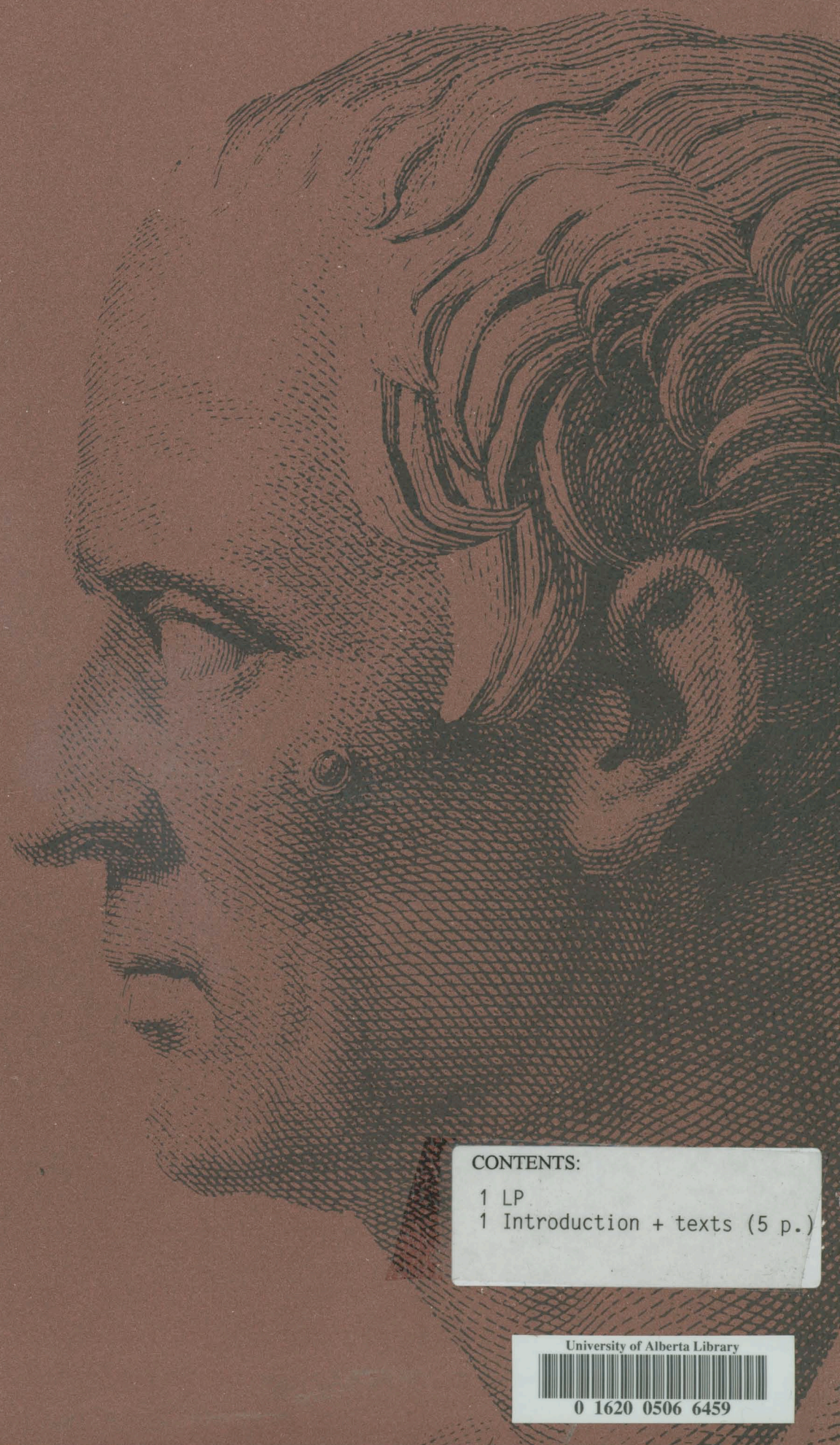


CICERO

Commentary and Readings in Latin and English by Professor Moses Hadas of Columbia University

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Introduction / First Oration Against Cataline / On Old Age / Tusculan Disputations / On Moral Duties / Letter to Atticus



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CICERO

Commentary and Readings in Latin and English by
Moses Hadas

Moses Hadas, Professor of Greek and Latin at Columbia University, is the author of *A History of Greek Literature* (1950) and *A History of Latin Literature* (1951), and the editor of the *Modern Library Tacitus* (1941), *Cicero* (1951), and *The Greek Poets* (1953). He has published many translations of classical literature.

CICERO
By Moses Hadas

For no national group is it so easy to choose a single representative author as it is for Rome. Not only in the volume and scope of his work but in its form and spirit, in its strength and weakness, Cicero is the perfect embodiment of Latin literature. In that literature concern for the practical and devotion to the service of Rome are central motives; to preoccupation with beauty for its own sake and to hard speculative thinking, both characteristic of the Greek literature of which the Latin was an offshoot, the Romans were indifferent.

