

BOOK VIII

1. This also conduces to contempt of vainglory, that it is no longer in your power to have lived your whole life, or at any rate your life from manhood, in the pursuit of philosophy. To yourself as well as to many others it is plain that you fall far short of philosophy. And so you are tainted, and it is no longer easy for you to acquire the reputation of a philosopher. Your calling, too,* in life has a rival claim. Therefore, if you have truly seen where the matter at issue lies, put away the question of what men will think of you and be satisfied if you live the rest of your life, be it more or less, as your nature wills. Consider accordingly what it does will, and let nothing besides distract you; for experience has taught you in how many paths you have strayed and nowhere found the good life: not in logical arguments, not in riches, not in glory, not in self-indulgence, nowhere. Where then is it to be found?* In doing what man's nature requires. How then will he do this? If he hold fast doctrines upon which impulses and actions depend. What doctrines are these? They concern good and evil, how nothing is good for man which does not make him just, sober, brave, and free; nothing evil which does not produce effects the opposite of these.

2. On the occasion of each act, ask yourself: 'How is this related to me? Shall I repent of it? But a little while and I am dead and all things are taken away. What more do I require, if my present work is the work of an intelligent and social creature, subject to the same law as God?'

3.* Alexander, Julius Caesar, and Pompeius, what are they by comparison with Diogenes, Heraclitus, and Socrates? For these men saw reality and its causal and material aspects, and their ruling selves were self-determined; but as for the former, how much there was to provide for, and of how many things they were the servants.

4. Even if you break your heart, none the less they* will do just the same.

5. In the first place, be not troubled; for all things are according to Universal Nature, and in a little while you will be no one and nowhere, even as Hadrian and Augustus are no more. Next, looking earnestly at the question, perceive its essence, and reminding yourself that your duty is to be a good man, and what it is that man's nature demands, do that without swerving, and speak the thing that appears to you to be most just, provided only that it is with kindness and modesty, and without hypocrisy.

6. The work of Universal Nature is this: to transfer what is here to there, to make changes, to take up from here and to carry there. All things are alterations, but the assignments, too, are impartial: all things are familiar, but not so that we need dread some new experience.

7. Every natural thing is satisfied when it fares well, and a reasonable nature fares well when it gives its assent to nothing false or obscure in its imaginations, directs its impulses only to social ends, desires and avoids only what is in our power, and welcomes all that is assigned by Universal Nature. For it is a part of Universal Nature, just as the leaf's nature is part of the plant's, only in that case the leaf's nature is part of a Nature naturally without sense or reason and able to be hindered, whereas man's nature is part of a Nature which is unhindered and reasonable and just, inasmuch as it assigns to each, impartially and according to its worth, its share of times, substance, cause, activity, experience. Consider, however, not whether you will find one thing equal to another in everything, but whether the whole of this taken together is not equal to the whole of that other.

8.* You are not able to read; but you are able to restrain your arrogance, you are able to rise above pleasures and pains, you are able to be superior to fame, you are able not only not to be angry with the unfeeling and graceless, but to care for them besides.

9. Let no one any longer hear you finding fault with your life in a palace; nay, do not even hear yourself.

10. Regret is blame of oneself for having let something useful go by; but the good must be something useful and worth the attention of a really good man. Now no really good man would regret having let a pleasure go by: no pleasure, therefore, is either useful or good.
11. What is this by itself in its own constitution, what is its substance or substrate, what its causal element, what its function in the world and how long a time does it persist?
12. When you are called from sleep with difficulty,* revive the thought that to render social acts is according to your constitution and to human nature, but to sleep is what you share also with dumb animals. Now what to every creature is according to Nature is also more closely related to it, more part of its flesh and bone, yes, and also more agreeable.
13. Continually and, if possible, on the occasion of every imagination, test it by natural science, by psychology, by logic.*
- 14.* Whatever man you meet, say to yourself at once: 'what are the principles this man entertains about human goods and ills?' For if he has certain principles about pleasure and pain and the sources of these, about honour and dishonour, about death and life, it will not seem surprising or strange to me if he acts in certain ways, and I shall remember that he is obliged to act like this.
15. Remember that it is as absurd to be surprised that the world brings forth the fruits with which it teems as that the fig-tree should bear figs.* And it is absurd for the physician or the master of a ship to be surprised, if a patient is feverish or if a head wind gets up.
- 16.* Remember that to change your course and to follow someone who puts you right is not to be less free. For the change is your own action, proceeding according to your own impulse and decision, and indeed according to your mind.
17. If it is in your power to decide, why do you do it? But if in another's, whom do you find fault with? The atoms or the

gods? Either is madness. You must find fault with no one. If you are able, put him right; if you can't do this, at least put the thing itself right; but if you can't even do this, to what purpose still does fault-finding tend? For nothing should be done without a purpose.

