

A NEW ANNOTATED EDITION

MEDITATIONS

Marcus Aurelius

Translated by Charles Reginald Haines (1916)

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ABOUT THIS EDITION

This edition pairs Charles Reginald Haines’s 1916 Loeb Classical Library translation of the *Meditations*, which is in the public domain, with a modern annotation layer built for this edition. Haines’s translation, section numbering, and original footnotes are reproduced as he wrote them; nothing in his English text has been altered apart from the correction of transcription errors described under The Source Text. What follows describes what has been added or changed, and how. This volume is in two parts. Part One reproduces Haines’s edition: his preface, introduction, essay on Stoicism, and bibliography; the twelve books with his footnotes; and his back matter, comprising the speeches and sayings attributed to Marcus, his note on Marcus and the Christians, his two indexes, and his glossary of Greek terms. The Greek text of the 1916 volume is not reproduced. Within Part One, each of Haines’s footnotes begins with its number; the unnumbered paragraphs printed beneath many of them, in blue, are this edition’s commentary, described below. Part Two contains the additions original to this edition: Names in the Text, on the people Marcus names; a Key Terms Glossary of the Stoic vocabulary in Haines’s English; Haines’s Footnote Key, decoding his abbreviations; Sources Behind the Footnotes, on the works he cites and the works this edition’s notes were checked against; The World of Marcus Aurelius, on the places and events of his reign; Wars and Battles, on the conflicts that bear on the text; Family and Imperial Lineage; and a Book-by-Book Synopsis.

THE SOURCE TEXT

The English text, Haines’s footnotes, and his front and back matter are taken from Wikisource’s transcription of the 1916 volume, in which volunteers correct optical character recognition (OCR) of the printed pages against the page scans. That transcription was chosen over raw OCR of the kind found on the Internet Archive because of this proofreading. Proofreading on Wikisource proceeds page by page and is uneven, however, and some recognition errors survive in the transcription, concentrated in three places. Haines’s Greek is polytonic, with breathings, accents, and iota subscripts often stacked on a single letter, and recognition software trained mainly on Latin script misreads these marks or the letters beneath them: ω , an omega with iota subscript, can come out as ϕ . Footnotes that move between English, Latin, and Greek within a line lead the software to substitute look-alike letters from the wrong alphabet, as in a Cyrillic “cp.” standing in for the Latin “cp.,” an

error invisible on screen. And a misread Latin word that happens to form another real word passes both spell-checking and a proofreader's glance, and is detectable only by reading the sentence for its sense. Errors of all three kinds are also less likely to be caught by volunteers proofreading an English translation, many of whom do not read Greek. Every such error identified in the course of preparing this edition has been corrected where the intended reading is clear; corrections within Haines's footnotes are described under De-Abbreviating Haines's Footnotes. The Greek text of the *Meditations*, J. H. Leopold's Oxford Classical Text via the Perseus Digital Library, was used to confirm the book-and-section structure.

HAINES'S ENGLISH

Haines's older English is reproduced unchanged. Most of the *Meditations* is Marcus addressing himself in the second person singular, and Haines renders that singular "you" as "thou," "thee," "thy," and "thine," with the verb forms that go with them: "thou art," "thou hast," "thou wilt," "thou canst." Other forms are older spellings or usages, such as "shew" for "show," "to-morrow" for "tomorrow," and "hath" and "doth" for "has" and "does." The modern translations compared under Choosing a Translation render the text in current English.

DE-ABBREVIATING HAINES'S FOOTNOTES

Haines wrote his footnotes for a 1916 reader trained in classical scholarship, and leaned on abbreviations that reader would have recognized without a second thought: "cp." for "compare," "Capit." for the historian Capitolinus, "Vit. Mar." for the *Life of Marcus*, and so on. A century later, those abbreviations are the main obstacle between a general reader and a footnote that is otherwise perfectly clear. Rather than rewriting or paraphrasing Haines's footnotes, this edition expands the abbreviations themselves, spelling out authors, titles, and Latin shorthand in full while leaving everything else — the numbering, the citations, the substance of each note — exactly as printed. A footnote reading "Capit. *Vit. Mar.* vi. 1" becomes "Capitolinus, *Life of Marcus* vi. 1"; nothing is added, and nothing is removed.

A few conventions governed this pass across all twelve books:

- Numbering is untouched. Footnote numbers, section references, and citation formats (roman numerals, "§" clause markers, and the like) are reproduced exactly as Haines printed them. Only the words identifying an author, title, or Latin term are expanded.

- Greek and direct quotations are untouched. Any Greek text or directly quoted Latin passage in a footnote is reproduced as printed. Only Haines’s own abbreviated English and Latin shorthand — the citation apparatus around a quotation, not the quotation itself — is expanded.
- Ambiguous references were checked, not guessed. Haines sometimes cites two different people under the same short form — “Dio” for both Cassius Dio and Dio Chrysostom, “Zeno” for both the Stoic founder and the much earlier Zeno of Elea, “Arist.” for both Aristotle and Aristophanes depending on the work named. Each of these was resolved by checking which author actually wrote the work cited, not by pattern-matching the abbreviation.
- Disputed authorship is noted, not flattened. A handful of works Haines cites under one name are now attributed differently by modern scholars — the *Epitome de Caesaribus* traditionally credited to Aurelius Victor, or the *De Placitis Philosophorum* traditionally bound with Plutarch’s works. These are rendered with the traditional attribution marked as such (“attributed to...”) rather than stated as settled fact.
- Transcription artifacts were corrected. A small number of footnotes contain characters that are plainly scanning or transcription errors rather than anything Haines wrote — a Cyrillic “c” and “p” standing in for the Latin “c” and “p” of “cp.,” for instance. These are corrected as errors, not treated as part of the text being decoded.
- Bare cross-references gained “See.” Many footnotes are nothing but a string of section numbers with no introductory word at all. Where a footnote is entirely a bare cross-reference like this, “See” was added for readability; nothing else about the footnote was changed.

In total, 403 of the 812 footnotes across the twelve books of the *Meditations* contained an abbreviation and were expanded under these rules. The same expansion was applied to the footnotes of Haines’s Introduction, his essay on Stoicism, the Speeches, the Sayings (with their source headings), and his Note on the Christians. His Glossary and two Indexes, compact reference lists, keep his abbreviations as printed; Haines’s Footnote Key decodes them.

HAINES’S CROSS-REFERENCES

A large share of Haines’s footnotes consist only of references to other places in the *Meditations*, in the form book and section: a lowercase roman numeral for the book, a number for the section, and a “§” for a clause within a long section, so that “ix. 4, 38” points to Book IX, sections 4 and 38, and “i. 17, § 6” to the sixth clause of Book I, section 17. Following the usual practice of classical commentaries, such a reference marks a related passage without saying how it is related. Most often the passage restates the same idea, sometimes in nearly the same words: “The wrong rests with him” in IV.26 is referred to “If he did wrong, with him lies the evil” in IX.38. A reference may instead

point to a recurring image, to another use of the same Greek word, or to another appearance of the same person. Where the other passage qualifies or runs against the one annotated, Haines says so in words (“but see,” “contrast”); a bare reference does not signal disagreement. The “See” added in this edition before bare references directs the reader to the passage; like Haines’s references themselves, it leaves the relation unstated.

HAINES’S BIBLICAL PARALLELS

Fifty-three of Haines’s footnotes cite the Bible, most often Paul’s letters and the Gospels, and at times the wisdom books of the Old Testament and Apocrypha. Like his internal cross-references, these mark a parallel, a passage in which the same idea appears: Marcus’s “Nothing befalls anyone that he is not fitted by nature to bear” (V.18) is set beside 1 Corinthians 10:13, “God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able.” They do not claim that Marcus knew Christian writings. The practice has a long history in editions of the *Meditations*: Thomas Gataker, the Puritan clergyman whose 1652 edition Haines cites throughout, filled his commentary with parallels from Scripture as well as from classical authors, and Haines wrote for readers to whom the King James Bible was the most familiar body of moral writing.

THE FOOTNOTE COMMENTARY

Beyond de-abbreviating Haines’s own footnotes, this edition adds a layer of commentary. Many footnotes carry an additional paragraph directly beneath Haines’s own note, setting out what the note cites: who wrote each source and when, what the cited passage contains, what a Greek or Latin word means, and, at first mention, who a person was or where a place lay. The commentary adds exposition only; it does not restate the footnote or offer interpretation. It is unlabeled and unnumbered, set in blue immediately under the footnote it addresses; each of Haines’s footnotes begins with its number.

PART ONE — HAINES'S 1916 EDITION

The translation, footnotes, front matter, and back matter of the 1916 Loeb volume.

PREFACE

The Greek text of this book is often difficult and in many places corrupt beyond cure, but no trouble has been spared to make the translation as accurate and idiomatic as possible. I have preferred to err, if error it be, on the side of over-faithfulness, because the physiognomy of the book owes so much to the method and style in which it is written. Its homeliness, abruptness, and want of literary finish (though it does not lack rhetoric) are part of the character of the work, and we alter this character by rewriting it into the terse, epigrammatic, staccato style so much in vogue at the present day. Another reason for literalness is that it makes a comparison with the Greek, printed beside it, easier for the unlearned. When a work has been translated so often as this one, it is difficult to be original without deviating further from the text, but I have not borrowed a phrase, scarcely a word, from any of my predecessors. If unconscious coincidences appear, it remains only to say *Pereant qui ante nos nostra dixerint!* Numerous references (such as have proved so invaluable for the due understanding of the Bible) and good indices have always been greatly wanted in the translations of this work, and I have taken pains to supply the want. For a better understanding of the character of Marcus I have added to the *Thoughts* translations of his *Speeches* and *Sayings*, with a Note on his attitude towards the Christians (in which I am glad to find myself in complete agreement with M. Lemerrier). A companion volume on the Correspondence with Fronto will contain all his extant Letters. In conclusion my best thanks are due to Messrs. Teubner for permission to use their text as the basis of the revised one here printed, to Professors Leopold and Schenkl for advice and help on various points, and, last but not least, to my predecessors in the translation of this “Golden Book.”

C. R. HAINES.
Godalming, 1915.

INTRODUCTION

It is not known how this small but priceless book of private devotional memoranda¹ came to be preserved for posterity. But the writer that in it puts away all desire for after-fame has by means of it attained to imperishable remembrance. As Rénan has said, “tous, tant que nous sommes, nous portons au cœur le deuil de Marc Aurèle comme s’il était mort d’hier.” Internal evidence proves that the author was Marcus Antoninus, emperor of Rome 7 March 161 to 17 March 180, and notes added in one MS between Books I and II and II and III shew that the second Book was composed when the writer was among the Quadi on the Gran, and the third at Carnuntum (Haimburg). The headquarters of Marcus in the war against the barbarians were at Carnuntum 171–173, and we know that the so-called “miraculous victory” against the Quadi was in 174.² But Professor Schenkl has given good reasons for thinking that the first book was really written last and prefixed as a sort of introduction to the rest of the work.³ It was probably written as a whole, while the other books consist mostly of disconnected jottings. The style throughout is abrupt and concise, and words have occasionally to be supplied to complete the sense. There is here no reasoned treatise on Ethics, no exposition of Stoic Philosophy, such as the *sextarum ardua ac perocculta*⁴ or the *ordo praeceptionum*,⁵ on which Marcus is said to have discoursed before he set out the last time for the war in 178, but we have a man and a ruler taking counsel with himself, noting his own shortcomings, excusing those of others, and “whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honourable, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are pure,” exhorting his soul to think on these things. Never were words written more transparently single-hearted and sincere. They were not merely written, they were lived. Those who accuse Marcus of pharisaism wilfully mistake his character and betray their own. Very noticeable is the delicacy of the author’s mind and the restrained energy of his style. He eschews all the windflowers of speech, but the simplicity, straight-forwardness, and dignity of his thoughts lend an imperial nobility to his expression of them. There is a certain choiceness and even poetry in his words which amply condone an occasional roughness and technicality of phrase. Striking images are not infrequent, and such a passage as Book II, 2 is unique in ancient literature. This is not a book of confessions, and comparatively few allusions to personal incidents are to be found except in the first book, while an air of complete aloofness and detachment pervades the whole. The author expressly disclaims all *δριμύτης* or originality and acuteness of intellect, and there is a good deal of repetition unavoidable

in the nature of the work, for “line upon line” and “precept upon precept” are required in all moral teaching.

Of his two great Stoic predecessors Marcus has no affinity with Seneca. He certainly knew all about him and they have many thoughts⁶ in common, but Seneca’s rhetorical flamboyance, his bewildering contradictions, the glaring divergence between his profession and his practice have no counterpart in Marcus. Epictetus the Phrygian slave was his true spiritual father, but we do not find in the Emperor the somewhat rigid didacticism and spiritual dogmatism of his predecessor. Marcus is humbler and not so confident. The hardness and arrogance of Stoicism are softened in him by an infusion of Platonism and other philosophies.⁷ With the Peripatetics he admits the inequality of faults. His humanity will not cast out compassion as an emotion of the heart.⁸ His is no cut and dried creed, for he often wavers and is inconsistent. Call not his teaching ineffectual. He is not trying to teach anyone. He is reasoning with his own soul and championing its cause against the persuasions and impulses of the flesh. How far did he succeed? “By nature a good man,” says Dio, “his education and the moral training he imposed upon himself made him a far better one.”⁹ “As was natural to one who had beautified his soul with every virtuous quality he was innocent of all wrong-doing.”¹⁰ The wonderful revelation here given of the *ἀσκησις* of the spiritual athlete in the contests of life is full of inspiration still even for the modern world. It has been and is a source of solace and strength to thousands, and has helped to mould the characters of more than one leader of men, such as Frederick the Great¹¹ Maximilian of Bavaria, Captain John Smith, the saviour of Virginia, and that noble Christian soldier, General Gordon. It was but the other day, on the fiftieth anniversary of Italian Unity, that the King of Italy, speaking¹² on the Capitol, referred to Marcus “as the sacred and propitiatory image of that cult of moral and civil law which our Fatherland wishes to follow,” a reference received with particular applause by those who heard it. Whoever rescued the MS of the “Thoughts” on the death of their author in 180, whether it was that noble Roman, Pompeianus, the son-in-law of Marcus, or the high-minded Victorinus, his lifelong friend, we seem to hear an echo of its teaching in the dying words of Cornificia, his possibly last surviving daughter, when put to death by Caracalla in 215: “O wretched little soul of mine, imprisoned in an unworthy body, go forth, be free!”¹³ It was doubtless known to Chryseros the freedman and nomenclator of Marcus who wrote a history of Rome to the death of his patron,¹⁴ and to the Emperor Gordian I., for the latter in his youth, soon after the Emperor’s death, wrote an epic poem on Pius and Marcus. He also married Fabia Orestilla, the latter’s

granddaughter through Fadilla (probably) and Claudius Severus. As their eldest son Gordian II. had sixty children, the blood of Marcus was soon widely diffused.

The first direct mention of the work is about 350 A.D. in the Orations of the pagan philosopher Themistius, who speaks of the *παραγγέλματα* (precepts) of Marcus. Then for 550 years we lose sight of the book entirely, until, about 900, the compiler of the dictionary, which goes by the name of Suidas, reveals the existence of a MS of it by making some thirty quotations, taken from books I, III, IV, V, IX, and XI.¹⁵ He calls the book (*συγγραφή*) an “*ἀγωγή* (*a directing*) of his own life by Marcus the Emperor in twelve books.” About the same time Arethas, a Cappadocian bishop, writing to his metropolitan, speaks of the scarcity of this *μεγαλωφελέστατον βιβλίον*, and apparently sends him a copy of it.¹⁶ He also refers to it three times in scholia to Lucian, calling it *τὰ εἰς ἑαυτὸν ἠθικά*. Two similar references are found in the scholia to Dio Chrysostom, possibly by the same Arethas.

Again a silence of 250 years, after which Tzetzes, a grammarian of Constantinople, quotes passages from Books IV. and V. attributing them to Marcus. About 150 years later (1300 A.D.) the ecclesiastical historian, Nicephorus Callistus (iii. 31) writes that Marcus “composed a book of instruction for his son, full of universal (*κοσμικῆς*, ? secular) experience and wisdom.” About this very time Planudes, a monk of Constantinople, may have been engaged in compiling the anthology of extracts from various authors,, including Marcus and Aelian, which has come down to us in twenty-five or more MSS dating from the fourteenth to the sixteenth century.¹⁷ They are practically of no help in re-establishing the text,¹⁸ and contain in all forty-four extracts from books IV.–XII.

Our present text is based almost entirely upon two MSS, the Codex Palatinus (P) first printed in 1558 by Xylander but now lost, which contains the whole work, and the Codex Vaticanus 1950 (A) from which about forty-two lines have dropped out by accidental omissions here and there. Two other MSS give some independent help to the text, but they are incomplete, the Codex Darmstadtinus 2773 (D) with 112 extracts from books I.–IX. and Codex Parisinus 319 (C) with twenty-nine extracts from Books I.–IV., with seven other MSS derived from it or from the same source. Apart from all these there is but one other MS (Monacensis 323) which contains only fourteen very short fragments from Books II., III., IV., and VII.

Translations of this Book have been made into Latin, English, French, Italian, German, Spanish, Norse, Russian, Czech, Polish and Persian. In England alone twenty-six editions of the work

appeared in the seventeenth century, fifty-eight in the eighteenth, eighty-one in the nineteenth, and in the twentieth up to 1908 thirty more.¹⁹

The English translations are as follows.—

1. *Meric Casaubon*.—“Marcus Aurelius Antoninus. His Meditations concerning himself: Treating of a Naturall Man’s Happinesse; wherein it consisteth, and of the Meanes to attain unto it. Translated out of the original Greeke with Notes by Meric Casaubon B.D., London, 1634.”

This, the first English translation,, albeit involved and periphrastic, is not without dignity or scholarship, though James Thomson in 1747 says that “it is everywhere rude and unpolished and often mistakes the author’s meaning,” while the Foulis Press Translators of 1742 find fault with its “intricate and antiquated style.” It may be conveniently read in Dr. Rouse’s new edition of 1900, which also contains some excellent translations of letters between Fronto and Marcus.

2. *Jeremy Collier*.—“The Emperor Marcus Antoninus His Conversation with Himself. Translated into English by Jeremy Collier M.A., London 1701.” A recent edition of it by Alice Zimmern is in the Camelot Series, but it hardly deserved the honour. We may fairly say of it that it is too colloquial. James Thomson in 1747 speaks of it as “a very coarse copy of an excellent original,” and as “bearing so faint a resemblance to the original in a great many places as scarcely to seem taken from it.” R. Graves in 1792 remarks that it “abounds with so many vulgarities, anilities and even ludicrous expressions . . . that one cannot now read it with any patience.” The comment of G. Long in 1862 is much the same, but it called forth an unexpected champion of the older translator in Matthew Arnold, who says: “Most English people, who knew Marcus Aurelius before Mr. Long appeared as his introducer, knew him through Jeremy Collier. And the acquaintance of a man like Marcus Aurelius is such an imperishable benefit that one can never lose a peculiar sense of obligation towards the man who confers it. Apart from this however, Jeremy Collier’s version deserves respect for its genuine spirit and vigour, the spirit and vigour of the age of Dryden. His warmth of feeling gave to his style an impetuosity and rhythm which from Mr. Long’s style are absent.” The real defect of Collier as a translator, adds Arnold, is his imperfect acquaintance with Greek.

3. *James Moor and Thomas Hutcheson*.—“The Meditations of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius Antoninus. Newly translated from the Greek with notes.” Glasgow: The Foulis Press, 1742. Certainly the best translation, previous to Long’s, for accuracy and diction, and superior to that in

spirit. Dr. Rendall (1898) praises it as “the choicest alike in form and contents.” R. Graves, however, in 1792, while allowing its fidelity, had pronounced it “unnecessarily literal,” and shewing a “total neglect of elegance and harmony of style.” A very satisfactory revision of this translation appeared in 1902, made by G. W. Chrystal.

4. *Richard Graves*.—“The Meditations of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius Antoninus. A New Translation from the Greek Original, with notes.” By R. Graves, M.A., Rector of Claverton, Somerset. Bath, 1792.

A fairly accurate and smooth version of no especial distinction, but superior to most of its predecessors. An abbreviated edition of this was published at Stourport without any date by N. Swaine with the title: “The Meditations of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius Antoninus Philosophus collated with and abridged from the best translations.”

5. *George Long*.—“The Thoughts of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius Antoninus.” Translated by George Long. London., 1862. This may be looked upon as in some sense the “authorized version” and it is from it that most people know their Marcus Aurelius. For nearly forty years it was master of the field. M. Arnold, though finding fault with the translator as not idiomatic or simple enough and even pedantic, yet gives him full credit for soundness, precision, and general excellence in his translation. The author tells us that he deliberately chose a ruder style as better suited to express the character of the original, and he was right, for in spite of Arnold’s dictum to the contrary the book of Marcus has a “distinct physiognomy,” and here, more than is usually the case, *le style cest l’homme*.

6. *Hastings Crossley*.—“The Fourth Book of the Meditations of Marcus Aurelius.” A revised text with Translation and commentary by Hastings Crossley, M.A., London, 1882. This specimen makes us regret that the author did not publish the whole version which he tells us was in MS. The book contains an interesting appendix on the relations of Fronto and Marcus.

7. *G. H. Rendall*.—“Marcus Aurelius Antoninus to Himself: An English Translation with Introductory Study on Stoicism and the Last of the Stoics.” By Gerald H. Rendall, M.A., Litt.D., London, 1898. A second edition with a different introduction was published in 1901.

This version has been pronounced by many critics the best rendering of the *Thoughts*. Its accuracy, ability, and liveliness are unquestionable.

8. *John Jackson*.—"The Meditations of Marcus Aurelius Antoninus." Translated by John Jackson. With an introduction by Charles Bigg. Oxford, 1906.

This version is the newest comer, and is a worthy presentment of the *Thoughts*. There are useful notes, but some very bold alterations of the text have been followed in the English version. The book would have been more acceptable without the introduction by Dr. Bigg, which gives a most unfair and wholly inaccurate view of the life and character of Marcus.

Besides the above versions there are several abridged translations of the *Thoughts*, which need not be enumerated here. But the two chief ones seem to be by B. E. Smith, published by the Century Company, New York, 1899, and by J. E. Wilson, London, 1902.

1. Marcus may be referring in Bk. III. 14 to this his own work as *ὑπομνημάτια*
2. See Dio, 71. 8.
3. For a discussion of the chronology of the work, see *Journal of Philology*, vol. xxiii., No. 66, 1914.
4. Aurelius Victor, *On the Caesars* xvi. 9.
5. Vulcarius Gallicanus, *Life of Avidius Cassius* iii. 7.
6. Marcus never quotes him by name, and though there are plenty of similarities between the two writers in thought, and even in expression, it is not certain that there is a single case of borrowing. Most of the resemblances are based on commonplaces; see, however, Seneca, *Epistles* 77 = vi. 2; *Epistles* 65 = xi. 10; *On Providence* 4 = iv. 1; *Epistles* 36 = v. 18; *On Benefits* vii. 31 = xi. 18, 9; *Epistles* 74 = v. 8, § 3; *Epistles* 28 = v. 16.
7. Even Epicurus is mentioned with approval, as he is also by Seneca.
8. Compare Epictetus's *Discourses* iii. 24, 43; *Manual* 16, etc.
9. Dio 71. 35, § 6.
10. Aristides *ad Reg.* § 106 (Jebb).
11. Who, however, in the field of morality cannot be said to have profited by its lessons.
12. March, 1911.
13. See Dio's *Fragments*, Dindorf's edition, v. 214.
14. 8 Theoph. *ad Autol.* iii. 27.
15. See Index, under "Suidas."
16. See A. Sonny in *Philol.* 54. 182f.
17. One (Vat. 2231) has just come to light.

18. Except Codex Monacensis 2 = Codex Hoeschelianus.
19. See J. W. Legg, *A Bibliography of Marcus Aurelius*, 1908.

STOICISM

Stoicism was so called from the Colonnade¹ at Athens, where Zeno about 300 b.c. first taught its doctrines. More religious in character than any other Greek philosophy, it brought a new moral force into the world. It put intellectual speculation more into the background, and carried the moral attitude of the Cynics further into the domain of right conduct. Oriental fervour was in it grafted on Greek acumen, for Zeno was a Phoenician Greek of Cyprus, and Chrysippus, the St. Paul who defined and established² Stoicism, a Cilician like the Apostle.

In spite of its origin Stoicism proved wonderfully adapted to the practical Roman character, and under the tyranny of the early Caesars it formed the only impregnable fortress³ of liberty for the noblest Romans. It reached its culmination, and found its highest exponents as a living creed in the courtier Seneca, the Phrygian slave Epictetus, and the emperor Marcus Antoninus.

Stoic philosophy consisted of Logic, Physics, and Ethics.⁴ Logic, which comprised Dialectics and Rhetoric, was the necessary instrument of all speculation;⁵ but Marcus found no satisfaction in either branch of it, nor in such Physics as dealt with Meteorology.⁶

The key-note of Stoicism was *Life according to Nature*, and Marcus was converted to the pursuit of this possibly by Sextus the Boeotian.⁷ By “Nature” was meant the controlling Reason of the Universe.⁸ A study of Physics was necessary for a proper understanding of the Cosmos and our position in it, and thus formed the scientific basis of philosophy; but it was regarded as strictly subordinate, and merely a means to an end.

Though he confesses to some disappointment in his progress therein,⁹ there is no doubt that Marcus was well versed in Stoic Physics. Fully recognizing the value of a scientific spirit of enquiry,¹⁰ he describes it as a characteristic of the rational soul to “go the whole Universe through and grasp its plan”,¹¹ affirming that “no man can be good without correct notions as to the Nature of the Whole and his own constitution.”¹²

To the Stoics the Universe—God and Matter—¹³was One, all Substance, unified by the close sympathy¹⁴ and interdependence of the parts, forming with the rational Power, that was co-

extensive with it, a single entity. The Primary Being, by means of its informing Force,¹⁵ acting as igneous or atmospheric current¹⁶ upon inert matter, evolved out of itself a Cosmos, subsequent modifications being by way of consequence.¹⁷ This Universe is periodically destroyed by fire,¹⁸ thus returning again to its pristine Being, only however to be created anew¹⁹ on the same plan even to the smallest details; and so on for ever.

God and Matter being thus indistinguishable, for all that was not God in its original form was God in an indirect sense as a manifestation of him, the Stoic creed was inevitably pantheistic. It was also materialistic; for the Stoics, allowing existence to nothing incorporeal, by means of their strange theory of air-currents²⁰ inherent even in abstract things such as virtue, rendered not only them but God himself corporeal, terming him the “perfect living Being.”²¹ But their conceptions on this point seem to be really irreconcilable, for while on the one hand they speak of the Supreme Power by such names as Zeus, Cause or Force, Soul, Mind, or Reason of the Universe, Law or Truth, Destiny, Necessity, Providence, or Nature of the Whole, on the other they identify it with such terms as Fiery Fluid, or Heat, Ether (warm air) or Pneuma (atmospheric current).

Other physical theories were borrowed from Heraclitus, and Marcus constantly alludes to these, such as the “downward and upward” round of the elements²² as they emanate from the primary Fire, air passing into fire, fire into earth, earth into water and so back again,²³ and the famous doctrine that all things are in flux.²⁴

Man consists of Body, Soul, Intelligence, or Flesh, Pneuma, and the Ruling Reason.²⁵ But the *ψυχή* (soul) can be looked upon in two ways, as *πνευμάτιον*, an exhalation from blood,²⁶ and as *ἡ νοερά, ἡ λογικὴ ψυχή*, *i.e.* the ruling Reason. It is the latter, a “morsel” or “efflux”²⁷ from the Divine, which constitutes the real man. Marcus often speaks of this rational nature²⁸ of a man as his daemon, or genius enthroned within him,²⁹ and makes the whole problem of life depend upon how this Reason treats itself. As all that is rational is akin, we are formed for fellowship with others and, the universe being one, what affects a part of it affects the whole. Reason is as a Law to all rational creatures, and so we are all citizens of a World-state.³⁰ In this cosmopolitanism the Stoics approached the Christian view, ethics being divorced from national politics and made of universal application. It was no cloistered virtue the Stoics preached, showing how a man can save his own soul, but a practical positive goodness;³¹ though it cannot be denied that the claims of *αὐτάρκεια* (the self-sufficiency of the Inner Self) and *κοινωνία* (social interdependence of parts of a common

whole) are not easy to reconcile. It is certain, however, that the Stoic admission of slaves into the brotherhood of man had an ameliorating effect upon slavery, and the well-known bias of Marcus in favour of enfranchisement may well have been due to his creed.³²

From virtue alone can happiness and peace of mind result, and virtue consists in submission to the higher Power and all that he sends us, in mastery over our animal nature, in freedom from all perturbation,³³ and in the entire independence of the Inner Self. Since life is Opinion,³⁴ and everything but what we think it, the vital question is what assent we give to the impressions of our senses. "Wipe out imagination," says Marcus, time after time, "and you are saved."³⁵ "Do not think yourself hurt and you remain unhurt."³⁶ He longs for the day when he shall cease to be duped by his impressions and pulled like a puppet by his passions,³⁷ and his soul shall be in a great calm. But virtue must also show itself, like faith, in right actions. It means not only self-control but justice and benevolence to others and piety towards the Gods.

By the Gods Marcus sometimes means the controlling Reason,³⁸ sometimes, apparently, Gods in a more popular sense, such as are even visible to the eyes.³⁹ He often puts the alternative God (or Gods) and Atoms,⁴⁰ but himself firmly believes that there are immortal Gods,⁴¹ who care for mankind, live with them, and help even bad men.⁴² He bids himself call upon them, follow them,⁴³ be their minister, live with them and be likened to them.⁴⁴ They too are part of the Cosmos and subject to its limitations, and by our own loyalty to Destiny we contribute to the welfare and permanence of God himself. But a predestined Order of things involved fatalism, and the Stoics were hard put to it to maintain the complete freedom of the will.

Unfortunately the Stoic scheme left no room for Immortality. At most a soul could only exist till the next conflagration, when it must be absorbed again into the Primary Being. Seneca indeed, who was no true Stoic, speaks in almost Christian terms of a new and blissful life to come,⁴⁵ but Epictetus turns resolutely, and Marcus with evident reluctance, from a hope so dear to the human heart. In one place the latter even uses the expression "another life,"⁴⁶ and finds it a hard saying that the souls of those who were in closest communion with God should die for ever when they die.⁴⁷ But he does not repine. He is ready for either fate, extinction or transference elsewhere.⁴⁸

One more question remains, that of Suicide. The Stoics allowed this, if circumstances made it impossible for a man to maintain his moral standard.⁴⁹ The door is open, but the call must be very

clear.⁵⁰ Still the act seems quite inconsistent with the doctrine of submission to Destiny, and the classing of things external as indifferent.

In this brief sketch of Stoicism much has perforce been omitted, and much may seem obscure, but Marcus confesses that “things are in a manner so wrapped up in mystery that even the Stoics have found them difficult to apprehend.”⁵¹ This at least we know, that Stoicism inspired some of the noblest lives ever lived, left its humanizing impress upon the Roman Law, which we have inherited, and appeals in an especial way to some of the higher instincts of our nature.

1. Στοὰ ποικίλη.
2. εἰ μὴ γὰρ ἦν Χρύσιππος, οὐκ ἂν ἦν Στοά, an anonymous verse quoted by Diogenes Laertius, *Life of Chrysippus* 5.
3. See viii. 41, 48.
4. See viii. 13.
5. See Epictetus's *Discourses* i. 17.
6. See i. 7, 17, § 4; vii. 67; viii. 1.
7. i. 9, § 1, 17, § 5. But Rusticus (i. 7) and Maximus (i. 15) were his chief instructors in Stoicism.
8. See vii. 11.
9. See vii. 67.
10. See x. 11.
11. See xi. 1, 2.
12. See viii. 52; xi. 5.
13. αἴτιον and ὄλγ.
14. See iv. 27; v. 26; ix. 9, § 3.
15. σπερματικός λόγος (used by Justin of Christ), iv. 14, 21; vi. 24; ix. 1, near the end.
16. πνεῦμα. This set up tension (τόνος), resulting in expansion and contraction (compare our attraction and repulsion) and gave to things shape, quality, and relation.
17. See vi. 36, § 2; ix. 1, § 4.
18. v. 13, 32; x. 7. The doctrine of ἐκπύρωσις was Heraclitan. Compare 2 Peter iii. 7; Justin Martyr's *Apology* i. 20; ii. 7.
19. παλιγγενεσία, vii. 19; xi. 1. Compare St. Matthew xix. 28.
20. πνεύματα.
21. See iv. 40; x. 1.

22. *ἄνω κάτω*. vi. 17; ix. 28.
23. See iv. 46.
24. *ἅπαντα βεῖ*, ii. 17; iv. 3, near the end, 36; v. 10; vi. 15; vii. 25; ix. 19; x. 7.
25. See iii. 16; xii. 3.
26. v. 33; vi. 15, or *ζωή*, an inhalation from the air.
27. See ii. 1; ii. 4; v. 27.
28. See xi. 1.
29. ii. 17; iii. 7, 16; v. 27, etc., and he calls this God, iii. 5; v. 10; xii. 26.
30. See iv. 4.
31. See vi. 30.
32. See *Digest*, xxviii. 4. 3.
33. *ἀταραξία*, ix. 31.
34. See iv. 3; vii. 17; xi. 18, § 7, etc.
35. See xii. 25.
36. See iv. 7.
37. See ii. 2; iii. 16; vi. 16, etc.
38. xii. 5; vi. 44; viii. 17; iii. 3; ix. 1. He even calls the Supreme Nature *πρεσβυτάτη τῶν θεῶν*, ix. 1.
39. xii. 28; iii. 16; viii. 19: *ὁ ἥλιος καὶ οἱ λοιποὶ θεοί*.
40. See iv. 3, §2; viii. 17; xi. 18, §1.
41. See ii. 11; vii. 70.
42. See ix. 11, 27, 40.
43. A Stoic precept.
44. Compare Julian's *The Caesars* 421.
45. Seneca's *Epistles* 54, 102; *Consolation to Polybius* 28; *Consolation to Marcia* 25.
46. See iii. 3.
47. See xii. 5.
48. See iv. 21; xi. 3; xii. 31.
49. See v. 29; ix. 2.
50. xi. 3; Epictetus's *Discourses* i. 29, § 28; i. 24, near the end; iii. 13, § 14.
51. See v. 10.

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BOOK I

I.1 From my Grandfather Verus,¹ a kindly disposition and sweetness of temper.

1. Namely, “I had an example of,” “was in the way to learn.” But the construction varies and sometimes a direct statement of characteristics is given. It is obvious that Marcus does *not* claim to possess all the good qualities enumerated.

I.2 From what I heard of my Father² and my memory of him, modesty and manliness.

2. Died before 136. The grandfather of Marcus (§ 1) died aged nearly 90 in 138 (Capitolinus’s *Life of Marcus* vi. 1; *Life of Pius* iv. 2).

The father is Marcus Annii Verus, who died while Marcus was a child; Haines gives only an outer limit for the date. The grandfather, also Marcus Annii Verus, is the “Grandfather Verus” of I.1. Capitolinus is one of the six purported authors of the *Historia Augusta*, a late-antique collection of Latin biographies of the emperors from Hadrian onward whose date and authorship are disputed; his lives of Marcus and of Antoninus Pius are Haines’s sources for the grandfather’s age and year of death.

I.3 From my Mother, the fear of God, and generosity; and abstention not only from doing ill but even from the very thought of doing it; and furthermore to live the simple life,³ far removed from the habits of the rich.

3. Compare Aristides, *To the King* 115 (Jebb) διαίτης εὐτέλεια (of Marcus).

Aelius Aristides was a Greek orator of the 2nd century. *To the King* is a speech in praise of an emperor transmitted among his works, cited here by section in Samuel Jebb’s edition; the phrase *diaitēs euteleia*, “simplicity of living,” is used there of the emperor, whom Haines takes to be Marcus.

- I.4 From my Grandfather's Father,⁴ to dispense with attendance at public schools, and to enjoy good teachers at home,⁵ and to recognize that on such things money should be eagerly spent.

