

An Epicurean Study of Aristotle's Nichomachean Ethics

Post by "Cassius" of November 1, 2022 at 8:42 AM

For example U417:

U417

Plutarch, *That Epicurus actually makes a pleasant life impossible*, 3, p. 1088C:
Epicurus has imposed a limit on pleasures that applies to all of them alike: the removal of all pain. For he believes that our nature adds to pleasure only up to the point where pain is abolished and does not allow it any further increase in magnitude (although the pleasure, when the state of painlessness is reached, admits of certain unessential variations). But to proceed to this point, accompanied by desire, is our stint of pleasure, and the journey is indeed short and quick. Hence it is that becoming aware of the poverty here they transfer their final good from the body, as from an unproductive piece of land, to the soul, persuaded that there they will find pastures and meadows lush with pleasures.

To me that variation makes clear in saying "adds to pleasure only up to the point where pain is abolished" that there's nothing different in kind when all pain is absent. The step from 99% pleasures 1% pains is simply the addition of 1% more pleasure -- the 100% level is not something different in and of itself.