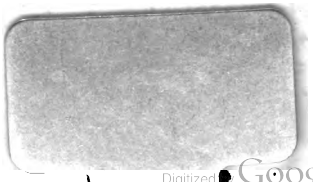
THE

ENCHEIRIDION

OF

EPICTETUS



EPICTETUS

Dass der Mensch ins Unvermeidliche sich füge, darauf dringen alle Religionen; jede sucht auf ihre Weise mit dieser Aufgabe fertig zu werden.

GOETHE.

THE

ENCHEIRIDION

OF

EPICTETUS

. . . . .
. . . .
. . .
.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GREEK

WITH PREFACE AND NOTES BY

T. W. H. ROLLESTON, B.A., T.C.D.

LONDON
KEGAN PAUL, TRENCH, & CO.
MDCCCLXXXI

PREFACE.

BUT for the zeal and ability of one disciple, we should not now possess any trustworthy account of the philosophy of Epictetus. For, like many other sages, he wrote nothing; and for us he would now be little more than a name, had not Arrian, the future historian of Alexander, taken down a very full record of the oral teaching which he had from Epictetus' own lips in Nicopolis. This record he afterwards published in eight books (of which we now possess four), called the *Discourses of Epictetus*, and out of these he drew most of the materials for compiling the little work, the *Encheiridion*, of which I now offer a translation.

tion.[1] Arrian also wrote a Life of Epictetus, now unfortunately lost. The few facts about him which we know with any approach to certainty are—that he was born at Hierapolis in Phrygia; that he became (how is unknown) slave to Epaphroditus, a freedman and favourite of Nero; that while in his master's service he attended the philosophic lectures[2] of a Stoic, C. Musonius Rufus; that he somehow obtained his freedom, and was banished from Rome about the year 90 A.D., when the tyrant Domitian, by a public edict, 'cleared Rome of what most shamed him,' the teachers of philosophy; that he then settled in Nicopolis, a city of Epirus, where he taught publicly for

[1] Besides the *Encheiridion* and the *Discourses* we have also of Epictetus a large number of sayings and maxims, preserved for us in certain philosophic anthologies compiled by monks in the sixth to the ninth centuries. A selection from these will be found translated in this book at the end of the *Encheiridion*.

[2] It appears to have been considered fashionable, among Roman nobles of the time, to possess philosophers and men of culture as slaves. A curious modern illustration of this whim will be found in *About Some Fellows*, by an Eton Boy, p. 179.

many

many years. It is said that Epaphroditus treated him with much cruelty, and on one occasion even broke his leg, perhaps to see whether his philosophic slave was making satisfactory progress in Stoicism under C. Musonius Rufus. But this story rests on no good authority, and is probably a mere legend which grew up to account for the undoubted fact that Epictetus was in some way crippled or deformed. Simplicius tells us he was so from an early age. He never married; it is said, however, that he adopted and brought up a child whom a friend of his, led by a sense of the inconvenience of a large family, was about to expose: a practice not condemned in those days. The date of his death we cannot determine, but there is reason to believe that he lived to a venerable age.

Such is about all we know of the history of Epictetus. And it is much to be regretted that we have no fuller means of realising to ourselves somewhat of his outward life, appearance,

pearance, manners, studies—all now shrouded in that veil which hides from us all but the outline of so many distinguished figures. For this crippled slave of Hierapolis had undoubtedly a brightness and energy of intellect, a buoyancy of spirit, an instinctive sense of what is excellent in action, an instinctive aversion for all facile and unreal thinking such as few of the world's teachers before or after him have possessed. He has the rare and important characteristic that he deserves to be read as much for what is *not* in him as for what is. If, as seems clear, man can never arrive at a satisfactory relation towards the problems and mysteries of life except by following out the lines of Greek thought with its resolute logic combined with reverence for that which gives the data for logic—human experience, then Epictetus ought to be held of more account than he has ever yet been, even though there were periods when he was far more fully appreciated than he is now.

now. For though the final triumph of Hellenism, the union of sane practice with sound theory which it was the mission of Hellenism to bring about, can hardly be said to be achieved in Epictetus, yet it is at least indicated there, and the promise of it made clearly visible to discerning eyes. He did not take formal and public possession of the citadel, but he showed for the first time how it was to be won.

When Arrian was putting forth his edition of the *Discourses*, he wrote a preface to the work in the form of a letter to a friend, Lucius Gellius, which indirectly throws some light on the origin of the *Encheiridion*. On account of its general interest for readers of Epictetus, I here translate it in full:—

I did not write the words of Epictetus in the manner in which a man might write such things. Neither have I put them forth among men, since, as I say, I did not even write them [in literary form, *συγγράφειν*]. But whatever I heard him speak, these

these things I endeavoured to set down in his very words, that having written them I might preserve to myself for future times a memorial of his thought and unstudied speech. Naturally, therefore, they are such things as one man might say to another on the impulse of the moment, not such as he would write in the idea of finding readers long afterwards. Such they are, and I know not how, without my will or knowledge, they fell among men. [There seems to have been a 'pirated' edition of Arrian's private memorials brought out, which he would have been unwilling to let appear, could he have helped it, in their crude state.] But to me it matters little if I shall appear an incompetent writer, and to Epictetus not at all, if anyone shall despise his words. For when he was speaking them it was evident that he had only one aim—to stir the minds of his hearers towards the best things. And if, indeed, the words here written should do this, then they will do, I think, that which the words of philosophers ought to do. But if not, let those who read them know this, that when he himself spoke them it was impossible for the hearer to avoid feeling whatever Epictetus desired he should feel. And if his words, when they are merely words, have not this effect, perhaps

perhaps it is that I am in fault, perhaps it could not have been otherwise.

The style of the *Discourses* answers very well to the above account of their origin and purpose. They are brightly and vividly written, containing passages of great interest, but are, as a whole, wanting in unity and coherent development. Moreover, there is a great deal of this unsystematic record of Epictetus' daily conversation. The eight books must have made up a volume sufficiently bulky and expensive to prevent the slave-philosopher from being very widely read among the class for whom his teaching was intended. And it is particularly important to notice that it was by no means intended for aristocratic amateurs in Stoicism, but for men subject every day to the stress of life,[1] workers, to whom a philosopher

[1] Epictetus never will be a favourite author with those who take a mere literary pleasure in hearing fine things finely said about morality and inward freedom. I have noticed that

must

must speak clearly and briefly if he would have a chance of being listened to. It seems likely, then, that it was considerations such as these which induced Arrian to put together the leading principles of his master's teaching in that inestimable little work known as the *Encheiridion*, or Handbook, of Epictetus.

The result has shown how wisely Arrian judged of the means necessary to make Epictetus' influence widely felt, and to give him a permanent hold upon the human mind. For the *Encheiridion*, as the saying is, *took*; offering, as it did, an easy means of approach to the mind of a great thinker and an excellent subject for commentators and translators who wished to spread his views.[1] With its richness

in Montaigne (who has Seneca always on his lips) there are very few references to Marcus Aurelius, and I think only one to Epictetus (*Ench.* vi.).

[1] One remarkable feature of its history is the exhaustive Commentary written on it by Simplicius in the sixth century, wherein chapter after chapter of the *Encheiridion* is dissected, discussed, and its lessons of edification drawn out with a rather unprofitable laboriousness. Simplicius was a pagan; but Christians, too, paid honour to this 'king of old philosophy.' Adaptations of the *Encheiridion* were made especially for their

in

in illustration and in practical application, together with its unfailing grasp of principles, it has the merits at once of an abstract, and of a detailed work, and may well be regarded as holding a central position with respect to everything else that goes under the name of Epictetus. The reasons for which Arrian first produced the *Encheiridion* are those which have induced me to bring out this translation of it. There is no other English translation of it at present in print in a separate form, although the late Mr. Long translated it in the Bohn Series, where it appears bound up with the *Discourses* and *Fragments*. Reading it for the first time a year ago, it appeared to me that it ought to exist in English in the form which its name denotes—that of a Handbook, and that in this form it might chance to reach and to serve many who are no students of philosophy, who would never care to purchase

use in which the name 'Socrates' in *Ench.* li. γ was changed to 'Paul.'

Epictetus

Epictetus in his entirety, but who might be glad, nevertheless, to have a guide to plain living and high thinking which can find room in a traveller's knapsack or a sailor's chest.

The value of the *Encheiridion*, like that of every book which contains a revelation and a doctrine, must be tested, to a large extent at least, by the proveable reality of the facts which it declares and on which it builds. If these facts, in the case of Stoicism, are, as many seem to think, mere philosophic fancies, incapable of being widely verified in common experience, then let not all the lives which it has influenced and ennobled persuade us to take Stoicism, as a system, into any serious consideration. But is this so? or is not rather the main thesis of Stoicism a genuine and profound discovery of capacities which really exist in average humanity, and of paths which it can naturally and happily follow?

