The Meditations, Book VII

1. What is evil? It is that which you have often seen. And on the occasion of everything which happens keep this in mind, that it is that which you have often seen. Everywhere up and down you will find the same things, with which the old histories are filled, those of the middle ages and those of our own day; with which cities and houses are filled now. There is nothing new: all things are both familiar and short-lived.

2. How can our principles become dead, unless the impression [thoughts] which correspond to them are extinguished? But it is in your power continuously to fan these thoughts into a flame. I can have that opinion about anything which I ought to have. If I can, why am I disturbed? The things which are external to my mind have no relation at all to my mind.—Let this be the state of your affects, and you stand erect. To recover your life is in your power. Look at things again as you used to look at them; for in this consists the recovery of your life.

3. The idle business of show, plays on the stage, flocks of sheep, herds, exercises with spears, a bone cast to little dogs, a bit of bread into fishponds, laborings of ants and burden-carrying, runnings about of frightened little mice, puppets pulled by strings—all alike. It is your duty then in the midst of such things to show good humor and not a proud air; to understand however that every man is worth just so much as the things are worth about which he busies himself.

4. In discourse you must attend to what is said, and in every movement you must observe what is doing. And in the one you should see immediately to what end it refers, but in the other watch carefully what is the thing signified.

5. Is my understanding sufficient for this or not? If it is sufficient, I use it for the work as an instrument given by the universal nature. But if it is not sufficient, then either I retire from the work and give way to him who is able to do it better, unless there be some reason why I ought not to do so; or I do it as well as I can, taking to help me the man who with the aid of my ruling principle can do what is now fit and useful for the general good. For whatsoever either by myself or with another I can do, ought to be directed to this only, to that which is useful and well suited to society.

6. How many after being celebrated by fame have been given up to oblivion; and how many who have celebrated the fame of others have long been dead.

7. Be not ashamed to be helped; for it is your business to do your duty like a soldier in the assault on a town. How then, if being lame you cannot mount up on the battlements alone, but with the help of another it is possible?

8. Don’t let future things disturb you, for you will come to them, if it shall be necessary, having with you the same reason which now you use for present things.
9. All things are implicated with one another, and the bond is holy; and there is hardly anything unconnected with any other thing. For things have been coordinated, and they combine to form the same universe [order]. For there is one universe made up of all things, and one god who pervades all things, and one substance, and one law, [one] common reason in all intelligent animals, and one truth; if indeed there is also one perfection for all animals which are of the same stock and participate in the same reason.

10. Everything material soon disappears in the substance of the whole; and everything formal [causal] is very soon taken back into the universal reason; and the memory of everything is very soon overwhelmed in time.

11. To the rational animal the same act is according to nature and according to reason.

12. Be upright, or be made upright.

13. Just as it is with the members in those bodies which are united in one, so it is with rational beings which exist separate, for they have been constituted for one co-operation. And the perception of this will be more apparent to yourself if you often say to yourself that I am a member of the system of rational beings. But if you say that you art a part, you do not yet love men from your heart; beneficence does not yet delight you for its own sake; you still do it barely as a thing of propriety, and not yet as doing good to yourself.

14. Let there fall externally what will on the parts which can feel the effects of this fall. For those parts which have felt will complain, if they choose. But I, unless I think that what has happened is an evil, am not injured. And it is in my power not to think so.

15. Whatever any one does or says, I must be good; just as if the gold, or the emerald, or the purple were always saying this, Whatever any one does or says, I must be emerald and keep my color.

16. The ruling faculty does not disturb itself; I mean, does not frighten itself or cause itself pain. But if any one else can frighten or pain it, let him do so. For the faculty itself will not by its own opinion turn itself into such ways. Let the body itself take care, if it can, that it suffer nothing, and let it speak, if it suffers. But the soul itself, that which is subject to fear, to pain, which has completely the power of forming an opinion about these things, will suffer nothing, for it will never deviate into such a judgment. The leading principle in itself wants nothing, unless it makes a want for itself; and therefore it is both free from perturbation and unimpeded, if it does not disturb and impede itself.

17. Eudaemonia [happiness] is a good daemon, or a good thing. What then art you doing here, O imagination? Go away, I entreat you by the gods, as you did come, for I want you not. But you art come according to your old fashion. I am angry with you: only go away.

18. Is any man afraid of change? Why, what can take place without change? What then is more pleasing or more suitable to the universal nature? And can you take a bath unless the wood undergoes a change? and can you be nourished, unless the food undergoes a change? And can anything else that is useful be accomplished without change? Do you not see then that for yourself also to change is just the same, and equally necessary for the universal nature?

19. Through the universal substance as through a furious torrent all bodies are carried, being by their nature united with
and co-operating with the whole, as the parts of our body with one another. How many a Chrysippus, how many a Socrates, how many an Epictetus has time already swallowed up! And let the same thought occur to you with reference to every man and thing.

20. One thing only troubles me, lest I should do something which the constitution of man does not allow, or in the way which it does not allow, or what it does not allow now.

21. Near is your forgetfulness of all things; and near the forgetfulness of you by all.

22. It is peculiar to man to love even those who do wrong. And this happens, if when they do wrong it occurs to you that they are kinsmen, and that they do wrong through ignorance and unintentionally, and that soon both of you will die; and above all, that the wrong-doer has done you no harm, for he has not made your ruling faculty worse than it was before.

23. The universal nature out of the universal substance, as if it were wax, now moulds a horse, and when it has broken this up, it uses the material for a tree, then for a man, then for something else; and each of these things subsists for a very short time. But it is no hardship for the vessel to be broken up, just as there was none in its being fastened together.

24. A scowling look is altogether unnatural; when it is often assumed, the result is that all comeliness dies away, and at last is so completely extinguished that it cannot be again lighted up at all. Try to conclude from this very fact that it is contrary to reason. For if even the perception of doing wrong shall depart, what reason is there for living any longer?

25. Nature which governs the whole will soon change all things which you see, and out of their substance will make other things, and again other things from the substance of them, in order that the world may be ever new.

26. When a man has done you any wrong, immediately consider with what opinion about good or evil he has done wrong. For when you have seen this, you will pity him, and will neither wonder nor be angry. For either you yourself think the same thing to be good that he does or another thing of the same kind. It is your duty then to pardon him. But if you do not think such things to be good or evil, you will more readily be well disposed to him who is in error.

27. Think not so much of what you have not as of what you have: but of the things which you have select the best, and then reflect how eagerly they would have been sought, if you had them not. At the same time, however, take care that you do not through being so pleased with them accustom yourself to overvalue them, so as to be disturbed if ever you should not have them.