If Rome's mission was to secure order and spread civilization, as Vergil's famous *Tu Romane memento* lines at the end of the sixth *Aeneid* declare, Cicero is our best example of that mission in operation. The heart of his creed was traditional order and administration, and he is the single greatest conserver and transmitter of Roman cultural values to European posterity. His was the language which gave shape to civilized discourse in the countries of Europe, and his popularizations transmitted so much of the philosophic thought of the ancients as the Middle Ages were prepared to receive. For the centuries during which Europe was a cultural unit, its unifying force, so far as an individual would provide one, was Cicero.

The personality of Cicero as well as the facts of his public career are easy to read from the extensive body of private correspondence which he has left behind; no other figure of antiquity, and few of modern times, stands so clearly revealed. If we find him a good deal of a trimmer and inordinately vain, we might well ask how many comparable figures in history would better pass scrutiny under such merciless light. If his views of politics and society were limited, we must recognize that it was inevitable for a man of his background to identify the interests of the state and of civilization with those views. For his faltering and his compromises there is one sufficient answer: he suffered death for his views. He is the shining example of the lawyer and politician in a republic making of his lawyership an art and of his politics statesmanship. And he transcended the ordinary measure of lawyer and politician by his concern for the cultural values of the race; he was not merely a patron of learning but set his own hand to propagating the wisdom of the past and making it accessible to all.

In shaping the modes of European thought and expression the contributions of Cicero are beyond calculation. Assimilation into our own culture, it is true, has already completed the direct

usefulness of much of his work. Treatises on rhetoric are caviar to the general, and only amateurs of antiquity or of forensic oratory are likely to be much concerned with the bulk of Cicero's orations. But in his philosophical essays Cicero may still be read not merely as a record of antiquity but as a guide to thought and conduct. No one could maintain that Cicero is a giant in speculative philosophy or that he created systems of thought. He is the first to admit that his essays are merely adaptations from the Greek: "They are mere drafts, produced with little labor; I contribute only the words, of which I have a great abundance" (*To Atticus* 12.52).

And the Greeks from whom he borrowed were not themselves 'first philosophers' but adherents of the Hellenistic schools then in vogue--Stoics, Epicureans, Academics--who were concerned not with explaining the universe so much as with helping men adjust themselves to it. It is in his selection and presentation that Cicero performs his great service. Not only did he transform the knotty treatises of the Greeks into lucid and delightful and witty essays, but by his very selection and distribution of emphasis he informed the whole of his work with his own characteristic outlook.

It is the personal element in Cicero's writings that gives them peculiar relevance to ourselves. We too respect culture and ideals, are impatient of subtleties, suspicious of certainties, think of utilities and ends. Like Cicero we are confronted by the imperious problems of civilized existence in a great commonwealth founded upon justice and common aspirations and threatened by revolution. Cicero's thought is directed toward providing distinctions which should make it possible for thoughtful men to adjust to the greater commonwealth, yield its aspirations devoted loyalty, and yet maintain personal integrity. If he were a closet philosopher his work would not have this relevance; and if political vicissitudes had not interrupted his public career he would not have written philosophy at all. He wrote the essays only in periods of enforced retirement from public life and as an inadequate surrogate, as he himself says, for the more important contributions to the Roman state which his retirement prevented him from making. The writing of philosophy was the second best service he could perform for Roman patriotism. The Romans, he explains at the beginning of the *Tusculans* and elsewhere, had no philosophic literature, though they were fully the peers of the Greeks in intellectual capacity and their superiors in morality, because they had been preoccupied with more important matters. But it would be becoming for Rome to possess the ornament of a philosophic literature also, and since no other avenue of service was open and his achievements in oratory

suggested his fitness for the task, he would now undertake to supply the want. But the essays are patriotic in senses other than supplying a becoming ornament. For one thing, the Roman constitutions are justified, as in the *Republic*; for another, the Epicureans, who were become associated with political subversiveness, are constantly refuted. But most of all, the essays make it possible for a man of thoughtful temper to be at the same time a good Roman.

Considering the brief periods of retirement which Cicero devoted to his essays--the bulk were written between the death of Tullia in 45 and his return to political activity in 44--his output is astonishing.

The category in which Cicero shows his greatest technical competence, deals with rhetoric. In our world rhetoric has fallen upon hard times. We seldom use the word except in a disparaging sense, and usually with the prefix 'mere,' to denote turgid artificiality in vocabulary and syntax. But the word and the thing have their legitimate uses; discourse is a human product and therefore susceptible to the refinements of art, and the rules of the art are capable of being set down. Like other arts which are practised socially and continuously--the art of table manners, for example--we learn the art of discourse by imitation, but handbooks of etiquette have their place nevertheless. Orators may unconsciously follow the rules of the handbooks, as poets may lisp in numbers; but somewhere in the

consciousness of the lispng poet are the examples of predecessors who labored over the art, and orators who would be offended if the word 'rhetoric' were applied to their efforts have assimilated the end product of classical theory and practice. Sir Winston Churchill's periods are unmistakably Ciceronian, whether or not he conned Cicero's treatises, which they would not have been if Cicero's treatises had not served as Europe's textbooks in the art of discourse through the centuries. Cicero himself was doubtless magnificently endowed by nature, but he composed his speeches strictly according to theory, as the studious elaboration of the rhythms at the end of his periods demonstrates. He considered himself an artist in the spoken word, and from his earliest youth and throughout his life occupied himself with the theory of his art and its history.