Without here noticing what is limited or mistaken in the teaching of the *Encheiridion*, let

let me devote a few pages towards offering a mere suggestion of its basis and drift, as they appear to me.

In the first place it must be understood that Epictetus is not a philosopher in the sense in which that word is generally used now. About the origins and destinies of things he is strictly silent, no shadow of an explanation of any metaphysical problem is to be found in him. The end of his teaching is simply to take the sting from human misery by showing that man is not, as was believed, the plaything of Fortune—that there is a way in which he can set his well-being beyond the reach of all forces which he cannot control. Stoicism, as represented by Epictetus, makes no attempt to transcend the limits of what can be actually felt, now and here. It rests upon a profound appreciation of the distinction between what we may call a man's real and permanent, and his transitory or phantasmal self. The first man who was ever consciously a Stoic (there

a have

have been and are many unconscious ones) was he who first looked upon the world and his own nature, and observed that the things wherein he was subject to fatality and chance, which he was unable to order at his own will, were just those which either did not affect *him*, his real self, at all; or affected him only as he desired they should. The question, then, about Stoicism, is this, Is this distinction between the real and phantasmal self a valid one—is it founded upon natural truth? Now, let no friend of the Association philosophy imagine that in this 'real self' of Epictetus he is being confronted with his ancient enemy, the Ego. To say that there is a real self and that there is a phantasmal self need imply no more than this—that among all the things which give pleasure there are some which afford a deeper, fuller, more permanent enjoyment than others; an enjoyment of such a kind that he who has felt it knows it to be more worth having than anything else in the world. The real self, then,

then, is simply the soul delighting in these things, and to pursue them is said to be, in the words of the old, yet never outworn formula, 'to live according to Nature'—to follow the course suggested to the conscious mind by experience (its own or others') of the facts of life. And what does this experience tell us? Universally it tells us that in Righteousness and Love lie the paths of our peace. That this is so every man must verify for himself. 'The gods' with Epictetus are the sources of this law, and, so far as explicit statement goes, they are little more.

Now, keeping this notion of the real self before us, let us turn to Epictetus and see how he applies it. 'Of things that exist,' he says, 'some depend upon ourselves (ἔστιν ἐφ' ἡμῖν), others do not depend upon ourselves.' That is to say, some things centre upon the real self, are within its domain and power, and have their existence through it; while others are independent of it, are outside the

sphere of its action, as it is outside the sphere of theirs. What, then, are the former things? 'Opinions and impulses, desires and aversions' —briefly, that which a man *does* as opposed to that which he suffers. 'And these things,' he adds, 'are, in their nature, free, not liable to forbiddance or embarrassment.' So that Epictetus starts with announcing that the business and concern of the real self is with matters absolutely subject to its own control, absolutely uninfluenced by external chance or change. How important this announcement is will only appear by meditation and realisation: that it is true there can be no doubt— there is nothing essentially good for us which we cannot have if we only desire it strongly enough.

Again, in *Ench.* i. ϵ he teaches that when we are tried by misfortune we should never let our suffering overwhelm the sense of inward mastery and freedom expressed in the thought, 'It is nothing to me'—it has no power

power to close the sources of true happiness, the happiness which satisfies the real self, against me.

And, again, in *Ench.* xliv., one man is said to be superior to another, not for his possessions or for his talents, but (since *you* are not wealth, *you* are not language) for the predominance in him of his real self, for his hold of such things as truth, soberness, justice, love of God and man.

Such ideas as these seem, when their bearing on practice is first realized, so profoundly discrepant with human life as it is, that most people are inclined to regard them, though not without admiration, as being merely unpractical and fantastic. But, apart from the fact that this discrepancy is probably far less great than is generally supposed (many persons, especially in great crises, showing themselves true Stoics who might be incapable of reading a chapter of Epictetus with sympathy), it must be remembered that what I have

have called the 'discovery' of Stoicism is a discovery rather of capacities than of actualities; of capacities as yet undeveloped, but which it is for man's good to develop; which *must* indeed sooner or later be developed, on the principle that the growth of the human spirit will follow the line of least resistance. So when Epictetus declares that the things wherein we are subject to powers outside of ourselves and uncontrollable by our will are not matters of vital concern to us, he does not mean to say that the majority of mankind do not feel themselves vitally and almost exclusively concerned in those very things. He merely asserts that to lose this overpowering concern in things beyond our control is possible to human nature, and is for our good; and this being so, the fact that certain men have realised this possibility in their lives and proclaimed it to the world cannot but make it easier for other men to realise it also.

But while to some minds the teaching of the

the *Encheiridion* might present itself as unpractical, to others it might seem to be quite sufficiently practised already. For Stoicism is often taken to be merely a synonym for intellectual self-sufficiency and heartlessness, for scorn of human affection and an ascetic disregard of at any rate the material welfare of others as well as of oneself. It is no answer to this accusation to point out passages in Epictetus (such as *Ench.* xxx. xxxii. xliii.; *Frag.* ii. xvii.), which are full of a quite different spirit; they would only prove that the philosopher may have been better than his creed. But the creed itself is a more profound and a more expansive one than is commonly supposed; for, its fundamental principle being merely to place Good and Ill in the things dependent on the will, it leaves room for any doctrine as to right living which can establish itself upon this basis. Thus it leaves room for asceticism, or for indifferentism; and many Stoics were, as a matter of fact, ascetics or indifferentists.

differentists. But it leaves room also for a view of life very different from these, a view entirely opposed to the doctrine that a man should aim at *insulating* himself in the world by deadening his mind, as far as possible, to the attractions and impressions of external things. In this view the pleasures of the senses and affections are regarded as energies of the soul which supply just as needful and just as worthy a part of our total humanity as, for instance, moral conscientiousness and religious adoration. And this is not a lowering of things deemed high ; it is a raising of things which too many deem common and unclean. 'I make holy,' says Walt Whitman, 'whatever I touch, or am touch'd from.' Only, in order that the things which are called secular, and which it is often thought right to despise or dread, may be discerned in this their true character, they must be seen in the light of the ever-present thought of unity ; and Whitman's saying must be borne in mind—

I swear the earth shall surely be complete to him or her who shall be complete;

I swear the earth shall remain jagged and broken only to him or her who remains jagged and broken.

And in order to be 'complete,' be it remembered, it may often be necessary for us to sacrifice a gratification to a duty, while to sacrifice a duty to a gratification is quite another matter. For to do the duty at the expense of the gratification leaves, so far, our capacity for the gratification just where it was; while to indulge a gratification at the expense of a duty undoubtedly injures our capacity for duty in general, and probably, in the end, for gratification also.

This view, I say, accords with Stoicism, for as long as we have any consciousness at all we are being impressed in some way or other through the senses and affections, and to use the pleasures of them with the mingled freedom and reverence only known to those whom

whom all things have power to penetrate with a sense of the divine is not less satisfying to the real self than to deal patiently and nobly with their pains—'*despising* not the chastening of the Eternal.' It accords with Stoicism; but whether it accords with Epictetus is a different question. Asceticism was certainly a *cachet* of eminence among Stoics, and Epictetus says much that appears to favour it. 'In things that concern the body,' he says, 'you must accept only what is absolutely needful—all that makes for show and luxury you must utterly proscribe' (*Ench.* xxxiii. η). And, again, in *Ench.* xxxix. he makes the needs of the body the standard of gain, as the foot is for the shoe. And in various other places (as *Ench.* xxxiv.) he seems to advise the abstention from pleasure simply as pleasure. Yet to condemn the enjoyments of the senses in this strenuous way, to insist so emphatically upon the necessity of living in an environment of a certain special character, whether

whether that character be one of enjoyment or of hardship, seems to me most contradictory to the spirit and tendency of the *Encheiridion*, as expressed, for instance, in chapter xli. There is no such thing as true self-mastery in one who is afraid of pleasure. There is a good deal of evidence, too, in the *Discourses*, that Epictetus cared for the outward seemliness of life; on one occasion he even said (of a pupil who came to him in foul and disordered garments) that when a man had no feeling for external beauty there was little chance of his being able to rouse him to a sense of the spiritually beautiful. Briefly, then, I incline to think that the doctrine which I put forward as that opposed to the ascetic doctrine is the one which Epictetus' works imply, and are likely, on the whole, to foster; and that contradictions to that doctrine which may appear in them are to be explained in three ways, by supposing: 1. That Arrian did not fully grasp or accurately report his master's views on