28. Retire into yourself. The rational principle which rules has this nature, that it is content with itself when it does what is just, and so secures tranquility.

29. Wipe out the imagination. Stop the pulling of the strings. Confine yourself to the present. Understand well what happens either to you or to another. Divide and distribute every object into the causal [formal] and the material. Think of your last hour. Let the wrong which is done by a man stay there where the wrong was done.
30. Direct your attention to what is said. Let your understanding enter into the things that are doing and the things which do them.

31. Adorn yourself with simplicity and modesty, and with indifference towards the things which lie between virtue and vice. Love mankind. Follow God. The poet says that law rules all—and it is enough to remember that law rules all.

32. About death: whether it is a dispersion, or a resolution into atoms, or annihilation, it is either extinction or change.

33. About pain: the pain which is intolerable carries us off; but that which lasts a long time is tolerable; and the mind maintains its own tranquility by retiring into itself, and the ruling faculty is not made worse. But the parts which are harmed by pain, let them, if they can, give their opinion about it.

34. About fame: look at the minds [of those who seek fame], observe what they are, and what kind of things they avoid, and what kind of things they pursue. And consider that as the heaps of sand piled on one another hide the former sands, so in life the events which go before are soon covered by those which come after.

35. From Plato: The man who has an elevated mind and takes a view of all time and of all substance, do you suppose it possible for him to think that human life is anything great? It is not possible, he said.—Such a man then will think that death also is no evil.—Certainly not.

36. From Antisthenes: It is royal to do good and to be abused.

37. It is a base thing for the countenance to be obedient and to regulate and compose itself as the mind commands, and for the mind not to be regulated and composed by itself.

38. It is not right to vex ourselves at things, for they care nothing about it.

39. May you give joy to the immortal gods and to us.

40. Life must be reaped like the ripe ears of corn. One man is born; another dies.

41. If gods care not for me and for my children, there is a reason for it.

42. For the good is with me, and the just.

43. No joining others in their wailing, no violent emotion.

44. From Plato: But I would make this man a sufficient answer, which is this: You say not well, if you think that a man who is good for anything at all ought to compute the hazard of life or death, and should not rather look to this only in all that he does, whether he is doing what is just or unjust, and the works of a good or bad man.

45. For thus it is, men of Athens, in truth: wherever a man has placed himself thinking it the best place for him, or has been placed by a commander, there in my opinion he ought to stay and to abide the hazard, taking nothing into the reckoning, either death or anything else, before the baseness [of deserting his post].

46. But, my good friend, reflect whether that which is noble and good is not something different from saving and being
saved; for as to a man living such or such a time, at least one
who is really a man, consider if this is not a thing to be dis-
missed from the thoughts: and there must be no love of life:
but as to these matters a man must entrust them to the Deity
and believe what the women say, that no man can escape his
destiny, the next inquiry being how he may best live the time
that he has to live.

47. Look around at the courses of the stars, as if you wert go-
ing along with them; and constantly consider the changes of
the elements into one another, for such thoughts purge away
the filth of the terrene life.

48. This is a fine saying of Plato: That he who is discoursing
about men should look also at earthly things as if he viewed
them from some higher place; should look at them in their
assemblies, armies, agricultural labors, marriages, treaties,
births, deaths, noise of the courts of
justice, desert places, various nations of barbarians, feasts,
lamentations, markets, a mixture of all things and an orderly
combination of contraries.

49. Consider the past,—such great changes of political su-
premacies; you may foresee also the things which will be. For
they will certainly be of like form, and it is not possible that
they should deviate from the order of the things which take
place now; accordingly to have contemplated human life for
forty years is the same as to have contemplated it for ten thou-
sand years. For what more will you see?

50.

“What which has grown from the earth to the earth,
But that which has sprung from heavenly seed,
Back to the heavenly realms returns.”

This is either a dissolution of the mutual involution of atoms,
or a similar dispersion of the senseless elements.

51.

“With food and drinks and cunning magic arts
Turning the channel’s course to ’scape from death.
The breeze which heaven has sent
We must endure, and toil without complaining.”

52. Another may be more expert in overthrowing his oppo-
nent; but he is not more social, nor more modest, nor better
disciplined to meet all that happens, nor more considerate with
respect to the faults of his neighbors.

53. Where any work can be done conformably to the reason
which is common to gods and men, there we have nothing to
fear; for where we are able to get profit by means of the activ-
ity which is successful and proceeds according to our constitu-
tion, there no harm is to be suspected.

54. Everywhere and at all times it is in your power piously to
acquiesce in your present condition, and to behave justly to
those who are about you, and to exert your skill upon your
present thoughts, that nothing shall steal into them without
being well examined.

55. Do not look around yourself to discover other men's ruling
principles, but look straight to this, to what nature leads you,
both the universal nature through the things which happen to
you, and your own nature through the acts which must be
done by you. But every being ought to do that which is ac-
cording to its constitution; and all other things have been con-
stituted for the sake of rational beings, just as among irrational
things the inferior for the sake of the superior, but the rational
for the sake of one another.
The prime principle then in man’s constitution is the social. And the second is not to yield to the persuasions of the body—for it is the peculiar office of the rational and intelligent motion to circumscribe itself, and never to be overpowered either by the motion of the senses or of the appetites, for both are animal; but the intelligent motion claims superiority, and does not permit itself to be overpowered by the others. And with good reason, for it is formed by nature to use all of them. The third thing in the rational constitution is freedom from error and from deception. Let then the ruling principle holding fast to these things go straight on, and it has what is its own.

56. Consider yourself to be dead, and to have completed your life up to the present time; and live according to nature the remainder which is allowed you.

57. Love that only which happens to you and is spun with the thread of your destiny. For what is more suitable?

58. In everything which happens keep before your eyes those to whom the same things happened, and how they were vexed, and treated them as strange things, and found fault with them: and now where are they? Nowhere. Why then do you too choose to act in the same way; and why do you not leave these agitations which are foreign to nature to those who cause them and those who are moved by them; and why art you not altogether intent upon the right way of making use of the things which happen to you? For then you will use them well, and they will be a material for you [to work on]. Only attend to yourself, and resolve to be a good man in every act which you do: and remember....

59. Look within. Within is the fountain of good, and it will ever bubble up, if you will ever dig.

60. The body ought to be compact, and to show no irregularity either in motion or attitude. For what the mind shows in the face by maintaining in it the expression of intelligence and propriety, that ought to be required also in the whole body. But all these things should be observed without affectation.