4. Catilius Severus, urban prefect, who hoped to succeed Hadrian (Spartianus's *Life of Hadrian* v. 10; xxiv. 6).

Catilius Severus was Marcus's great-grandfather on his mother's side; the *Historia Augusta* records that he was twice consul and urban prefect (*praefectus urbi*), and that he hoped to succeed the emperor Hadrian. Spartianus, like Capitolinus, is one of the purported authors of the *Historia Augusta*.

5. Capitolinus's *Life of Marcus* (ii. 3–iii. 4) gives a list of these.

Capitolinus's list runs from Marcus's first teachers of letters, music, and geometry through his grammarians (among them Alexander of Cotiaeum), his teachers of rhetoric (among them Herodes Atticus and Fronto), and his philosophers (among them Apollonius of Chalcedon, Sextus of Chaeronea, Junius Rusticus, Claudius Maximus, and Cinna Catulus). Several of these are the teachers Marcus thanks in I.6–I.15.

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- I.5 From my Tutor,⁶ not to side with the Green Jacket or the Blue⁷ at the races, or to back the Light-Shield Champion or the Heavy-Shield in the lists; not to shirk toil,⁸ and to have few wants, and to do my own work, and mind my own concerns; and to turn a deaf ear to slander.

6. The name has perhaps dropped out. Capitolinus's *Life of Pius* x. 5 has an anecdote of the death of the *educator* of Marcus, but Aristides in his funeral oration on Alexander of Cotiaeum calls the latter not only διδάσκαλος but τροφεύς to Marcus and Verus (Jebb's edition § 149). But he is mentioned below § 10.

Marcus's Greek has *trophheus*, "the one who brought me up," with no name, which Haines renders "Tutor"; *educator*, the word Capitolinus uses, is the Latin equivalent. Aristides, in his funeral oration for Alexander of Cotiaeum, calls Alexander both *didaskalos*, "teacher," and *trophheus* of Marcus and Lucius Verus, but Alexander is thanked separately in I.10.

7. Capitolinus's *Life of Verus* vi. 2; Malalas xi., near the end.

Chariot racing at Rome was contested by teams identified by colour, and their partisans were known by it; the Green Jacket and the Blue are two of these, as the Light-Shield and Heavy-Shield champions are rival types of gladiator. John Malalas was a 6th-century Greek chronicler from Antioch. Capitolinus's *Life of Verus* vi. 2 records that Lucius Verus was insulted by the Blues for openly taking sides against them.

8. Dio's *Roman History* (71. 6, § 2) calls Marcus φιλόπονος.

Cassius Dio, a Greek senator from Bithynia, wrote his *Roman History* in the early 3rd century; the books covering Marcus's reign survive mainly in an abridgment made in the 11th century by the Byzantine John Xiphilinus. Dio's word is *philoponos*, "fond of toil"; Marcus's own word here is *phereponos*, "enduring toil," which Haines renders "not to shirk toil."

I.6 From Diognetus,⁹ not to be taken up with trifles; and not to give credence to the statements of miracle-mongers and wizards,¹⁰ about incantations and the exorcizing of demons,¹¹ and such-like marvels; and not to keep quails, nor to be excited about such things: not to resent plain speaking; and to become familiar with philosophy and be a heaver first of Baccheius, then of Tandasis and Marcianus; and to write dialogues as a boy; and to set my heart on a pallet-bed and a pelt,¹² and whatever else tallied with the Greek regimen.

9. A Diognetus taught Marcus painting (Capitolinus's *Life of Marcus* iv. 9).

Capitolinus names a Diognetus as Marcus's teacher of painting at iv. 9. Haines's "A Diognetus" leaves open whether this is the same man Marcus thanks here.

10. Compare Capitolinus's *Life of Marcus* xiii. 6; Dio's *Roman History* 71. 9, § 2 (Xiphilinus).

Capitolinus xiii. 6 tells of a man who, during the preparations for the Marcomannic War, preached from a wild fig tree on the Campus Martius that fire would fall from heaven and the world would end. The passage of the historian Cassius Dio, marked "(Xiphilinus)" because it belongs to the abridger rather than to Dio, concerns the "Rain Miracle" of the war against the Quadi, which Dio credited to the Egyptian magician Arnuphis and Xiphilinus to the prayers of Christian soldiers.

11. Undoubtedly refers to the Christians, see Justinian's *Digest* L. 13. 1, § 3, and compare Justin Martyr, *Apology* ii. 6, of Rome itself. The Christians constantly boasted of their power to exorcize: Tertullian, *Apology* 23; Irenaeus ii. 6, § 2; Lactantius v. 21. Compare also the legend of Abercius and his visit to Rome to cure Lucilla.

The *Digest* is Justinian's 6th-century compilation of excerpts from the Roman jurists. Justin Martyr's second *Apology*, Tertullian's *Apology*, Irenaeus's *Against Heresies*, and Lactantius's *Divine Institutes* are early Christian works, the last three cited for Christian claims to cast out demons; the legend of Abercius has him travel to Rome to cure Marcus's daughter Lucilla of possession. Marcus's text speaks only of "miracle-mongers and wizards"; the identification with Christians is Haines's, and he takes up the subject at length in his note on Marcus and the Christians.

12. Capitolinus's *Life of Marcus* ii. 6.

Capitolinus says that at twelve Marcus took up the dress of a philosopher and slept on the ground, until his mother persuaded him to sleep on a couch strewn with skins.

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- I.7 From Rusticus,¹³ to become aware of the fact that I needed amendment and training for my character; and not to be led aside into an argumentative sophistry; nor compose treatises on speculative subjects, or deliver little homilies,¹⁴ or pose ostentatiously as the moral athlete or unselfish man; and to eschew rhetoric,¹⁵ poetry, and fine language; and not to go about the house in my robes, nor commit any such breach of good taste; and to write letters without affectation, like his own letter written to my mother from Sinuessa; to shew oneself ready to be reconciled to those who have lost their temper and trespassed against one, and ready to meet them halfway as soon as ever they seem to be willing to retrace their steps¹⁶; to read with minute care and not to be content with a superficial bird's-eye view; nor to be too quick in agreeing with every voluble talker; and to make the acquaintance of the *Memoirs of Epictetus*, which he supplied me with out of his own library.

13. i. 17, §§ 4, 6. Compare Justinian's *Digest* xlix. 1. 1, § 3, "Rusticus, our friend"; Capitolinus's *Life of Marcus* iii. 3; Themistius, *Orations* xiii. 173c; Fronto's letter to Marcus as Emperor, 1. 2.

Quintus Junius Rusticus, a Stoic philosopher, was consul for the second time in 162 and later urban prefect, in which office he condemned the Christian apologist Justin Martyr. Book I.17 names him twice more, among the teachers Marcus was glad to have known (§ 4) and as someone Marcus was often offended with (§ 6). The *Digest* passage quotes a rescript of Marcus and his co-emperor Lucius Verus that refers to him as "our friend, the urban prefect"; Capitolinus lists him among Marcus's teachers as one "whom he both revered and followed"; Themistius is a Greek orator and philosopher of the 4th century; and the letter is by Marcus Cornelius Fronto, the orator who taught Marcus Latin rhetoric, and calls Rusticus a man "who would gladly surrender and sacrifice his life for your little finger." Fronto's correspondence with Marcus was rediscovered in the early 19th century and later translated by Haines himself.

14. λογάρια (*ratiunculae*). Compare Epictetus's *Discourses*, i. 29. 55.

Logaria, a diminutive of *logos*: "petty arguments." *Ratiunculae* is Haines's Latin equivalent. Epictetus, a former slave who taught Stoic philosophy at Nicopolis in Greece, uses the same word in *Discourses* i. 29. 55, contrasting facility with such arguments with bearing witness to them in action; the *Discourses* are his pupil Arrian's record of his teaching, and are probably the "Memoirs of Epictetus" that Rusticus lent Marcus.

15. i. 17, § 4. Compare Fronto's letter to Marcus as Emperor, i. 2 (Naber's edition p. 96); *On Eloquence* 3 (Naber's edition p. 150). Dio's *Roman History* (71. 35, § 1) says Marcus was ἀσκηθεὶς ἐν τοῖς ῥητορικοῖς λόγοις.

I.17 § 4 is Marcus's thanks that he made no further progress in rhetoric and poetry. The two Fronto passages are cited by page in S. A. Naber's 1867 edition of the correspondence; the historian Dio's phrase, in translation: "trained in rhetorical speeches."

16. As Marcus in the case of Herodes, see Philostratus's *Lives of the Sophists* ii. 12 (Kayser's edition p. 243).

Herodes Atticus was a wealthy Athenian sophist, consul in 143, and Marcus's tutor in Greek rhetoric. Philostratus, a Greek sophist of the early 3rd century, describes in his *Lives of the Sophists* (cited by page in Kayser's edition) Herodes' hearing before Marcus, at which Herodes spoke with open hostility and Marcus responded with restraint.

I.8 From Apollonius,¹⁷ self-reliance and an unequivocal determination not to leave anything to chance; and to look to nothing else even for a moment save Reason alone; and to remain ever the same, in the throes of pain, on the loss of a child,¹⁸ during a

lingering illness; and to see plainly from a living example that one and the same man can be very vehement and yet gentle: not to be impatient in instructing others; and to see in him a man who obviously counted as the least among his gifts his practical experience and facility in imparting philosophic truths; and to learn in accepting seeming favours from friends'¹⁹ not to give up our independence for such things nor take them callously as a matter of course.

17. Compare Fronto's letter to Marcus as Caesar, v. 36. Capitolinus (*Life of Pius* x. 4) and Lucian (*Demonax* 31) shew him in a different light, as ill-mannered and avaricious. He is mentioned as Ἀντωνίνου ἑταῖρος by Epiphanius.

Apollonius of Chalcedon was a Stoic philosopher whom Antoninus Pius summoned to Rome to teach Marcus. Capitolinus's *Life of Pius* x. 4 records his refusal to come to the palace, and Pius's remark that it was easier for Apollonius to travel from Chalcis (as the *Historia Augusta* gives his home) to Rome than from his house to the palace. Lucian, the 2nd-century Greek satirist, has the Cynic philosopher Demonax describe Apollonius leaving for Rome with his students as "Apollonius and his Argonauts"; Epiphanius calls him *Antōninou hetairos*, "companion of Antoninus."

18. See the behaviour of Marcus on the death of M. Annius Verus, aged 7, at Praeneste in 169 (Capitolinus's *Life of Marcus* xxi. 3), and on the death of his first-born son T. Aelius Antoninus soon after birth in 147 (*Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum*, Boeckh 3176). Compare Dio's *Roman History* 71. 34, § 5.

Capitolinus records that Marcus mourned his son Annius Verus, who died at Praeneste after an operation on a tumour below the ear, for no more than five days, and gave time to public business even during that period. August Boeckh's *Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum*, a 19th-century collection of Greek inscriptions, is cited by number for an inscription recording the death of Marcus's first son.

19. Compare Fronto's letter to Appian (Naber's edition p. 246).

Appian of Alexandria, the Greek historian of Rome's wars, was a friend of Fronto. Their surviving exchange concerns gifts between friends: Appian offered Fronto a gift of slaves, and Fronto declined it.

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- 1.9 From Sextus,²⁰ kindness, and the example of a household patriarchally governed; and the conception of life in accordance with Nature; and dignity without affectation; and an intuitive consideration for friends; and a toleration of the unlearned and the

unreasoning.

And his tactful treatment of all his friends, so that simply to be with him was more delightful than any flattery, while at the same time those who enjoyed this privilege looked up to him with the utmost reverence; and the grasp and method which he shewed in discovering and marshalling the essential axioms of life.

And never to exhibit any symptom of anger or any other passion, but to be at the same time utterly impervious to all passions and full of natural affection; and to praise without noisy obtrusiveness, and to possess great learning but make no parade of it.

20. Capitolinus's *Life of Marcus* iii. 1. He was of Chaeronea and grandson of Plutarch; compare the Suda under his entry: "He was held in such honour by the Emperor as to act as his assessor on the bench."

Sextus was a philosopher from Chaeronea in Boeotia and a relative of Plutarch, the Greek biographer and essayist from the same town. Capitolinus's word for the relation, *nepos*, can mean either "grandson" or "nephew," and ancient sources differ. The Suda is a 10th-century Byzantine Greek encyclopedia; an *assessor* was a legal adviser who sat with a magistrate hearing cases.

I.10 From Alexander the Grammarian,²¹ not to be captious; nor in a carping spirit find fault with those who import into their conversation any expression which is barbarous or ungrammatical or mispronounced, but tactfully to bring in the very expression, that ought to have been used, by way of answer, or as it were in joint support of the assertion, or as a joint consideration of the thing itself and not of the language, or by some such graceful reminder.

21. Of Cotiaeum, see Aristides, *Orations* xii. 142 ff. (Jebb's edition). He lived to a great age. He was in Rome in 145 (see the same oration, §159) and resided at the palace (§§ 148, 154). See above on i. 5.

Alexander of Cotiaeum, in Phrygia, was a grammarian, and Capitolinus lists him as Marcus's teacher of Greek grammar. The Aristides oration is his funeral speech for Alexander; the cross-reference to I.5 is to Haines's note there, where the same speech calls Alexander Marcus's *tropheus*.

- I.11 From Fronto, to note the envy, the subtlety, and the dissimulation which are habitual to a tyrant; and that, as a general rule, those amongst us who rank as patricians are somewhat wanting in natural affection.²²

22. See Fronto's letter to Verus, ii. 7 (Naber's edition, p. 135; compare p. 231). Marcus acknowledges greater debts to Fronto elsewhere, for example his letter to Marcus as Caesar, iii. 12: *Verum dicere ex te disco. Ea re prorsum dis hominibusque ardua.*

Marcus's Greek word for "wanting in natural affection" is *astorgoteroi*, the negative of *philostorgos*, "affectionate"; in the letter to Lucius Verus, Fronto remarks that Latin has no word for *philostorgia* because no one at Rome truly feels it. The Latin quotation is from a letter of Marcus to Fronto: "From you I learn to speak the truth, a thing hard indeed for gods and men."

- I.12 From Alexander the Platonist,²³ not to say to anyone often or without necessity, nor write in a letter, I am too busy, nor in this fashion constantly plead urgent affairs as an excuse for evading the obligations entailed upon us by our relations towards those around us.

23. See Philostratus's *Lives of the Sophists* ii. 5, p. 247, Kayser's edition. He was summoned by Marcus to Pannonia about 174 and made his Greek secretary.

Alexander was a sophist nicknamed Peloplaton, "Clay Plato." As Greek secretary (*ab epistulis Graecis*) he handled the emperor's correspondence in Greek; Pannonia was the Roman province on the middle Danube where Marcus spent much of the Marcomannic Wars.

- I.13 From Catulus,²⁴ not to disregard a friend's expostulation even when it is unreasonable, but to try to bring him back to his usual friendliness; and to speak with whole-hearted good-will of one's teachers, as it is recorded that Domitius²⁵ did of Athenodotus; and to be genuinely fond of one's children.

24. A Stoic, see Capitolinus's *Life of Marcus* iii. 2.

Cinna Catulus appears in Capitolinus's list of Marcus's Stoic teachers alongside Sextus, Rusticus, and Maximus.

25. Domitii were among the maternal ancestors of Marcus, and an Athenodotus was Fronto's teacher (letter to Marcus as Caesar, iv. 12; Naber's edition p. 73).

Marcus's mother was Domitia Lucilla, hence Haines's suggestion that the Domitius here belongs to her family; neither Domitius nor Athenodotus can be identified with certainty.

- I.14 From my 'brother' Severus,²⁶ love of family, love of truth, love of justice, and (thanks to him!) to know Thrasea, Helvidius, Cato, Dion, Brutus; and the conception of a state with one law for all, based upon individual equality and freedom of speech, and of a sovranity which prizes above all things the liberty of the subject; and furthermore from him also to set a well-balanced and unvarying value on philosophy; and readiness to do others a kindness, and eager generosity, and optimism, and confidence in the love of friends; and perfect openness in the case of those that came in for his censure; and the absence of any need for his friends to surmise what he did or did not wish, so plain was it.

26. See Index II. He was father of the son-in-law of Marcus.

Haines's index identifies Severus as probably the father of the Claudius Severus who married one of Marcus's daughters, and possibly the Peripatetic philosopher Severus whom Capitolinus lists among Marcus's teachers. The five names Severus introduced to Marcus are figures remembered for opposing tyranny: Cato the Younger and Brutus, opponents of Julius Caesar; Thrasea Paetus and Helvidius Priscus, Stoic senators under Nero and Vespasian; and Dion, generally taken to be Dion of Syracuse, opponent of the tyrant Dionysius II, though Haines's index suggests Dio Chrysostom as the better match.

- I.15 From Maximus,²⁷ self-mastery and stability of purpose; and cheeriness in sickness as well as in all other circumstances; and a character justly proportioned of sweetness and gravity; and to perform without grumbling the task that lies to one's hand.

And the confidence of every one in him that what he said was also what he thought, and that what he did was done with no ill intent. And not to shew surprise, and not to be daunted; never to be hurried, or hold back, or be at a loss, or downcast, or smile a forced smile, or, again, be ill-tempered or suspicious.

And beneficence²⁸ and placability and veracity; and to give the impression of a man who cannot deviate from the right way rather than of one who is kept in it²⁹; and that no one could have thought himself looked down upon by him, or could go so far as to imagine himself a better man than he; and to keep pleasantries within due bounds.

27. i. 16, § 9; viii. 25. See Capitolinus's *Life of Marcus* iii. 2; Index II.

Maximus is Claudius Maximus, a Stoic philosopher and senator. I.16 § 9 cites Maximus's illness as an instance of "a perfect and indomitable soul," and VIII.25 records his death and that of his wife Secunda; Capitolinus, *Life of Marcus* iii. 2, lists him among Marcus's Stoic teachers, and Index II is Haines's Index of Proper Names. Haines's index identifies him with the proconsul of Africa before whom Apuleius was tried for magic, praised as *vir sanctissimus*, "a most upright man," in Apuleius's *Apology*.

28. Marcus raised a temple to *Εὐεργεσία*, a new deity. See Dio's *Roman History* 71. 34, § 3.

Euergesia is Greek for "beneficence," the quality named in Marcus's text at this point, here personified as a goddess.

29. Compare iii. 5.

I.16 From my Father,³⁰ mildness, and an unshakable adherence to decisions deliberately come to; and no empty vanity in respect to so-called honours; and a love of work and thoroughness; and a readiness to hear any suggestions for the common good; and an inflexible determination to give every man his due; and to know by experience when is the time to insist and when to desist; and to suppress all passion for boys.³¹

And his public spirit, and his not requiring his friends at all to sup with him or necessarily attend him abroad,³² and their always finding him the same when any urgent affairs had kept them away; and the spirit of thorough investigation which he shewed in the meetings of his Council, and his perseverance; nay his never desisting prematurely from an enquiry on the strength of off-hand impressions; and his faculty for keeping his friends and never being bored with them or infatuated about them; and his self-reliance in every emergency, and his good humour; and his habit of looking ahead and making provision for the smallest details without any heroics.

And his restricting in his reign public acclamations and every sort of adulation; and his unsleeping attention to the needs of the empire, and his wise stewardship of its resources, and his patient tolerance of the censure that all this entailed; and his freedom from superstition with respect to the Gods and from hunting for popularity with respect to men by pandering to their desires or by courting the mob: yea his soberness in all things³³ and stedfastness; and the absence in him of all vulgar tastes and any craze for novelty.

And the example that he gave of utilizing without pride, and at the same without any apology, all the lavish gifts of Fortune that contribute towards the comfort of life, so as to enjoy them when present as a matter of course, and, when absent, not to miss them and no one could charge him with sophistry, flippancy,³⁴ or pedantry; but he was a man mature, complete,³⁵ deaf to flattery, able to preside over his own affairs and those of others.

Besides this also was his high appreciation of all true philosophers without any upbraiding of the others, and at the same time without any undue subservience to them; then again his easiness of access and his graciousness that yet had nothing fulsome about it; and his reasonable attention to his bodily requirements, not as one too fond of life, or vain of his outward appearance,³⁶ nor yet as one who neglected it, but so as by his own carefulness to need but very seldom the skill of the leech or medicines and outward applications.

But most of all a readiness to acknowledge without jealousy the claims of those who were endowed with any especial gift, such as eloquence or knowledge of law or ethics or any other subject, and to give them active support, that each might gain the honour to which his individual eminence entitled him and his loyalty to constitutional precedent without any parade of the fact that it was according to precedent.

Furthermore he was not prone to change or vacillation, but attached to the same places and the same things; and after his spasms of violent headache he would come back at once to his usual employments with renewed vigour; and his secrets were not many but very few and at very rare intervals, and then only political secrets; and he

shewed good sense and moderation in his management of public spectacles, and in the construction of public works, and in *congiaria*³⁷ and the like, as a man who had an eye to what had to be done and not to the credit to be gained thereby.

He did not bathe at all hours; he did not build for the love of building; he gave no thought to his food, or to the texture and colour of his clothes, or the comeliness of his slaves. His robe came up from Lorium, his country-seat in the plains, and Lanuvium supplied his wants for the most part. Think of how he dealt with the customs' officer at Tusculum when the latter apologized, and it was a type of his usual conduct.

There was nothing rude in him, nor yet overbearing or violent nor carried, as the phrase goes, "to the sweating state"; but everything was considered separately, as by a man of ample leisure, calmly, methodically, manfully, consistently. One might apply to him what is told of Socrates,³⁸ that he was able to abstain from or enjoy those things that many are not strong enough to refrain from and too much inclined to enjoy. But to have the strength to persist in the one case and be abstemious in the other³⁹ is characteristic of a man who has a perfect and indomitable soul, as was seen in the illness of Maximus.

30. Here Pius, his adoptive father, is meant, not as above (i. 2) his father Verus. For a first sketch of this eulogy of Pius see below vi. 30.

Antoninus Pius was emperor from 138 to 161; at Hadrian's direction he adopted Marcus in 138, and Marcus succeeded him. The distinction Haines draws is marked in the Greek, where I.2 has *ho gennēsas*, "the one who begot me," and this section *ho patēr*, "the father." VI.30 is a shorter portrait of Pius, in which Marcus urges himself to act in everything as Antoninus's disciple.

31. It is not quite clear whether this means that Pius had put away this vice from himself or others, but the active verb seems rather to favour the latter view. Capitolinus's *Life of Pius* ii. 1 calls him *clarus moribus* (compare also Aurelius Victor's *On the Caesars* xv.), but Julian says he was σώφρων οὐ τὰ ἐξ Ἀφροδίτην.

Capitolinus calls Pius *clarus moribus*, "distinguished in character." Aurelius Victor was a Latin historian whose *On the Caesars* is a short history of the emperors. Julian, emperor from 361 to 363, wrote the satire *The Caesars*, in which the gods judge past emperors; there he calls Pius *sōphrōn ou ta es Aphroditēn*, "temperate, but not in matters of love."

32. Compare Fronto's letter to Marcus as Caesar, iii. 20; v. 44.

33. Compare St. Paul, 2 Timothy iv. 5.

In 2 Timothy 4:5 Paul tells Timothy to “watch thou in all things” (King James); the Greek verb is *nēphē*, literally “be sober,” the phrase Haines uses here in translating Marcus.

34. Literally, that he was a “home-bred slave,” that is, impudent.

Marcus’s word is *ouernaklos*, a Greek spelling of the Latin *vernaculus*, from *verna*, a slave born in the household.

35. Julian calls Marcus τετράγωνος—“a man foursquare.”

Marcus’s own word here is *teleios*, which Haines renders “complete.” The parallel is from Julian’s *The Caesars*, where Dionysus describes Marcus, quoting the poet Simonides, as “four-square and made without a flaw”; Julian’s word is *tetragōnos*, literally “four-cornered.”

36. Capitolinus (*Life of Pius* xiii. 1) says he wore stays to keep himself upright in old age.

Capitolinus, *Life of Pius* xiii. 1, says that Pius, tall and stooping in old age, had splints of lime-wood bound to his chest so that he could walk upright.

37. Literally, “distributions.” Compare Capitolinus’s *Life of Pius* iv. 9; viii. 11.

A *congiarium* (from *congius*, a liquid measure) was a distribution of money or goods by the emperor to the people of Rome.

38. Xenophon’s *Memorabilia* I. 3, § 15. πολλοὶ would here seem = οἱ πολλοί.

Xenophon’s *Memorabilia* (4th century BC) is his collection of recollections of Socrates. Haines’s Greek note reads *polloi*, “many,” here as equivalent to *hoi polloi*, “the many,” that is, most people.

39. The Greek may also mean “To be strong and to persist without excess in each case is characteristic,” and ἐκαστέρῳ suits this better.

I.17 From the Gods, to have good grandfathers,⁴⁰ good parents, a good sister, good teachers, good companions, kinsmen, friends—nearly all of them; and that I fell into no trespass against any of them, and yet I had a disposition that way inclined, such as might have led me into something of the sort;⁴¹ had it so chanced; but by the grace of God there was no such coincidence of circumstances as was likely to put me to the test.

And that I was not brought up any longer with my grandfather’s⁴² concubine, and that I kept unstained the flower of my youth; and that I did not make trial of my manhood before the due time, but even postponed it.

That I was subordinated to a ruler and a father capable of ridding me of all conceit, and of bringing me to recognize that it is possible to live in a Court and yet do without body-guards and gorgeous garments and linkmen and statues and the like pomp; and that it is in such a man's power to reduce himself very nearly to the condition of a private individual and yet not on this account to be more paltry or more remiss in dealing with what the interests of the state require to be done in imperial fashion.

That it was my lot to have such a brother,⁴³ capable by his character of stimulating me to watchful care over myself, and at the same time delighting me by his deference⁴⁴ and affection: that my children have not been devoid of intelligence nor physically deformed. That I did not make more progress in rhetoric⁴⁵ and poetry⁴⁶ and my other studies, in which I should perhaps have been engrossed, had I felt myself making good way in them. That I lost no time in promoting my tutors to such posts of honour⁴⁷ as they seemed to desire, and that I did not put them off with the hope that I would do this later on since they were still young. That I got to know Apollonius, Rusticus, Maximus.

That I had clear and frequent conceptions as to the true meaning of a life according to Nature,⁴⁸ so that as far as the Gods were concerned and their blessings and assistance and intention, there was nothing to prevent me from beginning at once to live in accordance with Nature, though I still come short of this ideal by my own fault, and by not attending to the reminders, nay, almost the instructions, of the Gods.

That my body holds out so long in such a life as mine⁴⁹; that I did not touch Benedicta or Theodotus, but that even afterwards, when I did give way to amatory passions, I was cured of them; that, though often offended with Rusticus, I never went so far as to do anything for which I should have been sorry; that my mother,⁵⁰ though she was to die young, yet spent her last years with me.

That as often as I had the inclination to help anyone, who was in pecuniary distress or needing any other assistance, I was never told that there was no money available for the purpose; and that I was never under any similar need of accepting help from another. That I have been blessed with a wife so docile,⁵¹ so affectionate, so unaffected;⁵² that I had no lack of suitable tutors for my children.

That by the agency of dreams⁵³ I was given antidotes both of other kinds and against the spitting of blood and vertigo; and there is that response also at Caieta, “*as thou shalt use it.*” And that, when I had set my heart on philosophy, I did not fall into the hands of a sophist, nor sat down at the author’s desk, or became a solver of syllogisms, nor busied myself with physical phenomena. For all the above *the Gods as helpers and good fortune need. Written among the Quadi on the Gran.*⁵⁴

40. That is, M. Annius Verus, three times consul (Dio’s *Roman History* 69. 21, § 1) and urban prefect (Capitolinus’s *Life of Marcus* i. 2), who died 138, and P. Calvisius Tullus, suffect consul 109. See Capitolinus’s *Life of Marcus* i. 3; Fronto’s letter to Marcus as Caesar, iii. 2.

Publius Calvisius Tullus was Marcus’s maternal grandfather, the father of Domitia Lucilla; the paternal grandfather, Annius Verus, is the “Grandfather Verus” of I.1. A suffect consul was one appointed to replace an ordinary consul partway through the year.

41. Compare i. 17, § 6; xi. 18, § 4.

42. Compare ix. 21. After his father’s death Marcus was brought up at his grandfather’s house (Capitolinus’s *Life of Marcus* i. 7). Capitolinus’s *Life of Marcus* (v. 3) says he migrated *de maternis hortis* much against his will to the imperial palace when adopted by Hadrian. It is possible but not likely that “grandfather” here means Hadrian.

Capitolinus’s *de maternis hortis*, “from his mother’s gardens,” refers to the family estate where Marcus had been living. Strictly, the adoption was by Antoninus Pius, at Hadrian’s direction, in 138.

43. L. Verus, whose character was more of a warning than an example, as Lucian’s *Nigrinus* 19 calls Rome for its wickedness γυμνάσιον ἀρετῆς; see Epictetus’s *Discourses*, iii. 20, § 11. Marcus seems to have been genuinely fond of him; see Fronto’s letter to Verus, ii. 1; letter to Marcus as Caesar, ii. 17; and compare Aristides, *Panegyric at Cyzicus* § 425 (Jebb).

Lucius Verus was Marcus’s adoptive brother and co-emperor from 161 to 169. Lucian’s *Nigrinus* 19 calls Rome *gymnasion aretēs*, “a training-ground for virtue,” because of its temptations, and Epictetus iii. 20 makes a similar point; the two Fronto letters and Aristides’ *Panegyric at Cyzicus*, cited by section in Jebb’s edition, are Haines’s evidence for Marcus’s affection for Verus.

44. Capitolinus's *Life of Verus* viii. 5.

Capitolinus's example of that deference: at the triumph the two emperors celebrated together, Verus shared with Marcus the titles that had been granted to him.

45. See i. 7.

46. I. 7. Compare Fronto's letter to Marcus as Caesar, i. 8; letter to Marcus as Emperor, i. 2 (Naber's edition p. 96); *On Eloquence* 3 (Naber's edition p. 150).

47. For example, Rusticus, consul for the second time in 162, and urban prefect; Proculus, see Capitolinus's *Life of Marcus* ii. 5.

Rusticus is the teacher of I.7. Capitolinus names Eutychius Proculus of Sicca among Marcus's teachers of Latin grammar and says Marcus advanced him to a proconsulship.

48. See i. 9.

49. Dio's *Roman History* 71. 36, § 3.

The historian Cassius Dio says that Marcus "was not strong in body and was involved in a multitude of troubles throughout practically his entire reign."

50. Domitia Lucilla, daughter of P. Calvisius Tullus. She died in 156, aged about 50. For her see above i. 3; viii. 25; Fronto's letter to Marcus as Caesar, iv. 6; Capitolinus's *Life of Marcus* vi. 9. Her head appears on a coin of Nicaea in Bithynia.

Domitia Lucilla was Marcus's mother, praised earlier at I.3; VIII.25 lists her among the dead in one of Marcus's catalogues of mortality. The year of her death is not firmly attested.

51. Compare Fronto's letter to Marcus as Caesar, v. 11.

52. Compare Fronto's letter to Pius, 2, near the end, for Pius' opinion of his daughter. The coiffure of the younger Faustina as seen on coins is much simpler than that of her mother. She was with Marcus in Pannonia for a time at least.

The younger Faustina, daughter of Antoninus Pius, was Marcus's wife.

53. Compare Fronto's letter to Marcus as Caesar, iii. 9, and below, ix. 27. Marcus himself became a dream-giver after his death; see Capitolinus's *Life of Marcus* xviii. 7. Dreams were the recognised method by which the God of healing communicated his prescriptions. Belief in them was universal, and shared by the atheist Pliny, the sceptic Lucian, Aristides the devotee, Galen the scientist, Dio the historian and man of affairs. It is not unknown to Christians. Yet there have been found writers to gird at Marcus for his "superstitious" belief in dreams!

Capitolinus xviii. 7 records that after his death people claimed Marcus had foretold many things to them in dreams, which is Haines's "dream-giver"; IX.27 is Marcus's remark that the gods aid people "by dreams and oracles." The god of healing is Asclepius, whose patients slept in his temples to receive prescriptions in dreams. Of the figures Haines lists, Pliny is Pliny the Elder, author of the *Natural History*; Galen was the leading physician of the age and attended Marcus; and Aelius Aristides' *Sacred Tales* is an extended record of his own dream-cures.

54. These words may be intended either to conclude the first book or, more likely, head the second. In the former case, as Gataker points out, τὰδε would have been usual, not τὰ.

The line, "Written among the Quadi on the Gran," is a place-heading; Haines gives the river its German name, Gran, where the Greek has *Granoua* (Granua), the modern Hron, a northern tributary of the Danube in Slovakia. The Quadi were a Germanic people living north of the middle Danube, in what is now Slovakia and Moravia, and one of Rome's principal opponents in the Marcomannic Wars (c. 166–180), which Marcus directed in person from the frontier for most of the 170s. Book II ends, in Haines's text, with a similar heading, "Written at Carnuntum," the Roman legionary base on the Danube in Pannonia. Haines's footnote concerns which book the line belongs to: Thomas Gataker, the English scholar whose 1652 edition of the *Meditations* included a Latin translation and commentary, noted that a closing subscription would normally read *tade*, "these things," rather than the bare article *ta*.

BOOK II

II.1 Say to thyself at daybreak:¹ I shall come across the busy-body, the thankless, the bully, the treacherous, the envious, the unneighbourly.² All this has befallen them because they know not good from evil. But I, in that I have comprehended the nature of the Good that it is beautiful, and the nature of Evil that it is ugly, and the nature of the wrong-doer himself that it is akin to me, not as partaker of the same blood and seed but of intelligence and a morsel of the Divine, can neither be injured by any of them—for no one can involve me in what is debasing—nor can I be wroth with my kinsman and hate him. For we have come into being for co-operation, as have the feet, the hands, the eyelids, the rows of upper and lower teeth. Therefore to thwart one another is against Nature; and we do thwart one another by shewing resentment and aversion.

1. See v. 1.

2. Compare Seneca's *On Anger* ii. 10.

Lucius Annaeus Seneca was a Stoic philosopher, dramatist, and adviser to Nero. *On Anger* is his three-book treatise on the passion; at ii. 10 he argues that the wise man will not be angry with wrongdoers, since no one is born wise and error is common to all.

II.2 This that I am, whatever it be, is mere flesh and a little breath and the ruling Reason. Away with thy books³! Be no longer drawn aside by them: it is not allowed. But as one already dying disdain the flesh: it is naught but gore and bones and a network compact of nerves and veins and arteries. Look at the breath too, what sort of thing it is; air: and not even that always the same, but every minute belched forth and again gulped down. Then, thirdly, there is the ruling Reason. Put thy thought thus: thou art an old man⁴; let this be a thrall no longer, no more a puppet⁵ pulled aside by every selfish impulse; nor let it grumble any longer at what is allotted to it in the present or dread it in the future.

3. Compare ii. 3.

4. Compare ii. 6; i. 17, § 6; Dio's *Roman History* 71. 24, § 4. Marcus would be a little over 50. Contrast i. 17, § 6, and note. Cromwell when 51 writing from Dunbar says, "I grow an old man."

Marcus was born in 121, so Haines's "a little over 50" places this entry around 171–172.

Cromwell was writing from Dunbar, where he defeated the Scottish army on 3 September 1650.

5. iii. 16; vi. 16, 28; vii. 3, 29; xii. 19. Compare Clement of Alexandria's *Stromata* ii. 3; iv. 11.

Clement of Alexandria was a Christian theologian and teacher; the *Stromata* ("Miscellanies") is his loosely organized work on the relation between Greek philosophy and Christian belief.

II.3 Full of Providence are the works of the Gods, nor are Fortune's works independent of Nature or of the woven texture and interlacement of all that is under the control of Providence. Thence⁶ are all things derived⁷; but Necessity too plays its part and the Welfare of the whole Universe of which thou art a portion. But good for every part of Nature is that which the Nature of the Whole brings about, and which goes to preserve it. Now it is the changes not only of the elements but of the things compounded of them that preserve the Universe. Let these reflections suffice thee, if thou hold them as principles. But away with thy thirst for books,⁸ that thou mayest die not murmuring but with a good grace, truly and from thy heart grateful to the Gods.

