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Bolingbroke, Henry St. John

London, 1754

Reflections upon exile

[urn:nbn:de:hbz:466:1-60759](https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:hbz:466:1-60759)

REFLECTIONS

UPON

EXILE.

Vol. I.

O

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS

1892

CHICAGO, ILL.

1892

REFLECTIONS

ON

THE

UNION

OF

THE

EXILES

OF

THE

AMERICAN

REPUBLIC

BY

W. L. G. O.

Vol. I

1892

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REFLECTIONS

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MDCCXVI.

DISSIPATION of mind, and length of time, are the remedies to which the greatest part of mankind trust in their afflictions. But the first of these works a temporary, the second a slow, effect: and both are unworthy of a wise man. Are we to fly from ourselves that we may fly from our misfortunes, and fondly to imagine that the disease is cured because we find means to get some moments of respite from pain? Or shall we expect from time, the physician of brutes, a lingering and uncertain deliverance? Shall we wait to be happy till we can forget that we are miserable, and owe to the weakness of our faculties a tranquillity which ought to be the effect of their strength? Far otherwise. Let us set all our past and our present afflictions at once before our eyes †. Let us resolve to overcome them, instead of flying from them, or wearing out the sense of them by long and ig-

* Several passages of this little treatise are taken from *SENECA*: and the whole is writ with some allusion to his style and manner, "quanquam non omnino temere fit, quod de sententiis illius queritur Fabius," &c. *ERAS.* De sen. jud.

† *SEN.* De con. ad Hel.

nomious patience. Instead of palliating remedies, let us use the incision-knife and the caustic, search the wound to the bottom, and work an immediate and radical cure.

THE recalling of former misfortunes serves to fortify the mind against later. He must blush to sink under the anguish of one wound, who surveys a body seamed over with the scars of many, and who has come victorious out of all the conflicts wherein he received them. Let sighs, and tears, and fainting under the lightest strokes of adverse fortune, be the portion of those unhappy people whose tender minds a long course of felicity has enervated: while such, as have passed through years of calamity, bear up, with a noble and immoveable constancy, against the heaviest. Uninterrupted misery has this good effect, as it continually torments, it finally hardens.

SUCH is the language of philosophy: and happy is the man who acquires the right of holding it. But this right is not to be acquired by pathetic discourse. Our conduct can alone give it us: and therefore, instead of presuming on our strength, the surest method is to confess our weakness, and, without loss of time, to apply ourselves to the study of wisdom. This was the advice which the oracle gave to ZENO*, and there is no other way of securing our tranquillity amidst all the accidents to which human life is exposed. Philosophy has, I know, her THRASOS, as well as War: and among her sons many there have been, who, while they aimed at being more than men, became something less. The means of preventing this danger are easy and sure. It is a good rule, to examine well before we addict ourselves to any sect: but I think it is a better rule, to addict ourselves to none. Let us hear them all, with a perfect indifferency on which side the truth lies: and, when we

* DIOG. LAERT.

come

come to determine, let nothing appear so venerable to us as our own understandings. Let us gratefully accept the help of every one who has endeavoured to correct the vices, and strengthen the minds of men; but let us chuse for ourselves, and yield universal assent to none. Thus, that I may instance the sect already mentioned, when we have laid aside the wonderful and surprizing sentences, and all the paradoxes of the Portique, we shall find in that school such doctrines as our unprejudiced reason submits to with pleasure, as nature dictates, and as experience confirms. Without this precaution, we run the risque of becoming imaginary kings, and real slaves. With it, we may learn to assert our native freedom, and live independent on fortune.

In order to which great end, it is necessary that we stand watchful, as centinels; to discover the secret wiles and open attacks of this capricious goddess, before they reach us*. Where she falls upon us unexpected, it is hard to resist; but those who wait for her, will repel her with ease. The sudden invasion of an enemy overthrows such as are not on their guard; but they who foresee the war, and prepare themselves for it before it breaks out, stand, without difficulty, the first and the fiercest onset. I learned this important lesson long ago, and never trusted to fortune even while she seemed to be at peace with me. The riches, the honors, the reputation, and all the advantages which her treacherous indulgence poured upon me, I placed so, that she might snatch them away without giving me any disturbance. I kept a great interval between me and them. She took them, but she could not tear them from me. No man suffers by bad fortune, but he who has been deceived by good. If we grow fond of her gifts, fancy that they belong to us, and are perpetually to re-

* SEN. De con. ad Hel.

main with us, if we lean upon them, and expect to be considered for them; we shall sink into all the bitterness of grief, as soon as these false and transitory benefits pass away, as soon as our vain and childish minds, unfraught with solid pleasures, become destitute even of those which are imaginary. But, if we do not suffer ourselves to be transported by prosperity, neither shall we be reduced by adversity. Our souls will be of proof against the dangers of both these states: and, having explored our strength, we shall be sure of it; for in the midst of felicity, we shall have tried how we can bear misfortune.

It is much harder to examine and judge, than to take up opinions on trust; and therefore the far greatest part of the world borrow, from others, those which they entertain concerning all the affairs of life and death*. Hence it proceeds that men are so unanimously eager in the pursuit of things, which, far from having any inherent real good, are varnished over with a specious and deceitful gloss, and contain nothing answerable to their appearances†. Hence it proceeds, on the other hand, that, in those things which are called evils, there is nothing so hard and terrible as the general cry of the world threatens. The word exile comes indeed harsh to the ear, and strikes us like a melancholy and execrable sound, through a certain persuasion which men have habitually concurred in. Thus the multitude has ordained. But the greatest part of their ordinances are abrogated by the wife.