61. The art of life is more like the wrestler’s art than the dancer’s, in respect of this, that it should stand ready and firm to meet onsets which are sudden and unexpected.

62. Constantly observe who those are whose approbation you wish to have, and what ruling principles they possess. For then you will neither blame those who offend involuntarily, nor will you want their approbation, if you look to the sources of their opinions and appetites.

63. Every soul, the philosopher says, is involuntarily deprived of truth; consequently in the same way it is deprived of justice and temperance and benevolence and everything of the kind. It is most necessary to bear this constantly in mind, for thus you will be more gentle towards all.

64. In every pain let this thought be present, that there is no dishonor in it, nor does it make the governing intelligence worse, for it does not damage the intelligence either so far as the intelligence is rational or so far as it is social. Indeed in the case of most pains let this remark of Epicurus aid you, that pain is neither intolerable nor everlasting, if you bear in mind that it has its limits, and if you add nothing to it in imagination: and remember this too, that we do not perceive that many things which are disagreeable to us are the same as pain, such as excessive drowsiness, and the being scorched by heat, and the having no appetite. When then you are discontented about any of these things, say to yourself that you are yielding to pain.
65. Take care not to feel towards the inhuman as they feel towards men.

66. How do we know if Telauges was not superior in character to Socrates? For it is not enough that Socrates died a more noble death, and disputed more skillfully with the Sophists, and passed the night in the cold with more endurance, and that when he was bid to arrest Leon of Salamis, he considered it more noble to refuse, and that he walked in a swaggering way in the streets—though as to this fact one may have great doubts if it was true. But we ought to inquire what kind of a soul it was that Socrates possessed, and if he was able to be content with being just towards men and pious towards the gods, neither idly vexed on account of men's villainy, nor yet making himself a slave to any man's ignorance, nor receiving as strange anything that fell to his share out of the universal, nor enduring it as intolerable, nor allowing his understanding to sympathize with the affects of the miserable flesh.

67. Nature has not so mingled [the intelligence] with the composition of the body, as not to have allowed you the power of circumscribing yourself and of bringing under subjection to yourself all that is your own; for it is very possible to be a divine man and to be recognized as such by no one. Always bear this in mind; and another thing too, that very little indeed is necessary for living a happy life. And because you have despaired of becoming a dialectician and skilled in the knowledge of nature, do not for this reason renounce the hope of being both free and modest, and social and obedient to God.

68. It is in your power to live free from all compulsion in the greatest tranquility of mind, even if all the world cry out against you as much as they choose, and even if wild beasts tear in pieces the members of this kneaded matter which has grown around you. For what hinders the mind in the midst of all this from maintaining itself in tranquility and in a just judgment of all surrounding things and in a ready use of the objects which are presented to it, so that the judgment may say to the thing which falls under its observation: This you are in substance [reality], though in men's opinion you may appear to be of a different kind; and the use shall say to that which falls under the hand: You art the thing that I was seeking; for to me that which presents itself is always a material for virtue both rational and political, and in a word, for the exercise of art, which belongs to man or God. For everything which happens has a relationship either to God or man, and is neither new nor difficult to handle, but usual and apt matter to work on.

69. The perfection of moral character consists in this, in passing every day as the last, and in being neither violently excited nor torpid nor playing the hypocrite.

70. The gods who are immortal are not vexed because during so long a time they must tolerate continually men such as they are and so many of them bad; and besides this, they also take care of them in all ways. But you, who art destined to end so soon, art you wearied of enduring the bad, and this too when you art one of them?

71. It is a ridiculous thing for a man not to fly from his own badness, which is indeed possible, but to fly from other men's badness, which is impossible.

72. Whatever the rational and political [social] faculty finds to be neither intelligent nor social, it properly judges to be inferior to itself.

73. When you have done a good act and another has received it, why do you still look for a third thing besides these, as
fools do, either to have the reputation of having done a good act or to obtain a return?

74. No man is tired of receiving what is useful. But it is useful to act according to nature. Do not then be tired of receiving what is useful by doing it to others.

75. The nature of the All moved to make the universe. But now either everything that takes place comes by way of consequence or [continuity]; or even the chief things towards which the ruling power of the universe directs its own movement are governed by no rational principle. If this is remembered, it will make you more tranquil in many things.

Book VIII

1. This reflection also tends to the removal of the desire of empty fame, that it is no longer in your power to have lived the whole of your life, or at least your life from your youth upwards, like a philosopher; but both to many others and to yourself it is plain that you are far from philosophy. You have fallen into disorder then, so that it is no longer easy for you to get the reputation of a philosopher; and your plan of life also opposes it. If then you have truly seen where the matter lies, throw away the thought, How you shall seem [to others], and be content if you shall live the rest of your life in such wise as your nature wills. Observe then what it wills, and let nothing else distract you; for you have had experience of many wanderings without having found happiness anywhere,--not in syllogisms, nor in wealth, nor in reputation, nor in enjoyment, nor anywhere. Where is it then? In doing what man’s nature requires. How then shall a man do this? If he has principles from which come his affects and his acts. What principles? Those which relate to good and bad: the belief that there is nothing good for man which does not make him just, temperate, manly, free; and that there is nothing bad which does not do the contrary to what has been mentioned.

2. On the occasion of every act ask yourself, How is this with respect to me? Shall I repent of it? A little time and I am dead, and all is gone. What more do I seek, if what I am now doing is the work of an intelligent living being, and a social being, and one who is under the same law with God?

3. Alexander and Caius and Pompeius, what are they in comparison with Diogenes and Heraclitus and Socrates? For they were acquainted with things, and their causes [forms], and their matter, and the ruling principles of these men were the same [or conformable to their pursuits]. But as to the others, how many things had they to care for, and to how many things were they slaves!

4. [Consider] that men will do the same things nevertheless, even though you should burst.

5. This is the chief thing: Be not perturbed, for all things are according to the nature of the universal; and in a little time you will be nobody and nowhere, like Hadrianus and Augustus. In the next place, having fixed your eyes steadily on your business look at it, and at the same time remembering that it is your duty to be a good man, and what man’s nature demands, do that without turning aside; and speak as it seems to you most just, only let it be with a good disposition and with modesty and without hypocrisy.

6. The nature of the universal has this work to do,--to remove to that place the things which are in this, to change them, to take them away hence, and to carry them there. All things are
change, yet we need not fear anything new. All things are familiar [to us]; but the distribution of them still remains the same.