The fullest embodiment of Cicero's theory is to be found in his own speeches, which have been universally acknowledged as models in their kind. Fifty-eight have come down to us, and forty-eight others are known to be lost. Their subjects range from commonplace litigation (but usually with some political implication) to questions of the highest statesmanship. His oratorical style is characterized by richness of vocabulary, beauty of phrasing, an amplitude verging on the redundant, and extraordinary attention to cadence. In lawsuits he was almost always on the side of the defendant, and when his side was represented by several speakers he was always chosen to give the summation. Most of his political speeches were delivered in the senate, where his own party held the majority; but he could be effective with the multitude also, as when he persuaded them to relinquish a land law which was put forward for their advantage.

Seldom has a critical and pregnant juncture in history been illuminated by a participant with

expert knowledge and keen perception as fully as the Roman revolution is illuminated by the private correspondence of Cicero. He was a diligent correspondent; he might write three letters to Atticus in a single day, and did not like to have a day go by without a letter. There being no regular postal service, a letter might be written elaborately at leisure to await the chance of a messenger, or one might be written hastily while a messenger waited at the doorstep. Some of the longer and politically significant letters may have been carefully revised; the great bulk are untouched. So frank are the letters, indeed, that scholars hostile to Cicero have been able to draw up damning bills of indictment on the basis of the information they supply, and a French scholar of standing has recently argued at length that the collections were made by an enemy of Cicero for the specific purpose of discrediting him.

But only a Don Quixote or an insulated monk could reproach Cicero for his political maneuvering in an age when ambition was not only condoned but approved. In appraising Cicero's inordinate self-conceit we must remember that he was a 'new man' who had made headway against the entrenched exclusiveness of the aristocracy. Approbation was meat and drink to him. A concomitant of his insatiable appetite for applause, which a modern might attribute to an inferiority complex, was a dash of hero worship for those who had surely arrived and of awe for aristocracy of blood even when the individual aristocrat was contemptible. The weak mortal who wrote the letters does sometimes fall short of the professions of the ethical preacher; but Cicero is surely not alone in this inconsistency, and in his day the fault was venial. For his vacillation and opportunism the blame is partly on the exigencies of political life and its accepted standards, but partly also, surely, on Cicero's Academic criteria in philosophy and his training as a lawyer. He was always able to see the merit in either side of a question, and his advocate's eloquence naturally tended to heap up arguments of probability on the side which happened to be expedient. But even to readers unconcerned with the personality of Cicero and with the fascinating web of contemporary politics the wide and humane range of interests in these letters, in literature, in art, and most of all in people, make them one of the more attractive legacies from antiquity.

We now turn to specimens of Cicero's work in various kinds, and first to oratory. The most familiar of Cicero's speeches, because of their traditional place in the school curriculum, are those against the conspirator Catiline, delivered in 63 BC, the year of Cicero's consulship. First we shall have brief selections from the first Catilinarian in Latin, and then an English translation.

Quo usque tandem abutere, Catilina, patientia nostra? quam diu etiam furor iste tuus nos eludet? quem ad finem sese effrenata iactabit audacia? Nihilne te nocturnum praesidium Palatii nihil urbis vigiliae, nihil timor populi, nihil concursus bonorum omnium, nihil hic munitissimus habendi senatus locus, nihil horum ora vultusque moverunt? Patere tua consilia non sentis? constrictam iam omnium horum scientia teneri coniurationem tuam non vides? Quid proxima, quid superiore nocte egeris, ubi fueris, quos convocaveris, quid consilii ceperis quem nostrum ignorare arbitraris? O tempora! O mores! senatus haec intelligit, consul videt: hic tamen vivit. Vivit? immo vero etiam in senatum venit, fit publici consilii particeps, notat et designat oculis ad caedem unum quemque nostrum. Nos autem, viri

fortes, satis facere rei publicae videmur, si istius forem ac tela vitemus..

How much further, Catiline, will you carry your abuse of our forbearance? How much longer will your reckless temper baffle our restraint? What bounds will you set to this display of your uncontrolled audacity? Have you not been impressed by the nightly guards upon the Palatine, by the watching of the city sentinels? Are you not affected by the alarm of the people, by the rallying of all loyal citizens, by the convening of the senate in this safely-guarded spot, by the looks and the expressions of all assembled here? Do you not perceive that your designs are exposed? Do you not see that your conspiracy is even now fully known and detected by all who are here assembled? What you did last night and the night before, where you were and whom you summoned, and what plans you laid, do you suppose that there is one of us here who does not know? Alas! what degenerate days are these! The senate is well aware of the facts, the consul can perceive them all; but the criminal still lives. Lives? Yes, lives; and even comes down to the senate, takes part in the public deliberations, and marks down with ominous glances every single one of us for massacre. And we,--such is our bravery,--think we are doing our duty to our country, if we merely keep ourselves out of the way of his reckless words and bloody deeds. No, Catiline, long ere now you should yourself have been led by the consul's orders to execution; and on your own head should have been brought down the destruction which you are now devising for us.