REJECTING therefore the judgment of those who determine according to popular opinions, or the first appearances of things,

* Dum unusquisque mavult credere, quam judicare, nunquam de vita judicatur, semper creditur. SEN. De vita beat. † SEN. De con. ad Hel.

let

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let us examine what exile really is*. It, is then, a change of place; and, lest you should say that I diminish the object, and conceal the most shocking parts of it, I add, that this change of place is frequently accompanied by some or all of the following inconveniences: by the loss of the estate which we enjoyed, and the rank which we held; by the loss of that consideration and power which we were in possession of; by a separation from our family and our friends; by the contempt which we may fall into; by the ignominy with which those who have driven us abroad, will endeavour to fully the innocence of our characters, and to justify the injustice of their own conduct.

ALL these shall be spoke to hereafter. In the mean while, let us consider what evil there is, in change of place, abstractedly and by itself.

To live deprived of one's country is intolerable †. Is it so? How comes it then to pass that such numbers of men live out of their countries by choice? Observe how the streets of London and of Paris are crowded. Call over those millions by name, and ask them one by one, of what country they are: how many will you find, who, from different parts of the earth, come to inhabit these great cities, which afford the largest opportunities, and the largest encouragement, to virtue and to vice? Some are drawn by ambition, and some are sent by duty; many resort thither to improve their minds, and many to improve their fortunes; others bring their beauty, and others their eloquence, to market. Remove from hence, and go to the utmost extremities of the East or the West: visit the barbarous nations of Africa, or the inhospitable re-

* SEN. De con. ad Hel.

† Ibid.

gions

gions of the North : you will find no climate so bad, no country so savage, as not to have some people who come from abroad, and inhabit there by choice.

AMONG numberless extravagancies which have passed through the minds of men, we may justly reckon for one that notion of a secret affection, independent of our reason, and superior to our reason, which we are supposed to have for our country; as if there were some physical virtue in every spot of ground, which necessarily produced this effect in every one born upon it.

“----Amor patriae ratione valentior omni*.”

As if the heimvei was an universal distemper, inseparable from the constitution of an human body, and not peculiar to the Swifs, who seem to have been made for their mountains, as their mountains seem to have been made for them †. This notion may have contributed to the security and grandeur of states. It has therefore been not unartfully cultivated, and the prejudice of education has been with care put on its side. Men have come in this case, as in many, from believing that it ought to be so, to persuade others, and even to believe themselves that it is so. PROCOPIUS relates that ABGARUS came to Rome, and gained the esteem and friendship of AUGUSTUS to such a degree, that this emperor could not resolve to let him return home: that ABGARUS brought several beasts, which he had taken one day in hunting, alive to AUGUSTUS: that he placed in different parts of the Circus some of the earth which belonged to the places where each of these animals had been caught; that as soon as this was done, and they were turned loose, every one of them ran to that corner where his earth lay: that AUGUSTUS, admiring their sentiment of love

* Ov. De Ponto, El. iv.

† Card. BENTI, Let.

for

for their country which nature has graved in the hearts of beasts, and struck by the evidence of the truth, granted the request which ABGARUS immediately pressed upon him, and allowed, though with regret, the tetrarch to return to Edeſſa. But this tale deſerves juſt as much credit as that which follows in the ſame place, of the letter of ABGARUS to JESUS CHRIST, of our Saviour's answer, and of the cure of ABGARUS. There is nothing, ſurely, more groundleſs than the notion here advanced, nothing more abſurd. We love the country in which we are born, becauſe we receive particular benefits from it, and becauſe we have particular obligations to it: which ties we may have to another country, as well as to that we are born in; to our country by election, as well as to our country by birth. In all other reſpects, a wiſe man looks on himſelf as a citizen of the world: and, when you ask him where his country lies, points, like ANAXAGORAS, with his finger to the heavens.

THERE are other perſons, again, who have imagined that as the whole univerſe ſuffers a continual rotation, and nature ſeems to delight in it, or to preſerve herſelf by it, ſo there is in the minds of men, a natural reſtleſſneſs, which inclines them to change of place, and to the ſhifting their habitations*. This opinion has at leaſt an appearance of truth, which the other wants; and is countenanced, as the other is contradicted, by experience. But, whatever the reaſons be, which muſt have varied infinitely in an infinite number of caſes, and an immense ſpace of time; true it is in fact, that the families and nations of the world have been in a continual fluctuation, roaming about on the face of the globe, driving and driven out by turns. What a number of colonies has Aſia ſent into Europe! The

* SEN. De con. ad Hel.

Phoenicians planted the coasts of the Mediterranean sea, and pushed their settlements even into the ocean. The Etrurians were of Asiatic extraction; and, to mention no more, the Romans, those lords of the world, acknowledged a Trojan exile for the founder of their empire. How many migrations have there been, in return to these, from Europe into Asia? They would be endless to enumerate; for, besides the Aeolic, the Ionic, and others of almost equal fame, the Greeks, during several ages, made continual expeditions, and built cities in several parts of Asia. The Gauls penetrated thither too, and established a kingdom. The European Scythians over-ran these vast provinces, and carried their arms to the confines of Egypt. ALEXANDER subdued all from the Hellespont to India, and built towns, and established colonies, to secure his conquests, and to eternise his name. From both these parts of the world Africa has received inhabitants and masters; and what she has received she has given. The Tyrians built the city, and founded the republic, of Carthage; and Greek has been the language of Egypt. In the remotest antiquity we hear of BELUS in Chaldaea, and of SESOSTRIS planting his tawny colonies in Colchos: and Spain has been, in these latter ages, under the dominion of the Moors. If we turn to Runic history, we find our fathers, the Goths, led by WODEN and by THOR, their heroes first and their divinities afterwards, from the Asiatic Tartary into Europe: and who can assure us that this was their first migration? They came into Asia perhaps by the east, from that continent to which their sons have lately sailed from Europe by the west: and thus, in the process of three or four thousand years, the same race of men have pushed their conquests and their habitations round the globe: at least this may be supposed, as reasonably as it is supposed, I think by GROTIUS, that America was peopled from Scandinavia. The world is a great wilderness, wherein mankind have wandered and

and jostled one another about from the creation. Some have removed by necessity, and others by choice. One nation has been fond of seizing what another was tired of possessing: and it will be difficult to point out the country which is to this day in the hands of its first inhabitants.