7. Every nature is contented with itself when it goes on its way well; and a rational nature goes on its way well when in its thoughts it assents to nothing false or uncertain, and when it directs its movements to social acts only, and when it confines its desires and aversions to the things which are in its power, and when it is satisfied with everything that is assigned to it by the common nature. For of this common nature every particular nature is a part, as the nature of the leaf is a part of the nature of the plant; except that in the plant the nature of the leaf is part of a nature which has not perception or reason, and is subject to be impeded; but the nature of man is part of a nature which is not subject to impediments, and is intelligent and just, since it gives to everything in equal portions and according to its worth, times, substance, cause [form], activity and incident. But examine, not to discover that any one thing compared with any other single thing is equal in all respects, but by taking all the parts together of one thing and comparing them with all the parts together of another.

8. You have not leisure [or ability] to read. But you have leisure [or ability] to check arrogance: you have leisure to be superior to pleasure and pain: you have leisure to be superior to love of fame, and not to be vexed at stupid and ungrateful people, nay even to care for them.

9. Let no man any longer hear you finding fault with the court life or with your own.

10. Repentance is a kind of self-reproof for having neglected something useful; but that which is good must be something useful, and the perfect good man should look after it. But no such man would ever repent of having refused any sensual pleasure. Pleasure then is neither good nor useful.

11. This thing, what is it in itself, in its own constitution! What is its substance and material? And what its causal nature [or form]? And what is it doing in the world? And how long does it subsist?

12. When you rise from sleep with reluctance, remember that it is according to your constitution and according to human nature to perform social acts, but sleeping is common also to irrational animals. But that which is according to each individual's nature is also more peculiarly its own, and more suitable to its nature, and indeed also more agreeable (V. 1).

13. Constantly and, if it be possible, on the occasion of every impression on the soul, apply to it the principles of Physic, of Ethic, and of Dialectic.

14. Whatever man you meet with, immediately say to yourself: What opinions has this man about good and bad? For if with respect to pleasure and pain and the causes of each, and with respect to fame and ignominy, death and life, he has such and such opinions, it will seem nothing wonderful or strange to me if he does such and such things; and I shall bear in mind that he is compelled to do so.

15. Remember that as it is a shame to be surprised if the fig-tree produces figs, so it is to be surprised if the world produces such and such things of which it is productive; and for the physician and the helmsman it is a shame to be surprised if a man has a fever, or if the wind is unfavorable.

16. Remember that to change your opinion and to follow him who corrects your error is as consistent with freedom as it is to
persist in your error. For it is your own, the activity which is exerted according to your own movement and judgment, and indeed according to your own understanding too.

17. If a thing is in your own power, why do you do it? but if it is in the power of another, whom do you blame,—the atoms [chance] or the gods? Both are foolish. You must blame nobody. For if you can, correct [that which is the cause]; but if you can’t do this, correct at least the thing itself; but if you can’t do even this, of what use is it to you to find fault? for nothing should be done without a purpose.

18. That which has died falls not out of the universe. If it stays here, it also changes here, and is dissolved into its proper parts, which are elements of the universe and of yourself. And these too change, and they murmur not.

19. Everything exists for some end,—a horse, a vine. Why do you wonder? Even the sun will say, I am for some purpose, and the rest of the gods will say the same. For what purpose then art you,—to enjoy pleasure? See if common sense allows this.

20. Nature has had regard in everything no less to the end than to the beginning and the continuance, just like the man who throws up a ball. What good is it then for the ball to be thrown up, or harm for it to come down, or even to have fallen? and what good is it to the bubble while it holds together, or what harm when it is burst? The same may be said of a light also.

21. Turn it [the body] inside out, and see what kind of thing it is; and when it has grown old, what kind of thing it becomes, and when it is diseased.

22. Attend to the matter which is before you, whether it is an opinion or an act or a word. You suffer this justly: for you choose rather to become good tomorrow than to be good today.

23. Am I doing anything? I do it with reference to the good of mankind. Does anything happen to me? I receive it and refer it to the gods, and the source of all things, from which all that happens is derived.

24. Just as you see your bath—soap, sweat, grime, greasy water, the whole disgusting thing—so is every part of life and every object in it.

25. Lucilla buried Verus, then Lucilla was buried. Secunda buried Maximus, and Secunda followed. Epitynchanus saw Diotimus die, and then Epitynchanus died. Antoninus saw Faustina die, and then Antoninus died. The same story always. Celer saw Hadrianus die, and then Celer died. And those sharp-witted men, either prophets or men inflated with pride, where are they now? No doubt Charax, Demetrius the Platonist, Eudaemon, and others like them were sharp minds. But all were ephemeral and are now long dead. Some indeed have not been remembered even for a short time, and others have become the heroes of fables, and again others have disappeared even from fables. Remember this then, that this little compound, yourself, must either be dissolved, or your poor breath must be extinguished, or be removed and placed elsewhere.
26. It is satisfaction to a man to do the proper works of a man. Now it is a proper work of a man to be benevolent to his own kind, to despise the movements of the senses, to form a just judgment of plausible appearances, and to take a survey of the nature of the universe and of the things which happen in it.

27. There are three relations [between you and other things]: first, the one with your body; second, to the divine cause from which all things come; and third, to those who live with you.

28. Pain is either an evil to the body—then let the body say what it thinks of it—or to the soul; but it is in the power of the soul to maintain its own serenity and tranquility, and not to think that pain is an evil. For every judgment and movement and desire and aversion is within, and no evil ascends so high.

29. Wipe out your imaginations by often saying to yourself: Now it is in my power to let no badness be in this soul, nor desire, nor any perturbation at all; but looking at all things I see what is their nature, and I use each according to its value. Remember this power which you have from nature.

30. Speak properly in the senate and to every person, whoever he may be, not with any affectation: use plain discourse.

31. Augustus' court, wife, daughter, descendants, ancestors, sister, Agrippa, kinsmen, intimates, friends, Areius, Maecenas, physicians, and sacrificing priests—the whole court is dead. Then turn to the rest, not considering the death of a single man [but of a whole race], as of the Pompeii; and that which is inscribed on the tombs: the last of his race. Then consider what trouble those before them have had that they might leave a successor; and then, that of necessity some one must be the last. Again, here consider the death of a whole race.

