

14. Do not wander from your path any longer, for you are not likely to read your notebooks or your deeds of ancient Rome and Greece or your extracts from their writings,* which you laid up against old age. Hasten then to the goal, lay idle hopes aside, and come to your own help, if you care at all for yourself, while still you may.

15. They* have not learnt to know the manifold significance of theft, of sowing, of buying, resting, seeing what ought to be done. This depends not on the bodily eye but on another kind of vision.

16. Body, vital spirit, mind: of the body, sense perceptions; of the vital spirit, impulses; of the mind, doctrines. To be impressed by images belongs also to the beasts of the field, to be swayed by the strings of impulse to wild beasts, to men who sin against nature,* to a Phalaris* or a Nero. To have the mind as guide to what appear to be duties belongs also to men who do not believe in gods, who betray their own country, who do anything and everything once they have locked their doors.* If then all else is common to you with those whom I have mentioned, it remains the peculiar mark of the good man to love and welcome what befalls him and is the thread fate spins for him; not to soil the divinity seated within his breast nor to disquiet it with a mob of imaginations, but to preserve and to propitiate it, following God in orderly wise, uttering no word contrary to truth, doing no act contrary to justice. And if all men disbelieve that he lives simply, modestly, and cheerfully, he is not angry with any one of them nor diverted from the road that leads to the goal of his life, at which he must arrive, pure, peaceful, ready to depart, in effortless accord with his own birth-spirit.

BOOK IV

1.* The sovereign power within, in its natural state, so confronts what comes to pass as always to adapt itself readily to what is feasible and is presented to it. This is because it puts its affection upon no material of its own choice; rather it sets itself upon its objects with a reservation, and then makes the opposition which encounters it into material for itself. It is like a fire, when it masters what falls into it, whereby a little taper would have been put out, but a bright fire very quickly appropriates and devours what is heaped upon it, and leaps up higher out of those very obstacles.

2. Nothing that is undertaken is to be undertaken without a purpose, nor otherwise than according to a principle which makes the art of living perfect.

3*. Men look for retreats for themselves, the country, the sea-shore, the hills; and you yourself, too, are peculiarly accustomed to feel the same want. Yet all this is very unlike a philosopher, when you may at any hour you please retreat into yourself. For nowhere does a man retreat into more quiet or more privacy than into his own mind, especially one who has within such things that he has only to look into, and become at once in perfect ease; and by ease I mean nothing else but good behaviour. Continually, therefore, grant yourself this retreat and repair yourself. But let them be brief and fundamental truths,* which will suffice at once by their presence to wash away all sorrow, and to send you back without repugnance to the life to which you return.

For what is it that shall move your repugnance? The wickedness of men? Recall the judgement that reasonable creatures have come into the world for the sake of one another; that patience is a part of justice; that men do wrong involuntarily; and how many at last, after enmity, suspicion, hatred, warfare, have been laid out on their death-beds and come to dust.

This should make you pause. But shall what is assigned from Universal Nature be repugnant to you? Revive the alternative: 'either Providence or blind atoms',* and the many proofs that the Universe is a kind of Commonwealth. Shall then the things of the flesh still have hold upon you? Reflect that the understanding, when once it takes control of itself and recognizes its own power, does not mingle with the vital spirit, be its current smooth or broken, and finally reflect upon all that you have heard and consented to about pain and pleasure.

Well, then, shall mere glory distract you? Look at the swiftness of the oblivion of all men; the gulf of endless time, behind and before; the hollowness of applause, the fickleness and folly of those who seem to speak well of you, and the narrow room in which it is confined. This should make you pause. For the entire earth is a point in space, and how small a corner thereof is this your dwelling place, and how few and how paltry those who will sing your praises here!

Finally, therefore, remember your retreat into this little domain which is yourself, and above all be not disturbed nor on the rack, but be free and look at things as a man, a human being, a citizen,* a creature that must die. And among what is most ready to hand into which you will look have these two: the one, that things do not take hold upon the mind, but stand without unmoved, and that disturbances come only from the judgement within; the second, that all that your eyes behold will change in a moment and be no more; and of how many things you have already witnessed the changes, think continually of that.

The Universe is change, life is opinion.

4. If mind is common to us all, then also the reason, whereby we are reasoning beings, is common. If this be so, then also the reason which enjoins what is to be done or left undone is common. If this be so, law also is common; if this be so, we are citizens; if this be so, we are partakers in one constitution; if this be so, the Universe is a kind of Commonwealth. For in what other common government can we say that the whole race of men partakes? And thence, from this common City, is derived our mind itself, our reason and our sense of law, or from what else?