THUS fate has ordained that nothing shall remain long in the same state: and what are all these transportations of people, but so many public exiles? VARRO, the most learned of the Romans, thought, since Nature * is the same wherever we go, that this single circumstance was sufficient to remove all objections to change of place, taken by itself, and stripped of the other inconveniences which attend exile. M. BRUTUS thought it enough that those, who go into banishment, cannot be hindered from carrying their virtue along with them. Now, if any one judge that each of these comforts is in itself insufficient, he must however confess that both of them, joined together, are able to remove the terrors of exile. For what trifles must all we leave behind us be esteemed, in comparison of the two most precious things which men can enjoy, and which, we are sure, will follow us wherever we turn our steps, the same nature, and our proper virtue †? Believe me, the providence of God has established such an order in the world, that of all which belongs to us the least valuable parts can alone fall under the will of others. Whatever is best is safest; lies out of the reach of human power; can neither be given nor taken away. Such is this great and beautiful work of nature, the world. Such is the mind of man, which contemplates and admires the world whereof it makes the noblest part. These are inseparably ours, and as long as we remain in one we shall enjoy the other. Let us march therefore intrepidly wherever

* SEN. De con. ad Hel.

† Ib.

we are led by the course of human accidents. Wherever they lead us, on what coast soever we are thrown by them, we shall not find ourselves absolutely strangers. We shall meet with men and women, creatures of the same figure, endowed with the same faculties, and born under the same laws of nature. We shall see the same virtues and vices, flowing from the same general principles, but varied in a thousand different and contrary modes, according to that infinite variety of laws and customs which is established for the same universal end, the preservation of society. We shall feel the same revolution of seasons, and the same sun and moon * will guide the course of our year. The same azure vault, bespangled with stars, will be every where spread over our heads. There is no part of the world from whence we may not admire those planets which roll, like ours, in different orbits round the same central sun; from whence we may not discover an object still more stupendous, that army of fixed stars hung up in the immense space of the universe, innumerable suns whose beams enlighten and cherish the unknown worlds which roll around them: and whilst I am ravished by such contemplations as these, whilst my soul is thus raised up to heaven, it imports me little what ground I tread upon.

BRUTUS †, in the book which he writ on virtue, related that he had seen MARCELLUS in exile at Mitylene, living in all the happiness which human nature is capable of, and cultivating, with as much assiduity as ever, all kinds of laudable knowledge. He added, that this spectacle made him think that it was rather

* PLUT. Of banishment. He compares those who cannot live out of their own country, to the simple people who fancied that the moon of Athens was a finer moon than that of Corinth.

— labentem coelo quae ducitis annum.

VIRG. Georg.

† SEN. De con. ad Hel.

he who went into banishment, since he was to return without the other, than the other who remained in it. O MARCELLUS, far more happy when BRUTUS approved thy exile, than when the commonwealth approved thy consulship! How great a man must thou have been, to extort admiration from him who appeared an object of admiration even to his own CATO! The same BRUTUS reported further, that CÆSAR overshot Mitylene, because he could not stand the sight of MARCELLUS reduced to a state so unworthy of him. His restoration was at length obtained by the public intercession of the whole senate, who were dejected with grief to such a degree, that they seemed all upon this occasion to have the same sentiments with BRUTUS, and to be suppliants for themselves rather than for MARCELLUS †. This was to return with honour; but surely he remained abroad with greater, when BRUTUS could not resolve to leave him, nor CÆSAR to see him; for both of them bore witness of his merit. BRUTUS grieved, and CÆSAR blushed to go to Rome without him.

Q. METELLUS NUMIDICUS had undergone the same fate some years before, while the people, who are always the surest instruments of their own servitude, were laying, under the conduct of MARIUS, the foundations of that tyranny which was perfected by CÆSAR. METELLUS alone, in the midst of an intimidated senate, and outrageous multitude, refused to swear to the pernicious laws of the tribune SATURNINUS. His constancy became his crime, and exile his punishment. A wild and lawless faction prevailing against him, the best men of the city armed in his defence, and were ready to lay down

† MARCELLUS was assassinated at Athens, in his return home, by CHILO, an old friend, and fellow-soldier of his. The motive of CHILO is not explained in history. CÆSAR was suspected, but he seems to be justified by the opinion of BRUTUS.

their

their lives that they might preserve so much virtue to their country. But he, having failed to persuade, thought it not lawful to constrain. He judged in the phrensy of the Roman commonwealth, as PLATO judged in the dotage of the Athenian. METELLUS knew, that if his fellow-citizens amended, he should be recalled; and if they did not amend, he thought he could be no where worse than at Rome. He went voluntarily into exile, and wherever he passed he carried the sure symptom of a sickly state, and the certain prognostic of an expiring commonwealth. What temper he continued in abroad will best appear by a fragment of one of his letters which GELLIUS *, in a pedantic compilation of phrases used by the annalist Q. CLAUDIUS, has preserved for the sake of the word *frunifcor*. “*Illi vero omni jure atque honestate interdicti : ego neque aqua neque igne careo : et summa gloria frunifcor.*” Happy METELLUS ! happy in the conscience of thy own virtue ! happy in thy pious son, and in that excellent friend who resembled thee in merit and in fortune !