32. It is your duty to order your life well in every single act; and if every act does its duty as far as is possible, be content; and no one is able to hinder you so that each act shall not do its duty.—But something external will stand in the way.—Nothing will stand in the way of your acting justly and soberly and considerately.—But perhaps some other active power will be hindered.—Well, but by acquiescing in the hindrance and by being content to transfer your efforts to that which is allowed, another opportunity of action is immediately put before you in place of that which was hindered, and one which will adapt itself to this ordering of which we are speaking.

33. Receive [wealth or prosperity] without arrogance; and be ready to let it go.

34. Just as when someone has a hand cut off, or a foot, or a head, lying anywhere apart from the rest of the body, so does a man make himself, as far as he can, who is not content with what happens, and separates himself from others, or does anything unsocial. Suppose that you have detached yourself from the natural unity—for you were made by nature a part, but now you have cut yourself off—yet here there is this beautiful provision, that it is in your power again to unite yourself. God has allowed this to no other part, after it has been separated and cut asunder, to come together again. But consider the kindness by which he has distinguished man, for he has put it in his power not to be separated at all from the universal; and when he has been separated, he has allowed him to return and to be united and to resume his place as a part.

35. As the nature of the universal has given to every rational being all the other powers that it has, so we have received from it this power also. For as the universal nature converts and fixes in its predestined place everything which stands in the way and opposes it, and makes such things a part of itself,
so also the rational animal is able to make every hindrance its own material, and to use it for such purposes as it may have designed.

36. Do not disturb yourself by thinking of the whole of your life. Let not your thoughts at once embrace all the various troubles which you may expect to befall you: but on every occasion ask yourself, What is there in this which is intolerable and past bearing? for you will be ashamed to confess. In the next place remember that neither the future nor the past pains you, but only the present. But this is reduced to a very little, if you only circumscribes it, and chides your mind if it is unable to hold out against even this.

37. Does Panthea or Pergamus now sit by the tomb of Verus? Does Chaurias or Diotimus sit by the tomb of Hadrianus? That would be ridiculous. Well, suppose they did sit there, would the dead be conscious of it? and if the dead were conscious would they be pleased? and if they were pleased, would that make them immortal? Was it not in the order of destiny that these persons too should first become old women and old men and then die? What then would those do after these were dead? All this is foul smell and blood in a bag.

38. If you can see sharp, look and judge wisely, says the philosopher.

39. In the constitution of the rational animal I see no virtue which is opposed to justice; but I see a virtue which is opposed to love of pleasure, and that is temperance.

40. If you take away your opinion about that which appears to give you pain, you yourself are immune to pain.—“What is this self?” Answer: reason.—“But I am not simply reason.”—Granted. So let your reason not trouble itself. If any other part of you suffers, it can form its own judgment for itself.

41. Hindrance to the perceptions of sense is an evil to the animal nature. Hindrance to the movements [desires] is equally an evil to the animal nature. And something else also is equally an impediment and an evil to the constitution of plants. So then that which is a hindrance to the intelligence is an evil to the intelligent nature. Apply all these things then to yourself. Does pain or sensuous pleasure affect you? The senses will look to that. Has any obstacle opposed you in your efforts towards an object? If indeed you were making this effort absolutely [unconditionally, or without any reservation], certainly this obstacle is an evil to you considered as a rational animal. But if you take [into consideration] the usual course of things, you have not yet been injured nor even impeded. The things however which are proper to the understanding no other man is used to impede, for neither fire, nor iron, nor tyrant, nor abuse, touches it in any way. When it has been made a sphere, it continues a sphere.

42. It is not fit that I should give myself pain, for I have never intentionally given pain even to another.

43. Different things delight different people; but it is my delight to keep the ruling faculty sound without turning away either from any man or from any of the things which happen to men, but looking at and receiving all with welcome eyes and using everything according to its value.

44. See that you secure this present time to yourself: for those who rather pursue posthumous fame do not consider that the men of after time will be exactly such as these whom they cannot bear now; and both are mortal. And what is it in any
way to you if these men of after time utter this or that sound, or have this or that opinion about you?

45. Take me and cast me where you will; for there I shall keep my divine part tranquil, that is, content, if it can feel and act conformably to its proper constitution. Is this [change of place] sufficient reason why my soul should be unhappy and worse than it was, depressed, expanded, shrinking, frightened? and what will you find which is sufficient reason for this?

46. Nothing can happen to any man which is not a human accident, nor to an ox which is not according to the nature of an ox, nor to a vine which is not according to the nature of a vine, nor to a stone which is not proper to a stone. If then there happens to each thing both what is usual and natural, why should you complain? For the common nature brings nothing which may not be borne by you.

47. If you are pained by any external thing, it is not this thing that disturbs you, but your own judgment about it. And it is in your power to wipe out this judgment now. But if anything in your own disposition gives you pain, who hinders you from correcting your opinion? And even if you are pained because you are not doing some particular thing which seems to you to be right, why do you not rather act than complain?—But some insuperable obstacle is in the way? Do not be grieved then, for the cause of its not being done depends not on you.—But it is not worthwhile to live, if this cannot be done.—Take your departure then from life contentedly, just as he dies who is in full activity, and well pleased too with the things that are obstacles.

48. Remember that the ruling faculty is invincible, when self-collected it is satisfied with itself, if it does nothing which it does not choose to do, even if it resist from mere obstinacy.

50. A cucumber is bitter—Throw it away.—There are briers in the road.—Turn aside from them.—This is enough. Do not add, “and why were such things made in the world?” For you will be ridiculed by a man who is acquainted with nature, as you would be ridiculed by a carpenter and shoemaker if you found fault because you see in their workshop shavings and cuttings from the things which they make. And yet they have places into which they can throw these shavings and cuttings, and the universe has no external space; but the wondrous part of her art is that though she has circumscribed herself, everything within her which appears to decay and to grow old and to be useless she changes into herself, and again makes other new things from these very same, so that she requires neither substance from without nor wants a place into which she may cast that which decays. She is content then with her own space, and her own matter, and her own art.
51. Neither in your actions be sluggish nor in your conversation without method, nor wandering in your thoughts, nor let there be in your soul inward contention nor external effusion, nor in life be so busy as to have no leisure.

Suppose that men kill you, cut you in pieces, curse you. What then can these things do to prevent your mind from remaining pure, wise, sober, just? For instance, if a man should stand by a limpid pure spring, and curse it, the spring never ceases sending up potable water; and if he should cast clay into it or filth, it will speedily disperse them and wash them out, and will not be at all polluted. How then shall you possess a perpetual fountain [and not a mere well]? By forming yourself hourly to freedom conjoined with contentment, simplicity, and modesty.

