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Marcus Tullius Cicero, *On Friendship (De Amicitia)*
[44 BC]



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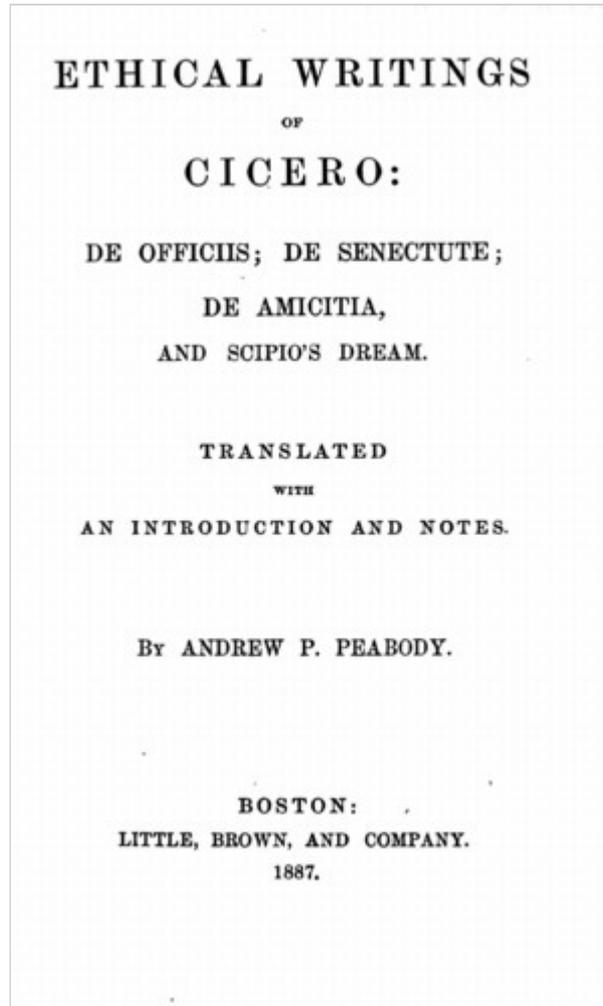
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Part of a collection of Cicero's writings which includes *On Old Age*, *On Friendship*, *Officiis*, and *Scipio's Dream*.

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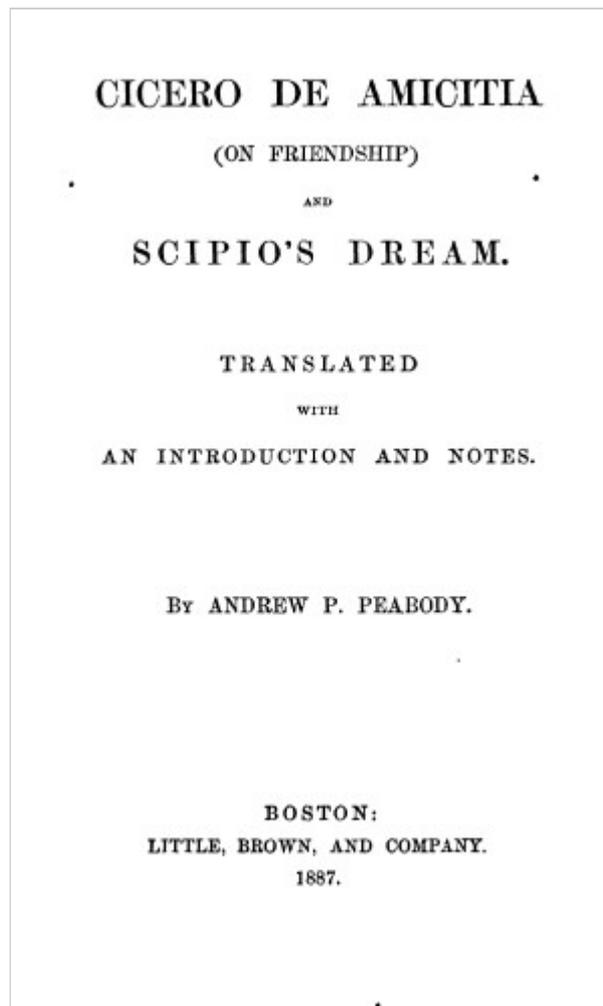


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INTRODUCTION.

DE AMICITIA.

The *De Amicitia*, inscribed, like the *De Senectute*, to Atticus, was probably written early in the year 44 b. c., during Cicero's retirement, after the death of Julius Caesar and before the conflict with Antony. The subject had been a favorite one with Greek philosophers, from whom Cicero always borrowed largely, or rather, whose materials he made fairly his own by the skill, richness, and beauty of his elaboration. Some passages of this treatise were evidently suggested by Plato; and Aulus Gellius says that Cicero made no little use of a now lost essay of Theophrastus on Friendship.

In this work I am especially impressed by Cicero's dramatic power. But for the mediocrity of his poetic genius, he might have won pre-eminent honor from the Muse of Tragedy. He here so thoroughly enters into the feelings of Laelius with reference to Scipio's death, that as we read we forget that it is not Laelius himself who is speaking. We find ourselves in close sympathy with him, as if he were telling us the story of his bereavement, giving utterance to his manly fortitude and resignation, and portraying his friend's virtues from the unfading image phototyped on his own loving memory. In other matters, too, Cicero goes back to the time of Laelius, and assumes his point of view, assigning to him just the degree of foresight which he probably possessed, and making not the slightest reference to the very different aspect in which he himself had learned to regard and was wont to represent the personages and events of that earlier period. Thus, while Cicero traced the downfall of the republic to changes in the body politic that had taken place or were imminent and inevitable when Scipio died, he makes Laelius perceive only a slight though threatening deflection from what had been in the earlier time.¹ So too, though Cicero was annoyed more than by almost any other characteristic of his age by the prevalence of the Epicurean philosophy, and ascribed to it in a very large degree the demoralization of men in public life, with Laelius the doctrines of this school are represented, as they must have been in fact, as new and unfamiliar. In fine, Laelius is here made to say not a word which he, being the man that he was, and at the date assumed for this dialogue, might not have said himself; and it may be doubted whether a report of one of his actual conversations would have seemed more truly genuine.

This is a rare gift, often sought indeed, yet sought in vain, not only by dramatists, who have very seldom attained it, but by authors of a very great diversity of type and culture. One who undertakes to personate a character belonging to an age not his own hardly ever fails of manifest anachronisms. The author finds it utterly impossible to fit the antique mask so closely as not now and then to show through its chinks his own more modern features; while this form of internal evidence never fails to betray an intended forgery, however skilfully wrought. On the other hand, there is no surer proof of the genuineness of a work purporting to be of an earlier, but alleged to be of a later origin, than the absence of all tokens of a time subsequent to the earliest date claimed for it.¹

In connection with this work it should be borne in mind that the special duties of friendship constituted an essential department of ethics in the ancient world, and that the relation of friend to friend was regarded as on the same plane with that of brother to brother. No treatise on morals would have been thought complete, had this subject been omitted. Not a few modern writers have attempted the formal treatment of friendship; but while the relation of kindred minds and souls has lost none of its sacredness and value, the establishment of a code of rules for it ignores, on the one hand, the spontaneity of this relation, and, on the other hand, its entire amenableness to the laws and principles that should restrict and govern all human intercourse and conduct.

Shaftesbury, in his "Characteristics," in his exquisite vein of irony, sneers at Christianity for taking no cognizance of friendship either in its precepts or in its promises. Jeremy Taylor, however, speaks of this feature of Christianity as among the manifest tokens of its divine origin; and Soame Jenyns takes the same ground in a treatise expressly designed to meet the objections and cavils of Shaftesbury and other deistical writers of his time. These authors are all in the right, and all in the wrong, as to the matter of fact. There is no reason why Christianity should prescribe friendship, which is a privilege, not a duty, or should essay to regulate it; for its only ethical rule of strict obligation is the negative rule, which would lay out for it a track that shall never interfere with any positive duty selfward, manward, or Godward. But in the life of the Founder of Christianity, who teaches, most of all, by example, friendship has its apogee, — its supreme pre-eminence and honor. He treats his apostles, and speaks of and to them, not as mere disciples, but as intimate and dearly beloved friends; among these there are three with whom he stands in peculiarly near relations; and one of the three was singled out by him in dying for the most sacred charge that he left on the earth; while at the same time that disciple shows in his Gospel that he had obtained an inside view, so to speak, of his Master's spiritual life and of the profounder sense of his teachings, which is distinguished by contrast rather than by comparison from the more superficial narratives of the other evangelists.

But Christianity has done even more than this for friendship. It has superseded its name by fulfilling its offices to a degree of perfectness which had never entered into the ante-Christian mind. Man shrinks from solitude. He feels inadequate to bear the burdens, meet the trials, and wage the conflicts of this mortal life, alone. Orestes always needed and craved a Pylades, but often failed to find one. This inevitable yearning, when it met no human response, found still less to satisfy it in the objects of worship. Its gods, though in great part deified men, could not be relied on for sympathy, support, or help. The stronger spirits did not believe in them; the feebler looked upon them only with awe and dread. But Christianity, in its anthropomorphism, which is its strongest hold on faith and trust, insures for the individual man in a Divine Humanity precisely what friends might essay to do, yet could do but imperfectly, for him. It proffers the tender sympathy and helpfulness of Him who bears the griefs and carries the sorrows of each and all; while the near view that it presents of the life beyond death inspires the sense of unbroken union with friends in heaven, and of the fellow-feeling of "a cloud of witnesses" beside. Thus while friendship in ordinary life is never to be spurned when it may be had without

sacrifice of principle, it is less a necessity than when man's relations with the unseen world gave no promise of strength, aid, or comfort.

Experience has deepened my conviction that what is called a free translation is the only fit rendering of Latin into English; that is, the only way of giving to the English reader the actual sense of the Latin writer. This last has been my endeavor. The comparison is, indeed, exaggerated; but it often seems to me, in unrolling a compact Latin sentence, as if I were writing out in words the meaning of an algebraic formula. A single word often requires three or four as its English equivalent. Yet the language is not made obscure by compression. On the contrary, there is no other language in which it is so hard to bury thought or to conceal its absence by superfluous verbiage.

I have used Beier's edition of the *De Amicitia*, adhering to it in the very few cases in which other good editions have a different reading. There are no instances in which the various readings involve any considerable diversity of meaning.

LAELIUS.

Caius Laelius Sapiens, the son of Caius Laelius, who was the life-long friend of Scipio Africanus the Elder, was born b. c. 186, a little earlier in the same year with his friend Africanus the Younger. He was not undistinguished as a military commander, as was proved by his successful campaign against Viriathus, the Lusitanian chieftain, who had long held the Roman armies at bay, and had repeatedly gained signal advantages over them. He was known in the State, at first as leaning, though moderately and guardedly, to the popular side, but after the disturbances created by the Gracchi, as a strong conservative. He was a learned and accomplished man, was an elegant writer, — though while the Latin tongue retained no little of its archaic rudeness, — and was possessed of some reputation as an orator. Though bearing his part in public affairs, holding at intervals the offices of Tribune, Praetor, and Consul, and in his latter years attending with exemplary fidelity to such duties as belonged to him as a member of the college of Augurs, he yet loved retirement, and cultivated, so far as he was able, studious and contemplative habits. He was noted for his wise economy of time. To an idle man who said to him, "I have sixty years"¹ (that is, I am sixty years old), he replied, "Do you mean the sixty years which you have not?" His private life was worthy of all praise for the virtues that enriched and adorned it; and its memory was so fresh after the lapse of more than two centuries, that Seneca, who well knew the better way which he had not always strength to tread, advises his young friend Lucilius to "live with Laelius;"² that is, to take his life as a model.

The friendship of Laelius and the younger Scipio Africanus well deserves the commemoration which it has in this dialogue of Cicero. It began in their boyhood, and continued without interruption till Scipio's death. Laelius served in Africa, mainly that he might not be separated from his friend. To each the other's home was as his own. They were of one mind as to public men and measures, and in all probability the more pliant nature of Laelius yielded in great measure to the stern and uncompromising adherence of Scipio to the cause of the aristocracy. While they were united in grave pursuits and weighty interests, we have the most charming pictures of their rural and seaside life together, even of their gathering shells on the shore, and of

fireside frolics in which they forgot the cares of the republic, ceased to be stately old Romans, and played like children in vacation-time.

FANNIUS.

Caius Fannius Strabo in early life served with high reputation in Africa, under the younger Africanus, and afterward in Spain, in the war with Viriathus. Like his father-in-law, he was versed in the philosophy of the Stoic school, under the tuition of Panaetius. He was an orator, as were almost all the Romans who aimed at distinction; but we have no reason to suppose that he in this respect rose above mediocrity. He wrote a history, of which Cicero speaks well, and which Sallust commends for its accuracy; but it is entirely lost, and we have no direct information even as to the ground which it covered. It seems probable, however, that it was a history either of the third of the Punic wars, or of all of them; for Plutarch quotes from him — probably from his History — the statement that he, Fannius, and Tiberius Gracchus were the first to mount the walls of Carthage when the city was taken.

SCAEVOLA.

Quintus Mucius Scaevola filled successively most of the important offices of the State, and was for many years, and until death, a member of the college of Augurs. He was eminent for his legal learning, and to a late and infirm old age was still consulted in questions of law, never refusing to receive clients at any moment after daylight. But while he was regarded as foremost among the jurists of his time, he professed himself less thoroughly versed in the laws relating to mortgages than two of his coevals, to whom he was wont to send those who brought cases of this class for his opinion or advice. He was remarkable for early rising, constant industry, and undeviating punctuality, — at the meetings of the Senate being always the first on the ground.

No man held a higher reputation than Scaevola for rigid and scrupulous integrity. It is related of him that when as a witness in court he had given testimony full, clear, strong, and of the most damnatory character against the person on trial, he protested against the conviction of the defendant on his testimony, if not corroborated, on the principle held sacred in the Jewish law, that it would be a dangerous precedent to suffer the issue of any case to depend on the intelligence and veracity of a single witness. When, after Marius had been driven from the city, Sulla asked the Senate to declare him by their vote a public enemy, Scaevola stood in a minority of one; and when Sulla urged him to give his vote in the affirmative, his reply was: “Although you show me the military guard with which you have surrounded the Senate-house, although you threaten me with death, you will never induce me, for the little blood still in an old man’s veins, to pronounce Marius — who has been the preserver of the city and of Italy — an enemy.”

His daughter married Lucius Licinius Crassus, who had such reverence for his father-in-law, that, when a candidate for the consulship, he could not persuade himself in the presence of Scaevola to cringe to the people, or to adopt any of the usual self-humiliating methods of canvassing for the popular vote.

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SCIPIO'S DREAM.