6. See vi. 36; xii. 26.

7. Referred to by Arethas on Dio Chrysostom's *Orations* 32. 15 as πάντα ἀνωθεν ῥεῖ. Compare St. James, Epistle i. 17.

Arethas, a Cappadocian bishop of about 900, knew the *Meditations* and refers to it in marginal notes on Lucian; Haines's Introduction attributes the similar notes on Dio Chrysostom, such as this one, "possibly" to him as well. The note quotes the passage as *panta anōthen rhei*, "all things flow from above." Dio Chrysostom, the "golden-mouthed," was a Greek orator and philosopher, not to be confused with the historian Cassius Dio. The epistle of James (1:17) has "every good gift and every perfect gift is from above."

8. See ii. 2.

II.4 Call to mind how long thou deferrest these things, and how many times thou hast received from the Gods grace⁹ of the appointed day and thou usest it not. Yet now, if never before, shouldest thou realize of what Universe thou art a part, and as an emanation from what Controller of that Universe thou dost subsist; and that a limit has been set to thy time, which if thou use not to let daylight into thy soul, it will be gone—and thou!—and never again shall the chance be thine.

9. *προθεσμία*, literally “a time-limit for enforcement of claims after which they lapsed.”

II.5 Every hour make up thy mind sturdily as a Roman and a man to do what thou hast in hand with scrupulous and unaffected dignity and love of thy kind and independence and justice; and to give thyself rest from all other impressions. And thou wilt give thyself this, if thou dost execute every act of thy life as though it were thy last,¹⁰ divesting thyself of all aimlessness¹¹ and all passionate antipathy to the convictions of reason, and all hypocrisy and self-love and dissatisfaction with thy allotted share. Thou seest how few are the things, by mastering which a man may lead a life of tranquillity and godlikeness; for the Gods also will ask no more from him who keeps these precepts.

10. § 11; vii. 69; Seneca's *Epistles* xii.

The *Epistles* are Seneca's 124 letters to his friend Lucilius on Stoic ethics. The twelfth, on old age, urges that each day be ordered as though it were the last.

11. See §§ 16, 17; iv. 2.

II.6 Wrong thyself,¹² wrong thyself, O my Soul! But the time for honouring thyself will have gone by; for a man has but one life, and this for thee is well-nigh closed,¹³ and yet thou dost not hold thyself in reverence, but settest thy well-being in the souls of others.

12. Apparently a sarcastic apostrophe, which is not in Marcus' usual manner.

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- II.7** Do those things draw thee at all away, which befall thee from without? Make then leisure for thyself for the learning of some good thing more, and cease being carried aside hither and thither. But therewith must thou take heed of the other error. For they too are triflers, who by their activities have worn themselves out in life without even having an aim whereto they can direct every impulse, aye and even every thought.
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- II.8** Not easily is a man found to be unhappy by reason of his not regarding what is going on in another man's soul; but those who do not attend closely to the motions of their own souls must inevitably be unhappy.
-
- II.9** This must always be borne in mind, what is the Nature of the whole Universe, and what mine, and how this stands in relation to that, being too what sort of a part of what sort of a whole; and that no one can prevent thee from doing and saying always what is in keeping with the Nature of which thou art a part.
-
- II.10** Theophrastus in his comparison of wrong-doings—for, speaking in a somewhat popular way, such comparison may be made—says in the true philosophical spirit that the offences which are due to lust are more heinous than those which are due to anger.¹⁴ For the man who is moved with anger seems to turn his back upon reason with some pain and unconscious compunction¹⁵; but he that does wrong from lust, being mastered by pleasure, seems in some sort to be more incontinent and more unmanly in his wrong-doing. Rightly then, and not unworthily of a philosopher, he said that the wrongdoing which is allied with pleasure calls for a severer condemnation than that which is allied with pain; and, speaking generally, that the one wrong-doer is

more like a man, who, being sinned against first, has been driven by pain to be angry, while the other, being led by lust to do some act, has of his own motion been impelled to do evil.

14. Here Marcus deviates from the strict Stoic doctrine, which allowed no degrees in faults.

Theophrastus was Aristotle's successor as head of the Peripatetic school. The Stoic doctrine Haines refers to is the paradox that all wrong acts are equal, which Cicero sets out in his *Stoic Paradoxes*.

15. For συστολή compare Diogenes Laertius (*Life of Zeno*) 63, ἔλεος εἶναι πάθος καὶ συστολήν ἄλογον.

Systolē, "contraction," is the term the quoted passage uses in defining pity as "a passion and an irrational contraction." Diogenes Laertius (probably 3rd century) wrote the *Lives of the Eminent Philosophers*, whose seventh book covers Zeno of Citium, the founder of Stoicism, and his successors.

II.11 Let thine every deed and word and thought be those of a man who can depart from life this moment.¹⁶ But to go away from among men, if there are Gods, is nothing dreadful; for they would not involve thee in evil. But if indeed there are no Gods, or if they do not concern themselves with the affairs of men, what boots it for me to live in a Universe where there are no Gods, where Providence is not? Nay, but there *are* Gods, and they *do* concern themselves with human things;¹⁷ and they have put it wholly in man's power not to fall into evils that are truly such. And had there been any evil in what lies beyond, for this too would they have made provision, that it should be in every man's power not to fall into it. But how can that make a man's life worse which does not make the man worse?¹⁸ Yet the Nature of the Whole could not have been guilty of an oversight from ignorance or, while cognizant of these things, through lack of power to guard against or amend them; nor could it have gone so far amiss either from inability or unskilfulness, as to allow good and evil to fall without any discrimination alike upon the evil and the good. Still it is a fact that death and life,

honour and dishonour, pain and pleasure, riches and penury, do among men one and all betide the Good and the Evil alike, being in themselves neither honourable nor shameful. Consequently they are neither good nor evil.

16. *above*, § 5.

17. Compare Fronto's *On the Loss of a Grandson* (Naber's edition p. 233).

On the Loss of a Grandson is Fronto's letter to Marcus on the death of his grandson, written near the end of Fronto's life.

18. See iv. 8.

II.12 How quickly all things vanish away, in the Universe their actual bodies, and the remembrance of them in Eternity, and of what character are all objects of sense, and particularly those that entice us with pleasure or terrify us with pain or are acclaimed by vanity—how worthless and despicable and unclean and ephemeral and dead!—this is for our faculty of intelligence to apprehend; as also what they really are whose conceptions and whose voices award renown; what it is to die, and that if a man look at death in itself, and with the analysis of reason strip it of its phantom terrors, no longer will he conceive it to be aught but a function of Nature,—but if a man be frightened by a function of Nature, he is childish; and this is not only Nature's function but her welfare;—and how man is in touch with God and with what part of himself, and in what disposition of this portion of the man.

II.13 Nothing can be more miserable than the man who goes through the whole round of things, and, as the poet¹⁹ says, *pries into the secrets of the earth*, and would fain guess the thoughts in his neighbour's heart, while having no conception that he needs but to associate himself with the divine 'genius' in his bosom,²⁰ and to serve it truly. And service of it is to keep it pure from passion and aimlessness and discontent with anything that proceeds from Gods or men. For that which proceeds from the Gods is worthy of reverence in that it is excellent; and that which proceeds from men, of love,

in that they are akin, and, at times and in a manner,²¹ of compassion, in that they are ignorant of good and evil—a defect this no less than the loss of power to distinguish between white and black.

19. Pindar, *Fragment* (see Plato's *Theaetetus* 173 E).

Pindar was a Greek lyric poet. The line survives because Plato quotes it in the *Theaetetus*, his dialogue on the nature of knowledge, in a digression describing the philosopher whose mind ranges over the depths of the earth and the heavens while ignorant of his neighbour's affairs.

20. § 17; iii. 6, 16. Compare Shakespeare, *The Tempest* ii. 1. 275: "Conscience, this deity in my bosom." The δαιμόνιον of Socrates is well known.

The Shakespeare line is Antonio's in *The Tempest*, dismissing conscience as a "deity" he does not feel. Marcus's word here is *daimōn*, which Haines renders "genius"; Socrates' *daimonion*, described in Plato's *Apology*, was the inner divine sign that warned him against particular actions.

21. Marcus qualifies his departure from the strict Stoic view, for which see Seneca's *On Clemency* ii. 4–6, where he calls pity pusillanimity, and says *sapiens non miserebitur sed succurret*. Marcus was far from a Stoic in this, see Herodian i. 4, § 2. See above, p. xiii.

On Clemency is Seneca's treatise addressed to the young Nero; *sapiens non miserebitur sed succurret*, in translation: "the wise man will not pity, but will help." Herodian was a Greek historian whose history of the emperors begins with the death of Marcus in 180. Haines's "p. xiii" refers to a page of his own Introduction.

II.14 Even if thy life is to last three thousand years or for the matter of that thirty thousand, yet bear in mind that no one ever parts with any other life than the one he is now living,²² nor lives any other than that which he now parts with. The longest life, then, and the shortest amount but to the same. For the present time is of equal duration for all, while that which we lose is not ours;²³ and consequently what is parted with is obviously a mere moment. No man can part with either the past or the future. For how can a man be deprived of what he does not possess? These two things, then, must needs be remembered: the one, that all things from time everlasting have been cast in the same mould and repeated cycle after cycle, and so it makes no difference whether a man see the same things recur through a hundred years or two hundred,²⁴ or through eternity: the other, that the longest liver and he whose time to die comes soonest part

with no more the one than the other. For it is but the present that a man can be deprived of, if, as is the fact, it is this alone that he has, and what he has not a man cannot part with.

22. See iii. 10

23. Seneca's *Natural Questions* vi. 32, near the end.

The *Natural Questions* is Seneca's treatise on natural phenomena; its sixth book, on earthquakes, closes with reflections on the fear of death.

24. See xii. 36.

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- II.15** Remember that everything is but what we think it. For obvious indeed is the saying fathered on Monimus the Cynic, obvious too the utility of what was said,²⁵ if one accept the gist of it as far as it is true.

25. τυφον εἶναι τὰ πάντα, Menander, *Fragment* 249, Kock's edition (Diogenes Laertius vi. 3, § 2); Sextus Empiricus (*Against the Logicians* ii. 1) attributes the saying to Monimus.

Typhon einai ta panta, "all things are *typhos*": literally "smoke" or "vapour," and by extension delusion or empty conceit. Monimus of Syracuse was a Cynic philosopher and pupil of the Cynic Diogenes of Sinope. Menander was the leading playwright of Athenian New Comedy, here cited by fragment number in Theodor Kock's collection of the comic fragments; Sextus Empiricus was a physician and Skeptic philosopher, probably of the 2nd or 3rd century.

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- II.16** The soul of man does wrong to itself then most of all, when it makes itself, as far as it can do so, an imposthume and as it were a malignant growth in the Universe. For to grumble at anything that happens is a rebellion against Nature, in some part of which are bound up the natures of all other things. And the soul wrongs itself then again, when it turns away from any man or even opposes him with intent to do him harm, as is the case with those who are angry. It does wrong to itself, thirdly, when it is overcome by pleasure²⁶ or pain. Fourthly, when it assumes a mask, and in act or word is insincere or untruthful. Fifthly, when it directs some act or desire of its own towards no mark, and expends its energy on any thing whatever aimlessly and unadvisedly,

whereas even the most trifling things should be done with reference to the end in view. Now the end for rational beings is to submit themselves to the reason and law of that archetypal city and polity²⁷—the Universe.

26. Compare Euripides, *Fragment* 107: ὅταν γλυκείας ἡδονῆς ἦσσαν τις ᾗ.

Euripides was the last of the three great Athenian tragedians; many of his plays survive only in fragments quoted by later writers. The line, in translation: “whenever someone is overcome by sweet pleasure.”

27. Aristides, *Panegyric at Cyzicus* § 427 (Jebb’s edition), ὁ γὰρ λογισμὸς αὐτῶν (Marcus and Lucius) θεῖος καὶ ὡς ἀληθῶς ἀνωθεν ἔχων τὸ παράδειγμα, καὶ πρὸς ἐκείνην ὁρῶν τὴν πολιτείαν.

The Greek, from Aristides’ speech at Cyzicus, reads: “For their reasoning is divine, and truly has its pattern from above, and looks toward that polity.” “Their” refers to Marcus and Lucius Verus as joint emperors.

II.17 Of the life of man the duration is but a point, its substance streaming away, its perception dim, the fabric of the entire body prone to decay, and the soul a vortex, and fortune incalculable, and fame uncertain. In a word all the things of the body are as a river, and the things of the soul as a dream and a vapour; and life is a warfare and a pilgrim’s sojourn, and fame after death is only forgetfulness. What then is it that can help us on our way? One thing and one alone—Philosophy; and this consists in keeping the divine ‘genius’ within pure²⁸ and unwronged, lord of all pleasures and pains, doing nothing aimlessly²⁹ or with deliberate falsehood and hypocrisy, independent of another’s action or inaction; and furthermore welcoming what happens and is allotted, as issuing from the same source, whatever it be, from which the man himself has issued; and above all waiting for death with a good grace as being but a setting free of the elements of which every thing living is made up. But if there be nothing terrible in each thing being continuously changed into another thing, why should a man look askance at the change and dissolution of all things? For it is in the way of Nature, and in the way of Nature there can be no evil. *Written at Carnuntum.*^{30,31}

28. See § 13.

29. See § 5, 16.

30. These words may very possibly be intended as a heading for Book III.

31. Now Haimburg in Hungary.

Carnuntum was a Roman legionary fortress on the Danube in Pannonia, east of Vienna, near the modern village of Petronell-Carnuntum. Haines's "Haimburg" is the neighbouring town of Hainburg an der Donau, which in 1916 lay within Austria-Hungary.

BOOK III

III.1 We ought not to think only upon the fact that our life each day is waning away, what is left of it being ever less, but this also should be a subject for thought, that even if life be prolonged, yet is it uncertain whether the mind will remain equally fitted in the future for the understanding of facts and for that contemplation which strains after the knowledge of things divine and human. For if a man has entered upon his dotage, there will still be his the power of breathing,¹ and digestion, and thought, and desire, and all such-like faculties; but the full use of himself,² the accurate appreciation of the items³ of duty, the nice discrimination of what presents itself to the senses, and a clear judgment on the question whether it is time for him to end his own life,⁴ and all such decisions, as above all require well-trained powers of reasoning—these are already flickering out in him. It needs, then, that we should press onwards, not only because we come each moment nearer to death, but also because our insight into facts and our close touch of them is gradually ceasing even before we die.

1. vi. 16. Aristotle's *Problems* i. 21: ὅπερ ἐν τῷ θώρακι ἀναπνοή, τοῦτο ἐν τῷ σώματι διαπνοή διὰ τῶν ἀρτηριῶν (arterial breathing).

The *Problems* is a collection of questions in natural science transmitted among Aristotle's works. The Greek, in translation: "what breathing is in the chest, transpiration through the arteries is in the body."

2. Compare Seneca's *Epistles* 60: *vivit is qui se utitur*.

Seneca's Latin, in translation: "he lives who makes use of himself."

3. See vi. 26.

4. x. 8, § 3. The right of suicide was part of the Stoic creed (Zeno and Cleanthes both took their own lives). Marcus allows it when circumstances make it impossible for a man to live his true life (v. 29; viii. 47; x. 8. Compare Epictetus's *Discourses* i. 24, § 20; i. 25, § 18). Hadrian (Justinian's *Digest* 28. 3. 6, § 7) enumerates as causes of suicide *taedium vitae*, *valetudinis adversae impatientia*, *iactatio* (in the case of certain philosophers). Marcus himself, if Dio's *Roman History* (71. 30, § 2) is to be trusted, threatened, in a letter to the Senate, to commit suicide, and according to Capitolinus's *Life of Marcus* (xxviii. 3) actually hastened his own death by abstaining from food.

Zeno of Citium, the founder of Stoicism, and Cleanthes, his successor as head of the school, were both said to have ended their own lives in old age. The *Digest* passage, on the validity of wills made by those who took their own lives, records Hadrian's list of motives: *taedium vitae*, "weariness of life"; *valetudinis adversae impatientia*, "inability to bear ill health"; and *iactatio*, "display," which Haines notes was said of certain philosophers.

III.2 Such things as this also we ought to note with care, that the accessories too of natural operations have a charm and attractiveness of their own. For instance, when bread is in the baking, some of the parts split open, and these very fissures, though in a sense thwarting the bread-maker's design, have an appropriateness of their own and in a peculiar way stimulate the desire for food. Again when figs are at their ripest, they gape open; and in olives that are ready to fall their very approach to over-ripeness gives a peculiar beauty to the fruit. And the full ears of corn bending downwards, and the lion's beetling brows, and the foam dripping from the jaws of the wild-boar,⁵ and many other things, though, if looked at apart from their setting, they are far from being comely, yet, as resultants from the operations of Nature, lend them an added charm and excite our admiration.

And so, if a man has sensibility and a deeper insight into the workings of the Universe, scarcely anything, though it exist only as a secondary consequence to something else, but will seem to him to form in its own peculiar way a pleasing adjunct to the whole. And he will look on the actual gaping jaws⁶ of wild beasts⁷ with no less pleasure than the representations of them by limners and modellers; and he will be able to see in the aged of either sex a mature prime and comely ripeness, and

gaze with chaste eyes upon the alluring loveliness of the young. And many such things there are which do not appeal to everyone, but will come home to him alone who is genuinely intimate with Nature and her works.

5. A very fine early medallion shows Marcus in full chase after a wild boar (Grueber's *Roman Medallions in the British Museum*, Plate xviii.). Compare Dio's *Roman History* 71. 36, § 2: σὺς ἀγρίου ἐν θήρᾳ κατέβαλλεν ἀπὸ ἵππου; Fronto's letter to Marcus as Caesar, iii. 20; iv. 5; Capitolinus's *Life of Marcus* iv. 9.

Herbert A. Grueber's *Roman Medallions in the British Museum* catalogues the museum's medallions, large commemorative pieces struck like coins but not used as currency. The historian Dio's Greek, in translation: "he struck down wild boars from horseback while hunting."

6. See iv. 36.

7. Such are the things Marcus noticed in the amphitheatre, and not the bloodshed which his soul abhorred (Dio's *Roman History* 71. 29, § 3).

The historian Cassius Dio records that Marcus was so averse to bloodshed that at Rome he would watch gladiators fight only with blunted weapons.

III.3 Hippocrates, after healing many a sick man, fell sick himself and died. Many a death have Chaldaeans foretold, and then their own fate has overtaken them also.⁸ Alexander, Pompeius and Gaius Caesar times without number utterly destroyed whole cities, and cut to pieces many myriads of horse and foot on the field of battle, yet the day came when they too departed this life. Heraclitus, after endless speculations on the destruction of the world by fire, came to be filled internally with water, and died beplastered with cowdung. And lice caused the death of Democritus,⁹ and other vermin of Socrates.

What of this? Thou hast gone aboard, thou hast set sail, thou hast touched land; go ashore; if indeed for another life, there is nothing even there void of Gods; but if to a state of non-sensation,¹⁰ thou shalt cease being at the mercy of pleasure and pain and lackeying the bodily vessel¹¹ which is so much baser than that which ministers to it. For the one is intelligence and a divine 'genius,' the other dust and putrescence.

8. See iv. 48.

9. Told of Pherecydes (Diogenes Laertius, *Life of Pherecydes* v, viii.), of Speusippus (*Life of Speusippus* ix.), and even of Plato (*Life of Plato* xxix.), but not elsewhere of Democritus. Lucian (doubtful attribution), *Long-Lived Men* 15, says Democritus died of starvation aged 104.

Pherecydes of Syros was a 6th-century BC Greek thinker, traditionally a teacher of Pythagoras; Speusippus was Plato's nephew and his successor as head of the Academy; and Democritus of Abdera (5th century BC) was, with Leucippus, the founder of atomism. Haines marks the attribution of *Long-Lived Men* to Lucian as doubtful.

10. Compare Justin Martyr's *Apology* i. §§ 18, 57.

Justin Martyr addressed his *First Apology* to Antoninus Pius and his adopted sons, Marcus among them. In chapter 18 he argues that the dead retain sensation, since if death ended in insensibility it would be a boon to the wicked.

11. So *vas animi*, Cicero's *Tusculan Disputations* i. 22, § 52. Compare St. Paul, 1 Thessalonians iv. 4 (σκεῦος); Dio Chrysostom's *Orations* xii., Reiske's edition p. 404: ἀνθρώπινον σῶμα ὡς ἀγγεῖον φρονήσεως καὶ λόγου.

Cicero's *Tusculan Disputations* (45 BC) are five dialogues on death, pain, grief, and happiness; *vas animi*, "vessel of the soul," is his image for the body. In 1 Thessalonians 4:4 Paul's word is *skeuos*, "vessel." The orator Dio Chrysostom's twelfth oration, the *Olympic Discourse*, is cited by page in Johann Jakob Reiske's 18th-century edition; the Greek, in translation: "the human body as a vessel of wisdom and reason."

III.4 Fritter not away what is left of thy life in thoughts about others, unless thou canst bring these thoughts into relation with some common interest. For verily thou dost hereby cut thyself off from other work, that is, by thinking what so and so is doing and why, what he is saying, having what in mind, contriving what, and all the many like things such as whirl thee aside from keeping close watch over thine own ruling Reason.

We ought therefore to eschew the aimless¹² and the unprofitable in the chain of our thoughts, still more all that is over-curious and ill-natured, and a man should accustom himself to think only of those things about which, if one were to ask on a sudden, *What now in thy thoughts?* thou couldst quite frankly answer at once, *This or that*; so that thine answer should immediately make manifest that all that is in thee is simple and kindly and worthy of a living being that is social and has no thought for

pleasures or for the entire range of sensual images, or for any rivalry, envy, suspicion, or anything else, whereat thou wouldest blush to admit that thou hadst it in thy mind.¹³

For in truth such a man, one who no longer puts off being reckoned now, if never before, among the best, is in some sort a priest and minister of the Gods, putting to use also that which, enthroned within him,¹⁴ keeps the man unstained by pleasures, invulnerable to all pain, beyond the reach of any wrong, proof against all evil, a champion in the highest of championships—that of never being overthrown by any passion—dyed in grain with justice, welcoming with all his soul everything that befalls and is allotted him, and seldom, nor yet without a great and a general necessity, concerning himself with the words or deeds or thoughts of another. For it is only the things which relate to himself that he brings within the scope of his activities, and he never ceases to ponder over what is being spun for him as his share in the fabric of the Universe, and he sees to it that the former are worthy, and is assured that the latter is good. For the fate which is allotted to each man is swept along with him in the Universe as well as sweeps him along with it.¹⁵

And he bears in mind that all that is rational is akin, and that it is in man's nature to care for all men, and that we should not embrace the opinion of all, but of those alone who live in conscious agreement with Nature. But what sort of men they, whose life is not after this pattern, are at home and abroad, by night and in the day, in what vices they wallow and with whom—of this he is ever mindful. Consequently he takes no account of praise from such men, who in fact cannot even win their own approval.

12. See ii. 5.

13. Compare Fronto's letter to a friend, i. 12: *nullum est factum meum dictumve quod clam ceteris esse velim: quia cuius rei mihi met ipse conscius sim, ceteros quoque omnes iuxta mecum scire velim.*

Fronto's letters "to a friend" (*Ad Amicos*) are a separate collection within his correspondence. The Latin, in translation: "there is nothing I have done or said that I would wish hidden from others; for whatever I know of myself, I would wish everyone else to know as well as I."

14. See ii. 13. 17; iii. 6. 16.

15. Or, more abstractly, *is conditioned no less than conditions*.

III.5 Do that thou doest neither unwillingly nor selfishly nor without examination nor against the grain. Dress not thy thought in too fine a garb. Be not a man of superfluous words or superfluous deeds. Moreover let the god that is in thee¹⁶ be lord of a living creature, that is manly, and of full age, and concerned with statecraft, and a Roman, and a ruler, who hath taken his post as one who awaits the signal of recall from life in all readiness, needing no oath nor any man as his voucher. Be thine the cheery face and independence of help,¹⁷ from without and independence of such ease as others can give. It needs then to stand, and not be set, upright.’¹⁸

16. See ii. 13. 17; iii. 6.

17. But see vii. 7.

18. See i. 15, § 3; vii. 12.

III.6 If indeed thou findest in the life of man a better thing than justice, than truth, than temperance, than manliness, and, in a word, than thy mind’s satisfaction with itself in things wherein it shews thee acting according to the true dictates of reason, and with destiny in what is allotted thee apart from thy choice—if, I say, thou seest anything better than this, turn to it with all thy soul and take thy fill of the best, as thou findest it.

But if there appears nothing better than the very deity¹⁹ enthroned in thee, which has brought into subjection to itself all individual desires, which scrutinizes the thoughts, and, in the words of Socrates, has withdrawn itself from all the enticements of the senses, and brought itself into subjection to the Gods, and cherishes a fellow-feeling for men—if thou findest everything else pettier and of less account than this, give place to nought else, to which if thou art but once plucked aside, and incline thereto, never more shalt thou be able without distraction to give paramount honour to that good which is thine own peculiar heritage. For it is not right that any

extraneous thing at all, such as the praise of the many, or office, or wealth, or indulgence in pleasure, should avail against that good which is identical with reason and a civic spirit. All these things, even if they seem for a little to fit smoothly into our lives, on a sudden overpower us and sweep us away.

But do thou, I say, simply and freely choose the better and hold fast to it. *But that is the better which is to my interest.* If it is to thy interest as a rational creature, hold that fast; but if as a mere animal, declare it boldly and maintain thy judgment without arrogance. Only see to it that thou hast made thy enquiry without error.

19. iii. 4, § 3, 12, 16, or good ‘genius,’ but compare iii. 5, θεός.

Haines’s point is that Marcus calls the divinity within a man *daimōn*, which Haines renders “genius,” in III.4, but *theos*, “god,” in III.5.

III.7 Prize not anything as being to thine interest that shall ever force thee to break thy troth, to surrender thine honour, to hate, suspect, or curse anyone, to play the hypocrite, to lust after anything that needs walls and curtains.²⁰ For he that has chosen before all else his own intelligence and good genius, and to be a devotee of its supreme worth, does not strike a tragic attitude or whine, nor will he ask for either a wilderness or a concourse of men; above all he will live neither chasing anything nor shunning it. And he recks not at all whether he is to have his soul imprisoned in his body for a longer or a shorter span of time,²¹ for even if he must take his departure at once, he will go as willingly as if he were to discharge any other function that can be discharged with decency and orderliness, making sure through life of this one thing, that his thoughts should not in any case assume a character out of keeping with a rational and civic creature.

20. iii. 16; Epictetus’s *Discourses* iii. 22, § 16. Compare Plutarch’s *Table Talk* vii. 5.

Epictetus’s discourse iii. 22 is on the calling of the Cynic philosopher, whom he contrasts with those who conceal their conduct behind walls and doors. Plutarch’s *Table Talk* is a collection of discussions set at dinner parties.

21. Seneca's *Natural Questions* vi. 32, near the end.

- III.8** In the mind of the man that has been chastened and thoroughly cleansed thou wilt find no foul abscess or gangrene or hidden sore. Nor is his life cut short, when the day of destiny overtakes him, as we might say of a tragedian's part, who leaves the stage before finishing his speech and playing out the piece.²² Furthermore there is nothing there slavish or affected, no dependence on others or severance from them,²³ no sense of accountability or skulking to avoid it.

22. xii. 36; Seneca's *Epistles* 77.

Seneca's seventy-seventh letter, written after the suicide of his friend Tullius Marcellinus, closes by comparing life to a play: what matters is not how long it is but how well it is acted.

23. See viii. 34.

- III.9** Hold sacred thy capacity for forming opinions. With that it rests wholly that thy ruling Reason should never admit any opinion out of harmony with Nature, and with the constitution of a rational creature. This ensures due deliberation and fellowship with mankind and fealty to the Gods.
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- III.10** Jettison everything else, then, and lay hold of these things only, few as they are; and remember withal that it is only this present,²⁴ a moment of time, that a man lives: all the rest either has been lived or may never be. Little indeed, then, is a man's life, and little the nook of earth,²⁵ whereon he lives, and little even the longest after-fame, and that too handed on through a succession of manikins, each one of them very soon to be dead, with no knowledge even of themselves, let alone of a man who has died long since.

24. See ii. 14.

III.11 To the stand-bys mentioned add one more, that a definition or delineation should be made of every object that presents itself, so that we may see what sort of thing it is in its essence²⁶ stripped of its adjuncts, a separate whole taken as such, and tell over with ourselves both its particular designation and the names of the elements that compose it and into which it will be disintegrated.

For nothing is so conducive to greatness of mind as the ability to examine systematically and honestly everything that meets us in life, and to regard these things always in such a way as to form a conception of the kind of Universe they belong to, and of the use which the thing in question subserves in it; what value it has for the whole Universe and what for man, citizen as he is of the highest state, of which all other states are but as households; what it actually is, and compounded of what elements, and likely to last how long—namely this that now gives me the impression in question; and what virtue it calls for from me, such as gentleness, manly courage, truth, fidelity, guilelessness, frugality, and the rest.

In each case therefore must thou say: *This has come from God; and this is due to the conjunction of fate and the contexture of the world's web and some such coincidence and chance;*²⁷ *while that comes from a clansman and a kinsman and a fellow, albeit one who is ignorant of what is really in accordance with his nature. But I am not ignorant, therefore I treat him kindly and justly, in accordance with the natural law of neighbourliness; at the same time, of things that are neither good nor bad, my aim is to hit their true worth.*

26. See xii. 10. 18.

27. Notice the fondness of Marcus for compounds of συν- and his use here of alliteration, compare xii. 14.

Syn- is the Greek prefix “with, together.”

III.12 If in obedience to right reason thou doest the thing that thy hand findeth to do earnestly, manfully, graciously, and in no sense as a by-work,²⁸ and keepest that divine ‘genius’,²⁹ of thine in its virgin state, just as if even now thou wert called upon to restore it to the Giver—if thou grapple this to thee, looking for nothing, shrinking from nothing, but content with a present sphere of activity such as Nature allows, and with old-world truth in every word and utterance of thy tongue, thou shalt be happy in thy life. And there is no one that is able to prevent this.

28. Compare Dio’s *Roman History* 71. 6, § 2 (of Marcus): οὐδὲν ἐν παρέργῳ οὔτε ἔλεγεν οὔτε ἔγραψεν οὔτε ἐποίησεν.

The historian Dio’s Greek, in translation: “he neither said nor wrote nor did anything as a by-work.”

29. See iii. 6, § 2.

III.13 Just as physicians always keep their lancets and instruments ready to their hands for emergency operations, so also do thou keep thine axioms ready for the diagnosis of things human and divine, and for the performing of every act, even the pettiest, with the fullest consciousness of the mutual ties between these two.³⁰ For thou shalt never carry out well any human duty unless thou correlate it to the divine, nor the reverse.

30. That is, the human and the divine.

III.14 Go astray no more; for thou art not likely to read thy little *Memoranda*,³¹ or the *Acts of the Romans and the Greeks of Old Time*,³² and the extracts³³ from their writings which thou wast laying up against thine old age. Haste then to the consummation and, casting away all empty hopes, if thou carest aught for thy welfare, come to thine own rescue, while it is allowed thee.

31. It is not clear whether Marcus refers to the present book. He uses a similar word for the discourses of Epictetus (i. 7).

Marcus's word is *hypomnēmatia*, a diminutive of *hypomnēmata*, "notes" or "memoirs"; in I.7 he uses *hypomnēmata* of Arrian's record of Epictetus's teaching.

32. ii. 2. Some have seen here a reference to a history written by Marcus himself.

33. See Fronto's letter to Marcus as Caesar, ii. 10: *excerpta ex libris sexaginta in quinque tomis*.

The letter is Marcus's own, written to Fronto: "I have made for myself during these days extracts from sixty books, in five volumes." No such collection survives.

III.15 They know not how full of meaning are—to thief,³⁴ to sow, to buy, to be at peace, to see what needs doing, and this is not a matter for the eye but for another sort of sight.

34. See xi. 3.

III.16 *Body, Soul, Intelligence:* for the body sensations, for the soul desires, for the intelligence axioms. To receive impressions by way of the senses is not denied even to cattle; to be as puppets³⁵ pulled by the strings of desire is common to wild beasts and to pathics and to a Phalaris and a Nero. Yet to have the intelligence a guide to what they deem their duty is an attribute of those also who do not believe in Gods and those who fail their country in its need and those who do their deeds behind closed doors.³⁶

If then all else is the common property of the classes mentioned, there is left as the characteristic of the good man to delight in and to welcome what befalls and what is spun for him by destiny; and not to sully the divine 'genius' that is enthroned in his bosom,³⁷ nor yet to perplex it with a multitude of impressions, but to maintain it to the end in a gracious serenity, in orderly obedience to God, uttering no word that is not true and doing no deed that is not just. But if all men disbelieve in his living a

simple and modest and cheerful life, he is not wroth with any of them, nor swerves from the path which leads to his life's goal, whither he must go pure, peaceful, ready for release, needing no force to bring him into accord with his lot.

35. See ii. 2.

36. Must undoubtedly refer to the Christians, who were accused precisely of these three things—atheism, want of patriotism, and secret orgies. Compare also i. 6; vii. 68; viii. 48, 51; and see note pp. 381 ff.

The charges are those the 2nd-century Christian apologists answer: Athenagoras's *Plea for the Christians*, addressed to Marcus and Commodus, lists atheism, cannibal feasts, and incest. Haines's "pp. 381 ff." refers to his appended note on Marcus and the Christians.

37. iii. 6, § 2; St. Paul, 1 Corinthians iii. 16.

In 1 Corinthians 3:16 Paul writes, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" (King James).

BOOK IV

IV.1 That which holds the mastery¹ within us, when it is in accordance with Nature, is so disposed towards what befalls, that it can always adapt itself with ease to what is possible and granted us. For it is wedded to no definite material, but, though in the pursuit of its high aims it works under reservations,² yet it converts into material for itself any obstacle that it meets with, just as fire³ when it gets the mastery of what is thrown in upon it. A little flame would have been stifled by it, but the blazing fire instantly assimilates what is cast upon it and, consuming it, leaps the higher in consequence.

1. iii. 6, § 2, etc. Compare Lucian, *The Dream* 10: ἡ ψυχὴ, ὅπερ σου κυριώτατόν ἐστιν.

Marcus's phrase is *to endon kyrieuon*, "that which holds the mastery within." Lucian's *The Dream* is his account of choosing a literary education over a trade as a sculptor; the Greek, in translation: "the soul, which is the most sovereign part of you."

2. That is, conditionally or as far as circumstances will allow, vi. 50. Compare St. James, Epistle iv. 15.

Marcus's word is *hypexairesis*, "reservation," the Stoic term for undertaking an action on the condition that nothing prevents it. James 4:15 expresses the same condition: "If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that" (King James).

3. v. 20; vi. 50; Seneca's *On Providence* 2.

Seneca's *On Providence* is an essay on why good men suffer misfortune; in its second chapter he argues that adversity is the exercise by which virtue is tested and strengthened.

IV.2 Take no act in hand aimlessly⁴ or otherwise than in accordance with the true principles perfective of the art.

4. See ii. 5 etc.

IV.3 Men seek out retreats for themselves in the country, by the seaside, on the mountains, and thou too art wont to long intensely for such things.⁵ But all this is unphilosophical to the last degree, when thou canst at a moment's notice retire into thyself.⁶ For nowhere can a man find a retreat more full of peace or more free from care than his own soul—above all if he have that within him, a steadfast look,⁷ at which and he is at once in all good ease, and by good ease I mean nothing other than good order. Make use then of this retirement continually and regenerate thyself. Let thy axioms be short and elemental, such as, when set before thee, will at once rid thee of all trouble, and send thee away with no discontent at those things to which thou art returning.

For with what art thou discontented? The wickedness of men? Take this conclusion to heart, that rational creatures have been made for one another; that forbearance is part of justice; that wrong-doing is involuntary;⁸ and think how many ere now, after passing their lives in implacable enmity, suspicion, hatred, and at daggers drawn with one another, have been laid out and burnt to ashes—think of this, I say, and at last stay thy fretting. But art thou discontented with thy share in the whole? Recall the alternative: *Either Providence or Atoms!*⁹ and the abundant proofs there are that the Universe is as it were a state.¹⁰ But is it the affections of the body that shall still lay hold on thee? Bethink thee that the Intelligence, when it has once abstracted itself and learnt its own power,¹¹ has nothing to do with the motions smooth or rough of the vital breath. Bethink thee too of all that thou hast heard and subscribed to about pleasure and pain.