For as the earthy is in me a portion from some earth, and the watery from a second element, and the vital spirit from some source, and the hot and fiery from yet another source of its own (for nothing comes from nothing, just as nothing returns to nothing), so therefore the mind also has come from some source.

5. Death is like birth, a mystery of Nature; a coming together out of identical elements and a dissolution into the same. Looked at generally this is not a thing of which man should be ashamed, for it is contrary neither to what is conformable to a reasonable creature nor to the principle of his constitution.

6. These are natural and necessary results from creatures of this kind, and one who wants this to be otherwise wants the fig-tree* not to yield its acrid juice. And in general remember this, that within a very little while both he and you will be dead, and a little after not even your name nor his will be left.

7. Get rid of the judgement; you are rid of the 'I am hurt'; get rid of the 'I am hurt', you are rid of the hurt itself.

8. What does not make a man worse than he was, neither makes his life worse than it was, nor hurts him without or within.

9. It was a law of necessity that what is naturally beneficial should bring this about.

10. 'All that comes to pass comes to pass with justice.' You will find this to be so if you watch carefully. I do not mean only in accordance with the ordered series of events, but in accordance with justice and as it were by someone who assigns what has respect to worth. Watch, therefore, as you have begun and whatever you do, do it with this, with goodness in the specific sense in which the notion of the good man is conceived. Preserve this goodness in everything you do.

11. Don't regard things in the light in which he who does the wrong judges them, nor as he wishes you to judge them: but see them as in truth they are.

12. In these two ways you must always be prepared: the one, only to act as the principle of the royal and law-giving art*

prescribes for the benefit of mankind; the second, to change your purpose, if someone is there to correct and to guide you away from some fancy of yours.* The guidance must, however, always be from a conviction of justice or common benefit ensuing, and what you prefer must be similar, not because it looked pleasant or popular.

13. 'You have reason?' 'Yes, I have?' 'Why not use it then? If this is doing its part, what else do you want?'

14. You came into the world as a part. You will vanish in that which gave you birth, or rather you will be taken up into its generative reason by the process of change.*

15. Many grains of incense upon the same altar; one falls first, another later, but difference there is none.*

16. Within ten days you will appear a god even to those* to whom today you seem a beast or a baboon, if you return to your principles and your reverence of the Word.

17. Don't live as though you were going to live a myriad years. Fate is hanging over your head; while you have life, while you may, become good.

18. How great a rest from labour he gains who does not look to what his neighbour says or does or thinks,* but only to what he himself is doing, in order that exactly this may be just and holy, or in accord with a good man's conduct. 'Do not look round at a black character',* but run towards the goal, balanced, not throwing your body about.

19. The man in a flutter for after-fame fails to picture to himself that each of those who remember him will himself also very shortly die, then again the man who succeeded him, until the whole remembrance is extinguished as it runs along a line of men who are kindled and then put out. And put the case that those who will remember never die, and the remembrance never dies, what is that to you! And I do not say that it is nothing to the dead; what is praise to the living, except perhaps for some practical purpose? For now you are putting off unseasonably the gift of Nature, which does not depend on the testimony of some one else . . .*

20. Everything in any way lovely is of itself and terminates in itself, holding praise to be no part of itself. At all events, in no case does what is praised become better or worse. This I say also of what is commonly called lovely, for instance materials and work of art; and indeed what is there lacking at all to that which is really lovely? No more than to law, no more than to truth, no more than to kindness or reverence of self. Which of these is lovely because it is praised or corrupted because it is blamed? Does an emerald become worse than it was, if it be not praised? And what of gold, ivory, purple, a lute, a sword-blade, a flower-bud, and little plant?

21. You ask how, if souls continue to exist,* the atmosphere has room for them from time eternal. But how does the ground have room for the bodies of those who for so long an age are buried in it? The answer is that, as on earth change and dissolution after a continuance for so long make room for other dead bodies, so in the atmosphere souls pass on and continue for so long, and then change and are poured out and are kindled being assumed into the generative principle of Universal Nature, and so provide room for those which succeed to their place. This would be the answer presuming that souls do continue. But we must consider not only the multitude of bodies that are thus buried, but also the number of animals eaten every day by ourselves and the rest of the animal creation. How large a number are devoured and in a manner of speaking buried in the bodies of those who feed upon them; and yet there is room to contain them because they are turned into blood, because they are changed into forms of air and heat. How shall we investigate the truth of this? By a distinction into the material and the causal.

