

Epicurus or Emerson?

The question between Epicurus and Emerson resolves itself at once into this:- Shall we care or shall we not care a damn? Epicurus as I am told by those who are better acquainted with his writings than I am say they have had ^{more} ~~him~~ did care a good many damages and declared things in general to be worthy of ~~some~~
~~that~~ such consideration. Emerson on the ~~one~~ other hand ~~I take to be~~ is the modern representative of a small but very ancient school of philosophers who declared that it wasn't worth while. The world with its usual impartiality has made Epicurean almost a term of reproach while it has testified its opinion of Emerson by the motto "Don't care comes to the gallows". Perhaps an Emersonian would have the score off the world by remarking to the hangman as he was being executed "I don't care a damn".

Naturally ~~of~~ ^{Anyhow} the whole question & is of very little consequence to the world. It goes on & is much too much wrapped up in its search for good things to eat & drink ~~any~~ to consider what the ultimate object of existence is. It goes on unconsciously as hard as it can & does its work and only now and then looks round to

administer a little practical common sense advice
 to those who sit aside & do nothing. Whether they say
 with one party that is the only thing to do or the other saying
 that ~~nothing~~^{that is} is worth doing & the other saying
 that it can enjoy things without all that trouble.

There is a great deal to be said for this position
~~of the~~ which it is
~~that the world's takes up and endeavours to force~~
 down everyone's throat. It is a good tonic for
 people with depressed minds who are only miserable
 the moment they have time for reflection, to have
 to go in to their office at nine o'clock every
 morning and assist the great incomprehensible machine
 called Trade to manufacture & sell its shoddy & good
 at the highest prices, and if they are fortunate enough
 never to have considered whether it is worth while
~~they had better be left alone &~~ until they have
 made their fortunes and stand when they will be
 to be very watched again for want of work.

But suppose that a man But so a small minority
 of the inhabitants of England and a large one of
 the inhabitants of this University do at some time
 suddenly wake up from this condition of unconsciousness
 and consider for a moment ask why they are going on as
 they do go on & what object they hope to gain by

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doing so. Whether it is worthwhile to work all day and almost all night to get food to live on or at best to be Lord Chancellor and have 3 carriages and a great deal of power. Or whether on the whole it would not be better to stop. and then decide whether it is worthwhile to go to heaven & if so whether there is such a place to go to. A man in such an unsatisfactory state of mind will probably find two acknowledged positions the Epicurean & the Mystical. either of which it ~~will~~ ^{may} be pretty easy to take natural for him to accept. The Epicurean & Mystic. or Epicurean. I think this antithesis is larger than that between Stoic and Epicurean. Stoicism being a somewhat limited phase of mysticism because though very similar because that deals chiefly

~~Suggests only one particular form of mysticism.~~

The mystic is abstract the Epicurean concrete. The mystic exists the Epicurean lives and acts. the former endavours to disregard Space & Time & live in Eternity the latter accepts time as all important. values time above all things. the former trifles circumstance the latter resizes ~~it~~ ^{to conquer it by obedience}. trifles it. ~~it~~ ^{to conquer it by obedience} My mysticism is impression & contemplative it is the worship of the Father - Epicureanism is expressive - it is the worship of the Son & Barabbas.

When the hypothetical individual wakes up I think he will probably become a mystic. He is lost in contemplation wonder at contemplating the sight to which his eyes are just opened and the processes of nature ~~and~~ ^{with} their ~~is~~ overwhelming significance and above all the processes of his own soul almost stun him. He cannot see anything clearly. ~~only~~ the broad ^{effects} masses of light and shade alone are visible ~~in the landscape~~ he sees no detail he cares for nothing else but the great general masses which he ~~whose outlines~~ he dimly sees. Nature it is true speaks ^{he has learned to the elements &} to him now in a new way - ~~it all means something~~ her language ~~to~~ ^{the more} he sees a connection in things before chaotically haphazard arranged as by mere chance, but every thing he sees suggests the whole outline and he cares for nothing but that. and he is still blind to the subtleties of proportion of light and shade & of colors. And ~~in proportion as~~ he grasps the whole scheme and is lost in ecstasy ^{before it} the more dimly does he feel the current of the world outside him - it is like voices of people standing by when one is ill, or bells heard far off. in hot weather.

