

Thomas Jefferson's Epicurean Outline

CHAP. IV.

That the Pleasure, wherein consists Felicity, is Indolence of Body, and Tranquillity of Mind.

Jefferson's

There being (as before is intimated) two kinds of pleasures; one in station or rest, which is a placability, calmness, and vacuity, or immunity from trouble and grief; the other in motion, which consists in a sweet movement, as in gladness, mirth, and whatsoever moves the sense delightfully, with a kind of sweetness and vibration, as to eat and drink out of hunger and thirst: It may be demanded, Whether in both, or in either, and in which consists Felicity?

We say, that pleasure, wherein felicity consists, is of the first kind, the stable, or that which is in station; and so can be no other than indolence of body, and tranquillity of mind.

When therefore we say in general terms, Pleasure is the end of happy life, we are far from meaning the pleasures of luxurious persons, or of others, as considered in the motion or act of fruition, by which the sense is pleasantly and sweetly affected; as some, either through ignorance, dissent, or ill will, interpret. We mean no more but this, (to repeat it once more) *Not pained in body, nor troubled in mind.*

For it is not perpetually feasting, and drinking; not the conversation of beautiful women; not rarities of fish, nor any other dainties of a profuse table, that make a happy life; but reason, with sobriety, and a serene mind, searching the causes, why this object is to be preferred, that to be rejected; and expelling opinions, which occasion much trouble to the mind.

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