22. Do not wander without a purpose, but in all your impulses render what is just, and in all your imaginations preserve what you apprehend.

23.* Everything is fitting for me, my Universe, which fits thy purpose. Nothing in thy good time is too early or too late for me; everything is fruit for me which thy seasons, Nature, bear; from

thee, in thee, to thee are all things. The poet sings: 'Dear city of Cecrops',* and will you not say: 'Dear city of God'?

24. Democritus has said: 'Do few things, if you would enjoy tranquillity'.* May it not be better to do the necessary things and what the reason of a creature intended by Nature to be social prescribes, and as that reason prescribes? For this brings not only the tranquillity from doing right but also from doing few things. For if one removes most of what we say and do as unnecessary, he will have more leisure and less interruption. Wherefore on each occasion he should remind himself: 'Is this *not* one of the necessary things?' And he should remove not actions merely that are unnecessary, but imaginations also, for in this way superfluous actions too will not follow in their train.

25. Make trial for yourself how the life of the good man, too, fares well, of the man pleased with what is assigned from Universal Nature and contented by his own just action and kind disposition.

26. You have seen those things, look now at these: do not trouble yourself, make yourself simple. Does a man do wrong? He does wrong to himself. Has some chance befallen you? It is well; from Universal Nature, from the beginning, all that befalls was determined for you and the thread was spun.* The sum of the matter is this: life is short; the present must be turned to profit with reasonableness and right. Be sober without effort.

27. Either an ordered Universe or a medley heaped together mechanically but still an order; or can order subsist in you and disorder in the Whole! And that, too, when all things are so distinguished and yet intermingled and sympathetic.*

28. A black heart is* an unmanly heart, a stubborn heart; resembling a beast of prey, a mere brute, or a child; foolish, crafty, ribald, mercenary, despotic.

29. If he is a foreigner* in the Universe who does not recognize the essence of the Universe, no less is he a foreigner, who does not recognize what comes to pass in it. A fugitive is he who runs away from the reasonable law of his City; a blind man,

he who shuts the eye of the mind; a beggar, he who has need of another and has not all that is necessary for life in himself; a blain on the Universe, he who rebels and separates himself from the reason of our common nature because he is displeased with what comes to pass (for Nature who bore you, brings these things also into being); a fragment cut off from the City, he who cuts off his own soul from the soul of reasonable creatures, which is one.

30. Here is a philosopher without a tunic,* another without a book, another here half-naked. 'I have no bread,' he says, 'still I stand firm by the Word.' And I have nourishment from my lessons and yet do not stand firm.

31. Love the art which you were taught, set up your rest in this. Pass through what is left of life as one who has committed all that is yours, with your whole heart, to the gods, and of men making yourself neither despot nor servant to any.

32.* Call to mind by way of example the time of Vespasian: you will see everything the same: men marrying, bringing up children, falling ill, dying, fighting, feasting, trading, farming, flattering, asserting themselves, suspecting, plotting, praying for another's death, murmuring at the present, lusting, heaping up riches, setting their heart on offices and thrones. And now that life of theirs is no more and nowhere.

Again pass on to the time of Trajan; again everything the same. That life, too, is dead. In like manner contemplate and behold the rest of the records of times and whole nations; and see how many after their struggles fell in a little while and were resolved into the elements. But most of all you must run over in mind those whom you yourself have known to be distracted in vain, neglecting to perform what was agreeable to their own constitution, to hold fast to this and to be content with this. And here you are bound to remember that the attention paid to each action has its own worth and proportion; only so you will not be dejected if in smaller matters you are occupied no farther than was appropriate.

33. Words familiar in olden times are now archaisms; so also the names of those whose praises were hymned in bygone days

are now in a sense archaisms;* Camillus, Caeso, Volesus, Dentatus;* a little after, Scipio too and Cato; then also Augustus, then also Hadrian and Antoninus. For all things quickly fade and turn to fable, and quickly, too, utter oblivion covers them like sand. And this I say of those who shone like stars to wonder at; the rest, as soon as the breath was out of their bodies, were 'unnoticed and unwept'.* And what after all is everlasting remembrance? Utter vanity. What then is that about which a man ought to spend his pains? This one thing;* right understanding, neighbourly behaviour, speech which would never lie, and a disposition welcoming all which comes to pass, as necessary, as familiar, as flowing from a source and fountain like itself.

