

O Scipio (since you said that you with Lælius were accustomed to wonder at this), old age is tolerable to me, and not only not irksome, but even delightful. And if I am wrong in this, that I believe the souls of men to be immortal, I willingly delude myself: nor do I desire that this mistake, in which I take pleasure, should be wrested from me as long as I live; but if I, when dead, shall have no consciousness, as some narrow-minded philosophers imagine, I do not fear lest dead philosophers should ridicule this my delusion."

Nor can I omit the striking passage in the *Apology*, when pleading before the people of Athens, Socrates says, "Let us reflect in another way, and we shall see that there is great reason to hope that death is a good; for one of two things—either death is a state of nothingness and utter unconsciousness, or, as men say, there is a change and migration of the soul from this world to another. Now if you suppose that there is no consciousness, but a sleep like the sleep of him who is undisturbed even by the sight of dreams, death will be an unspeakable gain. For if a person were to select the night in which his sleep was undisturbed even by dreams, and were to compare with this the other days and nights of his life, and then were to tell us how many days and nights he had passed in the course of his life better and more pleasantly than this one, I think that any man, I will not say a private man, but even the great king will not find