THE EPISTLES OF SENeca

ex consortibus studiorum suorum scriberet: "Haece,"
inquit, "ego non multis, sed tibi; satis enim magnum
alter alteri theatrum sumus." Ista, mi Lucili, con-
denda in animum sunt, ut contemnas voluptatem ex
plurium adscriptione venientem. Multi te laudant.
Equiv habeas, cur placeas tibi, si is es, quem intel-
gant multi? Introrsus bona tua spectent. VALE.

VIII.

Seneca Lucilio svo salutem

1 "Tu me," inquis, "vitare turbam iubes, secedere
et conscientia esse contentum? Ubi illa praecipita
vestra, quae imperant in actu mori?" Quod ego tibi
videor interim suadere, in hoc me recondidi et fores
cusi, ut prodesse pluribus possem. Nullus mihi per
otium dies exit. Partem noctium studii vindico.
Non vaco somno sed succumbo, et oculos vigilia fa-
gatos cadentesque in opere detineo. Secessi non
tantum ab hominibus, sed a rebus, et inprimis a meis
rebus; posteriorum negotium ago; illis alicua, quae
possint prodesse, conscibo. Salutares admonitiones,
velut medicamentorum utilium compositiones, litteris
mando, esse illas efficaces in meis ulceribus expertus,
quae etiam si persanata non sunt, serpere desierunt.

1 equad Erasmus; et quid MSS.

^ As contrasted with the general Stoic doctrine of taking
part in the world's work.
EPISTLES VII., VIII.

written to one of the partners of his studies: "I
write this not for the many, but for you; each of
us is enough of an audience for the other." Lay
these words to heart, Lucilius, that you may scorn
the pleasure which comes from the applause of the
majority. Many men praise you; but have you any
reason for being pleased with yourself, if you are a
person whom the many can understand? Your good
qualities should face inwards. Farewell.

VIII. ON THE PHILOSOPHER'S SECLUSION

"Do you bid me," you say, "shun the throng, and
withdraw from men, and be content with my own
conscience? Where are the counsels of your school,
which order a man to die in the midst of active work?"
As to the course which I seem to you to be urging
on you now and then, my object in shutting myself
up and locking the door is to be able to help a greater
number. I never spend a day in idleness; I appro-
priate even a part of the night for study. I do not
allow time for sleep but yield to it when I must, and
when my eyes are wearied with waking and ready
to fall shut, I keep them at their task. I have with-
drawn not only from men, but from affairs, especially
from my own affairs; I am working for later genera-
tions, writing down some ideas that may be of assis-
tance to them. There are certain wholesome counsels,
which may be compared to prescriptions of useful
drugs; these I am putting into writing; for I have
found them helpful in ministering to my own sores,
which, if not wholly cured, have at any rate ceased
to spread.
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4 In praecipitia cursus iste deducit. Huius eminentis vitae exitus cadere est. Deinde ne resistere quidem licet, cum coepit transversos agere felicitas, aut saltim rectis aut semel ruere; non evertit fortuna, sed cernulat et allidit.

5 Hanc ergo sanam ac salubrem formam vitae tenete, ut corpore tantum indulgeatis, quantum bonae valitudini satis est. Durius tractandum est, ne animo male pareat. Cibus famem sedet, potio sitim extinguat, vestis arceat frigus, domus munimentum sit adversus infesta corporis. Hanc utrum caespes erexerit an varius lapis gentis alienae, nihil interest; scito tam bene hominem culmo quam auro tegi. Contemnite omnia, quae supervacuus labor velut ornamentum ac decus ponit. Cogitate nihil praeter

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1 *evertit* the edition of Mentelin; *vertit* MSS.

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*a* See *Ep. lxxxv. 33* for the famous saying of the Rhodian pilot.

*b* *cernulat*, equivalent to the Greek *ἀναχαρίζω*, of a horse which throws a rider over its head.
EPISTLE VIII.

I point other men to the right path, which I have found late in life, when wearied with wandering. I cry out to them: "Avoid whatever pleases the throng; avoid the gifts of Chance! Halt before every good which Chance brings to you, in a spirit of doubt and fear; for it is the dumb animals and fish that are deceived by tempting hopes. Do you call these things the 'gifts' of Fortune? They are snares. And any man among you who wishes to live a life of safety will avoid, to the utmost of his power, these limed twigs of her favour, by which we mortals, most wretched in this respect also, are deceived; for we think that we hold them in our grasp, but they hold us in theirs. Such a career leads us into precipitous ways, and life on such heights ends in a fall. Moreover, we cannot even stand up against prosperity when she begins to drive us to leeward; nor can we go down, either, 'with the ship at least on her course,' or once for all; Fortune does not capsize us,—she plunges our bows under and dashes us on the rocks.