34. With your whole will surrender yourself to Clotho to spin your fate into whatever web of things she will.

35.* All is ephemeral, both what remembers and what is remembered.

36. Contemplate continually all things coming to pass by change, and accustom yourself to think that Universal Nature loves nothing so much as to change what is and to create new things in their likeness. For everything that is, is in a way the seed of what will come out of it, whereas you imagine seeds to be only those which are cast into the earth or into the womb. But that is very unscientific.*

37. You will presently be dead and are not yet simple, untroubled, void of suspicion that anything from outside can hurt you, not yet propitious to all men, nor counting wisdom to consist only in just action.

38. Look into their governing principles, even the wise among them, what petty things they avoid and what pursue!

39. Your evil does not consist in another's governing principle, nor indeed in any change and alteration of your environment. Where then? Where the part of you which judges about evil is. Let it not frame the judgement, and all is well. Even if what is nearest to it, your body, is cut, cauterized, suppurates, mortifies, still let the part which judges about these things be at rest; that

is, let it decide that nothing is good or evil which can happen indifferently to the evil man and the good. For what happens indifferently to one whose life is contrary to Nature and to one whose life is according to Nature, this is neither according to nor contrary to Nature.

40. Constantly think of the Universe as one living creature, embracing one being and one soul; how all is absorbed into the one consciousness of this living creature; how it compasses all things with a single purpose, and how all things work together to cause all that comes to pass, and their wonderful web and texture.

41. You are a spirit bearing the weight of a dead body, as Epictetus used to say.*

42. For what comes to pass in the course of change nothing is evil, as nothing is good for what exists in consequence of change.

43. There is a kind of river of things passing into being, and Time is a violent torrent.* For no sooner is each seen, then it has been carried away, and another is being carried by, and that, too, will be carried away.

44. All that comes to pass is as familiar and well known as the rose in spring and the grape in summer. Of like fashion are sickness, death, calumny, intrigue, and all that gladdens or saddens the foolish.

45. What follows is always organically related to what went before; for it is not like a simple enumeration of units separately determined by necessity, but a rational combination; and as Being is arranged in a mutual co-ordination, so the phenomena of Becoming display no bare succession but a wonderful organic interrelation.

46. Always remember what Heraclitus said:* 'the death of earth is the birth of water, the death of water is the birth of atmosphere, the death of atmosphere is fire, and conversely'. Remember, too, his image of the man who forgets the way he is going; and: 'they are at variance with that with which they most continuously have converse (Reason which governs the Universe),

and the things they meet with every day appear alien to them'; and again: 'we must not act and speak like men who sleep, for in sleep we suppose that we act and speak'; and 'we must not be like children with parents', that is, accept things simply as we have received them.

47. Just as, if one of the gods told you: 'tomorrow you will be dead or in any case the day after tomorrow', you would no longer be making that day after important any more than tomorrow, unless you are an arrant coward (for the difference is a mere trifle), in the same way count it no great matter to live to a year that is an infinite distance off rather than till tomorrow.

48. Think continually how many physicians have died, after often knitting their foreheads over their patients; how many astrologers after prophesying other men's deaths, as though to die were a great matter; how many philosophers after endless debate on death or survival after death; how many paladins after slaying their thousands; how many tyrants after using their power over men's lives with monstrous arrogance, as if themselves immortal; how many entire cities have,* if I may use the term, died, Helice, Pompeii, Herculaneum, and others innumerable. Run over, too, the many also you know of, one after another. One followed this man's funeral and then was himself laid on the bier; another followed him, and all in a little while. This is the whole matter: see always how ephemeral and cheap are the things of man—yesterday, a spot of albumen,* tomorrow, ashes or a mummy. Therefore make your passage through this span of time in obedience to Nature and gladly lay down your life, as an olive, when ripe, might fall, blessing her who bare it and grateful to the tree which gave it life.

49. Be like the headland on which the waves continually break, but it stands firm and about it the boiling waters sink to sleep. 'Unlucky am I, because this has befallen me.' Nay rather: 'Lucky am I, because, though this befell me, I continue free from sorrow, neither crushed by the present, nor fearing what is to come.' For such an event might have befallen any man, but not every man would have continued in it free from sorrow. On what

grounds then is this ill fortune more than that good fortune? Do you, speaking generally, call what is not a deviation from man's nature a man's ill fortune, and do you suppose that what is not opposed to his natural will is a deviation from his nature? Very well, you have been taught what that will is. Can what has befallen you prevent your being just, high-minded, temperate, prudent, free from rash judgements, trustful, self-reverent, free, and whatever else by its presence with him enables a man's nature to secure what is really his? Finally, in every event which leads you to sorrow, remember to use this principle: that this is not a misfortune, but that to bear it like a brave man is good fortune.