I bid you Catiline pursue the course you have begun. Quit Rome at last and soon; the city gates are open; depart at once: your camp under Manlius's command has too long been awaiting with anxiety the arrival of its general. Take with you all your associates; or, at least, take as many as you can; free the city from the infection of their presence. You will relieve me from serious apprehension by putting the city wall between yourself and me; you cannot possibly remain in our society any longer; I will not bear, I will not endure, I will not allow it. Our hearty thanks must be rendered to the immortal gods and especially to Jupiter the Stablisher, from the most ancient times the special protector of this city, for that we have now so often eluded this brutal man, this baneful and vindictive enemy of our country: but the supreme interests of the state must not be too frequently imperilled in the person of a single man.

What object indeed is there in this city, Catiline, in which you can feel any pleasure? There is not a man in Rome, outside your band of desperate conspirators, who does not fear you, not a man who does not hate you. Is there any form of personal immorality which has not stained your family life? Is there any scandal to be incurred by private conduct which has not attached itself to your reputation? Is there any evil passion which has not glared from your eyes, any evil deed which has not soiled your hands, any outrageous vice that has not left its mark upon your whole body? Can the light of the sun, Catiline, can the breath of heaven be pleasant to you, when you know that every member of this house knows well that on the 31st of December in the consulship of Lepidus and Tullus you had posted yourself in the Comitium with a dagger in your hand? When they know that you had got together a band to murder the consuls and the leading men in Rome? When they know that your criminal and reckless design was frustrated,

not by any reflection or apprehension on your part, but only by the good fortune of Rome?

But at the present moment what sort of life is yours? I will address you in terms so mild that I shall be thought to feel towards you, not the indignation which I ought to feel, but a pity which you ought not to expect. A few moments ago you came into the senate-house. Did a single person in this crowded assembly, did a single one of your friends and relations here give you any welcome? If you know that such a thing as this has never happened to any one within human memory, are you waiting for positive insults, when you are already extinguished by that impressive silence? What do you infer from the fact that your approach emptied all the benches near where you are sitting, and that all the ex-consuls, whom you have so often destined for massacre, as soon as you sat down left the seats in that part of the house absolutely empty and bare? In what spirit do you intend to accept those intimations? Why, I protest, if my own slaves feared me in the way in which all your fellow-citizens fear you, I should feel it high time to flee from my own house. Do you not feel any impulse to flee from the city? And if I saw myself exposed even unjustly to suspicions so grave, and giving such deep offence to my fellow-citizens, I should prefer to be deprived of the sight of those fellow-citizens to thus remaining the object of their hostile glances. And do you, when your guilty conscience forces you to recognise the universal indignation against you as justly felt and long deserved, do you hesitate to avoid the sight and presence of those whose thoughts and feelings you so bitterly offend? If your own parents were afraid of you and hated you, and you could not conciliate them by any expedients, you would probably withdraw to some place far from their sight. At the present moment your country, which is the common mother of us all, hates you and fears you and has long been convinced that your one thought is to work some murderous treason against her. Will you not then quail before her authority, will you not submit to her decision, will you not fear her power to punish?

Yet why do I speak? Is it possible that anything can influence a man like you? Is it possible that a man like you will ever reform? That you will ever turn your thoughts to flight? That you will ever contemplate exile? Would indeed that heaven might inspire you with such a thought! Though I see clearly, if you are alarmed at my words and make up your mind to go into exile, what a storm of unpopularity it will bring down upon my head, if not at the present moment while the memory of your crimes is still fresh, at any rate in future ages: but it is worth while, if only the disastrous consequences are confined to my private fortunes, and do not involve results which are dangerous to the state.

Too long already, my lords, have we been environed by the perils of this treasonable conspiracy; but it has chanced that all these crimes, this ancient recklessness and audacity has matured at last and burst in full force upon the year of my consulship. If then out of the whole gang this single villain only is removed, perhaps we shall think ourselves for a brief period freed from care and alarm; but the real danger will only have been driven under the surface, and will continue to infect the veins and vital organs of the state. As men stricken with a dangerous disease, when hot and tossing with fever, often seem at first to be relieved by a draught of cold water, but afterwards are much more gravely and severely af-

flicted; so this disease, which has seized the state may be temporarily relieved by the punishment of Catiline, but will return with greater severity if his associates are allowed to survive. Let the disloyal then withdraw, let them separate themselves from the loyal, let them herd together in one place, let there be a wall, as I have often said, to sunder them from us. Let them cease to lay plots to assassinate the consul in his own house, let them cease to crowd menacingly round the City Praetor's judgment-seat, let them cease to beleague the senate-house with drawn swords and prepare their grenades and matches for firing the city: in short, let the political principles of every man be visibly written upon his forehead. I promise you this, my lords, that in me and my colleague there shall be found such energy, in you yourselves such resolution, in the Roman knights such courage; in all loyal men such unanimity, that at Catiline's departure from Rome you shall see everything that is evil exposed and brought to light, sternly repressed and adequately punished.

