Interim temeritas est damnare, quod nescias. At illud seis, quam multis utilis sit, quam multos liberet tormentis, egestate, querellis, supplicis, taedio. Non sumus in ullius potestate, cum mors in nostra potestate sit. Vale.

XCI

Seneca Lucilio suo salutem

1. Puto, inter me teque conveniet externa corpori adquiri, corpus in honorem animi colit, in animo esse partes ministras, per quas movemur alimurque, propter ipsum principale nobis datas. In hoc principali est alicquid irrationale, est et rationale. Illud huic servit, hoc unum est, quod alio non referitur, sed omnia ad se referunt. Nam illa quoque divina ratio omnibus praeposita est, ipsa sub nullo est; et haec autem nostra eadem est, quia ex illa est. Si de hoc inter nos convenit, sequitur ut deillo quoque conveniat, in hoc uno positam esse beatam vitam, ut in nobis ratio perfecta sit. Haec enim sola non submittit animum, stat contra fortunam; in quolibet rerum habuit securos servat. Id autem unum bonum est, quod nunquam defringitur. Is est, inquam, beatus quem nulla res minorem facit;

1. referunt a later MS. and Madvig; perfect BA.
2. quia later MSS.; quas BA.
3. securos later MSS.; servitus BA.

* The reader will find this topic treated at greater length in Seneca's De Vita Beata.

+ i.e., the soul. See Aristotle, Eth. i. 13: "It is stated that the soul has two parts, one irrational and the other possessing reason." Aristotle further subdivides the irrational part into (1) that which makes for growth and increase, and (2) desire (which will, however, obey reason). In this passage Seneca uses "soul" in its widest sense.

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Meanwhile it is foolhardy to condemn that of which you are ignorant. This one thing, however, you do know—that death is helpful to many, that it sets many free from tortures, want, ailments, sufferings, and weariness. We are in the power of nothing when once we have death in our own power! Farewell.

XCII. ON THE HAPPY LIFE

You and I will agree, I think, that outward things are sought for the satisfaction of the body, that the body is cherished out of regard for the soul, and that in the soul there are certain parts which minister to us, enabling us to move and to sustain life, bestowed upon us just for the sake of the primary part of us. In this primary part there is something irrational, and something rational. The former obeys the latter, while the latter is the only thing that is not referred back to another, but rather refers all things to itself. For the divine reason also is set in supreme command over all things, and is itself subject to none; and even this reason which we possess is the same, because it is derived from the divine reason. Now if we are agreed on this point, it is natural that we shall be agreed on the following also—namely, that the happy life depends upon this and this alone: our attainment of perfect reason. For it is naught but this that keeps the soul from being bowed down, that stands its ground against Fortune; whatever the condition of their affairs may be, it keeps men untroubled. And that alone is a good which is never subject to impairment. That man, I declare, is happy whom nothing makes
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tenet summa, et ne ulli quidem nisi sibi innixus. Nam qui aliquo auxilio sustinetur, potest cadere. Si aliter est, incipient multum in nobis valere non nostra. Quis autem vult constare fortunam aut quis se prudens ob aliena miratur?

3 Quid est beata vita? Securitas et perpetua tranquillitas. Hanc dabit animi magnitudo, dabit constantia bene iudicati tenax. Ad haec quomodo pervenitur? Si veritas tota perspecta est; si servatus est in rebus agendis ordo, modus, decor, innoxia voluntas ac benigna, intenta rationi nec umquam ab illa recedens, amabilis simul mirabilisque. Denique ut breviter tibi formulam scribam, talis animus esse sapientis viri debet, quals quam deum deceat.

4 Quid potest desiderare is, cui omnia honesta contingunt? Nam si possunt aliquid non honesta conferre ad optimum statum, in his erit beata vita, sine quibus honesta. Et quid turpius stultiusve quam bonum rationalis animi ex irrationalibus nectere? Quidam tamen augeri sumnum bonum iudicant, quia parum plenum sit fortuitis repugnantibus. Antipater quoque inter magnos sectae huius auctores aliquid se tribuere dicit externis, sed exiguum admodum. Vides autem quale sit die non esse contentum, nisi aliquid igniculus adluxerit. Quod potest in hac claritate solis habere scintilla

\footnotesize{fortune Buecheler; fortuna BA.}
\footnotesize{honesta Hense; non est BA.}
\footnotesize{die non Erasmus; zonae BA.}

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{a} Certain of the Peripatetic and Academic school.}
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{b} Probably due to the criticism of the Stoics by Carneades, who said that everything which is according to nature should be classed among the goods.}

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less strong than he is; he keeps to the heights, leaning upon none but himself; for one who sustains himself by any prop may fall. If the case is otherwise, then things which do not pertain to us will begin to have great influence over us. But who desires Fortune to have the upper hand, or what sensible man prides himself upon that which is not his own?