50. An unscientific but none the less a helpful support to disdain of death is to review those who have clung tenaciously to life. What more did they gain than those who died prematurely? In every case they are laid in some grave at last: Caedicianus, Fabius, Julianus, Lepidus,* and any others like them, who after carrying many to the grave were themselves carried out. To speak generally the difference is a small one, and this difference long-drawn-out through what great toils and with what sorts of men and in how weak a body. Do not count it then as a thing . . .; for see the gulf of time behind and another infinite time in front: in this what difference is there between a three-days-old infant and a Nestor of three generations?

51. Run always the short road, and Nature's road is short. Therefore say and do everything in the soundest way, because a purpose like this delivers a man from troubles and warfare, from every care and superfluity.

BOOK V

1. At dawn of day, when you dislike being called,* have this thought ready: 'I am called to man's labour; why then do I make a difficulty if I am going out to do what I was born to do and what I was brought into the world for? Is it for this that I am fashioned, to lie in bedclothes and keep myself warm?' 'But this is more pleasant.' 'Were you born then to please yourself; in fact for feeling, not for action? Can't you see the plants, the birds, the ants,* the spiders, the bees each doing his own work, helping for their part to adjust a world? And then you refuse to do a man's office and don't make haste to do what is according to your own nature.' 'But a man needs rest as well.' I agree, he does, yet Nature assigns limits to rest, as well as to eating and drinking, and you nevertheless go beyond her limits, beyond what is sufficient; in your actions only this is no longer so, there you keep inside what is in your power. The explanation is that you do not love your own self, else surely you would love both your nature and *her* purpose. But other men who love their own crafts wear themselves out in labours upon them, unwashed and unfed; while you hold your own nature in less honour than the smith his metal work, the dancer his art, the miser his coin, the lover of vainglory his fame. Yet they, when the passion is on them, refuse either to eat or to sleep sooner than refuse to advance the objects they care about, whereas you imagine acts of fellowship to bring a smaller return and to be deserving of less pains.

2. How simple to reject and to wipe away every disturbing or alien imagination, and straightway to be in perfect calm.

3. Make up your mind that you deserve every word and work that is according to Nature, and do not allow the ensuing blame or speech of any men to talk you over; but, if it is right to be done or said, do not count yourself undeserving of it. Those others have their own selves to govern them, and use their several

inclinations. Don't look round at that, but walk the straight way, following your own and the common Nature, for the path of them both is one.

4. I walk in Nature's way until I shall lie down and rest, breathing my last in this from which I draw my daily breath, and lying down on this from which my father drew his vital seed, my mother her blood, my nurse her milk; from which for so many years I am fed and watered day by day; which bears my footstep and my misusing it for so many purposes.

5. 'Your mental powers they cannot admire.' Granted! but there is much else of which you cannot say: 'that is no gift of mine'. Bring forth then what is wholly in your power, freedom from guile, dignity, endurance of labour, distaste for pleasure, contentment with your portion, need of little, kindness, freedom, plain-living, reserve in speech, magnanimity. See you not how much you are able to bring forth, where there is no excuse of want of gift or want of facility, and yet you are content to keep a lower place? Are you obliged to grumble, to be grasping, to flatter, to blame your poor body, to be obsequious, to vaunt yourself, to be tossed about in mind, because you have been fashioned without talent? No, by heaven, you had the power to be rid of all this long ago, and only, if at all, to be convicted of some slowness and tardiness of understanding; and even there you should exercise yourself, not disregarding your faults nor finding satisfaction in your dullness.

6. One kind of man, when he does a good turn to someone, is forward also to set down the favour to his account. Another is not forward to do this, but still within himself he thinks as though he were a creditor and is conscious of what he has done. A third is in a sense not even conscious of what he has done, but he is like a vine which has borne grapes, and asks nothing more when once it has borne its appropriate fruit. A horse runs, a hound tracks, bees make honey, and a man does good, but doesn't know that he has done it* and passes on to a second act, like a vine to bear once more its grapes in due season. You ought then to be one of these who in a way are not aware of what they do. 'Yes,

but one ought to be aware precisely of this; for', he argues, 'it is a mark of the social being to perceive it too.' What you are saying is true, but you take what is now meant in the wrong way; because of this you will be one of those whom I mentioned above, for they, too, are led astray by a kind of plausible reasoning. But if you make up your mind to understand what is meant, do not be afraid of omitting thereby any social act.'