With these ominous words of warning, Catiline, to the true preservation of the state, to the mischief and misfortune of yourself and to the destruction of those attached to you by every sort of crime and treason, get you gone to your unholy and abominable campaign. Then shalt thou, great Jupiter, who hast been established with the same rites as this city, whom we name rightly the Stablisher of this city and empire, keep this man and his associates far from thy fanes and from the other temples, far from the buildings and the walls of the city, far from the lives and fortunes of the citizens; and these men who hate the loyal, who make war on their country and pillage Italy like brigands, who are linked together by bonds of guilt and by complicity in abominable crimes, thou shalt greatly afflict in life and in death with punishments that shall never cease.

One of the most delightful of Cicero's essays is that on Old Age. After pleasant exchanges between the several interlocutors Cato says: When I reflect on the subject of old age, I find that the reasons why old age is regarded as unhappy are four: one, it withdraws us from active employments; another, it impairs physical vigor; the third, it deprives us of nearly all sensual pleasures; and four, it is the verge of death. Let us see, if you please, how much force and justice there is in these several reasons.

Then he proceeds to discuss and refute these objections one by one. Here is the refutation of the last:

There remains the fourth reason, which more than the others seems to make my time of life anxious and perturbed--the approach of death, which certainly cannot be far removed from old age. Wretched old man, not to have learned in a long life that death is to be despised! Death is wholly negligible if it extinguishes life altogether, and even desirable, if it conducts the soul where it will be immortal; surely no third possibility is imaginable. Why then should I fear death if I shall be not unhappy or else be happy? Even so, is anyone so foolish, however young he be, as to be sure he will live till evening? Youth has many more chances of death than age. The young are more liable to disease, their sickness is more serious, their cure more difficult. Few reach old age; were it not so life would be better and wiser. Intelligence and reason and prudence reside in the old, and but for them there could be no community at all. But to return to the imminence of death--can it be urged as a charge against age when you see that it is shared by youth? The death of my own excellent son, and of your brothers, Scipio, men born to the highest

expectations, taught me that death is common to every age. Yet a young man hopes to live long and an old man can entertain no such hope. The hope itself is foolish; what can be more stupid than to take things uncertain for certain, false for true? "An old man has nothing even to hope."

There he is in better case than the young, for what the one hopes the other has attained; one wishes to live long, the other has lived long.

And can we, in heaven's name, call anything human long? Grant the very latest term of life; suppose we reach the age of the king of Tartessus--it is recorded that the king of Cadiz ruled eighty years and lived a hundred and twenty--still nothing that has an end is long. When the end comes what has passed has flowed away, and all that is left is what you have achieved by virtue and good deeds. Hours, days, months, years, glide by; the past never returns, and what is to come we cannot know. With whatever span is allotted us we should be content. There is no need for an actor to perform the whole play to give his audience satisfaction; enough to play his own role well. Nor need the wise man continue to the last curtain. A short span is long enough to live well and honorably; if you live on you have no more reason to mourn your advancing years than have farmers, when the sweetness of spring is past, to lament the coming of fall and winter. Spring typifies youth, and points to the fruits to come; the other seasons are appropriate for harvesting and storing the crop. The harvest of old age, as I have often said, is the memory and abundance of blessings previously acquired. Moreover, all that falls out according to nature

must be reckoned good, and what accords better with nature than for old men to die? Nature struggles and rebels when the young die. When they die it is as if a violent fire is extinguished by a torrent, but the old die like a spent fire quenched of its own accord and without external effort. Unripe apples must be wrenched from the tree, but all of their own accord when ripe and mellow; so from the young, it is force that takes life, from the old, ripeness. So agreeable is this ripeness to me that as I approach death nearer I feel like a voyager at last in sight of land and on the point of reaching harbor after a long journey.

Old age has no fixed term, and one may fitly live in it so long as he can observe and discharge the duties of his station, and yet despise death. Fearless of death, old age may transcend youth in courage and fortitude. Such is the meaning of Solon's answer to the tyrant Pisistratus, who asked the grounds of his bold resistance; "old age" was Solon's reply. That end of life is best when, with mind and faculties unimpaired, Nature herself takes apart what she has put together. The builder of a ship or house is best able to tear it down, and so Nature who compacted man can best effect his dissolution. What is newly compacted is hard to tear apart, old fabrics come apart easily. It follows that old men should neither be averse of their brief remaining span nor desert it without cause. Pythagoras forbids us to desert our post and charge in life without the order of our commander, God.