52. He who does not know what the world is, does not know where he is. And he who does not know for what purpose the world exists, does not know who he is, nor what the world is. But he who has failed in any one of these things could not even say for what purpose he exists himself. What then do you think of him who [avoids or] seeks the praise of those who applaud, of men who know not either where they are or who they are?

53. Do you wish to be praised by a man who curses himself thrice every hour? Would you wish to please a man who does not please himself? Does a man please himself who repents of nearly everything that he does?

54. No longer let your breathing only act in concert with the air which surrounds you, but let your intelligence also now be in harmony with the intelligence which embraces all things. For the intelligent power is no less diffused in all parts and pervades all things for him who is willing to draw it to him than the aerial power for him who is able to respire it.

55. Generally, wickedness does no harm at all to the universe; and particularly the wickedness [of one man] does no harm to another. It is only harmful to him who has it in his power to be released from it as soon as he shall choose.

56. To my own free will the free will of my neighbor is just as indifferent as his poor breath and flesh. For though we are made especially for the sake of one another, still the ruling power of each of us has its own office, for otherwise my neighbor's wickedness would be my harm, which God has not willed in order that my unhappiness may not depend on another.

57. The sun appears to be poured down, and in all directions indeed it is diffused, yet it is not effused. For this diffusion is extension: Accordingly its rays are called Extensions because they are extended. But one may judge what kind of a thing a ray is, if he looks at the sun's light passing through a narrow opening into a darkened room, for it is extended in a right line, and as it were is divided when it meets with any solid body which stands in the way and intercepts the air beyond; but there the light remains fixed and does not glide or fall off. Such then ought to be the outpouring and diffusion of the understanding, and it should in no way be an effusion, but an extension, and it should make no violent or impetuous collision with the obstacles which are in its way; nor yet fall down, but be fixed, and enlighten that which receives it. For a body will deprive itself of the illumination, if it does not admit it.

58. He who fears death either fears the loss of sensation or a different kind of sensation. But if you shall have no sensation, neither will you feel any harm; and if you shall acquire an-
other kind of sensation, you will be a different kind of living being and you will not cease to live.

59. Human beings exist for the sake of one another. So teach them or bear with them.

60. An arrow flies in one way, the mind in another. Yet even when it is cautiously engaged in an enquiry, the mind moves no less directly to its target.

61. Enter into everyone’s guiding faculty [of reason]; and let everyone else enter into yours.

Book X

1. My soul, will you never be good, simple, bare, brighter than the body that surrounds you? Will you never enjoy an affectionate and contented disposition? Will you never be full and without a want of any kind, longing for nothing more, nor desiring anything, either animate or inanimate, for the enjoyment of pleasures? not desiring a time when you shall have a longer enjoyment, a nicer place, a more pleasant climate, or a society of men with whom you may live in harmony? Will you be satisfied with your present condition, and pleased with all that is about you, and will you convince yourself that you have everything, and that it comes from the gods, that everything is well for you, and will be well whatever shall please them, and whatever they shall give for the conservation of the perfect living being, the good and just and beautiful, which generates and holds together all things, and contains and embraces all things which are dissolved for the production of other like things? Will you never be such that you shall so dwell in community with gods and men as neither to find fault with them at all, nor be condemned by them?

2. Take care of what your nature requires to the extent that you are governed by nature only; do it and accept it, as long as your nature as a living being is not made worse by it. Next you should observe what your nature requires of you as a living being. Again, adopt all of this as long as your nature as a rational being is not impaired. Remember: a “rational being” is a social being. Follow these rules, and don’t worry about anything else.

3. Everything which happens either happens in such wise as you are formed by nature to bear it, or as you are not formed by nature to bear it. If, then, it happens to you in such way as you are formed by nature to bear it, do not complain, but bear it as you are formed by nature to bear it. But if it happens in such wise as you are not formed by nature to bear it, do not complain, for it will perish after it has consumed you. Remember, however, that you are formed by nature to bear everything, with respect to which it depends on your own opinion to make it endurable and tolerable, by thinking that it is either your interest or your duty to do this.

4. If a man is mistaken, instruct him kindly and show him his error. But if you are not able, blame yourself, or blame not even yourself.

5. Whatever may happen to you, it was prepared for you from all eternity; and the implication of causes was from eternity spinning the thread of your being, and of that which is incident to it.

6. Whether the universe is [a concourse of] atoms, or nature [is a system], let this first be established, that I am a part of the whole which is governed by nature; next, I am in a manner intimately related to the parts which are of the same kind with myself. For remembering this, inasmuch as I am a part, I shall
be discontented with none of the things which are assigned to me out of the whole; for nothing is injurious to the part if it is for the advantage of the whole. For the whole contains nothing which is not for its advantage; and all natures indeed have this common principle, but the nature of the universe has this principle besides, that it cannot be compelled even by any external cause to generate anything harmful to itself. By remembering, then, that I am a part of such a whole, I shall be content with everything that happens. And inasmuch as I am in a manner intimately related to the parts which are of the same kind with myself, I shall do nothing unsocial, but I shall rather direct myself to the things which are of the same kind with myself, and I shall turn all my efforts to the common interest, and divert them from the contrary. Now, if these things are done so, life must flow on happily, just as you may observe that the life of a citizen is happy, who continues a course of action which is advantageous to his fellow citizens, and is content with whatever the state may assign to him.

7. The parts of the whole, everything, I mean, which is naturally comprehended in the universe, must of necessity perish; but let this be understood in this sense, that they must undergo change. But if this is naturally both an evil and a necessity for the parts, the whole would not continue to exist in a good condition, the parts being subject to change and constituted so as to perish in various ways. For whether did Nature herself design to do evil to the things which are parts of herself, and to make them subject to evil and of necessity fall into evil, or have such results happened without her knowing it? Both these suppositions, indeed, are incredible. But if a man should even drop the term Nature [as an efficient power], and should speak of these things as natural, even then it would be ridiculous to affirm at the same time that the parts of the whole are in their nature subject to change, and at the same time to be surprised or vexed as if something were happening contrary to nature, particularly as the dissolution of things is into those things of which each thing is composed. For there is either a dispersion of the elements out of which everything has been compounded, or a change from the solid to the earthy and from the airy to the aerial, so that these parts are taken back into the universal reason, whether this at certain periods is consumed by fire or renewed by eternal changes. And do not imagine that the solid and the airy part belongs to you from the time of generation. For all this received its accretion only yesterday and the day before, as one may say, from the food and the air which is inspired. This, then, which has received [the accretion], changes, not that which your mother brought forth. Had you suppose that this [which your mother brought forth] implicates you very much with that other part, which has the peculiar quality [of change], this is nothing in fact in the way of objection to what is said.