7. A prayer of the people of Athens: 'Rain, beloved Zeus, rain on the cornfields and the plains of Attica.' One ought to pray thus simply and freely, or not to pray at all.

8. We commonly say: 'Aesculapius' ordered a man horse-exercise, cold baths, or no shoes'; similarly we might say: 'Universal Nature ordered him sickness, disablement, loss or some other affliction.' In the former phrase 'ordered' virtually means 'laid this down for him as appropriate to health'; in the latter what befits every man has been laid down for him as appropriate to the natural order. So, too, we say things 'befit us' as workmen talk of squared blocks 'fitting' in walls or pyramids bonding with one another in a definite structure. For in the whole of things there is one connecting harmony, and as out of all material bodies the world is made perfect into a connected body, so out of all causes the order of Nature is made perfect into one connected cause. Even quite simple folk have in their minds what I am saying, for they use the phrase; 'it was sent to him'; and so this was 'sent' to him, that is, 'this was ordered for him'. Accordingly let us accept these orders as we accept what Aesculapius orders. Many of them, too, are assuredly severe, yet we welcome them in hopes of health. Let the performance and completion of the pleasure of the Universal Nature seem to you to be your pleasure, precisely as the conduct of your health is seen to be, and so welcome all that comes to pass, even though it appear rather cruel, because it leads to that end, to the health of the universe, that is to the welfare and well-being of Zeus. For he would not 'send' this to one, if it were not to the well-being of the whole, no more than any living principle you may choose 'sends' anything which is not appropriate to what is governed

by it. Thus there are two reasons why you must be content with what happens to you: first because it was for you it came to pass, for you it was ordered and to you it was related, a thread of destiny stretching back to the most ancient causes; secondly because that which has come to each individually is a cause of the welfare and the completion and in very truth of the actual continuance of that which governs the Whole. For the perfect Whole is mutilated if you sever the least part of the contact and continuity alike of its causes as of its members; and you do this so far as in you lies, whenever you are disaffected, and in a measure you are destroying it.

9. Don't be disgusted, don't give up, don't be impatient if you do not carry out entirely conduct based in every detail upon right principles; but after a fall return again, and rejoice if most of your actions are worthier of human character. Love that to which you go back, and don't return to Philosophy as to a schoolmaster, but as a man with sore eyes to the sponge and salve, as another to a poultice, another to a fomentation. For so you will show that to obey Reason is no great matter but rather you will find rest in it. Remember, too, that philosophy wills nothing else than the will of your own nature, whereas you were willing some other thing not in accord with Nature. For what is sweeter than this accord? Does not pleasure overcome us just by sweetness? Well, see whether magnanimity, freedom, simplicity, consideration for others, holiness are not sweeter; for what is sweeter than wisdom itself when you bear in mind the unbroken current in all things of the faculty of understanding and knowledge?

10. Realities are so veiled, one might say, from our eyes that not a few and those not insignificant thinkers* thought them to be incomprehensible, while even the Stoics think them difficult of comprehension; and all our assent to perceptions is liable to alter. For where is the infallible man to be met? Pass on, then, to objects of experience—how short their duration, how cheap, and able to be in the possession of the bestial,* the harlot, or the brigand. Next pass to the characters of those who live with you, even the best of whom it is hard to suffer, not to say that it is

hard for a man even to endure himself. In such a fog and filth,* in so great a torrent of being and time and movement and moving things, what can be respected or be altogether the object of earnest pursuit I do not see. On the contrary, one must console oneself by awaiting Nature's release, and not chafing at the circumstances of delay, but finding repose only in two things: one, that nothing will befall me which is not in accordance with the nature of the Whole; the other, that it is in my power to do nothing contrary to my God and inward Spirit; for there is no one who shall force me to sin against this.

11. 'To what purpose, then, am I now using my soul?' In every case ask yourself this question and examine yourself: 'What have I now in this part which men call the governing part, and whose soul have I at present? A child's, a boy's, a woman's, a despot's, a dumb animal's, a dangerous beast's?'