RUTILIUS had defended Asia against the extortions of the publicans, according to the strict justice of which he made profession, and to the particular duty of his office. The Equestrian order were upon this account his enemies, and the Marian faction was so of course, on account of his probity, as well as out of hatred to METELLUS. The most innocent man of the city was accused of corruption. The best man was prosecuted by the worst, by APICIUS ; a name dedicated to infamy †. Those who had stirred up the false accusation sat as judges, and pronounced the unjust sentence against him. He hardly deigned to defend his cause, but retired into the East,

* Lib. xvii. cap. 2.

† There was another APICIUS, in the reign of TIBERIUS, famous for his gluttony ; and a third in the time of TRAJAN.

where that Roman virtue which Rome could not bear, was received with honor*. Shall RUTILIUS now be deemed unhappy, when they who condemned him are, for that action, delivered down as criminals to all future generations? when he quitted his country with greater ease than he would suffer his exile to finish? when he alone durst refuse the dictator SYLLA, and being recalled home, not only declined to go, but fled farther off?

WHAT do you propose, it may be said, by these examples, multitudes of which are to be collected from the memorials of former ages? I propose to shew that as change of place, simply considered, can render no man unhappy, so the other evils which are objected to exile, either cannot happen to wise and virtuous men; or, if they do happen to them, cannot render them miserable. Stones are hard, and cakes of ice are cold: and all who feel them, feel them alike †. But the good or the bad events, which fortune brings upon us, are felt according to what qualities we, not they, have. They are in themselves indifferent and common accidents, and they acquire strength by nothing but our vice or our weakness. Fortune can dispense neither felicity nor infelicity unless we co-operate with her. Few men, who are unhappy under the loss of an estate, would be happy in the possession of it: and those, who deserve to enjoy the advantages which exile takes away, will not be unhappy when they are deprived of them.

It grieves me to make an exception to this rule; but TULLY was one so remarkably, that the example can be neither concealed, nor passed over. This great man, who had been the saviour of his country, who had feared, in the support of that

* SEN. L. De prov. cap. 3.

† PLUT. On exile.

cause,

cause, neither the insults of a desperate party, nor the daggers of assassins, when he came to suffer for the same cause, sunk under the weight. He dishonored that banishment which indulgent providence meant to be the means of rendering his glory complete. Uncertain where he should go, or what he should do, fearful as a woman, and froward as a child, he lamented the loss of his rank, of his riches, and of his splendid popularity. His eloquence served only to paint his ignominy in stronger colors. He wept over the ruins of his fine house which *CLODIUS* had demolished: and his separation from *TERENTIA*, whom he repudiated not long afterwards, was perhaps an affliction to him at this time. Every thing becomes intolerable to the man who is once subdued by grief^a. He regrets what he took no pleasure in enjoying, and, overloaded already, he shrinks at the weight of a feather. *CICERO*'s behaviour, in short, was such that his friends, as well as his enemies, believed him to have lost his senses^b. *CAESAR* beheld, with a secret satisfaction, the man, who had refused to be his lieutenant, weeping under the rod of *CLODIUS*. *POMPEY* hoped to find some excuse for his own ingratitude in the contempt which the friend, whom he had abandoned, exposed himself to. Nay *ATTICUS* judged him too meanly attached to his former fortune, and reproached him for it. *ATTICUS*, whose great talents were usury and trimming, who placed his principal merit in being rich, and who would have been noted with infamy at Athens, for keeping well with all sides, and venturing on none^c: even *ATTICUS* blushed for *TULLY*, and the most plausible man alive assumed the style of *CATO*.

^a Mitto caetera intolerabilia. Etenim fletu impediior. L. iii. Ad Attic. ep. 10.

^b Tam saepe, et tam vehementer objurgas, et animo infirmo esse dicis. Ib.

^c *PLUT.* Vit. Solon.

I HAVE dwelt the longer on this instance, because, whilst it takes nothing from the truth which has been established, it teaches us another of great importance. Wise men are certainly superior to all the evils of exile. But in a strict sense he, who has left any one passion in his soul unsubdued, will not deserve that appellation. It is not enough that we have studied all the duties of public and private life, that we are perfectly acquainted with them, and that we live up to them in the eye of the world: a passion that lies dormant in the heart, and has escaped our scrutiny, or which we have observed and indulged as venial, or which we have perhaps encouraged, as a principle to excite and to aid our virtue, may one time or other destroy our tranquility, and disgrace our whole character. When virtue has steeled the mind on every side, we are invulnerable on every side: but ACHILLES was wounded in the heel. The least part, overlooked or neglected, may expose us to receive a mortal blow. Reason cannot obtain the absolute dominion of our souls by one victory. Vice has many reserves, which must be beaten; many strongholds, which must be forced; and we may be found of proof in many trials, without being so in all. We may resist the severest, and yield to the weakest attacks of fortune. We may have got the better of avarice, the most epidemical disease of the mind, and yet be slaves to ambition*. We may have purged our souls of the fear of death, and yet some other fear may venture to lurk behind. This was the case of CICERO. Vanity was his

* SENECA says the contrary of all this, according to the Stoical system, which however he departs from on many occasions. " Si contra unam quamlibet partem fortunæ satis tibi roboris est, idem adversus omnes erit. — Si avaritia dimisit, vehementissima generis humani pestis, moram tibi ambitio non faciet. — Si ultimum diem, &c. De Con. ad Hel.