on this subject. 2. That Epictetus, speaking of what was needful and proper for the body, had in his mind an ideal of the *σεμνὸν καὶ πρέπον* such as would naturally occur to a Greek, and did not judge by the merely materialistic standard to which alone, to us, his words seem applicable. 3. That though he may not have condemned the pleasures of the senses in themselves, he advised abstinence, *ἄσκησις*, especially in one who is only 'making advance,' as a means of helping him to realise the fact that, if occasion should require, he could cheerfully do without them. So, too, a little consideration will clear away the impression which chapters iii., xxvi., &c., of the *Encheiridion* might leave on the mind—the impression, namely, that Epictetus regarded the natural affections and the griefs which inevitably accompany them as being unworthy of a philosopher. He is so full of the conception that the wise man, by the aid of philosophy, may reap benefit from every experience

perience in life, that I do not think he could have meant to present it, in the cases where we most need its aid, as a mere anodyne. For an anodyne is of no positive benefit in itself, being merely the annihilation of experience; while to master the pain, to recognise that through it we are more fitted to be helpful, to let it strengthen and deepen our sense of the reality of things, is to have made it a blessing. But that it should be so it is needful to have felt it as a pain. Now, note that Epictetus does not say, 'If your wife or child should die, you are not to be grieved.' He says 'you are not to be *confounded*,' ταρασσόμενος. There is a kind of grief (who has not seen it?) which is really a self-indulgence, which is mingled with something like pride in its own intensity and absorbingness, and in the paralysis and confusion it causes. This is barren grief, the grief which Epictetus scorned. But there is another grief, which I think he was far from scorning, in which suffering is not allowed to isolate

isolate us from the living activities around us, in which it is possible to say with real and full assent, 'Whatever harmonises well with thee, O universe, harmonises well with me.'[1] That this feeling can hardly arise except when the love of the individual is embraced in the vaster love of the All, of God, we may readily admit. For the pantheistic faith, giving full place to such a feeling, which was actually held by most of the old Stoics, is but the natural outgrowth of their analysis of our daily experience.

Here we touch upon greater issues than those which concern the mere safe-conduct of our moral life. But, in this place at least, these issues shall be pursued no further. Everywhere in Epictetus his faith in transcendental religion may be discerned, but that religion is never formulated; it exists as in a state of solution; and if it should ever be desirable to crystallise it into a system, a preface to the

[1] *Marcus Aurelius*, Mr. Long's translation.

Encheiridion

Encheiridion is not the place for such an attempt. Here, then, on the threshold, as it were, of the Real World, I take leave of all who may have gone thus far with me, hoping that the words which follow may do that which Arrian said, as the words of a philosopher, they ought to do—stir the minds of some towards the best things; knowing, too, how much it may be my own fault if they have not this effect.

ENCHEIRIDION

—And if I pray, the only prayer
That moves my lips for me,
Is *Leave the heart that now I bear,*
And give me liberty!

EMILY BRONTË.

THE

THE

ENCHEIRIDION OF EPICTETUS.[1]

a. OF things that exist, some depend upon ourselves,[2] others do not depend upon ourselves. Of things that depend upon ourselves are our opinions and impulses, desires and aversions, and, briefly, all that is of our own doing. Of things that do not depend upon ourselves are the body, possessions, reputation, civil authority, and, briefly, all that is not of our own doing. 1.

β. And the things that depend upon ourselves are in their nature free, not liable to hindrance or

[1] In the following translation I have in the main followed Schweighäuser's text, ed. 1798; but I have sometimes adopted another fairly-supported reading which seemed to me to fall in more with the general line of Epictetus' thought. I cannot confidently suppose that there are no blunders in it, but I hope and think that there are few seriously misleading ones.

[2] ἐφ' ἡμῖν ἐστίν. The full sense which Epictetus puts into these words cannot be briefly rendered in English.

embarrassment,

embarrassment, while the things that do not depend upon ourselves are strengthless, servile, subject, alien.

γ. Remember then, that if you take things which are by nature subject, to be free; and things alien to be your proper interest, you will be embarrassed, you will bewail yourself, you will be troubled, you will blame Gods and men. But if you consider that only to be yours which truly is so, and the alien as what it is, alien, then none shall ever compel you, none shall hinder you, you will blame no one, you will accuse no one, you will not do the least thing reluctantly, none shall harm you, you will have no foe, for you will suffer no injury.

δ. Aiming then at things so high, remember that it is no moderate passion wherewith you must attempt them, but you must utterly renounce some things, and put some, for the present, aside. For if (let us say) you make this also your object, to attain a position of authority and wealth, then you not only run the risk (through aiming at the first things too) of failing to gain these ends, but will most assuredly miss those others through

through which alone freedom and happiness are born.

ε. Straightway, then, practise saying to every harsh-seeming phantasm, *You are a Phantasm, and not by any means the thing you appear to be.* Then realize it, and test it according to the criterions you possess; but especially by this supreme criterion, whether it concerns anything that depends upon ourselves, or something that does not depend upon ourselves. And if the latter, then be the thought instantly at hand, *It is nothing to me.*

II. α. REMEMBER that desire announces the aim of attaining the thing desired, and aversion that of not falling into the thing shunned; and that to miss what you desire is unfortunate, but it is misfortune to fall into what you shun. But you can never fall into anything that you shun, if you will shun only things contrary to Nature which lie within your power: but if you shun disease, or death, or poverty, you will have misfortune. Withdraw then your aversion from those things that do not depend upon ourselves, and place it upon those things

things contrary to Nature which do depend upon ourselves.

β. And let desire, for the present, be utterly effaced; for if you are desiring something of the kind that does not depend upon ourselves, it must needs be that you miscarry,—and of the things that do depend upon ourselves, of such as you may fairly desire, none are yet open to you. Use therefore only [tentative] advances and withdrawals, and that but lightly, and with exception, and indifferently.

III. IN the case of everything that allures the mind, or offers an advantage, or is beloved by you, remember, from the least thing upward, to think of it in its true nature. For instance, if you like an earthen jar, think *I like an earthen jar*, for so your mind will not be confounded if it should break. And if you love your child or your wife, think *I love a mortal*, and so you will not be confounded when they die.

IV. WHEN you are about to take in hand some action, bethink yourself what it really is that

that you are about to do. If you propose to go to the bath, represent to yourself all the things that take place at the bathing establishment, the squirting of water, the beating, the bad language, the theft. And after this fashion you will take the matter more safely in hand if you say *I intend simply to bathe, and to maintain my purpose according to Nature.* And similarly with every action. For thus if anything should occur to cross you in your bathing, you will instantly think *I did not only intend to bathe, but also that my purpose should be maintained according to Nature. But it will not be so maintained if I let myself be vexed at what occurs.*

V. IT is not things in themselves, but the opinions held about them which trouble and confuse our minds. Thus, Death is not really terrible—if it were so it would have appeared so to Socrates—but the opinion about Death, that it is terrible, *that* it is wherein the terror lies. Wherefore when we are hindered, or confounded, or grieved, let us never cast the blame upon others, but upon ourselves; that is, on our opinions of things. A man untaught

untaught in philosophy[1] accuses others on the score of his own misfortunes; he who has begun to be taught accuses himself; he who is fully taught, neither others nor himself.

VI. BE not puffed-up on account of any excellence that is not of yourself. If your horse were proud and should say, *I am beautiful*, that would be tolerable. But when you are proud, and say, *I have a beautiful horse*, know that it is an excellence in your horse that you are proud of. What then is really your own? This, to make use of the phantasms. So that when you deal according to Nature in your use of the phantasms, then you may pride yourself, for then you will be priding yourself on an excellence which is really your own.

VII. EVEN as in a sea-voyage, when the ship is brought to anchor, and you go out to fetch in water, you make a bye-work of gathering a few roots and shells upon the way, but have need ever to

[1] ἀπαίδευτος, a word including the ideas both of teaching and training.

keep

keep your mind fixed upon the ship, and constantly to look round lest at any time the master of the ship should call, and must, if he call, cast away all those things, lest you be treated like the sheep that are bound and thrown into the hold: So it is with human life also, and nothing hinders the comparison if there be given wife and children instead of shells and roots.[1] And if the master call, run to the ship, forsaking all those things and looking not behind. And if you be in old age, go not far from the ship at any time, lest the master should call, and you should not be ready.

VIII. DO not seek to have all things happen as you would choose them, but rather choose them to happen as they do; and so shall the current of your life flow free.

IX. DISEASE is a hindrance of the body, not of the will, unless the will itself consent. Lame-

[1] Or 'if there be given wife and children, &c. . . . . nothing hinders [you from taking them].'

ness

ness is a hindrance of the leg, not of the will. And this you may say upon every occasion, for nothing can happen to you but you will find it a hindrance, not of yourself, but of some other thing.

