

# Paul Thyry (Baron D'Holbach / Mirabaud) - French / German Sympathizer With Some Epicurean Ideas

Post by "Cassius" of December 16, 2023 at 3:12 PM

This "Common Sense" appears to be an interesting collection of what is almost an extended set of "[Principal Doctrines](#)" or written as aphorisms somewhat like Nietzsche.

Here's one that I find helpful in explaining Epicurus' view of "chance," but it may go to far and be read to deny any swerve to atoms:

[Baron D'Holbach - Good Sense \(1-50\)](#)

Quote

§43. "What?" you will say, "is intelligent man, is the universe, and all it contains, the effect of chance?" No; I repeat it, the universe is not an effect; it is the cause of all effects; every being it contains is the necessary effect of this cause, which sometimes shews us its manner of acting, but generally conceals its operations. Men use the word chance to hide their ignorance of true causes, which, though not understood, act not less according to certain laws. There is no effect without a cause. Nature is a word, used to denote the immense assemblage of beings, various matter, infinite combinations, and diversified motions, that we behold. All bodies, organized or unorganized, are necessary effects of certain causes. Nothing in nature can happen by chance. Every thing is subject to fixed laws. These laws are only the necessary connection of certain effects with their causes. One atom of matter cannot meet another by chance; this meeting is the effect of permanent laws, which cause every being necessarily to act as it does, and hinder it from acting otherwise, in given circumstances. To talk of the fortuitous concurrence of atoms, or to attribute some effects to chance, is merely saying that we are ignorant of the laws, by which bodies act, meet, combine, or separate.

Those, who are unacquainted with nature, the properties of beings, and the effects which must necessarily result from the concurrence of certain causes, think, that every thing takes place by chance. It is not chance, that has placed the sun in the centre of our planetary system; it is by its own essence, that the substance, of which it is composed, must occupy that place, and thence be diffused.