Palimpsests¹ — the name and the thing — are at least as old as Cicero. In one of his letters he banters his friend Trebatius for writing to him on a palimpsest,² and marvels what there could have been on the parchment which he wanted to erase. This was a device probably resorted to in that age only in the way in which rigid economists of our day sometimes utilize envelopes and handbills. But in the dark ages, when classical literature was under a cloud and a ban, and when the scanty demand for writing materials made the supply both scanty and precarious, such manuscripts of profane authors as fell into the hands of ecclesiastical copyists were not unusually employed for transcribing the works of the Christian Fathers or the lives of saints. In such cases the erasion was so clumsily performed as often to leave distinct traces of the previous letters. The possibility of recovering lost writings from these palimpsests was first suggested by Montfaucon in the seventeenth century; but the earliest successful experiment of the kind was made by Bruns, a German scholar, in the latter part of the eighteenth century. The most distinguished laborer in this field has been Angelo Mai, who commenced his work in 1814 on manuscripts in the Ambrosian Library at Milan, of which he was then custodian. Transferred to the Vatican Library at Rome, he discovered there, in 1821, a considerable portion of Cicero's *De Republica*, which had been obliterated, and replaced by Saint Augustine's Commentary on the Psalms. This latter being removed by appropriate chemical applications, large portions of the original writing remained legible, and were promptly given to the public.

This treatise Cicero evidently considered, and not without reason, as his master-work. It was written in the prime of his mental vigor, in the fifty-fourth year of his age, after ample experience in the affairs of State, and while he still hoped more than he feared for the future of Rome. His object was to discuss in detail the principles and forms of civil government, to define the grounds of preference for a republic like that of Rome in its best days, and to describe the duties and responsibilities of a good citizen, whether in public office or in private life. He regarded this treatise, in its ethics, as his own directory in the government of his province of Cilicia, and as binding him, by the law of self-consistency, to unswerving uprightness and faithfulness. He refers to these six books on the Republic as so many hostages¹ for his uncorrupt integrity and untarnished honor, and makes them his apology to Atticus for declining to urge an extortionate demand on the city of Salamis.

The work is in the form of Dialogues, in which, with several interlocutors beside, the younger Africanus and Laelius are the chief speakers; and it is characterized by the same traits of dramatic genius to which I have referred in connection with the *De Amicitia*.

The *De Republica* was probably under interdict during the reigns of the Augustan dynasty; men did not dare to copy it, or to have it known that they possessed it; and when it might have safely reappeared, the republic had faded even from regretful memory, and there was no desire to perpetuate a work devoted to its service and

honor. Thus the world had lost the very one of all Cicero's writings for which he most craved immortality. The portions of it which Mai has brought to light fully confirm Cicero's own estimate of its value, and feed the earnest — it is to be feared the vain — desire for the recovery of the entire work.

Scipio's Dream, which is nearly all that remains of the Sixth Book of the *De Republica*, had survived during the interval for which the rest of the treatise was lost to the world. Macrobius, a grammarian of the fifth century, made it the text of a commentary of little present interest or value, but much prized and read in the Middle Ages. The Dream, independently of the commentary, has in more recent times passed through unnumbered editions, sometimes by itself, sometimes with Cicero's ethical writings, sometimes with the other fragments of the *De Republica*.

In the closing Dialogue of the *De Republica* the younger Africanus says: "Although to the wise the consciousness of noble deeds is a most ample reward of virtue, yet this divine virtue craves, not indeed statues that need lead to hold them to their pedestals, nor yet triumphs graced by withering laurels, but rewards of firmer structure and more enduring green." "What are these?" says Laelius. Scipio replies by telling his dream. The time of the vision was near the beginning of the Third Punic War, when Scipio, no longer in his early youth, was just entering upon the career in which he gained pre-eminent fame, thenceforward to know neither shadow nor decline.

I have used for Scipio's Dream, Creuzer and Moser's edition of the *De Republica*.

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CICERO DE AMICITIA.

1. Quintus Mucius, the Augur, used to repeat from memory, and in the most pleasant way, many of the sayings of his father-in-law, Caius Laelius, never hesitating to apply to him in all that he said his surname of The Wise. When I first put on the robe of manhood,¹ my father took me to Scaevola, and so commended me to his kind offices, that thenceforward, so far as was possible and fitting, I kept my place at the old man's side.² I thus laid up in my memory many of his elaborate discussions of important subjects, as well as many of his utterances that had both brevity and point, and my endeavor was to grow more learned by his wisdom. After his death I stood in a similar relation to the high-priest Scaevola,¹ whom I venture to call the foremost man of our city both in ability and in uprightness. But of him I will speak elsewhere. I return to the Augur. While I recall many similar occasions, I remember in particular that at a certain time when I and a few of his more intimate associates were sitting with him in the semicircular apartment² in his house where he was wont to receive his friends, the conversation turned on a subject about which almost every one was then talking, and which you, Atticus, certainly recollect, as you were much in the society of Publius Sulpicius; namely, the intense hatred with which Sulpicius, when Tribune of the people, opposed Quintus Pompeius, then Consul,³ with whom he had lived in the closest and most loving union, — a subject of general surprise and regret. Having incidentally mentioned this affair, Scaevola proceeded to give us the substance of a conversation on friendship, which Laelius had with him and his other son-in-law, Caius Fannius, the son of Marcus, a few days after the death of Africanus. I committed to memory the sentiments expressed in that discussion, and I bring them out in the book which I now send you. I have put them into the form of a dialogue, to avoid the too frequent repetition of "said I" and "says he," and that the discussion may seem as if it were held in the hearing of those who read it. While you, indeed, have often urged me to write something about friendship, the subject seems to me one of universal interest, and at the same time specially appropriate to our intimacy. I have therefore been very ready to seek the profit of many by complying with your request. But as in the *Cato Major*, the work on Old age inscribed to you, I introduced the old man Cato as leading the discussion, because there seemed to be no other person better fitted to talk about old age than one who had been an aged man so long, and in his age had been so exceptionally vigorous, so, as we had heard from our fathers of the peculiarly memorable intimacy of Caius Laelius and Publius Scipio, it appeared appropriate to put into the mouth of Laelius what Scaevola remembered as having been said by him when friendship was the subject in hand. Moreover, this method of treatment, resting on the authority of men of an earlier generation, and illustrious in their time, seems somehow to be of specially commanding influence on the reader's mind. Thus, as I read my own book on Old Age, I am sometimes so affected that I feel as if not I, but Cato, were talking. But as I then wrote as an old man to an old man about old age, so in this book I write as the most loving of friends to a friend about friendship.¹ Then Cato was the chief speaker, than whom there was in his time scarcely any one older, and no one his superior in intellect; now Laelius shall hold the first place, both as a wise man (for so he was regarded), and as excelling in all that can do honor to friendship. I want you for the while to turn your mind away from me,

and to imagine that it is Laelius who is speaking. Caius Fannius and Quintus Mucius come to their father-in-law after the death of Africanus. They commence the conversation; Laelius answers them. In reading all that he says about friendship, you will recognize the picture of your own friendship for me.

2. Fannius. It is as you say,² Laelius; for there never was a better man, or one more justly renowned, than Africanus. But you ought to bear it in mind that the eyes of all are turned upon you at this time; for they both call you and think you wise. This distinction has been latterly given to Cato, and you know that in the days of our fathers Lucius Atilius¹ was in like manner surnamed The Wise; but both of them were so called for other reasons than those which have given you this name, — Atilius, for his reputation as an adept in municipal law; Cato, for the versatility of his endowments: for there were reported to his honor many measures wisely planned and vigorously carried through in the Senate, and many cases skilfully defended in the courts, so that in his old age The Wise was generally applied to him as a surname. But you are regarded as wise on somewhat different grounds, not only for your disposition and your moral worth, but also for your knowledge and learning; and not in the estimation of the common people, but in that of men of advanced culture, you are deemed wise in a sense in which there is reason to suppose that in Greece — where those who look into these things most discriminatingly do not reckon the seven who bear the name as on the list of wise men — no one was so regarded except the man in Athens whom the oracle of Apollo designated as the wisest of men.² In fine, you are thought to be wise in this sense, that you regard all that appertains to your happiness as within your own soul, and consider the calamities to which man is liable as of no consequence in comparison with virtue. I am therefore asked, and so, I believe, is Scaevola, who is now with us, how you bear the death of Africanus; and the question is put to us the more eagerly, because on the fifth day of the month next following,¹ when we met, as usual, in the garden of Decimus Brutus the Augur, to discuss our official business, you were absent, though it was your habit always on that day to give your most careful attendance to the duties of your office.

Scaevola. As Fannius says, Caius Laelius, many have asked me this question. But I answered in accordance with what I have seen, that you were bearing with due moderation your sorrow for the death of this your most intimate friend, though you, with your kindly nature, could not fail to be moved by it; but that your absence from the monthly meeting of the Augurs was due to illness, not to grief.

Laelius. You were in the right, Scaevola, and spoke the truth; for it was not fitting, had I been in good health, for me to be detained by my own sad feeling from this duty, which I have never failed to discharge; nor do I think that a man of firm mind can be so affected by any calamity as to neglect his duty. It is, indeed, friendly in you, Fannius, to tell me that better things are said of me than I feel worthy of or desire to have said; but it seems to me that you underrate Cato. For either there never was a wise man (and so I am inclined to think), or if there has been such a man, Cato deserves the name. To omit other things, how nobly did he bear his son's death! I remembered Paulus,¹ I had seen Gallus,² in their bereavements. But they lost boys; Cato, a man in his prime and respected by all.³ Beware how you place in higher esteem than Cato even the man whom Apollo, as you say, pronounced superlatively

wise; for it is the deeds of Cato, the sayings of Socrates, that are held in honor. Thus far in reply to Fannius. As regards myself, I will now answer both of you.

3. Were I to deny that I feel the loss of Scipio, while I leave it to those who profess themselves wise in such matters to say whether I ought to feel it, I certainly should be uttering a falsehood. I do indeed feel my bereavement of such a friend as I do not expect ever to have again, and as I am sure I never had beside. But I need no comfort from without; I console myself, and, chief of all, I find comfort in my freedom from the apprehension that oppresses most men when their friends die; for I do not think that any evil has befallen Scipio. If evil has befallen, it is to me. But to be severely afflicted by one's own misfortunes is the token of self-love, not of friendship. As for him, indeed, who can deny that the issue has been to his pre-eminent glory? Unless he had wished — what never entered into his mind — an endless life on earth, what was there within human desire that did not accrue to the man who in his very earliest youth by his incredible ability and prowess surpassed the highest expectations that all had formed of his boyhood; who never sought the consulship, yet was made consul twice, the first time before the legal age,¹ the second time in due season as to himself, but almost too late for his country;² who by the overthrow of two cities implacably hostile to the Roman empire put a period, not only to the wars that were, but to wars that else must have been? What shall I say of the singular affability of his manners, of his filial piety to his mother,¹ of his generosity to his sisters,² of his integrity in his relations with all men? How dear he was to the community was shown by the grief at his funeral. What benefit, then, could he have derived from a few more years? For, although old age be not burdensome, — as I remember that Cato, the year before he died, maintained in a conversation with me and Scipio,³ — it yet impairs the fresh vigor which Scipio had not begun to lose. Thus his life was such that nothing either in fortune or in fame could be added to it; while the suddenness of his death must have taken away the pain of dying. Of the mode of his death it is hard to speak with certainty; you are aware what suspicions are abroad.¹ But this may be said with truth, that of the many days of surpassing fame and happiness which Publius Scipio saw in his lifetime, the most glorious was the day before his death, when, on the adjournment of the Senate, he was escorted home by the Conscript Fathers, the Roman people, the men of Latium, and the allies,² — so that from so high a grade of honor he seems to have passed on into the assembly of the gods rather than to have gone down into the underworld.

4. For I am far from agreeing with those who have of late promulgated the opinion that the soul perishes with the body, and that death blots out the whole being.¹ I, on the other hand, attach superior value to the authority of the ancients, whether that of our ancestors who established religious rites for the dead, which they certainly would not have done if they had thought the dead wholly unconcerned in such observances;² or that of the former Greek colonists in this country, who by their schools and teaching made Southern Italy³ — now in its decline, then flourishing — a seat of learning; or that of him whom the oracle of Apollo pronounced the wisest of men, who said not one thing to-day, another to-morrow, as many do, but the same thing always, maintaining that the souls of men are divine, and that when they go out from the body, the return to heaven is open to them, and direct and easy in proportion to their integrity and excellence. This was also the opinion of Scipio, who seemed

prescient of the event so near, when, a very short time before his death, he discoursed for three successive days about the republic in the presence of Philus, Manilius, and several others, — you, Scaevola, having gone with me to the conferences, — and near the close of the discussion he told us what he said that he had heard from Africanus in a vision during sleep.¹ If it is true that the soul of every man of surpassing excellence takes flight, as it were, from the custody and bondage of the body, to whom can we imagine the way to the gods more easy than to Scipio? I therefore fear to mourn for this his departure, lest in such grief there be more of envy than of friendship. But if truth incline to the opinion that soul and body have the same end, and that there is no remaining consciousness, then, as there is nothing good in death, there certainly is nothing of evil. For if consciousness be lost, the case is the same with Scipio as if he had never been born, though that he was born I have so ample reason to rejoice, and this city will be glad so long as it shall stand. Thus in either event, with him, as I have said, all has issued well, though with great discomfort for me, who more fittingly, as I entered into life before him, ought to have left it before him. But I so enjoy the memory of our friendship, that I seem to have owed the happiness of my life to my having lived with Scipio, with whom I was united in the care of public interests and of private affairs, who was my companion at home and served by my side in the army,¹ and with whom — and therein lies the special virtue of friendship — I was in perfect harmony of purpose, taste, and sentiment. Thus I am now not so much delighted by the reputation for wisdom of which Fannius has just spoken, especially as I do not deserve it, as by the hope that our friendship will live in eternal remembrance; and this I have the more at heart because from all ages scarce three or four pairs of friends are on record,² on which list I cannot but hope that the friendship of Scipio and Laelius will be known to posterity.

Fannius. It cannot fail, Laelius, to be as you desire. But since you have made mention of friendship, and we are at leisure, you will confer on me a very great favor, and, I trust, on Scaevola too, if, as you are wont to do on other subjects when your opinion is asked, you will discourse to us on friendship, and tell us what you think about it, in what estimation you hold it, and what rules you would give for it.

Scaevola. This will indeed be very gratifying to me, and had not Fannius anticipated me, I was about to make the same request. You thus will bestow a great kindness on both of us.

5. Laelius. I certainly would not hesitate, if I had confidence in my own powers; for the subject is one of the highest importance, and, as Fannius says, we are at leisure. It is the custom of philosophers, especially among the Greeks, to have subjects assigned to them which they discuss even without premeditation.¹ This is a great accomplishment, and requires no small amount of exercise. I therefore think that you ought to seek the treatment of friendship by those who profess this art. I can only advise you to prefer friendship to all things else within human attainment, insomuch as nothing beside is so well fitted to nature, — so well adapted to our needs whether in prosperous or in adverse circumstances. But I consider this as a first principle, — that friendship can exist only between good men. In thus saying, I would not be so rigid in definition¹ as those who establish specially subtle distinctions,² with literal truth it may be, but with little benefit to the common mind; for they will not admit that

any man who is not wise is a good man. This may indeed be true. But they understand by wisdom a state which no mortal has yet attained; while we ought to look at those qualities which are to be found in actual exercise and in common life, not at those which exist only in fancy or in aspiration. Caius Fabricius, Manius Curius, Tiberius Coruncanius, wise as they were in the judgment of our fathers, I will consent not to call wise by the standard of these philosophers. Let them keep for themselves the name of wisdom, which is invidious and of doubtful meaning, if they will only admit that these may have been good men. But they will not grant even this; they insist on denying the name of good to any but the wise. I therefore adopt the standard of common sense.³ Those who so conduct themselves, so live, that their good faith, integrity, equity, and kindness win approval, who are entirely free from avarice, lust, and the infirmities of a hasty temper, and in whom there is perfect consistency of character; in fine, men like those whom I have named, while they are regarded as good, ought to be so called, because to the utmost of human capacity they follow Nature, who is the best guide in living well. Indeed, it seems to me thoroughly evident that there should be a certain measure of fellowship among all, but more intimate the nearer we approach one another. Thus this feeling has more power between fellow-citizens than toward foreigners, between kindred than between those of different families. Toward our kindred, Nature herself produces a certain kind of friendship. But this lacks strength; and indeed friendship, in its full sense, has precedence of kinship in this particular, that good-will may be taken away from kinship, not from friendship; for when good-will is removed, friendship loses its name, while that of kinship remains. How great is the force of friendship we may best understand from this, — that out of the boundless society of the human race which Nature has constituted, the sense of fellowship is so contracted and narrowed that the whole power of loving is bestowed on the union of two or a very few friends.