What is the happy life? It is peace of mind, and lasting tranquillity. This will be yours if you possess greatness of soul; it will be yours if you possess the steadfastness that resolutely clings to a good judgment just reached. How does a man reach this condition? By gaining a complete view of truth, by maintaining, in all that he does, order, measure, fitness, and a will that is inoffensive and kindly, that is intent upon reason and never departs therefrom, that commands at the same time love and admiration. In short, to give you the principle in brief compass, the wise man's soul ought to be such as would be proper for a god. What more can one desire who possesses all honourable things? For if dishonourable things can contribute to the best estate, then there will be the possibility of a happy life under conditions which do not include an honourable life. And what is more base or foolish than to connect the good of a rational soul with things irrational? Yet there are certain philosophers who hold that the Supreme Good admits of increase because it is hardly complete when the gifts of fortune are adverse. Even Antipater, one of the great leaders of this school, admits that he ascribes some influence to externals, though only a very slight influence. You see, however, what absurdity lies in not being content with the daylight unless it is increased by a tiny fire. What importance can
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6 momentum? Si non es sola honestate\(^{1}\) contentus, necesse est ant quietem adici velis, quam \(\delta \alpha \chi \lambda \gamma \rho \iota \alpha \nu\) vocant Graeci, aut voluptatem. Horum alterum utcumque recipi potest. Vacat enim animus molestia liber ad inspectum universi, nihilque illum avocat a contemplatione naturae. Alterum illud, voluptas, bonum pecoris est. Adieimus rationali inrationale, honesto inhoneste. Ad hanc vitam\(^{2}\) facit tiltilatio corporis; quid ergo dubitatis dicere bene esse homini, si palato bene est? Et hunc tu, non dico inter viros numeras, sed inter homines, cuius summum bonum saporibus et coloribus\(^{3}\) sonisque\(^{4}\) constat? Excedat ex hoc animalium numero pulcherrimo ac dis secundo: mutis adgregetur animal pabulo lactum.

8 Inrationalis pars animi duas habet partes, alteram animosam, ambiciosam, inpotentem, positam in affectionibus, alteram humilem, languidam, voluptatibus deditam; illam effrenatam, meliorem tamen, certe fortior em ac dignior em viro reliquerunt, hanc necessariam beatae vitae putaverunt, et enervem\(^{5}\) et abiecatam. Huic rationem servire iussere tunt et fecerunt animalis generosissimi summum\(^{6}\) bonum demissum et ignobile, praeterea mixtum portentosumque et ex diversis ac male\(^{7}\) con-

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\(^{1}\) honestate later MSS.; honesta B\(^{1}\)A.

\(^{2}\) ad hanc vitam Buecheler; magno vitam B; magnevitam A.

\(^{3}\) coloribus later MSS.; coloribus BA.

\(^{4}\) sonisque Windhaus; sonis or solis MSS.

\(^{5}\) et enervem Rossbach; enervem BA.

\(^{6}\) generosissimi summum Buecheler; generosissimum (or -i) MSS.

\(^{7}\) ac male Schweighaeuser; animalis BA.

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\(a\) If we call pleasure a good.

\(b\) Cf. § 1 of this letter. Plato gives three divisions—the
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a spark have in the midst of this clear sunlight? If you are not contented with only that which is honourable, it must follow that you desire in addition either the kind of quiet which the Greeks call "undisturbedness," or else pleasure. But the former may be attained in any case. For the mind is free from disturbance when it is fully free to contemplate the universe, and nothing distracts it from the contemplation of nature. The second, pleasure, is simply the good of cattle. We are but adding a the irrational to the rational, the dishonourable to the honourable. A pleasant physical sensation affects this life of ours; why, therefore, do you hesitate to say that all is well with a man just because all is well with his appetite? And do you rate, I will not say among heroes, but among men, the person whose Supreme Good is a matter of flavours and colours and sounds? Nay, let him withdraw from the ranks of this, the noblest class of living beings, second only to the gods; let him herd with the dumb brutes—an animal whose delight is in fodder!

The irrational part of the soul is twofold: the one part is spirited, ambitious, uncontrolled; its seat is in the passions; the other is lowly, sluggish, and devoted to pleasure. Philosophers have neglected the former, which, though unbridled, is yet better, and is certainly more courageous and more worthy of a man, and have regarded the latter, which is nerveless and ignoble, as indispensable to the happy life. They have ordered reason to serve this latter; they have made the Supreme Good of the noblest living being an abject and mean affair, and a monstrous hybrid, too, composed of various members λογοτικόν, the ἐπιθυμητικόν, and the θυμοειδές which obeys either the first or the second. See his Republic, 440.
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gruentibus membris. Nam ut ait Vergilius noster in Scylla

Prima hominis facies et pulchro pectore virgo
Pube tenuis, postrema inmani corpore pistris
Delphinum caudas utero commissa luporum.

Huic tamen Scyllae fera animalia adiuncta sunt,
horrenda, velocia; at isti sapientiam ex quibus
composuere portentis! Prima ars hominis est ipsa
virtus; huic committitur inutilis caro et fluida,
receptandis tantum cibis habilis, ut ait Posidonius.
Virtus illa divina in lubricum desinit et superioribus
eius partibus venerandis atque caelestibus animal
inser ac marcidum adtextitur. Illa utcunque altera
quies nihil quidem ipsa praestabat animo, sed
inpedimenta removebat; voluptas ultimo dissolvit et
omne robur emollit. Quae inveni etiam discors
inter se iunctura corporum? Fortissimae rei inertissimae
adstruitur, severissimae parum seriat, sanctissimae
intemperans usque ad incesta.\(^1\) “Quid ergo?”
inquit, “si virtutem nihil impeditura sit bona valutudo
et quies et dolorum vacatio,\(^2\) non petes illas?”
Quidni petam? Non quia bona sunt, sed quia
secundum naturam sunt, et quia bona a me iudicio
sumentur. Quid erit tunc in illis bonum? Hoc
unum, bene eligi. Nam cum\(^3\) vestem qualem decet,

\(^1\) incesta Gruter; ingesta BA.
\(^2\) vacatio later MSS.; vognatio BA.
\(^3\) cum omitted in A and supplied by a late hand in B.
Buecheler suggests nam vestem qualem decet cum sumo.

* Aeneid, iii. 426 ff.

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