THE EPISTLES OF SENECA

5 dixerim vitium, alterum tutius; sic utrosque reprehendas, et eos qui semper inquiecti sunt, et eos qui semper quiescunt. Nam illa tumultu gaudens non est industria, sed exagitatae mentis concursatio. Et haec non est quies, quae motum omnem molestiam
6 iudicat, sed dissolutio et languor. Itaque hoc, quod apud Pomponium legi, animo mandabitur: "quidam adeo in latebras refugerunt, ut putent in turbido esse, quicquid in luce est." Inter se ista miscenda sunt, et quiescenti agendum et agenti quiescendum est. Cum rerum natura delibera; illa dicet tibi et diem fecisse se et noctem. Vale.

III.

SENeca Lucilio svo saltem

1 Persevera ut coepisti et quantum potes propea, quo diutius frui emendato animo et composito possis. Frueris quidem etiam dum emendas, etiam dum con-

*See Index.*
There is a class of men who communicate, to anyone whom they meet, matters which should be revealed to friends alone, and unload upon the chance listener whatever irks them. Others, again, fear to confide in their closest intimates; and if it were possible, they would not trust even themselves, burying their secrets deep in their hearts. But we should do neither. It is equally faulty to trust everyone and to trust no one. Yet the former fault is, I should say, the more ingenuous, the latter the more safe. In like manner you should rebuke these two kinds of men,—both those who always lack repose, and those who are always in repose. For love of bustle is not industry,—it is only the restlessness of a hunted mind. And true repose does not consist in condemning all motion as merely vexation; that kind of repose is slackness and inertia. Therefore, you should note the following saying, taken from my reading in Pomponius*: “Some men shrink into dark corners, to such a degree that they see darkly by day.” No, men should combine these tendencies, and he who reposes should act and he who acts should take repose. Discuss the problem with Nature; she will tell you that she has created both day and night. Farewell.

IV. ON THE TERRORS OF DEATH

Keep on as you have begun, and make all possible haste, so that you may have longer enjoyment of an improved mind, one that is at peace with itself. Doubtless you will derive enjoyment during the time
ponis; alia tamen illa voluptas est, quae percipitur
ex contemplatione mentis ab omni labe purae et
splendidae. Tenes utique memoria, quantum senseris
gaudium, cum praetexta posita sumpsisti virilem
togam et in forum deductus es; maius expecta, cum
puerilem animum deposueris et te in viros philo-
sophia transscripserit. Adhuc enim non pueritia sed,
quod est gravius, puellitias remanet. Et hoc quidem
peior est, quod auctoritatem habemus senum, vitia
puerorum, nec puerorum tantum sed infantum. Illi
levia, hi falsa formidant, nos utraque.

Profice modo; intelleges quaedam ideo minus
timenda, quia multum metus adferunt. Nullum
malum est magnum, quod extremum est. Mors ad
te venit; timenda erat, si tectum esse posset; sed necesse est aut non perveniat aut transeat

"Difficile est," inquis, "animum perducere ad con-
temptionem animae." Non vides, quam ex frivolis
causis contemnatur? Alius ante amicæ fores laqueo
pependit, alius se praecipitavit e tecto, ne dominum
stomachætæm diutius audiret, alius ne reduceretur e
fuga, ferrum adegit in viscera. Non putas virtutem
hoc effecturam, quod efficit nimia forma? Nulli
potest secura vita contingere, qui de producenda
nimis cogitât, qui inter magna bona multos consules

1 Hense, after Gertz, adds res after peior.
2 malum est and sed inserted by Gertz.
when you are improving your mind and setting it at peace with itself; but quite different is the pleasure which comes from contemplation when one's mind is so cleansed from every stain that it shines. You remember, of course, what joy you felt when you laid aside the garments of boyhood and donned the man's toga, and were escorted to the forum; nevertheless, you may look for a still greater joy when you have laid aside the mind of boyhood and when wisdom has enrolled you among men. For it is not boyhood that still stays with us, but something worse,—boyishness. And this condition is all the more serious because we possess the authority of old age, together with the follies of boyhood, yea, even the follies of infancy. Boys fear trifles, children fear shadows, we fear both.

All you need to do is to advance; you will thus understand that some things are less to be dreaded, precisely because they inspire us with great fear. No evil is greater which is the last evil of all. Death arrives; it would be a thing to dread, if it could remain with you. But death must either not come at all, or else must come and pass away.