6. Friendship is nothing else than entire fellow-feeling as to all things, human and divine, with mutual good-will and affection;¹ and I doubt whether anything better than this, wisdom alone excepted, has been given to man by the immortal gods. Some prefer riches to it; some, sound health; some, power; some, posts of honor; many, even sensual gratification. This last properly belongs to beasts; the others are precarious and uncertain, dependent not on our own choice so much as on the caprice of Fortune. Those, indeed, who regard virtue as the supreme good are entirely in the right; but it is virtue itself that produces and sustains friendship, nor without virtue can friendship by any possibility exist. In saying this, however, I would interpret virtue in accordance with our habits of speech and of life; not defining it, as some philosophers do, by high-sounding words, but numbering on the list of good men those who are commonly so regarded, — the Pauli, the Catos, the Galli, the Scipios, the Phili. Mankind in general are content with these. Let us then leave out of the account such good men as are nowhere to be found. Among such good men as there really are, friendship has more advantages than I can easily name. In the first place, as Ennius says: —

“How can life be worth living, if devoid
Of the calm trust reposed by friend in friend?
What sweeter joy than in the kindred soul,
Whose converse differs not from self-communion?”

How could you have full enjoyment of prosperity, unless with one whose pleasure in it was equal to your own? Nor would it be easy to bear adversity, unless with the sympathy of one on whom it rested more heavily than on your own soul. Then, too, other objects of desire are, in general, adapted, each to some specific purpose, — wealth, that you may use it; power, that you may receive the homage of those around you; posts of honor, that you may obtain reputation; sensual gratification, that you may live in pleasure; health, that you may be free from pain, and may have full exercise of your bodily powers and faculties. But friendship combines the largest number of utilities. Wherever you turn, it is at hand. No place shuts it out. It is never unseasonable, never annoying. Thus, as the proverb says, “You cannot put water or fire to more uses than friendship serves.” I am not now speaking of the common and moderate type of friendship, which yet yields both pleasure and profit, but of true and perfect friendship, like that which existed in the few instances that are held in special remembrance. Such friendship at once enhances the lustre of prosperity, and by dividing and sharing adversity lessens its burden.

7. Moreover, while friendship comprises the greatest number and variety of beneficent offices, it certainly has this special prerogative, that it lights up a good hope for the time to come, and thus preserves the minds that it sustains from imbecility or prostration in misfortune. For he, indeed, who looks into the face of a friend beholds, as it were, a copy of himself. Thus the absent are present, and the poor are rich, and the weak are strong, and — what seems stranger still¹ — the dead are alive, such is the honor, the enduring remembrance, the longing love, with which the dying are followed by the living; so that the death of the dying seems happy, the life of the living full of praise.² But if from the condition of human life you were to exclude all kindly union, no house, no city, could stand, nor, indeed, could the tillage of the field survive. If it is not perfectly understood what virtue there is in friendship and concord, it may be learned from dissension and discord. For what house is so stable, what state so firm, that it cannot be utterly overturned by hatred and strife? Hence it may be ascertained how much good there is in friendship. It is said that a certain philosopher of Agrigentum¹ sang in Greek verse that it is friendship that draws together and discord that parts all things which subsist in harmony, and which have their various movements in nature and in the whole universe. The worth and power of friendship, too, all mortals understand, and attest by their approval in actual instances. Thus, if there comes into conspicuous notice an occasion on which a friend incurs or shares the perils of his friend, who can fail to extol the deed with the highest praise? What shouts filled the whole theatre at the performance of the new play of my guest² and friend Marcus Pacuvius, when — the king not knowing which of the two was Orestes — Pylades said that he was Orestes, while Orestes persisted in asserting that he was, as in fact he was, Orestes!¹ The whole assembly rose in applause at this mere fictitious representation. What may we suppose that they would have done, had the same thing occurred in real life? In that case Nature herself displayed her power, when men recognized that as rightly done by another, which they would not have had the courage to do themselves. Thus far, to the utmost of my ability as it seems to me, I have given you my sentiments concerning friendship. If there is more to be said, as I think that there is, endeavor to obtain it, if you see fit, of those who are wont to discuss such subjects.

Fannius. But we would rather have it from you. Although I have often consulted those philosophers also, and have listened to them not unwillingly, yet the thread of your discourse differs somewhat from that of theirs.

Scaevola. You would say so all the more, Fannius, had you been present in Scipio's garden at that discussion about the republic, and heard what an advocate of justice he showed himself in answer to the elaborate speech of Philus.¹

Fannius. It was indeed easy for the man pre-eminently just to defend justice.

Scaevola. As to friendship, then, is not its defence easy for him who has won the highest celebrity on the ground of friendship maintained with pre-eminent faithfulness, consistency, and probity?

8. Laelius. This is, indeed, the employing of force; for what matters the way in which you compel me? You at any rate do compel me; for it is both hard and unfair not to comply with the wishes of one's sons-in-law, especially in a case that merits favorable consideration.

In reflecting, then, very frequently on friendship, the foremost question that is wont to present itself is, whether friendship is craved on account of conscious infirmity and need, so that in bestowing and receiving the kind offices that belong to it each may have that done for him by the other which he is least able to do for himself, reciprocating services in like manner; or whether, though this relation of mutual benefit is the property of friendship, it has yet another cause, more sacred and more noble, and derived more genuinely from the very nature of man. Love, which in our language gives name to friendship,¹ bears a chief part in unions of mutual benefit; for a revenue of service is levied even on those who are cherished in pretended friendship, and are treated with regard from interested motives. But in friendship there is nothing feigned, nothing pretended, and whatever there is in it is both genuine and spontaneous. Friendship, therefore, springs from nature rather than from need, — from an inclination of the mind with a certain consciousness of love rather than from calculation of the benefit to be derived from it. Its real quality may be discerned even in some classes of animals, which up to a certain time so love their offspring, and are so loved by them, that the mutual feeling is plainly seen, — a feeling which is much more clearly manifest in man, first, in the affection which exists between children and parents, and which can be dissolved only by atrocious guilt; and in the next place, in the springing up of a like feeling of love, when we find some one of manners and character congenial with our own, who becomes dear to us because we seem to see in him an illustrious example of probity and virtue. For there is nothing more lovable than virtue, — nothing which more surely wins affectionate regard, insomuch that on the score of virtue and probity we love even those whom we have never seen. Who is there that does not recall the memory of Caius Fabricius, of Manius Curius, of Tiberius Coruncanius, whom he never saw, with some good measure of kindly feeling? On the other hand, who is there that can fail to hate Tarquinius Superbus, Spurius Cassius, Spurius Maelius? Our dominion in Italy was at stake in wars under two commanders, Pyrrhus and Hannibal. On account of the good faith of the one, we

hold him in no unfriendly remembrance;¹ the other because of his cruelty our people must always hate.²

9. But if good faith has such attractive power that we love it in those whom we have never seen, or — what means still more — in an enemy, what wonder is it if the minds of men are moved to affection when they behold the virtue and goodness of those with whom they can become intimately united?

Love is, indeed, strengthened by favors received, by witnessing assiduity in one's service, and by habitual intercourse; and when these are added to the first impulse of the mind toward love, there flames forth a marvellously rich glow of affectionate feeling. If there are any who think that this proceeds from conscious weakness and the desire to have some person through whom one can obtain what he lacks, they assign, indeed, to friendship a mean and utterly ignoble origin, born, as they would have it, of poverty and neediness. If this were true, then the less of resource one was conscious of having in himself, the better fitted would he be for friendship. The contrary is the case; for the more confidence a man has in himself, and the more thoroughly he is fortified by virtue and wisdom, so that he is in need of no one, and regards all that concerns him as in his own keeping, the more noteworthy is he for the friendships which he seeks and cherishes. What? Did Africanus need me? Not in the least, by Hercules. As little did I need him. But I was drawn to him by admiration of his virtue, while he, in turn, loved me, perhaps, from some favorable estimate of my character; and intimacy increased our mutual affection. But though utilities many and great resulted from our friendship, the cause of our mutual love did not proceed from the hope of what it might bring. For as we are beneficent and generous, not in order to exact kindnesses in return (for we do not put our kind offices to interest), but are by nature inclined to be generous, so, in my opinion, friendship is not to be sought for its wages, but because its revenue consists entirely in the love which it implies. Those, however, who, after the manner of beasts, refer everything to pleasure,¹ think very differently. Nor is it wonderful that they do; for men who have degraded all their thoughts to so mean and contemptible an end can rise to the contemplation of nothing lofty, nothing magnificent and divine. We may, therefore, leave them out of this discussion. But let us have it well understood that the feeling of love and the endearments of mutual affection spring from nature, in case there is a well-established assurance of moral worth in the person thus loved. Those who desire to become friends approach each other, and enter into relation with each other, that each may enjoy the society and the character of him whom he has begun to love; and they are equal in love, and on either side are more inclined to bestow obligations than to claim a return, so that in this matter there is an honorable rivalry between them. Thus will the greatest benefits be derived from friendship, and it will have a more solid and genuine foundation as tracing its origin to nature than if it proceeded from human weakness. For if it were utility that cemented friendships, an altered aspect of utility would dissolve them. But because nature cannot be changed, therefore true friendships are eternal. This may suffice for the origin of friendship, unless you have, perchance, some objection to what I have said.

Fannius. Go on, Laelius. I answer by the right of seniority for Scaevola, who is younger than I am.

Scaevola. I am of the same mind with you. Let us, then, hear farther.

10. Laelius. Hear, then, my excellent friends, the substance of the frequent discussions on friendship between Scipio and me. He, indeed, said¹ that nothing is more difficult than for friendship to last through life; for friends happen to have conflicting interests, or different political opinions. Then, again, as he often said, characters change, sometimes under adverse conditions, sometimes with growing years. He cited also the analogy of what takes place in early youth, the most ardent loves of boyhood being often laid aside with its robe. But if friendships last on into opening manhood, they are not infrequently broken up by rivalry in quest of a wife, or in the pursuit of some advantage which only one can obtain.¹ Then, if friendships are of longer duration, they yet, as Scipio said, are liable to be undermined by competition for office; and indeed there is nothing more fatal to friendship than, in very many cases, the greed of gain, and among some of the best of men the contest for place and fame, which has often engendered the most intense enmity between those who had been the closest friends. Strong and generally just aversion, also, springs up when anything morally wrong is required of a friend; as when he is asked to aid in the gratification of impure desire, or to render his assistance in some unrighteous act, — in which case those who refuse, although their conduct is highly honorable, are yet charged by the persons whom they will not serve with being false to the claims of friendship, while those who dare to make such a demand of a friend profess, by the very demand, that they are ready to do anything and everything for a friend's sake. By such quarrels, not only are old intimacies often dissolved, but undying hatreds generated. So many of these perils hang like so many fates over friendship, that to escape them all seemed to Scipio, as he said, to indicate not wisdom alone, but equally a rare felicity of fortune.

11. Let us then, first, if you please, consider how far the love of friends ought to go. If Coriolanus had friends, ought they to have helped him in fighting against his country, or should the friends of Viscellinus¹ or those of Spurius Maelius¹ have aided them in the endeavor to usurp regal power? We saw, indeed, Tiberius Gracchus, when he was disturbing the peace of the State, deserted by Quintus Tubero and others with whom he had been on terms of intimacy. But Caius Blossius, of Cumae, the guest,² Scaevola, of your family, coming to me, when I was in conference with the Consuls Laenas and Rupilius, to implore pardon, urged the plea that he held Tiberius Gracchus in so dear esteem that he felt bound to do whatever he desired. I then asked him, “Even if he had wanted you to set fire to the Capitol, would you have done it?” He replied, “He never would have made such a request.” “But if he had?” said I. “I would have obeyed him,” was the answer. And, by Hercules, he did as he said, or even more; for he did not so much yield obedience to the audacious schemes of Tiberius Gracchus, as he was foremost in them; he was not so much the companion of his madness, as its leader. Therefore, in consequence of this folly, alarmed by the appointment of special judges for his trial, he fled to Asia, entered the service of our enemies, and finally met the heavy and just punishment for his disloyalty to his country.¹ It is, then, no excuse for wrong-doing that you do wrong for the sake of a friend. Indeed, since it may have been a belief in your virtue that has made one your friend, it is hard for friendship to last if you fall away from virtue. But if we should determine either to concede to friends whatever they may ask, or to exact from them whatever we may desire, we and they must be endowed with perfect wisdom, in order

for our friendship to be blameless. We are speaking, however, of such friends as we have before our eyes, or as we have seen or have known by report, — of such as are found in common life. It is from these that we must take our examples, especially from such of them as make the nearest approach to perfect wisdom. We have learned from our fathers that Papus Aemilius was very intimate with Caius Luscinus, they having twice been consuls together, as well as colleagues in the censorship; and it is said also that Manius Curius and Tiberius Coruncanius lived in the closest friendship both with them and with each other. Now we cannot suspect that either of these men would have asked of one of his friends anything inconsistent with good faith, or with an engagement sanctioned by oath, or with his duty to the State. Indeed, to what purpose is it to say that among such men if one had asked anything wrong, he would not have obtained it? For they were men of the most sacred integrity; while to ask anything wrong of a friend and to do it when asked are alike tokens of deep depravity. But Caius Carbo and Caius Cato were the followers of Tiberius Gracchus, as was his brother Caius, at first with little ardor, but now 1 most zealously.