But will that paltry thing, Fame, pluck thee aside? Look at the swift approach of complete forgetfulness, and the void of infinite time on this side of us and on that, and the empty echo of acclamation, and the fickleness and uncritical judgment of those who claim to speak well of us, and the narrowness of the arena to which all this is confined. For the whole earth is but a point, and how tiny a corner¹² of it is this the place of our sojourning! and how many therein and of what sort are the men who shall praise thee!

From now therefore bethink thee of the retreat into this little plot that is thyself. Above all distract not thyself, be not too eager, but be thine own master, and look upon life as a man, as a human being, as a citizen, as a mortal creature. But among the principles readiest to thine hand, upon which thou shalt pore, let there be these two. One, that objective things do not lay hold of the soul, but stand quiescent without; while disturbances are but the outcome of that opinion which is within us. A second, that all this visible world changes in a moment, and will be no more; and continually bethink thee to the changes of how many things thou hast already been a witness. ‘The Universe—mutation: Life—opinion.’¹³

5. For example, Lorium, Lanuvium, Alsium, Centumcellae, Praeneste, Baiae, Caieta, all holiday resorts of Marcus; see especially Fronto’s *On the Holidays at Alsium*, Naber’s edition p. 223 ff. Compare x. 15, 23.

The places are villas and resorts in central Italy: Lorium, Antoninus Pius’s estate on the Via Aurelia west of Rome; Lanuvium, in the Alban Hills, Pius’s birthplace; Alsium, on the Etruscan coast; Centumcellae, the modern Civitavecchia; Praeneste, the modern Palestrina; Baiae, on the Bay of Naples; and Caieta, the modern Gaeta. Fronto’s *On the Holidays at Alsium* is a set of letters urging Marcus to rest from work while on holiday there.

6. Compare Arethas on Dio Chrysostom’s *Orations* xx. 8: μή οὖν βελτίστη καὶ λυσιτελεστάτη πασῶν ἡ εἰς αὐτὸν ἀναχώρησις. See below iv. 3, § 4; vii. 28.

Dio Chrysostom’s twentieth oration is *On Retirement*. Arethas’s note on it echoes this passage; in translation: “is not withdrawal into oneself the best and most profitable of all?”

7. For ἐγκύψας compare St. James, Epistle i. 25: παρακύψας.

Marcus’s *enkypsas* and James’s *parakypsas* both picture stooping to look closely into something; James 1:25 has “whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty” (King James).

8. See vii. 22, 63; xi. 18, § 3.

9. See viii. 17; ix. 28, 39.

The alternative sets the Stoic view, that the universe is governed by a providential reason, against the Epicurean view, that it is a chance concourse of atoms. At IX.28, one of the passages cited, Marcus states what follows for conduct: “if God—all is well; if haphazard—be not thou also haphazard.”

10. ii. 16, near the end; iv. 4; x. 15; xii. 36. St. Paul, Philippians iii. 20.

Paul’s word in Philippians 3:20 is *politeuma*, “citizenship” or “commonwealth,” which the King James renders “conversation”: “our conversation is in heaven.”

11. See v. 14.

12. See iii. 10; viii. 21.

13. ii. 15; iv. 7; xii. 22. A maxim of Democrates, a Pythagorean; compare Shakespeare's *Hamlet* ii. 2. 256, "There is nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so"; Tennyson: "All things are, as they seem, to all." Some have been found to say that even matter has no objective existence.

The maxims transmitted under the name "Democrates" are often assigned to Democritus, though their authenticity is disputed. Hamlet's line comes in his exchange with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, after he calls Denmark a prison.

IV.4 If the intellectual capacity is common to us all, common too is the reason, which makes us rational creatures. If so, that reason also is common which tells us to do or not to do. If so, law¹⁴ also is common. If so, we are citizens. If so, we are fellow-members of an organised community. If so, the Universe is as it were a state¹⁵—for of what other single polity can the whole race of mankind be said to be fellow-members?—and from it, this common State, we get the intellectual, the rational, and the legal instinct, or whence do we get them? For just as the earthy part has been portioned off for me from some earth, and the watery from another element, and the aerial¹⁶ from some source, and the hot and fiery from some source of its own—for nothing comes from the non-existent, any more than it disappears into nothingness—so also the intellect has undoubtedly come from somewhere.

14. vii. 9. Compare the *Epitome de Caesaribus*, attributed to Aurelius Victor, xvi. 4: *Mundi lex seu Natura*.

The *Epitome de Caesaribus* is a short anonymous history of the emperors, long attributed to Aurelius Victor. *Mundi lex seu Natura*: "the law of the world, or Nature."

15. See iv. 3, § 2.

16. Literally *the pneumatic*, here = τὸ ἀερῶδες (x. 7, § 2).

Marcus's word is *pneumatikon*, from *pneuma*, "breath" or "spirit"; *to aerōdes*, "the airy," is the term Haines takes it to stand for.

IV.5 Death like birth is a secret of Nature—a combination of the same elements, a breaking up into the same—and not at all a thing in fact for any to be ashamed of,¹⁷ for it is not out of keeping with an intellectual creature or the reason of his constitution.

17. See vii. 64.

IV.6 Given such men, it was in the nature of the case inevitable that their conduct should be of this kind.¹⁸ To wish it otherwise, is to wish that the fig-tree had no acrid juice.¹⁹ As a general conclusion call this to mind, that within a very short time both thou and he will be dead, and a little later not even your names will be left behind you.

18. See v. 17.

19. xii. 16. Compare Bacon's essay *On Revenge*.

Bacon's essay, titled "Of Revenge" in his *Essays* (1625), makes the same comparison: a man who does wrong out of ill nature is "like the thorn or briar, which prick and scratch, because they can do no other."

IV.7 Efface the opinion, *I am harmed*, and at once the feeling of being harmed disappears; efface the feeling, and the harm disappears at once.²⁰

20. See iv. 3, § 4; vii. 14, 29; ix. 7; xii. 25.

IV.8 That which does not make a man himself worse than before cannot make his life worse²¹ either, nor injure it whether from without or within.

21. See ii. 11; vii. 64.

IV.9 The nature of the general good could not but have acted so.

IV.10 Note that all that befalls befallerth justly. Keep close watch and thou wilt find this true, I do not say, as a matter of sequence merely but as a matter of justice also, and as would be expected from One whose dispensation is based on desert.²² Keep close watch, then, as thou hast begun, and whatsoever thou doest, do it as only a good man should in the strictest sense of that word. In every sphere of activity safeguard this.

22. See x. 25.

IV.11 Harbour no such opinions as he holds who does thee violence, or as he would have thee hold. See things in all their naked reality.

IV.12 Thou shouldest have these two readinesses always at hand; the one which prompts thee to do only what thy reason in its royal and law-making capacity shall suggest for the good of mankind; the other to change thy mind,²³ if one be near to set thee right, and convert thee from some vain conceit. But this conversion should be the outcome of a persuasion in every case that the thing is just or to the common interest—and some such cause should be the only one—not because it is seemingly pleasant or popular.

23. Compare Capitolinus's *Life of Marcus* xxii. 4.

Capitolinus records Marcus's saying that it is fairer for him to follow the advice of so many friends than for so many friends to follow his will.

IV.13 Hast thou reason? *I have*. Why then not use it? For if this performs its part, what else²⁴ wouldest thou have?

24. See vii. 73; ix. 42, near the end.

IV.14 Thou hast subsisted as part of the Whole.²⁵ Thou shalt vanish into that which begat thee, or rather thou shalt be taken again into its Seminal Reason²⁶ by a process of change.

25. See ii. 3.

26. The primal Fire and the eternal Reason are one and the same, and held to contain the seed of all things. Compare Justin Martyr's *Apology* ii. 8, 13, for λόγος σπερματικός used of Christ.

The Stoic term is *logos spermatikos*, "seminal reason": the rational principle containing the seeds from which all things develop. Justin Martyr, in his *Second Apology*, applies the phrase to the divine Word, a share of which he held to be present in all people.

IV.15 Many little pellets of frankincense fall upon the same altar, some are cast on it sooner, some later: but it makes no difference.

IV.16 Ere ten days are past, thou shalt rank as a god with them that hold thee now a wild-beast or an ape,²⁷ if thou but turn back to thy axioms and thy reverence of reason.

27. There was a Greek proverb: ἢ θεὸς ἢ θηρίον (Aristotle's *Politics* i. 2, *Ethics* vii. 1). Plutarch's *On Stoic Self-Contradictions* speaks of conversion by philosophy from a θηρίον to a θεός. See Justin Martyr's clever application of this proverb, *Apology* i. 24.

The proverb is *ē theos ē thērion*, "either a god or a beast"; in the *Politics* Aristotle says that a being who cannot live in a city is either a beast or a god. Plutarch's *On Stoic Self-Contradictions* is his polemic on inconsistencies in Stoic doctrine.

IV.17 Behave not as though thou hadst ten thousand years to live. Thy doom hangs over thee. While thou livest, while thou mayest, become good.

IV.18 What richness of leisure doth he gain who has no eye for his neighbour's words or deeds or thoughts,²⁸ but only for his own doings, that they be just and righteous! Verily it is not for the good man to peer about into the blackness of another's heart,²⁹ but to 'run straight for the goal with never a glance aside.'

28. See iii. 4, near the beginning.

29. See iv. 28.

IV.19 He whose heart flutters for after-fame³⁰ does not reflect that very soon every one of those who remember him, and he himself, will be dead, and their successors again after them, until at last the entire recollection of the man will be extinct, handed on as it is by links that flare up and are quenched. But put the case that those who are to remember are even immortal,³¹ and the remembrance immortal, what then is that to thee? To the dead man, I need scarcely say, the praise is nothing, but what is it to the living, except, indeed, in a subsidiary way?,³² For thou dost reject the bounty of nature unseasonably in the present, and clingest to what others shall say of thee hereafter.³³

30. See ii. 17; iii. 10; viii. 44; x. 34.

31. See iv. 33.

32. iv. 19, 51; xi. 18, § 5. The Greek word covers the meanings *expediency*, *management*, or *means to an end*. We use it in a sort of double sense in the expression *economy of truth*.

The Greek word is *oikonomia*, literally "household management."

33. Marcus is perhaps finding real fault with himself for caring so much what people said of him; see Capitolinus's *Life of Marcus* xx. 5; xxix. 5. But the reading is doubtful.

IV.20 Everything, which has any sort of beauty of its own, is beautiful of itself, and looks no further than itself, not counting praise as part of itself. For indeed that which is praised is made neither better nor worse thereby. This is true also of the things that in common parlance are called beautiful, such as material things and works of art. Does, then, the truly beautiful need anything beyond? Nay, no more than law, than truth,

than kindness, than modesty. Which of these owes its beauty to being praised, or loses it by being blamed? What! Does an emerald³⁴ forfeit its excellence by not being praised? Does gold, ivory, purple, a lyre, a poniard, a floweret, a shrub?

34. See vii. 15.

IV.21 If souls outlive their bodies, how does the air contain them³⁵ from times everlasting? How does the earth contain the bodies of those who have been buried in it for such endless ages? For just as on earth the change of these bodies, after continuance for a certain indefinite time, followed by dissolution, makes room for other dead bodies, so souls, when transferred into the air, after lasting for a certain time,³⁶ suffer change and are diffused and become fire, being taken again into the Seminal Reason of the Whole, and so allow room for those that subsequently take up their abode there. This would be the answer one would give on the assumption that souls outlive their bodies.

But not only must the multitude of bodies thus constantly being buried be taken into account, but also that of the creatures devoured daily by ourselves and the other animals. How great is the number consumed and thus in a way buried³⁷ in the bodies of those who feed upon them! And yet room is made for them all by their conversion into blood, by their transmutation into air or fire.

Where in this case lies the way of search for the truth? In a separation of the Material from the Causal.³⁸

35. Compare Tzetzes' *Chiliades* vii. 806.

John Tzetzes was a 12th-century Byzantine scholar; the *Chiliades* ("Thousands") is his long verse compendium of stories and learned lore.

36. iii. 3; vi. 24; vii. 32, 50; viii. 25, 58; xii. 5. The Stoic doctrine on this point was not very definite, but it was mostly held that souls might exist till the next cyclical conflagration, when they became merged into the λόγος σπερματικός. Marcus wavers in his belief.

The cyclical conflagration is the Stoic *ekpyrōsis*, in which the universe is periodically consumed by fire and renewed; *logos spermatikos*, "seminal reason," is the rational principle containing the seeds of all things.

37. Compare Fronto's letter to Marcus as Caesar, i. 6; Athenagoras's *Apology* 36. Apuleius (*Metamorphoses* iv, near the beginning) calls beasts the living tombs of condemned criminals. Longinus (*On the Sublime* iii) inveighs against the trope, as used by Gorgias of Leontini.

Athenagoras's *Apology* is his *Plea for the Christians*. Apuleius's *Metamorphoses*, also known as *The Golden Ass*, is a Latin comic novel of the 2nd century. *On the Sublime* is a Greek treatise on literary style of probably the 1st century AD, transmitted under the name of Longinus; it cites as an example of strained style Gorgias of Leontini, the 5th-century BC Sicilian rhetorician, calling vultures "living tombs."

38. See vii. 29.

IV.22 Be not whirled aside; but in every impulse fulfil the claims of justice, and in every impression safeguard certainty.

IV.23 All that is in tune with thee, O Universe,³⁹ is in tune with me! Nothing that is in due time for thee is too early or too late for me! All that thy seasons bring, O Nature, is fruit for me! All things come from thee, subsist in thee, go back to thee.⁴⁰ There is one who says *Dear City of Cecrops*⁴¹! Wilt thou not say *O dear City of Zeus*?

39. Nature, God, and the Universe were identical in the Stoic creed; see Seneca's *Natural Questions* ii. 45.

In *Natural Questions* ii. 45 Seneca says that the supreme god may rightly be called fate, providence, nature, or the world.

40. St. Paul, Romans xi. 36: ἐξ αὐτοῦ δι' αὐτοῦ εἰς αὐτὸν τὰ πάντα.

The Greek of Romans 11:36, in the King James rendering: "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things."

41. Seemingly a Fragment from Aristophanes.

Cecrops was, in legend, the first king of Attica, so the "City of Cecrops" is Athens. Marcus answers the line with "O dear City of Zeus," the universe as the single city of the Stoics.

IV.24 *If thou wouldst be tranquil in heart*, says the Sage,⁴² *do not many things*. Is not this a better maxim: do but what is needful, and what the reason of a living creature born for a civic life demands, and as it demands. For this brings the tranquillity which comes of doing few things no less than of doing them well. For nine tenths of our words and deeds being unnecessary, if a man retrench there, he will have more abundant leisure and fret the less. Wherefore forget not on every occasion to ask thyself, *Is this one of the unnecessary things?* But we must retrench not only actions but thoughts which are unnecessary, for then neither will distracting actions follow.

42. Democritus (Stobaeus i. 100): τὸν εὐθυμῆσθαι μέλλοντα χρὴ μὴ πολλὰ πρῆσσειν; iii. 5; Seneca's *On Tranquility of Mind* 12: *Hanc stabilem animi sedem Graeci εὐθυμίαν vocant, de qua Democriti volumen egregium est: ego Tranquillitatem voco.*

John Stobaeus was a 5th-century compiler of an anthology of excerpts from Greek authors. The Democritus fragment, in translation: "he who would be cheerful must not do many things." Seneca's Latin, in translation: "This steady seat of the mind the Greeks call *euthymia*, on which there is an excellent volume by Democritus; I call it tranquillity."

IV.25 Try living the life of the good man who is more than content with what is allotted to him out of the whole, and is satisfied with his own acts as just and his own disposition as kindly: see how that answers.

IV.26 Hast thou looked on that side of the picture? Look now on this! Fret not thyself; study to be simple.⁴³ Does a man do wrong? The wrong rests with him.⁴⁴ Has something befallen thee? It is well. Everything that befalls was from the beginning destined and spun⁴⁵ for thee as thy share out of the Whole. In a word, life is short.⁴⁶ Make profit of the present by right reasoning and justice. In thy relaxation be sober.

43. iv. 37; ix. 37. Dio's *Roman History* (71. 34 §§ 4, 5) says of Marcus οὐδὲν προσποίητον εἶχε, and he is a far better authority than Capitolinus's *Life of Marcus* xxix. 6 and xx. 1–4.

The historian Dio's Greek, in translation: "he had nothing affected about him."

44. See ix. 4, 38.

45. See iii. 11; iv. 34.

46. See iv. 17.

IV.27 Either there is a well-arranged Order of things or a medley that is confused,⁴⁷ yet still an order. Or can a sort of order subsist in thee, while in the Universe there is no order, and that too when all things, though separated and dispersed, are still in sympathetic connexion?

47. See vi. 10.

IV.28 A black character,⁴⁸ an unmanly character, an obstinate character, inhuman, animal, childish, stupid, counterfeit, shameless, mercenary, tyrannical.⁴⁹

48. See iv. 18.

49. Marcus here in his vehemence seems to violate his own gentle precepts. He must be thinking of some monster of iniquity, such as Nero.

IV.29 If he is an alien in the Universe who has no cognizance of the things that are in it, no less is he an alien⁵⁰ who has no cognizance of what is happening in it. He is an exile, who exiles himself from civic reason; blind, he who will not see with the eyes of his understanding⁵¹; a beggar, he who is dependent on another, and cannot draw from his own resources all that his life requires; an imposthume⁵² on the Universe, he who renounces, and severs himself from, the reason of our common Nature, because he is ill pleased at what happens—for the same Nature brings this into being, that also brought thee; a limb cut off from the community,⁵³ he who cuts off his own soul from the soul of all rational things, which is but one.

50. iv. 46. Compare 1 Peter iv. 12.

1 Peter 4:12 has “think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you” (King James).

51. St. Matthew xiii. 15.

Matthew 13:15 has “their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes” (King James).

52. See ii. 16.

53. viii. 34. Compare St. Paul, Romans xii. 5; 1 Corinthians xii. 20 f.

Romans 12:5 has “So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another,” and 1 Corinthians 12:20 “But now are they many members, yet but one body” (King James).

IV.30 One philosopher goes without a shirt, a second without a book, a third yonder half-naked: says he, *I am starving for bread, yet cleave I fast to Reason; and I get no living out of my learning, yet cleave I to her.*

IV.31 Cherish the art, though humble, that thou hast learned, and take thy rest therein; and pass through the remainder of thy days as one that with his whole soul has given all that is his in trust to the Gods, and has made of himself neither a tyrant nor a slave to any man.

IV.32 Think by way of illustration upon the times of Vespasian, and thou shalt see all these things: mankind marrying, rearing children, sickening, dying, warring, making holiday, trafficking, tilling, flattering others, vaunting themselves, suspecting, scheming, praying for the death of others,⁵⁴ murmuring at their own lot, loving, hoarding, coveting a consulate, coveting a kingdom. Not a vestige of that life of theirs is left anywhere any longer.

Change the scene again to the times of Trajan. Again it is all the same; that life too is dead. In like manner contemplate all the other records of past time and of entire nations, and see how many after all their high-strung efforts sank down so soon in death and were resolved into the elements. But above all must thou dwell in thought upon those whom thou hast thyself known, who, following after vanity, neglected to do the things that accorded with their own constitution and, cleaving steadfastly thereto, to be content with them. And here it is essential to remember that a due sense of value⁵⁵ and proportion should regulate the care bestowed on every action. For thus wilt thou never give over in disgust, if thou busy not thyself beyond what is right with the lesser things.

54. See a characteristic anecdote of Marcus' mother, Capitolinus's *Life of Marcus* vi. 9.

55. See iii. 11, near the end.

IV.33 Expressions once in use are now obsolete. So also the names of those much be-sung⁵⁶ heroes of old are in some sense obsolete, Camillus, Caeso, Volesus,⁵⁷ Dentatus, and a little later Scipio and Cato, then also Augustus, and then Hadrianus and Antoninus. For all things quickly fade away and become legendary, and soon absolute oblivion encairns them. And here I speak of those who made an extraordinary blaze in the world. For the rest, as soon as the breath is out of their bodies, it is, *Out of sight, out of mind*.⁵⁸ But what, when all is said, is even ever-lasting remembrance⁵⁹? Wholly vanity. What then is it that calls for our devotion? This one thing: justice in thought, in act unselfishness and a tongue that cannot lie and a disposition ready to welcome all that befalls as unavoidable, as familiar,⁶⁰ as issuing from a like origin and fountain-head.

56. See vii. 6.

57. Volesus, or Volusus, was the family name of the Valerii. Valerius Poplicola must be meant, the obsolete name adding to the point.

The first names in the list are those of heroes of the early Roman Republic. Camillus is Marcus Furius Camillus, traditionally the saviour of Rome after the Gallic sack of about 390 BC; Publius Valerius Poplicola was, by tradition, one of the first consuls after the expulsion of the kings in 509 BC.

58. Homer's *Odyssey* i. 242.

Marcus's words are *aistoi*, *apustoi*, "unseen, unheard of," which Haines renders "Out of sight, out of mind." In *Odyssey* i. 242 Telemachus uses them of his father, who has vanished without trace.

59. See iv. 19.

60. See iv. 44.

IV.34 Offer thyself whole-heartedly to Clotho, letting her spin thy thread to serve what purpose soever she will.

IV.35 Ephemeral all of them, the rememberer as well as the remembered!

IV.36 Unceasingly contemplate the generation of all things through change, and accustom thyself to the thought that the Nature of the Universe delights above all in changing the things that exist and making new ones of the same pattern. For in a manner everything that exists is the seed of that which shall come out of it. But thou imaginest that only to be seed that is deposited in the earth or the womb, a view beyond measure unphilosophical.

IV.37 A moment and thou wilt be dead; and not even yet art thou simple, nor unperturbed, nor free from all suspicion that thou canst be injured by externals, nor gracious⁶¹ to all, nor convinced that wisdom and just dealing are but one.

61. Compare Herodian (i. 2, § 4) of Marcus: τοὺς προσίοντας δεξιούμενος; and Aristides, *To the King* § 112 (Jebb's edition).

Herodian's Greek, in translation: "greeting those who approached him with his right hand."

IV.38 Consider narrowly their ruling Reason, and see what wise men avoid and what they seek after.⁶²

62. Compare iii. 4, near the beginning. This precept does not really contradict what is said in iii. 4 etc.

IV.39 Harm to thee cannot depend on another's ruling Reason, nor yet on any vagary or phase of thy environment. On what then? On the power that is thine of judging what is evil. Let this, then, pass no judgment, and all is well. Even if its closest associate, the poor body, be cut, be burnt, fester, gangrene, yet let the part which forms a judgment⁶³ about these things hold its peace, that is, let it assume nothing to be either good or bad, which can befall a good man or a bad indifferently.⁶⁴ For that which befalls alike the man who lives by the rule, and the man who lives contrary to the rule, of Nature, is neither in accordance with Nature nor contrary to it.

63. See xi. 16.

64. ii. 11, about the middle.

IV.40 Cease not to think of the Universe as one living Being,⁶⁵ possessed of a single Substance and a single Soul; and how all things trace back to its single sentience;⁶⁶ and how it does all things by a single impulse; and how all existing things are joint causes of all things that come into existence; and how intertwined in the fabric is the thread and how closely woven the web.⁶⁷

65. A Stoic doctrine, Diogenes Laertius, *Life of Zeno* 36.

Diogenes Laertius, in his *Life of Zeno*, reports the Stoic doctrine that the universe is a living being, rational and endowed with soul.

66. For ἀναδίδοσθαι, compare v. 26.

67. See iii. 11.

IV.41 Thou art *a little soul bearing up a corpse*, as Epictetus said.⁶⁸

68. Not now found in his works. Swinburne has “A little soul for a little bears up this corpse which is man” (*Hymn to Proserpine*). Compare Ignatius’s *Letter to the Smyrnaeans* 5: νεκροφόρος.

Modern editions of Epictetus print the line among his fragments on the strength of this passage. Swinburne’s “Hymn to Proserpine” was published in 1866. Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, wrote a series of letters to churches while being taken to Rome for execution in the early 2nd century; his word is *nekrophoros*, “corpse-bearer.”

IV.42 Nothing is evil to that which is subject to change, even as there is no good for that which exists as the result of change.

IV.43 As a river⁶⁹ consisting of all things that come into being, aye, a rushing torrent, is Time. No sooner is a thing sighted than it is carried past, and lo, another is passing, and it too will be carried away.

69. ii. 17; v. 23; vi. 15 (Heraclitus).

Heraclitus of Ephesus (fl. c. 500 BC) wrote in compressed, riddling aphorisms; the river image is his, in the saying that no one steps into the same river twice.

IV.44 Everything that happens is as usual and familiar,⁷⁰ as the rose in spring and the fruit in autumn. The same applies to disease and death and slander and treachery and all that gladdens the foolish or saddens them.

70. See iv. 33.

IV.45 That which comes after always has a close relationship to what has gone before. For it is not like some enumeration of items separately taken and following a mere inevitable sequence, but there is a rational connection; and just as existing things have been combined in a harmonious order, so also all that comes into being bears the stamp not of a mere succession but of a wonderful relationship.⁷¹

71. See vi. 38; vii. 9.

IV.46 Always bear in mind what Heraclitus⁷² said: *The death of earth is to pass into water, and the death of water to pass into air, and of air to pass into fire, and so back again.* Bear in mind too: *the wayfarer who forgets the trend of his way*, and that *men are at variance with the one thing with which they are in the most unbroken communion*, the Reason that administers the whole Universe; and that *what they encounter every day, this they deem strange*; and that we must not *act and speak like men asleep*,⁷³—for in fact even in sleep we seem to act and speak;—and that there should be nothing of the *children from parents* style, that is, no mere perfunctory *what our Fathers have told us*.

72. A favourite with Marcus, see Index II.

Heraclitus of Ephesus was known in antiquity for a compressed, riddling style. The section sets several of his sayings side by side with little connecting explanation: the cycle of earth, water, air, and fire; “the wayfarer who forgets the trend of his way”; men “at variance with the one thing with which they are in the most unbroken communion”; and acting and speaking “like men asleep.” Haines’s “Index II” is his Index of Proper Names and Quotations.

73. See vi. 42.

IV.47 Just as, if a God had told thee,⁷⁴ *Thou shalt die to-morrow or in any case the day after*, thou wouldest no longer count it of any consequence whether it were the day after to-morrow or to-morrow, unless thou art in the last degree mean-spirited,⁷⁵ for how little is the difference!⁷⁶—so also deem it but a trifling thing that thou shouldest die after ever so many years rather than to-morrow.

74. Compare the story of Mycerinus (Herodotus ii. 129), and Matthew Arnold's poem.

Herodotus tells of Mycerinus, a king of Egypt who, told by an oracle that he had only six years to live, spent his nights in revelry to make them twelve. Matthew Arnold's poem "Mycerinus" (1849) retells the story.

75. Seneca's *Natural Questions* ii. 59, about the middle.

Seneca's *Natural Questions* ii. 59 closes the book on lightning by turning to the fear of death.

76. Or *interval*, compare iv. 50.

IV.48 Cease not to bear in mind how many physicians are dead after puckering up their brows so often over their patients; and how many astrologers after making a great parade of predicting the death of others;⁷⁷ and how many philosophers after endless disquisitions on death and immortality; how many great captains after butchering thousands;⁷⁸ how many tyrants after exercising with revolting insolence their power of life and death, as though themselves immortal; and how many entire cities are, if I may use the expression, dead,⁷⁹ Helice and Pompeii and Herculaneum, and others without number.

Turn also to all, one after another, that come within thine own knowledge. One closed a friend's eyes and was then himself laid out, and the friend who closed his,⁸⁰ he too was laid out—and all this in a few short years. In a word, fail not to note how short-lived are all mortal things, and how paltry—yesterday a little mucus,⁸¹ to-morrow a mummy or burnt ash. Pass then through this tiny span of time in accordance with Nature, and come to thy journey's end with a good grace, just as an olive falls when it is fully ripe, praising the earth that bare it and grateful to the tree that gave it growth.

77. iii. 3. Epictetus's *Discourses* iii. 10, 15.

78. The same.

79. Lucian uses it, *Charon* 23.

In Lucian's *Charon*, the ferryman of the dead and Hermes survey the world from a height; Hermes tells him that Nineveh has perished without a trace, that Babylon will soon be as hard to find, and that Mycenae and Cleonae are already ruins.

80. x. 34. This is invariably referred to ὁ μὲν, "another closed *his eyes*," but it must surely answer to τοῦτον.

81. See vi. 13.

IV.49 Be like a headland of rock on which the waves break incessantly; but it stands fast and around it the seething of the waters sinks to rest. *

Ah, unlucky am I, that this has befallen me! *Nay, but rather, lucky am I, that though this has befallen me, yet am I still unhurt, neither crushed by the present nor dreading the future. For something of the kind could have befallen everyone, but everyone would not have remained unhurt in spite of it. Why then count that rather a misfortune than this a good fortune? And in any case dost thou reckon that a misfortune for a man which is not an aberration from his nature? And wouldst thou have that to be an aberration from a man's nature, which does not contravene the will of his nature! What then? This will thou hast learnt to know. Does what has befallen thee hinder thee one whit from being just, high-minded, chaste, sensible, deliberate, straight-forward, modest, free, and from possessing all the other qualities, the presence of which enables a man's nature to come fully into its own? Forget not in future, when anything would lead thee to feel hurt, to take thy stand upon this axiom: 'This is no misfortune, but to bear it nobly is good fortune'.*

IV.50 An unphilosophical, but none the less an effective, help to the contemning of death is to tell over the names of those who have clung long and tenaciously to life. How are they better off than those who were cut off before their time? After all, they lie buried

somewhere at last, Cadicianus, Fabius, Julianus, Lepidus, and any others like them, who after carrying many to their graves were at last carried to their own.⁸² Small, in any point of view, is the difference⁸³ in length, and that too lived out to the dregs amid what great cares and with what sort of companions and in what kind of a body! Count it then of no consequence. For look at the yawning gulf of Time behind thee, and before thee at another Infinity to come. In this Eternity the life of a baby of three days and the life of a Nestor of three centuries⁸⁴ are as one.⁸⁵

82. See iv. 48, § 2.

83. See iv. 47.

84. *τριγερῆνιος*, a clever conflation between *τριγέρων* and *Γερῆνιος*, an epithet of Nestor from a town in Messenia.

85. Compare Ecclesiasticus xli. 4.

Ecclesiasticus, the Wisdom of Jesus the son of Sirach, is a book of the Apocrypha. The verse has “there is no inquisition in the grave, whether thou have lived ten, or an hundred, or a thousand years” (King James).

IV.51 Run ever the short way; and the short way is the way of Nature, that leads to all that is most sound in speech and act. For a resolve such as this is a release from troubles and strife, from all mental reservation⁸⁶ and affectation.

86. See iv. 19.

BOOK V

V.I At daybreak,¹ when loth to rise,² have this thought ready in thy mind: *I am rising for a man's work*. Am I then still peevish that I am going to do that for which I was born and for the sake of which I came into the world? Or was I made for this, that I should nuzzle under the bed-clothes and keep myself warm? *But this is pleasanter*. Hast thou been made then for pleasure, in a word, I ask thee, to be acted upon or to act? Consider each little plant, each tiny bird, the ant, the spider, the bee, how they go about their own work and do each his part for the building up of an orderly Universe. Dost *thou* then refuse to do the work of a man? Dost thou not hasten to do what Nature bids thee. *But some rest, too, is necessary*. I do not deny it. Howbeit Nature has set limits to this, and no less so to eating and drinking. Yet thou exceedest these limits and exceedest sufficiency. But in acts it is no longer so; there thou comest short of the possibility.

For thou lovest not thyself, else surely hadst thou loved thy nature also and to do her will. But others who love their own art wear themselves to a shadow with their labours over it, forgetting to wash or take food.³ But thou holdest thine own nature in less honour than the chaser of metal his art of chasing, than the dancer his dancing, than the miser his money-bags, than the popularity-hunter his little applause. And these, when they are exceptionally in earnest, are ready to forgo food and sleep, so that they forward the things in which they are interested. But dost thou deem the acts of a social being of less worth and less deserving of attention?

1. See ii. 1.

2. Marcus in younger days was an early riser, getting up even at 3 o'clock (Fronto's letter to Marcus as Caesar, iv. 5) or 5 o'clock (the same, iv. 6). He admits sleepiness of habit (the same, i. 4; v. 59), but says it is so cold in his bedroom that he can scarcely put his hands outside his bedclothes. Fronto constantly urges him to take more sleep (the same, ii. 5; v. 1, 2; *On the Holidays at Alsium* 2, Naber's edition p. 227): *sleep as much as a free man should!* At the last he suffered dreadfully from insomnia, see Galen, Kühn's edition, volume 14 page 3; Dio's *Roman History* 71. 24, § 4.

Galen is cited by volume and page in Karl Gottlob Kühn's 19th-century edition of his collected works.

3. Compare, of Marcus himself, *καμάτοις καὶ φροντίσι τετραχωμένος* (Herodian i. 3, § 1) and Julian's *The Caesars* 407. See Plutarch's story of Nikias the painter (*Whether an Old Man Should Engage in Public Affairs* 4; *That It Is Not Possible to Live Pleasantly According to Epicurus* 11).

Herodian's Greek, in translation: "worn out with labours and cares." Plutarch tells of the painter Nicias, so absorbed in his work that he would ask his servants whether he had yet bathed or eaten.

V.2 How easy a thing it is to put away and blot out every impression⁴ that is disturbing or alien, and to be at once in perfect peace.

4. See vii. 29; viii. 47.

V.3 Deem no word or deed that is in accord with Nature to be unworthy of thee, and be not plucked aside by the consequent censure of others or what they say,⁵ but if a thing is good to do or say, judge not thyself unworthy of it. For those others have their own ruling Reason and follow their own bent. Do not thou turn thine eyes aside, but keep to the straight path, following thy own and the universal Nature; and the path of these twain is one.⁶

5. x. 11. Compare 1 Peter ii. 20.

1 Peter 2:20 has "if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God" (King James).

6. See iv. 29.

V.4 I fare forth through all that Nature wills until the day when I shall sink down and rest from my labours, breathing forth my last breath into the air whence I daily draw it in, and falling upon that earth, whence also my father gathered the seed, and my mother the blood, and my nurse the milk; whence daily for so many years I am fed and watered; which bears me as I tread it under foot and make full use of it in a thousand ways.

V.5 Sharpness of wit men cannot praise thee for.⁷ Granted! Yet there are many other qualities of which thou canst not say: *I had not that by nature*.⁸ Well then, display those which are wholly in thy power, sterling sincerity, dignity, endurance of toil,⁹ abstinence from pleasure.¹⁰ Grumble not at thy lot, be content with little,¹¹ be kindly, independent, frugal, serious, high-minded.¹² Seest thou not how many virtues it is in thy power to display now, in respect of which thou canst plead no natural incapacity or incompatibility, and yet thou art. content still with a lower standard? Or art thou forced to be discontented, to be grasping, to flatter, to inveigh against the body, to play the toady and the braggart, and to be so unstable in thy soul, because forsooth thou hast no natural gifts? By the Gods, No! but long ere now couldst thou have shaken thyself free from all this and have lain under the imputation only, if it must be so, of being somewhat slow and dull of apprehension. And this too thou must amend with training and not ignore thy dulness or be in love with it.

7. vii. 67; compare Fronto's letter to Marcus as Emperor, i. 2.

8. Compare Horace's *Epistles* i. 1. 28–32.

Horace was the Roman lyric poet and satirist of the age of Augustus. In the lines cited from the first book of his *Epistles* he argues that inability to reach perfection is no reason to neglect what progress one can make: a man who cannot see as far as Lynceus should still treat his sore eyes.

9. Compare i. 5.

10. Compare Aristides, *To the King* § 114 (Jebb's edition), of Marcus: οὐδεμίας ἡδονῆς ἡττημένος; and Fronto's *On the Holidays at Alsium*, Naber's edition p. 225: *volpem facilius quis tibi quam voluptatem conciliaverit*.

Aristides' Greek, in translation: "overcome by no pleasure." Fronto's Latin plays on *volpem*, "fox," and *voluptatem*, "pleasure"; in translation: "anyone could sooner make a fox your friend than pleasure."