12. You could apprehend the character of what the majority of men fancy to be 'goods' like this. If a man were to conceive the existence of real goods, like wisdom, temperance, justice, fortitude, he could not with those in his mind still listen to the popular proverb about 'goods in every corner', for it will not fit. But with what appear to the majority of men to be goods in his mind he will listen to and readily accept what the comic poet* said as an appropriate witticism. In this way even the majority perceive the difference, otherwise this proverb would not in the one case offend and be disclaimed, whereas in the case of wealth and the blessings which lead to luxury or show we accept it as a witticism to fit the case. Go on, then, and ask whether one should respect and conceive to be good, things to which when one has thought of them one could properly apply the proverb that their owner is so well off that he 'has not a corner where to ease himself'.

13. I was composed of a formal and a material substance; and of these neither will pass away into nothingness, just as neither came to exist out of nothingness. Thus, every part of me will be assigned its place by change into some part of the Universe, and that again into another part of the Universe, and so on to infinity.

By a similar change both my parents and I came to exist, and so on to another infinity of regression. For there is no reason to prevent one speaking so, even if the Universe is governed according to finite periods (of coming to be and passing away).*

14. Reason and the method of reasoning are abilities, sufficient to themselves and their own operations. Thus, they start from their appropriate principle and proceed to their proposed end; wherefore reasonable acts are called right acts, to indicate the rightness of their path.

15. A man ought to treasure none of these things, which does not fall to a man's portion *qua* man. They are not requirements of a man, nor does man's nature profess them, nor are they accomplishments of man's nature. Accordingly man's end does not lie in them, and certainly not the good which is complementary to his end. Moreover, if any of these were given as his portion to man, it would not have been his portion to disdain them and to resist them, nor would the man who made himself independent of them have been laudable nor the man who took less of them than he might, have been good, if they were really 'goods'. But as things are, the more a man robs himself of these and other such, the more he forbears when he is robbed of them, so much the more is he good.

16. As are your repeated imaginations so will your mind be, for the soul is dyed by its imaginations.* Dye it, then, in a succession of imaginations like these: for instance, where it is possible to live, there also it is possible to live well: but it is possible to live in a palace, therefore it is also possible to live well in a palace.* Or once more: a creature is made for that in whose interest it was created: and that for which it was made, to this it tends: and to what it tends, in this is its end: and where its end is, there is the advantage and the good alike of each creature: therefore fellowship is the good of a reasonable creature. For it has been proved long ago* that we are born for fellowship; or was it not plain that the inferior creatures are in the interests of the superior, the superior of one another? But the animate are

superior to the inanimate and the reasoning to the merely animate.

17. To pursue the impossible is madness: but it is impossible for evil men not to do things of this sort.

18. Nothing befalls anything which that thing is not naturally made to bear. The same experience befalls another, and he is unruffled and remains unharmed; either because he is unaware that it has happened or because he exhibits greatness of soul.* Is it not strange that ignorance and complaisance are stronger than wisdom . . . ?

19. Things as such do not touch the soul in the least: they have no avenue to the soul nor can they turn or move it. It alone turns and moves itself, and it makes what is submitted to it resemble the judgements of which it deems itself deserving.

20.* In one relation man is the nearest creature to ourselves, so far as we must do them good and suffer them. But so far as they are obstacles to my peculiar duties, man becomes something indifferent to me as much as sun or wind or injurious beast. By these some action might be hindered, but they are not hindrances to my impulse and disposition, because of my power of reservation and adaptation; for the understanding adapts and alters every obstacle to action to suit its object, and a hindrance to a given duty becomes a help, an obstacle in a given path a furtherance.

21. Reverence the sovereign power over things in the Universe; this is what uses all and marshals all. In like manner, too, reverence the sovereign power in yourself; and this is of one kind with that. For in you also this is what uses the rest, and your manner of living is governed by this.

22. What is not injurious to the city* does not injure the citizens either. On the occasion of every imagination that you have been injured apply this canon: 'If the city is not injured by this neither am I injured.' But if the city is injured you must not be angry, only point out to him who injured the city what he has failed to see.

23. Repeatedly dwell on the swiftness of the passage and departure of things that are and of things that come to be. For substance is like a river in perpetual flux,* its activities are in continuous changes, and its causes in myriad varieties, and there is scarce anything which stands still, even what is near at hand; dwell, too, on the infinite gulf of the past and the future, in which all things vanish away. Then how is he not a fool who in all this is puffed up or distracted or takes it hardly, as if he were in some lasting scene, which has troubled him for long?

24. Call to mind the whole of Substance of which you have a very small portion, and the whole of time whereof a small hair's breadth has been determined for you, and of the chain of causation whereof you are how small a link.