I do not see why I should hesitate to tell you my own feelings about death, for I seem to have a clearer view of it the nearer I approach it. I believe, dear Scipio and Laelius, that your excellent fathers and my very good friends are

living, and that life too which alone deserves the name of life. As long as we are shut up in this bodily prison we are performing a heavy task laid upon us by necessity, for the soul, celestial by birth, is forced down from its exalted abode and plunged, as it were, to earth,

a place uncongenial to its divine nature and its eternity. I believe that the immortal gods implanted souls in human bodies to provide overseers for the earth who would contemplate the heavenly order and imitate it in the moderation and constancy of their lives. To this belief I have been impelled not by reason and arguments alone, but by the distinguished authority of the greatest philosophers. I learned that Pythagoras and the Pythagoreans, virtually our countrymen and sometimes called Italian philosophers, never doubted that our souls were emanations of the universal divine intelligence. I was impressed also by the discourse on the immortality of the soul delivered on the last day of his life by Socrates, who the oracle of Apollo had pronounced the wisest of men. I need say no more. This is my conviction, this my belief: Such is the rapid movement of souls, such their memory of the past and foresight of the future, so many are the arts, so profound the sciences, so numerous the inventions, that the nature which embraces these things cannot be mortal; and since the soul is always active and has no source of motion because it is self-moving, it can have no end of motion, for it will never abandon itself; and since the nature of the soul is uncompounded and has no admixture heterogeneous and unlike itself, it is indivisible and hence cannot perish. Furthermore, it is a strong proof of men knowing many things before birth that boys studying difficult subjects grasp innumerable points so quickly that they seem not to be receiving them for the first time but to be recalling and remembering them. This, in substance, is Plato's argument.

Let me now, if you will, give my own sentiments. No one will ever convince me, Scipio, that your father Paulus, or your two grandfathers Paulus and Africanus, or the latter's father and uncle, or other illustrious men whom I need not name, would have undertaken such noble enterprises which were to belong to the memory of posterity without a clear perception that posterity belonged to them. Or do you suppose, to take an old man's privilege of boasting, that I would have undertaken such vast labors, day and night, at home and abroad, if I were going to limit my glory by the bounds of my life? Would it not have been better to pass a quiet and leisurely life, far from toil and strife? But my soul somehow always strained to look forward to posterity, as if it would really live only when it departed from life. Were it not that souls are immortal, men's souls would not strive for undying fame in proportion to their transcending merit. The fact that the wisest men die with perfect calmness and the foolish with great perturbation proves that souls with a keener and wider vision perceive that they are going to a better state, while those of duller vision cannot see beyond death.

O glorious day when I shall go to join that divine company and conclave of souls and depart from these turmoils and impurities! I shall join not only the men I have mentioned but also my son Cato, than whom no better man was ever born nor one who surpassed him in filial duty. It was I who lighted his pyre--though he should have lighted mine--but his spirit, never abandoning but looking back upon me, has certainly gone whither he saw that I too must come. I gave the appearance of bearing my calamity bravely not be-

cause my heart was untroubled, but because I found solace in the thought that the parting and separation between us would not long endure.

For these reasons, Scipio, old age sits lightly on me--that is what you and Laelius wondered at--and I find it not irksome but actually agreeable. If I err in believing men's souls to be immortal, I err willingly, and as long as I live I do not wish an error which gives me such satisfaction to be wrested from me. If I shall have no sensation in death, as some paltry philosophers think, I have no fear that the dead philosophers will ridicule my error. But if we are not going to be immortal, it is desirable for a man to be erased in proper season; nature imposes a limit upon life as upon all else. Old age is the closing act of life, as of a drama, and we ought to leave when the play grows wearisome, especially if we have had our fill.

Such are my views on old age. I pray you attain it, so that you can verify what you have heard from me by experience.

Here is the final paragraph in Latin:

O praeclarum diem, cum in illud divinum animorum concilium coetumque proficiscar cumque ex hac turba et conlutione discedam! Proficiscar enim non ad eos solum viros, de quibus ante dixi, verum etiam ad Catonem meum, quo nemo vir melior natus est, nemo pietate praestantior; cuius a me corpus est crematum, quod contra decuit ab illo meum, animus vero non me deserens, sed respectans in ea profecto loca discessit, quo mihi ipsi cernebat esse veniendum. Quem ego meum casum fortiter ferre visus sum, non quo aequo animo ferrem, sed me ipse consolabar existumans non longinquum inter nos digressum et discessum fore. His mihi rebus, Scipio, (id enim te cum Laelio admirari solere dixisti) levis est senectus, nec solum non molesta, sed etiam iucunda. Quodsi in hoc erro, qui animos hominum immortales esse credam, libenter erro nec mihi hunc errorem, quo delector, dum vivo, extorqueri volo; sin mortuus, ut quidam minuti philosophi consent, nihil sentiam, non vereor, ne hunc errorem meum philosophi mortui irrideant. Quodsi non sumus immortales futuri, tamen extingui homini suo tempore optabile est. Nem habet natura ut aliarum omnium rerum, sic vivendi modum. Senectus autem aetatis est peractio tamquam fabulae, cuius defectionem fugere debemus, praesertim adjuncta satietate.