Non singula vitia ratio, sed pariter omnia prosternit. In universum semel vincitur. Ib. Nec audacem quidem timoris absolvimus: ne prodigum quidem avaritia liberamus. De Benef. L. iv. c. 27.

Qui autem habet vitium unum, habet omnia. Ib. L. v. c. 15.

cardinal vice. It had, I question not, warmed his zeal, quickened his industry, animated the love of his country, and supported his constancy against CATILINE: but it gave to CLODIUS an entire victory over him. He was not afraid to die, and part with estate, rank, honor, and every thing which he lamented the loss of: but he was afraid to live deprived of them. "Ut vivus haec amitterem." He would probably have met death on this occasion with the same firmness with which he said to POPILIUS LAENUS, his client and his murderer, "Approach, veteran, and, if at least thou canst do this well, cut off my head." But he could not bear to see himself, and to be seen by others, stripped of those trappings which he was accustomed to wear. This made him break out into so many shameful expressions. "Possum oblivisci qui fuerim? non sentire qui sum? quo caream honore? qua gloria?" And speaking of his brother---"Vitavi ne viderem; ne aut illius luctum squaloremque aspicerem, aut me, quem ille florentissimum reliquerat, perditum illi afflictumque offerrem." He had thought of death, and prepared his mind for it. There were occasions too where his vanity might be flattered by it. But the same vanity hindered him in his prosperous estate from supposing such a reverse as afterwards happened to him. When it came, it found him unprepared, it surpris'd him, it stunn'd him; for he was still fond of the pomp and hurry of Rome, "fumum et opes, strepitumque Romae," and unweaned from all those things which habit renders necessary, and which nature has left indifferent.

WE have enumerated them above, and it is time to descend into a more particular examination of them. Change of

^a In animo autem gloriae cupido, qualis fuit Ciceronis, plurimum potest. VEL. PAT. L. i. ^b Ep. ad ATTIC. L. iii. ep. 3, 7, 10. et passim.

^c L. iii. ep. 10. ad ATTIC.

place

place then may be borne by every man. It is the delight of many. But who can bear the evils which accompany exile? You who ask the question can bear them. Every one who considers them as they are in themselves, instead of looking at them through the false optic which prejudice holds before our eyes. For what? you have lost your estate: reduce your desires, and you will perceive yourself to be as rich as ever, with this considerable advantage to boot, that your cares will be diminished. Our natural and real wants* are confined to narrow bounds, whilst those which fancy and custom create are confined to none. Truth lies within a little and certain compass, but error is immense. If we suffer our desires therefore to wander beyond these bounds, they wander eternally. "Nescio quid curtae semper abest rei." We become necessitous in the midst of plenty, and our poverty encreases with our riches. Reduce your desires, be able to say with the apostle of Greece, to whom ERASMUS was ready to address his prayers, "quam multis ipse non egeo!" banish out of your exile all imaginary, and you will suffer no real wants. The little stream which is left will suffice to quench the thirst of nature, and that which cannot be quenched by it, is not your thirst, but your distemper; a distemper formed by the vicious habits of your mind, and not the effect of exile. How great a part of mankind bear poverty with cheerfulness, because they have been bred in it, and are accustomed to it? † Shall we not be able to acquire, by reason and by reflection, what the meanest artisan possesses by habit? Shall those who have so

* Naturalia desideria finita sunt: ex falsa opinione nascuntur ubi desinant non habent, nullus enim terminus falso est. SEN. Ep. 16.

Excerpt. ex Lib. SEN. falsely so called.

Si ad naturam vives, nunquam eris pauper; si ad opinionem, nunquam dives. Exiguum natura desiderat, opinio immensum. SEN. Ep. 16.

† SEN. De con. ad Hel.

many advantages over him, be slaves to wants and necessities of which he is ignorant? The rich, whose wanton appetites neither the produce of one country, nor of one part of the world, can satisfy, for whom the whole habitable globe is ransacked, for whom the caravans of the east are continually in march, and the remotest seas are covered with ships; these pampered creatures, sated with superfluity, are often glad to inhabit an humble cot, and to make an homely meal. They run for refuge into the arms of frugality. Madmen that they are, to live always in fear of what they sometimes wish for, and to fly from that life which they find it luxury to imitate! Let us cast our eyes backwards on those great men who lived in the ages of virtue, of simplicity, of frugality, and let us blush to think that we enjoy in banishment more than they were masters of in the midst of their glory, in the utmost affluence of their fortune. Let us imagine that we behold a great dictator giving audience to the Samnite ambassadors, and preparing on the hearth his mean repast with the same hand which had so often subdued the enemies of the commonwealth, and borne the triumphal laurel to the capitol. Let us remember that PLATO had but * three servants, and that ZENO had none †. SOCRATES, the reformer of his country, was maintained, as MENENIUS AGRIPPA, the arbiter of his country was buried, by

* PLATO's will, in *DIOD. LAER.* mentions four servants, besides DIANA, to whom he gave her freedom.

APULEIUS makes his estate consist in a little garden near the academy, two servants, a patten for sacrifices, and as much gold as would serve to make ear-rings for a child.

† ZENO was owner of a thousand talents when he came from Cyprus into Greece, and he used to lend his money out upon ships at an high interest. He kept, in short, a kind of insurance-office. He lost this estate perhaps when he said, "*recte sane agit fortuna, quae nos ad philosophiam impellit.*" Afterwards he received many and great presents from ANTIGONUS. So that his great frugality and simplicity of life, was the effect of his choice, and not of necessity. *Vid. DIO. LAER.*

contribution.

contribution*. While ATTILIUS REGULUS beat the Carthaginians in Afric, the flight of his ploughman reduced his family to distress at home, and the tillage of his little farm became the public care. SCIPIO died without leaving enough to marry his daughters, and their portions were paid out of the treasury of the state; for sure it was just that the people of Rome should once pay tribute to him, who had established a perpetual tribute on Carthage. After such examples shall we be afraid of poverty? shall we disdain to be adopted into a family which has so many illustrious ancestors? shall we complain of banishment for taking from us what the greatest philosophers, and the greatest heroes of antiquity never enjoyed?