11. Compare i. 5; Julian's *The Caesars* 427.

12. Or *humble*, if we read ἀμεγαλεῖον, but compare v. 9.

V.6 One man, when he has done another a kindness, is ready also to reckon on a return.¹³ A second is not ready to do this, but yet in his heart of hearts ranks the other as a debtor, and he is conscious of what he has done.¹⁴ But a third is in a manner not conscious of it, but is like the vine that has borne a cluster of grapes, and when it has once borne its due fruit looks for no reward beyond,¹⁵ as it is with a steed when it has run its course, a hound when it has singled out the trail, a bee when she hath made her comb. And so a man when he hath done one thing well, does not cry it abroad, but betakes himself to a second,¹⁶ as a vine to bear afresh her clusters in due season. *

A man then must be of those who act thus as it were unconsciously? *Aye*. But surely he must be conscious of what he is doing, for it is, we are told, the peculiar attribute of the man of true social instincts to be aware that he puts such instincts into practice,¹⁷ and by heaven to wish that his fellow should be aware of it too*. True; but thou misconceivest the present argument, and wilt consequently be of the number of those whom I mentioned before; for in fact they are led astray by reasoning which has a plausible look. But if thou thinkest it worth while to understand what has been said, fear not that thou wilt be led thereby to neglect any social act.

13. St. Luke vi. 34; xiv. 12.

Luke 6:34 has "if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye?" and Luke 14:12 warns against inviting friends to dinner "lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee" (King James).

14. Seneca's *On Benefits* ii. 6. But see the speech of Marcus to his soldiers (as reported by Dio's *Roman History*, 71. 26, § 2) on the revolt of Cassius.

Seneca's *On Benefits* is his seven-book treatise on the giving and receiving of favours. Avidius Cassius, governor of Syria, proclaimed himself emperor in 175 on a false report of Marcus's death and was killed by his own soldiers; in the speech the historian Dio gives Marcus on hearing of the revolt, Marcus hopes to be able to pardon him.

15. vii. 73; ix. 42, § 4. Compare Fronto's *On the Loss of a Grandson* 2, near the end.

16. See xi. 4; xii. 29.

17. For example, a man who acts on the precept, "Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth," must act so designedly.

The precept Haines quotes is Matthew 6:3.

V.7 A prayer of the Athenians: *Rain, Rain, O dear Zeus, upon the corn-land of the Athenians*¹⁸ and their meads. Either pray not at all, or in this simple and frank fashion.

18. Compare Pausanias i. 24, § 3.

Pausanias was a Greek travel writer of the 2nd century whose *Description of Greece* records the monuments he saw; at i. 24. 3 he describes a statue on the Athenian Acropolis of Earth praying to Zeus for rain.

V.8 We have all heard, *Aesculapius has prescribed for so and so riding exercise, or cold baths*,¹⁹ or walking barefoot. Precisely so it may be said that the Universal Nature has prescribed for so and so sickness or maim or loss or what not of the same kind. For, in the former case, prescribed has some such meaning as this: He ordained this for so and so as conducive to his health; while in the latter what befalls each man has been ordained in some way as conducive to his destiny. For we say that things *fall to us*, as the masons too say that the huge squared stones in walls and pyramids *fall into* their places, adjusting themselves harmoniously to one another in a sort of structural unity. For, in fine, there is one harmony of all things, and just as from all bodies the Universe is made up into such a body as it is, so from all causes is Destiny made up into such a

Cause. This is recognized by the most unthinking, for they say: *Fate brought this on him*. So then this was brought on this man, and this prescribed for this man. Let us then accept our fate, as we accept the prescriptions of Aesculapius. And in fact in these, too, there are many “bitter pills,” but we welcome them in hope of health.

Take much the same view of the accomplishment and consummation of what Nature approves as of thy health, and so welcome whatever happens, should it even be somewhat distasteful, because it contributes to the health of the Universe and the well-faring and well-doing of Zeus himself. For he had not brought this on a man, unless it had brought welfare to the Whole. For take any nature thou wilt, it never brings upon that which is under its control anything that does not conduce to its interests.

For two reasons then it behoves thee to acquiesce in what befalls one, that it was for thee it took place, and was prescribed for thee, and had reference in some sort to thee, being a thread of destiny spun from the first²⁰ for thee from the most ancient causes; the other, that even what befalls each individual is the cause of the well-faring, of the consummation,²¹ and by heaven of the very permanence of that which controls the Universe. For the perfection of the Whole is impaired, if thou cuttest off ever so little of the coherence and continuance of the Causes no less than of the parts. And thou dost cut them off, as far as lies with thee, and bring them to an end, when thou murmurest.

19. See the amazing story of an icy bathe prescribed so to Aristides (*Sacred Tales* ii. 529, Jebb's edition ff.).

Aesculapius is the Latin form of Asclepius, the god of healing. In his *Sacred Tales*, Aristides records the god prescribing him, in a dream, a bath in an icy river in winter.

20. Or, *from above*.

21. Compare Seneca's *Epistles* 74.

V.9 Do not feel qualms²² or despondency or discomfiture if thou dost not invariably succeed in acting from right principles; but when thou art foiled,²³ come back again to them, and rejoice if on the whole thy conduct is worthy of a man, and love the course to which thou returnest. Come not back to Philosophy as to a schoolmaster, but as the sore-eyed to their sponges and their white of egg, as this patient to his plaster and that to his fomentations. Thus wilt thou rest satisfied with Reason, yet make no parade of obeying her. And forget not that Philosophy wishes but what thy nature wishes, whereas thy wish was for something else that accords not with Nature. *Yes, for it would have been the acme of delight.* Ah, is not that the very reason why pleasure trips us up? Nay, see if these be not more delightful still: high-mindedness, independence, simplicity, tenderness of heart,²⁴ sanctity of life. Why what is more delightful than wisdom herself, when thou thinkest how sure and smooth in all its workings is the faculty of understanding and knowledge?

22. Literally *be nauseated* (compare viii. 24).

23. See v. 36.

24. Galen, Kühn's edition, volume 12 page 17, calls Marcus εὐγνώμων, μέτριος, ἡμερος, πρᾶος.

Galen's Greek words, in translation: "considerate, moderate, gentle, mild."

V.10 Things are in a sense so wrapped up in mystery that not a few philosophers, and they no ordinary ones, have concluded that they are wholly beyond our comprehension: nay, even the Stoics themselves find them hard to comprehend. Indeed every assent we give to the impressions of our senses is liable to error, for where is the man who never errs? Pass on then to the objective things themselves, how transitory they are, how worthless, the property, quite possibly, of a boy-minion, a harlot, or a brigand.²⁵ After that turn to the characters of thine associates, even the most refined of whom it is difficult to put up with, let alone the fact that a man has enough to do to endure himself.²⁶

What then there can be amid such murk and nastiness, and in so ceaseless an ebbing of substance and of time, of movement and things moved, that deserves to be greatly valued or to excite our ambition in the least, I cannot even conceive. On the contrary, a man should take heart of grace to await his natural dissolution, and without any chafing at delay comfort²⁷ himself with these twin thoughts alone: the one, that nothing will befall me that is not in accord with the Nature of the Universe; the other, that it is in my power to do nothing contrary to the God and the ‘genius’,²⁸ within me. For no one can force me to disobey that.

25. vi. 34. Compare Seneca’s *Epistles* 81.

26. iv. 50; ix. 3. For a qualifying picture to this very pessimistic view see vi. 48.

27. A favourite word. Compare iv. 31; v. 9 = “to take rest in.”

Marcus’s word is *prosanapauesthai*, “to find repose in.”

28. See ii. 13; iii. 5 etc.

V.11 *To what use then am I putting my soul?* Never fail to ask thyself this question and to cross-examine thyself thus: What relation have I to this part of me which they call the ruling Reason? And whose Soul have I got now? The Soul of a child? Of a youth? Of a woman? Of a tyrant? Of a domestic animal? Of a wild beast?

V.12 What are counted as good things in the estimation of the many thou canst gather even from this. For if a man fix his mind upon certain things as really and unquestionably good, such as wisdom, temperance, justice, manliness, with this preconception in his mind he could no longer bear to listen to the poet’s, *By reason of his wealth of goods*; for it would not apply. But, if a man first fix his mind upon the things which appear good to the multitude, he will listen and readily accept as aptly added the quotation from the Comic Poet. In this way even the multitude have a perception of the difference. For otherwise this jest would not²⁹ offend and be repudiated, while we accept it as appropriately and wittily said of wealth and of the advantages which wait

upon luxury and popularity. Go on, then, and ask whether we should prize and count as good those things, with which first fixed in our mind we might germanely quote of their possessor, that *for his very wealth of goods he has no place to ease himself in*.³⁰

29. Namely, as in the case of things really good.

30. From Menander, *Fragment* 530, Kock's edition. The substitution of πτύση for χέση would mitigate the coarseness of the phrase, and we might then compare Diogenes Laertius, *Life of Diogenes* 6 and *Life of Aristippus* 4, passages in which we are told that the philosopher being taken to a magnificent house where spitting was forbidden spat in his host's face, explaining that he could find no other place.

Haines's "ease himself" softens Marcus's verb, *chesē*, "relieve himself"; his suggested reading would replace it with *ptysē*, "spit," which is the verb in the anecdote he then cites.

V.13 I am made up of the Causal³¹ and the Material, and neither of these disappears into nothing, just as neither did it come into existence out of nothing. So shall my every part by change be told off³² to form some part of the Universe, and that again be changed into another part of it, and so on to infinity. It was by such process of change that I too came into being and my parents, and so backwards into a second infinity. And the statement is quite legitimate, even if the Universe be arranged according to completed cycles.³³

31. The Efficient, or Formal, or Formative principle, here the Soul, but the Soul itself consists of a causal element (νοῦς) and a material (τὸ πνευμάτιον).

Nous, "mind"; *to pneumation*, "the little breath" or "spirit."

32. See viii. 25.

33. v. 32; xi. 1. See Index III. (περίοδοι).

Periodoi, "cycles" or "periods"; Index III is Haines's Glossary of Greek Terms.

V.14 Reason and the art of reasoning are in themselves and in their own proper acts self-sufficing faculties. Starting from a principle peculiar to them, they journey on to the end set before them. Wherefore such actions are termed *right acts*, as signifying that

they follow the right way.

V.15 Call none of those things a man's that do not fall to him as man. They cannot be claimed of a man; the man's nature does not guarantee them; they are no consummations of that nature. Consequently neither is the end for which man lives placed in these things, nor yet that which is perfective of the end, namely The Good. Moreover, if any of these things did fall to a man, it would not fall to him to condemn them and set his face against them, nor would a man be commendable who shewed himself independent of these things, nor yet would he be a good man who came short of his own standard in any of them, if so be these things were good. But as it is, the more a man can cut himself free, or even be set free, from these and other such things with equanimity, by so much the more is he good.

V.16 The character of thy mind will be such as is the character of thy frequent thoughts,³⁴ for the soul takes its dye from the thoughts. Dye her then with a continuous succession of such thoughts as these: Where life is possible, there it is possible also to live well.—*But the life is life in a Court.*³⁵ Well, in a Court too it is possible to live well. And again: A thing is drawn towards that for the sake of which it has been made, and its end lies in that towards which it is drawn and, where its end lies, there lie also its interest and its good. The Good, then, for a rational creature is fellowship with others.³⁶ For it has been made clear long ago³⁷ that we were constituted for fellowship. Or was it not obvious that the lower were for the sake of the higher³⁸ and the higher for the sake of one another? And living things are higher than lifeless,³⁹ and those that have reason than those that have life only.

³⁴. vii. 3; Seneca's *Epistles* 95.

³⁵. viii. 9. Compare Seneca's *Epistles* 28.

Seneca's twenty-eighth letter argues that travel cannot cure a troubled mind, since a man takes himself wherever he goes.

36. See ii. 1; iii. 4, § 1.

37. See ii. 1.

38. vii. 55; xi. 18, § 1; Seneca's *Epistles* 65, near the end.

39. Compare Chrysippus: τὸ ζῶον τοῦ μὴ ζῶου κρεῖττον.

Chrysippus succeeded Cleanthes as head of the Stoic school and was its chief systematizer. The Greek, in translation: "the living is better than the non-living."

V.17 To crave impossibilities is lunacy; but it is impossible for the wicked to act otherwise.⁴⁰

40. iv. 6; vii. 71; xi. 18, near the end; Seneca's *On Anger* ii. 31.

V.18 Nothing befalls anyone that he is not fitted by nature to bear.⁴¹ Others experience the same things as thou, but either from ignorance that anything has befallen them, or to manifest their greatness of mind, they stand firm and get no hurt. A strange thing indeed that ignorance and vanity should prove stronger than wisdom!⁴²

41. viii. 46; x. 3; St. Paul, 1 Corinthians x. 13.

1 Corinthians 10:13 has "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able" (King James).

42. Compare Seneca's *Epistles* 36, near the end: *turpissimum si eam securitatem nobis ratio non praestat, ad quam stultitia perducit.*

Seneca's Latin, in translation: "it is most shameful if reason does not give us the calm that folly brings."

V.19 Things of themselves cannot take the least hold of the Soul, nor have any access to her, nor deflect or move her; but the Soul alone deflects and moves herself,⁴³ and whatever judgments she deems it right to form, in conformity with them she fashions for herself the things that submit themselves to her from without.⁴⁴

43. See vi. 8.

44. See xi. 16.

V.20 In one respect a man is of very close concern to us, in so far as we must do him good and forbear; but in so far as any stand in the way of those acts which concern us closely, then man becomes for me as much one of things indifferent as the sun, as the wind, as a wild-beast. Though a man may in some sort fetter my activity, yet on my own initiative and mental attitude no fetters can be put because of the power they possess of conditional action⁴⁵ and of adaptation to circumstances. For everything that stands in the way of its activity is adapted and transmuted by the mind into a furtherance of it,⁴⁶ and that which is a check on this action is converted into a help to it, and that which is a hindrance in our path goes but to make it easier.

45. See iv. 1; vi. 50.

46. See iv. 1; x. 31, near the end.

V.21 Prize the most excellent thing in the Universe; and this is that which utilizes all things and controls all things. Prize in like manner the most excellent thing in thyself;⁴⁷ and this is that which is akin to the other. For this, which utilizes all else is in thee too, and by it thy life is governed.

47. See vi. 16, near the end.

V.22 That which is not hurtful to the community cannot hurt the individual.⁴⁸ Test every case of apparent hurt by this rule: if the community be not hurt by this, neither am I hurt; but if the community be hurt, there is no need to be angry with him that hath done the hurt,⁴⁹ but to enquire, What hath he seen amiss?⁵⁰

48. See v. 35; vi. 54.

49. See v. 35.

50. See xi. 13.

V.23 Think often on the swiftness with which the things that exist and that are coming into existence are swept past us and carried out of sight. For all substance⁵¹ is as a river in ceaseless flow,⁵² its activities ever changing and its causes subject to countless variations, and scarcely anything stable; and ever beside us is this infinity of the past and yawning abyss of the future, wherein all things are disappearing.⁵³ Is he not senseless who in such an environment puffs himself up, or is distracted, or frets as over a trouble lasting and far-reaching?

51. Or, *Being*.

52. See iv. 43; vii. 19.

53. See xii. 32.

V.24 Keep in memory the universal Substance, of which thou art a tiny part; and universal Time, of which a brief, nay an almost momentary span has been allotted thee; and Destiny, in which how fractional thy share?⁵⁴

54. Epictetus's *Discourses* i. 12, 26.

V.25 Another does me some wrong? He shall see to it.⁵⁵ His disposition is his own, his activities are his own. What the universal Nature wills me to have now, that I now have, and what my nature wills me now to do, that I do.

55. St. Matthew xii. 4, 24.

The verses are Matthew 27:4 and 27:24, where the chief priests tell Judas “see thou to that” and Pilate tells the crowd “see ye to it” (King James).

V.26 Let the ruling and master Reason of thy soul be proof against any motions in the flesh smooth or rough. Let it not mingle itself with them, but isolate and restrict those tendencies to their true spheres. But when in virtue of that other sympathetic connection these tendencies grow up into the mind as is to be expected in a single organism, then must thou not go about to resist the sensation, natural as it is, but see that thy ruling Reason adds no opinion of its own as to whether such is good or bad.

V.27 Walk with the Gods! And he does walk with the Gods, who lets them see his soul invariably satisfied with its lot and carrying out the will of that ‘genius,’ a particle⁵⁶ of himself, which Zeus has given to every man as his captain and guide,⁵⁷—and this is none other than each man’s intelligence and reason.

56. See ii. 1, 4; xii. 26, 30.

57. Epictetus’s *Discourses* i. 14, § 12: ἐπίτροπον ἐκάστῳ παρέστησε (namely, Zeus) τὸν ἐκάστου δαίμονα καὶ παρέδωκε φυλάσσειν αὐτὸν αὐτῷ.

Epictetus’s Greek, in translation: “he has set beside each man as guardian his own *daimōn*, and entrusted him to its keeping.”

V.28 If a man’s armpits are unpleasant, art thou angry with him? If he has foul breath? What would be the use? The man has such a mouth, he has such armpits. Some such effluvium was bound to come from such a source. *But the man has sense, quotha! With a little attention he could see wherein he offends.* I congratulate thee! Well, thou too hast sense. By a rational attitude, then, in thyself evoke a rational attitude in him,⁵⁸ enlighten him, admonish him. If he listen, thou shalt cure him,⁵⁹ and have no need of anger.

Neither tragedian nor harlot.

58. x. 4; Epictetus’s *Discourses* ii. 8, § 11.

59. Compare St. Matthew xviii. 15.

Matthew 18:15 has “if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother” (King James).

- V.29 Thou canst live on earth as thou dost purpose to live when departed. But if men will not have it so, then is it time for thee even to go out of life,⁶⁰ yet not as one who is treated ill. *'Tis smoky and I go away.*⁶¹ Why think it a great matter? But while no such cause drives me forth, I remain a free man, and none shall prevent me from doing what I will, and I will what is in accordance with the nature of a rational and social creature.

60. See on iii. 1. Compare viii. 47.

61. Epictetus's *Discourses* i. 25, § 18; iv. 10, § 27.

In Epictetus the smoky room is an image for circumstances that make life intolerable: a little smoke can be borne, but if there is too much, one leaves, and the door is open.

- V.30 The intelligence of the Universe is social. It hath at any rate made the lower things for the sake of the higher, and it adapted the higher⁶² to one another. Thou seest how it hath subordinated, coordinated, and given each its due lot and brought the more excellent things into mutual accord.

62. See v. 16.

- V.31 How hast thou borne thyself heretofore towards Gods, parents, brothers, wife, children, teachers, tutors, friends, relations, household? Canst thou say truly of them all to this day, *Doing to no man wrong, nor speaking aught that is evil?*⁶³

And call to mind all that thou hast passed through, all thou hast found strength to bear; that the story of thy life is now full-told and thy service is ending; and how many beautiful sights thou hast seen, how many pleasures and pains thou hast disregarded,

forgone what ambitions, and repaid with kindness how much unkindness.⁶⁴

63. Homer's *Odyssey* iv. 690.

In *Odyssey* iv. 690 Penelope says of Odysseus that he never did or said anything unjust to anyone.

64. x. 36. There is no Pharisaism here, as some have most unwarrantably asserted.

V.32 Why do unskilled and ignorant souls confound⁶⁵ him who has skill and has knowledge? What soul, then, has skill and knowledge? Even that which knoweth beginning and end, and the reason that informs all Substance, and governs the Whole from ordered cycle to cycle,⁶⁶ through all eternity.

65. Compare St. Paul, 1 Corinthians i. 27 (Authorized Version).

1 Corinthians 1:27 has "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise" (King James).

66. See v. 13; x. 7.

V.33 But a little while and thou shalt be burnt ashes or a few dry bones, and possibly a name, possibly not a name even.⁶⁷ And a name is but sound and a far off echo. And all that we prize so highly in our lives is empty and rotten and paltry, and we but as puppies snapping at each other, as quarrelsome children now laughing and anon in tears. But faith and modesty and justice and truth *Up from the wide-wayed Earth have winged their flight to Olympus.*⁶⁸

What then keeps thee here?—if indeed sensible objects are ever changing and unstable, and our faculties are so feeble and so easily misled; and the poor soul itself is an exhalation from blood⁶⁹; and to be well-thought of in such a world mere vanity. What then remains? To wait with a good grace for the end, whether it be extinction or translation.⁷⁰ But till our time for that be come, what sufficeth? What but to

reverence the Gods and to praise them, to do good unto men and to *bear with them and forbear*,⁷¹ but, for all else that comes within the compass of this poor flesh and breath, to remember that it is not thine nor under thy control?

67. See viii. 25; xii. 27.

68. Hesiod, *Works and Days* 197. Compare Euripides' *Medea* 439 and Lucian's *Nigrinus* 16, who, speaking of Rome, says much the same of αἰδώς and ἀρετή and δικαιοσύνη. See also Dio's *Roman History* 71, 24, § 2.

Hesiod was an early Greek poet; in *Works and Days* 197–200 Shame and Retribution abandon mankind and go up to Olympus. In Euripides' *Medea* the chorus sings that shame no longer remains in Greece but has flown up to the sky. The satirist Lucian's three Greek words: "shame," "virtue," and "justice."

69. vi. 15. Compare Tzetzes' *Chiliades* vii. 803; viii. 223.

70. Marcus never seems to have made up his mind which it was to be. See iv. 21; viii. 25; xi. 3.

71. These two constituted for Epictetus the whole "Law and the Prophets"; see Aulus Gellius, *Attic Nights* xvii. 19.

Aulus Gellius was a 2nd-century Roman writer whose *Attic Nights* is a miscellany of notes on language, literature, and philosophy; he reports Epictetus's two-word summary of ethics, *anechou kai apechou*, "bear and forbear."

V.34 Thou hast it in thy power that the current of thy life be ever fair, if also 'tis thine to make fair way, if also in ordered way to think and act. The Soul of God and the souls of men and of every rational creature have these two characteristics in common: to suffer no let or hindrance from another, and to find their good in a condition and practice of justice, and to confine their propension to this.

V.35 If this be no vice of mine nor the outcome of any vice of mine, and if the common interest does not suffer, why concern myself about it? And how can the common interest suffer?⁷²

V.36 Be not carried incontinently away by sense-impressions, but rally to the fight as thou canst and as is due. If there be failure⁷³ in things indifferent, think not there is any great harm done; for that is an evil habit. But as the greybeard (in the play) taking his leave reclaimed his foster-child's top, not forgetting that it was but a top, so do thou here also.⁷⁴ Since indeed thou art found haranguing on the hustings, O Man, hast thou forgotten what this really means? *Aye, but people will have it.* Must thou too be a fool in consequence?

Time was that wheresoever forsaken⁷⁵ I was a man well-portioned; but that *man well-portioned* is he that hath given himself a good portion; and good portions are good phases of the soul, good impulses, good actions.

73. See v. 36.

74. It is not known what Marcus alludes to. The following words are unintelligible.

75. Or *overtaken* (καταληφθείς).

BOOK VI

VI.1 The Universal Substance is docile¹ and ductile; and the Reason that controls it has no motive in itself to do wrong. For it hath no wrongness and doeth no wrong, nor is anything harmed by it. But all things come into being and fulfil their purpose as it directs.

1. Not so all Stoics; compare Seneca's *On Providence* 5: *non potest artifex mutare materiem*.

Seneca's Latin, in translation: "the craftsman cannot change his material."

VI.2 Make no difference in doing thy duty² whether thou art shivering or warm, drowsy³ or sleep-satisfied, defamed or extolled, dying or anything else. For the act of dying too is one of the acts of life.⁴ So it is enough in this also to *get the work in hand done well*.⁵

2. See vi. 22.

3. Galen (Kühn's edition, volume 14 page 3) says of Marcus that, owing to the theriac which he prescribed him, συνέβαιεν αὐτῷ νυστάζειν καρῶδῶς ἐν ταῖς ὁσημέραις πράξεσιν.

The Galen passage concerns the theriac he prepared for Marcus; the Greek, in translation: "it happened that he dozed heavily in his daily business."

4. Compare Seneca's *Epistles* 77, near the end: *Unum ex vitae officiis, mori*.

Seneca's Latin, in translation: "dying is one of the duties of life."

5. A saying of the "Wise Men." See Suidas. Compare Lucian's *Necyomantia* 21. It was a trait of Marcus, Dio's *Roman History* 71. 26, § 4.

The "Wise Men" are the Seven Sages of archaic Greece, to whom a set of maxims was traditionally attributed. "Suidas" is the older name for the Suda, once taken to be the name of its author. In Lucian's *Necyomantia*, Menippus visits the underworld, where Tiresias advises him that the best life is the ordinary one, attending well to what is at hand.

VI.3 Look within. Let not the special quality⁶ or worth of anything escape thee.

6. = that which makes a thing what it is.

VI.4 All objective things will anon be changed and either etherialized into the Universal Substance, if that indeed be one, or dispersed abroad.⁷

7. See viii. 25, near the end; x. 7, § 2.

VI.5 The controlling Reason knows its own bent and its work and the medium it works in.

VI.6 The best way of avenging thyself is not to do likewise.⁸

8. Compare Epictetus's *Fragments* 130. So Diogenes, being asked "How shall I avenge myself of mine enemy?" said, "By behaving like a gentleman," Plutarch's *How to Study Poetry* 5.

The *Fragments* of Epictetus are sayings preserved by later writers outside Arrian's *Discourses* and *Manual*. Plutarch's *How to Study Poetry* is an essay on reading the poets for moral instruction.

VI.7 Delight in this one thing and take thy rest therein—from social act to go on to social act, keeping all thy thoughts on God.

VI.8 The ruling Reason it is that can arouse and deflect itself, make itself whatever it will,⁹ and invest everything that befalls with such a semblance as it wills.

9. See v. 19.

VI.9 In accordance with the Nature of the Universe is accomplished each several thing. For surely this cannot be in accordance with any other nature, that either envelops it from

without, or is enveloped by it within, or exists in external detachment outside it.

- VI.10 Either a medley and a tangled web¹⁰ and a dispersion abroad, or a unity and a plan and a Providence. If the former, why should I even wish to abide in such a random welter and chaos? Why care for anything else than to *turn again to the dust* at last.¹¹ Why be disquieted? For, do what I will, the dispersion must overtake me. But if the latter, I bow in reverence, my feet are on the rock, and I put my trust in the Power that rules.

10. See iv. 27; vii. 50.

11. Homer's *Iliad* vii. 99; compare below, vii. 50.

In *Iliad* vii. 99 Menelaus, rebuking the Greeks for hesitating to face Hector in single combat, wishes they might all turn to earth and water.

- VI.11 When forced, as it seems, by thine environment to be utterly disquieted, return with all speed into thy self, staying in discord no longer than thou must. By constant recurrence to the harmony,¹² thou wilt gain more command over it.

12. Compare Dio Chrysostom's *Orations* xxxii. 676, Reiske's edition: ἔξω τῆς ἀρμονίας τῆς κατὰ φύσιν.

Dio Chrysostom's thirty-second oration is addressed to the people of Alexandria; the Greek, in translation: "outside the harmony that accords with nature."

- VI.12 Hadst thou at once a stepmother and a mother thou wouldst pay due service to the former, and yet thy constant recourse would be to thy mother. So hast thou now the court and philosophy for stepmother and mother. Cease not then to come to the latter and take thy rest in her,¹³ whereby shall both thy court life seem more tolerable¹⁴ to thee, and thou to thy court life.

13. Seneca's *Epistles* 103.

14. For life in kings' courts see Lucian's *On Slander* 10, and *Icaromenippus* 16.

Lucian's *On Slander* is an essay on calumny; in *Icaromenippus* Menippus flies up to heaven and looks down on the affairs of men.

VI.13 As in the case of meat and similar eatables the thought strikes us, this is the dead body of a fish, this of a fowl or pig; and again that this Falernian is merely the juice of a grape-cluster, and this purple-edged robe is nought but sheep's wool¹⁵ steeped in the blood of a shell-fish; or, of sexual intercourse, that it is merely internal attrition and the spasmodic excretion of mucus¹⁶—such, I say, as are these impressions that get to grips with the actual things and enter into the heart of them, so as to see them as they really are, thus should it be thy life through, and where things look to be above measure convincing, laying them quite bare, behold their paltriness and strip off their conventional prestige. For conceit is a past master in fallacies and, when thou flatterest thyself most that thou art engaged in worthy tasks, then art thou most of all deluded by it. At any rate, see what Crates has to say about none other than Xenocrates.¹⁷

15. Compare Lucian's *Demonax* § 41.

In Lucian's *Demonax*, the philosopher, seeing a man proud of the broad stripe on his robe, tells him that the cloth “did not make its original wearer anything but a sheep.”

16. Compare Tzetzes' *Chiliades* vii. 801. He reads νευρίου for ἐντερίου.

Tzetzes' reading would replace *enteriou*, “of an entrail,” with *neurion*, “of a sinew.”

17. It is not known what Marcus here refers to.

Xenocrates was head of Plato's Academy from 339 to 314 BC and was known for his austerity. Which Crates Marcus means, whether the Cynic of Thebes or the Academic philosopher of Athens, is uncertain.

VI.14 Objects admired by the common sort come chiefly under things of the most general kind, which are held together by physical coherence,¹⁸ such as stones and wood, or by a natural unity, such as figs, vines, olives; and those which are admired by persons of a somewhat higher capacity may be classed as things which are held together by a

conscious life, such as flocks and herds; and those which are admired by persons still more refined, as things held together by a rational soul; I do not mean rational as part of the Universal Reason, but in the sense of master of an art or expert in some other way, or merely in so far as to own a host of slaves. But he that prizes a soul which is rational, universal, and civic, no longer turns after anything else, but rather than everything besides keeps his own soul, in itself and in its activity, rational and social, and to this end works conjointly with all that is akin to him.

18. Compare Sextus Empiricus's *Against the Mathematicians* viii. 2; ix. 81: τὰ μὲν ὑπὸ ψιλῆς ἔξεως συνέχεται, τὰ δὲ ὑπὸ φύσεως, τὰ δὲ ὑπὸ ψυχῆς· καὶ ἔξεως μὲν ὡς λίθοι καὶ ξύλα, φύσεως δὲ καθάπερ τὰ φυτά, ψυχῆς δὲ τὰ ζῷα.

The Greek, in translation: “some things are held together by mere cohesion, some by nature, some by soul: by cohesion, as stones and wood; by nature, as plants; by soul, as animals.” The terms are *hexis*, *physis*, and *psychē*, the Stoic grades of unity in bodies.

VI.15 Some things are hastening to be, others to be no more, while of those that haste into being some part is already extinct. Fluxes and changes perpetually renew the world, just as the unbroken march of time makes ever new the infinity of ages. In this river of change,¹⁹ which of the things which swirl past him, whereon no firm foothold is possible, should a man prize so highly? As well fall in love with a sparrow,²⁰ that flits past and in a moment is gone from our eyes. In fact a man's life itself is but as an exhalation from blood,²¹ and an inhalation from the air. For just as it is to draw in the air once into our lungs and give it back again, as we do every moment, so is it to give back thither, whence thou didst draw it first, thy faculty of breathing which thou didst receive at thy birth yesterday or the day before.

19. See iv. 43; vii. 19.

20. Compare the parable of the sparrow in Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* ii. 13.

Bede was an English monk and historian of the 8th century. In his *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, a counsellor of King Edwin compares human life to a sparrow flying through a lit hall in winter, in at one door and out at the other.

VI.16 Neither is it an inner respiration,²² such as that of plants, that we should prize, nor the breathing which we have in common with cattle and wild animals, nor the impressions we receive through our senses, nor that we are pulled by our impulses like marionettes,²³ nor our gregarious instincts, nor our need of nutriment; for that is on a par with the rejection of the waste products of our food.

What then is to be prized? The clapping of hands? No. Then not the clapping of tongues either. For the acclamations of the multitude are but a clapping of tongues. So overboard goes that poor thing Fame also. What is left to be prized? This methinks: to limit our action or inaction to the needs of our own constitution, an end that all occupations and arts set before themselves. For the aim of every art is that the thing constituted should be adapted to the work for which it has been constituted. It is so with the vine-dresser who looks after the vines, the colt-trainer, and the keeper of the kennels. And this is the end which the care of children and the methods of teaching have in view. There then is the thing to be prized!

This once fairly made thine own, thou wilt not seek to gain for thyself any of the other things as well. Wilt thou not cease prizing many other things also? Then thou wilt neither be free nor sufficient unto thyself nor unmoved by passion. For thou must needs be full of envy and jealousy, be suspicious of those that can rob thee of such things, and scheme against those who possess what thou prizest. In fine, a man who needs any of those things cannot but be in complete turmoil, and in many cases find fault even with the Gods.²⁴ But by reverencing and prizing thine own mind, thou shalt make thyself pleasing in thine own sight, in accord with mankind, and in harmony with the Gods, that is, grateful to them for all that they dispense and have ordained.

22. See iii. 1.

23. See ii. 2 etc.

24. See vi. 41.

VI.17 Up, down,²⁵ round-wise sweep the elements along. But the motion of virtue is in none of these ways. It is something more divine, and going forward on a mysterious path fares well upon its way.²⁶

25. See vi. 17; iv. 46; ix. 28.

26. See vii. 53.

VI.18 What a way to act! Men are chary of commending their contemporaries and associates, while they themselves set great store by the commendation of posterity, whom they have never seen or shall see. But this is next door to taking it amiss that thy predecessors also did not commend thee.

VI.19 Because thou findest a thing difficult for thyself to accomplish do not conceive it to be impracticable for others; but whatever is possible for a man and in keeping with his nature consider also attainable by thyself.

VI.20 Suppose that a competitor in the ring has gashed us with his nails and butted us violently with his head, we do not protest or take it amiss or suspect our opponent in future of foul play. Still we do keep an eye on him, not indeed as an enemy, or from suspicion of him, but with good-humoured avoidance. Act much in the same way in all the other parts of life. Let us make many allowances for our fellow-athletes as it were. Avoidance is always possible, as I have said, without suspicion or hatred.

VI.21 If any one can prove and bring home to me that a conception or act of mine is wrong, I will amend²⁷ it, and be thankful. For I seek the truth, whereby no one was ever harmed. But he is harmed who persists in his own self-deception and ignorance.

27. See iv. 12; vi. 30, § 2; viii. 16.

VI.22 I do my own duty; other things do not distract me. For they are either inanimate or irrational, or such as have gone astray and know not the road.²⁸

28. See iv. 46.

VI.23 Conduct thyself with magnanimity and freedom towards irrational creatures and, generally, towards circumstances and objective things, for thou hast reason and they have none. But men have reason, therefore treat them as fellow creatures. And in all cases call upon the Gods, and do not concern thyself with the question, *How long shall I do this?* Three hours are enough so spent.

VI.24 Death reduced to the same condition Alexander the Macedonian and his muleteer, for either they were taken back into the same Seminal Reason²⁹ of the Universe or scattered alike into the atoms.³⁰

29. Usually singular in the Greek. See iv. 14. 21; ix. 1.

30. Marcus puts the two alternatives (Stoic and Epicurean), though he does not himself admit the second.

VI.25 Bear in mind how many things happen to each one of us with respect to our bodies as well as our souls in the same momentary space of time, so wilt thou cease to wonder that many more things—not to say all the things that come into existence in that One

and Whole which in fact we call the Universe—subsist in it at one time.

VI.26 If one enquire of thee, *How is the name Antoninus written?* wilt thou with vehemence enunciate each constituent letter? What then? If thy listeners lose their temper, wilt thou lose thine? Wouldst thou not go on gently to enumerate each letter? So recollect that in life too every duty is the sum of separate items.³¹ Of these thou must take heed, and carry through methodically what is set before thee, in no wise troubled or shewing counter-irritation against those who are irritated with thee.

31. See iii. 1.

VI.27 How intolerant it is not to permit men to cherish an impulse towards what is in their eyes congenial and advantageous! Yet in a sense thou withholdest from them the right to do this, when thou resentest their wrong-doing. For they are undoubtedly drawn to what they deem congenial and advantageous. *But they are mistaken.* Well, then, teach and enlighten them without any resentment.³²

32. See v. 28.

VI.28 Death is a release from the impressions of sense, and from impulses that make us their puppets, from the vagaries of the mind, and the hard service of the flesh.