18. What dies does not fall outside the Universe. If it remains here and changes here, it is also resolved here into the eternal constituents, which are elements of the Universe and of yourself. And the elements themselves change and make no grievance of it.

19. Each has come into being for a purpose—a horse, say, or a vine. Why are you surprised? So the Sun God will say: 'I came into being for a purpose', and the rest of the gods too. What then is the purpose of your coming to be? 'To please yourself?*' See whether the idea allows itself to be framed.

20. Nature has designed the ending of each thing, no less than its beginning and its continuance, like one who throws a ball up. What good is it to the ball to go up or harm to come down and even fall to the ground? What good to the bubble to be blown or harm to it to burst? The same is true of a candle.

21. Turn it inside out and see the sort of thing it is, what it is like when it grows old or falls sick or . . . [*gap in text*] Short-lived alike are praiser and the praised, he who remembers and he who is remembered. Moreover, they live in a mere corner of this region of the globe and even here all are not in accord, nor is even a man in accord with himself. The whole earth, too, is a mere point.*

22. Attend to the subject, the activity, the doctrine, or the meaning.

You deserve to suffer this; so you would rather become good tomorrow than be good today.

23. Am I doing something? I relate the act to beneficence to men. Does an accident befall me? I accept it, relating it to the gods and to the source of all things, from which all that comes to pass depends by a common thread.

24.* As your bath appears to your senses—soap, sweat, dirt, greasy water, all disgusting—so is every piece of life and every object.

25.* Lucilla laid Verus in the grave, Lucilla followed; Secunda buried Maximus, Secunda next; Epitynchanus buried Diotimus, Epitynchanus next; Antoninus Faustina, Antoninus next. The same story over again. Celer Hadrian, Celer came next. Where now are those acute minds, those who unveiled the future, those who were swollen with pride? acute minds like Charax and Demetrius and Eudaemon and others of their kind. All creatures of a day, dead long since; some remembered not even for a little while, some turned to fable, and some even now fading out of fable. Keep these facts in mind, that your own frame is bound either to be scattered into atoms or your spirit to be extinguished or to change its place and be stationed somewhere else.

26. A man's joy is to do what is proper to man, and man's proper work is kindness to his fellow man, disdain of the movements of the senses, to discern plausible imaginations, to meditate on Universal Nature and the work of her hands.

27. There are three relations: one to your environment, one to the divine cause from which all things come to pass for all, one to those who live at the same time with you.

28. Pain is an evil, either to the body, in which case let the body say that it is so, or to the soul. But it is in the soul's power to preserve its own quiet and calm,* and not to judge pain to be an evil; for every judgement, impulse, desire, or aversion is within, and nothing evil makes its way up to this.

29. Wipe out impressions by continually saying to yourself: it is in my power now not to allow any wickedness to be in this soul of mine, any appetite or disturbance at all, but seeing what is the character of them all I employ each according to its worth. Remember this power as Nature requires.

30.* Speak both in the senate and to every man of whatever

rank with propriety, without affectation. Use words that ring true.

31. The court of Augustus, his wife, daughter, grandsons, stepsons, sister, Agrippa, his kinsmen, familiar friends, Areios,* Maecenas,* doctors, sacrificial ministers—a whole court dead. Next pass on to other courts—death not of a single individual, but of a family, like the children of Pompeius. Then the familiar inscription upon tombs: *THE LAST OF HIS LINE*. Calculate all the anxiety of those who preceded them in order to leave behind an heir, and then it was ordained that one should be the last; here again a whole family dead.

