THE EPISTLES OF SENECAN

vivamus et omnia tamquam illo vidente faciamus."

9 Hoc, mi Lucili, Epicurus praecepit. Custodem nobis et paedagogum dedit, nce inmerito. Magna pars peccatorum tollitur, si peccaturis testis adsitit. Ali-
quem habeat animus, quem vereatur, cuius auctor-
tate etiam secretum suum sanctius faciat. O felicem illum, qui non praesens tantum, sed etiam cogitatus emendat! O felicem, qui sic aliquem vereri potest, ut ad memoriam quoque eius se conponat atque ordinet! Qui sic aliquem vereri potest, cito erit 10 verendus. Elige itaque Catonem. Si hic tibi videtur nimis rigidus, elige remissioris animi virum Laelium. Elige eum, cuius tibi placuit et vita et oratio et ipse animum ante se ferens vultus; illum tibi semper ostende vel custodem vel exemplum. Opus est, inquam, aliquo, ad quem mores nostri se ipsi exigant; nisi ad regulam prava non corriges. Vale.

XII.

SENeca Lucilio svo salutem

1 Quocumque me verti, argumenta senectutis meae video. Veneram in suburbanum meum et querebar de insipis aedificationis dilabentis. Ait vilicus mihi non esse neglegentiae suae vitium, omnia se facere, sed villam veterem esse. Haec villa inter manus meas crevit; quid mihi futurum est, si tam patria sunt

* Frac. 210 Usener.
* The figure is taken from the ἄσυροκ, the Holy of Holies in a temple. Cf. Vergil, Aeneid, vi. 10 secreta Sibyllas.
you, and ordering all your actions as if he beheld them." Such, my dear Lucilius, is the counsel of Epicurus; he has quite properly given us a guardian and an attendant. We can get rid of most sins, if we have a witness who stands near us when we are likely to go wrong. The soul should have someone whom it can respect,—one by whose authority it may make even its inner shrine more hallowed. Happy is the man who can make others better, not merely when he is in their company, but even when he is in their thoughts! And happy also is he who can so revere a man as to calm and regulate himself by calling him to mind! One who can so revere another, will soon be himself worthy of reverence. Choose therefore a Cato; or, if Cato seems too severe a model, choose some Laelius, a gentler spirit. Choose a master whose life, conversation, and soul-expressing face have satisfied you; picture him always to yourself as your protector or your pattern. For we must indeed have someone according to whom we may regulate our characters; you can never straighten that which is crooked unless you use a ruler. Farewell.

XII. ON OLD AGE

Wherever I turn, I see evidences of my advancing years. I visited lately my country-place, and protested against the money which was spent on the tumble-down building. My bailiff maintained that the flaws were not due to his own carelessness; "he was doing everything possible, but the house was old." And this was the house which grew under my own hands! What has the future in store for

4 Debeo hoc suburbano meo, quod mihi senectus mea, quocumque adverteram, apparuit. Conpectamur illam et amemus; plena est voluptatis, si illa scias uti. Gratissima sunt poma, cum fugiunt; pueritiae maximus in exitu decor est; deditos vino potio extrema delectat, illa quae mergit, quae ebrietati 5 summam manum inponit. Quod in se iucundissimum omnis voluptas habet, in finem sui differt. Iucundissima est aetas deexa iam, non tamen praeceps. Et

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a A jesting allusion to the Roman funeral; the corpse’s feet pointed to the door.
b His former owner should have kept him and buried him.
c Small figures, generally of terra-cotta, were frequently given to children as presents at the Saturnalia. Cf. Macro-bius, i. 11. 49 sigilla ... pro se atque suis piciatum.
d i.e., the old slave resembles a child in that he is losing his teeth (but for the second time).
EPISTLE XII.

me, if stones of my own age are already crumbling? I was angry, and I embraced the first opportunity to vent my spleen in the bailiff's presence. "It is clear," I cried, "that these plane-trees are neglected; they have no leaves. Their branches are so gnarled and shrivelled; the boles are so rough and unkempt! This would not happen, if someone loosened the earth at their feet, and watered them." The bailiff swore by my protecting deity that "he was doing everything possible, and never relaxed his efforts, but those trees were old." Between you and me, I had planted those trees myself; I had seen them in their first leaf. Then I turned to the door and asked: "Who is that broken-down dotard? You have done well to place him at the entrance; for he is outward bound." Where did you get him? What pleasure did it give you to take up for burial some other man's dead?" But the slave said: "Don't you know me, sir? I am Felicio; you used to bring me little images. My father was Philositus the steward, and I am your pet slave." "The man is clean crazy," I remarked. "Has my pet slave become a little boy again? But it is quite possible; his teeth are just dropping out." I owe it to my country-place that my old age became apparent whithersoever I turned. Let us cherish and love old age; for it is full of pleasure if one knows how to use it. Fruits are most welcome when almost over; youth is most charming at its close; the last drink delights the toper,—the glass which souses him and puts the finishing touch on his drunkenness. Each pleasure reserves to the end the greatest delights which it contains. Life is most delightful when it is on the downward slope, but has not yet reached the abrupt decline. And I myself believe that the period which stands, so to
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illum quoque in extrema tegula\(^1\) stantem iudico
habere suas voluptates. Aut hoc ipsum sucedit in
locum voluptation, nullis egere. Quam dulce est
6 cupiditates fatigasse ac reliquisse! "Molestum est,
inquis, "mortem ante oculos habere." Primum ista
tam seni ante oculos debet esse quam iuveni. Non
enim citamur ex censu. Deinde nemo tam senex est,
ut inprobe unum diem speret. Unus autem dies gradus
vitae est.