12. As to friendship, then, let this law be enacted, that we neither ask of a friend what is wrong, nor do what is wrong at a friend's request. The plea that it was for a friend's sake is a base apology, — one that should never be admitted with regard to other forms of guilt, and certainly not as to crimes against the State. We, indeed, Fannius and Scaevola, are so situated that we ought to look far in advance for the perils that our country may incur. Already has our public policy deviated somewhat from the method and course of our ancestors. Tiberius Gracchus attempted to exercise supreme power; nay, he really reigned for a few months. What like this had the Roman people ever heard or seen before? What, after his death, the friends and kindred who followed him did in their revenge on Publius Scipio 1 I cannot say without tears. We put up with Carbo 2 as well as we could in consideration of the recent punishment of Tiberius Gracchus; but I am in no mood to predict what is to be expected from the tribuneship of Caius Gracchus. Meanwhile the evil is creeping upon us, from its very beginning fraught with threats of ruin. Before recent events, 3 you perceive how much degeneracy was indicated in the legalizing of the ballot, first by the Gabinian, 4 then two years later by the Cassian law. 5 I seem already to see the people utterly alienated from the Senate, and the most important affairs determined by the will of the multitude; for more persons will learn how these things are brought about than how they may be resisted. To what purpose am I saying this? Because no one makes such attempts without associates. It is therefore to be enjoined on good men that they must not think themselves so bound that they cannot renounce their friends when they are guilty of crimes against the State. But punishment must be inflicted on all who are implicated in such guilt, — on those who follow, no less than on those who lead. Who in Greece was more renowned than Themistocles? Who had greater influence than he had? When as commander in the Persian war he had freed Greece from bondage, and for envy of his fame was driven into exile, he did not bear as he ought the ill treatment of his ungrateful country. He did what Coriolanus had done with us twenty years before. Neither of these men found any helper against his country; 1 they therefore both committed suicide. 1 Association with depraved men for such an end is not, then, to be shielded by the plea of friendship, but rather to be avenged by punishment of the utmost severity, so that no one may ever think himself authorized to follow a friend to the extent of making war upon his country, — an extremity which, indeed,

considering the course that our public affairs have begun to take, may, for aught I know, be reached at some future time. I speak thus because I feel no less concern for the fortunes of the State after my death than as to its present condition.

13. Let this, then, be enacted as the first law of friendship, that we demand of friends only what is right, and that we do for the sake of friends only what is right.² This understood, let us not wait to be asked. Let there be constant assiduity and no loitering in a friend's service. Let us also dare to give advice freely; for in friendship the authority of friends who give good counsel may be of the greatest value. Let admonition be administered, too, not only in plain terms, but even with severity, if need be, and let heed be given to such admonition.

On this subject some things that appear to me strange have, as I am told, been maintained by certain Greeks who are accounted as philosophers, and are so skilled in sophistry that there is nothing which they cannot seem to prove. Some of them hold that very intimate friendships are to be avoided; that there is no need that one feel solicitude for others; that it is enough and more than enough to take care of your own concerns, and annoying to be involved to any considerable extent in affairs not belonging to you; that the best way is to have the reins of friendship as loose as possible, so that you can tighten them or let them go at pleasure; for, according to them, ease is the chief essential to happy living, and this the mind cannot enjoy, if it bears, as it were, the pains of travail in behalf of a larger or smaller circle of friends.¹ Others,¹ I am told, with even much less of true human feeling, teach what I touched upon briefly a little while ago, that friendships are to be sought for defence and help, not on account of good-will and affection. The less of self-confidence and the less of strength one has, the more is he inclined to make friends. Thus it is that women² seek the support of friendship more than men do, the poor more than the rich, the unfortunate more than those who seem happy. Oh, pre-eminent wisdom! It is like taking the sun out of the world, to bereave human life of friendship, than which the immortal gods have given man nothing better, nothing more gladdening. What is the ease of which they speak? It is indeed pleasing in aspect, but on many occasions it is to be renounced; for it is not fitting, in order to avoid solicitude, either to refuse to undertake any right cause or act, or to drop it after it is undertaken. If we flee from care, we must flee from virtue, which of necessity with no little care spurns and abhors its opposites, as goodness spurns and abhors wickedness; temperance, excess; courage, cowardice. Thus you may see that honest men are excessively grieved by the dishonest, the brave by the pusillanimous, those who lead sober lives by the dissolute. It is indeed characteristic of a well-ordered mind to rejoice in what is good and to be grieved by the opposite. If, then, pain of mind fall to the lot of a wise man, as it must of necessity unless we imagine his mind divested of its humanity, why should we take friendship wholly out of life, lest we experience some little trouble on account of it? Yet more; if emotion be eliminated, what difference is there, I say not between a man and a brute, but between a man and a rock, or the trunk of a tree, or any inanimate object? Nor are those to be listened to, who regard virtue as something hard and iron-like.¹ As in many other matters, so in friendship, it is tender and flexible, so that it expands, as it were, with a friend's well-being, and shrinks when his peace is disturbed. Therefore the pain which must often be incurred on a friend's account is not of sufficient moment to banish friendship from human life, any more than the

occasional care and trouble which the virtues bring should be a reason for renouncing them.

14. Since virtue attracts friendship, as I have said, if there shines forth any manifestation of virtue with which a mind similarly disposed can come into contact and union, from such intercourse love must of necessity spring. For what is so absurd as to be charmed with many things that have no substantial worth, as with office, fame, architecture, dress, and genteel appearance, but not to be in any wise charmed by a mind endowed with virtue, and capable of either loving, or — if I may use the word — re-loving?¹ Nothing indeed yields a richer revenue than kind affections; nothing gives more delight than the interchange of friendly cares and offices. Then if we add, as we rightly may, that there is nothing which so allures and attracts aught else to itself as the likeness of character does to friendship, it will certainly be admitted that good men love good men and adopt them into fellowship, as if united with them by kindred and by nature. By nature, I say; for nothing is more craving or greedy of its like than nature. This, then, as I think, is evident, Fannius and Scaevola, that among the good toward the good there cannot but be mutual kind feeling, and in this we have a fountain of friendship established by nature.

But the same kind feeling extends to the community at large. For virtue is not unsympathetic, nor unserviceable,² nor proud. It is wont even to watch over the well-being of whole nations, and to give them the wisest counsel, which it would not do if it had no love for the people.

Now those who maintain that friendships are formed from motives of utility annul, as it seems to me, the most endearing bond of friendship; for it is not so much benefit obtained through a friend as it is the very love of the friend that gives delight. What comes from a friend confers pleasure, only in case it bears tokens of his interest in us; and so far is it from the truth that friendships are cultivated from a sense of need, that those fully endowed with wealth and resources, especially with virtue, which is the surest safeguard, and thus in no need of friends, are the very persons who are the most generous and munificent. Indeed, I hardly know whether it may not be desirable that our friends should never have need of our services. Yet in the case of Scipio and myself, what room would there have been for the active exercise of my zeal in his behalf, had he never needed my counsel or help at home or in the field? In this instance, however, the service came after the friendship, not the friendship after the service.

15. If these things are so, men who are given up to pleasure are not to be listened to when they express their opinions about friendship, of which they can have no knowledge either by experience or by reflection. For, by the faith of gods and men, who is there that would be willing to have a super-abundance of all objects of desire and to live in the utmost fulness of wealth and what wealth can bring, on condition of neither loving any one nor being loved by any one? This, indeed, is the life of tyrants, in which there is no good faith, no affection, no fixed confidence in kindly feeling, perpetual suspicion and anxiety, and no room for friendship; for who can love either him whom he fears, or him by whom he thinks that he is feared? Yet they receive the show of homage, but only while the occasion for it lasts.¹ If they chance to fall, as

they commonly have fallen, they then ascertain how destitute of friends they have been, as Tarquin is reported to have said that he learned what faithful and what unfaithful friends he had, when he could no longer render back favors to those of either class, — although I wonder whether pride and insolence like his could have had any friends. Moreover, as his character could not have won real friends, so is the good fortune of many who occupy foremost places of influence so held as to preclude faithful friendships. Not only is Fortune blind, but she generally makes those blind whom she embraces. Thus they are almost always beside themselves under the influence of haughtiness and waywardness; nor can there be created anything more utterly insupportable than a fortune-favored fool. There are to be seen those who previously behaved with propriety who are changed by station, power, or prosperity, and who spurn their old friendships and lavish indulgence on the new. But what is more foolish than when men have resources, means, wealth at their fullest command, and can obtain horses, servants, splendid raiment, costly vases, whatever money can buy, for them not to procure friends, who are, if I may so speak, the best and the most beautiful furniture of human life? Other things which a man may procure know not him who procures them, nor do they labor for his sake, — indeed, they belong to him who can make them his by the right of superior strength. But every one has his own firm and sure possession of his friendships; while even if those things which seem the gifts of fortune remain, still life unadorned and deserted by friends cannot be happy. But enough has been said on this branch of our subject.

16. We must now determine the limits or bounds of friendship. On this subject I find three opinions proposed, neither of which has my approval, — the first, that we should do for our friends just what we would do for ourselves; the second, that our good offices to our friends should correspond in quantity and quality to those which they perform for us; the third, that one's friends should value him according to his own self-estimate. I cannot give unqualified assent to either of these opinions. The first — that one should be ready to do for his friends precisely what he would do for himself — is inadmissible. How many things there are that we do for our friends which we should never do on our own account! — such as making a request, even an entreaty, of a man unworthy of respect, or inveighing against some person with a degree of bitterness, nay, in terms of vehement reproach. In fine, we are perfectly right in doing in behalf of a friend things that in our own case would be decidedly unbecoming. There are also many ways in which good men detract largely from their own comfort, or suffer it to be impaired, that a friend may have the enjoyment which they sacrifice. The second opinion is that which limits kind offices and good-will by the rule of equality. This is simply making friendship a matter of calculation, with the view of keeping a debtor and creditor account evenly balanced. To me friendship seems more affluent and generous, and not disposed to keep strict watch lest it may give more than it receives, and to fear that a part of its due may be spilled over or suffered to leak out, or that it may heap up its own measure over-full in return.¹ But worst of all is the third limit, which prescribes that friends shall take a man's opinion of himself as a measure for their estimate and treatment of him. There are some persons who are liable to fits of depression, or who have little hope of better fortune than the present. In such a case, it is the part of a friend, not to hold the position toward his friend which he holds toward himself, but to make the efficient endeavor to rouse him from his despondency, and to lead him to better hope and a more

cheerful train of thought. It remains for me, then, to establish another limit of friendship. But first let me tell you what Scipio was wont to speak of with the severest censure. He maintained that no utterance could have been invented more inimical to friendship¹ than that of him who said that one ought to love as if he were going at some future time to hate; nor could he be brought to believe that this maxim came, as was reported, from Bias, who was one of the seven wise men, but he regarded it as having proceeded from some sordid person, who was either inordinately ambitious, or desirous of bringing everything under his own control. For how can one be a friend to him to whom he thinks that he may possibly become an enemy? In this case one would of necessity desire and choose that his friend should commit offences very frequently, so as to give him, so to speak, the more numerous handles for fault-finding; and on the other hand one would be vexed, pained, aggrieved by all the right and fitting things that friends do. This precept, then, from whomsoever it came, amounts to the annulling of friendship. The proper rule should be, that we exercise so much caution in forming friendships, that we should never begin to love a friend whom it is possible that we should ever hate; but even in case we should have been unfortunate in our choice, Scipio thought that it would be wiser to bear the disappointment when it comes than to keep the contingency of future alienation in view.

17. I would then define the terms of friendship by saying that, where friends are of blameless character, there may fittingly be between them a community of all interests, plans, and purposes, without any exception, even so far that, if perchance there be occasion for furthering the not entirely right wishes of friends when life or reputation is at stake, one may in their behalf deviate somewhat from a perfectly straight course,¹ yet not so far as to incur absolute dishonor. There is a point up to which a concession made to friendship is venial. But we are not bound to be careless of our own reputation, nor ought we to regard the esteem of our fellow-citizens as an instrument of small importance in the management of such affairs as devolve upon us, — an esteem which it is base to conciliate¹ by flattery and fawning. Virtue, which has the sincere regard of the people as its consequence, is by no means to be sacrificed to friendship.

But, to return to Scipio, who was all the time talking about friendship, he often complained that men exercised greater care about all other matters; that one could always tell how many goats and sheep he had, but could not tell how many friends he had; and that men were careful in selecting their beasts, but were negligent in the choice of friends, and had nothing like marks and tokens¹ by which to determine the fitness of friends.

Firm, steadfast, self-consistent men are to be chosen as friends, and of this kind of men there is a great dearth. It is very difficult to judge of character before we have tested it; but we can test it only after friendship is begun. Thus friendship is prone to outrun judgment, and to render a fair trial impossible. It is therefore the part of a wise man to arrest the impulse of kindly feeling, as we check a carriage in its course, that, as we use only horses that have been tried, so we may avail ourselves of friendships in which the characters of our friends have been somehow put to the test. Some readily show how fickle their friendship is in paltry pecuniary matters; others, whom a slight

consideration of that kind cannot influence, betray themselves when a large amount is involved. But if some can be found who think it mean to prefer money to friendship, where shall we come upon those who do not put honors, civic offices, military commands, places of power and trust, before friendship, so that when these are offered on the one hand, and the claims of friendship on the other, they will much rather make choice of the objects of ambition? For nature is too feeble to despise a commanding station; and even though it be obtained by the violation of friendship, men think that this fault will be thrown into obscurity, because it was not without a weighty motive that they held friendship in abeyance. Thus true friendships are rare among those who are in public office, and concerned in the affairs of the State. For where will you find him who prefers a friend's promotion to his own? What more shall I say? Not to dwell longer on the influence of ambition upon friendship, how burdensome, how difficult does it seem to most men to share misfortunes! to which it is not easy to find those who are willing to stoop. Although Ennius is right in saying,

“In unsure fortune a sure friend is seen,”

yet one of these two things convicts most persons of fickleness and weakness, — either their despising their friends when they themselves are prosperous, or deserting their friends in adversity.

18. Him, then, who alike in either event shall have shown himself unwavering, constant, firm in friendship, we ought to regard as of an exceedingly rare and almost divine order of men.

Still further, good faith is essential to the maintenance of the stability and constancy which we demand in friendship; for nothing that is unfaithful is stable. It is, moreover, fitting to choose for a friend one who is frank, affable, accommodating, interested in the same things with ourselves, — all which qualities come under the head of fidelity; for a changeful and wily disposition cannot be faithful, nor can he who has not like interests and a kindred nature with his friend be either faithful or stable. I ought to add that a friend should neither take pleasure in finding fault with his friend, nor give credit to the charges which others may bring against him, — all which is implied in the constancy of which I have been speaking. Thus we come back to the truth which I announced at the beginning of our conversation, that friendship can exist only between the good. It is, indeed, the part of a good or — what is the same thing — a wise man¹ to adhere to these two principles in friendship, — first, that he tolerate no feigning or dissembling (for an ingenuous man will rather show even open hatred than hide his feeling by his face); and, secondly, that he not only repel charges made against his friend by others, but that he be not himself suspicious, and always thinking that his friend has done something unfriendly.

To these requisites there may well be added suavity of speech and manners, which is of no little worth as giving a relish to the intercourse of friendship. Rigidness and austerity of demeanor on every occasion indeed carry weight with them; but friendship ought to be more gentle and mild, and more inclined to all that is genial and affable.