VI.29 It is a disgrace for the soul to be the first to succumb in that life in which the body does not succumb.³³

33. viii. 36. So Marcus himself in a letter to Fronto (the correspondence with him as Caesar, iv. 8): *Turpe fuerit diutius vitam corporis quam animi studium ad recipiendam sanitatem posse durare.*

Marcus's Latin, in translation: "it would be shameful for the body's life to hold out longer than the mind's resolve to recover health."

VI.30 See thou be not *Caesarified*, nor take that dye,³⁴ for there is the possibility. So keep thyself a simple and good man, uncorrupt, dignified, plain, a friend of justice, god-fearing, gracious, affectionate, manful in doing thy duty. Strive to be always such as Philosophy minded to make thee. Revere the Gods, save mankind. Life is short. This only is the harvest of earthly existence, a righteous disposition and social acts.

Do all things as a disciple of Antoninus.³⁵ Think of his constancy in every act rationally undertaken, his invariable equability, his piety, his serenity of countenance, his sweetness of disposition, his contempt for the bubble of fame, and his zeal for getting a true grip of affairs. How he would never on any account dismiss a thing until he had first thoroughly scrutinized and clearly conceived it; how he put up with those who found fault with him unfairly, finding no fault with them in return; how he was never in a hurry; how he gave no ear to slander,³⁶ and with what nicety he tested dispositions and acts; was no imputer of blame, and no craven, not a suspicious man, nor a sophist; what little sufficed him whether for lodging or bed, dress, food or attendance; how fond he was of work, and how long-suffering; how he would remain the whole day at the same occupation,³⁷ owing to his spare diet³⁸ not even requiring to relieve nature except at the customary time; and how loyal he was to his friends and always the same; and his forbearance towards those who openly opposed his views, and his pleasure when anyone pointed out something better³⁹; and how god-fearing he was and yet not given to superstition. Take heed to all this, that thy last hour come upon thee as much at peace with thy conscience as he was.

34. There was also a “philosophic dye”; see Lucian’s *The Double Indictment* 8.

Marcus’s verb, *apokaisarōthēis*, formed from *Kaisar*, is rendered by Haines “be Caesarified”; the next verb, *baphēis*, “be dyed,” continues the image. *The Double Indictment* is Lucian’s comic trial in which Rhetoric and Dialogue each bring charges against “the Syrian,” Lucian himself.

35. Compare i. 16 throughout.

36. See i. 5.

37. Or, *in the same place*.

38. Compare i. 3.

39. See vi. 21; viii. 16.

VI.31 Be sober once more and call back thy senses, and being roused again from sleep and, realizing that they were but dreams that beset thee, now awake again, look at these realities as thou didst at those thy dreams.

VI.32 I consist of body and soul.⁴⁰ To the body indeed all things are indifferent, for it cannot concern itself with them. But to the mind,⁴¹ only those things are indifferent which are not its own activities; and all those things that are its own activities are in its own power. Howbeit, of these it is only concerned with the present; for as to its activities in the past and the future, these two rank at once among things indifferent.

40. See v. 13.

41. Here *διάνοια* = *ψυχή*.

Dianoia, “understanding”; *psychē*, “soul.”

VI.33 For hand or foot to feel pain is no violation of nature, so long as the foot does its own appointed work, and the hand its own. Similarly pain for a man, as man, is no unnatural thing so long as he does a man’s appointed work. But, if not unnatural, then is it not an evil either.

VI.34 The pleasures of the brigand, the pathic, the parricide, the tyrant⁴²—just think what they are!

42. See v. 10.

VI.35 Dost thou not see how the mechanic craftsman, though to some extent willing to humour the non-expert, yet holds fast none the less to the principles of his handicraft, and cannot endure to depart from them. Is it not strange that the architect and the physician should hold the rationale of their respective arts in higher reverence than a man his own reason, which he has in common with the Gods?

VI.36 Asia, Europe, corners of the Universe: the whole Ocean a drop in the Universe: Athos but a little clod therein: all the present a point in Eternity:—everything on a tiny scale, so easily changed, so quickly vanished.

All things come from that one source, from that ruling Reason of the Universe,⁴³ either under a primary impulse from it or by way of consequence. And therefore the gape of the lion's jaws⁴⁴ and poison and all noxious things, such as thorns and mire, are but after-results of the grand and the beautiful. Look not then on these as alien to that which thou dost reverence, but turn thy thoughts to the one source of all things.

43. See ii. 3; v. 8, § 5; xii. 26.

44. See iii. 2.

VI.37 He, who sees what now is, hath seen all that ever hath been from times everlasting, and that shall be to eternity⁴⁵; for all things are of one lineage and one likeness.

45. See ii. 14; iv. 32; vii. 1, 49; xi. 1; xii. 24.

VI.38 Meditate often on the intimate union and mutual interdependence of all things in the Universe. For in a manner all things are mutually intertwined, and thus all things have a liking for one another. For these things are consequent one on another by reason of their contracting and expanding⁴⁶ motion, the sympathy⁴⁷ that breathes through them, and the unity of all substance.

46. τονικήν; see Index III.

Tonikē, from *tonos*, “tension”: in Stoic physics, the motion of *pneuma* by which bodies are held together.

47. Compare Diogenes Laertius, *Life of Zeno* 70: τὴν τῶν οὐρανίων πρὸς τὰ ἐπίγεια σύμπνοιαν καὶ συντονίαν.

The Greek, in translation: “the sympathy and common tension of the heavenly with the earthly.” *Sympnoia*, literally “breathing together,” and *syntonía*, “common tension,” express the interconnection of all parts of the universe.

VI.39 Fit thyself to the environment that is thy portion,⁴⁸ and love the men among whom thy lot is thrown, but whole-heartedly.⁴⁹

48. See vii. 57.

49. vi. 48; viii. 22. Compare 1 Peter i. 22.

1 Peter 1:22 has “see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently” (King James).

VI.40 Every implement, tool, or vessel is well if it do the work for which it is made, and yet in their case the maker is not at hand. But in the things which owe their organic unity to Nature, the Power that made is within them and abides there. Wherefore also must thou reverence it the more, and realize that if thou keep and conduct thyself ever according to its will, all is to thy mind. So also to its mind are the things of the Universe.

VI.41 If thou regardest anything not in thine own choice as good or evil for thyself, it is inevitable that, on the incidence of such an evil or the miscarriage of such a good, thou shouldst upbraid the Gods,⁵⁰ aye, and hate men as the actual or supposed cause of the one or the other; and in fact many are the wrongdoings we commit by setting a value on such things.⁵¹ But if we discriminate as good and evil only the things in our power, there is no occasion left for accusing the Gods⁵² or taking the stand of an enemy towards men.

50. vi. 16 § 3; ix. 1, about the middle. Compare Epictetus's *Discourses* i. 27 § 13.

51. That is, treating as important things which are ἀδιάφορα, or of no consequence either way.

Adiaphora, “indifferents”: the Stoic term for things such as health, wealth, and reputation, which are neither good nor bad in themselves.

52. See vi. 16 § 3.

VI.42 We are all fellow-workers towards the fulfilment of one object, some of us knowingly and intelligently, others blindly; just as Heraclitus, I think, says that *even when they sleep men are workers* and fellow-agents in all that goes on in the world.⁵³ One is a co-agent in this, another in that, and in abundant measure also he that murmurs and seeks to hinder or disannul what occurs. For the Universe had need of such men also. It remains then for thee to decide with whom thou art ranging thyself. For He that controls the Universe will in any case put thee to a good use and admit thee to a place among his fellow-workers and coadjutors. But see that thou fill no such place as the paltry and ridiculous line in the play which Chrysippus mentions.⁵⁴

53. Compare iv. 46. But Plutarch in his treatise *On Superstition* cites a saying of Heraclitus to the effect that sleepers live in a world of their own.

Plutarch's *On Superstition* cites Heraclitus's saying that those awake share one common world, while each sleeper turns aside into a world of his own.

54. Plutarch (*On Common Conceptions Against the Stoics* §§ 13, 14) vigorously denounces this sophism, as he counts it, of Chrysippus that what is evil in itself has a value as a foil to the good. He quotes Chrysippus (Arnim's *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta*, Physics fragment 1181): ὥσπερ γὰρ αἱ κωμωδίαι ἐπιγράμματα γελοῖα φέρουσιν ἀ καθ' ἑαυτὰ μὲν ἐστὶ φαῦλα, τῷ δὲ ὅλῳ ποιήματι χάριν τινα προστίθουσιν, οὕτως ψέξειας ἂν αὐτὴν ἐφ' ἑαυτῆς τὴν κακίαν· τοῖς δὲ ἄλλοις οὐκ ἀχρηστός ἐστιν.

Plutarch's *On Common Conceptions Against the Stoics* is a polemic on Stoic doctrine; Hans von Arnim's *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta* is the standard collection of the fragments of the early Stoics. The Greek, in translation: "for as comedies contain ridiculous lines which are bad in themselves but lend a certain grace to the whole play, so you might censure vice in itself, but it is not without use to the rest."

VI.43 Does the sun take upon himself to discharge the functions of the rain? or Asclepius of the Fruit-bearer⁵⁵? And what of each particular star? Do they not differ in glory yet co-operate to one end?

55. That is, the Earth, or possibly Demeter.

VI.44 If the Gods have taken counsel about me and the things to befall me, doubtless they have taken good counsel. For it is not easy even to imagine a God without wisdom. And what motive could they have impelling them to do me evil? For what advantage could thereby accrue to them or to the Universe which is their special care? But if the Gods have taken no counsel for me individually, yet they have in any case done so for the interests of the Universe, and I am bound to welcome and make the best of⁵⁶ those things also that befall as a necessary corollary to those interests. But if so be they take counsel about nothing at all—an impious belief—in good sooth let us have no more of sacrifices and prayers and oaths, nor do any other of these things every one of which is a recognition of the Gods as if they were at our side and dwelling amongst us—but if so be, I say, they do not take counsel about any of our concerns, it is still in my power to take counsel about myself, and it is for me to consider my own interest. And that is to every man's interest which is agreeable to his own constitution and

nature. But my nature is rational and civic; my city and country, as Antoninus, is Rome; as a man, the world. The things then that are of advantage to these communities, these, and no other, are good for me.

56. See v. 8 § 3; x. 6, 11.

VI.45 All that befalls the Individual is to the interest of the Whole also.⁵⁷ So far, so good. But further careful observation will shew thee that, as a general rule, what is to the interest of one man is also to the interest of other men. But in this case the word *interest* must be taken in a more general sense as it applies to intermediate⁵⁸ things.

57. See v. 8; x. 6 etc.

58. That is, indifferent, neither good nor bad.

VI.46 As the shows in the amphitheatre and such places grate upon thee⁵⁹ as being an everlasting repetition of the same sight, and the similarity makes the spectacle pall, such must be the effect of the whole of life. For everything above and below is ever the same and the result of the same things. How long then?

59. A personal touch. See Fronto's letter to Marcus as Caesar, iv. 12: *theatro libros lectitabas*; ii. 6, *idem theatrum, idem odium* (variant reading: *otium*); compare ii. 10; Naber's edition p. 34; compare Capitolinus's *Life of Marcus* xv. § 1.

Fronto's Latin, in translation: "you used to read books in the theatre," and "the same theatre, the same loathing," with *otium*, "leisure," as a variant for *odium*, "loathing." Capitolinus records that Marcus read, listened to reports, and signed documents at the games, and was mocked for it by the crowd.

VI.47 Never lose sight of the fact that men of all kinds, of all sorts of vocations and of every race under heaven, are dead; and so carry thy thought down even to Philistion and Phoebus and Origanion. Now turn to the other tribes of men. We must pass at last to

the same bourne whither so many wonderful orators have gone, so many grave philosophers, Heraclitus, Pythagoras, Socrates: so many heroes of old time, and so many warriors, so many tyrants of later days: and besides them, Eudoxus, Hipparchus, Archimedes, and other acute natures, men of large minds, lovers of toil, men of versatile powers, men of strong will, mockers, like Menippus⁶⁰ and many another such, of man's perishable and transitory life itself. About all these reflect that they have long since been in their graves. What terrible thing then is this for them? What pray for those whose very names are unknown? One thing on earth is worth much—to live out our lives in truth and justice, and in charity with liars and unjust men.

60. A Cynic philosopher of Gadara. His Syrian compatriot, Lucian, the prince of mockers, was yet alive and mocking. Compare Lucian's *The Fisherman* 26, where the Scholiast (Arethas) refers to this passage. Diogenes Laertius mentions a Meleager, the contemporary of Menippus, as a writer of similar character.

Menippus of Gadara was a Cynic writer of the 3rd century BC whose satires mixing prose and verse became a model for Lucian. Meleager, also of Gadara, was a poet of the 1st century BC.

VI.48 When thou wouldst cheer thine heart, think upon the good qualities of thy associates⁶¹; as for instance, this one's energy, that one's modesty, the generosity of a third, and some other trait of a fourth. For nothing is so cheering as the images of the virtues mirrored in the characters of those who live with us, and presenting themselves in as great a throng as possible. Have these images then ever before thine eyes.

61. But compare v. 10.

VI.49 Thou art not aggrieved, art thou, at being so many pounds in weight and not three hundred? Then why be aggrieved if thou hast only so many years to live and no more? For as thou art contented with the amount of matter allotted thee, so be content also with the time.

VI.50 Try persuasion first, but even though men would say thee nay, act when the principles of justice so direct. Should any one however withstand thee by force, take refuge in being well-content and unhurt, and utilize the obstacle for the display of some other virtue. Recollect that the impulse thou hadst was conditioned⁶² by circumstances,⁶³ and thine aim was not to do impossibilities. What then was it? To feel some such impulse as thou didst. In that thou art successful. That which alone was in the sphere of our choice⁶⁴ is realized.

62. See iv. 1; v. 20.

63. Literally *was with a reservation*, that is, “should circumstances allow.” Compare iv. 1; viii. 41.

64. Casaubon translates “that for which we were brought into the world,” but can *προάγω* mean this?

Meric Casaubon’s translation of 1634 was the first complete English translation of the *Meditations*. *Proagō*, “lead forward” or “bring forth.”

VI.51 The lover of glory conceives his own good to consist in another’s action, the lover of pleasure in his own feelings, but the possessor of understanding in his own actions.

VI.52 We need not form any opinion about the thing in question or be harassed in soul, for Nature gives the thing itself no power to compel our judgments.

VI.53 Train thyself to pay careful attention to what is being said⁶⁵ by another and as far as possible enter into his soul.

65. Obviously no contradiction of iv. 18 etc. See also vii. 4. 30.

VI.54 That which is not in the interests of the hive cannot be in the interests of the bee.⁶⁶

VI.55 If the sailors spoke ill of a steersman or the sick of a physician, what else would they have in mind but how the man should best effect the safety of the crew or the health of his patients?

VI.56 How many have already left the world who came into it with me!

VI.57 To the jaundiced honey tastes bitter; and the victim of hydrophobia has a horror of water; and to little children their ball is a treasure. Why then angry? Or dost thou think that error is a less potent factor than bile in the jaundiced and virus in the victim of rabies?

VI.58 From living according to the reason of thy nature no one can prevent thee: contrary to the reason of the Universal Nature nothing shall befall thee.

VI.59 The persons men wish to please,⁶⁷ the objects they wish to gain, the means they employ—think of the character of all these! How soon will Time hide all things! How many a thing has it already hidden!

⁶⁷. See vii. 62.

BOOK VII

VII.1 What is vice? A familiar sight enough. So in everything that befalls have the thought ready: *This is a familiar sight*. Look up, look down, everywhere thou wilt find the same things, whereof histories ancient, medieval, and modern are full; and full of them at this day are cities and houses. There is no new thing under the sun.¹ Everything is stereotyped, everything fleeting.

1. Ecclesiastes i. 9. Compare also Justin Martyr's *Apology* i. 57, addressed to Pius and Marcus.

VII.2 How else can thy axioms be made dead than by the extinction of the ideas that answer to them? And these it lies with thee ever to kindle anew into flame. I am competent to form the true conception of a thing. If so, why am I harassed? What is outside the scope of my mind has absolutely no concern with my mind. Learn this lesson and thou standest erect.

Thou canst begin a new life! See but things afresh as thou usedst to see them; for in this consists the new life.

VII.3 Empty love of pageantry, stage-plays, flocks and herds, sham-fights, a bone thrown to lap-dogs, crumbs cast in a fish-pond, painful travail of ants and their bearing of burdens, skurryings of scared little mice, puppets moved by strings.² Amid such environment therefore thou must take thy place graciously and not 'snorting defiance,'³ nay thou must keep abreast of the fact that everyone is worth just so much as those things are worth in which he is interested.'⁴

2. See ii. 2 etc.

3. Compare ix. 41 (Epicurus).

Epicurus founded the Epicurean school, which held pleasure, understood as freedom from pain and disturbance, to be the goal of life; IX.41 records his account of how he conducted himself in illness.

4. v. 16. Compare Demosthenes' *Olynthiac* iii. 32: ἅττα γὰρ ἂν τὰ ἐπιτηδεύματα τῶν ἀνθρώπων ᾗ, τοιοῦτον ἀνάγκη καὶ τὸ φρόνημα ἔχειν. Compare Clement of Alexandria's *Stromata* iv. 23.

Demosthenes' third *Olynthiac* urges Athens to act against Philip of Macedon; the Greek, in translation: "whatever men's pursuits are, such must their spirit be."

VII.4 In conversation keep abreast of what is being said,⁵ and, in every effort, of what is being done. In the latter see from the first to what end it has reference, and in the former be careful to catch the meaning.

5. See vi. 53.

VII.5 Is my mind competent for this or not? If competent, I apply it to the task as an instrument given me by the Universal Nature. If not competent, I either withdraw from the work in favour of someone who can accomplish it better, unless for other reasons duty forbids; or I do the best I can, taking to assist me any one that can utilize my ruling Reason to effect what is at the moment seasonable and useful for the common welfare. For in whatsoever I do either by myself or with another I must direct my energies to this alone, that it shall conduce to the common interest⁶ and be in harmony with it.

6. See iv. 12.

VII.6 How many much-lauded heroes have already been given as a prey unto forgetfulness,⁷ and how many that lauded them have long ago disappeared!

7. See iii. 10; iv. 33; viii. 21.

VII.7 Blush not to be helped⁸; for thou art bound to carry out the task that is laid upon thee as a soldier to storm the breach. What then, if for very lameness thou canst not mount the ramparts unaided, but canst do this with another's help?

8. x. 12. See saying of Marcus, Capitolinus's *Life of Marcus* xxii. 4, quoted below, p. 360.

Haines's "p. 360" refers to his appended collection of Marcus's sayings.

VII.8 Be not disquieted about the future. If thou must come thither, thou wilt come armed with the same reason which thou appliest now to the present.

VII.9 All things are mutually intertwined,⁹ and the tie is sacred, and scarcely anything is alien the one to the other. For all things have been ranged side by side,¹⁰ and together help to order one ordered Universe. For there is both one Universe, made up of all things, and one God immanent in all things, and one Substance, and one Law, one Reason common to all intelligent creatures,¹¹ and one Truth, if indeed there is also one perfecting of living creatures that have the same origin and share the same reason.

9. See vi. 38.

10. See iv. 45.

11. See iv. 4.

VII.10 A little while and all that is material is lost to sight in the Substance of the Universe,¹² a little while and all Cause is taken back into the Reason of the Universe, a little while and the remembrance of everything is encained in Eternity.

12. See ii. 12.

VII.11 To the rational creature the same act is at once according to nature and according to reason.¹³

13. Seneca's *On the Happy Life* 8.

Seneca's *On the Happy Life* argues that happiness consists in virtue, lived in accordance with nature.

VII.12 Upright, or made upright.¹⁴

14. Compare vii. 7; but see iii. 5.

VII.13 The principle which obtains where limbs and body unite to form one organism, holds good also for rational things with their separate individualities, constituted as they are to work in conjunction. But the perception of this shall come more home to thee, if thou sayest to thyself, I am a *limb* of the organized body of rational things. But if [using the letter R] thou sayest thou art but a *part*,¹⁵ not yet dost thou love mankind from the heart, nor yet does well-doing delight thee for its own sake.¹⁶ Thou dost practise it still as a bare duty, not yet as a boon to thyself.

15. The pun may be kept by *limb*—*rim*.

Marcus's words are *melos*, "limb," and *meros*, "part," which differ by a single letter, λ for ρ; hence the bracketed "[using the letter R]" in Haines's text. Haines's *limb*—*rim* imitates the pun in English.

16. Compare iv. 20.

VII.14 Let any external thing, that will, be incident to whatever is able to feel this incidence. For that which feels can, if it please, complain.¹⁷ But I, if I do not consider what has befallen me to be an evil,¹⁸ am still unhurt. And I *can* refuse so to consider it.

17. See vii. 33; viii. 28

18. See iv. 7, 39.

VII.15 Let any say or do what he will, I must for my part be good. So might the emerald—or gold or purple—never tire of repeating, *Whatever any one shall do or say, I must be an emerald and keep my colour.*

VII.16 The ruling Reason is never the disturber of its own peace, never, for instance, hurries itself into lust. But if another can cause it fear or pain, let it do so. For it will not let its own assumptions lead it into such aberrations.

Let the body take thought for itself, if it may, that it suffer no hurt and, if it do so suffer, let it proclaim the fact.¹⁹ But the soul that has the faculty of fear, the faculty of pain, and alone can assume that these exist, can never suffer; for it is not given to making any such admission.²⁰

In itself the ruling Reason wants for nothing unless it create its own needs, and in like manner nothing can disturb it, nothing impede it, unless the disturbance or impediment come from itself.

19. See vii. 14, 33.

20. See vi. 52; vii. 14, 33; viii. 40 etc.

VII.17 Well-being²¹ is a good Being, or a ruling Reason that is good. What then doest thou here, O Imagination?²² Avaunt, in God's name, as thou camest, for I desire thee not! But thou art come according to thine ancient wont. I bear thee no malice; only depart

from me!

21. Defined by Chrysippus as “harmony of our δαίμων with God’s will.”

Daimōn is the divinity within each person, which Haines renders “genius.”

22. vii. 29; compare Ecclesiasticus xxxvii. 3.

Ecclesiasticus 37:3 has “O wicked imagination, whence camest thou in to cover the earth with deceit?” (King James).

VII.18 Does a man shrink from change? Why, what can come into being save by change? What be nearer or dearer to the Nature of the Universe? Canst thou take a hot bath unless the wood for the furnace suffer a change? Couldst thou be fed, if thy food suffered no change, and can any of the needs of life be provided for apart from change? Seest thou not that a personal change is similar, and similarly necessary to the Nature of the Universe?

VII.19 Through the universal Substance as through a rushing torrent²³ all bodies pass on their way, united with the Whole in nature and activity, as our members are with one another.

How many a Chrysippus,²⁴ how many a Socrates, how many an Epictetus²⁵ hath Time already devoured! Whatsoever man thou hast to do with and whatsoever thing, let the same thought strike thee.

23. See iv. 43; v. 23; vi. 15.

24. Referred by some (see Zeller, *The Stoics, Epicureans, and Sceptics*, p. 158, English translation) to the theory that at each cyclical regeneration of the world the same persons and events repeat themselves. But see x. 31.

Eduard Zeller was a German historian of Greek philosophy, whose history Haines calls “the standard work.”

25. Aulus Gellius, *Attic Nights* ii. 18, speaks of Epictetus as recently dead; Themistius, *Orations* v, p. 63 D, implies that he was alive under the Antonines. Lucian's *The Ignorant Book Collector* 13 speaks of his earthenware lamp having been bought by an admirer for 3,000 drachmas.

Lucian's *The Ignorant Book Collector* is an invective against a man who buys fine books to pass for a man of letters without the learning to judge them.

VII.20 I am concerned about one thing only, that I of myself do not what man's constitution does not will, or wills not now, or in a way that it wills not.

VII.21 A little while and thou wilt have forgotten everything, a little while and everything will have forgotten thee.

VII.22 It is a man's especial privilege²⁶ to love even those who stumble. And this love follows as soon as thou reflectest that they are of kin to thee and that they do wrong involuntarily and through ignorance,²⁷ and that within a little while both they and thou will be dead²⁸; and this, above all, that the man has done thee no hurt²⁹; for he has not made thy ruling Reason worse than it was before.

26. Fronto's letter to Verus, ii. 2: *Hominis maxime proprium ignoscere*. Compare St. Matthew v. 44; Dio's *Roman History* 71. 26, § 2.

Fronto's Latin, in translation: "forgiveness is most proper to man." Matthew 5:44 has "Love your enemies"; the Dio passage is the speech on the revolt of Avidius Cassius, in which Marcus hopes to be able to pardon him.

27. Compare St. Luke xxiii. 34.

Luke 23:34 has "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (King James).

28. See iv. 6.

29. See ii. 1; ix. 38.

VII.23 The Nature of the Whole out of the Substance of the Whole,³⁰ as out of wax, moulds at one time a horse, and breaking up the mould kneads the material up again into a tree, then into a man, and then into something else; and every one of these subsists but for a moment. It is no more a hardship for the coffer to be broken up than it was for it to be fitted together.

30. vii. 25. Compare St. Paul, Romans ix. 20.

Romans 9:20 has “Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?” (King James).

VII.24 An angry scowl on the face is beyond measure unnatural, and when it is often seen there, all comeliness begins at once to die away, or in the end is so utterly extinguished that it can never be rekindled at all. From this very fact try to reach the conclusion that it is contrary to reason. The consciousness of wrong-doing once lost, what motive is left for living any more?

VII.25 Everything that thou seest will the Nature that controls the Universe change, no one knows how soon, and out of its substance make other compounds,³¹ and again others out of theirs, that the world may ever renew its youth.

31. See vii. 23.

VII.26 Does a man do thee wrong? Go to and mark what notion of good and evil was his that did the wrong. Once perceive that and thou wilt feel compassion³² not surprise or anger. For thou hast still thyself either the same notion of good and evil as he or another not unlike. Thou needs must forgive him then.³³ But if thy notions of good and evil are no longer such, all the more easily shalt thou be gracious to him that sees awry.

32. Compare ii. 13; x. 30; Herodian i. 4, § 2; Dio's *Roman History* 71. 10, § 4.

33. See xi. 18, § 4.

VII.27 Dream not of that which thou hast not as though already thine, but of what thou hast pick out the choicest blessings, and do not forget in respect of them how eagerly thou wouldst have coveted them, had they not been thine.³⁴ Albeit beware that thou do not inure thyself, by reason of this thy delight in them, to prize them so highly as to be distressed if at any time they are lost to thee.³⁵

34. Epictetus's *Fragments* 129.

35. Compare Horace's *Epistles* i. 10, 31.

In the lines cited from the first book of his *Epistles*, Horace warns that the man whom prosperity has pleased too much will be shaken when it changes.

VII.28 Gather thyself into thyself.³⁶ It is characteristic of the rational Ruling Faculty to be satisfied with its own righteous dealing and the peace which that brings.

36. See iv. 3, near the beginning; viii. 48.

VII.29 Efface imagination!³⁷ Cease to be pulled as a puppet by thy passions.³⁸ Isolate the present. Recognize what befalls either thee or another. Dissect and analyze all that comes under thy ken into the Causal and the Material. Meditate on thy last hour.³⁹ Let the wrong thy neighbour does thee rest with him that did the wrong.⁴⁰

37. See vii. 17; viii. 29; ix. 7.

38. See ii. 2 etc.

39. See ii. 5.

40. See ix. 20, 38.

VII.30 Do thy utmost to keep up with what is said.⁴¹ Let thy mind enter into the things that are done and the things that are doing them.

41. See vii. 4.

VII.31 Make thy face to shine with simplicity and modesty and disregard of all that lies between virtue and vice. Love human-kind. Follow God.⁴² Says the Sage: *All things by Law, but in very truth only elements*. And it suffices to remember that all things *are* by law: there thou hast it briefly enough.⁴³

42. 1 Peter ii. 17. Compare Seneca's *On the Happy Life* 15: *Deum sequere*. Dio Chrysostom's *Orations* ii. 98, Reiske's edition.

1 Peter 2:17 has "Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king" (King James). Seneca's *Deum sequere*: "follow God."

43. The reading and meaning are uncertain. The Sage is Democritus, and we should expect atoms rather than elements to be mentioned. Leopold aptly quotes Sextus Empiricus's *Against the Mathematicians* vii. 35: νόμῳ γλυκὺ καὶ νόμῳ πικρὸν, νόμῳ θερμὸν νόμῳ ψυχρὸν . . . ἔτεῃ δὲ ἄτομα καὶ κενόν. Fournier cleverly makes a hexameter of the words πάντα νομίστ', ἔτεῃ δὲ μόνα στοιχεῖα <κενὸν τε>.

J. H. Leopold edited the Greek text of the *Meditations* for the Clarendon Press. The Greek from Sextus Empiricus, in translation, quotes Democritus: "by convention sweet and by convention bitter, by convention hot, by convention cold . . . but in reality atoms and void." Fournier's hexameter, in translation: "all things are by convention, but in reality only elements and void."

VII.32 Of Death: Either dispersion if atoms; or, if a single Whole, either extinction or a change of state.⁴⁴

44. Seneca's *Epistles* 65, near the end: *Mors aut finis aut transitus*.

Seneca's Latin, in translation: "death is either an end or a passage."

VII.33 Of Pain: *When unbearable it destroys us, when lasting, it is bearable,*⁴⁵ and the mind safeguards its own calm by withdrawing itself, and the ruling Reason takes no hurt. As to the parts that are impaired by the pain, let them say their say about it as they can.’⁴⁶

45. vii. 16, 64. Compare Aeschylus, *Fragment* 310: θάρσει πόνου γὰρ ἄκρον οὐκ ἔχει χρόνον; Diogenes Laertius, *Life of Epicurus* xxxi. 4.

Aeschylus was the earliest of the three great Athenian tragedians; the Greek, in translation: “take heart, for the height of pain lasts no time.” The Epicurean doctrine is that severe pain is brief and lasting pain is mild.

46. See vii. 14; viii. 40.

VII.34 Of Glory: Look at the minds of its votaries, their characteristics, ambitions, antipathies.⁴⁷ Remember too that, as the sands of the sea drifting one upon the other bury the earlier deposits, so in life the earlier things are very soon hidden under what comes after.

47. See vi. 59.

VII.35 [From Plato.]⁴⁸ *Dost thou think that the life of man can seem any great matter to him who has true grandeur of soul and a comprehensive outlook on all Time and all Substance? “It cannot seem so,” said he. Will such a man then deem death a terrible thing? “Not in the least.”*

48. Plato’s *Republic* 486 A.

In *Republic* 486 A Plato argues that a mind which contemplates all time and all being will not think human life a great thing. This is the first of a series of quotations running through VII.52, with a few reflections of Marcus’s own among them: passages of Plato, marked as such in Haines’s text, and lines of Euripides, several from lost plays that Haines identifies by fragment number.

VII.36 [From Antisthenes.] *’Tis royal to do well and be ill spoken of.*⁴⁹

49. Compare Epictetus's *Discourses* iv. 6, § 20; 1 Peter ii. 20. See Diogenes Laertius, *Life of Antisthenes* § 4. Plutarch attributes the saying to Alexander.

Antisthenes was a pupil of Socrates, regarded in antiquity as a forerunner of the Cynics. Plutarch attributes the saying to Alexander the Great.

VII.37 It is a shame that while the countenance⁵⁰ is subject to the mind, taking its cast and livery from it, the mind cannot take its cast and its livery from itself.

50. See vii. 60.

VII.38 *It nought availeth to be wroth with things, For they reck not of it.*⁵¹

51. Euripides, *Bellerophon*, Fragment 289; xi. 6. Twice quoted by Plutarch.

Euripides' *Bellerophon*, now lost, dramatized the story of the hero Bellerophon.

VII.39 *Unto the deathless Gods and to us give cause for rejoicing.*⁵²

52. Unknown.

VII.40 *Our lives are reaped like the ripe ears of corn, And as one falls, another still is born.*⁵³

53. Euripides, *Hypsipyle*, Fragment 757; xi. 6. Cicero's *Tusculan Disputations* iii. 25, § 59: *Vita omnibus metenda, ut fruges*. Epictetus's *Discourses* ii. 6. 14. Compare Job v. 26.

Euripides' *Hypsipyle* is a lost play known from quotations and fragments. Cicero's Latin, in translation: "life must be reaped by all, like crops." Job 5:26 has "Thou shalt come to thy grave in a full age, like as a shock of corn cometh in in his season" (King James).

VII.41 *Though me and both my sons the Gods have spurned, For this too there is reason.*⁵⁴

54. Euripides, *Antiope*, Fragment 207; xi. 6.

VII.42 *For justice and good luck shall bide with me.*⁵⁵

55. Namely, σύμμαχον ἔσται, Euripides, *Fragment* 910. Twice quoted by Cicero (*Letters to Atticus* vi. 1, § 8; viii. 8, § 2). Compare Aristophanes' *Acharnians* 661.

Symmachon estai, "will be an ally." Cicero's *Letters to Atticus* are his correspondence with his friend Titus Pomponius Atticus. Aristophanes was a poet of Athenian Old Comedy, and the *Acharnians* is one of his plays.

VII.43 *No chorus of loud dirges, no hysteria.*⁵⁶

56. Unknown.

VII.44 [Citations from Plato]: *I might fairly answer such a questioner: Thou art mistaken if thou thinkest that a man, who is worth anything at all, ought to let considerations of life and death weigh with him rather than in all that he does consider but this, whether it is just or unjust and the work of a good man or a bad.*⁵⁷

57. Plato's *Apology* 28 B. Socrates is answering a question whether he is not ashamed of risking his life in a vocation such as his.

VII.45 *This, O men of Athens, is the true state of the case: Wherever a man has stationed himself, deeming it the best for him, or has been stationed by his commander, there methinks he ought to stay and run every risk, taking into account neither death nor any thing else save dishonour.*⁵⁸

58. Plato's *Apology* 28 E.

VII.46 *But, my good sir, see whether nobility and goodness do not mean something other than to save and be saved; for surely a man worthy of the name must waive aside the question of the duration of life however extended, and must not cling basely to life, but leaving these things in the hands of God pin his faith to the women's adage, his destiny no man can flee,' and thereafter consider in what way he may best live for such time as he has to live.*⁵⁹

59. Plato's *Gorgias* 512 DE.

In *Gorgias* 512 DE Socrates tells Callicles that a true man should not be concerned with living as long as possible.

VII.47 Watch the stars in their courses as one that runneth about with them therein; and think constantly upon the reciprocal changes of the elements, for thoughts on these things cleanse away the mire of our earthly life.

VII.48 Noble is this saying of Plato's.⁶⁰ Moreover he who discourses of men should, as if from some vantage-point⁶¹ above, take a bird's-eye view of the things of earth, in its gatherings,⁶² armies, husbandry, its marriages and separations,⁶³ its births and deaths, the din of the law-court and the silence of the desert, barbarous races manifold, its feasts and mournings and markets, the medley of it all and its orderly conjunction of contraries.

60. What follows is obviously not a saying of Plato. We must therefore refer back to what precedes, or suppose that Plato's words have dropped out.

61. ix. 30. Compare Lucian's *Charon* § 15; *Icaromenippus* § 12.

In both Lucian dialogues human affairs are surveyed from a height: in *Charon* by the ferryman of the dead and Hermes, in *Icaromenippus* by Menippus from the moon.

62. If κατὰ ἀγέλας be read, it will mean literally, *drove by drove, that is, in its aggregations*; if κάτω, ἀγέλας, the latter word must refer to gatherings of men.

63. This might mean *treaties of peace*, but there seems to be a system of contrasted pairs.

VII.49 Pass in review the far-off things of the past and its succession of sovranities without number. Thou canst look forward and see the future also. For it will most surely be of the same character,⁶⁴ and it cannot but carry on the rhythm of existing things. Consequently it is all one, whether we witness human life for forty years or ten thousand. For what more shalt thou see?

64. See vi. 37.

VII.50 *All that is earth-born gravitates earthwards, Dust unto dust; and all that from ether Grows, speeds swiftly back again heavenward;*⁶⁵

that is, either there is a breaking up of the closely-linked atoms or, what is much the same, a scattering of the impassive elements.

65. Euripides, *Chrysippus*, Fragment 836. Constantly quoted. Compare Lucretius ii. 991; Genesis iii. 19: γῆ εἰ καὶ ἐς γῆν ἀπελεύσῃ; Ecclesiasticus xl. 11.

