libenter mori. Da operam, ne quid umquam invitus
facias. Quicquid necesse futurum est repugnanti,
volenti necessitas non est. Ita dico: qui imperia
libens excipit, partem acerbissimam servitutis effugit,
facere quod nolit. Non qui iussus aliquid facit, miser
est, set qui invitus facit. Itaque sic animum conpona-
mus, ut quicquid res exigit, id velimus et in primis
ut finem nostri sine tristitia cogitemus. Ante ad
mortem quam ad vitam praeparandi sumus. Satis
instructa vita est, sed nos in instrumenta eius adivi
sumus; deesse aliquid nobis videtur et semper vide-
bitur. Ut satis vixerimus, nec anni nec dies faciunt,
sed animus. Vixi, Lucili carissime, quantum satis
erat; mortem plenus exspecto. Vale.

LXII.

SENICA VCCILIO SVO SALTEM

1 Mentiuntur, qui sibi obstare ad studia liberalia
turbam negotiorum videri volunt; simulant occupa-
tiones et augent et ipsi se occupant. Vaco, Lucili,
vaco et ubicumque sum, ibi meus sum. Rebus enim
me non trado, sed commodo, nec consector perdendi
temporis causas. Et quocumque constiti loco, ibi
cogitationes meas tracto et aliquid in animo salutare

a A reminiscence of Lucretius, iii. 938 f. Cur non ut plenus
vitae convivia recedis Aequo animoque capis securam, qui
tem? Cf. also Horace, Sat. i. 1. 118 f. vicit sedat uti con-
viva satur.
well means dying gladly. See to it that you never
do anything unwillingly. That which is bound to be a
necessity if you rebel, is not a necessity if you desire
it. This is what I mean: he who takes his orders
gladly, escapes the bitterest part of slavery,—doing
what one does not want to do. The man who
does something under orders is not unhappy; he is
unhappy who does something against his will. Let
us therefore so set our minds in order that we may
desire whatever is demanded of us by circumstances,
and above all that we may reflect upon our end with-
out sadness. We must make ready for death before
we make ready for life. Life is well enough furnished,
but we are too greedy with regard to its furnishings;
something always seems to us lacking, and will always
seem lacking. To have lived long enough depends
neither upon our years nor upon our days, but upon
our minds. I have lived, my dear friend Lucilius,
long enough. I have had my fill; I await death.
Farewell.

LXII. ON GOOD COMPANY

We are deceived by those who would have us
believe that a multitude of affairs blocks their pursuit
of liberal studies; they make a pretence of their
engagements, and multiply them, when their en-
gagements are merely with themselves. As for me,
Lucilius, my time is free; it is indeed free, and
wherever I am, I am master of myself. For I do
not surrender myself to my affairs, but loan myself
to them, and I do not hunt out excuses for wasting
my time. And wherever I am situated, I carry on
my own meditations and ponder in my mind some
THE EPISTLES OF SENEC

2 converso. Cum me amicis dedi non tamen mihi abduco, nec cum illis moror, quibus me tempus aliquid congregavit aut causa ex officio nata civili, sed cum optimo quoque sum; ad illos, in quocumque loco, in quocumque saeculo fuerunt, animum meum mitto.


LXIII.

SENeca LVCilio svO salvem

1 Moleste fero decessisse Flaccum, amicum tuum, plus tamen aequo dolere te nolo. Illud, ut non doleas, vix audebo exigere; et esse melius scio. Sed cui ista furtitas animi continget nisi iam multum supra fortunam elato? Illum quoque ista res vellicabit, sed tantum vellicabit. Nobis autem ignosci potest prolapsis ad lacrimas, si non nimiae decucur-rerunt, si ipsi illas repressimus. Nec sicci sint oculi

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1 civili late MSS.; civi the rest, followed by Hense.

2 Demetrius of Sunium, the Cynic philosopher, who taught in Rome in the reign of Caligula and was banished by Nero.

3 i.e., he has achieved the Stoic ideal of independence of all external control; he is a king and has all things to bestow upon others, but needs nothing for himself.

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wholesome thought. When I give myself to my friends, I do not withdraw from my own company, nor do I linger with those who are associated with me through some special occasion or some case which arises from my official position. But I spend my time in the company of all the best; no matter in what lands they may have lived, or in what age, I let my thoughts fly to them. Demetrius, for instance, the best of men, I take about with me, and, leaving the wearers of purple and fine linen, I talk with him, half-naked as he is, and hold him in high esteem. Why should I not hold him in high esteem? I have found that he lacks nothing. It is in the power of any man to despise all things, but of no man to possess all things. The shortest cut to riches is to despise riches. Our friend Demetrius, however, lives not merely as if he has learned to despise all things, but as if he has handed them over for others to possess. Farewell.

LXIII. ON GRIEF FOR LOST FRIENDS

I am grieved to hear that your friend Flaccus is dead, but I would not have you sorrow more than is fitting. That you should not mourn at all I shall hardly dare to insist; and yet I know that it is the better way. But what man will ever be so blessed with that ideal steadfastness of soul, unless he has already risen far above the reach of Fortune? Even such a man will be stung by an event like this, but it will be only a sting. We, however, may be forgiven for bursting into tears, if only our tears have not flowed to excess, and if we have checked them by our own efforts. Let not the eyes be dry when
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