

19.0.7. (ii) Epicurus is insistent that the senses are the criterion of truth, and in particular the criterion of goodness (DL X.124, 129, 137). This is confirmed by Cicero (*Fin.* I.

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ix.30-1) who reports a dispute among Epicureans on the point, Epicurus holding that the good is recognized in perception 'as that fire is hot, snow white, honey sweet'. What precise form this view took we shall discuss in detail in the next chapter. For the moment it is enough to note that the good is appreciated or grasped in perception. It is easy enough to see how sensory pleasure might be grasped in perception. It is not so easy to see how the various versions of katastematic pleasure might be. If we turn to the first version above we find Cicero (*Fin.* I.xi.39) defending the Epicureans against the following objection: a hand that has nothing wrong with it lacks nothing; but if pleasure were a good, it would lack pleasure; therefore pleasure is not a good. The obvious assumption is that the pain-free hand is without any (felt) pleasure. Cicero's defence is that while this might be an objection to a Cyrenaic it cannot tell against Epicurus since for him the mere absence of pain is pleasure, indeed the greatest pleasure. This objection and the defence against it are used by Cicero to bring out the contrast between familiar sensory pleasures and conditions of being without pain either altogether or in particular organs. He is surely right to claim that if the mere absence of pain is the greatest pleasure then the greatest pleasures pass for the most part unnoticed, and certainly could hardly be given in perception without becoming sensory pleasures. In short, this interpretation makes it hard for Epicurus consistently to hold that the good is given in perception. Of course, Epicurus could say that