

Metrodorus On The Importance of A "Strong Constitution of Body"

Post by "Cassius" of July 26, 2019 at 9:26 PM

Cicero, in writing against Epicurus, preserves for us (1) confirmation of Epicurus' focus on pleasure as the goal, with virtue being value only as an instrument of pleasure, as the heart of his doctrine, and (2) a statement of Metrodorus emphasizing the importance of a "strong constitution of body" and a "reasonable expectation of continuing" the same. From De Officiis, Peabody translation.

<https://archive.org/details/ethica...ceiala/page/244>

—is not expedient, because it is infamous, foul, base.

33. There remains the fourth division, comprehending becomingness, moderation, discretion, self-restraint, temperance. Can anything be expedient which is opposed to this choir¹ of such virtues? However, those of the Cyrenaic school² and the disciples of Anniceris,³ philosophers only in name, followed Aristippus in making all good to consist in pleasure, and regarded virtue as commendable only in its pleasure-giving capacity. They having passed almost out of notice, Epicurus holds his ground as an advocate and teacher of nearly the same doctrine. With these I must contend, as the phrase is, with infantry and cavalry,⁴ if I mean to guard and maintain the right. For if not only expediency but everything appertaining to a happy life consists in a strong constitution of body and in a reasonable expectation of preserving that constitution, as Metrodorus¹ writes, certainly this expediency — the

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From [the same source](#), Cicero buries himself deeper! "I affirm that all sensual pleasure is opposed to the right!" Cicero was more of a neo-Platonist than a Stoic, but regardless of his influence this kind of quote serves as a warning against trying to pick and choose among the schools - Epicurus leads in a totally different direction than the others:

on their own account, but only with reference to pleasure. To sum up the whole in brief, as I have maintained that there is no expediency which is opposed to the right, so I affirm that all sensual pleasure is opposed to the right. All the more do I find fault with Calliphon and Dinomachus,² who

¹ A figure derived from a watercourse whose flow is obstructed. The idea is : What he says about these virtues does not flow easily, as if he were sincere and thoroughly in earnest.

² Their doctrine was that for man pleasure and virtue are both ends of being, — pleasure by nature and from the beginning, virtue after experience of the good that there is in it.

Post by “Hiram” of July 29, 2019 at 10:32 AM

This reminds me of Michel Onfray's praise of ancient philosophers who rejected Stoicism because they felt that they had to be true to their bodies and wanted to philosophize with their bodies--making the body a token of one's conscience because it represents that which we know with all our being to be true.