X. REMEMBER, at anything that shall befall you, to turn to yourself, and seek what faculty you possess for making use of it. If you see a beautiful person, you will find a faculty for that, namely, Self-mastery. If toil is laid upon you, you will find the faculty of Perseverance. If you are reviled, you will find Patience. And making this your wont, you will not be rapt-away by the phantasms.

XI. NEVER in any case say *I have lost* such a thing, but *I have returned it.* Is your child dead? it is a return. Is your wife dead? it is a return. Are you deprived of your estate? is not this also a return? *But he who deprives me of it is wicked!* But what is that to you, through whom the giver demands his own! As long therefore as he

he grants it to you, steward it like another's property, as travellers use an inn.[1]

a. IF you wish to advance in philosophy you must dismiss such considerations as *If I neglect my affairs, I shall not have wherewithal to support life. If I do not correct my servant, he will be good-for-nothing.* For it is better to die of hunger, having lived without grief and fear, than to live with a troubled spirit amid abundance. And it is better to have a bad servant than an afflicted mind. XII.

β. Make a beginning then with small matters. Is a little of your oil spilt? or a little wine stolen? Then say to yourself *For so much, tranquillity of mind is bought, this is the price of peace.* For nothing can be gained without paying for it. And when you call your servant, reflect that he may not hear you, or that hearing, he may not do your bidding. For him indeed that is not well, but for you it is altogether well that he have not the power to disturb your mind.

[1] 'Steward it' (ἐπιμελοῦ) expresses one characteristic of Epictetus' view of life, 'as travellers use an inn,' another; no real comparison is intended.

IF

XIII. IF you wish to advance, you must be content to let people think you senseless and distraught as regards external things. Wish not ever to seem wise, and if ever you shall find yourself accounted to be somebody, then mistrust yourself. For know that it is not an easy matter to make a choice that shall agree both with external things and with Nature, but it must needs be that he who is careful of the one shall neglect the other.

XIV. *a.* YOU are quite astray if you desire your wife and children and friends to live for ever, for then you are desiring things that are not of yourself to be of yourself, and to control that which is not in your power. So also if you desire that your servant never should display any shortcomings, you are a fool; for that is as much as to desire that imperfection should not be imperfection, but something else. But if you wish never to fall short of your desires, this indeed is possible to you; this therefore practise, namely, the practicable.

β. You own a master when another has power over the things that are pleasing or displeasing to you

you, to give them or to take them away. Whosoever then would be free, let him neither desire nor shun any of the things that depend not upon himself; otherwise he must needs be enslaved.

XV. BEAR in mind that you should conduct yourself in life as at a feast. Is some dish brought to you? Then put forth your hand and help yourself in seemly fashion. Does it pass you by? Then do not hold it back. Has it not yet come to you? Then do not stretch out for it at a distance, but wait till it is at your hand. And thus doing with regard to children, and wife, and authority, and wealth, you will be a worthy guest at the table of the Gods. And if you even pass over things that are offered to you, and refuse to take of them, then you will not only share the banquet of the Gods, but also their dominion. For so doing, Diogenes and Heracleitus and such as they were rightly divine, as they were said to be.

XVI. WHEN you shall see one lamenting in grief because his son is gone abroad, or because he

he has lost his wealth, see to it that you be not rapt-away by the phantasm, to think that he has suffered a real misfortune in external matters. But be the thought at hand, *It is not the fact itself which afflicts this man—since there are others whom it afflicts not—but the opinion he has conceived about it.* And do not hesitate as far as words go, to give him your sympathy, and even, if so it be, to lament with him. But take heed that your lamenting be not from within.

XVII. REMEMBER that you are an actor in a drama, of such a part as it may please the master to assign you, for a long time or for a little as he may choose. And if he will you to take the part of a poor man, or a cripple, or a ruler, or a private citizen, then may you act that part with grace! For to act well the part that is allotted to us, that indeed is ours to do, but to choose it is another's.

XVIII. IF a raven croaks you a bad omen, be not rapt-away by the phantasm, but straightway make

a

a distinction with regard to yourself[1] and say, *This bodes something perhaps to this poor body or this little property of mine, or to my reputation, or my wife or children, but to myself, nothing. For to me, if I will to have it so, all omens are fortunate. And whatever of these things may come to pass, it lies with me to reap some benefit from it.*

a. YOU may be always victorious if you will never enter into any contest where the issue does not wholly depend upon yourself. XIX.

β. When you see a man honoured above others, or mighty in power, or otherwise in high repute, look to it that you esteem him not blessed, being rapt-away by the phantasm. For if Good, in its essence, be in those things which depend upon ourselves, then there is no place for jealousy or envy, and you yourself will not wish to be a general, or a prince, or a consul—but to be free. And to this

[1] διαίρει παρὰ σεαυτῷ—distinguish what concerns your real self from what does not; or perhaps it merely means 'draw a distinction inwardly.'

there

there is but one way—disdain of the things that depend not upon ourselves.

XX. REMEMBER that it is not he who strikes you or he who reviles you who does you an injury, but the opinion you have about these things, that they are injurious. Therefore when someone shall provoke you to wrath, know that you are provoked by your own conception. Strive then at the outset not to be rapt-away by the phantasm; for if you shall once succeed in gaining time and delay you will more easily master yourself.

XXI. DEATH and exile and all things that appear terrible, let these be every day before your eyes. But Death most of all, for so you will never feel any condition to be wretched, nor think any very greatly to be desired.

XXII. IF you set your heart upon philosophy, you must straightway prepare yourself to be laughed at and mocked by many who will say *Behold a philosopher*

sopher arisen among us! or *How came you by that brow of scorn?* But do you cherish no scorn, but hold to those things which seem to you the best, as one set by God in that place. Remember too, that if you abide in those ways, those who first mocked you, the same shall afterwards reverence you; but if you yield to them, you will be laughed at twice as much as before.

XXIII. IF ever it shall happen to you to be turned to things of the outside world in the desire to make yourself acceptable to someone, know that you have lost your position.[1] Let it be enough for you in all things to *be* a philosopher. But if you desire also to seem one, then appear so to yourself, and it will suffice.[2]

XXIV. *a.* NEVER afflict yourself with such reflections as *I shall live without honour and never be anybody anywhere.* For if to live without honour

[1] ἴσθι ὅτι ἀπώλεσας τὴν ἔνστασιν.

[2] According to another reading, 'and you will be able to do this.'

be really a misfortune, know that it is not possible for you to fall into misfortune, any more than into vice, through anything that another can do. Is it then of your own doing that you are appointed to the magistracy or invited to feasts? By no means. How then is this to be without honour? and how do you say that you shall *never be anybody*, whose part it is to be somebody in those things only which depend upon yourself, and in which it is in your power to be of the highest worth?

β. *But then I can be of no service to my friends.* How say you? of no service? Certainly they shall not have money from you, nor will you be able to get them made Roman citizens. But who told you that these things were of those that depend upon ourselves, and were not alien to us? And who is able to give that which he himself has not?

γ. *Acquire then*, they say, *in order that we may possess.* Well, if I am able to acquire, without a loss of modesty, or faith, or high-mindedness, show me the way, and I will do it. But if you require me to sacrifice that which I have, which is really good, in order that you may compass what is no good at all, behold how unjust and inconsiderate you

you are! And is it not better than money, to have faith and modesty in a friend? Then rather help me on my way, and take part with me, than require me to do anything which would compel me to renounce these things.

δ. *But*, you say, *I shall not be bearing my part in the service of my country!* Again, what do you take service to consist in? Your country will not be enriched through you with porticos and public baths. And what then? The smith does not supply her with shoes, nor the shoemaker with weapons, but it is enough that every man fulfil his own work. And if you have made one faithful and modest citizen for her, are you then of no service? Wherefore neither shall you be useless to your country.

ε. *What place then*, you say, *shall I hold in the State?* Whatever place you are able to hold, guarding still your modesty and faith. But if you cast away these things in order to be of service to the State, of what service do you think you will be to her then, when you are perfected in the contrary qualities?

XXV. *a.* IS some one preferred before you at a feast, or in salutation, or in being invited to give counsel? Then if these things be good, you should rejoice that he has gained them; but if evil, why grieve that you have not? But remember that if you do not do as other men, in order to gain the things that depend not upon ourselves, neither shall you be rewarded as they.

β. For how is it possible for you to have an equal share with him who hangs about other men's doors, and attends upon them, and flatters them, when you yourself will do none of these things? You are unjust then, and insatiable, if you wish to gain the things that depend not upon ourselves, for nothing, and without paying the price for which they are sold.