You will find fault perhaps, and attribute to artifice, that I consider singly misfortunes which come all together on the banished man, and overbear him with their united weight. You could support change of place if it was not accompanied with poverty, or poverty if it was not accompanied with the separation from your family and your friends, with the loss of your rank, consideration, and power, with contempt and ignominy. Whoever he be who reasons in this manner, let him take the following answer. The least of these circumstances is singly sufficient to render the man miserable who is not prepared for it, who has not divested himself of that passion upon which it is directed to work. But he who has got the mastery of all his passions, who has foreseen all these accidents, and prepared his mind to endure them all, will be superior to all of them, and to all of them at once as well as singly. He will not bear the loss of his rank, because he can bear the loss of his estate: but

* DIOC. LAER. Vit. Soc. quotes ARISTOXENUS for affirming that SOCRATES used to keep a box, and lived upon the money which was put into it: "Posita igitur arcula, colligisse pecuniam quae daretur; consumpta autem ea, rursus posuisse."

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he will bear both, because he is prepared for both; because he is free from pride as much as he is from avarice.

You are separated from your family and your friends. Take the list of them, and look it well over. How few of your family will you find who deserve the name of friends? and how few among these who are really such? Erase the names of such as ought not to stand on the roll, and the voluminous catalogue will soon dwindle into a narrow compass. Regret, if you please, your separation from this small remnant. Far be it from me, whilst I declaim against a shameful and vicious weakness of mind, to proscribe the sentiments of a virtuous friendship. Regret your separation from your friends: but regret it like a man who deserves to be theirs. This is strength, not weakness of mind; it is virtue, not vice.

BUT the least uneasiness under the loss of the rank which we held is ignominious. There is no valuable rank among men, but that which real merit assigns. The princes of the earth may give names, and institute ceremonies, and exact the observation of them; their imbecillity and their wickedness may prompt them to clothe fools and knaves with robes of honor, and emblems of wisdom and virtue: but no man will be in truth superior to another, without superior merit; and that rank can no more be taken from us, than the merit which establishes it. The supreme authority gives a fictitious and arbitrary value to coin, which is therefore not current alike in all times and in all places; but the real value remains invariable, and the provident man, who gets rid as fast as he can of the drossy piece, hoards up the good silver. Thus merit will not procure the same consideration universally. But what then? the title to this consideration is the same, and will be found alike in every circumstance by those who are wise and virtuous

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themselves. If it is not owned by such as are otherwise, nothing is however taken from us; we have no reason to complain. They considered us for a rank which we had; for our denomination, not for our intrinsic value. We have that rank, that denomination no longer, and they consider us no longer: they admired in us what we admired not in ourselves. If they learn to neglect us, let us learn to pity them. Their assiduity was importunate: let us not complain of the ease which this change procures us; let us rather apprehend the return of that rank and that power, which, like a sunny day, would bring back these little insects, and make them swarm once more about us. I know how apt we are, under specious pretences, to disguise our weaknesses and our vices, and how often we succeed not only in deceiving the world, but even in deceiving ourselves. An inclination to do good is inseparable from a virtuous mind, and therefore the man, who cannot bear with patience the loss of that rank and power which he enjoyed, may be willing to attribute his regrets to the impossibility which he supposes himself reduced to of satisfying this inclination. But let such an one know, that a wise man contents himself with doing as much good as his situation allows him to do; that there is no situation wherein we may not do a great deal; and that when we are deprived of greater power to do more good, we escape at the same time the temptation of doing some evil.

THE inconveniencies, which we have mentioned, carry nothing along with them difficult to be borne by a wise and virtuous man; and those which remain to be mentioned, contempt and ignominy, can never fall to his lot. It is impossible that he who reverences himself should be despised by others: and how can ignominy affect the man who collects all

* SEN. De con. ad Hel.

his

his strength within himself, who appeals from the judgment of the multitude to another tribunal, and lives independent of mankind and of the accidents of life? CATO lost the election of praetor, and that of consul; but is any one blind enough to truth to imagine that these repulses reflected any disgrace on him? The dignity of those two magistracies would have been increased by his wearing them. They suffered, not CATO.

You have fulfilled all the duties of a good citizen, you have been true to your trust, constant in your engagements, and have pursued the interest of your country without regard to the enemies you created, and the dangers you run. You served her interest, as much as lay in your power, from those of her factions, and from those of her neighbours and allies too, when they became different. She reaps the benefit of these services, and you suffer for them. You are banished, and pursued with ignominy, and those whom you hindered from triumphing at her expence, revenge themselves at yours. The persons, in opposition to whom you served, or even saved the public, conspire and accomplish your private ruin. These are your accusers, and the giddy ungrateful crowd your judges. Your name is hung up in the tables of proscription, and art joined to malice endeavours to make your best actions pass for crimes, and to stain your character. For this purpose the sacred voice of the senate is made to pronounce a lye, and those records, which ought to be the eternal monuments of truth, become the vouchers of imposture and calumny. Such circumstances as these you think intolerable, and you would prefer death to so ignominious an exile. Deceive not yourself. The ignominy remains with them who persecute unjustly, not with him who suffers unjust persecution. "Recalcitrat undique tutus." Suppose that in the act which banishes you, it was declared that you have some contagious distemper, that you are crooked,