Haec habui, de senectute quae dicerem; ad quam utinam perveniat! ut ea, quae ex me audistis, re experti probare possitis.

The most attractive of Cicero's ethical treatises is his Tusculan Disputations, written in the last year of Cicero's life. This is a work of ethical edification, teaching how various disconcerting emotions which militate against happiness may best be overcome. The work is divided into 5 books, whose subjects are: On Despising Death, On Enduring Pain, On Alleviating Distress, On Other Disorders of the Soul, and On Virtue as of Itself Sufficient for a Happy Life. Our selection is from the first book.

Ut cum videmus speciem primum candoremque caeli, dein conversionis celeritatem tantam, quantum cogitare non possumus, tum vicissitudines dierum ac noctium commutationesque temporum quadrupertitas ad maturitatem frugum et ad temperationem corporum aptas eorumque omnium moderatorem et ducem solem lunamque accretione et deminutione luminis quasi fastorum notantem et significantem dies, tum in eodem orbe in duodecim partes distributo quinque stellas ferri eosdem cursu constantissime servantis

disparibus inter se motibus nocturnamque caeli formam undique sideribus ornatam, tum globum terrae eminentem e mari, fixum in medio mundi universi loco, duabus oris distantibus habitabilem et cultum, quarum altera, quam nos incolimus....tum multitudinem pecudum partim ad vescendum, partim ad cultus agrorum, partim ad vehendum, partim ad corpora vestienda, hominemque ipsum quasi contemplatorem caeli ac deorum cultorem atque hominis utilitati agros omnis et maria parentia--: haec igitur et alia innumeralia cum cerimus, possumusne dubitare, quin iis praesit aliquis vel effector, si haec nata sunt, ut Platoni videtur, vel, si semper fuerunt, ut Aristoteli placet; moderator tanti operis et muneris?

When we observe, first of all, the beauty and brightness of the heaven; then that swiftness of revolution which passes comprehension; then the alternations of day and night, and the fourfold changes of the seasons, adapted to the ripening of fruits, and to the keeping of bodies in healthy order (with the sun for the regulator and the leader of it all, and with the moon, by its waxings and wanings, noting and indicating the days, as if upon a calendar); then, in the same circle, with its twelve divisions, the five planets moving along, keeping the same courses with the utmost regularity, but with different rates of motion, and the firmament everywhere studded at night with stars: then the sphere of the earth, emergent from the sea, fixed in the centre of the Universe, inhabited and cultivated in two opposite regions; then the multitude of cattle, partly for food, partly for field-labour, partly for draught, partly for clothing; and, lastly man himself, the contemplator, so to speak, of Heaven and the gods (and the worshipper of the latter), and all lands and seas subserving the good of man--as, I say, when we observe all these things, we cannot doubt, can we? but that there presides over them either some Creator (if they were created, as Plato thinks), or, if they have been from everlasting (as Aristotle is pleased to suppose), some Manager of so mighty a work, so magnificent a spectacle...

Next we turn to the treatise on Moral Duties (De officiis) also written in the last year of Cicero's life. The first book deals with the honestum, or morally good, the second with the utile or useful, and the third with conflicts between the honestum and the utile. The following selections are from the first book.

THE DUTIES OF RULERS.

Omnino, qui reipublicae praefuturi sunt, duo Platonis praecepta teneant: unum, ut utilitatem civium sic tueantur, ut, quaecumque agunt, ad eam referant, obliti commodorum suorum; alterum, ut totum corpus reipublicae curent, ut, dum partem aliquam tuentur, reliquas deserant. Ut enim tutela, sic procuratio reipublicae ad utilitatem eorum, qui commissi sunt, non ad eorum, quibus commissa, gerenda est. Qui autem parti civium consulunt, partem neglegunt, rem perniciosissimam in civitatem inducunt, seditionem atque discordiam; ex quo evenit, ut alii populares, alii studiosi optimi cuiusque videantur, pauci universorum. Hinc apud Atheniensis magis discordiae, in nostra republica non solum seditiones, sed etiam pestifera bella civilia; quae gravis et fortis civis et in republica dignus principatu fugiet atque oderit, tradetque se totum reipublicae, neque opes aut potentiam consectabitur, totamque eam sic tuebitur ut omnibus consulat.

De Off., I xxv, 85, 86.