"Hold fast, then, to this sound and wholesome rule of life; that you indulge the body only so far as is needful for good health. The body should be treated more rigorously, that it may not be disobedient to the mind. Eat merely to relieve your hunger; drink merely to quench your thirst; dress merely to keep out the cold; house yourself merely as a protection against personal discomfort. It matters little whether the house be built of turf, or of variously coloured imported marble; understand that a man is sheltered just as well by a thatch as by a roof of gold. Despise everything that useless toil creates as an ornament and an object of beauty. And reflect that nothing except the soul is worthy
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animum esse mirabile, cui magno nihil magnum est."

6 Si haec mecum, si haec cum posteris loquor, non videor tibi plus prod esse, quam cum ad vadimonium advocatus descenderem, aut tabulis testamenti anum imprimere, aut in senatu candidato vocem et manum commodarem? Mihi crede, qui nihil agere videntur, maiora agunt; humana divinaque simul tractant.

7 Sed iam finis faciendus est et aliquid, ut institui, pro hac epistula dependendum. Id non de meo fiet; adhuc Epicurum complicamus, cuin habe vocem hodierno die legi: "Philosophiae servias oportet, ut tibis contingat vera libertas." Non differtur in diem, qui se ilii subiectit et tradidit; statim circumagitur. Hoc enim ipsum philosophiae servire libertas est.

8 Potest fieri, ut me interroges, quare ab Epicuro tam multa bene dicta referam potius quam nostrorum. Quid est tamen, quare tu istas Epicuri voce putes esse, non publicas? Quam multi poetae dicunt, quae philosophis aut dicta sunt aut dicenda! Non adtingam tragicos nec togatas nostras. Habent enim lae quoque aliquid severitatis et sunt inter comodias ac tragoedias mediae. Quantum disertissimorum versuum inter mimos iacet! Quam multa Publilii non excalceatis, sed coturnatis dicenda sunt!

9 Unum versum eius, qui ad philosophiam pertinet et

a Cf. the Stoic precept "nil admirandum."

b Frag. 199 Usener.

c Literally "spun round" by the master and dismissed to freedom. Cf. Persius, v. 75 f.

d Fabilia togatae were plays which dealt with Roman subject matter, as contrasted with adaptations from the Greek, called paitatae. The term, in the widest sense, includes both comedy and tragedy.

e i.e., comedians or mimes.
of wonder; for to the soul, if it be great, naught is great.”

When I commune in such terms with myself and with future generations, do you not think that I am doing more good than when I appear as counsel in court, or stamp my seal upon a will, or lend my assistance in the senate, by word or action, to a candidate? Believe me, those who seem to be busied with nothing are busied with the greater tasks; they are dealing at the same time with things mortal and things immortal.

But I must stop, and pay my customary contribution, to balance this letter. The payment shall not be made from my own property; for I am still conning Epicurus. I read to-day, in his works, the following sentence: “If you would enjoy real freedom, you must be the slave of Philosophy.” The man who submits and surrenders himself to her is not kept waiting; he is emancipated on the spot. For the very service of Philosophy is freedom.

It is likely that you will ask me why I quote so many of Epicurus’s noble words instead of words taken from our own school. But is there any reason why you should regard them as sayings of Epicurus and not common property? How many poets give forth ideas that have been uttered, or may be uttered, by philosophers! I need not touch upon the tragedians and our writers of national drama; for these last are also somewhat serious, and stand half-way between comedy and tragedy. What a quantity of sagacious verses lie buried in the mine! How many of Publius’s lines are worthy of being spoken by buskin-clad actors, as well as by wearers of the slipper! I shall quote one verse of his, which concerns philosophy, and particularly that phase.
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ad hanc partem, quae modo fuit in manibus, referam, quo negat fortuita in nostro habenda:

Alienum est omne, quicquid optando evenit.

10 Hunc sensum a te dici non paulo melius et adstric-tius memini:

Non est tuum, fortuna quod fecit tuum.

Illud etiam nunc melius dictum a te non praeteribo:

Dari bonum quod potuit, auferri potest.

Hoc non inputo in solutum; dedi de tuo tibi.

IX.

SENeca IVCILIO svo SALVEM

1 An merito reprehendat in quadem epistula Epicurus eos, qui dicunt sapientem se ipso esse contentum et propter hoc amico non indigere, desideras seire. Hoc obiectitur Stilboni ab Epicuro et iis quibus sumnum bonum visum est animus inpatientis.

2 In ambiguitatem incidendum est, si exprimere \( \alpha\pi\alpha\beta\epsilon\upsilon\upsilon\upsilon \) uno verbo cito voluerimus et inpatientiam dicere. Poterit enim contrarium ei, quod significare volumus, intellegi. Nos eum volumus dicere, qui respuat omnis mali sensum; accipietur is, qui nullum

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1 sensum Buecheler; versum MSS.
2 et Muretus; sed MSS.
3 dedi inserted by Hense.

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\(^a\) Syri Sententiae, p. 309 Ribbeck\(^b\).
\(^b\) Com. Rom. Frag. p. 394 Ribbeck\(^c\).
\(^c\) ibidem.  
\(^d\) Frag. 174 Usener.  
\(^e\) i.e., the Cynics.
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