crooked, or otherwise deformed. This would render the legislators ridiculous*. The other renders them infamous. But neither one nor the other can affect the man, who in an healthful well-proportioned body enjoys a conscience void of all the offences ascribed to him. Instead of such an exile, would you compound, that you might live at home in ease and plenty, to be the instrument of blending these contrary interests once more together, and of giving but the third place to that of your country? Would you prostitute her power to the ambition of others, under the pretence of securing her from imaginary dangers, and drain her riches into the pockets of the meanest and vilest of her citizens, under the pretence of paying her debts? If you could submit to so infamous a composition, you are not the man to whom I address my discourse, or with whom I will have any commerce: and if you have virtue enough to disdain it, why should you repine at the other alternative? Banishment from such a country, and with such circumstances, is like being delivered from prison. *DIOGENES* was driven out of the kingdom of Pontus for counterfeiting the coin, and *STRATONICUS* thought that forgery might be committed in order to get banished from Scirphos. But you have obtained your liberty by doing your duty.

BANISHMENT, with all its train of evils, is so far from being the cause of contempt, that he who bears up with an undaunted spirit against them, while so many are dejected by them, erects on his very misfortunes a trophy to his honor: for such is the frame and temper of our minds, that nothing strikes us with greater admiration than a man intrepid in the midst of misfortunes. Of all ignominies an ignominious death must be allowed to be the greatest; and yet where is the blasphem-

* The dialogue between *CICERO* and *PHILISCUS*. *DION. CASS. L. xxxviii.*

mer who will presume to defame the death of SOCRATES^a? This faint entered the prison with the same countenance with which he reduced thirty tyrants, and he took off ignominy from the place: for how could it be deemed a prison when SOCRATES was there? PHOCION was led to execution in the same city. all those who met the sad procession, cast their eyes to the ground, and with throbbing hearts bewailed, not the innocent man, but Justice herself, who was in him condemned. Yet there was a wretch found, for monsters are sometimes produced in contradiction to the ordinary rules of nature, who spit in his face as he passed along. PHOCION wiped his cheek, smiled, turned to the magistrate, and said, "Admonish this man not to be so nasty for the future."

IGNOMINY then can take no hold on Virtue^b; for Virtue is in every condition the same, and challenges the same respect. We applaud the world when she prospers; and when she falls into adversity we applaud her. Like the temples of the Gods, she is venerable even in her ruins. After this must it not appear a degree of madness to defer one moment acquiring the only arms capable of defending us against attacks which at every moment we are exposed to? Our being miserable, or not miserable, when we fall into misfortunes, depends on the manner in which we have enjoyed prosperity. If we have applied ourselves betimes to the study of wisdom, and to the practice of virtue, these evils become indifferent; but if we have neglected to do so, they become necessary. In one case they are evils, in the other they are remedies for greater evils than themselves. ZENO^c rejoiced that a shipwreck had thrown him on the Athenian coast: and he owed to the loss of his fortune the acquisition which he made of virtue, of wisdom,

^a SEN. De con. ad Hel.

^b Ib.

^c DIOG. LAERT.

of immortality. There are good and bad airs for the mind, as well as for the body. Prosperity often irritates our chronic distempers, and leaves no hopes of finding any specific but in adversity. In such cases banishment is like change of air, and the evils we suffer are like rough medicines applied to inveterate diseases. What * ANACHARSIS said of the vine, may aptly enough be said of prosperity. She bears the three grapes of drunkenness, of pleasure, and of sorrow: and happy it is if the last can cure the mischief which the former work. When afflictions fail to have their due effect, the case is desperate. They are the last remedy which indulgent Providence uses: and if they fail, we must languish and die in misery and contempt. Vain men! how seldom do we know what to wish or to pray for? When we pray against misfortunes, and when we fear them most, we want them most. It was for this reason that PYTHAGORAS forbid his disciples to ask any thing in particular of GOD. The shortest and the best prayer which we can address to him, who knows our wants, and our ignorance in asking, is this: "Thy will be done."

TULLY says, in some part of his works, that as happiness is the object of all philosophy, so the disputes among philosophers arise from their different notions of the sovereign good. Reconcile them in that point, you reconcile them in the rest. The school of ZENO placed this sovereign good in naked virtue, and wound the principle up to an extreme beyond the pitch of nature and truth. A spirit of opposition to another doctrine, which grew into great vogue while ZENO flourished, might occasion this excess. EPICURUS placed the sovereign good in pleasure. His terms were wilfully, or accidentally mistaken. His scholars might help to pervert his doctrine, but

* SEN.

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rivalship enflamed the dispute; for in truth there is not so much difference between stoicism reduced to reasonable intelligible terms, and genuine orthodox epicurism, as is imagined. The *felicis animi immota tranquillitas*, and the voluptas of the latter are near enough a-kin: and I much doubt whether the firmest hero of the Portique would have borne a fit of the stone, on the principles of ZENO, with greater magnanimity and patience than EPICURUS did, on those of his own philosophy*. However, ARISTOLE took a middle way, or explained himself better, and placed happiness in the joint advantages of the mind, of the body, and of fortune. They are reasonably joined; but certain it is, that they must not be placed on an equal foot. We can much better bear the privation of the last, than of the others; and poverty itself, which mankind is so afraid of, "*per mare pauperiem fugiens, per saxa, per ignes,*" is surely preferable to madness, or the stone, though † CHRYSIPPUS thought it better to live mad, than not to live! If banishment therefore, by taking from us the advantages of fortune, cannot take from us the more valuable advantages of the mind and the body, when we have them; and if the same accident is able to restore them to us, when we have lost them, banishment is a very slight misfortune to those who are already under the dominion of reason, and a very great blessing to those who are still plunged in vices which ruin the health both of body and mind. It is to be wished for, in favor of such as these, and to be feared by none. If we are in this case, let us second the designs of Providence in our favor, and make some amends for neglecting former opportunities by not letting