32. You must plan your life, one action at a time, and be content if each acquires its own end as best it can; and that it should acquire its end, no one at all can prevent you. 'But some external obstacle will be in the way.' None to prevent action with justice, temperance, and due reflection. 'But possibly some other activity will be hindered.' Still, by meeting the actual obstacle with resignation and good-temperedly altering your course to what is granted you, a new action is at once substituted, which will fit into the plan of which we are speaking.

33. Accept without pride, relinquish without a struggle.

34. If you have ever seen a dismembered hand or foot or a head cut off,* lying somewhere apart from the rest of the trunk, you have an image of what a man makes of himself, so far as in him lies, when he refuses to associate his will with what happens and cuts himself off or when he does some unneighbourly act. You have somehow made yourself an outcast from the unity which is according to Nature; for you came into the world as a part and now you have cut yourself off. Yet here there is this admirable provision that it is in your power to make yourself once more part of the unity—God has permitted this to no other part, to come together again, once it has been severed and cut off. But consider the kindness with which he has honoured man. He has put it in his power, to begin with, not to be broken off from the Whole, and then, if he has been broken off, to come back again

once more and to grow together and to recover his portion as a part.

35. As each reasonable creature receives the rest of his abilities from the Nature of the Whole, so have we received this ability, too, from her. Just as she converts every obstacle and resistance, puts it into its place in the order of necessity and makes it a part of herself, so, too, the reasonable creature can make every obstacle material for himself and employ it for whatever kind of purpose he has set out upon.

36. Do not allow the imagination of the whole of your life to confuse you, do not dwell upon all the manifold troubles which have come to pass and will come to pass, but ask yourself in regard to every present piece of work: what is there here that can't be borne and can't be endured? You will be ashamed to make the confession. Then remind yourself that it is not the future or the past that weighs heavy upon you, but always the present, and that this gradually grows less, if only you isolate it and reprove your understanding, if that is not strong enough to hold out against it, thus taken by itself.

37. Is Panthea* or Pergamos* still sitting by the funeral bier of Verus; Chabrias or Diotimus* by Hadrian's bier? Absurd! And if they were still sitting there, would the dead perceive it? And if they did perceive it, would it give them pleasure? And, if it gave them pleasure, would the mourners live for ever? Were not they too fated first to become old men and women, and then to die? And when they were dead, what would those they mourned do afterwards? This is all a smell of corruption and blood, and dust in a winding sheet.

38. If you have a sharp sight; 'see', says he,* 'and judge, by the wisest judgements you have.'

39. In the constitution of a reasonable creature I see no virtue able to oppose justice: but I see one able to oppose pleasure, self-control.

40. If you cancel your judgement about what seems to pain you, you yourself stand firm on surest ground. 'What is self?'

'Reason.' 'But I am not reason.' 'Granted; then do not let reason itself trouble itself, but if some other part of you is harmed, let it form its own judgement about itself.'

41. An obstacle to sense perception is injurious to animal nature; an obstacle to impulse is equally injurious to animal nature. (And something else may similarly be an obstacle and injurious to the constitution of a plant.) Thus then an obstacle to reason is injurious to a reasoning nature. Transfer, therefore, all these considerations to yourself. Perhaps pain and pleasure are affecting you. Sense affection must look to it. Did an obstacle oppose your impulse? If you started out to satisfy it without mental reservation, the obstacle is at once injurious to you as a reasonable being; but if you experience the general lot, you are not yet hurt or hindered. The properties of the mind, you know, no one else is wont to hinder, for neither fire nor steel nor despot nor abuse affect it one whit, when it has become 'a sphere rounded and at rest'.*

42. I do not deserve to give myself pain, for I never deliberately gave another pain.

43. One thing gives joy to one man, another to another; it is my joy if I keep my governing self intact, not turning my back on any human being nor on anything that befalls men, but seeing everything with kind eyes, welcoming and employing each occasion according to its merits.

44. See that you bestow this present time upon yourself. Those who rather run after fame in the future leave out of account that men hereafter will be just such others as these whom they find hard to bear, and those men, too, will be liable to death. What, after all, is it to you if men hereafter resound your name with such and such voices or have such and such a judgement about you?

45. 'Take me up and cast me where you please.' For there I shall keep the divinity within me propitious; satisfied, that is, if it should behave and act consistently with its own constitution.

Is this a sufficient reason why my soul should be in evil case,

should lower itself, be humbled, craving, fettered, fluttering? What will you discover to be a sufficient reason for that?

