

Torquatus' Statement of the Epicurean View Of The Ultimate Good In "On Ends"

free from pain is in a state of pleasure. Further, to make it plain that pleasure is our utmost *good*, let us represent to ourselves the condition of a man perpetually regaled with all the variety conceivable of the most ravishing pleasures incident either to the mind or body, without the least alloy of pain, either present or approaching: can any condition of life be more advantageous, or more desirable than this? especially since it must include such a firmness of soul, as renders it proof against the fears of death or pain; death being a loss of all sensation, and pain either long and moderate, or acute and short; so that which ever it provè, there is room for comfort: though to finish the felicity of it, it is necessary that the dread of a Deity be forgotten, and the sweetness of past pleasures very frequently recollected. Again: let us imagine a man afflicted with the saddest agonies and tortures of mind and body, utterly despairing

to the remembrance of past, and the expectation of future, as the fruition of any present pleasure ; what could we call him but the very accomplishment and *idea* of *misery* itself? If therefore a life of torment is the most detestable, undoubtedly it is the greatest evil, and consequently a life of pleasure must be the greatest good, on this side whereof the mind of man finds nothing for it *finally* to fix upon ; as there is nothing besides pain, as that comprehends all sorts of terrors and molestations, which simply and from itself can either disturb or shatter us. In short, pleasure and pain are the first occasions and springs of all affection, aversion, and action ; whence it is evident, that all the concerns of wisdom and virtue are to be reckoned into the account of a life of pleasure. And thus while we convince ourselves, that when we have said all, a life of jollity and pleasure is the *summum bonum*, the last and the completest good, into which all others must be resolved, and itself into none ; there