Our statesmen will do well to remember these two precepts of Plato's. Forgetting personal interest they should aim at the public advantage and make that the object of all their efforts; again, they should care for the whole body politic and not abandon one part while protecting another. The government of a country resembles the charge of a minor. It must be conducted for the advantage of the governed, not of the governors. To promote the welfare of one section of the citizens and neglect another is to bring upon the state the curse of revolution and civil strife. What is the result? We have a democratic and an aristocratic party, but a national party hardly exists. This factious spirit it was that caused such bitter feuds at Athens and in our own republic fanned the flames of sedition and destructive civil wars. From such disasters a brave and earnest citizen worthy of supreme political power will turn with detestation. Indifferent to influence and power he will give his undivided energies to the public service and will impartially promote the interests of every class and the good of the whole nation. He will never employ false charges to expose any man to hatred or unpopularity, but will cleave to justice and honour, and rather than abandon his principles will suffer the heaviest loss and brave even death itself. There is nothing more deplorable than the passion for popularity and the struggle for office. Plato has a fine simile on this subject "Competitors for the public administration" he says, "are like sailors fighting for the helm."

Nothing reveals the character of a man and the habits of his age as fully as do his letters, if he is a good letter writer. Cicero was an excellent correspondent, and some 900 of his letters are extant. Here is one addressed to his friend Atticus in 45 BC, reporting a visit by Julius Caesar. Cicero had been on Pompey's side, and against Caesar in the civil war, but Caesar had forgiven him, though Cicero had to retire from political life.

To Atticus (At Rome)

Puteoli, 19 December, 45 B.C.

What a fearsome guest! and yet I do not regret his visit, for it was very delightful. On the second day of the winter holidays he put up at the villa of Octavius' stepfather, Philippus. The company so packed the establishment that there was hardly a place left for Caesar to dine in; two thousand men there were. You may be sure I was disturbed as to the morrow; but Barba Cassius came to my relief; he posted guards, made camp in the fields, and protected my villa.

Caesar stayed with Philippus until noon of the next day; nobody was admitted to his presence; no doubt, he was going over his accounts with Balus. Then (coming to Cicero's villa) he took a walk on the seashore; at one o'clock a bath. Then word was brought him concerning Mamurra; he did not move a muscle of his face. He next took a rub down in oil, after which he dined. Since he was undergoing a course of emetics, he ate and drank without fear and with pleasure. The dinner was well got up, and not only that but it was well cooked and well seasoned; the conversation was delightful; and, to take it all, everything went off agreeably.

Besides, in three rooms Caesar's suite was entertained very bountifully. The ordinary attendants

and the slaves had all they wanted; the more fashionable guests were served right elegantly. In fact, I showed off as a good provider.

As for my guest, he is not one to whom one would say: "Pray, my good fellow, on your way back stop off again with me." Once is enough. The talk avoided politics but fell much on literary topics. In short, he was in a charming and agreeable mood. He was to spend one day at Puteoli and another at Baiae. There you have an account of his visit, or shall I say his billeting, which, though it brought me some trouble, as I have said, occasioned me little annoyance.

O hospitem mihi tam gravem *ametameleton!* Fuit enim periucunde. Sed cum secundis Saturnalibus ad.

Philippum vesperi venisset, villa ita completa militibus est ut vix triclinium ubi cenaturus ipse Caesar esset vacaret; quippe hominum MM. Sane sum commotus quid futurum esset postridie, ac mihi Barba Cassius subvenit: custodes dedit. Castra in agro; villa defensa est. Ille tertiis

Saturnalibus apud Philippum ad h. VII, nec quemquam admisit: rationes opinor cum Balbo. Inde ambulavit in litore; post h. VIII in balneum; tum audivit de Mamurra; non mutavit; unctus est, accubuit. *Emetiken* agebat; itaque et edit et bibit *adeos* et incunde, opipare sane et apparte, nec id solum, sed

bene cocto
Condito, sermone bono et, si quaeri', libenter.

Praeterea tribus tricliniis accepti *hoi peri auton* valde copiose; libertis minus lautis servisque nihil defuit: nam lautiores eleganter accepti. Quid multa? homines visi sumus. Hospes tamen non is cui diceret: 'Amabo te, eodem ad me, cum revertere.' Semel satis est. *Spoudaion ouden* in sermone, *philologa* multa. Quid quaeris? Delectatus est et libenter fuit. Puteolis se aiebat unum diem fore, alterum ad Baias. Habes hospitium sive *epistathemian* odiosam mihi, dixi, non molestam. Ego paulisper hic, deinde in Tusculanum. Dolabellae villam cum praeteriret, omnis armatorum copia dextra sinistra ad equum nec usquam alibi. Hoc ex Nicia.

You will have noticed that this letter contains many Greek words and expressions. In informal communication with his peers, especially with a philhellene like Atticus, a Roman gentleman would use Greek words and expressions as a cultured British or German gentleman might use French expressions.

Cicero had no part in the assassination of Caesar on the Ides of March 44 BC, though he was pleased when he received the news. At once he plunged into political activity in an effort to restore the republic, and this meant hostility to Antony, who was setting himself up as Caesar's successor. His very last speeches were a series against Antony called the Philippics, filled with invective.

After such bitterness there could be no reconciliation. When the triumvirs--Antony, Octavian, and Lepidus--drew up their proscription lists, Antony demanded Cicero's head. He was hunted down and killed on December 7, 43 BC--"an eloquent man," as Octavian said in later years, "and one who loved his country well."

LATIN

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