19. There occurs here a question by no means difficult,¹ whether at any time new friends worthy of our love are to be preferred to the old, as we are wont to prefer young horses to those that have passed their prime. Shame that there should be hesitation as to the answer! There ought to be no satiety of friendships, as there is rightly of many other things. The older a friendship is, the more precious should it be, as is the case with wines that will bear keeping;² and there is truth in the proverb, that many pecks of salt must be eaten together to bring friendship to perfection.³ If new friendships offer the hope of fruit, like the young shoots in the grain-field that give promise of harvest, they are not indeed to be spurned; yet the old are to be kept in their place. There is very great power in long habit. To recur to the horse, there is no one who would not rather use the horse to which he has become accustomed, if he is still sound, than one unbroken and new. Nor has habit this power merely as to the movements of an animal; it prevails no less as to inanimate objects. We are charmed with the places, though mountainous and woody,¹ where we have made a long sojourn. But what is most remarkable in friendship is that it puts a man on an equality with his inferior. For there often are in a circle of friends those who excel the rest, as was the case with Scipio in our flock, if I may use the word. He never assumed superiority over Philus, never over Rupilius, never over Mummius, never over friends of an order lower than his own. Indeed he always revered as a superior, because older than himself, his brother Quintus Maximus,² a thoroughly worthy man, but by no means his equal; and in fact he wanted to make all his friends of the more consequence by whatever advantages he himself possessed. This example all ought to imitate, that if they have attained any superiority of virtue, genius, fortune, they may impart it to and share it with those with whom they are the most closely connected; and that if they are of humble parentage, and have kindred of slender ability or fortune, they may increase their means of well-being, and reflect honor and worth upon them, — as in fable those who were long in servile condition through ignorance of their parentage and race, when they were recognized and found to be sons either of gods or of kings, retained their love for the shepherds whom for many years they supposed to be their fathers. Much more ought the like to be done in the case of real and well-known fathers; for the best fruit of genius, and virtue, and every kind of excellence is reaped when it is thus bestowed on near kindred and friends.

20. Moreover, as among persons bound by ties of friendship and intimacy those who hold the higher place ought to bring themselves down to the same plane with their inferiors, so ought these last not to feel aggrieved because they are surpassed in ability, or fortune, or rank by their friends. Most of them, however, are always finding some ground of complaint, or even of reproach, especially if they can plead any service that they have rendered faithfully, in a friendly way, and with a certain amount of painstaking on their part. Such men, indeed, are hateful when they reproach their friends on the score of services which he on whom they were bestowed ought to bear in mind, but which it is unbecoming for him who conferred them to recount. Those who are superior ought, undoubtedly, not only to waive all pretension in friendly intercourse, but to do what they can to raise their humbler friends to their own level.¹ There are some who give their friends trouble by imagining that they are held in low esteem, which, however, is not apt to be the case except with those who think meanly of themselves. Those who feel thus ought to be raised to a just self-esteem, not only by kind words, but by substantial service. But what you do for any one must be

measured, first by your own ability, and then by the capacity of him whom you would favor and help. For, however great your influence may be, you cannot raise all your friends to the highest positions. Thus Scipio could effect the election of Publius Rupilius to the consulship; but he could not do the same for his brother Lucius.² In general, friendships that are properly so called are formed between persons of mature years and established character; nor if young men have been fond of hunting or of ball-playing, is there any need of permanent attachment to those whom they then liked as associates in the same sport. On this principle our nurses and the slaves that led us to school will demand by right of priority the highest grade of affectionate regard, — persons, indeed, who are not to be neglected, but who are on a somewhat different footing from that of friends. Friendships formed solely from early associations cannot last; for differences of character grow out of a diversity of pursuits, and unlikeness of character dissolves friendships. Nor is there any reason why good men cannot be the friends of bad men, or bad men of good, except that the dissimilarity of pursuits and of character between them is as great as it can be.

It is also a counsel worthy of heed, that excessive fondness be not suffered to interfere, as it does too often, with important services that a friend can render. To resort again to fable, Neoptolemus could not have taken Troy¹ if he had chosen to comply with the wishes of Lycomedes, who brought him up, and who with many tears attempted to dissuade him from his expedition. Equally in actual life there are not infrequently important occasions on which the society of friends must be for a time abandoned; and he who would prevent this because he cannot easily bear the separation, is of a weak and unmanly nature, and for that very reason unfit to fill the place of a friend. In fine, in all matters you should take into consideration both what you may reasonably demand of your friend, and what you can fitly suffer him to obtain from you.

21. The misfortune involved in the dissolution of friendships is sometimes unavoidable; for I am now coming down from the intimacies of wise men to common friendships. Faults of friends often betray themselves openly — whether to the injury of their friends themselves, or of strangers — in such a way that the disgrace falls back upon their friends. Such friendships are to be effaced by the suspension of intercourse, and, as I have heard Cato say, to be unstitched rather than cut asunder, unless some quite intolerable offence flames out to full view, so that it can be neither right nor honorable not to effect an immediate separation and dissevering. But if there shall have been some change either in character or in the habits of life, or if there have sprung up some difference of opinion as to public affairs, — I am speaking, as I have just said, of common friendships, not of those between wise men, — care should be taken lest there be the appearance, not only of friendship dropped, but of enmity taken up; for nothing is more unbecoming than to wage war with a man with whom you have lived on terms of intimacy. Scipio, as you know, had withdrawn from the friendship of Quintus Pompeius¹ on my account; he became alienated from Metellus¹ because of their different views as to the administration of the State. In both cases he conducted himself with gravity and dignity, and without any feeling of bitterness. The endeavor, then, must first be, to prevent discord from taking place among friends, and if anything of the kind occurs, to see that the friendship may seem to be extinguished rather than crushed out. Care must thus be taken lest friendships lapse into violent

enmities, whence are generated quarrels, slanders, insults, which yet, if not utterly intolerable, are to be endured, and this honor rendered to old friendship, that the blame may rest with him who does, not with him who suffers, the wrong.

The one surety and preventive against these mistakes and misfortunes is, not to form attachments too soon, nor for those unworthy of such regard.

But it is those in whose very selves there is reason why they should be loved, that are worthy of friendship. A rare class of men! Indeed, superlatively excellent objects of every sort are rare, nor is anything more difficult than to discover that which is in all respects perfect in its kind. But most persons have acquired the habit of recognizing nothing as good in human relations and affairs that does not produce some revenue, and they most love those friends, as they do those cattle, that will yield them the greatest gain. Thus they lack that most beautiful and most natural friendship, which is to be sought in itself and for its own sake; nor can they know from experience what and how great is the power of such friendship. One loves himself, not in order to exact from himself any wages for such love, but because he is in himself dear to himself. Now, unless this same property be transferred to friendship, a true friend will never be found; for such a friend is, as it were, another self. But if it is seen in beasts, birds, fishes, animals tame and wild, that they first love themselves (for self-love is born with everything that lives), and that they then require and seek those of their kind to whom they may attach themselves, and do so with desire and with a certain semblance of human love, how much more is this natural in man, who both loves himself, and craves another whose soul he may so blend with his own as almost to make one out of two!

22. But men in general are so perverse, not to say shameless, as to wish a friend to be in character what they themselves could not be, and they expect of friends what they do not give them in return. The proper course, however, is for one first to be himself a good man, and then to seek another like himself. In such persons the stability of friendship, of which I have been speaking, can be made sure, since, united in mutual love, they will, in the first place, hold in subjection the desires to which others are enslaved; then they will find delight in whatever is equitable and just, and each will take upon himself any labor or burden in the other's stead, while neither will ever ask of the other aught that is not honorable and right. Nor will they merely cherish and love, they will even reverence each other. But he who bereaves friendship of mutual respect¹ takes from it its greatest ornament. Therefore those are in fatal error who think that in friendship there is free license for all lusts and evil practices. Friendship is given by nature, not as a companion of the vices, but as a helper of the virtues, that, as solitary virtue might not be able to attain the summit of excellence, united and associated with another it might reach that eminence. As to those between whom there is, or has been, or shall be such an alliance, the fellowship is to be regarded as the best and happiest possible, inasmuch as it leads to the highest good that nature can bestow. This is the alliance, I say, in which are included all things that men think worthy their endeavor, — honor, fame, peace of mind, and pleasure, so that if these be present life is happy, and cannot be happy without them. Such a life being the best and greatest boon, if we wish to make it ours, we must devote ourselves to the cultivation of virtue, without which we can attain neither friendship nor anything else desirable. But

if virtue be left out of the account, those who think that they have friends perceive that they are mistaken when some important crisis compels them to put their friends to the test. Therefore — for it is worth reiterating — you ought to love after having exercised your judgment on your friends, instead of forming your judgment of them after you have begun to love them. But while in many things we are chargeable with carelessness, we are most so in choosing and keeping our friends. We reverse the old proverb,¹ take counsel after acting, and attempt to do over again what we have done; for after having become closely connected by long habit and even by mutual services, some occasion of offence springs up, and we suddenly break in sunder a friendship in full career.

23. The more blameworthy are they who are so very careless in a matter of so essential importance. Indeed, among things appertaining to human life, it is friendship alone that has the unanimous voice of all men as to its capacity of service. By many even virtue is scorned, and is said to be a mere matter of display and ostentation. Many despise wealth, and, contented with little, take pleasure in slender diet and inexpensive living. Though some are inflamed with desire for office, many there are who hold it in so low esteem that they can imagine nothing more inane or worthless. Other things, too, which seem to some admirable, very many regard as of no value. But all have the same feeling as to friendship, — alike those who devote themselves to the public service, those who take delight in learning and philosophy, those who manage their own affairs in a quiet way, and, lastly, those who are wholly given up to sensual pleasure. They all agree that without friendship life cannot be, if one only means to live in some form or measure respectably.¹ For friendship somehow twines through all lives, and leaves no mode of being without its presence. Even if one be of so rude and savage a nature as to shun and hate the society of men, as we have learned was the case with that Timon of Athens,² if there ever was such a man,³ he yet cannot help seeking some one in whose presence he may vomit the venom of his bitterness. The need of friendship would be best shown, were such a thing possible, if some god should take us away from this human crowd, and place us anywhere in solitude, giving us there an abundant supply of all things that nature craves, but depriving us utterly of the sight of a human countenance. Who could be found of so iron make that he could endure¹ such a life, and whom solitude would not render incapable of enjoying any kind of pleasure? That is true then which, if I remember aright, our elders used to say that they had heard from their seniors in age as having come from Archytas of Tarentum, — “If one had ascended to heaven, and had obtained a full view of the nature of the universe and the beauty of the stars, yet his admiration would be without delight, if there were no one to whom he could tell what he had seen.” Thus Nature has no love for solitude, and always leans, as it were, on some support; and the sweetest support is found in the most intimate friendship.

24. But while Nature declares by so many tokens what she desires, craves, needs, we — I know not how — grow deaf, and fail to hear her counsel.

Intercourse among friends assumes many different forms and modes, and there frequently arise causes of suspicion and offence, which it is the part of a wise man sometimes to avoid, sometimes to remove, sometimes to bear. One ground of offence, namely, freedom in telling the truth, must be put entirely away, in order that

friendship may retain its serviceableness and its good faith; for friends often need to be admonished and reprov'd, and such offices, when kindly performed, ought to be received in a friendly way. Yet somehow we witness in actual life what my friend [1](#) says in his play of *Andria*: —

“Complacency [2](#) wins friends; but truth gives birth to hatred.”

Truth is offensive, if hatred, the bane of friendship, is indeed born of it; but much more offensive is complacency, when in its indulgence for wrongdoing it suffers a friend to go headlong to ruin. The greatest blame, however, rests on him who both spurns the truth when it is told him, and is driven by the complacency of friends to self-deception. In this matter, therefore, there should be the utmost discretion and care, first, that admonition be without bitterness, then, that reproof be without invective. But in complacency — for I am ready to use the word which Terence furnishes — let pleasing truth be told; let flattery, the handmaid of the vices, be put far away, as unworthy, not only of a friend, but of any man above the condition of a slave; for there is one way of living with a tyrant, another with a friend. We may well despair of saving him whose ears are so closed to the truth that he cannot hear what is true from a friend. Among the many pithy sayings of Cato was this: “There are some who owe more to their bitter enemies than to the friends that seem sweet; for those often tell the truth, these never.” It is indeed ridiculous for those who are admonished not to be annoyed by what ought to trouble them, and to be annoyed by what ought to give them no offence. Their faults give them no pain; they take it hard that they are reprov'd; — while they ought, on the contrary, to be griev'd for their wrong-doing, to rejoice in their correction.

25. As, then, it belongs to friendship both to admonish and to be admonished, and to do the former freely, yet not harshly, to receive the latter patiently, not resentfully, so it is to be maintained that friendship has no greater pest than adulation, flattery, subserviency; for under its many names [1](#) a brand should be put on this vice of fickle and deceitful men, who say everything with the view of giving pleasure, without any reference to the truth. While simulation is bad on every account, inasmuch as it renders the discernment of the truth which it defaces impossible, it is most of all inimical to friendship; for it is fatal to sincerity, without which the name of friendship ceases to have any meaning. For since the essence of friendship consists in this, that one mind is, as it were, made out of several, how can this be, if in one of the several there shall be not always one and the same mind, but a mind varying, changeful, manifold? And what can be so flexible, so far out of its rightful course, as the mind of him who adapts himself, not only to the feelings and wishes, but even to the look and gesture, of another?

“Does one say No or Yes? I say so too.
My rule is to assent to everything,”

as Terence, whom I have just quoted, says; but he says it in the person of Gnatho, [1](#) — a sort of friend which only a frivolous mind can tolerate. But as there are many like Gnatho, who stand higher than he did in place, fortune, and reputation, their

subserviency is the more offensive, because their position gives weight to their falsehood.

But a flattering friend may be distinguished and discriminated from a true friend by proper care, as easily as everything disguised and feigned is seen to differ from what is genuine and real. The assembly of the people, though consisting of persons who have the least skill in judgment, yet always knows the difference between him who, merely seeking popularity, is sycophantic and fickle, and a firm, inflexible, and substantial citizen. With what soft words did Caius Papirius¹ steal² into the ears of the assembly a little while ago, when he brought forward the law about the re-election of the tribunes of the people!³ I opposed the law. But, to say nothing of myself, I will rather speak of Scipio. How great, ye immortal gods, was his dignity of bearing! What majesty of address! So that you might easily call him the leader of the Roman people, rather than one of their number. But you were there, and you have copies of his speech. Thus the law was rejected by vote of the people. But, to return to myself, you remember, when Quintus Maximus, Scipio's brother, and Lucius Mancinus were Consuls, how much the people seemed to favor the law of Caius Licinius Crassus about the priests. The law proposed to transfer the election of priests from their own respective colleges to the suffrage of the people;¹ and he on that occasion introduced the custom of facing the people in addressing them.² Yet under my advocacy the religion of the immortal gods obtained the ascendancy over his plausible speech. That was during my praetorship, five years before I was chosen Consul. Thus the cause was gained by its own merits rather than by official authority.

26. But if on the stage, or — what is the same thing — in the assembly of the people, in which there is ample scope for false and distorted representations, the truth only needs to be made plain and clear in order for it to prevail, what ought to be the case in friendship, which is entirely dependent for its value on truth, — in which unless, as the phrase is, you see an open bosom and show your own, you can have nothing worthy of confidence, nothing of which you can feel certain, not even the fact of your loving or being loved, since you are ignorant of what either really is? Yet this flattery of which I have spoken, harmful as it is, can injure only him who takes it in and is delighted with it. Thus it is the case that he is most ready to open his ear to flattery, who flatters himself and finds supreme delight in himself. Virtue indeed loves itself; for it has thorough knowledge of itself, and understands how worthy of love it is. But it is reputed, not real, virtue of which I am now speaking; for there are not so many possessed of virtue as there are that desire to seem virtuous. These last are delighted with flattery, and when false statements are framed purposely to satisfy and please them, they take the falsehood as valid testimony to their merit. That, however, is no friendship, in which one of the (so-called) friends does not want to hear the truth, and the other is ready to lie. The flattery of parasites on the stage would not seem amusing, were there not in the play braggart soldiers¹ to be flattered.

“Great thanks indeed did Thais render to me?”

