THE EPITLES OF SENECA

si medium spatium transiluerit et se in illam saeculo
post futuram sollicitudinem inmiserit; codem modo
fit, ut animos libenter aegros et captantes causas
doloris vetera atque oblitterata contristent. Et quae
practierunt et quae futura sunt, absunt; neutra
sentimus. 1 Non est autem nisi ex eo, quod sentias,
dolor. VALE.

LXXV.

SENECA LVCILO SVO SALVTEM

1 Minus tibi accuratas a me epistulas mitti quereris.
Quis enim accurate loquitur, nisi qui vult putide
loqui? Qualis sermo meus esset, si una sederemus
aut ambularemus, inlaboratus et facilis, tales esse
epistulas meas volo, quae nihil habent accerisum nec
2 fictum. Si fieri posset, quid sentiam, ostendere
quam loqui mallem. Etiam si disputarem, nec
supploderem pedem nec manum iactarem nec at-
tollerem vocem, sed ista oratoribus reliquissem,
contentus sensum meos ad te pertulisse, quos nec
3 exornassem nec abieciessem. Hoc unum plane tibi
adprobar vellem: omnia me illa sentire, quae
dicerem, nec tantum sentire, sed amare. Aliter
hominem amicam, aliter liberos osculatam; tamen in
hoc quoque amplexi tam sancto et moderato satis
apparet affectus.

1 sentimus later MSS.; sentiamus Pb; sentiam V.

* For putidum (that which offends the taste, i.e. is too
artificially formal) see Cic. De Orat. iii. 41 nolo exprimi
litteras putidius, nolo obscurar in nelegantius.
* Cf. Ep. lxvii. 2 si quando intervenierunt epistolae tuae,
tecum esse mihi videor, etc.
EPISTLES LXXIV., LXXV.

unless he has leaped over the intervening years, and has projected himself into the trouble that is destined to arrive a generation later. In the same way, souls that enjoy being sick and that seize upon excuses for sorrow are saddened by events long past and effaced from the records. Past and future are both absent; we feel neither of them. But there can be no pain except as the result of what you feel. Farewell.

LXXV. ON THE DISEASES OF THE SOUL

You have been complaining that my letters to you are rather carelessly written. Now who talks carefully unless he also desires to talk affectionately? I prefer that my letters should be just what my conversation would be if you and I were sitting in one another's company or taking walks together,—spontaneous and easy; for my letters have nothing strained or artificial about them. If it were possible, I should prefer to show, rather than speak, my feelings. Even if I were arguing a point, I should not stamp my foot, or toss my arms about, or raise my voice; but I should leave that sort of thing to the orator, and should be content to have conveyed my feelings to you without having either embellished them or lowered their dignity. I should like to convince you entirely of this one fact,—that I feel whatever I say, that I not only feel it, but am wedded to it. It is one sort of kiss which a man gives his mistress, and another which he gives his children; yet in the father's embrace also, holy and restrained as it is, plenty of affection is disclosed.
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Non meherculcs ieiuna esse et arida volo, quae
de rebus tam magnis dicentur; neque enim philo-
sophia ingenio renuntiat. Multum tamen operae
4 inpendi verbis non oportet. Haec sit propositi
nostri summa: quod sentimus loquamur, quod
loquimur sentiamus; concordet sermo cum vita.
Ille promissum suum inplevit, qui, et cum vides
5 illum et cum audias, idem est. Videbimus, qualis
sit, quantus sit; unus sit. Non delectent verba
nostra, sed prosint. Si tamen contingere eloquentia
non sollicito potest, si aut parata est aut parvo
constat, adsit et res pulcherrimas prosequatur. Sit
talis, ut res potius quam se ostendat. Aliae artes ad
ingenium totae pertinent, hic animi negotium agitur.
6 Non quaerit aeger medicum eloquentem,\textsuperscript{1} sed, si
ita competit, ut idem ille, qui sanare potest, compe
de iis, quae facienda sunt, disserat, boni consulet.
Non tamen erit, quare gratuletur sibi, quod inciderit
in medicum etiam disertum. Hoc enim tale est,
quaie si peritus gubernator etiam formosus est.
7 Quid aures meas scabis? Quid oblectas? Aliud
agitur; urendus, secundus, abstinendus sum. Ad
haec adhibitus es.

Curare debes morbum veterem, gravem, publicum.
Tantum negotii habes, quantum in pestilentia

\textsuperscript{1} eloquentem later MSS.; loquentem VPb.

\textsuperscript{a} Cf. Ep. cxiv. 1 talis hominibus fuit oratio qualis vita,
and passim in Epp. xl., lxxv. and cxiv.

\textsuperscript{b} Eloquence and the other arts please mainly by their
cleverness; nor does philosophy abjure such cleverness as
style; but here in these letters, wherein we are discussing
the soul, the graces of speech are of no concern.

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I prefer, however, that our conversation on matters so important should not be meagre and dry; for even philosophy does not renounce the company of cleverness. One should not, however, bestow very much attention upon mere words. Let this be the kernel of my idea: let us say what we feel, and feel what we say; let speech harmonize with life.\(^a\) That man has fulfilled his promise who is the same person both when you see him and when you hear him. We shall not fail to see what sort of man he is and how large a man he is, if only he is one and the same. Our words should aim not to please, but to help. If, however, you can attain eloquence without painstaking, and if you either are naturally gifted or can gain eloquence at slight cost, make the most of it and apply it to the noblest uses. But let it be of such a kind that it displays facts rather than itself. It and the other arts are wholly concerned with cleverness\(^b\); but our business here is the soul.