γ. But how much is your head of lettuce sold for? A penny perchance. Go to, then: if one will lay out a penny he may have a head of lettuce; but you who do not choose to lay out your penny shall not have your lettuce. But you must not suppose that you will be therefore worse off than he. For he has the lettuce, but you the penny which you did not choose to part with.

δ. And

δ. And in this matter also the same principle holds good. You are not invited to somebody's banquet? That is because you did not give the entertainer the price that banquets are sold for—and they are sold for flattery, they are sold for attendance. Pay then the price if you think you will profit by the exchange. But if you are determined not to lay out these things, and at the same time to gain the others—surely you are a greedy man, and an infatuated.

ε. Shall you have nothing then instead of the banquet which you give up? Yea verily, you shall have this—not to have praised one whom you did not care to praise, nor to have endured the insolence of a rich man's doorkeepers.

XXVI. THE will of Nature is to be learned from matters in which we ourselves are not concerned.[1] For instance, when a boy breaks a cup, if it be another man's, you are ready enough to say, *Accidents will happen.* Know then, that

[1] I think this is the true reading, although the other—'from matters in which we do not differ from each other'—has more external evidence to support it.

when

when your own is broken it behoves you to be as though it were another man's. And apply this method even to greater things. When a neighbour's wife or child dies, who is there that will not say, *It is the lot of humanity.* But when your own wife or child is dead, then it is straightway, *Alas! wretched that I am!* But you ought to remember how you felt when you heard of another in the same plight.

XXVII. AS a mark is not set up to be missed, even so it is not possible that there should be any soul of evil[1] in the world.

XXVIII. IF anyone were to expose your body in public, that every passer-by might do as he liked with it, you would be indignant. Is it nothing to be ashamed of then that you should set your mind at the mercy of all the world, to be troubled and disturbed whenever anyone should happen to revile you?

XXIX. *a.* OF every work you take in hand to do, mark well the conditions and the consequences,

[1] κακοῦ φύσις.

and

and so enter upon it. For if you do not this, you will at first set out eagerly, not regarding what is to follow, but in the end thereof, if any difficulties have arisen, you will leave it off with shame.

β. So you wish to conquer in the Olympic games, my friend? And I too, by the Gods, and a fine thing it would be! But first mark the conditions and the consequences, and then set to work. You will have to put yourself under discipline; to eat by rule; to avoid cakes and sweetmeats; to take exercise at the appointed hour whether you like it or no, in cold and heat; to abstain from cold drinks and from wine at your will; in a word, to give yourself over to the trainer as to a physician. Then in the conflict itself you are likely enough to dislocate your wrist or twist your ankle, to swallow a great deal of dust, to be severely thrashed, and, after all these things, to be defeated.

γ. If, having considered these circumstances, you are still in the mind to enter for the Olympic prize, then do so. But without consideration, you will turn from one thing to another like a child, who now plays the wrestler, now the flute-player, now the gladiator, then sounds the bugle-call,

call, or declaims like an actor; and so you too will be first an athlete, then a gladiator, then an orator, then a philosopher, and nothing with your whole soul; but as an ape you will mimic every sight you see, and flatter yourself with one thing after another. For you approached nothing with consideration, nor with systematic diligence, but lightly, and with but a cold desire.

δ. And thus some men, after having seen a philosopher and heard discourse like that of Euphrates (yet who indeed can say that any discourse is like his?) desire that they also may become philosophers.

ε. But O man—first consider what it really is that you are desiring to do, and then inquire of your own nature, whether you have power to support the undertaking. Do you desire to become a pentathlos[1] or a wrestler? Then scan your arms and your thighs and try the strength of your loins. For nature endows different men with different capacities.

ζ. And do you think that you can be a sage and

[1] Pentathlos, a champion in five athletic exercises, viz. running, leaping, throwing the quoit, throwing the javelin, wrestling.

at

at the same time continue to eat and drink and indulge your desires and be fastidious, just as before? Nay verily, for you must watch and labour, and withdraw yourself from your household and be despised by any serving-boy and be ridiculed by your neighbours, and you must take an inferior position in all things, in reputation, in authority, in courts of justice, in dealings of every kind.

η. Consider these things; whether you are willing at such a price to gain serenity, freedom, and immunity from vexation. And if not, renounce that aim at once, and do not like a child at play be now for a little a philosopher, then a tax-gatherer, then a public speaker, then a procurator of the Empire. For these things do not agree among themselves, and, good or bad, it behoves you to be *one* man. You must either cultivate external things or your own essential part, you must show your skill in the management of either your outward or your inward life—in short, you must take up the position either of a sensualist[1] or of a sage.

[1] Wherever Epictetus uses the word ἰδιώτης, I have rendered it by sensualist. Ἰδιώτης originally meant simply a private citizen, one who took no part in the government of the State. Epictetus

OUR

XXX. OUR duties are universally fixed by the relations in which we find ourselves. Is such a man your father? Then your duty is to bear dictation from him, to take care of him, to yield to him in all things, to be patient with him when he chides you, when he beats you. *But if he be a bad father?* Is there then a natural law that you should be related by kin to a good father? No, but simply to a father. And does your brother do you wrong? Then guard your own proper position towards him, and do not consider what he is doing, but rather what you may do in order that your will may be in accordance with Nature. For no other can ever harm you if you do not choose it yourself, but you are harmed then, when you imagine yourself to be so. Thus then you may discover your duties by considering those of a neighbour, of a citizen, of a general,—if you will accustom yourself to observe the relationships.

uses it somewhat in the sense of 'layman,' one who is of the world, not of the philosophic guild; the distinction being that the ἰδιώτης looks for happiness, not in the things of the soul, but in relations with the external world established by means of the senses. On this distinction I venture to found my translation of the word.

α. OF religion towards the Gods, know that the principal element is to have right opinions about them, as existing, and as managing the Whole in fair order and justice; and then to set yourself to obey them, and to yield to them in all that happens and to follow it willingly, as accomplished under the highest counsels. For thus you will never at any time blame the Gods, nor accuse them of being neglectful. XXXI.

β. But this can be done in no other way than by placing good and evil in the things that depend upon ourselves, and withdrawing them from those that do not; for if you take any of the latter things for good or evil, then when you fail to obtain what you desire, and fall into what you would avoid, it is inevitable that you must blame and hate those who caused you to do so.

γ. For it is the inherent nature of every creature to fly from and shun all things that appear harmful, and the causes of the same, but to follow after and admire things, and the causes of things, which appear beneficial. It is impossible then that one who thinks himself harmed should take delight in that

that which seems to harm him, just as it is impossible that he should take delight in the very injury itself.

δ. And thus it is that a father is reviled by his son when he will not give him a share of the things that are thought to be good. And it was this that set Polyneices and Eteocles at war with each other, the opinion, namely, that royalty was a good. And through this the Gods are blamed by the husbandman and the sailor, by the merchant and by those who lose their wives or children. For when advantage is, there also is religion. So that he who is careful to desire and to dislike as he ought is careful at the same time of religion.[1]

[1] εὐσέβεια is the Greek word which I have translated by 'religion' in this chapter. It is derived from σέβομαι, which means to have a pious regard, reverent respect or awe, towards some person or thing, God or man, or ancient custom, &c. Epictetus seems to think that a man may have a good religion or a bad one. If he cares only for material pleasures, he will have respect, enthusiasm, 'religion,' only for the sources of such pleasures. But if he desires what is truly good, he will necessarily have these feelings towards the Gods, *i.e.* the powers that make for goodness. Hence by rightly regulating his desires and aversions he ensures that his religion shall be rightly directed. Compare the *Discourses* of Epictetus, ii. 23 (Mr. Long's translation), 'For universally, be not deceived, every animal is attracted to nothing so much as its own interest . . . . this is father, and brother, and kinsman, and country, and God;' and

ε. But

ε. But it is right too that every man should pour libations, and offer sacrifices, and offer firstfruits according to the customs of his fathers, purely, and not supinely, nor negligently, nor indeed scantily, yet not beyond his means.

XXXII.

α. WHEN you go to inquire of an oracle, remember that though you do not know beforehand what the event will be (for this very thing is what you have come to learn from the seer), yet of what nature it must be (if you are a philosopher), you knew already when you came. For if it be of those things which do not depend upon ourselves, it follows of necessity that it can be neither good nor evil.