“Great” was a sufficient answer; but the answer in the play is “Prodigious.” The flatterer always magnifies what he whom he is aiming to please wishes to have great. But while this smooth falsehood takes effect only with those who themselves attract

and invite it, even persons of a more substantial and solid character need to be warned to be on their guard, lest they be ensnared by flattery of a more cunning type. No one who has a moderate share of common-sense fails to detect the open flatterer; but great care must be taken lest the wily and covert flatterer may insinuate himself; for he is not very easily recognized, since he often assents by opposing, plays the game of disputing in a smooth, caressing way, and at length submits, and suffers himself to be outreasoned, so as to make him on whom he is practising his arts appear to have had the deeper insight. But what is more disgraceful than to be made game of? One must take heed not to put himself in the condition of the character in the play of *The Heiress*:[1](#) —

“Of an old fool one never made such sport
As you have made of me this very day;”

for there is no character on the stage so foolish as that of these unwary and credulous old men. But I know not how my discourse has digressed from the friendships of perfect, that is, of wise men, — wise, I mean, so far as wisdom can fall to the lot of man, — to friendships of a lighter sort. Let us then return to our original subject, and bring it to a speedy conclusion.

27. Virtue, I say to you, Caius Fannius, and to you, Quintus Mucius, — virtue both forms and preserves friendships. In it is mutual agreement; in it is stability; in it is consistency of conduct and character. When it has put itself forth and shown its light, and has seen and recognized the same light in another, it draws near to that light, and receives in return what the other has to give; and from this intercourse love, or friendship, — call it which you may, — is kindled. These terms are equally derived in our language from loving:[1](#) and to love is nothing else than to cherish affection for him whom you love, with no felt need of his service, with no quest of benefit to be obtained from him; while, nevertheless, serviceableness blooms out from friendship, however little you may have had it in view. With this affection I in my youth loved those old men, — Lucius Paulus, Marcus Cato, Caius Gallus, Publius Nasica, Tiberius Gracchus, the father-in-law of my friend Scipio. This relation is more conspicuous among those of the same age, as between myself and Scipio, Lucius Furius, Publius Rupilius, Spurius Mummius. But in my turn, as an old man, I find repose in the attachment of young men, as in yours, and in that of Quintus Tubero, and I am delighted with the intimacy of Publius Rutilius and Aulus Virginius, who are just emerging from boyhood. While the order of human life and of nature is such that another generation must come upon the stage, it would be most desirable, could such a thing be, to reach the goal, so to speak, with those of our own age with whom we started on the race; but since man’s life is frail and precarious, we ought always to be in quest of some younger persons whom we may love, and who will love us in return; for when love and kindness cease all enjoyment is taken out of life.

For me indeed, Scipio, though suddenly snatched away, still lives and will always live; for I loved the virtue of the man, which is not extinguished. Nor does it float before my eyes only, as I have always had it at hand; it will also be renowned and illustrious with generations to come. No one will ever enter with courage and hope on a high and noble career, without proposing to himself as a standard the memory and

image of his virtue. Indeed, of all things which fortune or nature ever gave me, I have nothing that I can compare with the friendship of Scipio. In this there was a common feeling as to the affairs of the State; in this, mutual counsel as to our private concerns; in this, too, a repose full of delight. Never, so far as I know, did I offend him in the least thing; never did I hear from him a word which I would not wish to hear. We had one home; 1 the same diet, and that simple; 1 we were together, not only in military service, but also in journeying and in our rural sojourns. And what shall I say of our unflagging zeal in the pursuit of knowledge, and in learning everything new within our reach, — an employment in which, when not under the eyes of the public, we passed all our leisure time together? Had the recollection and remembrance of these things died with him, I could not anyhow bear the loss of a man, thus bound to me in the closest intimacy and holding me in the dearest love. But they are not blotted out, they are rather nourished and increased by reflection and memory; and were I entirely bereft of them, my advanced age would still be my great comfort, for I can miss his society but for a brief season, and all sorrows, however heavy, if they can last but a little while, ought to be endured.

I had these things to say to you about friendship; and I exhort you that you so give the foremost place to virtue without which friendship cannot be, that with the sole exception of virtue, you may think nothing to be preferred to friendship.

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SCIPIO'S DREAM.

1. When I arrived in Africa, to serve, as you know, in the office of military Tribune of the fourth Legion, under Manius¹ Manilius as consul, I desired nothing so much as to meet Masinissa² the king, who for sufficient reasons³ stood in the most friendly relation to our family. When I came to him, the old man embraced me with tears, and shortly afterward looked up to heaven and said: "I thank thee, sovereign Sun,⁴ and all of you lesser lights of heaven, that before I pass away from this life I behold in my kingdom and beneath this roof Publius Cornelius Scipio, whose very name renews my strength, so utterly inseparable from my thought is the memory of that best and most invincible of men who first bore it." Then I questioned him about his kingdom, and he asked me about our republic; and with the many things that we had to communicate to each other, the day wore away.

At a later hour, after an entertainment of royal magnificence, we prolonged our conversation far into the night, while the old man talked to me about nothing else but Africanus, rehearsing not only all that he had done, but all that he had said. When we parted to go to our rest, sleep took a stronger hold on me than usual, on account both of the fatigue of my journey and of the lateness of the hour. In my sleep, I suppose in consequence of our conversation (for generally our thoughts and utterances by day have in our sleep an effect like that which Ennius describes in his own case as to Homer,¹ about whom in his waking hours he was perpetually thinking and talking), Africanus appeared to me, with an aspect that reminded me more of his bust than of his real face. I shuddered when I saw him. But he said: "Preserve your presence of mind, Scipio; be not afraid, and commit to memory what I shall say to you. 2. "Do you see that city, which was brought through me into subjection to the Roman people, but now renews its old hostility, and cannot remain quiet," — and he showed me Carthage from a high place full of stars, shining and splendid, — "against which you, being little more than a common soldier, are coming to fight? In two years from now you as Consul will overthrow this city, and you will obtain of your own right the surname which up to this time you hold as inherited from me. When you shall have destroyed Carthage, shall have celebrated your triumph over it, shall have been Censor, and shall have traversed, as an ambassador, Egypt, Syria, Asia, and Greece, you will be chosen a second time Consul in your absence, and will put an end to one of the greatest of wars by extirpating Numantia. But when you shall be borne to the Capitol in your triumphal chariot after this war, you will find the State disturbed by the machinations of my grandson.¹

"In this emergency, Africanus, it will behoove you to show your country the light of your energy, genius, and wisdom. But I see at that time, as it were, a double way of destiny. For when your age shall have followed the sun for eight times seven revolutions, and these two numbers² — each perfect, though for different reasons — shall have completed for you in the course of nature the destined period, to you alone and to your name the whole city will turn; on you the Senate will look, on you all good citizens, on you the allies, on you the Latini. You will be the one man on whom the safety of the city will rest; and, to say no more, you, as Dictator, must re-establish

the State, if you escape the impious hands of your kindred.”¹ Here, when Laelius had cried out, and the rest of the company had breathed deep sighs, Scipio, smiling pleasantly upon them, said, “I beg you not to rouse me from sleep and break up my vision. Hear the remainder of it.”

3. “But that you, Africanus, may be the more prompt in the defence of the State, know that for all who shall have preserved, succored, enlarged their country, there is a certain and determined place in heaven where they enjoy eternal happiness; for to the Supreme God who governs this whole universe nothing is more pleasing than those companies and unions of men that are called cities. Of these the rulers and preservers, going hence, return hither.”

Here I, although I had been alarmed, not indeed so much by the fear of death as by that of the treachery of my own kindred, yet asked whether Paulus, my father, and others whom we supposed to be dead were living. “Yes, indeed,” he replied, “those who have fled from the bonds of the body, like runners from the goal, live; while what is called your life is death. But do you see your father Paulus coming to you?” When I saw him, I shed a flood of tears; but he, embracing and kissing me, forbade my weeping.

Then as soon as my tears would suffer me to speak, I began by saying, “Most sacred and excellent father, since this is life, as Africanus tells me, why do I remain on the earth, and not rather hasten to come to you?” “Not so,” said he; “for unless the God who has for his temple all that you now behold, shall have freed you from this prison of the body, there can be no entrance for you hither. Men have indeed been brought into being on this condition, that they should guard the globe which you see in the midst of this temple, which is called the earth; and a soul has been given to them from those eternal fires which you call constellations and stars, which, globed and round, animated with god-derived minds, complete their courses and move through their orbits with amazing speed. You, therefore, Publius, and all rightly disposed men are bound to retain the soul in the body’s keeping, nor without the command of him who gave it to you to depart from the life appointed for man, lest you may seem to have taken flight from human duty as assigned by God. But, Scipio, like this your grandfather,¹ like me, your father, cherish justice and that sacred observance of duty to your kind, which, while of great worth toward parents and family, is of supreme value toward your country. Such a life is the way to heaven, and to this assembly of those who have already lived, and, released from the body, inhabit the place which you now see,” — it was that circle that shines forth among the stars in the most dazzling white, — “which you have learned from the Greeks to call the Milky Way.” And as I looked on every side I saw other things transcendently glorious and wonderful. There were stars which we never see from here below, and all the stars were vast far beyond what we have ever imagined. The least of them was that which, farthest from heaven, nearest to the earth, shone with a borrowed light. But the starry globes very far surpassed the earth in magnitude. The earth itself indeed looked to me so small as to make me ashamed of our empire, which was a mere point on its surface.

4. While I was gazing more intently on the earth, Africanus said: “How long, I pray you, will your mind be fastened on the ground? Do you not see into the midst of what

temples you have come? In your sight are nine orbs, or rather globes, by which all things are held together. One is the celestial, the outermost, embracing all the rest, — the Supreme God himself,¹ who governs and keeps in their places the other spheres. In this are fixed those stars which ever roll in an unchanging course. Beneath this are seven spheres which have a retrograde movement, opposite to that of the heavens. One of these is the domain of the star which on earth they call Saturn. Next is the luminary which bears the name of Jupiter, of prosperous and healthful omen to the human race; then, the star of fiery red which you call Mars, and which men regard with terror. Beneath, the Sun holds nearly the midway space,² leader, prince, and ruler of the other lights, the mind and regulating power of the universe, so vast as to illuminate and flood all things with his light. Him, as his companions, Venus and Mercury follow on their different courses; and in a sphere still lower the moon revolves, lighted by the rays of the sun. Beneath this there is nothing that is not mortal and perishable, except the souls bestowed upon the human race by the gift of the gods. Above the moon all things are eternal. The earth, which is the central and ninth sphere, has no motion, and is the lowest¹ of all, and all heavy bodies gravitate spontaneously toward it.”

5. When I had recovered from my amazement at these things I asked, “What is this sound so strong and so sweet that fills my ears?” “This,” he replied, “is the melody which, at intervals unequal, yet differing in exact proportions, is made by the impulse and motion of the spheres themselves, which, softening shriller by deeper tones, produce a diversity of regular harmonies. Nor can such vast movements be urged on in silence; and by the order of nature the shriller notes sound from one extreme of the universe, the deeper from the other. Thus yonder supreme celestial sphere with its clustered stars, as it revolves more rapidly, moves with a shrill and quick strain; this lower sphere of the moon sends forth deeper notes; while the earth, the ninth sphere, remaining motionless,² always stands fixed in the lowest place, occupying the centre of the universe. But these eight revolutions, of which two, those of Mercury and Venus, are in unison, make seven distinct tones, with measured intervals between, and almost all things are arranged in sevens.³ Skilled men, copying this harmony with strings and voice, have opened for themselves a way back to this place, as have others who with excelling genius have cultivated divine sciences in human life. But the ears of men are deafened by being filled with this melody; nor is there in you mortals a duller sense than that of hearing. As where the Nile at the Falls of Catadupa pours down from the loftiest mountains, the people who live hard by lack the sense of hearing because of the loudness of the cataract, so this harmony of the whole universe in its intensely rapid movement is so loud that men’s ears cannot take it in, even as you cannot look directly at the sun, and the keenness and visual power of the eye are overwhelmed by its rays.” While I marvelled at these things, I ever and anon cast my eyes again upon the earth.

6. Then Africanus said: “I perceive that you are now fixing your eyes on the abode and home of men, and if it seems to you small, as it really is, then look always at these heavenly things, and despise those earthly. For what reputation from the speech of men, or what fame worth seeking, can you obtain? You see that the inhabited places of the earth are scattered and of small extent, that in the spots¹ — so to speak — where men dwell there are vast solitary tracts interposed, and that those who live on

the earth are not only so separated that no communication can pass from place to place, but stand, in part at an oblique angle, in part at a right angle with you, in part even in an opposite direction;¹ and from these you certainly can anticipate no fame.

“You perceive also that this same earth is girded and surrounded by belts, two of which — the farthest from each other, and each resting at one extremity on the very pole of the heavens — you see entirely frost-bound; while the middle and largest of them burns under the sun’s intensest heat. Two of them are habitable, of which the southern, whose inhabitants are your antipodes, bears no relation to your people; and see how small a part they occupy in this other northern zone, in which you dwell. For all of the earth with which you have any concern — narrow at the north and south, broader in its central portion — is a mere little island, surrounded by that sea which you on earth call the Atlantic, the Great Sea, the Ocean, while yet, with such a name, you see how small it is. To speak only of these cultivated and well-known regions, could your name even cross this Caucasus which you have in view, or swim beyond that Ganges? Who, in what other lands may lie in the extreme east or west, or under northern or southern skies, will ever hear your name? All these cut off, you surely see within what narrow bounds your fame can seek to spread. Then, too, as regards the very persons who tell of your renown, how long will they speak of it?

7. “But even if successive generations should desire to transmit the praise of every one of us from father to son in unbroken succession, yet because of devastations by flood and fire, which will of necessity take place at a determined time, we must fail of attaining not only eternal fame, but even that of very long duration. Now of what concern is it that those who shall be born hereafter should speak of you, when you were spoken of by none who were born before you, who were not fewer, and certainly were better men? — especially, too, when among those who might hear our names there is not one that can retain the memories of a single year. Men, indeed, ordinarily measure the year only by the return of the sun, that is, one star, to its place; but when all the stars, after long intervals, shall resume their original places in the heavens, then that completed revolution may be truly called a year. As of old the sun seemed to be eclipsed and blotted out when the soul of Romulus entered these temples, so when the sun shall be again eclipsed in the same part of his course, and at the same period of the year and day, with all the constellations and stars recalled to the point from which they started on their revolutions, then count the year as brought to a close.¹ But be assured that the twentieth part of this year has not yet come round.

“Therefore, should you renounce the hope of returning to this place in which are all things that great and excellent men can desire, of what worth is that human glory which can scarcely extend to a small part of a single year? If, then, you shall determine to look high up, and to behold continuously this dwelling and eternal home, you will neither give yourself to the flattery of the people, nor place your hope of well-being on rewards that man can bestow. Let Virtue herself by her own charms draw you to true honor. What others may say of you, regard as their concern, not yours. They will doubtless talk about you, but all that they say is confined within the narrow limits of the regions which you now see; nor did such speech as to any one ever last on into eternity, — it is buried with those who die, and lost in oblivion for those who may come afterward.”