8. When you have assumed these names, good, modest, true, rational, a man of equanimity, and magnanimous, take care that you do not change these names; and if you should lose them, quickly return to them. And remember that the term Rational was intended to signify a discriminating attention to every several thing, and freedom from negligence; and that Equanimity is the voluntary acceptance of the things which are assigned to you by the common nature; and that Magnanimity is the elevation of the intelligent part above the pleasurable or painful sensations of the flesh, and above that poor thing called fame, and death, and all such things. If, then, you maintain yourself in the possession of these names, without desiring to be called by these names by others, you will be another person and will enter on another life. For to continue to be such as you have hitherto been, and to be torn in pieces and defiled in such a life, is the character of a very stupid man and one over-fond of his life, and like those half-devoured fighters with wild beasts who, though covered with wounds
and gore, still entreat to be kept to the following day, though they will be exposed in the same state to the same claws and bites. Therefore fix yourself in the possession of these few names: and if you are able to abide in them, abide as if you were removed to certain islands of the Happy. But if you shall perceive that you fall out of them and do not maintain your hold, go courageously into some nook where you shall maintain them, or even depart at once from life, not in passion, but with simplicity and freedom and modesty, after doing this one [laudable] thing at least in your life, to have gone out of it thus. In order, however, to the remembrance of these names, it will greatly help you if you remember the gods, and that they wish not to be flattered, but wish all reasonable beings to be made like themselves; and if you remember that what does the work of a fig-tree is a fig-tree, and that what does the work of a dog is a dog, and that what does the work of a bee is a bee, and that what does the work of a man is a man.

9. Plays, war, astonishment, torpor, slavery, will daily wipe out those holy principles of yours. How many things without studying nature do you imagine, and how many do you neglect? But it is your duty so to look on and so to do everything, that at the same time the power of dealing with circumstances is perfected, and the contemplative faculty is exercised, and the confidence which comes from the knowledge of each several thing is maintained without showing it, but yet not concealed. For when will you enjoy simplicity, when gravity, and when the knowledge of every several thing, both what it is in substance, and what place it has in the universe, and how long it is formed to exist, and of what things it is compounded, and to whom it can belong, and who are able both to give it and take it away?

10. A spider is proud when it has caught a fly, and another when he has caught a poor hare, and another when he has taken a little fish in a net, and another when he has taken wild boars, and another when he has taken bears, and another when he has taken Sarmatians. Are not these robbers, if you examine their opinions?

11. Acquire the contemplative way of seeing how all things change into one another, and constantly attend to it, and exercise yourself about this part [of philosophy]. For nothing is so much adapted to produce magnanimity. Such a man has put off the body, and as he sees that he must, no one knows how soon, go away from among men and leave everything here, he gives himself up entirely to just doing in all his actions, and in everything else that happens he resigns himself to the universal nature. But as to what any man shall say or think about him or do against him, he never even thinks of it, being himself contented with these two things—with acting justly in what he now does, and being satisfied with what is now assigned to him; and he lays aside all distracting and busy pursuits, and desires nothing else than to accomplish the straight course through the law, and by accomplishing the straight course to follow God.

12. What need is there of suspicious fear, since it is in your power to inquire what ought to be done? And if you see clear, go by this way content, without turning back: but if you do not see clear, stop and take the best advisers. But if any other things oppose you, go on according to your powers with due consideration, keeping to that which appears to be just. For it is best to reach this object, and if you do fail, let your failure be in attempting this. He who follows reason in all things is both tranquil and active at the same time, and also cheerful and collected.
13. Inquire of yourself as soon as you wake from sleep whether it will make any difference to you if another does what is just and right. It will make no difference.

You have not forgotten, I suppose, that those who assume arrogant airs in bestowing their praise or blame on others are such as they are at bed and at board, and you have not forgotten what they do, and what they avoid, and what they pursue, and how they steal and how they rob, not with hands and feet, but with their most valuable part, by means of which there is produced, when a man chooses, fidelity, modesty, truth, law, a good daemon [happiness]?

14. To her who gives and takes back all, to nature, the man who is instructed and modest says, Give what you will; take back what you will. And he says this not proudly, but obediently, and well pleased with her.

15. Short is the little which remains to you of life. Live as on a mountain. For it makes no difference whether a man lives there or here, if he lives everywhere in the world as in a political community. Let men see, let them know a real man who lives according to nature. If they cannot endure him, let them kill him. For that is better than to live thus [as men do].

16. No longer talk at all about the kind of man that a good man ought to be, but be such.

17. Always think of time and reality in terms of the totality, and remember that each individual thing is, on the scale of existence, a mere fig-seed, and on the scale of time, one turn of a drill.

18. Look at everything that exists, and observe that it is already in dissolution and in change, and as it were putrefaction or dispersion, or that everything is so constituted by nature as to die.

19. Consider what men are when they are eating, sleeping, generating, easing themselves, and so forth. Then what kind of men they are when they are imperious and arrogant, or angry and scolding from their elevated place. But a short time ago to how many they were slaves and for what things; and after a little time consider in what a condition they will be.

20. That is for the good of each thing, which the universal nature brings to each. And it is for its good at the time when nature brings it.

21. “The earth loves the shower”; and “the solemn ether loves”; and the universe loves to make whatever is about to be. I say then to the universe, that I love as you love. And is not this too said, that "this or that loves [is wont] to be produced”?

22. Either you live here and have already accustomed yourself to it, or you are going away, and this was your own will; or you are dying and have discharged your duty. But besides these things there is nothing. Be of good cheer, then.

23. Let this always be plain to you, that this piece of land is like any other; and that all things here are the same with things on the top of a mountain, or on the sea-shore, or wherever you choose to be. For you will find just what Plato says, Dwelling within the walls of a city as in a shepherd’s fold on a mountain.

24. What is my ruling faculty now to me? and of what nature am I now making it? and for what purpose am I now using it? is it void of understanding? is it loosed and rent asunder from
social life? is it melted into and mixed with the poor flesh so as to move together with it?

25. He who flies from his master is a runaway; but the law is master, and he who breaks the law is a runaway. And he also who is grieved or angry or afraid, is dissatisfied because something has been or is or shall be of the things which are appointed by him who rules all things, and he is Law and assigns to every man what is fit. He then who fears or is grieved or is angry is a runaway.