"It is difficult, however," you say, "to bring the mind to a point where it can scorn life." But do you not see what trifling reasons impel men to scorn life? One hangs himself before the door of his mistress; another hurls himself from the house-top that he may no longer be compelled to bear the taunts of a bad-tempered master; a third, to be saved from arrest after running away, drives a sword into his vitals. Do you not suppose that virtue will be as efficacious as excessive fear? No man can have a peaceful life who thinks too much about lengthening it, or believes that living through many consulships is a great bless-
5 numerat. Hoc cotidie meditare, ut possis aequo
animo vitam relinquere, quam multi sic conplectuntur
et tenent, quomodo quia aequa torrente rapiuntur spinas
et aspera.

Plerique inter mortis metum et vitae tormenta
miseri fluctuantur et vivere nolunt, mori nesciunt.

6 Fac itaque tibi iucundam vitam omnem pro illa
sollicitudinem deponendo. Nullum bonum adiuat
habentem, nisi ad cujus amissionem praeparatus est
animus; nullius autem rei facilior amissio est, quam
quae desiderari amissa non potest. Ergo adversus
haec, quae incidere possunt etiam potentissimis, ad-
hortare te et indura. De Pompei capite pupillus et
spado tulere sententiam, de Crasso crudelis et insolens
Parthus; Gaius Caesar iussit Lepidum Dextro tribuno
praebere cervicem, ipse Chaereae praestiti. Nemi-
nem eo fortuna provexit, ut non tantum illi minaretur,
quantum permiserat. Noli huic tranquillitati con-
fidere; momento mare evitabit. Eodem die ubi

8 luserunt navigia, sorbentur. Cogita posse et latronem
et hostem admoveere iugulo tuo gladium. Ut potestas
maior absit, nemo non servus habet in te vitae necisque
arbitrium. Ita dico: quisquis vitam suam contemptu-
sit, tuae dominus est. Recognoscex exempla eorum,
qui domestics insidiis perierant, aut aperta vi aut
dolo; intelleges non pauciores servorum ira cecidisse
quam regum. Quid ad te itaque, quam potens sit

* A reference to the murder of Caligula, on the Palatine.

10 A.D. 41.
EPISTLE IV.

ing. Rehearse this thought every day, that you may be able to depart from life contentedly; for many men clutch and cling to life, even as those who are carried down a rushing stream clutch and cling to briars and sharp rocks.

Most men ebb and flow in wretchedness between the fear of death and the hardships of life; they are unwilling to live, and yet they do not know how to die. For this reason, make life as a whole agreeable to yourself by banishing all worry about it. No good thing renders its possessor happy, unless his mind is reconciled to the possibility of loss; nothing, however, is lost with less discomfort than that which, when lost, cannot be missed. Therefore, encourage and toughen your spirit against the mishaps that afflict even the most powerful. For example, the fate of Pompey was settled by a boy and a eunuch, that of Crassus by a cruel and insolent Parthian. Gaius Caesar ordered Lepidus to bare his neck for the axe of the tribune Dexter; and he himself offered his own throat to Chaerea.¹ No man has ever been so far advanced by Fortune that she did not threaten him as greatly as she had previously indulged him. Do not trust her seeming calm; in a moment the sea is moved to its depths. The very day the ships have made a brave show in the games, they are engulfed. Reflect that a highwayman or an enemy may cut your throat; and, though he is not your master, every slave wields the power of life and death over you. Therefore I declare to you: he is lord of your life that scorns his own. Think of those who have perished through plots in their own homes, slain either openly or by guile; you will then understand that just as many have been killed by angry slaves as by angry kings. What matter, therefore, how powe-
THE EPISTLES OF SENECA

quem times, cum id, propter quod times, nemo non 9 possit? At si forte in manus hostium incideris, victor te duci iubebit; eo neme, quo duceris. Quid te ipse decipis et hoc nunc primum, quod olim patiebaris, intellegis? Ita dico: ex quo natus es, duceris. Haec et eiusmodi versus in animo sunt, si volumus ultimam illam horam placidi expectare, cuius metus omnes alias inquietas facit.


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a i.e., to death.
b The Garden of Epicurus. Fragg. 477 and 200 Usener.
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