8. When he had spoken thus, I said, “O Africanus, if indeed for those who have deserved well of their country there is, as it were, an open road by which they may enter heaven, though from boyhood treading in my father’s steps and yours, I have done no discredit to your fame, I yet shall now strive to that end with a more watchful diligence.” And he replied: “Strive¹ indeed, and bear this in mind, that it is not you that are mortal, but your body only. Nor is it you whom this outward form makes manifest; but every man’s mind is he, — not the bodily shape which can be pointed at by the finger. Know also that you are a god, if he indeed is a god who lives, who perceives, who remembers, who foresees, who governs and restrains and moves the body over which he is made ruler even as the Supreme God holds the universe under his sway; and in truth as the eternal God himself moves the universe which is mortal in every part, so does the everlasting soul move the corruptible body.

“That, indeed, which is in perpetual movement is eternal; but that which, while imparting motion to some other substance, derives its own movement from some other source, must of necessity cease to live when it ceases to move. Then that alone which is the cause of its own motion, because it is never deserted by itself, never has its movement suspended. But for other substances that are moved this is the source, the first cause,² of movement. But the first cause has no origin; for all things spring from the first cause: itself, from nothing. That indeed would not be a first cause which derived its beginning from anything else; and if it has no beginning, it never ceases to be. For the first cause, if extinct, will neither itself be born again from aught else, nor will it create aught else from itself, if indeed all things must of necessity originate from the first cause. Thus it is that the first cause of motion is derived from that which is in its nature self-moving; but this can neither be born nor die. Were it to die, the whole heaven would of necessity collapse, and all nature would stand still, nor could it find any force which could be set in movement anew from a primitive impulse.¹

9. “Since, then, that which is the source of its own movement is manifestly eternal, who is there that can deny that this nature has been given to the soul? For whatever is moved by external impulse is soulless;² but whatever has a soul³ is stirred to action by movement inward and its own; for this is the peculiar nature and virtue of the soul. Moreover, if it is this alone of all things that is the source of its own movement, it certainly did not begin to be, and is eternal.

“This soul I bid you to exercise in the best pursuits, and the best are your cares for your country’s safety, by which if your soul be kept in constant action and exercise, it will have the more rapid flight to this its abode and home. This end it will attain the more readily, if, while it shall be shut up in the body, it shall peer forth, and, contemplating those things that are beyond, abstract itself as far as possible from the body. For the souls of those who have surrendered themselves to the pleasures of the body, have yielded themselves to their service, and, obeying them under the impulse of sensual lusts, have transgressed the laws of gods and men, when they pass out of their bodies are tossed to and fro around the earth, nor return to this place till they have wandered in banishment for many ages.”

He departed; I awoke from sleep.

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[1] *Deflexit jam aliquantulum.*

[1] Thus among the many proofs of the genuineness of our canonical Gospels, perhaps none is more conclusive than the fact that, though evidently written by unskilled men, they contain not a trace or token of certain opinions known to have been rife even before the close of the first Christian century; while the (so-called) apocryphal Gospels bear, throughout, such vestiges of their later origin as would neutralize the strongest testimony imaginable in behalf of their primitive antiquity.

[1] *Sexaginta annos habeo.*

[2] *Vive cum Laelio.*

[1] *Rubbed again*, — the parchment, or papyrus, having been first polished for use, and then rubbed as clean as possible, to be used a second time.

[2] *In palimpsesto.*

[1] *Praedibus.*

[1] In the earliest time a boy put on the *toga virilis* when he had completed his sixteenth year; in Cicero's time pupilage ceased a year earlier; and by Justinian's code the period at which it legally ceased was the commencement of the fifteenth year. The Scaevola to whom Cicero was thus taken was Quintus Mucius (Scaevola), the Augur, already named.

[2] It was customary for youth in training for honorable positions in the State to attach themselves especially to men of established character and reputation, to attend them to public places, and to remain near them whenever anything was to be learned from their conversation, their legal opinions, their public harangues, or their pleas before the courts. Distinguished citizens deemed themselves honored by a retinue of such attendants. Cicero, in the *De Officiis*, says that a young man may best commend himself to the early esteem and confidence of the community by such an intimacy.

[1] As Cicero says, the most eloquent of jurists, and the most learned jurist among the eloquent. He was at the same time pre-eminent for moral purity and integrity. It was he, who, as Cicero (*De Officiis*, iii. 15) relates, insisted on paying for an estate that he bought a much larger sum than was asked for it, because its price had been fixed far below its actual value.

[2] Latin, *hemicyclo*, perhaps, a semicircular seat.

[3] The quarrel arose from the zealous espousal of the Marian faction by Sulpicius, who resorted to arms, in order to effect the incorporation of the new citizens from without the city among the previously existing tribes. Hence a series of tumults and conflicts, in one of which a son of Pompeius lost his life.

[1] In the Latin we have here two remarkable series of assonances, rhythmical to the ear, and though translatable in sense, not so in euphony. “Ut tum *senex* ad *senem* de *senectute*, sic hoc libro ad *amicum amicissimus* de *amicitia* scripsi.”

[2] The reference is to what Laelius is supposed to have said already. The dialogue, as given here, is made to commence in the midst of a conversation.

[1] The first Roman known to have borne the surname of Sapiens. He was one of the earliest of the jurisconsults who took pupils.

[2] Socrates.

[1] Latin, *proxumis nonis*. The *nones*, the ninth day before the *ides*, fell on the fifth of the month, except in March, May, July, and October, when the *ides* were two days later. We have elsewhere intimation that the Augurs held a meeting for business on the *nones* of each month.

[1] Paulus Aemilius, who lost two sons, one a few days before, the other shortly after, the triumph decreed to him for the conquest of the Macedonian King Perseus.

[2] Caius Sulpicius Gallus, mentioned as an astronomer by Cicero, *De Officiis*, i. 6, and *De Senectute*, 14.

[3] The younger Cato had won fame as a soldier and distinguished eminence as a jurist. At the time of his death he was praetor elect.

[1] He left the army in Africa, b. c. 147, for Rome, to offer himself as a candidate for the aedileship, for which he had just reached the legal age of thirty-seven; but such accounts of his ability, efficiency, and courage had preceded him and followed him from the army, that he was chosen Consul, virtually by popular acclamation.

[2] The war in Spain had been continued for several years, with frequent disaster and disgrace to the Roman army, when Scipio, b. c. 134, was chosen Consul with a special view to this war, which he closed by the capture and destruction of Numantia, in connection with which, it must be confessed, his record is rather that of a relentless and sanguinary enemy than of a generous and placable antagonist.

[1] He was the son of Paulus Aemilius, and the adopted son of Publius Cornelius Scipio Africanus. His mother, divorced for no assignable reason, was left very poor, and her son, on the death of the widow of his adopting father, gave her the entire patrimony that then came into his possession.

[2] After his mother's death, law and custom authorized him to resume what he had given her; but he bestowed it on his sisters, thus affording them the means of living comfortably and respectably.

[3] The *De Senectute*.

[1] He retired to his sleeping apartment apparently in perfect health, and was found dead on his couch in the morning, — as was rumored, with marks of violence on his neck. His wife was Sempronia, the sister of the Gracchi whose agrarian schemes he had vehemently opposed. She was suspected of having at least given admission to the assassin, and even her mother, the Cornelia who has been regarded as unparalleled among Roman women for the virtues appertaining to a wife and mother, did not escape the charge of complicity. Her son Caius was also among those suspected; but the more probable opinion is that Papirius Carbo was alone answerable for the crime. Carbo had been Scipio's most bitter enemy, and had endeavored to inflame the people against him as their enemy.

[2] Scipio had at that session of the senate proposed a measure in the utmost degree offensive to Caius Gracchus and his party. The law of Tiberius Gracchus would have disposed, at the hands of the commissioners appointed under it, of large tracts of land belonging to the Italian allies. Scipio's plan provided that such lands should be taken out of the jurisdiction of the commissioners, and that matters relating to them should be adjudged by a different board to be specially appointed, — a measure which would have been a virtual abrogation of the agrarian law. On this account he had his honorable escort home; and on this account, in all probability, he was murdered.

[1] The reference here is, of course, to the Epicureans. This school of philosophy had grown very rapidly, and numbered many disciples when this essay was written; but in the time of Laelius it had but recently invaded Rome, and Amafanius, who must have been his contemporary, was the earliest Roman writer who expounded its doctrines.

[2] This is sound reasoning, as these rites were annually renewed, and consisted in great part of the invocation of ancestors, — a custom which could not have originated if those ancestors were supposed to be utterly dead. This passage may remind the reader of the answer of Jesus Christ to the Sadducees, who denied that the Pentateuch contained any intimation of immortality. He quotes the passage in which God is represented as saying, "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob," and adds, "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living," implying that ancestors whom the writer of that record supposed to be dead could not have been thus mentioned.

[3] Latin *Magnam Graeciam*, — the name given to the cluster of Greek colonies that were scattered thick along the shore of Southern Italy. At Crotona, in Magna Graecia, Pythagoras established his school, and these colonies were the chief seat and seminary of his philosophy, which taught the immortality of the soul.

[1] The *De Republica* consists of dialogues on three successive days in Scipio's garden, and Scipio is the chief speaker. The work was supposed to be irrecoverably lost, with the exception of this Dream of Scipio, and a few fragments; but considerable portions of it were discovered in a palimpsest in 1822. The Dream of Scipio will be found in the latter part of this volume.

[1] Laelius went with Scipio on the campaign which resulted in the destruction of Carthage.

[2] Those referred to are probably Theseus and Peirithous, Achilles and Patroclus, Orestes and Pylades, Damon and Phintias, — all but the last, perhaps the last also, mythical.

[1] This was the boast and pride of the Greek sophists.

[1] Latin, *Neque id ad vivum reseco*, literally, nor in this matter do I cut to the quick.

[2] The Stoics of the more rigid type, who maintained that the wise man alone is good, but denied that the truly wise man had yet made his appearance on the earth.

[3] Latin, *agamus igitur pingui (ut aiunt) Minerva*; that is, with a less refined, a grosser wisdom, — a wisdom more nearly conformed to the sound, if somewhat crass, common-sense of the majority.

[1] It may be doubted whether this close conformity of opinion and feeling is essential, or even favorable, to friendship. The amicable comparison and collision of thought and sentiment are certainly consistent with, and often conducive to, the most friendly intimacy. Friends are not infrequently the complements, rather than the likenesses, of each other. Cicero and Atticus were as close friends as Scipio and Laelius; but they were at many points exceedingly unlike. Atticus had the tact and skill in worldly matters which Cicero lacked. Atticus kept aloof from public affairs, while Cicero was unhappy whenever he could not imagine himself as taking a leading part in them. Atticus was an Epicurean, and Cicero never loses an opportunity of attacking the Epicurean philosophy.

[1] Literally, *what is harder to say*.

[2] The sense of this sentence is somewhat overlaid by the rhetoric; yet it undoubtedly means that an absent friend is esteemed and honored in the person of the friend who not only loves him, but is regarded as representing him; that a poor friend enjoys the prosperity of his rich friend as if it were his own; that a weak friend feels his feebleness energized by the friend who in need will fight his battles for him; and that no man is suffered to lapse from the kind and reverent remembrance of those who see his likeness in the friend who keeps his memory green.

[1] Empedocles. Only a few fragments of his great poem are extant. His theory seems like a poetical version of Newton's law of universal gravitation. The analogy between physical attraction and the mutual attraction of congenial minds and souls has its record in the French word *aimant*, denoting *loadstone* or *magnet*.

[2] Or *host*; for the word *hospes* may have either meaning. It denotes not the fact of giving or receiving hospitality, but the permanent and sacred relation established between host and guest. This relation has lost much of its character in modern civilization, and I doubt whether it has a name in any modern European language.

[1] Among the many and conflicting legends about Orestes is that which seems to have been the theme of the lost tragedy of Pacuvius. Orestes, after avenging on his mother and her paramour the murder of his father, in order to expiate the guilt of

matricide, was directed by the Delphian oracle to go to Tauris, and to steal and transport to Athens an image of Artemis that had fallen from heaven. His friend Pylades accompanied him on this expedition. They were seized by Thoas the king, and Orestes, as principal offender, was to be sacrificed to Artemis. His sister, Iphigeneia, priestess of Artemis, contrived their escape, and the three arrived safe at Athens with the sacred image.

[1] Carneades, when on an embassy to Rome, for the entertainment of his Roman hosts, on one day delivered a discourse in behalf of justice as the true policy for the State, and on the next day delivered an equally subtle and eloquent discourse maintaining the opposite thesis. In the third Book of the *De Republica* Philus is made a “devil’s advocate,” and has assigned to him the championship of what we are wont to call a Machiavelian policy, and, in general, of the morally wrong as the politically right. He is represented as taking the part reluctantly, saying that one consents to soil his hands in order to find gold, and he professes to give the substance of the famous discourse of Carneades. Laelius answers him, and, so far as we can judge from the fragments of his reply that are extant, with the preponderance of reason, which Cicero intended should incline on the better side. There was perhaps a sublatent irony in making Philus play this part; for he was an eminently upright man. Valerius Maximus eulogizes him for his rigid integrity and impartiality, and relates that when at the expiration of his consulship he was sent to take command of the army against Numantia, he chose for his lieutenants Metellus and Pompeius, both his intensely bitter enemies, but the men best fitted for the service.

[1] *Amor, — amicitia.*

[1] Pyrrhus, after the only victory that he obtained over the Romans, treated his prisoners with signal humanity, and restored them without ransom. See *De Officiis*, i. 12.

[2] It may be doubted whether Hannibal deserved the reproach here implied. The Roman historians ascribe to him acts of cruelty no worse than their own generals were chargeable with; while nothing of the kind is related by either Polybius or Plutarch. It is certain that after the battle of Cannae he checked the needless slaughter of the Roman fugitives, and Livy relates several instances in which he paid funeral honors to distinguished Romans slain in battle. The intense hostility of the Romans to Carthage may have led to an unfair estimate of the great general’s character, and to the invention or exaggeration of reports to his discredit.

[1] The Epicureans.

[1] The construction of this entire section is in the subjunctive imperfect, depending on the *dicebat* in the second sentence. It has seemed to me that the direct form of construction which I have adopted is more consonant with the genius of our language.

[1] Had Cicero not been personating Laelius, who died long before the quarrel occurred, he would undoubtedly have cited the case of Servilius Caepio and Livius Drusus. They married each other’s sisters, and were united in the closest intimacy,

and seemingly in the dearest mutual love; but as rivals in bidding for a ring at an auction-sale they had their first quarrel, which grew into intense mutual hatred, led almost to a civil war between their respective partisans, and bore no small part in starting the series of dissensions which issued in the Social War, and the destruction of not far from three hundred thousand lives. I refer to this in a note, because it must have been fresh in Cicero's memory, and had annotation been the habit of his time, he would most assuredly have given it the place which I now give it.

[1] Spurius Cassius Viscellinus, the author of the earliest agrarian law, passed, but never carried into execution. He was condemned to death, — probably a victim to the rancorous opposition of the patrician order, of which he was regarded as a recreant member by virtue of his advocacy of the rights or just claims of the *plebs*. Cicero in early life was by no means so hostile to the principle underlying the agrarian laws and to the memory of the Gracchi, as he was after he had reached the highest offices in the gift of the people.

[1] Maelius, of the equestrian order, but of a plebeian family, obtained unbounded popularity with the *plebs* by selling corn at a low price, and giving away large quantities of it, in a time of famine. He was charged with seeking kingly power, and, on account of his alleged movements with that purpose, Cincinnatus was appointed dictator, and Maelius, resisting a summons to his tribunal, was killed by Ahala, his master of the horse. There seems to have been little evidence of his actual guilt.