β. When you go then to the seer, bring with you neither desire nor aversion, and approach him, not with trembling, but with the full assurance that all events are indifferent, and nothing to you, and

the Biblical expressions 'whose *God* is their belly,' '*worshippers* of tables.' In Disc. i. 27, Epictetus says, 'Whenever religion and profit do not coincide, religion is doomed.' This looks like an acquiescence in that ethical theory which we mostly think of in connection with his antagonists, the Epicureans, that Happiness is the *raison d'être* of morality.

that

that whatever may befall you it will be your part to use it nobly ; and this no one can prevent. Go then with a good courage to the Gods as to counsellors, and, for the rest, when something has been counselled to you, remember who they are whom you have chosen for counsellors, and whom you will be slighting if you are not obedient.

γ. Therefore, as Socrates insisted, you should consult the oracle in those cases only where your judgment depends entirely upon the event, and where you have no resources, either from reason or any other method, for knowing beforehand what is independently certain in the case. Thus, when it may behove you to share some danger with your friend or your country, do not inquire whether you may [safely] do so. For if the seer should announce to you that the sacrifices are inauspicious, that clearly signifies death, or the loss of some limb, or banishment ; yet Reason convinces that even with these things you should stand by your friend and share your country's danger. Mark therefore that greater seer, the Pythian, who cast out of the temple one who, when his friend was being murdered, did not help him.

α. ORDAIN

α. ORDAIN for yourself forthwith a certain principle and outline of conduct which you may observe both when you are alone and among men. XXXIII.

β. And for the most part keep silence, or speak only what is necessary, and in few words.[1] But when occasion shall require us to speak, then we shall speak, but sparingly, and not about any subject at haphazard, nor about gladiators, nor horse-races, nor athletes, nor about things to eat or drink, which one hears talked about everywhere, but especially not about men, as blaming, or praising, or comparing them.

γ. If then you are able, let your discourse draw that of the company towards what is fitting; but if you find yourself apart among strangers, keep silence.

δ. Do not laugh much, nor at many things, nor unrestrainedly.

[1] 'Nature has given men one tongue and two ears, in token that we should listen twice as much as we speak.' (Fragment of Epictetus.)

ε. Refuse

ε. Refuse altogether to take an oath, if possible; if not, then as much as circumstances permit.

ζ. Avoid banquets given by strangers and by the sensual.[1] But if you ever have occasion to go to them, then keep your attention on the stretch that you do not fall into sensuality. For know that if your companion be corrupted, you, who have conversation with him, must needs become corrupted also, even though yourself should chance to be pure.

η. In things that concern the body, such as food, drink, clothing, habitation, servants, you must only accept what is absolutely needful. But all that makes for show or luxury, you must utterly proscribe.

θ. Concerning sexual pleasures, it is right to be pure before marriage, as much as in you lies. But if you do indulge in them, let it be according to what is lawful.[2] But do not in any case make your-

[1] Ἑστιάσεις τὰς ἔξω καὶ ἰδιωτικὰς διακρούου. See note on ἰδιώτης, p. 2[illegible].

[2] Ὡς νόμιμον. Schweighäuser's Latin version (with the reading ὢν νόμιμον) gives 'ea (venere) utere quæ nihil flagitiosi habeat.' The whole sentence is Ἀπτομένῳ δὲ, ὡς (ὢν) νόμιμον μεταληπτέον.

self

self disagreeable to those who use such pleasures, nor be fond of reproving them, nor of putting yourself forward as not using them.

ι. If you shall be informed that some one has been speaking ill of you, do not defend yourself against his accusations, but answer, *He little knew what other vices there are in me, or he would have said more than that.*

κ. You need not go often to the arena; if however occasion should take you there, do not appear interested on any man's side except your own; that is to say, desire that that only may happen which does happen, and that the conqueror may be he who wins; for so shall you not be embarrassed. But shouting, and laughter at this or that, and gesticulation, all this you must utterly abstain from. And after you have gone away, do not talk much over what has passed, so far as it does not tend towards your own improvement. For from that it would appear that you had been impressed with the spectacle.[1]

[1] ὅτι ἐθαύμασας τὴν θέαν.

λ. Do

λ. Do not attend everybody's recitations[1] nor be easily induced to go to them. But if you do go, preserve (yet without making yourself offensive) your gravity and tranquillity.

μ. When you are about to meet any person, especially if he be one of those considered to be high in rank, put before yourself what Socrates or Zeno would have done in such a case. And then you will not fail to deal fittingly with the occasion.

ν. When you are going to see one of those who are great in power, imagine that you will not find him at home, that you will be shut out, that the doors will be banged in your face, that he will take no notice of you. And if in spite of these things it be right for you to go, then go, and bear whatever may happen, and never say to yourself *I did not deserve such treatment.*[2] For that is sensual, and shows

[1] 'Such recitations were common at Rome, when authors read their works and invited persons to attend' (Long). Perhaps Epictetus disliked the flattery and self-laudation which these occasions would give rise to.

[2] Schweighäuser gives 'Non erat tanto'—'it was not worth it.' I have followed Politian's version, 'Talia non merebar.' The Greek is οὐκ ἦν τοσούτου.

that

that you are subject to vexation from external things.

ξ. In company, be it far from you to bring your own doings and dangers constantly and disproportionately into notice. For though it is pleasant for you to tell of your own dangers, yet your adventures are not equally pleasant for other persons to hear.

ο. Be it far from you to move laughter. For that habit easily slips into sensuality; and it is always enough to lower your neighbour's respect for you.

π. And it is dangerous to approach to vicious conversation. Therefore when anything of the kind may arise, rebuke him who approaches thereto, if you can do so opportunely. But if not, show at least by your silence, and blushing, and serious looks that his words are disagreeable to you.

XXXIV. WHEN you have conceived the phantasm of some pleasure, guard yourself that you be not rapt-away by it, but delay with yourself a little and let the thing await you for a while. And then

 bethink

bethink yourself of the two periods of time, the one in which you will enjoy the pleasure, the other, in which, after having enjoyed it, you will repent of it, and reproach yourself; and set over against this how you will rejoice and commend yourself if you have abstained. But if it shall seem fitting to you to do the thing, beware lest you have been conquered by the flattery and the sweetness and the allurement of it. But set on the other side how much better would be the consciousness of having won that victory.

XXXV. WHEN you are doing something which you have clearly recognised as being right to do, do not seek to avoid observation in the act, even though you should know that the multitude will form a wrong opinion about it. For if you are acting wrongly, then you should have avoided the action altogether. But if rightly, why fear those who wrongly rebuke you?

XXXVI.[1] AS the sayings *It is day*, *It is night*, are perfectly justifiable if viewed disjunctively,

[1] Schweighäuser says pathetically of this chapter: 'In nullo

tively,[1] but unjustifiable if viewed together, even so, at a feast, to pick out the largest portion for oneself may be justifiable if the act is viewed merely as it concerns the body, but is unjustifiable if viewed as it concerns the preservation of the proper community of the feast. Therefore when you are eating with another person, remember not merely to look at the value for the body of the things that are set before you, but to preserve also the reverence due to the giver of the feast.[2]

Enchiridii capite tanta, quanta in hoc, librorum est discrepantia: in ea vero parte in qua mihi maxima inesse difficultas visa erat, in ipsa extremitate, miro modo iidem libri consentiunt.' The text (according to Schw.'s reading) is as follows: 'Ὡς τὸ Ἡμέρα ἐστὶ, καὶ Νύξ ἐστι, πρὸς μὲν τὸ διεζευγμένον μεγάλην ἔχει ἀξίαν, πρὸς δὲ τὸ συμπεπλεγμένον ἀπαξίαν, οὕτω καὶ τὸ τὴν μείζω μερίδα ἐκλέξασθαι, πρὸς μὲν τὸ σῶμα ἐχέτω ἀξίαν, πρὸς δὲ τὸ, τὸ κοινωνικὸν ἐν ἑστιάσει, οἷον δεῖ, φυλάξαι, ἀπαξίαν ἔχει. Ὅταν οὖν συνεσθίῃς ἑτέρῳ, μέμνησο, μὴ μόνον τὴν πρὸς τὸ σῶμα ἀξίαν τῶν παρακειμένων ὁρᾷν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὴν πρὸς τὸν ἑστιάτορα αἰδῶ φυλάξαι. The last two words are Schw.'s emendation for the perplexing reading οἷαν δεῖ φυλαχθῆναι, in which (with slight variations such as οἷον δ. φ., οἷαν σε δ. φ.) all the MSS. and old editions consent. One MS., strangely enough, has αἰδοῖ for οἷον δεῖ in the middle of the chapter. I have given the plain sense of the chapter as well as I could, but it has many difficulties.

[1] 'If viewed disjunctively,' that is, if you say 'It is day, *or* it is night.'

[2] Epictetus alludes to the feast of life, where 'the Gods' are the hosts. See ch. xv.