46. Nothing can happen to any human being which is not an incident appropriate to man, nor to an ox which is not appropriate to oxen, nor to a vine which is not appropriate to vines, nor to a stone which is not peculiar to a stone. If then that happens to each which is both customary and natural, why should you be discontented with your lot? For the Universal Nature did not bring to you what you could not bear.

47. If you suffer pain because of some external cause, what troubles you is not the thing but your decision about it, and this it is in your power to wipe out at once. But if what pains you is something in your own disposition, who prevents you from correcting your judgement? And similarly, if you are pained because you fail in some particular action which you imagine to be sound, why not continue to act rather than to feel pain? 'But something too strong for you opposes itself.' Then do not be pained, for the reason why the act is not done does not rest with you. 'Well, but if this be left undone, life is not worth living.' Depart then from life* in a spirit of good will, even as he dies who achieves his end, contented, too, with what opposes you.

48. Remember that the governing self becomes invincible* when it withdraws into itself and is satisfied with itself, doing nothing which it does not will to do, even if its opposition is unreasonable. How much more then when it decides both with reason and circumspection about a given case? On this account the understanding free from passions is a citadel of refuge;* for man has nothing stronger into which to retreat and be thereafter inexpugnable. He then who has not seen this is uninstructed; he who has seen it and does not retreat is unfortunate.

49. Do not say more to yourself than the first impressions report. You have been told that some one speaks evil of you. This is what you have been told; you have not been told that you are injured. I see that the little child is ill; this is what I see, but that he is in danger I do not see. In this way then abide always by

the first impressions and add nothing of your own from within, and that's an end of it; or rather one thought you may add, as one who is acquainted with every change and chance of the world.

50. The cucumber is bitter? Put it down. There are brambles in the path? Step to one side. That is enough, without also asking: 'Why did these things come into the world at all?' Because the student of Nature will ridicule the question, exactly as a carpenter or cobbler would laugh at you if you found fault because you see shavings and clippings* from their work in their shops. Still, they do have a place to throw rubbish into, whereas Universal Nature has nothing outside himself, and yet the astonishing thing in *her* way of working is that, having fixed her own limits, she is ever changing into herself everything within those limits that looks as though it were going bad and getting old and useless, and out of these very things creating again others that are young, in order that she may need no substance from outside nor require any place to throw away what begins to decay. Thus she is satisfied with her own room, her own material and her own way of working.

51. Be not a sluggard in action nor confused in conversation nor wandering in imagination. Briefly, neither contract into yourself nor boil over in spirit nor in your mode of life leave no room for leisure.

'They kill you, cut you in pieces, pursue you with curses.'* What has this to do with your understanding abiding pure, sane, temperate, and just? As if a man should stand by a sweet and crystal spring* of water and curse it, but it never ceases bubbling up in water fresh to drink, and if he throw in mud or dung, it will quickly break it up and wash it away and will in no way be discoloured. How then shall you possess an overflowing fountain, not a mere cistern? If you guard yourself every hour unto freedom, contentedly, too, simply and reverently.

52*. He who does not know that the Universe exists, does not know where he is. He who does not know the purpose of the Universe, does not know who he is nor what the Universe is. He

who fails in any one of these respects could not even declare the purpose of his own birth. What then do you imagine him to be, who shuns or pursues the praises of men who applaud, and yet do not know either where they are or who they are?

53. Do you wish to be praised by a man who curses himself three times every hour? Do you wish to please a man who doesn't please himself? Does a man please himself who repents of nearly everything that he does?

54. No longer merely breathe with the atmosphere that surrounds you, but now think also with the mind that surrounds all things. For the power of mind is as much poured out everywhere and distributed for him who is willing to absorb it, as the power of atmosphere for him who is able to respire it.

55. In general evil does no injury to the Universe, and particular evil does no injury to a neighbour, but only injures him to whom it is permitted to be delivered from it as soon as ever he himself determines.

56. To my will the will of a neighbour is as indifferent as his vital spirit and his flesh. For even though we were brought into the world more than anything else for the sake of one another, still each of our governing selves has its own sovereign right; for otherwise the evil of my neighbour would surely be evil of mine, and that was not God's good pleasure, in order that my unhappiness might not depend on someone other than myself.