* Compare the representations made so frequently of the doctrine of voluptu taught by EPICURUS, with the account which he himself gives in his letter to MENOECEUS, of the sense wherein he understood this word. Vid. *DIOG. LAER.*

† In his third book of Nature, cited by PLUTARCH, in the treatise on the contradictions of the Stoics.

flip the last. "Si nolis fanus, curres hydropicus." We may shorten the evils which we might have prevented, and as we get the better of our disorderly passions, and vicious habits, we shall feel our anxiety diminish in proportion. All the approaches to virtue are comfortable. With how much joy will the man, who improves his misfortunes in this manner, discover that those evils, which he attributed to his exile, sprung from his vanity and folly, and vanish with them! He will see that, in his former temper of mind, he resembled the effeminate prince who could drink no * water but that of the river Chospes; or the simple queen, in one of the tragedies of EURIPIDES, who complained bitterly, that she had not lighted the nuptial torch, and that the river Ismenus had not furnished the water at her son's wedding. Seeing his former state in this ridiculous light, he will labor on with pleasure towards another as contrary as possible to it; and when he arrives there, he will be convinced by the strongest of all proofs, his own experience, that he was unfortunate because he was vicious, not because he was banished.

IF I was not afraid of being thought to refine too much, I would venture to put some advantages of fortune, which are due to exile, into the scale against those which we lose by exile. One there is which has been neglected even by great and wise men. DEMETRIUS PHALEREUS, after his expulsion from Athens, became first minister to the king of EGYPT; and THEMISTOCLES found such a reception at the court of Persia, that he used to say his fortune had been lost if he had not been ruined. But DEMETRIUS exposed himself, by his favor under the first PTOLEMY, to a new disgrace under the second: and THEMISTOCLES, who had been the captain of a free people, became the vassal of the prince he had conquered. How

* PLUT. On banishment.

much

much better is it to take hold of the proper advantage of exile, and to live for ourselves, when we are under no obligation of living for others? SIMILIS, a captain of great reputation under TRAJAN and ADRIAN, having obtained leave to retire, passed seven years in his retreat, and then dying, ordered this inscription to be put on his tomb: that he had been many years on earth, but that he had lived only seven*. If you are wise, your leisure will be worthily employed, and your retreat will add new lustre to your character. Imitate THUCYDIDES in Thracia, or XENOPHON in his little farm at Scillus. In such a retreat you may sit down, like one of the inhabitants of Elis, who judged of the Olympic games, without taking any part in them. Far from the hurry of the world, and almost an unconcerned spectator of what passes in it, having paid in a public life what you owed to the present age, pay in a private life what you owe to posterity. Write as you live, without passion; and build your reputation, as you build your happiness, on the foundations of truth. If you want the talents, the inclination, or the necessary materials for such a work, fall not however into sloth. Endeavour to copy after the example of SCIPIO at Linternum. Be able to say to yourself,

“Innocuas amo delicias doctamque quietem.”

Rural amusements, and philosophical meditations, will make your hours glide smoothly on; and if the indulgence of Heaven has given you a friend like LAELIUS, nothing is wanting to make you completely happy.

THESE are some of those reflections which may serve to fortify the mind under banishment, and under the other misfortunes of life, which it is every man's interest to prepare for,

* XIPHIL.

I

because

because they are common to all men *: I say they are common to all men ; because even they who escape them are equally exposed to them. The darts of adverse fortune are always levelled at our heads. Some reach us, some graze against us, and fly to wound our neighbours. Let us therefore impose an equal temper on our minds, and pay without murmuring the tribute which we owe to humanity. The winter brings cold, and we must freeze. The summer returns with heat, and we must melt. The inclemency of the air disorders our health, and we must be sick. Here we are exposed to wild beasts, and there to men more savage than the beasts : and if we escape the inconveniencies and dangers of the air and the earth, there are perils by water and perils by fire. This established course of things it is not in our power to change ; but it is in our power to assume such a greatness of mind as becomes wise and virtuous men ; as may enable us to encounter the accidents of life with fortitude, and to conform ourselves to the order of nature, who governs her great kingdom, the world, by continual mutations. Let us submit to this order, let us be persuaded that whatever does happen ought to happen, and never be so foolish as to expostulate with nature. The best resolution we can take is to suffer what we cannot alter, and to pursue, without repining, the road which Providence, who directs every thing, has marked out to us : for it is not enough to follow ; and he is but a bad soldier who fights, and marches on with reluctance. We must receive the orders with spirit and cheerfulness, and not endeavour to flink out of the post which is assigned us in this beautiful disposition of things, whereof even our sufferings make a necessary part. Let us address ourselves to God, who governs all, as CLEANTHES did in those admirable verses, which are going to lose part of their grace and energy in my translation of them.

* SEN. Ep. 107.

Parent of nature! Master of the World!
 Where'er thy Providence directs, behold
 My steps with chearful resignation turn.
 Fate leads the willing, drags the backward on.
 Why should I grieve, when grieving I must bear?
 Or take with guilt, what guiltless I might share?

Thus let us speak, and thus let us act. Resignation to the will of God is true magnanimity. But the sure mark of a pusillanimous and base spirit, is to struggle against, to censure the order of Providence, and, instead of mending our own conduct, to set up for correcting that of our Maker.

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