Tota actas partibus constat et orbes habet circum-
ductos maiores minoribus. Est aliquid, qui omnis
conpectatur et cingat; hic pertinet a natali ad
diem extremum. Est alter, qui annos adolescentiae
cludit.\(^2\) Est qui totam pueritiam ambitu suo ad-
stringit. Est deinde per se annus in se omnia
continens tempora, quorum multiplicatione vita con-
ponitur. Mensis artiore praecingitur circulo. Angu-
stissimum habet dies gyrum, sed et hic ab initio ad
7 exitum venit, ab ortu ad occasum. Ideo Heraclitus,
qui cognomen fecit orationis obscuritas, "Unus," in-
quit, "dies par omni est." Hoc alius aliter exceptit.\(^3\)
Dixit enim parem esse horis, nec mentitur; nam si
dies est tempus viginti et quattuor horarum, necesse
est omnes inter se dies pares esse, quia nox habet, quod
dies perdidit. Alius ait parem esse unum diem omnibus
similitudine; nihil enim habet longissimi temporis
spatium, quod non et in uno die invenas, lucent et

\(^1\) tegula MSS., retained by Hense; regula, "horizon-
\(^2\) cludit C. Brakman; excludit MSS.
\(^3\) exceptit MSS.; cepit Hense.

\(^a\) i.e., seniores as contrasted with iuniores.
\(^b\) ὁ ἕκτος ὁμότροπος, "The Obscure," Frag. 106 Diels\(^b\).
EPISTLE XII.

speak, on the edge of the roof, possesses pleasures of its own. Or else the very fact of our not wanting pleasures has taken the place of the pleasures themselves. How comforting it is to have tired out one's appetites, and to have done with them! "But," you say, "it is a nuisance to be looking death in the face!" Death, however, should be looked in the face by young and old alike. We are not summoned according to our rating on the censor's list. Moreover, no one is so old that it would be improper for him to hope for another day of existence. And one day, mind you, is a stage on life's journey.

Our span of life is divided into parts; it consists of large circles enclosing smaller. One circle embraces and bounds the rest; it reaches from birth to the last day of existence. The next circle limits the period of our young manhood. The third confines all of childhood in its circumference. Again, there is, in a class by itself, the year; it contains within itself all the divisions of time by the multiplication of which we get the total of life. The month is bounded by a narrower ring. The smallest circle of all is the day; but even a day has its beginning and its ending, its sunrise and its sunset. Hence Heraclitus, whose obscure style gave him his surname, remarked: "One day is equal to every day." Different persons have interpreted the saying in different ways. Some hold that days are equal in number of hours, and this is true; for if by "day" we mean twenty-four hours' time, all days must be equal, insomuch as the night acquires what the day loses. But others maintain that one day is equal to all days through resemblance, because the very longest space of time possesses no element which cannot be found in a single day,—namely, light and
noctem, et in aeternum dies vices plures facit istas, non alias contractor,\(^1\) alias productor. Itaque sic ordinandus est dies omnis, tamquam cogat agmen et consummet atque expleat vitam.

Pacuvius, qui Syriae usu suam fecit, cum vino et illis funebribus epulis sibi parentaverat, sic in cubiculo ferebatur a cena, ut inter plausus exoletorum hoc ad symphoniam caneretur: \(βεβιωται, βεβιωται.\)

9 Nullo non se die extulit. Hoc, quod ille ex mala conscientia faciebat, nos ex bona faciamus et in somnum ituri laeti hilaresque dicamus:

Vixi et quem dederat cursum fortuna, peregi.

Cratinum si adiecerit deus, laeti recipiamus. Ille beatissimus est et securus sui possessor, qui cratinum sine sollicitudine expectat. Quisquis dixit "vixi," cotidie ad lucrur surgit.


\(^1\) et in aeternum dies vices plures facit istas non alias contractor Capps; et in aeternus mundi vices plures facit ista non alias contractor MSS.; non alia . . . alias contractor etc. Hense.

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\(^a\) i.e., of light and darkness.
\(^b\) Usus was the mere enjoyment of a piece of property; dominium was the exclusive right to its control. Possession for one, or two, years conferred ownership. See Leage, *Roman Private Law*, pp. 133, 152, and 164. Although Pacuvius was governor so long that the province seemed to belong to him, yet he knew he might die any day.

\(^c\) Vergil, *Aeneid*, iv. 653.

\(^d\) Epicurus, *Sprüche*, 9 Wotke.

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