To such an one expression becomes almost an absurdity why need he care to express things - will he not have to descend from his heaven of contemplation

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He is like St. Simon and do he is unwilling to come down from his pillars,
he prefers to stay at the top of his pillars

to do so - Why should he bother about metres or about
drawing or harmony. Or if in spite of his mysticism
the desire comes upon him strongly & he gives way his
^{correct.}
to poems with not scan nor his perspective be right or
his If he remains a mystic expression will become
impossible to Why should they be? he does not care
a damn. ^{And so it is} It is thus happens that scarcely any
poetry or art that has ever been produced is mystic
has been for a mystical in its origin & intention.
All the concrete forms & images which the artist
must of use are unsatisfactory & altogether inadequate
to his purpose

I think it ~~will~~ ^{may now} be the best thing that can happen
to our hypothetical friend to remain in this perpetual
state of wonder always rubbing his eyes and
never quite awake. But if it happens to the
fortune of but ^a few and they will always be
lost in their own heaven, invisible to the world unless
they happen to get in its way when they are
unaccountably obstinate & difficult to suppress.
because they will not consider the consequences.

So far Emerson but he may possibly cross the border land and come into the kingdom of Spiculae and this crossing of the border land is a very painful process to our hypothetical one. He is surprised after some time to find that the old same contemplation in which we saw him engrossed of the grand effects of the universe fails more & more to produce the same state of wondering ecstasy - he is no longer dazzled he feels that he ought to be; he knows he used to be and he is in consequence undesirable.

Then gradually if he has faith he gives up longing for the old shock + stimulating surprise and he finds that as he ceases to struggle against the growing familiarity then open out to him in all manner of beauties in the scene of which while he could only just see he had no conception. Now that world of sense which in old unconscious days tyramized so rudely so cruelly over him returns again no longer as of old incomprehensible dark a terrible full of strange things to be apprehended if need be with sacrifice. It returns to him full of meaning works all his intended thoughts to decipher. ~~P Glad to see his mystic days in affect~~

~~to him. But it is~~

And now that world of sense that gave so
uncertain a sound and looked so dim & shadowy when
he ^{first} says through it to the reality comes back to him.

But ~~it~~ comes back ~~if~~ quite changed from what it was
in his old unconscious days when it tyrannized over
him so rudely and terrified him with its ^{boastful} show of
reality. It is no longer full of incomprehensible, full of
dark strange shapes and awful beings to be appraised
if need be by sacrifice.

And now that scene whose outlines he has grasped &
grown familiar with ~~has to~~ ^{of the scene} studied in all its details.

Those great abstract outlines which he has now grasped
& learned by heart are to be filled in with colour &
light and shade and so he will set to work. and now
everything is significant & worth while & his old indifference
is gone. Time no longer seems an absurdity which may
~~be disregarded~~ While he was a mystic time seemed
an absurdity to be treated with contempt. now it seems
to him to have ^{real} significance in relation to strength
Now the realities of pleasure & pain are no longer
indistinct and his own efforts to lessen the latter
do not seem ~~too~~ unworthy but ~~that he must~~
& impudent to demand all his strength & concentration

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Walter Pater is quite right in making Marcus
Aurelius sit by calmly ~~at amidst all the~~
~~horrors of a gladiatorial show wrapt in his own~~
~~specious contemplations of an ideal state.~~ While the Marcus
the sensitive Epicurean ~~feels intensely~~^{tires sick with at} the sumptuous of it, and the
Roman society enters into the pleasures of the ~~body~~^{heart and soul.}

The fact is that the mystic & in disregarding pleasure &
pain for himself is accustomed to think them as of
no moment to others and in so far is in a lower
state of development ~~than~~ than the mass of mankind.

And now that this hypothetical person realizes once
more the importance of this life and of the world
of sense expression will be natural & necessary.

Now he can set to work once more. ~~for~~. the subtleties
of metre & rhythm & no longer to seem fatiguing.
Rather it is worth his while to spend any time
& over the minutest detail ~~because~~ not for its
own sake but for its relation with the whole
which is now always with him, no longer starting
~~& lost~~ but as it were a background to his whole
life.

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Effects of Fertilization?