26. A man deposits seed in a womb and goes away, and then another cause takes it, and labors on it and makes a child. What a thing from such a material! Again, the child passes food down through the throat, and then another cause takes it and makes perception and motion, and in fine, life and strength and other things; how many and how strange! Observe then the things which are produced in such a hidden way, and see the power just as we see the power which carries things downwards and upwards, not with the eyes, but still no less plainly.

27. Constantly consider how all things such as they now are, in time past also were; and consider that they will be the same again. And place before your eyes entire dramas and stages of the same form, whatever you have learned from your experience or from older history; for example, the whole court of Hadrianus, and the whole court of Antoninus, and the whole court of Philippus, Alexander, Croesus; for all those were such dramas as we see now, only with different actors.

28. Imagine every man who is grieved at anything or discontented to be like a pig which is sacrificed and kicks and screams. Like this pig also is he who on his bed in silence laments the bonds in which we are held. And consider that only to the rational animal is it given to follow voluntarily what happens; but simply to follow is a necessity imposed on all.

29. Severally on the occasion of everything that you do, pause and ask yourself if death is a dreadful thing because it deprives you of this.

30. When you art offended at any man's fault, forthwith turn to yourself and reflect in what like manner you do err yourself; for example, in thinking that money is a good thing, or pleasure, or a bit of reputation, and the like. For by attending to this you will quickly forget your anger, if this consideration also is added, that the man is compelled: for what else could he do? or, if you art able, take away from him the compulsion.

31. When you have seen Satyron the Socratic, think of either Eutyches or Hymen, and when you have seen Euphrates, think of Eutychion or Silvanus, and when you have seen Alciphron think of Tropeophorus, and when you have seen Xenophon, think of Crito or Severus, and when you have looked on yourself, think of any other Caesar, and in the case of every one do in like manner. Then let this thought be in your mind, Where then are those men? Nowhere, or nobody knows where. For thus continuously you will look at human things as smoke and nothing at all; especially if you reflect at the same time that what has once changed will never exist again in the infinite duration of time. But you, in what a brief space of time is your existence? And why art you not content to pass through this short time in an orderly way? What matter and opportunity [for your activity] art you avoiding? For what else are all these things, except exercises for the reason, when it has viewed carefully and by examination into their nature the things which happen in life? Persevere then until you shall have
made these things your own, as the stomach which is strengthened makes all things its own, as the blazing fire makes flame and brightness out of everything that is thrown into it.

32. Let it not be in any man's power to say truly of you that you art not simple or that you art not good; but let him be a liar whoever shall think anything of this kind about you; and this is altogether in your power. For who is he that shall hinder you from being good and simple? Do you only determine to live no longer unless you shall be such. For neither does reason allow [you to live], if you art not such.

33. What is that which as to this material [our life] can be done or said in the way most conformable to reason? For whatever this may be, it is in your power to do it or to say it, and do not make excuses that you art hindered. You will not cease to lament till your mind is in such a condition that, what luxury is to those who enjoy pleasure, such shall be to you, in the matter which is subjected and presented to you, the doing of the things which are conformable to man's constitution; for a man ought to consider as an enjoyment everything which it is in his power to do according to his own nature. And it is in his power everywhere. Now, it is not given to a cylinder to move everywhere by its own motion, nor yet to water nor to fire, nor to anything else which is governed by nature or an irrational soul, for the things which check them and stand in the way are many. But intelligence and reason are able to go through everything that opposes them, and in such manner as they are formed by nature and as they choose. Place before your eyes this facility with which the reason will be carried through all things, as fire upwards, as a stone downwards, as a cylinder down an inclined surface, and seek for nothing further. For all other obstacles either affect the body only, which is a dead thing; or, except through opinion and the yielding of the reason itself, they do not crush nor do any harm of any kind; for if they did, he who felt it would immediately become bad. Now, in the case of all things which have a certain constitution, whatever harm may happen to any of them, that which is so affected becomes consequently worse; but in the like case, a man becomes both better, if one may say so, and more worthy of praise by making a right use of these accidents. And finally remember that nothing harms him who is really a citizen, which does not harm the state; nor yet does anything harm the state, which does not harm law [order]; and of these things which are called misfortunes not one harms law. What then does not harm law does not harm either state or citizen.

34. To him who is penetrated by true principles even the briefest precept is sufficient, and any common precept, to remind him that he should be free from grief and fear. For example—

"Leaves, some the wind scatters on the ground—
So is the race of men."

Leaves, also, are your children; and leaves, too, are they who cry out as if they were worthy of credit and bestow their praise, or on the contrary curse, or secretly blame and sneer; and leaves, in like manner, are those who shall receive and transmit a man’s fame to after-times. For all such things as these “are produced in the season of spring,” as the poet says; then the wind casts them down; then the forest produces other leaves in their places. But a brief existence is common to all things, and yet you avoid and pursue all things as if they would be eternal. A little time, and you shall close your eyes; and him who has attended you to your grave another will soon lament.
35. The healthy eye ought to see all visible things and not to say, I wish for green things; for this is the condition of a diseased eye. And the healthy hearing and smelling ought to be ready to perceive all that can be heard and smelled. And the healthy stomach ought to be with respect to all food just as the mill with respect to all things which it is formed to grind. And accordingly the healthy understanding ought to be prepared for everything which happens; but that which says, Let my dear children live, and let all men praise whatever I may do, is an eye which seeks for green things, or teeth which seek for soft things.

36. There is no man so fortunate that there shall not be by him when he is dying some who are pleased with what is going to happen. Suppose that he was a good and wise man, will there not be at last some one to say to himself, Let us at last breathe freely, being relieved from this schoolmaster? It is true that he was harsh to none of us, but I perceived that he tacitly condemns us.—This is what is said of a good man. But in our own case how many other things are there for which there are many who wish to get rid of us. You will consider this, then, when you are dying, and you will depart more contentedly by reflecting thus: I am going away from such a life, in which even my associates in behalf of whom I have striven so much, prayed, and cared, themselves wish me to depart, hoping perchance to get some little advantage by it. Why then should a man cling to a longer stay here? Do not however for this reason go away less kindly disposed to them, but preserving your own character, and friendly and benevolent and mild, and on the other hand not as if you were torn away; but as when a man dies a quiet death, the poor soul is easily separated from the body, such also ought your departure from men to be, for nature united you to them and associated you. But does she now dissolve the union? Well, I am separated as from kins-

37. Accustom yourself as much as possible on the occasion of anything being done by any person to inquire with yourself, For what object is this man doing this? But begin with yourself, and examine yourself first.