IF

XXXVII. IF you have assumed a part beyond your power to play, then you have not only come to shame in that, but have missed one which you could have thoroughly fulfilled.

XXXVIII. IN going about, as you are careful not to step upon a nail or twist your foot, even so be careful that you do no injury to your own essential part. And if we observe this we shall the more safely undertake whatever we have to do.

XXXIX. THE measure of gain for every man is the body, as the foot is of the shoe. If you take this as your standpoint, you will preserve the measure. But if you go beyond it, you must thenceforward of necessity be borne, as it were, down a steep for the rest of the way. And so it is with the shoe; if you go beyond [what is proper for] the foot, you will have your shoe first gilded, then dyed purple, then embroidered. For there is no end to that which has once transgressed its measure.

XL. FROM the age of fourteen years upwards women are accustomed to the flattery of men (*κυρίαι καλοῦνται*).

καλοῦνται). Seeing then that there is nothing else open to them but only to serve the pleasure of men, they begin to beautify themselves and to place all their hopes in this. It is right then to study that they may perceive themselves to be valued for nothing else than modesty and decorum.

XLI. IT is a sign of a dull nature[1] to occupy oneself deeply in matters that concern the body; for instance, to be over much occupied about exercise, about eating and drinking, about easing oneself, about sexual intercourse. But all these things should be done by the way, and only the mind receive your full attention.

XLII. WHEN some one may do you an injury or speak ill of you, remember that he does it or speaks it under the impression that it is proper for him to do so. He must then of necessity follow not the appearance which the case presents to you, but that which it presents to him. Wherefore, if it has a bad appearance to him, it is he who is injured, being deceived. For if anyone should take a true statement to be false, it is not the statement

[1] ἀφυίας σημεῖον.

which

which is damaged, but he who is deceived. If then you set out from these principles, you will bear a gentle mind towards anyone who reviles you. For say on each occasion, *So it appeared to him.*

XLIII. EVERY matter has two handles; by the one you can carry it, by the other you cannot. If your brother wrongs you, do not take this by the handle *He wrongs me*, for by that handle you cannot carry it; but take it rather by this, *He is my brother, nourished with me*, and then you will be taking it by a handle by which you can carry it.

XLIV. THERE is no nexus in the following reasonings: *I am richer than you, therefore I am superior to you; I am more eloquent than you, therefore I am superior.* But the nexus is rather in these: *I am richer than you, therefore my wealth is superior to yours; I am more eloquent than you, therefore my language is superior to yours.* But you are not wealth, and you are not language.

XLV. DOES a man bathe himself quickly? Then say not *Badly*, but *Quickly.* Does he drink much wine? Then say not *Too much*, but *Much.* For before

before you have discerned how things appear to him,[1] how can you know if it were done badly? Thus it will not happen to you to surrender yourself to certain of the phantasms which lay hold of the mind, while comprehending others.

XLVI. *a.* NEVER proclaim yourself a philosopher, nor talk much among the sensual about the philosophic maxims; but do the things that follow from the maxims. For example, do not discourse, at a feast, upon how one ought to eat, but eat as you ought. For remember that even so Socrates everywhere banished ostentation, so that men used to come to him desiring him to recommend them to teachers in philosophy; and he brought them away and did so, so well did he bear being overlooked.

β. And if, among the sensual, discourse should arise concerning some maxim, do you for the most part keep silence; for there is great risk that you straightway vomit up what you have not digested.

[1] This is the usual rendering of πρὶν γὰρ διαγνῶναι τὸ δόγμα. I am not sure whether it may not mean, 'Until you have analysed the nature of opinion.'

And

And when some one shall say to you that you know nothing, and you are not offended, then know that the work is begun. And as sheep do not bring their food to the shepherds, to show how much they have eaten, but digesting inwardly their provender bear outwardly wool and milk, even so do not you, for the most part, display your maxims before the sensual, but rather the works which follow from them, when they are digested.

XLVII. WHEN you have harmonised yourself to a frugal provision for your bodily needs, do not pride yourself on that; and if your drink is water, do not take every opportunity of declaring *I am a water drinker*. And if you wish at any time to inure yourself to labour and endurance, do it unto yourself and not unto the world, and do not embrace the statues,[1] but some time when you are exceedingly thirsty take a draught of cold water into your mouth, and spit it out, and say nothing about it.

[1] Philosophers used sometimes to try (and exhibit) their powers of enduring cold by embracing the statues in the market-places in winter time.

THE

α. THE position and character of the sensualist : he never looks to himself for benefit or harm, but always to external things. The position and character of the sage : he looks for benefit or harm only to himself. XLVIII.

β. The tokens of one who is making advance : he blames none ; he praises none ; he finds fault with none ; he accuses none ; he never speaks of himself as being somewhat, or as knowing aught ; when he is let or hindered in anything he accuses himself ;[1] if anyone praises him, he laughs at him in his sleeve ; if anyone blames him, he makes no defence ; he goes about like convalescents, fearing to move the parts that are settling together before they have taken hold.

γ. He has taken out of himself all desire,[2] and has transferred his aversion solely to things contrary to Nature which depend upon ourselves. He attempts nothing, except lightly and indifferently. If he is thought foolish or unlearned, he is not concerned. In one word, he watches himself as he would a treacherous enemy.

[1] See chapter v. ad fin.
[2] See ch. ii. *β.*

WHEN

XLIX. WHEN someone exalts himself on account of his powers of understanding and expounding the writings of Chrysippus,[1] then say to yourself, *If Chrysippus had not written obscurely, this man would have had nothing whereon to exalt himself.* But I, what do I desire? Is it not to learn to understand Nature and to follow her? I inquire, then, who can expound Nature to me, and hearing that Chrysippus can, I betake myself to him. But I do not understand his writings, therefore I seek an expounder for them. And so far there is nothing exalted. But when I have found the expounder, it remains for me to put into practice what he declares to me; and in this alone is there anything exalted. But if I look on the exposition as a thing to be admired in itself, what else am I become than a grammarian instead of a sage? except that the exposition is not of Homer but of Chrysippus. Therefore when one may ask me to lecture on the philosophy

[1] Chrysippus (3rd century B.C.) united brilliant talents with the true Stoic independence of character, and was very famous in his own day and for long afterwards. He philosophized with a fearless idealism, resolved to follow logic wherever it should lead him. In consequence, perhaps, of hypotheses put forward in this spirit, he was accused by some (εἰσὶν οἳ) of having advocated cannibalism and incest. None of his many writings are now extant, but Diogenes Laertius gives some traits of him.

of

of Chrysippus, I shall rather blush when I am not able to show forth works of a like nature and in harmony with the words.

L. WHATSOEVER things are preferred, in these abide as in laws which it were impious to transgress. And whatever anyone may say of you, regard it not, for neither does this concern yourself.

LI. *a.* HOW long will you still delay to hold yourself worthy of the best things, and to transgress in nothing the defining word?[1] You have accepted the maxims by which you ought to live, and do you live by them? What teacher do you still look for, to whom to hand over the task of your correction? You are no longer a boy, but now a full-grown man. If, then, you are neglectful and indifferent, and make delay after delay, and

[1] Καὶ ἐν μηδενὶ παραβαίνειν τὸν διαιροῦντα λόγον. 'Et nulla parte violare Rationem quæ rerum distinctionem docet' (Schweighäuser). The defining (or dividing) word is that which declares the distinction between the things that really concern us and those which only appear to do so.

form

form purpose after purpose, and fix again and again the days after which you will begin to attend to yourself, you will not see that you are making no advance, but will be now and always a sensualist, living and dying.

β. Therefore hold yourself worthy forthwith to live as a man of full age, and with your foot on the path ; and let whatever appears to you as the best be to you as an inviolable law. And when anything is presented to you which involves toil, or pleasure, or reputation or the loss of it, remember that now is the conflict, here are the Olympic games, and you can put them off no longer ; and that in a single day and in a single trial ground is to be lost or gained.

γ. It was thus that Socrates made himself what he was, on every occasion bringing forward his true self,[1] and never having regard to anything else than Reason. And you, though you are not

[1] This translation (for the reading ἐπὶ πάντων προσάγων ἑαυτόν) is unprecedented, and will, no doubt, be criticised. Yet it seems to me that this pregnant use of the pronoun is often distinctly visible in Epictetus, and that this translation should not seem far-fetched to anyone who has found reason in the view of his teaching which I have tried to suggest in the *Preface*.

yet

yet Socrates, yet as one who desires to be Socrates so you ought to live.

