

like to get the victory. It is better a great deal, to sleep in the quiet of peace than to be awakened from our repose by all the trumpets of conquest, and the loudest shouts of acclamation and praise. Suppose a man will say that which you know not to be true, let it pass, rather than dispute it with him, if he be a captious, proud, and quarrelsome person.

9. Another is, *not to scoff at any body*. For few can endure to hear themselves abused; or pass it by without an endeavour of severe revenge. The mention of this is sufficient, and the reason of it apparent.

10. It is no less prudent as well as pious, to *speak ill of no man*, except when it is necessary to do some good to others. This is one of the Psalmist's counsels for a contented life, "What man is he that desires life, and loveth many days, that he may see good? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips that they speak no guile," Psal. xxxiv. 12, 13. This is so true that it is safest not so much as to open our ears to others that speak evil of their neighbours. If we do not entertain their speeches, they recoil and wound the speaker; if we receive them they wound and trouble us. And indeed the tongue is wont to procure us so much mischief, that,

11. Wise men (let me add in the next place) have advised us, if we would live happily, to accustom ourselves to *speak sparingly*, at least among strangers; especially concerning great persons it is best not to speak at all.

This is a rule which Arrianus gave in his time when there was danger from such men. Words, though innocently meant, yet may be ill-interpreted. And it is better (as Cardan was wont to say) to pretermitt an hundred things worthy perhaps to be heard, than to say one that should not have been spoken. Again,

12. It is of great service to accustom ourselves to *be cheerful* and to find all the means we can to preserve ourselves in that temper. For we shall the more easily pass by a great many occasions of trouble without much notice, and feel the rest less heavy and more supportable. Sadness never did any body good nor lightened any man's calamity; but it is a new misery in itself. It is apt also to look on things otherwise than they are; for it sees them in the twilight, and not in the clear sunshine of our spirits. Seneca I think was in the right when he said, that of the two, one had better imitate Democritus than Heraclitus. For he that laughs at things, looks upon them but as slight and vain. And so they will be the more equally enjoyed or equally borne. There is more of humanity in it also to smile at things, than to frown and lament. He that laughs deserves better of mankind, because he leaves some good hope; whereas the other bewails that which he despairs of amending. But the best of all is to receive all accidents quietly with a smooth and placid temper, neither with much laughter nor with lamentations.