A sick man does not call in a physician who is eloquent; but if it so happens that the physician who can cure him likewise discourses elegantly about the treatment which is to be followed, the patient will take it in good part. For all that, he will not find any reason to congratulate himself on having discovered a physician who is eloquent. For the case is no different from that of a skilled pilot who is also handsome. Why do you tickle my ears? Why do you entertain me? There is other business at hand; I am to be cauterized, operated upon, or put on a diet. That is why you were summoned to treat me!

You are required to cure a disease that is chronic and serious,—one which affects the general weal. You have as serious a business on hand as a physician
medicus. Circa verba occupatus es? Iamdudum gaude, si sufficies rebus. Quando, quae multa disces? Quando, quae didiceris, adfiges tibi ita, ut excidere non possint? Quando illa experieris? Non enim ut cetera, memoriae tradidisse satis est; in opere temptanda sunt. Non est beatus, qui seit illa, sed 8 qui facit.1 "Quid ergo? Infra illum nulli gradus sunt? Statim a sapientia praeceps est?" Non, ut existimo. Nam qui proficit, in numero quidem stultorum est, magno tamen intervallo ab illis diducitur. Inter ipsos quoque proficientes sunt magna discrimina. In tres classes, ut quibusdam placet, 9 dividuntur: primi sunt, qui sapientiam nondum habent, sed iam in vicinia eius constiterunt. Tamen etiam quod prope est, extra 2 est. Qui sint hi quaeris? Qui omnes iam affectus ac via posuerunt, quae erant complectenda, didicerunt, sed illis adhuc inexperta fiducia est. Bonum suum nondum in usu habent, iam tamen in illa, quae fugerunt, decidere non possunt. Iam ibi sunt, unde non est retro lapsus, sed hoc illis de se nondum liquet; quod in quadam epistula scripsisse me memini, "scire se nesciunt." Iam contigit illis bono suo frui, nondum 10 confidere. Quidam hoc proficientium genus, de quo locutus sum, ita complectuntur, ut illos dicant iam effugisse morbos animi, affectus nondum, et adhuc

1 qui facit later MSS.; facit VPb.
2 extra later MSS.; ex ora (hora) VPb.

a Chrysippus, however, recognized only the first two classes, as did Epictetus (iv. 2).
§ Ep. lxxi. 4,

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has during a plague. Are you concerned about words? Rejoice this instant if you can cope with things. When shall you learn all that there is to learn? When shall you so plant in your mind that which you have learned, that it cannot escape? When shall you put it all into practice? For it is not sufficient merely to commit these things to memory, like other matters; they must be practically tested. He is not happy who only knows them, but he who does them. You reply: “What? Are there no degrees of happiness below your ‘happy’ man? Is there a sheer descent immediately below wisdom?” I think not. For though he who makes progress is still numbered with the fools, yet he is separated from them by a long interval. Among the very persons who are making progress there are also great spaces intervening. They fall into three classes, as certain philosophers believe. First come those who have not yet attained wisdom but have already gained a place near by. Yet even that which is not far away is still outside. These, if you ask me, are men who have already laid aside all passions and vices, who have learned what things are to be embraced; but their assurance is not yet tested. They have not yet put their good into practice, yet from now on they cannot slip back into the faults which they have escaped. They have already arrived at a point from which there is no slipping back, but they are not yet aware of the fact; as I remember writing in another letter, “They are ignorant of their knowledge.” It has now been vouchsafed to them to enjoy their good, but not yet to be sure of it. Some define this class, of which I have been speaking,—a class of men who are making progress,—as having escaped the diseases of the mind,
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in lubrico stare, quia nemo sit extra periculum malitiae, nisi qui totam eam excussit. Nemo autem illam excussit, nisi qui pro illa sapientiam adsumpsit.

11 Quid inter morbos animi intersit et affectus, saepiam dixi. Nunc quoque te admovebo: morbi sunt inveterata vitia et dura, ut avaritia, ut ambitio; nimio\(^1\) artius\(^2\) haec animum inplicuerunt et perpetua eius mala esse coeperunt. Ut breviter finiam, morbus est iudicum in pravo pertinax, tamquam valde expectenda sint, quae leviter expectenda sunt. Vel si mavis, ita finiamus: nimis inminere leviter petendis vel ex toto non petendis, aut in magno pretio habere

12 in aliquo habenda vel in nullo. Affectus sunt motus animi improbables, subiti et concitati, qui frequentes neglectique fecere morbum, sicut destillatio una nec adhuc in morem adducta tussim facit, adsidua et vetus phthisin. Itaque qui plurimum profecerit, extra morbos sunt, affectus adhuc sentiunt perfecto proximi.

13 Secundum genus est eorum, qui et maxima animi mala et affectus deposuerunt, sed ita, ut non sit illis securitatis suae certa possessio. Possunt enim

14 in eadem relabi. Tertium illud genus extra multa

\(^{1}\) nimio Rossbach; nimia VP; ninia b.
\(^{2}\) artius later MSS.; actus VPb.

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\(^{a}\) For Seneca’s own struggles with this disease cf. Ep. lxxvii. 1.
\(^{b}\) The difference between the first and the second classes is well described in Ep. lxxii. 6 hoc interest inter consummatae sapientiae virum et alium procedentis, quod inter sanum et ex morbo gravi ac diutino emergentem.
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