57. The sun appears to be poured down and indeed is poured in every direction but not poured out. For this pouring is extension, and so its beams are called rays from their being extended.* Now you may see what kind of thing a ray is by observing the sun's light streaming through a chink into a darkened room. For it is stretched in a straight line, and rests so to speak upon any solid body that meets it and cuts off the flow of air beyond. It rests there and does not glide off or fall. The pouring and diffusion of the understanding then should be similar, in no way a pouring out, but an extension, and it should not rest forcibly or violently on obstacles that meet it nor yet fall down, but stand

still and illuminate the object that receives it; for that which does not reflect it will rob itself of the light.

58. He who fears death fears either total loss of consciousness or a change of consciousness. Now if you should no longer possess consciousness, you will no longer be aware of any evil; alternatively, if you possess an altered consciousness, you will be an altered creature and will not cease from living.

59. Men have come into the world for the sake of one another. Either instruct them then or bear with them.

60. An arrow's path and the mind's path are different. Nevertheless, both when it is on its guard and when it revolves round a subject of inquiry, the path of mind is none the less direct and upon its object.

61. Enter into the governing self of every man and permit every other man to enter into your own.

BOOK IX

1. Whosoever does injustice commits sin; for Universal Nature having made reasonable creatures for the sake of one another, to benefit each other according to desert but in no wise to do injury, manifestly he who transgresses her will sins against the most venerable of the gods, because Universal Nature is a nature of what is, and what is is related to all that exists.

And further, he who lies sins in regard to the same divine being, and she is named Truth and is the first cause of all truths. Now he who lies voluntarily commits sin in so far as by deceit he does injustice, and he who lies involuntarily sins, in so far as he is discordant with Universal Nature and creates disorder by fighting against the natural order of the Universe; for he who is carried of himself counter to truth does so fight, since he had before received from Nature aptitudes by neglecting which he is now not able to distinguish falsehood from truth.

Moreover, he who runs after pleasures as goods and away from pains as evils commits sin; for being such a man he must necessarily often blame Universal Nature for distributing to bad and good contrary to their desert, because the bad are often employed in pleasures and acquire what may produce these, while the good are involved in pain and in what may produce this.

And further, he who fears pains will sometimes fear what is to come to pass in the Universe, and this is at once sinful, while he who pursues pleasures will not abstain from doing injustice, and this is plainly sinful. But those who wish to follow Nature, being like-minded with her, must be indifferent towards the things to which she is indifferent, for she would not create both were she not indifferent towards both. Whosoever, therefore, is not himself indifferent to pain and pleasure, death and life, honour and dishonour, which Universal Nature employs indifferently, plainly commits sin.

And by 'Universal Nature employing these indifferently', I mean that in the natural order they happen indifferently to what comes to pass and follows upon an original impulse of Providence, whereby from an original cause it had an impulse to this world order, having conceived certain principles of what should come to be, and appointed powers generative of substances and changes and successions of the like kind.

2. A wiser man's part had been to go away from men without tasting falsehood, hypocrisy, luxury, and pride; a second-best course is to breathe your last filled at least with distaste for these things. Or is it your choice to sit down with wickedness and does not your experience even yet persuade you to flee from the plague?* For corruption of understanding is much more a plague than such a distemper and change of this environing atmosphere; for this is a plague to animals,* as animate beings, that is a plague to men, as human beings.

3. Disdain not death, but be well satisfied with it, because this, too, is one of the things which Nature wills. For as are adolescence and old age, growth and maturity, development of teeth and beard and grey hair, begetting, conception, and childbearing and the rest of the natural functions which life's seasons bring, such also is actual dissolution. This, therefore, is like a man of trained reason, not to be rash or violent or disdainful in the face of death, but to wait for it as one of the natural functions; and, as you now wait for the unborn child to come forth from your wife's womb,* so expect the hour in which your soul will drop from this shell.

And if you would have an everyday rule to touch your heart, it will make you most contented with death to dwell upon the objects from which you are about to be parted and the kind of characters* with whom your soul will be no longer contaminated. For you should in no wise be offended by them, but rather both care for them and bear them gently, yet still remember that your deliverance will not be from men like-minded* with yourself. This alone, if anything could, might draw you back and detain you in life, were it granted you to live

with those who had adopted the same doctrines; but, as it is, you see how great is the burden in the discord of life lived with them, so that you say: 'Come swiftly, death, for fear I, too, forget myself.'