25. Another does wrong. What is that to me? Let him look to it; he has his own disposition, his own activity. I have now what Universal Nature wills me to have, and I do what my own nature wills me to do.

26. See that the governing and sovereign part of your soul is undiverted by the smooth or broken movement in the flesh, and let it not blend therewith, but circumscribe itself, and limit those affections within the (bodily) parts. But when they are diffused into the understanding by dint of that other sympathy,* as needs must be in a united system, then you must not try to resist the sensation, which is natural, yet the governing part must not of itself add to the affection the judgement that it is either good or bad.

27. 'Live with the gods.' But he is living with the gods who continuously exhibits his soul to them, as satisfied with its dispensation and doing what the deity, the portion of himself* which Zeus has given to each man to guard and guide him, wills. And this deity is each man's mind and reason.

28. Are you angry with the man whose person or whose breath is rank?* What will anger profit you? He has a foul mouth, he has foul armpits; there is a necessary connexion between the effluvia and its causes. 'Well, but the creature has reason, and

can, if he stops to think, understand why he is offensive.' Bless you! and so too have you reason; let reasonable disposition move reasonable disposition;* point it out, remind him; for if he hearkens, you will cure him and anger will be superfluous. You are neither play-actor nor harlot.

29. As you intend to live when you depart, so you are able to live in this world; but if they do not allow you to do so, then depart this life, yet so as if you suffered no evil fate. The chimney smokes* and I leave the room. Why do you think it a great matter? But while no such reason drives me out, I remain a free tenant and none shall prevent me acting as I will, and I will what agrees with the nature of a reasonable and social creature.

30.* The mind of the Whole is social. Certainly it has made the inferior in the interests of the superior and has connected the superior one with another. You see how it has subordinated, coordinated, and allotted to each its due and brought the ruling creatures into agreement one with another.

31.* How have you hitherto borne yourself to gods, parents, brother, wife, children, masters, tutors, friends, connexions, servants? Has your relation to all men hitherto been: 'not to have wrought nor to have said a lawless thing to any'?* Remind yourself of the kinds of things you have passed through and the kinds you have had strength to endure; that the story of your life is written and your service accomplished.* How many beautiful things have been revealed, how many pleasures and pains you have looked down upon, how many ambitions ignored, to how many unkind persons you have been kind!

32. Why do the ignorant and unlearned confound men of knowledge and learning? What soul has knowledge and learning? That which knows the beginning and end and the reason which informs the whole substance and through all eternity governs the Whole according to appointed cycles.

33. In how short a time, ashes or a bare anatomy, and either a name or not even a name; and if a name, then a sound and an echo.* And all that is prized in life empty, rotten, and petty;

puppies biting one another, little children quarrelling, laughing, and then soon crying. And Faith, Self-respect, Right, and Truth 'fled to Olympus from the spacious earth'.* What, then, still keeps one here, if the sensible is everchanging,* never in one stay, the senses blurred and subject to false impressions; the soul itself an exhalation from blood, and a good reputation in such conditions vanity? What shall we say? Wait in peace, whether for extinction or a change of state;* and until its due time arrives, what is sufficient? What else than to worship and bless the gods, to do good to men, to bear them and to forbear;* and, for all that lies within the limits of mere flesh and spirit, to remember that this is neither yours nor in your power?

34. You are able always to have a favourable tide, if you are able to take a right path, if, that is, you are able both to conceive and to act with rectitude. These two things are common to God's soul and to man's, that is, to the soul of every reasonable creature: not to be subject to another's hindrance, to find his good in righteous act and disposition, and to terminate his desire in what is right.

35. If this is neither evil of mine nor action which results from evil of mine, and if the Universe is not injured, why am I troubled because of it? And what injury is there to the Universe?

36. Don't be carried away by imagination which sees only the surface, but help men as best you may and as they deserve, even though their loss be of something indifferent. Do not, however, imagine the loss to be an injury, for that habit is bad. Like the old man who,* when he went away, used to ask for his foster-child's top, but did not forget that it was a top; so you should act also in this instance. And so you are lamenting in the pulpit!* Have you forgotten, my friend, what these things were worth? 'I know, but to the sufferers* they were of vast importance.' Is that a reason why you should make a fool of yourself too?

37. 'There was a time when I was fortune's favourite, wherever and whenever she visited me.' Yes, but to be fortune's favourite meant assigning good fortune to yourself; and good fortune means good dispositions of the soul, good impulses, good actions.