysippus also maintained the power and inevitable nature of fate, but at the same time declared that we had control over our plans and decisions.

CHRYSIPPUS, the leader of the Stoic philosophy, defined fate, which the Greeks call *είμαρμένη*, in about the following terms:¹ "Fate," he says, "is an eternal and unalterable series of circumstances, and a chain rolling and entangling itself through an unbroken series of consequences, from which it is fashioned and made up." But I have copied Chrysippus' very words, as exactly as I could recall them, in order that, if my interpretation should seem too obscure to anyone, he may turn his attention to the philosopher's own language. For in the fourth book of his work *On Providence*, he says that *είμαρμένη* is "an orderly series, established by nature, of all events, following one another and joined together from eternity, and their unalterable interdependence."

But the authors of other views and of other schools of philosophy openly criticize this definition as follows: "If Chrysippus," they say, "believes that all things are set in motion and directed by fate, and that the course of fate and its coils cannot be turned aside or evaded, then the sins and faults of men too ought not to cause anger or be attributed to

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