4. Whosoever does wrong, wrongs himself; whosoever does injustice, does it to himself, making himself evil.

5. Often he who omits an act does injustice, not only he who commits an act.

6. Sufficient are the present judgement that grasps its object, the present social act, the present disposition well satisfied with all that comes to pass from a cause outside the self.

7. Wipe out imagination: check impulse: quench desire: keep the governing self in its own control.

8. One vital spirit is distributed in irrational creatures: one mind spirit is divided in rational creatures; just as one element earth is in all earthy things and we see by one light and breathe one atmosphere, all that have sight and vital spirit.

9. All that partake in something common to them hasten towards what is of the same kind. The earthy all tends to earth, the watery all flows together, and the nature of air is similar so that they even need things to hold them apart by compulsion. Fire rises because of the elemental fire, but is so ready to combine in combustion with all fire here below that every material that is a little too dry is easily ignited, because what hinders ignition is mixed in it in too small proportions. Therefore also, all that partakes of a common mind similarly, or even more swiftly, hastens to what is akin; for in proportion as it is superior to the rest, so is it more ready to mix and be blended with its own kind.

At any rate there were found from the first* among irrational creatures, hives, and flocks, care for nestlings, and what resembles love; for already there were vital spirits there, and in the higher part the tendency to union was found raised in degree, as it was not in plants or minerals or trees. Among reasonable creatures, constitutions, friendships, households, and gatherings

were found, conventions too and armistices in war. Among the yet higher, even among beings in a sense separated, there subsisted a unity such as obtains among the stars. Thus progress towards the higher was able to produce a sympathy even in what are separated.

Notice then what occurs now; only intelligent creatures have now forgotten that zeal and inclination to each other, and here only you do not see concurrence. Yet even so, they are overtaken in their flight, for nature is too strong for them.* Watch and you will observe what I mean; certainly one would more quickly discover something earthy not attaching itself to the earthy than man entirely cut off from man.

10. Man, God, and the Universe alike bear fruit, each in the appropriate season, but if custom has come to apply the word strictly of the vine and similar fruits, no matter. Reason, too, has its fruit, for the Whole and for itself, and from reason other results similar to itself come to pass.

11. If you can, change him by teaching, but if you cannot, remember that kindness was given you for this. The gods, too, are kind* to such men and even co-operate with them to some objects, to health, to wealth, to reputation, so good are they to men; and you may be so too; or say, who is there to prevent you?

12. Labour, not like one who is unfortunate, nor wishing to be pitied or admired: rather have only one wish: to bestir yourself or to keep quiet as the reason of the City requires.

13. Today I escaped all circumstance, or rather I cast out all circumstance, for it was not outside me, but within, in my judgements.

14. All things are the same: familiar in experience, transient in time, sordid in their material; all now such as in the days of those whom we have buried.

15.* Things stand outside our doors, themselves by themselves, neither knowing nor reporting anything about themselves. What then does report about them? The governing self.

16. Not in feeling but in action is the good and ill of the reasonable social creature; even as his excellence and his failings are not in feeling but in action.

17. To the stone that is thrown up it is no ill to be carried down nor good to be carried upwards.

18. Penetrate within, into their governing selves, and you will see what critics you fear, and what poor critics they are of themselves.

19. All things are in change, and you yourself in continuous alteration and in a sense destruction. So, too, is the Universe as a whole.

20.* Another's wrong act you must leave where it is.

21.* The ceasing of action, impulse, judgement is a pause and a kind of death, not any evil. Now pass to the ages of your life, boyhood for instance, youth, manhood, old age; for each change of these was a death; was it anything to be afraid of? Pass now to your manner of life under your grandfather, then under your mother, then under your (adoptive) father, and when you discover many another destruction, change, and ending, ask yourself: 'Was it anything to be afraid of?' So then even the ceasing, pause, and change of your whole life is not.

22. Make haste to your own governing self, to that of the Whole, and that of this man. To your own, to make it a righteous mind; to that of the whole, to remind yourself what it is of which you are a part; to this man's, that you may observe whether it is ignorance or design,* and may reflect at the same time that his self is of one kind with your own.