Euripides' *Chrysippus* is a lost play. Lucretius was the Roman poet of *On the Nature of Things*, an exposition of Epicurean physics. The Greek of Genesis 3:19, in translation: "earth thou art, and to earth thou shalt return." Ecclesiasticus 40:11 has "All things that are of the earth shall turn to the earth again" (King James).

VII.51 Again: *With meats and drinks and curious sorceries Side-track the stream, so be they may not die.*⁶⁶ *When a storm from the Gods beats down on our bark, At our oars then we needs must toil and complain not.*⁶⁷

66. Euripides, *Suppliants* 1110.

In Euripides' *Suppliants*, the lines are spoken by Iphis, an old man mourning his son and his daughter, on those who try to prolong their lives.

- VII.52** *Better at the cross-buttock*,⁶⁸ may be, but not at shewing public spirit or modesty, or being readier for every contingency or more gracious to our neighbour if he sees awry.

68. Plutarch, *Sayings of Kings and Commanders* 2. 206 E.

Plutarch's *Sayings of Kings and Commanders* is a collection of remarks attributed to famous rulers and generals.

- VII.53** A work that can be accomplished in obedience to that reason which we share with the Gods is attended with no fear. For no harm need be anticipated, where by an activity that follows the right road, and satisfies the demands of our constitution, we can ensure our own weal.
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- VII.54** At all times and in all places it rests with thee both to be content with thy present lot as a worshipper of the Gods, and to deal righteously with thy present neighbours, and to labour lovingly at thy present thoughts, that nothing unverified should steal into them.
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- VII.55** Look not about thee at the ruling Reason of others, but look with straight eyes at this, *To what is Nature guiding thee?*—both the Nature of the Universe, by means of what befalls thee and thy nature by means of the acts thou hast to do. But everyone must do what follows from his own constitution; and all other things have been constituted for the sake of rational beings—just as in every other case the lower are for the sake of the higher⁶⁹—but the rational for their own sake.

Social obligation then is the leading feature in the constitution of man and, coming second to it, an uncompromising resistance to bodily inclinations. For it is the privilege of a rational and intelligent motion to isolate itself, and never to be overcome by the motions of sense or desire; for either kind is animal-like. But the motion of the Intelligence claims ever to have the pre-eminence and never to be mastered by them. And rightly so, for it is its nature to put all those to its own use. Thirdly, the rational constitution is free from precipitancy and cannot be misled. Let the ruling Reason then, clinging to these characteristics, accomplish a straight course and then it comes into its own.

69. See v. 16, 30; xi. 10.

VII.56 As one that is dead, and his life till now lived and gone, must thou count the rest of thy days as so much to the good,⁷⁰ and live according to Nature.

70. Compare Seneca's *Epistles* 12, near the end: *Quisquis dixit "Vixi," quotidie ad lucrum surgit.* Seneca's Latin, in translation: "whoever has said 'I have lived' rises every day to a gain."

VII.57 Love only what befalls thee and is spun for thee by fate. For what can be more befitting for thee?

VII.58 In every contingency keep before thine eyes those who, when these same things befell them, were straightway aggrieved, estranged,⁷¹ rebellious. Where are they now? Nowhere! What then? Wouldst thou be like them? Why not leave those alien deflections to what deflects and is deflected by them, and devote thyself wholly to the question how to turn these contingencies to the best advantage? For then wilt thou

make a noble use of them, and they shall be thy raw material. Only in thought and will take heed to be beautiful to thyself in all that thou doest. And remember, in rejecting the one and using the other, that the thing which matters is the aim of the action.

71. Or, *taken by surprise*. Compare viii. 15.

VII.59 Look within. Within is the fountain of Good,⁷² ready always to well forth if thou wilt alway delve.

72. St. John iv. 14.

John 4:14 has “a well of water springing up into everlasting life” (King James).

VII.60 The body too should be firmly set and suffer no distortion in movement or bearing. For what the mind effects in the face,⁷³ by keeping it composed and well-favoured, should be looked for similarly in the whole body. But all this must be secured without conscious effort.

73. vii. 37. Compare vii. 24.

VII.61 The business of life is more akin to wrestling⁷⁴ than dancing, for it requires of us to stand ready and unshakable against every assault however unforeseen.

74. St. Paul, Ephesians vi. 12.

Ephesians 6:12 has “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood” (King James).

VII.62 Continually reflect, who they are whose favourable testimony thou desirest,⁷⁵ and what their ruling Reason; for thus wilt thou not find fault with those who unintentionally offend, nor wilt thou want their testimony, when thou lookest into

the inner springs of their opinions and desires.

75. See vi. 59; vii. 34.

VII.63 *Every soul, says Plato, is reft of truth against its will.*⁷⁶ Therefore it is the same also with justice and temperance and lovingkindness and every like quality. It is essential to keep this ever in mind, for it will make thee gentler towards all.⁷⁷

76. Quoted by Epictetus (*Discourses* i. 63, 28 § 4) as from Plato (see Plato's *Sophist* 238 C; *Republic* iii. 412); viii. 14; x. 30; xi. 18, § 3.

77. The same word is used of Marcus by Galen (Kühn's edition, volume 12 page 17); Athenagoras's *Apology* 1. 1; Lucian's *The Passing of Peregrinus* 17; and Aristides, *To the King* §§ 105, 112.

The word is *praos*, "gentle," from which Marcus's *praoteros*, "gentler," is formed. Lucian's *The Passing of Peregrinus* is his satirical account of the Cynic Peregrinus, who burned himself to death at the Olympic Games.

VII.64 Whenever thou art in pain, have this reflection ready, that this is nothing to be ashamed of, nor can it make worse the mind that holds the helm. For it cannot impair it in so far as it is rational or in so far as it is social. In most pains, however, call to thy rescue even Epicurus when he says that a pain is *never unbearable*⁷⁸ or *interminable*, so that thou remember its limitations and add nothing to it in imagination.⁷⁹ Recollect this too that many of our every-day discomforts are really pain in disguise, such as drowsiness,⁸⁰ a high temperature, want of appetite. When inclined to be vexed at any of these, say to thyself: *I am giving in to pain.*⁸¹

78. See vii. 33.

79. See viii. 49.

80. See vi. 2.

81. Compare vi. 29.

VII.65 See that thou never have for the inhuman the feeling which the inhuman have for human kind.

VII.66 How do we know that Telauges⁸² may not have excelled Socrates in character? For it is not enough that Socrates died a more glorious death, and disputed more deftly with the Sophists, and with more hardihood braved whole nights in the frost, and, when called upon to fetch the Salaminian,⁸³ deemed it more spirited⁸⁴ to disobey, and that he *carried his head high as he walked*⁸⁵—and about the truth of this one can easily judge—; but the point to elucidate is this: what sort of soul had Socrates,⁸⁶ and could he rest satisfied with being just in his dealings with men and religious in his attitude towards the Gods, neither resentful at the wickedness of others nor yet lackeying the ignorance of anyone, nor regarding as alien to himself anything allotted to him from the Whole, nor bearing it as a burden intolerable, nor letting his intelligence be swayed sympathetically by the affections of the flesh ?

82. Son of Pythagoras. See Diogenes Laertius, *Life of Pythagoras* 22. 26.

83. Plato's *Apology* 20 C; Epictetus's *Discourses* iv. 7 § 30.

The Salaminian is Leon of Salamis, whom the Thirty Tyrants in 404 BC ordered Socrates and four others to arrest for execution; Socrates refused and went home. His endurance of frost is described by Alcibiades in Plato's *Symposium*, from the campaign at Potidaea.

84. Or γενναϊότερον, *more honourable*.

85. Aristophanes' *Clouds* 363; Plato's *Symposium* 221 B. The meaning of the parenthesis is not clear.

In the *Clouds* Aristophanes mocks Socrates for swaggering through the streets; in Plato's *Symposium* Alcibiades quotes the line, describing Socrates during the retreat from Delium.

86. Compare Dio Chrysostom's *Orations* iii, near the beginning.

VII.67 Nature did not make so intimate a blend in the compound as not to allow a man to isolate himself and keep his own things in his own power. For it is very possible to be a godlike man and yet not to be recognized by any.⁸⁷ Never forget this nor that the

happy life depends on the fewest possible things⁸⁸; nor because thou hast been baulked in the hope of becoming skilled in dialectics and physics,⁸⁹ needest thou despair of being free and modest and unselfish and obedient to God.

87. Seneca (*Epistles* 79) instances Democritus, Socrates, and Cato.

88. Julian's *The Caesars* 427. 21, where Marcus, asked in what consists the imitation of the Gods, says δεῖσθαι τῶν ἐλαχίστων. Compare Lucian's *The Cynic* 12: οἱ δ' ἔγγιστοι θεοῖς ἐλαχίστων δέονται. Diogenes Laertius, *Life of Socrates* 11.

Julian's Greek, in translation: "to need as few things as possible." *The Cynic*, a dialogue attributed to Lucian that defends the Cynic way of life, in translation: "those nearest the gods need the fewest things."

89. i. 17, § 8; compare v. 5; viii. 1.

VII.68 Thou mayest live out thy life with none to constrain thee in the utmost peace of mind even though the whole world cry out against thee what they will, even though beasts tear limb from limb this plastic clay that has encased thee with its growth.⁹⁰ For what in all this debars the mind from keeping itself in calmness, in a right judgment as to its environment, and in readiness to use all that is put at its disposal? so that the judgment can say to that which meets it: *In essential substance thou art this, whatever else the common fame would have thee be*. And the use can say to the object presented to it: *Thee was I seeking*. For the thing in hand is for me ever material for the exercise of rational and civic virtue,⁹¹ and in a word for the art of a man or of God. For everything that befalls is intimately connected with God or man, and is not new or difficult to deal with, but familiar and feasible.

90. xi. 3. Applies accurately to the Christians. Compare i. 6; iii. 16; viii. 48, 51, § 2.

91. See iv. 1.

VII.69 This is the mark of a perfect character, to pass through each day as if it were the last,⁹² without agitation, without torpor, without pretence.

92. See ii. 5.

VII.70 The Gods—and they are immortal—do not take it amiss that for a time so long they must inevitably and always put up with worthless men who are what they are and so many⁹³; nay they even befriend them in all manner of ways. But thou, though destined to die so soon, criest off, and that too though thou art one of the worthless ones thyself.

93. St. Matthew v. 45.

Matthew 5:45 has “he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good” (King James).

VII.71 It is absurd not to eschew our own wickedness, which is possible, but to eschew that of others, which is not possible.⁹⁴

94. See v. 17; ix. 42.

VII.72 Whatever thy rational and civic faculty discovers to be neither intelligent nor social, it judges with good reason to fall short of its own standard.

VII.73 When thou hast done well to another and another has fared well at thy hands, why go on like the foolish to look for a third thing besides, that is, the credit also of having done well or a return for the same⁹⁵?

95. v. 6; ix. 42. Compare Fronto’s *On the Loss of a Grandson*, near the end.

VII.74 No one wearies of benefits received; and to act by the law of Nature is its own benefit. Weary not then of being benefited therein, wherein thou dost benefit others.⁹⁶

96. Compare St. Paul, Galatians vi. 9; 2 Thessalonians iii. 13. For the Stoic view see Stobaeus's *Eclogues* ii. 188.

Galatians 6:9 has “let us not be weary in well doing,” and 2 Thessalonians 3:13 “be not weary in well doing” (King James).

VII.75 The Nature of the Whole felt impelled to the creation of a Universe; but now either all that comes into being does so by a natural sequence,⁹⁷ or even the most paramount things, towards which the ruling Reason of the Universe feels an impulse of its own, are devoid of intelligence. Recollect this,⁹⁸ and thou wilt face many an ill with more serenity.

97. See iv. 45; ix. 28.

98. Marcus means that we must consider the second alternative given above as incredible.

BOOK VIII

VIII.1 This too serves as a corrective to vain-gloriousness, that thou art no longer able to have lived thy life wholly, or even from thy youth up, as a philosopher. Thou canst clearly perceive, and many others can see it too, that thou art far from Philosophy. So then thy life is a chaos,¹ and no longer is it easy for thee to win the credit of being a philosopher; and the facts of thy life too war against it. If then thine eyes have verily seen where the truth lies, care no more what men shall think of thee, but be content if the rest of thy life, whether long or short, be lived as thy nature wills. Make sure then what that will is, and let nothing else draw thee aside. For past experience tells thee in how much thou hast gone astray, nor anywhere lighted upon the true life; no, not in the subtleties of logic,² or in wealth or fame or enjoyment, or *anywhere*. Where then is it to be found? In doing that which is the quest of man's nature. How then shall a man do this? By having axioms as the source of his impulses and actions. What axioms? On the nature of Good and Evil, shewing that nothing is for a man's good save what makes him just, temperate, manly, free; nor any thing for his ill that makes him not the reverse of these.

1. Or, *thou hast been besmirched*, but compare vi. 16, § 3.

2. See i. 17, near the end; vii. 67.

VIII.2 In every action ask thyself, *How does it affect me? Shall I regret it?* But a little and I am dead and all that lies between is past. What more do I ask for, as long as my present work is that of a living creature, intelligent, social, and under one law with God?

VIII.3 What are Alexander and Gaius and Pompeius to Diogenes and Heraclitus³ and Socrates? For these latter had their eyes opened to things and to the causes and the material substance of things, and their ruling Reason was their very own. But those—

what a host of cares, what a world of slavery!

3. Justin Martyr (*Apology* i. 46) mentions Heraclitus and Socrates and others like them as “living with the divine Logos.” And in *Apology* ii. 8 Heraclitus and Musonius are spoken of as hated and slain for their opinions.

Gaius is Julius Caesar, and Pompeius is Pompey the Great. Musonius Rufus was a 1st-century Stoic teacher, exiled under Nero, whose pupils included Epictetus.

VIII.4 Thou mayst burst thyself with rage, but they will go on doing the same things none the less.

VIII.5 Firstly, fret not thyself, for all things are as the Nature of the Universe would have them, and within a little thou shalt be non-existent, and nowhere, like Hadrianus and Augustus. Secondly, look steadfastly at the thing, and see it as it is and, remembering withal that thou must be a good man, and what the Nature of man calls for, do this without swerving, and speak as seemeth to thee most just, only be it graciously, modestly, and without feigning.⁴

4. The word here used by Marcus occurs only in Christian writings.

Marcus's word is *anypokritōs*, “without feigning”; the related adjective *anypokritos* occurs in the New Testament, as in Romans 12:9, “Let love be without dissimulation” (King James).

VIII.6 The Nature of the Universe is charged with this task, to transfer yonder the things which are here, to interchange them, to take them hence and convey them thither. All things are but phases of change, but nothing new-fangled need be feared; all things are of the wonted type,⁵ nay, their distributions also are alike.

5. See ii. 14; iv. 32; vii. 1 etc.

VIII.7 Every nature is content with itself when it speeds well on its way; and a rational nature speeds well on its way, when in its impressions it gives assent to nothing that is false or obscure, and directs its impulses towards none but social acts, and limits its inclinations and its aversions only to things that are in its power, and welcomes all that the Universal Nature allots it. For it is a part of that, as the nature of the leaf is of the plant-nature; with the difference however, that in the case of the plant the nature of the leaf is part of a nature void both of sentience and reason, and liable to be thwarted, while a man's nature is part of a nature unthwartable and intelligent and just, if indeed it divides up equally and in due measure to every one his quotas of time, substance, cause, activity, circumstance. And consider, not whether thou shalt find one thing in every case equal to one thing, but whether, collectively, the whole of this equal to the aggregate of that.

VIII.8 *Thou canst not be a student.* But thou canst refrain from insolence; but thou canst rise superior to pleasures and pains; but thou canst tread under thy feet the love of glory; but thou canst forbear to be angry with the unfeeling and the thankless,⁶ aye and even care for them.

6. St. Luke vi. 35.

Luke 6:35 has "he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil" (King James).

VIII.9 Let no one hear thee any more grumbling at life in a Court,⁷ nay let not thine own ears hear thee.

7. See v. 16.

VIII.10 Repentance is a sort of self-reproach at some useful thing passed by; but the good must needs be a useful thing, and ever to be cultivated by the true good man; but the true good man would never regret having passed a pleasure by. Pleasure therefore is neither a useful thing nor a good.

VIII.11 What of itself is the thing in question as individually constituted? What is the substance and material of it? What the causal⁸ part? What doeth it in the Universe? How long doth it subsist?

8. Or, *formative*.

VIII.12 When thou art loth to get up,⁹ call to mind that the due discharge of social duties is in accordance with thy constitution and in accordance with man's nature, while even irrational animals share with us the faculty of sleep; but what is in accordance with the nature of the individual is more congenial, more closely akin to him, aye and more attractive.

9. See v. 1.

VIII.13 Persistently and, if possible, in every case test thy impressions by the rules of physics, ethics, logic.

VIII.14 Whatever man thou meetest, put to thyself at once this question: *What are this man's convictions*¹⁰ *about good and evil*? For if they are such and such about pleasure and pain and what is productive of them, about good report and ill report, about death and life, it will be in no way strange or surprising to me if he does such and such things. So I will remember that he is constrained to act as he does.¹¹

10. Or, *axioms*.

11. See v. 17; vii. 71; xi. 18, § 3.

VIII.15 Remember that, as it is monstrous to be surprised at a fig-tree bearing figs, so also is it to be surprised at the Universe bearing its own particular crop. Likewise it is monstrous for a physician or a steersman to be surprised¹² that a patient has fever or that a contrary wind has sprung up.

12. 1 Peter iv. 12.

VIII.16 Remember that neither a change of mind nor a willingness to be set right by others¹³ is inconsistent with true freedom of will. For thine alone is the active effort that effects its purpose in accordance with thy impulse and judgment, aye and thy intelligence also.

13. Compare vi. 30; vii. 7. Compare Capitolinus's *Life of Marcus* xxii. 4: "Aequius est ut ego tot talium amicorum consilium sequar, quam ut tot tales amici meam unius voluntatem sequantur"; Justinian's *Digest* 37. 14. 17.

The Latin, in translation: "it is fairer that I should follow the advice of so many such friends than that so many such friends should follow my will alone."

VIII.17 If the choice rests with thee, why do the thing? if with another, whom dost thou blame? Atoms or Gods To do either would be crazy folly. No one is to blame. For if thou canst, set the offender right. Failing that, at least set the thing itself right. If that too be impracticable, what purpose is served by imputing blame? For without a purpose nothing should be done.

VIII.18 That which dies is not cast out of the Universe. As it remains here, it also suffers change here and is dissolved into its own constituents, which are the elements of the Universe and thy own. Yes, and they too suffer change and murmur not.

VIII.19 Every thing, be it a horse, be it a vine, has come into being for some end. Why wonder? Helios himself will say: *I exist to do some work*; and so of all the other Gods. For what then dost thou exist? For pleasure? Surely it is unthinkable.

VIII.20 Nature has included in its aim in every case the ceasing to be no less than the beginning and the duration, just as the man who tosses up his ball.¹⁴ But what good does the ball gain while tossed upwards, or harm as it comes down, or finally when it reaches the ground? Or what good accrues to the bubble while it coheres, or harm in its bursting? And the same holds good with the lamp-flame.

14. Annius Verus, grandfather of Marcus, was the best ball-player of his day, see Wilmanns's *Exempla Inscriptionum Latinarum* 574. Marcus himself was an adept at the ball-game, Capitolinus's *Life of Marcus* iv. 9.

Gustav Wilmanns's *Exempla Inscriptionum Latinarum* is a selection of Latin inscriptions, cited by number.

VIII.21 Turn it¹⁵ inside out and see what it is like, what it comes to be when old, when sickly, when carrion. They endure but for a season, both praiser and praised, rememberer and remembered.¹⁶ All this too in a tiny corner of this continent, and not even there are all in accord, no nor a man with himself; and the whole earth is itself a point.¹⁷

15. That is, the body.

16. See iii. 10; iv. 3, § 3.

17. See iv. 3, § 3; vi. 36.

VIII.22 Fix thy attention on the subject-matter or the act or the principle or the thing signified. Rightly served! Thou wouldst rather become a good man to-morrow than be one to-day.

VIII.23 Am I doing some thing? I do it with reference to the well-being of mankind. Does something befall me? I accept it with a reference to the Gods and to the Source of all things from which issue, linked together, the things that come into being.

VIII.24 What bathing is when thou thinkest of it—oil, sweat, filth, greasy water, everything revolting—such is every part of life and every object we meet with.

VIII.25 Lucilla¹⁸ buried Verus, then Lucilla was buried; Secunda Maximus,¹⁹ then Secunda; Epitynchanus Diotimus, then Epitynchanus; Antoninus Faustina, then Antoninus. The same tale always: Celer²⁰ buried Hadrianus and then Celer was buried. And those acute wits, men renowned for their prescience or their pride, where are they? Such acute wits, for instance, as Charax and Demetrius [the Platonist²¹] and Eudaemon, and others like them. All creatures of a day, dead long ago!—some not remembered even for a while, others transformed into legends,²² and yet others from legends faded into nothingness! Bear then in mind that either this thy composite self must be scattered abroad, or thy vital breath be quenched, or be transferred²³ and set elsewhere.

18. The mother of Marcus, not as Gataker, Long, etc. the daughter.

George Long published an English translation of the *Meditations* in 1862. Marcus's daughter Annia Lucilla was the wife and then the widow of Lucius Verus, which is why Gataker and Long took "Lucilla buried Verus" to refer to her; Haines takes the pair to be Marcus's mother, Domitia Lucilla, and his father, Annius Verus.

19. See i. 15.

20. See Index II.

21. Arethas on Lucian's *On the Dance* § 63 alludes to this passage, but Lucian's Demetrius is the Cynic whom in *Demonax* § 3 he couples with Epictetus. (Compare also *The Ignorant Book Collector* § 19.) See Index II.

Lucian's Demetrius is Demetrius the Cynic, a friend of Seneca who taught at Rome in the 1st century, a different man from the Platonist Marcus names.

22. See xii. 27.

23. Or, *leave thee*; but compare v. 33.

VIII.26 It brings gladness to a man to do a man's true work. And a man's true work is to shew goodwill to his own kind, to disdain the motions of the senses, to diagnose specious impressions, to take a comprehensive view of the Nature of the Universe and all that is done at her bidding.

VIII.27 Thou hast three relationships—the first to the vessel thou art contained in; the second to the divine Cause wherefrom issue all things to all; and the third to those that dwell with thee.²⁴

24. See i. 12; v. 10, 48; ix. 3, near the end.

VIII.28 Pain is an evil either to the body—let the body then denounce it²⁵—or to the Soul; but the Soul can ensure her own fair weather and her own calm sea,²⁶ and refuse to account it an evil. For every conviction and impulse and desire and aversion is from within,²⁷ and nothing climbs in thither.

25. See vii. 33.

26. See xii. 22.

27. v. 19; St. Matthew xv. 18.

Matthew 15:18 has “those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart” (King James).

VIII.29 Efface thy impressions,²⁸ saying ever to thyself: *Now lies it with me that this soul should harbour no wickedness nor lust nor any disturbing element at all; but that, seeing the true nature of all things,*²⁹ *I should deal with each as is its due.* Bethink thee of this power that Nature gives thee.

28. See vii. 17, 29; ix. 7.

29. See iii. 11.

VIII.30 Say thy say in the Senate or to any person whatsoever becomingly and naturally.³⁰ Use sound speech.

30. Dr. Bigg does not scruple to say that Marcus spoke in such a pedantic jargon as to be *unintelligible to his hearers!* This is pitiable nonsense. See Fronto’s letter to Marcus as Emperor, i. 1: *quanto studio quantoque favore et voluptate dicentem te audit senatus populusque Romanus*; compare his letter to Marcus as Caesar, ii. 1.

Charles Bigg wrote the introduction to John Jackson’s 1906 translation of the *Meditations*, listed in Haines’s Introduction. Fronto’s Latin, in translation: “with what zeal, what favour and delight the Senate and people of Rome hear you speak.”

VIII.31 The court of Augustus—wife, daughter, descendants, ancestors, sister, Agrippa, kinsfolk, household, friends, Areius,³¹ Maecenas, physicians, haruspices—dead, the whole court of them! Pass on then to other records and the death not of individuals but of a clan, as of the Pompeii. And that well-known epitaph, *Last of his race*—think over it and the anxiety shewn by the man’s ancestors that they might leave a successor. But after all some one must be the last of the line—here again the dearth of a whole race!

31. Domestic philosopher to Augustus, as Rusticus was to Marcus. See Themistius, *Orations* v. 63d; xiii. 173c; Seneca's *Consolation to Marcia*, § 4.

The court is Augustus's own; the wife and daughter are Livia and Julia. Areius of Alexandria was a Stoic philosopher at the court of Augustus. Seneca's *Consolation to Marcia* is addressed to a mother mourning her son; in it Seneca recounts Areius's consolation of Augustus's wife Livia on the death of her son Drusus.

VIII.32 Act by act thou must build up thy life, and be content, if each act as far as may be fulfils its end.³² And there is never a man that can prevent it doing this. *But there will be some impediment from without.* There can be none to thy behaving justly, soberly, wisely. *But what if some other exercise of activity be hindered?* Well, a cheerful acceptance of the hindrance and a tactful transition to what is allowed will enable another action to be substituted that will be in keeping with the built-up life of which we are speaking.

32. Or, *receives its due reward* (ἀπέχει).

VIII.33 Accept without arrogance, surrender without reluctance.

VIII.34 Thou hast seen a hand cut off or a foot, or a head severed from the trunk, and lying at some distance from the rest of the body. Just so does the man treat himself, as far as he may, who wills not what befalls and severs himself from mankind or acts unsocially. Say thou hast been torn away in some sort from the unity of Nature; for by the law of thy birth thou wast a part; but now thou hast cut thyself off. Yet here comes in that exquisite provision, that thou canst return again to thy unity.³³ To no other part has God granted this, to come together again, when once separated and cleft asunder. Aye, behold His goodness, wherewith He hath glorified man! For He hath let it rest with a man that he be never rent away from the Whole, and if he do rend himself away, to return again and grow on to the rest and take up his position again as part.

33. Seneca's *Epistles* 98: *licet in integrum restitui* (a legal phrase for a restoration to all rights).

VIII.35 Just as the Nature of rational things has given each rational being almost all his other powers, so also have we received this one from it; that, as this Nature moulds to its purpose whatever interference or opposition it meets, and gives it a place in the destined order of things, and makes it a part of itself, so also can the rational creature convert every hindrance into material for itself³⁴ and utilize it for its own purposes.

34. See iv. 1; v. 20; vi. 50.

VIII.36 Let not the mental picture of life as a whole confound thee. Fill not thy thoughts with what and how many ills may conceivably await thee, but in every present case ask thyself: *What is there in this experience so crushing, so insupportable?* Thou wilt blush to confess. Remind thyself further that it is not the future nor the past but the present always that brings thee its burden. But this is reduced to insignificance if thou isolate it, and take thy mind to task³⁵ if it cannot hold out against this mere trifle.

35. See on vi. 29.

VIII.37 Does Pantheia³⁶ now watch by the urn of her lord, or Pergamus? What, does Chabrias or Diotimus by Hadrian's? Absurd! And had they sat there till now, would the dead have been aware of it? and, if aware of it, would they have been pleased? and, if pleased, would that have made the mourners immortal? Was it not destined that these like others should become old women and old men and then die? What then, when they were dead, would be left for those whom they had mourned to do? It is all stench and foul corruption in a sack of skin.³⁷

36. Lucian (doubtful attribution) (*Images* §§ 10, 22) mentions Pantheia as the matchless concubine of τῷ μεγάλῳ βασιλεῖ χρήστῳ καὶ ἡμέρῳ ὄντι (meaning apparently Lucius Verus). Lucian (*Nigrinus* §31) speaks of οἱ κελεύοντες καὶ παραμένειν τινὰς οἰκέτας τοῖς τάφοις.

Pantheia was the mistress of Lucius Verus, praised for her beauty and accomplishments in *Images*. The first Greek phrase, in translation: “the great king, who is good and gentle”; the second, from the satirist Lucian’s *Nigrinus*: “those who order some of their servants to remain at their tombs.”

37. Epictetus’s *Fragments* 94. Compare Diogenes Laertius, *Life of Anaxarchus* § 2; *Life of Zeno of Elea* § 5. Howell, *Familiar Letters*, viii. 2, 50, speaks of “this small skinful or bagful of bones.”

Anaxarchus was a philosopher in the entourage of Alexander the Great who, being pounded to death in a mortar, is said to have told his executioner, “Pound the bag of Anaxarchus; you do not pound Anaxarchus.” Zeno of Elea (5th century BC), known for his paradoxes of motion, is said to have borne torture with similar defiance. Howell’s *Familiar Letters* is a collection of letters.

VIII.38 Hast thou keenness of sight? Use it *with judgment ever so wisely*, as the saying goes.

VIII.39 In the constitution of rational creatures I see no virtue incompatible with justice, but incompatible with pleasure I see—continence.

VIII.40 Take away thy opinion³⁸ as to any imagined pain, and thou thyself art set in surest safety. *What is ‘thyself’?* Reason. *But I am not reason.* Be it so. At all events let the Reason not cause itself pain, but if any part in thee is amiss, let it form its own opinion about itself.³⁹

38. See vii. 10; viii. 47.

39. See vii. 33.

VIII.41 To the animal nature a thwarting of sense-perception is an evil, as is also to the same nature the thwarting of impulse. There is similarly some other thing that can thwart the constitution of plants and is an evil to them. Thus then the thwarting of

intelligence is an evil to the intelligent nature. Transfer the application of all this to thyself. Does pain, does pleasure take hold of thee? The senses shall look to it. Wast thou impelled to a thing and wast thwarted? If thy impulse counts on an unconditional fulfilment, failure at once becomes an evil to thee as a rational creature. But accept the universal limitation, and thou hast so far received no hurt nor even been thwarted.⁴⁰ Indeed no one else is in a way to thwart the inner purposes of the mind. For it no fire can touch, nor steel, nor tyrant, nor obloquy;⁴¹ nor any thing soever: *a sphere⁴² once formed continues round and true.*

⁴⁰. See vi. 50.

⁴¹. vii. 68; Epictetus's *Discourses* iii. 22. 43.

⁴². See xi. 12; xii. 3.

VIII.42 It were not right that I should pain myself for not even another have I ever knowingly pained.⁴³

⁴³. Compare Themistius, *Orations* xv, p. 191 B, quoted Appendix ii; compare Diogenes Laertius, *Life of Zeno* 64.

VIII.43 One thing delights one, another thing another. To me it is a delight if I keep my ruling Reason sound, not looking askance at man or anything that befalls man, but regarding all things with kindly eyes, accepting and using everything for its intrinsic worth.

VIII.44 See thou dower thyself with this present time. Those that yearn rather for after-fame do not realize that their successors are sure to be very much the same as the contemporaries whom they find such a burden, and no less mortal. What is it anyway to thee if there be this or that far-off echo of their voices, or if they have this or that opinion about thee?

VIII.45 Take me up and cast me where thou wilt. For even there will I keep my ‘genius’ tranquil, that is, content if in itself and in its activity it follow the laws of its own constitution.

Is this worth while, that on its account my soul should be ill at ease and fall below itself, grovelling, grasping, floundering, affrighted? What *could* make it worth while?

VIII.46 Nothing can befall a man that is not a contingency natural to man; nor befall an ox, that is not natural to oxen, nor a vine that is not natural to a vine, nor a stone that is not proper to it. If therefore only what is natural and customary befalls each, why be aggrieved? For the common Nature brings thee nothing that thou canst not bear.⁴⁴

44. Compare St. Paul, 1 Corinthians x. 13.

VIII.47 When thou art vexed at some external cross, it is not the thing itself that troubles thee,⁴⁵ but thy judgment on it. And this thou canst annul in a moment. But if thou art vexed at something in thine own character, who can prevent thee from rectifying the principle that is to blame?⁴⁶ So also if thou art vexed⁴⁷ at not undertaking that which seems to thee a sound act, why not rather undertake it than be vexed? *But there is a lion in the path!* Be not vexed then, for the blame of inaction rests not with thee. *But life is not worth living, this left undone.* Depart then from life,⁴⁸ dying with the same kindly feelings as he who effects his purpose, and accepting with a good grace the obstacles that thwart thee.

45. Compare Epictetus’s *Manual* 5.

The *Manual* (*Enchiridion*) is Arrian’s short handbook of Epictetus’s teaching; its fifth chapter begins, “Men are disturbed not by things, but by the opinions about things.”

46. See viii. 40.

47. See v. 9, 36; viii. 10; xi. 19.

48. iii. 1; v. 29; Epictetus’s *Discourses* i. 24, § 20.

VIII.48 Never forget that the ruling Reason shews itself unconquerable when, concentrated in itself,⁴⁹ it is content with itself so it do nothing that it doth not will, even if it refuse from mere opposition⁵⁰ and not from reason—much more, then, if it judge of a thing on reasonable grounds and advisedly. Therefore the Mind, unmastered by passions, is a very citadel, for a man has no fortress more impregnable⁵¹ wherein to find refuge and be untaken for ever. He indeed who hath not seen this is ignorant, but he that hath seen it and takes not refuge therein is luckless.

49. See vii. 28.

50. xi. 3. In both places Marcus seems to have the Christians in mind.

51. Compare Fronto's letter to Verus, ii. 1 (of Marcus): *arcem munitam et invictam et inexpugnabilem quae in fratris tui pectore sita est*.

Fronto's Latin, in translation: "the fortified, unconquered, and impregnable citadel that is in your brother's breast."

VIII.49 Say no more to thyself than what the initial impressions report.⁵² This has been told thee, that so and so speaks ill of thee. This *has* been told thee, but it has not been told thee that thou art harmed.⁵³ I see that my child is ailing. I see it, but I do not see that he is in danger. Keep then ever to first impressions and supplement them not on thy part from within, and nothing⁵⁴ happens to thee. And yet do supplement them with this, that thou art familiar with every possible contingency in the world.

52. See iv. 7 etc.

53. Yet Capitolinus's *Life of Marcus* (xx. § 5) says that Marcus was *suae curiosissimus famae*; compare the same, xxii. § 6; xxiii. § 7, 9; xxix. 5.

Capitolinus's *suae curiosissimus famae*: "most attentive to his reputation."

54. Compare viii. 28.

VIII.50 *The gherkin is bitter. Toss it away. There are briars in the path.* Turn aside. That suffices, and thou needest not to add: *Why are such things found in the world?* For thou wouldst be a laughing stock to any student of nature; just as thou wouldst be laughed at by a carpenter and a cobbler if thou tookest them to task because in their shops are seen sawdust and parings from what they are making. And yet they have space for the disposal of their fragments; while the Universal Nature has nothing outside herself; but the marvel of her craftsmanship is that, though she is limited to herself, she transmutes into her own substance all that within her seems to be perishing and decrepit and useless, and again from these very things produces other new ones; whereby she shews that she neither wants any substance outside herself nor needs a corner where she may cast her decaying matter. Her own space, her own material, her own proper craftsmanship is all that she requires.⁵⁵

55. Or, *for space, material, craftsmanship she is content, with herself alone.*

VIII.51 Be not dilatory in doing, nor confused in conversation, nor vague in thought; let not thy soul be wholly centred in itself nor uncontrollably agitated; leave thyself leisure in thy life. *

They kill us, they cut us limb from limb, they hunt us with execrations! *⁵⁶ How does that prevent thy mind being still pure, sane, sober, just? Imagine a man to stand by a crystal-clear spring of sweet water, and to rail at it; yet it fails not to bubble up with wholesome water. Throw in mud or even filth and it will quickly winnow them away and purge itself of them and take never a stain. How then possess thyself of a living fountain and no mere well? *⁵⁷ By guiding thyself carefully every hour into freedom with kindliness, simplicity, and modesty.

56. Marcus must be thinking of the Christians, compare vii. 68. See Appendix.

57. St. John, iv. 14-16.

VIII.52 He that knoweth not what the Universe is knoweth not where he is. He that knoweth not the end of its being knoweth not who he is or what the Universe is.⁵⁸ But he that is wanting in the knowledge of any of these things could not tell what is the end of his own being. What then must we think of those that court or eschew the verdict of the clappers, who have no conception where or who they are?

58. Compare Epictetus's *Discourses* ii. 24, § 19.

VIII.53 Carest thou to be praised by a man who execrates himself thrice within the hour? to win the approval of a man who wins not his own? Can he be said to win his own approval who regrets almost every thing he does?