[2] *Hospes*, guest, host, or both.

[1] He took refuge with Aristonicus, King of Pergamus, then at war with Rome; and when Aristonicus was conquered, Blossius committed suicide for fear of being captured by the Roman army.

[1] *Now*; that is, at the time at which this dialogue has its assumed date, immediately after Scipio's death. At that time Caius Gracchus was acting as a commissioner under his brother's agrarian law.

[1] Publius Cornelius Scipio Nasica, who took the lead of the Senate in the assassination of Tiberius Gracchus, and incurred such popular odium that he could not safely stay in Rome. He was sent on a fictitious mission to Asia to get him out of the way of the people, and, not daring to return, wandered with no settled habitation till his death at Pergamum not long before the assumed date of this dialogue.

[2] Carbo succeeded Tiberius Gracchus on the commission for carrying the agrarian law into execution, and was shortly afterward chosen Tribune. He then proposed a law, permitting a tribune to be re-elected for an indefinite number of years. This law was vehemently opposed by Scipio Africanus the Younger, and if he was really killed by Carbo, it was probably on account of his hostility to Carbo's ambitious schemes.

[3] The reference undoubtedly here is to the Papirian law which had been passed just before the assumed date of this dialogue, having been proposed and carried through

by (Caius *Papirius*) Carbo. By this law the use of the ballot was established in all matters of popular legislation.

[4] By which magistrates were to be chosen by ballot.

[5] By which the judges were to be chosen by ballot. With reference to the use of the ballot the parties in Rome were prototypes of like parties in England. The voice of the people was for the ballot, on the ground that it made suffrage free, as it could not be when employers or patrons could dictate to their dependents and make them suffer for failure to vote in favor of their own candidates or measures. The aristocratic party opposed the ballot as fatal to their controlling influence, which many sincere patriots, like Cicero, regarded as essential to the public safety, while patrician demagogues, intriguers, and office-seekers made it subservient to their own selfish or partisan interests.

[1] No one of his own fellow-countrymen.

[1] If the story of Coriolanus be not a myth, as Niebuhr supposes it to be, his suicide forms no part of the story as Livy tells it. The suicide of Themistocles is related as a supposition, not as an established fact. If he died by poison, as was said, it may have been administered by a rival in the favor of Artaxerxes.

[2] This is a virtual repetition of the law of friendship announced at the beginning of the previous section, and Cicero probably so intended it. He states the rule, then demonstrates its validity, then repeats it in an almost identical form, implying what the mathematician expresses when he puts at the end of a demonstration *Quod erat demonstrandum*.

[1] This passage seems to be a paraphrase of a passage in the *Hippolytus* of Euripides, in which the Nurse says: "It behooves mortals to form moderate friendships with one another, and not to the very marrow of the soul; and the affections of the mind should be held loosely, so that we may slacken or tighten them. That one soul should be in travail for two is a heavy burden." Euripides was regarded, and rightly, as no less a philosopher than a tragedian, and was not infrequently styled σοφός. Cicero here veils his thorough conversance with Greek literature and philosophy, and assumes the part of Laelius, in whose time, though Greek was not omitted in the education of cultivated men, the study was comparatively new, and was not carried to any great extent.

[1] The Epicureans.

[2] Latin, *mulierculae*, a diminutive, meaning, however, not *little women*, but denoting the feebleness and dependence of women in comparison with men. It must be confessed, too, that the term is sometimes used, and perhaps here, semi-contemptuously; for the Roman man felt an overweening pride in mere manhood.

[1] Here, undoubtedly, Cicero refers to the sterner type of Stoicism, which in his time was already obsolescent, and was yielding place to the milder, while no less rigid, ethics of which the *De Officiis* may be regarded as the manual.

[1] Latin, *redamare*, a word coined by Cicero, and used with the apology, *ut ita dicam*.

[2] Latin, *immunis*, literally, without office.

[1] Latin, *dum taxat ad tempus*; that is, while the homage rendered is in close contact with the occasion, — with the immunity or profit to be purchased by it.

[1] We have here, first, a figure drawn from pecuniary accounts, then one from liquid measure, then one from dry measure, — all designed to affix the brand of the most petty meanness on the (so-called) friendship which makes it a point neither to leave nor to brook a preponderance of obligation on either side.

[1] Latin, *inimiciorem* (that is, *in-amiciorem*) *amicitiae*.

[1] This at first sight appears like a license to yield up moral considerations to friendship, though the qualification, in the sequel, “not so far as to incur absolute dishonor,” and “virtue is by no means to be sacrificed,” seem saving clauses. But Cicero certainly has a right to be his own interpreter, since in the *De Officiis*, as I think, he explains in full, and in accordance with the highest moral principle, what he means here; and we have a double right to insist on this interpretation, first, because the *De Officiis* was written so very little while after the *De Amicitia*, and both at so ripe an age, that a change of opinion on important matters was improbable, and, secondly, because in the later treatise he expressly refers to the former as giving in full his views on friendship, and thus virtually sanctions that treatise. Now in the *De Officiis* he says: “A good man will do nothing against the State, or in violation of his oath or of good faith, for the sake of his friend, not even if he were a judge in his friend’s case. . . . He will yield so far to friendship as to wish his friend’s case to be worthy of succeeding, and to accommodate him as to the time of trial, within legal limits. But inasmuch as he must give sentence upon his oath, he will bear it in mind that he has God for a witness.” In another passage of the *De Officiis*, Cicero asserts, somewhat hesitatingly, yet on the authority of Panaetius as the strictest of Stoics, the moral rightfulness of “defending on some occasions a guilty man, if he be not utterly depraved and false to all human relations.” As in the passage on which I am commenting special reference is made to the peril of life or reputation, what Cicero contends for, as it seems to me, is the right of defending a guilty friend as an advocate, or of favoring him as to time and mode of trial as a judge. Aulus Gellius, in connection with this passage in the *De Amicitia*, tells the following story of Chilo, who was on some of the lists of the seven wise men. Chilo, on the last day of his life, said that the only thing that gave him uneasy thought, and was burdensome to his conscience, was that once when he and two other men were judges in a case in which a friend of his was on trial for a capital crime, he, in accordance with his own conviction, voted his friend guilty, but so influenced the minds of his two associates that they gave their voice for his acquittal.

[1] Latin, *colligere*, to collect, or gather up, one by one, the goodwill of each individual citizen.

[1] Latin, *signa et notas*, the marks and tokens by which the quality and worth of goats and sheep were estimated.

[1] Wisdom and goodness were identical with the Stoics.

[1] Latin, *subdifficilis*, which I should render *somewhat difficult*, did not Cicero treat the question as one that presents no difficulty. In the ancient tongues, as in our own, or even more than in our own, a word is often better defined by its use than in the dictionary.

[2] Some of the best Italian wines will not “bear keeping,” and it was probably true of more of them in Cicero’s time than now that wines are so often vitiated by strong alcoholic mixtures in order to preserve them. Cato, in his *De Re Rustica*, prescribes a method of determining whether the wine of any given vintage will “keep.”

[3] Aristotle quotes this as a proverbial saying, so that it must be of very great antiquity.

[1] Therefore uninviting; for mountain and forest had not in early time the charm which we find in them. Indeed, the love of nature uncultivated and unadorned is, for the most part, of modern growth.

[2] Quintus Fabius Maximus Aemilianus, the eldest son of Aemilius Paulus, and the adopted son of Fabius Maximus.

[1] Or, as it might be rendered by supplying a *se*, “so ought the humbler to do what they can to raise themselves.” Some of the commentators prefer this sense; but if Cicero meant *se*, I think that he would have written it.

[2] The brother of Publius Rupilius, not his own brother.

[1] Or rather, could not have borne the indispensable part which it was predicted that he should bear in the taking of Troy.

[1] Laelius intending to present himself as a candidate for the consulship, Scipio asked Pompeius whether he was going to be a candidate, and when he replied in the negative, asked him to use his influence in behalf of Laelius. This Pompeius promised, and then, instead of being true to his word, offered himself for the consulship, and was elected.

[1] Scipio and Metellus, though their intimacy was suspended for political reasons, held each other in the highest regard; and no person in Rome expressed profounder sorrow than Metellus for Scipio’s death, or was more warm in his praise as a man of unparalleled ability, worth, and patriotism.

[1] Latin, *verecundia*, an indefinite word; for it may have almost any good meaning. I have rendered it *respect*, because I have no doubt that it derives its meaning here from *verebuntur*, which I have rendered *reverence*, in the preceding sentence.

[1] What this proverb may have been we cannot determine with precision from its opposite; but the caution based upon it might remind one of our proverb about shutting the barn-door after the horse is stolen. The words, *acta agimus*, so terse that they can be translated only by a paraphrase, are probably the converse of the proverb, which may have been something like *non agenda sunt acta*.

[1] Latin, *liberaliter*; that is, worthily of a free man.

[2] Plutarch says that Timon had an associate, virtually a friend, not unlike himself, Apemantus, on whom he freely vented his spite and scorn for all the world beside, and that he also took a special liking to Alcibiades in his youth, perhaps as to one fitted and destined to do an untold amount of mischief.

[3] Latin, *nescio, quem*, I know not whom, or, of whom I am ignorant; that is, there may or may not have been such a man.

[1] Latin, *tam . . . ferreus, qui . . . ferre posset*, — an assonance which cannot be represented by corresponding English words.

[1] Terence, with whom Laelius was so intimate that he was reported, probably on no sufficient ground, to have aided in the composition of some of the plays that bear Terence's name. This verse is from the *Andria*.

[2] *Obsequium*.

[1] Latin, *multis nominibus*, which some commentators render "on many accounts," *nomen* being used familiarly in the sense of "account" with reference to matters of purchase and sale, debt and credit. But I think that Cicero brings in *adulatio*, *blanditia*, and *assentatio*, as so many synonyms of *obsequium*, intending to comprehend in his indictment whatever *alias* the one vice may assume.

[1] A parasite, in Terence's play of *Eunuchus*, from which these verses are quoted.

[1] Caius Papirius Carbo, the suspected murderer of Scipio.

[2] Latin, *influebat*, flowed in, a figure beautifully appropriate, but hardly translatable.

[3] There was an old law, which prohibited the re-election of a citizen to the same office till after an interval of ten years. In the law here referred to, Carbo — then Tribune — sought to provide for the re-election of tribunes as soon and as often as the people might choose, thus undoubtedly hoping to secure for himself a permanent tenure of office.

[1] The several pontifical colleges had been close corporations, filling their own vacancies. The law which Laelius defeated proposed transferring the election of priests to the people.

[2] It had been customary, when the Senate was in session, for him who harangued the people to face the temple where the Senate sat, thus virtually recognizing the supreme authority of that body.

[1] Latin, *milites gloriosi*. *Miles Gloriosus* is the title of one of the comedies of Plautus; and one of the stock characters of the ancient comedy is a conceited, swaggering, brainless soldier, who is perpetually boasting of his own valor and exploits, and who takes the most fulsome and ridiculous flattery as the due recognition of his transcendent merit. The verse here quoted is from Terence's *Eunuchus*. Thraso, a *miles gloriosus* (from whom is derived our adjective *thrasonical*), asks this question of Gnatho, the parasite, one of whose speeches is quoted in § 25. *Magnas* is the word in the question; *ingentes*, in the answer.

[1] *Epicleros*, a comedy by Caecilius Statius, of whose works only a few fragments, like this, are extant. Next to the braggart soldier, a credulous old man — generally a father — who could have all manner of tricks played upon him without detecting their import, was the favorite butt for ridicule in the ancient comedy.

[1] *Amor . . . amicitia . . . ab amando*.

[1] This may refer to their living together on their campaigns, journeys, and rural sojourns; but more probably to the fact that each felt as much at home in the other's house as in his own.

[1] Latin, *communis*. I do not find that this word has in Latin the sense of *cheap* and *mean* which our word *common* has. But here it cannot mean that Laelius and Scipio fed together, which is sufficiently said in the preceding *idem victus*. It must therefore denote such fare as was common to them with their fellow-citizens in general, and that is simple and not luxurious fare.

[1] The praenomen *Marcus* is given to Manilius in the manuscript of the *De Republica* discovered by Angelo Mai; but Manius is the reading in all previous authorities as to this special fragment.

[2] King of Numidia, — a country nearly identical in extent with the present province of Algeria. Its name defines its people, being derived from νομάδες, *nomads*. Its inhabitants were a wild, semi-savage cluster of tribes, black and white. Masinissa, though faithful to the Romans after he had convinced himself that theirs must be the ascendant star, was a crafty, treacherous, cruel prince, probably with enough of civilization to have acquired some of its vices, while he had not lost those of the savage.

[3] The elder Africanus had confirmed him in the possession of his own Numidia, and had added to it the adjoining kingdom of Cirta.

[4] The Numidians worshipped the heavenly bodies.

[1] The first verse of the *Annales* of Ennius was: — “In somnis mihi visus Homerus adesse poeta.”

[1] Tiberius Gracchus, whose mother, Cornelia, was the daughter of the elder Africanus.

[2] The Pythagoreans regarded seven as the number representing light, and eight as representing love. Seven was also a perfect number, as corresponding to the number of celestial orbits (including the sun, the moon, and the five known planets), the number of days in the quarter of the moon's revolution, and the number of the gates of sense (so to speak), mouth, eyes, ears, and nostrils. Eight was a perfect number, as being first after unity on the list of cubes; and Plato in the *Timaeus* speaks of eight celestial revolutions — including that of the earth — as unequal in duration and velocity, but as forming, in some unexplained way, a cycle synchronous with the year.

[1] See *De Amicitia* § 3, note.

[1] By adoption. The younger Africanus was adopted by a son of the elder.

[1] Here crops out the Pantheism — the non-detachment or semi-detachment of God from nature — which casts a penumbra around monotheism and the approaches to it, almost always, except under Hebrew and Christian auspices.

[2] The middle, as the fifth of the nine spheres, enclosed by four, and enclosing four.

[1] The lowest because central, and therefore farthest from the outermost or celestial sphere.

[2] Therefore without sound.

[3] Latin, *qui numerus* (that is, *septem*) *rerum omnium fers nodus est*. Literally, “which number is the knot of almost everything.” The more intelligible form in which I have rendered these words seems to me to convey their true meaning, and my belief to that effect is confirmed by reading what several commentators say about the passage.

[1] Latin, *maculis*, — a figure so bold in Cicero's time as to need an apology for its use, but now employed with no consciousness of its being otherwise than strictly literal.

[1] It hardly needs to be said, that the reference here is to the convex surface of the earth, on which those remote from one another may hold all the various angles to each other that are borne by the spokes of a wheel.

[1] The Stoics maintained that the visible universe would last through such a cycle as is here described, which in their conjectural astronomy comprehended many thousands of years, and then would be consumed by fire, or somehow be reduced to chaos, and a new universe take its place.

[1] Or, you will strive indeed.

[2] Latin, *principium*.

[1] From a first cause; the first cause, by hypothesis, having ceased to be.

[2] Latin, *inanimum*.

[3] Latin, *animal*. My renderings of *inanimum* and *animal* here, if not justified by any parallel instances (and I know not whether they are), are required by the obvious meaning of the sentence.