23. As you are yourself a complement of a social system, so let every act of yours be complementary of a social living principle. Every act of yours, therefore, which is not referred directly or remotely to the social end sunders your life, does not allow it to be a unity, and is a partisan act, like a man in a republic who for his own part sunders himself from the harmony of his fellows.

24. Children's fits of temper and dolls and 'spirits carrying dead bodies',* so that the story of the visit to the abode of Death* strikes one more vividly.

25. Penetrate to the individuality of the cause and separating it from the matter, look into it; next isolate the time which at longest this individuality can by its nature subsist.

26. You endure a myriad troubles because you are not content with your governing self doing the kind of things it was formed to do. But enough.

27. When another blames or hates you or men express such sentiments, go to their inward selves, pass in and see what kind of men they are. You will see that you ought not to torment yourself in order that they may hold some opinion about you. You must, however, be well disposed to them; for in the natural order they are friends, and moreover the gods help them in a variety of ways, by dreams, by prophecy;* to get, however, the objects about which they are concerned.

28. The rotations of the Universe are the same, up and down, from age to age.

Now either the mind of the Whole has an impulse to each individual; and if that is so, welcome what it initiates; or else it had an impulse once for all and what follows is consequential upon that; and why are you anxious? And whether the Whole be God, all is well—or whether it be Chance, somehow molecules or atoms, be not yourself then ruled by Chance.

29. In a moment earth will cover us all, then earth, too, will change and what ensues will change to eternity and that again to eternity. A man who thinks of the continuous waves of change and alteration, and the swift passage of all mortal things, will hold them in disdain.

29. The matter of the Whole is a torrent; it carries all in its stream. What then, man, is your part? Act as Nature this moment requires; set about it, if it is granted you, and don't look round to see whether anyone will know. Don't hope for Plato's Utopia,* but be content to make a very small step forward and reflect that the result even of this is no trifle. How cheap are these mere men with their policies* and their philosophic practice, as they suppose; they are full of drivel.* For who will

change men's convictions? And without a change of conviction what else is there save a bondage of men who groan and pretend to obey? Go to now and talk to me of Alexander, Philip, and Demetrius of Phalerum.* If they saw what Universal Nature willed and went to school to her, I will follow: but if they were actors on the world's stage,* no one has condemned me to imitate them. The work of Philosophy is simplicity and self-respect; lead me not away to vainglory.

30.* 'Look from above' at the spectacle of myriad herds, myriad rites, and manifold journeying in storm and calm; diversities of creatures who are being born, coming together, passing away. Ponder, too, the life led by others long ago, the life that will be led after you, the life being led in uncivilized races; how many do not even know your name, how many will very soon forget it and how many who praise you perhaps now will very soon blame you; and that neither memorial nor fame nor anything else at all is worth a thought.

31. Calm, in respect of what comes to pass from a cause outside you; justice, in acts done in accord with a cause from yourself: that is to say, impulse and act terminating simply in neighbourly conduct, because for you this is according to Nature.

32. You have the power to strip off many superfluities which trouble you and are wholly in your own judgement; and you will make a large room at once for yourself by embracing in your thought the whole Universe,* grasping ever-continuing Time and pondering the rapid change in the parts of each object, how brief the interval from birth to dissolution, and the time before birth a yawning gulf even as the period after dissolution equally boundless.

33. All that your eyes behold will very quickly pass away, and those who saw it passing will themselves also pass away very quickly; and he who dies in extreme age will be made equal in years with the infant who meets an untimely end.

34. What governing selves are theirs, what mean ends have

they pursued, for what mean reasons do they give love and esteem! Accustom yourself to look at their souls in nakedness.* When they fancy that their blame hurts or their praise profits, how great their vanity.

35. Loss is nothing else but change. In this Universal Nature rejoices and by her all things come to pass well. From eternity they came to pass in like fashion and will be to everlasting in other similar shapes. Why then do you say 'all things ever came to pass badly and that all will ever be bad'? So no power it seems was ever found in so many gods to remedy this,* but the world is condemned to be straitened in uninterrupted evils?