α. THE first and most necessary point in philosophy is the practice of the maxims, for example, not to lie. The second is the proof of the maxims, as, Whence it comes that one ought not to lie. The third is that which gives confirmation and coherence to these, as, Whence it comes that this is a proof, for what is proof? what is consequence? what is contradiction? what is truth? what is falsehood? LII.

β. Thus the third point is necessary through the second, and the second through the first. But the most necessary of all, and that where we must rest, is the first. But we do the contrary. For we delay in the third point, and spend all our zeal upon that, while of the first we are utterly careless: we are liars, while we are ready in explaining how it is shown that it is wrong to lie.

α. HOLD in readiness for every need, these— LIII.

'Lead me, O Zeus, and thou Destiny, whithersoever ye have appointed me to go, and may I follow fearlessly.

'But

'But if in an evil mind I be unwilling, still must I follow.'[1]

β. 'That man is wise among us, and has understanding of things divine, who has nobly agreed with Necessity.'[2]

γ. But the third also—

'O Crito, if so it seem good to the Gods, so let it be; Anytus and Melitus are able to kill me if they like, but to harm me, never.'[3]

[1] This quotation is from the Stoic philosopher Cleanthes (263 B.C.). from whose Hymn to Zeus St. Paul is supposed to have quoted the words, 'For we are also his offspring' (Acts xvii. 24).

[2] From a lost play of Euripides.

[3] Epictetus has joined together two sayings of Socrates, one from the *Crito*, the other from the *Apologia*. Anytus and Melitus were the two principal accusers of Socrates in the trial which ended in his condemnation to death.

End of the Encheiridion.

FRAGMENTS

We know
That we have power within ourselves to do
And suffer, *what*, we know not till we try;
But something nobler than to live and die:
So taught the kings of old philosophy.

SHELLEY.

SOME

SOME

FRAGMENTS OF EPICTETUS.

THE lover of mankind is not he who loves money, or pleasure, or reputation, but he only who loves that which is fair and good. I.

NOTHING is more little than love of pleasure, and love of gain, and arrogance; nothing is more great than highmindedness, and gentleness, and love of man, and beneficence. II.

IF you would have your house well established, then follow the example of Lycurgus the Spartan. For even as he did not fence his city with walls, but fortified the inhabitants with virtue, III.

 and

and so kept the city free for ever, so do you not surround yourself with a great court nor build lofty towers, but confirm the dwellers in your house with goodwill and faith and friendliness, and no harmful thing shall enter it, no, not if the whole army of evil were arrayed against it.

IV. NOT with tablets and pictures let your house be hung about, but adorn it with soberness. For those are alien to us, and a passing enchantment of the eyes; but that is akin to the soul and indelible, and an eternal ornament of the house.

V. LET not the structure of your city walls be variegated by the stones of Sparta and Eubœa, but let the philosophic teaching[1] that comes from Greece penetrate with order the minds of citizens and ministers. For by the thoughts of men are cities well established, and not with wood and stone.

VI. PHILOSOPHIC training, like gold, passes current in every place.

[1] παιδεία. See note on p. 8.

WEALTH

WEALTH is not a good thing; extravagance is a bad thing; soberness[1] is a good thing. And soberness inclines us to frugality and the acquisition of things that are good; but wealth inclines us to extravagance and draws us away from soberness. It is hard then for a sober man to be rich, or for a rich man to be sober. VII.

IF you had been born in Persia, you would not have been anxious to live in Greece, but rather to live a happy life where you were; why then, if you have been born in poverty, are you anxious to become rich instead of remaining in poverty and being happy there? VIII.

[1] σωφροσύνη (σώζω to save, φρήν the mind), inadequately rendered by 'moderation,' 'soberness,' 'temperance,' etc., is one of the most characteristic words of Greek literature, and expresses, as far as any one word can, the spirit of the best Greek art. To be σώφρων was, for a Greek philosopher, to be an ideal, regenerate man. This fragment then is exactly paralleled by Luke xviii. 24, 25. But how differently the truth is taught in each case: in one with all the fire of the Hebrews, in the other with all the light of the Greeks!

EVEN

IX. EVEN as the beacon-fires at harbours by a few dry sticks light up a great blaze and work a sufficient help to ships that are wandering on the sea, so a man who shines in a tempest-tossed State may be content with little for himself while he serves the citizens in much.

X. 'THEY are mere fops,' said Epictetus, 'who think much of themselves for things that do not depend upon ourselves. *I am better than you*, says one, *for I have large properties while you are dying of hunger.* Another says, *I am of consular rank*; another, *I am a Procurator*; another, *I have curled hair.* But a horse does not say to another horse, *I am better than you because I have much forage, and barley, and golden bits, and shining trappings*, but *because I am swifter.* Surely every creature is better or worse through his own virtue or his own fault! And has a man alone then no virtue of his own, or must we look away to our locks, and our robes, and our ancestors?'

XI. SEEK not to lay upon others what you avoid suffering yourself. You seek to avoid slavery, see

see to it that you do not yourself have slaves. For if you endure to have slaves, it seems that you yourself are first of all a slave. For evil has no communion with virtue, nor freedom with slavery.

XII. THE cruel chain of the body is circumstance; of the soul, vice. Now he who is loosed in the body but bound in the soul is a slave; but he who is bound in the body but loosed in the soul is free.

XIII. AS one who is in health would not choose to be served by the sick, nor to have sick people about him, so no one who is free would bear to be served by slaves, or that those living with him should be slaves.[1]

[1] The parallelisms of thought in Epictetus and the New Testament have often been noticed: it is a pity that the latter contains no parallel to this condemnation of slavery. Note that Epictetus, consistently with his principles, puts the objection to slavery on the side of the masters, not on that of the slaves—showing how one who consents to enslave the bodies of others can himself have no spiritual freedom, and therefore is more deeply enslaved than those of whom he calls himself the master.

BUT

XIV. BUT this above all is the task of Nature—to bind and harmonise together the forces of the phantasms of the Right and of the Useful.

XV. TO suppose that we shall render ourselves contemptible in the eyes of others unless we somehow inflict an injury on those who first displayed hostility to us, is the character of most ignoble and thoughtless men. For thus we assert that a man is despised in proportion as he is powerless to do injury. But far rather is he despised according to his inability to do good.

XVI. IT is better by agreeing with Truth to conquer Opinion, than by agreeing with Opinion to be conquered by Truth.

XVII. AS the Sun does not wait for prayers and incantations before he rises, but straightway shines forth and is hailed of all, so do not you wait to do good for applause, and noise, and praise, but do

do it of your own desire, and like the Sun you will be loved.

WHAT you should not do, you should not entertain the thought of doing. XVIII.

A PIRATE was cast ashore and perishing through hunger. And a certain man took clothing and gave it to him, and brought him into his house and supplied the rest of his needs. And some one having reproached him in that he had done good unto the wicked, *I had this respect*, he answered, *not unto the man, but unto mankind.*[1] XIX.

IF you would be good, then first believe that you are evil. XX.

IT must be understood that a conviction does not easily arise in a man unless he shall every XXI.

[1] οὐ τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἔφη, ἀλλὰ τὸ ἀνθρώπινον τετίμηκα. It is not certain that this fragment is by Epictetus.

day

day hear the same things, speak the same things, and at the same time apply them to life.

XXII. GRASSHOPPERS are musical, snails are voiceless; these delight in dryness, those in moisture. So the dew calls forth the snails, and for the sake of it they crawl out; but the beaming sun arouses grasshoppers, and in the sunlight they sing. Therefore if you wish to be musical and harmonious, do not, when the soul is bedewed with wine over your cups, send her forth to be polluted; but when men sit together and the soul is fired with Reason, then bid her speak divine things and sing the oracles of righteousness.

XXIII. AS those who have well constituted bodies are able to endure cold and heat, so those who have well constituted souls are able to bear anger, and grief, and excessive joy, and the other affections of the mind.

XXIV. TO him that dwells with righteousness every place is safe.

RATHER

RATHER than bread, let understanding (λόγος) concerning God be renewed to you day by day. XXV.

THINK of God more unremittingly than you draw your breath. XXVI.

THE sorrows of the foolish are cured by Time; of the wise, by Reason. XXVII.

HE is happily minded who grieves not for what he has not, but rejoices in what he has. XXVIII.

WOULD you live a life without grief? Then think of future things as though they had already been. XXIX.

'YOU are a little soul bearing up a corpse,' said Epictetus. XXX.

THE END.

THIS EDITION, CONSISTING OF FIVE HUNDRED COPIES, WAS PRINTED IN SEPTEMBER MDCCCLXXXI. BY SPOTTISWOODE AND CO., FOR KEGAN PAUL, TRENCH, AND CO., PUBLISHERS, LONDON.