

"If You Wish To Be An Epicurean, Get Used To Being Called 'Cockeyed'" - or - "Why Vatican Saying 29 Would Make A Good Epicurean Tatoo"

Post by "Cassius" of July 9, 2024 at 10:39 AM

Quote from DeWitt Epicurus and His Philosophy Chapter 7, page 127

Plutarch, who employed part of his leisure in digging up old slurs out of the archives, wrote scornfully: "It was not because Colotes had read 'the heaven-descended Canons' that bread was perceived by him to be bread and fodder fodder." Even after the time of Plutarch the Canon seemed good to the frivolous Alciphron for a joke between two courtesans, the Epicurean Leontion and Lamia, mistress of Demetrius the Besieger: "How long will one have to put up with this philosopher? Let him keep to his books on Physics, to his Authorized Doctrines and his cock-eyed Canons."

The footnote to that last part referencing Alciphron is *Ep.* 2.2.2 (Loeb 4.17, p.309), where the translator uses "distorted."

That letter can be read in full here: <https://archive.org/details/in.ern...ge/308/mode/2up>

From the introduction to that volume of Alciphron:

INTRODUCTION

1. GENERAL

Of the prose letters that have come down to us from Greek antiquity a few, like the short letters of Epicurus, are letters in the simple sense of the word ; most are "literary efforts," some genuine, like the amusing and informative letters of Synesius or the vapourings of Dionysius of Antioch, some forged, hke the letters attributed to Phalaris or to Socrates. 'Forged " 1s perhaps a dangerous word to use in some cases, the line between letters forged with intent to deceive and letters forged without such intent 1s often difficult or impossible to draw In the case of the letters in the present volume, however, there 1s no such difficulty they are forged without intent to deceive (i.e., they are "imaginary "), and they all illustrate, in one or way another, the workings of that " " Second Sophistic " which so rarely had the art to hide its art. Some of them are genre letters suggestive of the pastoral idyll, the names of writers and of addressees being avowedly fictitious some of them purport to be written by historical characters to historical characters.