36.* The rottenness of the matter which underlies everything. Water, dust, bones, stench. Again: marble, an incrustation of earth; gold and silver, sediments; your dress, the hair of animals; the purple dye, blood, and so all the rest. What is of the nature of breath too is similar and changing from this to that.

37. Enough of this wretched way of life, of complaining and mimicry. Why are you troubled, what novelty is there in this, what takes you out of yourself? The formal side of things? Look it in the face. The material side then? Face that. Besides these there is nothing, except even now at this late hour to become simpler and better in your relation to the gods. To acquaint yourself with these things for a hundred years or for three is the same.

38. If he did wrong, the harm is with him; but perhaps he did not.

39. Either all comes to pass from one fountain of mind, as in a single organic body, and the part must not find fault with what is for the good of the whole; or else there are atoms,* nothing but a mechanical mixture and dispersal. Why then be troubled? Say to your governing self: 'are you dead, gone to corruption. turned into a beast, are you acting a part, running with the herd, feeding with it?'

40. The gods are either powerless or powerful. If then they are powerless, why do you pray? But if they are powerful, why not

rather pray them for the gift to fear none of these things, to desire none of them, to sorrow for none of them, rather than that any one of them should be present or absent? For surely if they can co-operate with man, they can co-operate to these ends. But perhaps you will say: 'The gods put these things in my power.'* Were it not better then to use what is in your power with a free spirit rather than to be concerned for what is not in your power with a servile and abject spirit? Besides, who told you that the gods do not co-operate even in respect to what is in our power?* Begin at least to pray about these things and you will see. That man prays: 'How may I know that woman'; do *you* pray: 'How may I not desire to know her.' Another prays: 'How may I get rid of him'; do *you* pray: 'How may I not want to be rid of him.' Another: 'How may I not lose my little child'; do *you* pray: 'How may I not be afraid to lose him.' Turn your prayers round in this way generally and see what is the result.

41. Epicurus says:* 'In illness* my conversation was not about the sufferings of my body, nor used I', he says, 'to talk to my visitors about such matters, but I continued to debate leading principles of science and to keep only to this, how the understanding while conscious of such changes in the mere flesh is yet undisturbed and preserves its own proper good. I did not even', he goes on, 'permit the medical men to give themselves airs as though they were doing some great thing, but my life passed on happily and brightly.' Do the same then as he did, in sickness if you are sick and in any other circumstance, for it is common to every school not to desert Philosophy in any at all of the accidents of life and not to gossip with the ignorant and unlearned. Be intent only on what is now being done and on the instrument you use to do it.

42*. Whenever you are offended by a man's shamelessness, ask yourself immediately: 'Is it possible then for the shameless not to be in the world?' It is not; do not then ask for the impossible;* for he, too, is one of the shameless who must exist in the world. And have the same ready also for the rogue, the traitor, and every kind of wrongdoer; for directly you remind yourself that the class

of such persons cannot but be, you will be gentler to them as individuals. Another useful thing is to call to mind immediately what virtue Nature gave man to meet this wrong, for she gave as an antidote against the unfeeling, mildness, against another, some other faculty, and generally speaking it is in your power to convert the man who has gone astray, for every man who does wrong is going wrong from the goal set before him and has gone astray. And what harm have you suffered? For you will find that none of those with whom you are angry has done the kind of thing by which your understanding was likely to become worse and it is there that your ills and harms have their entire existence.

How is it an evil or strange event that the uninstructed does what uninstructed men do? See whether you should not rather find fault with yourself for not expecting that he would do this wrong; for you had aptitudes from reason to enable you to argue that in all probability this man will do this wrong, and yet you forgot and are surprised that he did wrong.

But, most important of all, turn inward to your own self, whenever you blame the traitor or the ungrateful, for the fault is plainly yours, whether you trusted a man with such a disposition to keep faith or whether, when you bestowed a favour,* you did not give it unreservedly or so that you received the whole fruit from your act itself then and there. For when you have done good, what more, oh man, do you wish? Is it not enough that what you did was in agreement with your nature and do you seek a recompense for this? As if the eye asked a return for seeing or the feet for walking;* for just as these were made for this which they effect according to their proper constitution, and so get what is theirs, even thus man is made by Nature to be benevolent, and whenever he contributes to the common stock by benevolence or otherwise, he has done what he was constituted for, and gets what is his own.