VIII.54 Be no longer content merely to breathe in unison with the all-embracing air, but from this moment think also in unison with the all-embracing Intelligence. For that intelligent faculty is every where diffused and offers itself on every side to him that can take it in no less than the aerial to him that can breathe.

VIII.55 Taken collectively wickedness does no harm to the Universe,⁵⁹ and the particular wickedness does no harm to others. It is harmful to the one individual alone, and he has been given the option of being quit of it the first moment he pleases.

59. See v. 35.

VIII.56 To my power of choice⁶⁰ the power of choice of my neighbour is as much a matter of indifference as is his vital breath and his flesh. For however much we may have been made for one another, yet our ruling Reason is in each case master in its own house.

Else might my neighbour's wickedness become my bane; and this was not God's will, that another might not have my unhappiness in his keeping.⁶¹

60. Not distinguishable from the ruling Reason.

61. Seneca's *Epistles* 70, about the middle: *nemo nisi vitio suo miser est*.

Seneca's Latin, in translation: "no one is wretched except by his own fault."

VIII.57 The sun's light is diffused down, as it seems, yes, and in every direction, yet it does not diffuse itself away. For this diffusion is an extension. At any rate the beams of the Sun are called *Extension rays*, because they have an *extension* in space⁶². And what a ray is you may easily see, if you observe the sun's light entering through a narrow chink into a darkened room, for it extends straight on, and is as it were brought up against⁶³ any solid body it encounters that cuts off the air beyond. There the ray comes to a standstill, neither slipping off nor sinking down. Such then should be the diffusion and circumfusion of the mind, never a diffusing away but extension, and it should never make a violent or uncontrollable impact against any obstacle it meets with, no, nor collapse, but stand firm and illuminate what receives it. For that which conducts it not on its way will deprive itself wilfully of its beams.

62. A false etymology. The derivation may be from *αἰσσω* or *ἄγνυμι*.

Marcus derives *aktines*, "rays," from *ekteinesthai*, "to be extended"; Haines's alternatives are *aissō*, "to dart," and *agnymi*, "to break."

63. *διαίρεται* (the manuscripts) would mean apparently *cut* or *broken*.

VIII.58 Dread of death is a dread of non-sensation or new sensation.⁶⁴ But either thou wilt feel no sensation, and so no sensation of any evil; or a different kind of sensation will be thine, and so the life of a different creature, but still a life.

64. Compare Justin Martyr's *Apology* i. § 57, addressed to Pius and Marcus.

VIII.59 Mankind have been created for the sake of one another.⁶⁵ Either instruct therefore or endure.⁶⁶

65. See ix. 1, near the beginning.

66. See v. 28; ix. 11.

VIII.60 One is the way of an arrow, another of the mind. Howbeit the mind, both when it cautiously examines its ground and when it is engaged in its enquiry, is none the less moving straight forward and towards its goal.

VIII.61 Enter into every man's ruling Reason, and give every one else an opportunity to enter into thine.⁶⁷

67. iv. 38. Compare vii. 55; Epictetus's *Discourses* iii. 9, § 12.

BOOK IX

IX.1 Injustice is impiety. For in that the Nature of the Universe has fashioned rational creatures for the sake of one another¹ with a view to mutual benefit based upon worth, but by no means for harm, the transgressor of her will acts with obvious impiety against the most venerable of Deities.

And the liar too acts impiously with respect to the same Goddess. For the Nature of the Universe is the Nature of the things that are. And the things that are have an intimate connexion with all the things that have ever been. Moreover this Nature is named Truth, and is the primary cause of all that is true. The willing liar then is impious in so far as his deceit is a wrong-doing; and the unwilling liar too, for he is out of tune with the Nature of the Whole, and an element of disorder by being in conflict with the Nature of an orderly Universe; for he is in conflict who allows himself, as far as his conduct goes, to be carried into opposition to what is true. And whereas he had previously been endowed by nature with the means of distinguishing false from true, by neglecting to use them he has lost the power.²

Again he acts impiously who seeks after pleasure as a good thing and eschews pain as an evil. For such a man must inevitably find frequent fault with the Universal Nature³ as unfair in its apportionments to the worthless and the worthy, since the worthless are often lapped in pleasures and possess the things that make for pleasure, while the worthy meet with pain and the things that make for pain. Moreover he that dreads pain will some day be in dread of something that must be in the world. And there we have impiety at once. And he that hunts after pleasures will not hold his hand from injustice. And this is palpable impiety.

But those, who are of one mind with Nature and would walk in her ways, must hold a neutral attitude⁴ towards those things towards which the Universal Nature is neutral—for she would not be the Maker of both were she not neutral towards both. So he clearly acts with impiety who is not himself neutral towards pain and pleasure, death and life, good report and ill report, things which the Nature of the Universe

treats with neutrality. And by the Universal Nature treating these with neutrality I mean that all things happen neutrally in a chain of sequence⁵ to things that come into being and their after products⁶ by some primeval impulse of Providence;⁷ in accordance with which She was impelled by some primal impulse to this making of an ordered Universe, when She had conceived certain principles for all that was to be, and allocated the powers generative of substances and changes and successions such as we see.

1. See v. 30; viii. 59.

2. See vii. 2.

3. vi. 16, near the end, 41. Compare Epictetus's *Discourses* i. 6, § 39.

4. Or, *attitude of indifference*.

5. See viii. 75.

6. Or, *that are consequent upon some primeval impulse*. Providence here = κοινὴ φύσις.

Koinē physis, "common nature."

7. See ix. 28.

IX.2 It were more graceful doubtless for a man to depart from mankind untainted with falsehood and all dissimulation and luxury and arrogance; failing that, however, the 'next best course' is to breathe out his life when his gorge has risen at these things. Or is it thy choice to throw in thy lot with vice, and does not even thy taste of it yet persuade thee to fly from the pestilence? For the corruption of the mind is a pest far worse than any such miasma and vitiation of the air which we breathe around us. The latter is a pestilence for living creatures and affects their life, the former for human beings and affects their humanity.

IX.3 Despise not death,⁸ but welcome it, for Nature wills it like all else. For dissolution is but one of the processes of Nature;⁹ associated with thy life's various seasons, such as to be young, to be old, to wax to our prime and to reach it, to grow teeth and beard

and gray hairs, to beget, conceive and bring forth. A man then that has reasoned the matter out should not take up towards death the attitude of indifference, reluctance, or scorn, but await it as one of the processes of Nature.¹⁰ Look for the hour when thy soul shall emerge from this its sheath, as now thou awaitest the moment when the child she carries shall come forth from thy wife's womb.'¹¹

But if thou desirest a commonplace solace too that will appeal to the heart, nothing will enable thee to meet death with equanimity better than to observe the environment thou art leaving and the sort of characters with whom thy soul shall no longer be mixed up.¹² For while it is very far from right to be disgusted with them,¹³ but rather even to befriend and deal gently with them,¹⁴ yet it is well to remember that not from men of like principles with thine will thy release be. For this alone, if anything, could draw us back and bind us to life, if it were but permitted us to live with those who have possessed themselves of the same principles as ours. But now thou seest how thou art driven by sheer weariness at the jarring discord of thy life with them to say: *Tarry not, O Death, lest peradventure I too forget myself.*¹⁵

8. But compare Capitolinus's *Life of Marcus* xxviii. 4 (of Marcus): *mortem contemnens*.

Capitolinus's *mortem contemnens*: "despising death."

9. See x. 36, § 2.

10. Compare Montaigne i. 19 (Florio's translation): "The same way you came from death to life, returne without passion or amazement from life to death. Your death is but a piece of the world's order, and but a parcel of the world's life."

Michel de Montaigne was a French essayist of the 16th century; John Florio translated his *Essays* into English. The chapter cited is titled "That to philosophize is to learn to die."

11. Hardly a personal touch, as Vibia Aurelia, Faustina's last child, was born in 166. Besides, ἐμβρυον has no article.

Haines's second point is grammatical: *embryon*, "unborn child," stands without the definite article, so the sentence speaks of any expected child rather than a particular one.

12. x. 36; Plato's *Phaedo* 66 B.

In *Phaedo* 66 B Socrates describes the body as a hindrance to the soul's pursuit of truth.

13. As Marcus himself often was. Compare v. 10; vi. 12; viii. 8.

14. See x. 4.

15. Compare the despairing echo of these words by General Gordon, who was a reader of Marcus, from Khartum: “There is nothing left for me to prevent me speaking evil of everyone and distrusting my dear Lord but death.”

Charles George Gordon, a British general, was killed at Khartoum in the Sudan when the city fell after a long siege by the forces of the Mahdi.

IX.4 He that does wrong, does wrong to himself.¹⁶ The unjust man is unjust to himself, for he makes himself bad.¹⁷

16. iv. 26; ix. 38. Epictetus’s *Discourses* ii. 10, § 26.

17. Or, *does himself harm*. Plutarch (*On Stoic Self-Contradictions* 12) shews that Chrysippus contradicts himself on this point. Justin Martyr (*Apology* i. 3), speaking of persecution to Pius and Marcus, turns the tables on the latter, saying that in injuring innocent Christians they injured themselves. Epictetus’s *Discourses* iv. 5. 10.

IX.5 There is often an injustice of omission as well as of commission.

IX.6 The present assumption rightly apprehended, the present act socially enacted, the present disposition satisfied with all that befalls it from the Cause external to it—these will suffice.

IX.7 Efface imagination.¹⁸ Restrain impulse. Quench desire. Keep the ruling Reason in thine own power.

18. See vii. 29; viii. 29, 49; xii. 25.

IX.8 Among irrational creatures one life is distributed, and among the rational one intellectual soul has been parcelled out. Just as also there is one earth for all the things that are of the earth; and one is the light whereby we see,¹⁹ and one the air we all breathe that have sight and life.

19. See xii. 30.

IX.9 All that share in a common element have an affinity for their own kind. The trend of all that is earthy is to earth; fluids all run together; it is the same with the aerial; so that only interposing obstacles and force can keep them apart. Fire indeed has a tendency to rise by reason of the elemental fire, but is so quick to be kindled in sympathy with all fire here below that every sort of matter, a whit drier than usual, is easily kindled owing to its having fewer constituents calculated to offer resistance to its kindling. So then all that shares in the Universal Intelligent Nature has as strong an affinity towards what is akin, aye even a stronger. For the measure of its superiority to all other things is the measure of its readiness to blend and coalesce with that which is akin to it.

At any rate to begin with among irrational creatures we find swarms and herds and bird-colonies and, as it were, love-associations.²⁰ For already at that stage there are souls, and the bond of affinity shews itself in the higher form to a degree of intensity not found in plants or stones or timber. But among rational creatures are found political communities and friendships and households and gatherings and in wars treaties and armistices. But in things still higher a sort of unity in separation even exists, as in the stars. Thus the ascent to the higher form is able to effect a sympathetic connexion²¹ even among things which are separate.

See then what actually happens at the present time; for at the present time it is only the intelligent creatures that have forgotten their mutual affinity and attraction, and here alone there is no sign of like flowing to like. Yet flee as they will, they are

nevertheless caught in the toils, for Nature will have her way. Watch closely and thou wilt see 'tis so. Easier at any rate were it to find an earthy thing in touch with nothing earthy than a man wholly severed from mankind.

20. Compare Aeschylus's *Prometheus Bound* 492: στέργηθρα.

Aeschylus's *Prometheus Bound* dramatizes the punishment of Prometheus for giving fire to mankind; in the passage cited he lists the arts he taught men, among them the reading of birds and their *stergēthra*, "affections."

21. Compare Epictetus's *Discourses* i. 14, near the beginning.

IX.10 They all bear fruit—Man and God and the Universe: each in its due season bears. It matters nought that in customary parlance such a term is strictly applicable only to the vine and such things. Reason too hath its fruit both for all and for itself, and there issue from it other things such as is Reason itself.²²

22. St. Paul, Galatians v. 22.

Galatians 5:22 has "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith" (King James).

IX.11 If thou art able, convert the wrong-doer.²³ If not, bear in mind that kindliness was given thee to meet just such a case. The Gods too are kindly to such persons and even co-operate with them for certain ends—for health, to wit, and wealth and fame, so benignant are they.²⁴ Thou too canst be the same; or say who is there that prevents thee.

23. See v. 28; viii. 59.

24. See ix. 27.

IX.12 Do thy work not as a drudge, nor as desirous of pity or praise. Desire one thing only,

to act or not to act as civic reason directs.

- IX.13** This day have I got me out of all trouble, or rather have cast out all trouble, for it was not from without, but within, in my own imagination.²⁵

25. v. 2; viii. 40; xii. 22. Compare Montaigne, i. 40 (Florio's translation): "Men, saith an ancient Greek sentence, are tormented by the opinions they have of things and not the things themselves. . . . If evil have no entrance into us but by our judgment, it seemeth that it lieth in our power either to contemne or turn them to our good. . . . If that which we call evil and torment be neither torment nor evil, but that our fancy only gives it that quality, it is in us to change it."

The chapter of Montaigne cited is titled "That the taste of good and evil depends in large part on the opinion we have of them"; the "ancient Greek sentence" he quotes is the fifth chapter of Epictetus's *Manual*.

- IX.14** All these are things of familiar experience²⁶; in their duration ephemeral,²⁷ in their material foul. Everything is now as it was in the days of those whom we have buried.²⁸

26. See iv. 44.

27. See iv. 35.

28. See ii. 4; iv. 32.

- IX.15** Objective things stand outside the door, keeping themselves to themselves, without knowledge of or message about themselves. What then has for us a message about them? The ruling Reason.
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- IX.16** Not in being acted upon but in activity lies the evil and the good of the rational and civic creature, just as his virtue too and his vice lie in activity and not in being acted upon.
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IX.17 The stone that is thrown into the air is none the worse for falling down, or the better for being carried upwards.²⁹

29. See viii. 20.

IX.18 Find the way within into their ruling Reason, and thou shalt see what these judges are whom thou fearest and what their judgment of themselves is worth.³⁰

30. See iv. 38; vii. 34.

IX.19 Change is the universal experience.³¹ Thou art thyself undergoing a perpetual transformation and, in some sort, decay³²: aye and the whole Universe as well.

31. See v. 23; vii. 18.

32. See iv. 3, near the end; vii. 25.

IX.20 Another's wrong-doing should be left with him.³³

33. See vii. 29; ix. 38.

IX.21 A cessation of activity, a quiescence from impulse and opinion and, as it were, their death, is no evil. Turn now to consider the stages of thy life—childhood, boyhood, manhood, old age—each step in the ladder of change a death. Is there anything terrible here? Pass on now to thy life under thy grandfather, then under thy mother, then under thy father,³⁴ and finding there many other alterations, changes, and cessations, ask thyself: *Is there anything terrible here?* No, nor any in the ending and quiescence and change of the whole of life.³⁵

34. Pius. See on i. 17. § 3.

35. Compare Lucian's *On Funerals* 15.

Lucian's *On Funerals* is a satire on mourning customs.

IX.22 Speed to the ruling Reason of thyself, and of the Universe, and of thy neighbour of thine own, that thou mayest make it just; of that of the Universe, that thou mayest therewithal remember of what thou art a part; of thy neighbour, that thou mayest learn whether it was ignorance with him or understanding, and reflect at the same time that it is akin to thee.

IX.23 As thou thyself art a part perfective of a civic organism, let also thine every act be a part perfective of civic life. Every act of thine then that has no relation direct or indirect to this social end, tears thy life asunder and destroys its unity, and creates a schism, just as in a commonwealth does the man who, as far as in him lies, stands aloof from such a concord of his fellows.

IX.24 Children's squabbles and make-believe, and *little souls bearing up corpses*³⁶—the Invocation of the Dead³⁷ might strike one as a more vivid reality!

36. iv. 41 πνευμάτιον = ψυχάριον.

Pneumation, “little breath”; *psycharion*, “little soul.”

37. Possibly refers to the Νέκυια of Homer (*Odyssey* xi). Menippus (Diogenes Laertius, *Life of Menippus* 6) also wrote a Νέκυια (compare above, vi. 47). But it was a term for the invocation of the dead, see Justin Martyr's *Apology* i. 18.

Nekyia, “the Invocation of the Dead,” is the name given to Book XI of the *Odyssey*, in which Odysseus summons the shades of the dead to question them. Menippus of Gadara was a Cynic satirist. In *First Apology* 18 Justin Martyr cites the “evoking of departed human souls” among the practices that show the dead retain sensation.

IX.25 Go straight to that which makes a thing what it is, its formative cause,³⁸ and, isolating it from the material, regard it so. Then mark off the utmost time for which the individual object so qualified is calculated to subsist.

38. To the Formative, or Efficient Cause, of things is due not only that they exist, but that they are what they are. To translate the words here literally *by the quality of the Cause* conveys no meaning. Compare vi. 3.

IX.26 By not being content with thy ruling Reason doing the work for which it was constituted, thou hast borne unnumbered ills. Nay, 'tis enough!

IX.27 When men blame or hate thee or give utterance to some such feelings against thee, turn to their souls, enter into them, and see what sort of men they are. Thou wilt perceive that thou needest not be concerned as to what they think of thee. Yet must thou feel kindly towards them, for Nature made them dear to thee. The Gods too lend them aid in divers ways by dreams³⁹ and oracles, to win those very things on which their hearts are set.⁴⁰

39. See i. 17, near the end.

40. See ix. 11, 40.

IX.28 The same, upwards, downwards,⁴¹ from cycle to cycle are the revolutions of the Universe. And either the Universal Mind feels an impulse to act in each separate case—and if this be so, accept its impulsion—or it felt this impulse⁴² once for all, and all subsequent things follow by way of consequence; and what matters which it be, for if you like to put it so the world is all atoms [or indivisible].⁴³ But as to the Whole, if God—all is well; if haphazard—be not thou also haphazard.⁴⁴

Presently the earth will cover us all. It too will anon be changed, and the resulting product will go on from change to change, and so for ever and ever. When a man thinks of these successive waves of change and transformation, and their rapidity, he will hold every mortal thing in scorn.⁴⁵

41. The Heraclitan round of change between the elements; see iv. 46.

The Heraclitean doctrine is that the elements change continually into one another, as in his saying that “the way up and the way down are one and the same.”

42. See ix. 1, § 4.

43. Possibly ἀμερῇ is a gloss, or ὁμοιομερῇ should be read. (Compare Epictetus’s *Fragments* 175.)

Amerē, “without parts”; *homoioimerē*, “made of like parts,” the term used of the elements in the physics of Anaxagoras.

44. ii. 5; iv. 2, etc. τὸ ὅλον may also be taken to mean in fine.

45. ix. 19; xii. 21. Compare Capitolinus’s *Life of Marcus* xxviii. 4 of Marcus on his death-bed: *ridens res humanas*.

Capitolinus’s *ridens res humanas*: “laughing at human affairs.”

IX.29 The World-Cause is as a torrent, it sweeps everything along. How negligible these manikins that busy themselves with civic matters and flatter themselves that they act therein as philosophers! Drivellers all! What then, O Man? Do what Nature asks of thee now. Make the effort if it be given thee to do so and look not about to see if any shall know it.⁴⁶ Dream not of Utopias but be content if the least thing go forward, and count the outcome of the matter in hand as a small thing.⁴⁷ For who can alter another’s conviction? Failing a change of conviction, we merely get men pretending to be persuaded and chafing like slaves under coercion. Go to now and tell me of Alexander and Philip and Demetrius of Phalerum. Whether they realized the will of Nature and schooled themselves thereto, is their concern. But if they played the tragedy-hero, no one has condemned me to copy them. Simple and modest is the work of Philosophy: lead me not astray into pomposity and pride.

46. v. 6, § 1. Seneca's *Epistles* 79: *Haec nos oportet agere licet nemo videat.*

Seneca's Latin, in translation: "these things we ought to do even though no one sees."

47. Or, reading οὐ μικρόν: *deem the success of the matter in hand no small thing.*

IX.30 Take a bird's-eye view of the world, its endless gatherings⁴⁸ and endless ceremonials,⁴⁹ voyagings manifold in storm and calm, and the vicissitudes of things coming into being, participating in being, ceasing to be. Reflect too on the life lived long ago by other men, and the life that shall be lived after thee, and is now being lived in barbarous countries; and how many have never even heard thy name, and how many will very soon forget it, and how many who now perhaps acclaim, will very soon blame thee, and that neither memory nor fame nor anything thing else whatever is worth reckoning.

48. See vii. 3, 48.

49. nearly = our colloquial "functions."

IX.31 Freedom from perturbation in all that befalls from the external Cause, and justice in all that thine own inner Cause prompts thee to do; that is, impulse and action finding fulfilment in the actual performance of social duty as being in accordance with thy nature.

IX.32 It is in thy power to rid thyself of many unnecessary troubles, for they exist wholly in thy imagination. Thou wilt at once set thy feet in a large room by embracing the whole Universe in thy mind and including in thy purview time everlasting, and by observing the rapid change in every part of everything, and the shortness of the span between birth and dissolution, and that the yawning immensity before birth is only matched by the infinity after our dissolution.

IX.33 All that thine eyes behold will soon perish and they, who live to see it perish, will in their turn perish no less quickly; and he who outlives all his contemporaries and he who dies before his time will be as one in the grave.

IX.34 What is the ruling Reason⁵⁰ of these men, and about what sort of objects have they been in earnest, and from what motives do they lavish their love and their honour! View with the mind's eye their poor little souls in their nakedness. What immense conceit this of theirs, when they fancy that there is bane in their blame and profit in their praises!

50. See vii. 34, 62; ix. 18.

IX.35 Loss and change,⁵¹ they are but one. Therein doth the Universal Nature take pleasure,⁵² through whom are all things done now as they have been in like fashion from time everlasting; and to eternity shall other like things be. Why then dost thou say that all things have been evil and will remain evil to the end, and that no help has after all been found in Gods, so many as they be, to right these things, but that the fiat hath gone forth that the Universe should be bound in an unbroken chain of ill?

51. The play on the words cannot be kept.

The Greek pairs *apobolē*, “loss,” with *metabolē*, “change.”

52. See vii. 18.

IX.36 Seeds of decay in the underlying material of everything—water, dust, bones, reek! Again, marble but nodules of earth, and gold and silver but dross, garments merely hair-tufts, and purple only blood. And so with everything else. The soul too another like thing and liable to change from this to that.

IX.37 Have done with this miserable way of life, this grumbling, this apism! Why fret? What is the novelty here? What amazes thee? The Cause? Look fairly at it. What then, the Material? Look fairly at that. Apart from these two, there is nothing. But in regard to the Gods also now even at the eleventh hour show thyself more simple,⁵³ more worthy.

Whether thy experience of these things lasts three hundred years or three, it is all one.

53. See iv. 26.

IX.38 If he did wrong, with him lies the evil. But maybe he did no wrong.⁵⁴

54. See vii. 29.

IX.39 Either there is one intelligent source, from which as in one body all after things proceed—and the part ought not to grumble at what is done in the interests of the whole—or there are atoms, and nothing but a medley and a dispersion.⁵⁵ Why then be harassed? Say to thy ruling Reason: *Thou art dead! Thou art corrupt! Thou hast become a wild beast! Thou art a hypocrite! Thou art one of the herd! Thou battenest with them!*

55. See iv. 27; vi. 10; vii. 32; xii. 14.

IX.40 Either the Gods have no power or they have power. If they have no power, why pray to them⁵⁶? But if they have power, why not rather pray that they should give thee freedom from fear of any of these things and from lust for any of these things and from grief at any of these things [rather] than that they should grant this or refuse that. For obviously if they can assist men at all, they can assist them in this. But perhaps thou wilt say: *The Gods have put this in my power*. Then is it not better to use what is in thy power like a free man than to concern thyself with what is not in thy power like a slave and an abject? And who told thee that the Gods do not co-operate

with us⁵⁷ even in the things that are in our power? Begin at any rate with prayers for such things and thou wilt see. One prays: *How may I lie with that woman!*⁵⁸ Thou: *How may I not lust to lie with her!* Another: *How may I be quit of that man!* Thou: *How may I not wish to be quit of him!* Another: *How may I not lose my little child!* Thou: *How may I not dread to lose him.*⁵⁹ In a word, give thy prayers this turn, and see what comes of it.

56. See vi. 44.

57. ix. 27. St. Paul, Romans viii. 26: τὸ πνεῦμα συναντιλαμβάνεται. Gataker very aptly quotes Augustine's *On the Grace of Christ* i. 15: *Cur petitur quod ad nostram pertinet potestatem, si Deus non adjuvat voluntatem?*

Romans 8:26 has "the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities" (King James). Augustine's Latin, in translation: "why is that asked for which lies in our own power, if God does not help the will?"

58. Seneca's *Epistles* 10, near the end; Shakespeare's *The Rape of Lucrece* 50.

Seneca's tenth letter closes with a saying of the philosopher Athenodorus: a man may know he is free of all desires when he asks the gods for nothing that he could not ask openly. *The Rape of Lucrece* is a narrative poem by Shakespeare.

59. Capitolinus's *Life of Marcus* xxi. § 3.

The passage records Marcus's mourning for his seven-year-old son, Annii Verus, who died in 169.

IX.41 Listen to Epicurus⁶⁰ where he says: *In my illness my talk was not of any bodily feelings, nor did I chatter about such things to those who came to see me, but I went on with my cardinal disquisitions on natural philosophy, dwelling especially on this point, how the mind, having perforce its share in such affections of the flesh, yet remains unperturbed, safeguarding its own proper good. Nor did I—he goes on—let the physicians ride the high horse as if they were doing grand things, but my life went on well and happily.* Imitate him then in sickness, if thou art sick, and in any other emergency; for it is a commonplace of every sect not to renounce Philosophy whatever difficulties we

encounter, nor to consent to babble as he does that is unenlightened in philosophy and nature; . . . devote thyself to thy present work alone and thy instrument for performing it.

60. See Diogenes Laertius, *Life of Epicurus* § 10.

IX.42 When thou art offended by shamelessness in any one, put this question at once to thyself: *Can it be that shameless men should not exist in the world?* It can not be. Then ask not for what can not be.⁶¹ For this man in question also is one of the shameless ones that must needs exist in the world. Have the same reflection ready for the rogue, the deceiver, or any other wrongdoer whatever. For the remembrance that this class of men cannot but exist will bring with it kindlier feelings towards individuals of the class. Right useful too is it to bethink thee at once of this: *What virtue has Nature given man as a foil to the wrong-doing in question?* For as an antidote against the unfeeling man she has given gentleness,⁶² and against another man some other resource.

In any case it is in thy power to teach the man that has gone astray the error of his ways. For every one that doth amiss misses his true mark and hath gone astray. But what harm hast thou suffered? Thou wilt find that not one of the persons against whom thou art exasperated has done anything capable of making thy mind worse; but it is in thy mind⁶³ that the evil for thee and the harmful have their whole existence.

Where is the harm or the strangeness in the boor acting—like a boor? See whether thou art not thyself the more to blame in not expecting that he would act thus wrongly. For thy reason too could have given thee means for concluding that this would most likely be the case. Nevertheless all this is forgotten, and thou art surprised at his wrongdoing.

But above all, when thou findest fault with a man for faithlessness and ingratitude,⁶⁴ turn thy thoughts to thyself. For evidently the fault is thine own, whether thou hadst faith that a man with such a character would keep faith with thee,

or if in bestowing a kindness thou didst not bestow it absolutely and as from the very doing of it having at once received the full complete fruit.⁶⁵

For when thou hast done a kindness, what more wouldst thou have? Is not this enough that thou hast done something in accordance with thy nature? Seekest thou a recompense for it? As though the eye should claim a guerdon for seeing, or the feet for walking! For just as these latter were made for their special work, and by carrying this out according to their individual constitution they come fully into their own, so also man, formed as he is by nature for benefiting others, when he has acted as benefactor or as co-factor in any other way for the general weal, has done what he was constituted for, and has what is his.⁶⁶

61. v. 17. Compare Dio's *Roman History* 71. 34, § 4.

62. Epictetus's *Manual* 10; St. Paul, Titus iii. 2: *πρότῃτα πρὸς πάντας*.

The tenth chapter of Epictetus's *Manual* advises asking, of each thing that befalls one, what faculty one has to meet it: against insult, patience. Titus 3:2 has "shewing all meekness unto all men" (King James).

63. Literally *there, that is, in thy mind*.

64. Compare the striking parallel in Dio's *Roman History* 71. 24, § 2: τὸ μὴδὲν πιστὸν ἐν ἀνθρώποις εἶναι; the same, 71. 26, § 2: πίστιν καταλύσαντι πιστὸν διαγενέσθαι, where Marcus is speaking to his soldiers on the revolt of Cassius; and 27. § 1, where, writing to the Senate, he calls Cassius ἀχάριστος. I cannot help thinking that this section of the *Thoughts* was written at the time of the rebellion in 175, and that Marcus is here taking himself to task.

The historian Dio's Greek phrases, in translation: "that there is nothing trustworthy among men"; "to remain faithful to one who has broken faith"; and *acharistos*, "ungrateful." The revolt is that of Avidius Cassius in 175.

65. See v. 6; vii. 73.

66. iv. 49; xi. 1. Compare St. Matthew vi. 2. Marcus was noted for *εὐεργεσία*, Dio's *Roman History* 71. 34, § 3; *Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum* 2495, 4697c.

Matthew 6:2 has "when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee" (King James). *Euergesia*, "beneficence," is the quality to which, according to the historian Dio, Marcus dedicated a temple on the Capitol.

BOOK X

X.1 Wilt thou then, O my Soul, ever at last be good and simple and single and naked, shewing thyself more visible than the body that overlies thee? Wilt thou ever taste the sweets of a loving and a tender heart? Ever be full-filled and self-sufficing, longing for nothing, lusting after nothing animate or inanimate, for the enjoyment of pleasures—not time wherein the longer to enjoy them, nor place or country or congenial climes or men nearer to thy liking—but contented with thy present state¹ and delighted with thy present everything, convincing thyself withal that all that is present for thee is present from the Gods,² and that everything is and shall be well with thee that is pleasing to them and that they shall hereafter grant for the conservation of that Perfect Being³ that is good and just and beautiful, the Begetter and Upholder of all things, that embraces and gathers them in, when they are dissolved, to generate therefrom other like things?⁴ Wilt thou ever at last fit thyself so to be a fellow-citizen with the Gods and with men as never to find fault with them or incur their condemnation?

1. See ix. 6.

2. See iii. 11, 3.

3. That is, Zeus = the Universe = the First Cause = Nature.

4. See vii. 28.

X.2 Observe what thy nature asks of thee, as one controlled by Nature alone, then do this and with a good grace, if thy nature as a living creature is not to be made worse thereby. Next must thou observe what thy nature as a living creature asks of thee. And this must thou wholly accept, if thy nature as a rational living creature be not made worse thereby. Now the rational is indisputably also the civic. Comply with these rules then and be not needlessly busy about anything.

X.3 All that befalls either so befalls as thou art fitted by nature to bear it or as thou art not fitted.⁵ If the former, take it not amiss, but bear it as thou art fitted to do. If the latter, take not that amiss either, for when it has destroyed thee, it will itself perish. Howbeit be assured that thou art fitted by nature to bear everything which it rests with thine own opinion about it to render bearable and tolerable, according as thou thinkest it thy interest or thy duty to do so.

5. See viii. 46.

X.4 If a man makes a slip, enlighten him with loving-kindness, and shew him wherein he hath seen amiss.⁶ Failing that, blame thyself or not even thyself.

6. See viii. 59; xi. 9, 13, 18, § 9.

X.5 Whatever befalls thee was set in train for thee from everlasting, and the interplication of causes was from eternity weaving into one fabric thy existence and the coincidence of this event.⁷

7. See iii. 11; iv. 26.

X.6 Whether there be atoms or a Nature, let it be postulated first, that I am a part of the whole Universe controlled by Nature; secondly, that I stand in some intimate connexion with other kindred parts. For bearing this in mind, as I am a part, I shall not be displeased with anything allotted me from the Whole. For what is advantageous to the whole can in no wise be injurious to the part.⁸ For the Whole contains nothing that is not advantageous to itself; and all natures have this in common, but the Universal Nature is endowed with the additional attribute of never being forced by any external cause to engender anything hurtful to itself.

As long then as I remember that I am a part of such a whole, I shall be well pleased with all that happens; and in so far as I am in intimate connexion with the parts that are akin to myself, I shall be guilty of no unsocial act, but I shall devote my attention rather to the parts that are akin to myself,⁹ and direct every impulse of mine to the common interest and withhold it from the reverse of this. That being done, life must needs flow smoothly, as thou mayst see the life flow smoothly of a citizen who goes steadily on in a course of action beneficial to his fellow-citizens and cheerfully accepts whatever is assigned him by the State.

8. See vi. 54; x. 33, § 4.

9. See ix. 22.

X.7 The parts of the Whole—all that Nature has comprised in the Universe—must inevitably perish, taking “perish” to mean “be changed.” But if this process is by nature for them both evil and inevitable, the Whole could never do its work satisfactorily, its parts ever going as they do from change to change and being constituted to perish in diverse ways. Did Nature herself set her hand to bringing evil upon parts of herself and rendering them not only liable to fall into evil but of necessity fallen into it,¹⁰ or was she not aware that such was the case? Both alternatives are incredible.

But supposing that we even put Nature as an agent out of the question and explain that these things are “naturally” so, even then it would be absurd to assert that the parts of the whole are naturally subject to change, and at the same time to be astonished at a thing or take it amiss as though it befell contrary to nature, and that though things dissolve into the very constituents out of which they are composed. For either there is a scattering of the elements¹¹ out of which I have been built up, or a transmutation of the solid into the earthy and of the spiritual¹² into the aerial; so that these too are taken back into the Reason of the Universe, whether cycle by cycle it be consumed with fire¹³ or renew itself by everlasting permutations.

Aye and so then do not be under the impression that the solid and the spiritual date from the moment of birth. For it was but yesterday or the day before that all this took in its increment from the food eaten and the air breathed. It is then this, that it took in, which changes, not the product of thy mother's womb. But granted that thou art ever so closely bound up¹⁴ with that by thy individuality, this, I take it, has no bearing upon the present argument.

10. These words can also be translated: *parts of herself that were both liable to fall into such evil and by necessity fell into doing evil.*

11. See vii. 32.

12. iv. 4. Literally *the pneumatic or breath element*. See Index III.

13. iii. 3. Justin Martyr, *Apology* i. 20; ii. 7, contrasts the Christian theory of the destruction of the world by fire with the Stoic.

14. προσπλέκει has no subject. ἐκείνῳ must be taken separately from τῷ ἰδίῳ ποιῶ and refer to τοῦτο ὃ ἔλαβεν.

X.8 Assuming for thyself the appellations, a good man,¹⁵ a modest man,¹⁶ a truth-teller,¹⁷ wise of heart, sympathetic of heart, great of heart, take heed thou be not new-named. And if thou shouldst forfeit these titles, e'en make haste to get back to them. And bear in mind that *wise of heart* was meant to signify for thee a discerning consideration of every object and a thoroughness of thought; *sympathetic of heart*, a willing acceptance of all that the Universal Nature allots thee; *great of heart* an uplifting of our mental part above the motions smooth or rough of the flesh, above the love of empty fame, the fear of death, and all other like things. Only keep thyself entitled to these appellations, not itching to receive them from others, and thou wilt be a new man and enter on a new life. For to be still such as thou hast been till now, and to submit to the rendings and defilements of such a life, is worthy of a man that shews beyond measure a dull senselessness and a clinging to life, and is on a level with the wild-beast fighters

that are half-devoured in the arena, who, though a mass of wounds and gore, beg to be kept till the next day, only to be thrown again, torn as they are, to the same teeth and talons.

Take ship then on these few attributes, and if thou canst abide therein, so abide as one who has migrated to some Isles of the Blest. But if thou feelest thyself adrift, and canst not win thy way, betake thyself with a good heart to some nook where thou shalt prevail, or even depart altogether from life,¹⁸ not in wrath but in simplicity, independence, and modesty, having at least done this one thing well in life, that thou hast quitted it thus. Howbeit, to keep these attributes in mind it will assist thee greatly if thou bear the Gods in mind, and that it is not flattery they crave but for all rational things to be conformed to their likeness,¹⁹ and that man should do a man's work, as the fig tree does the work of a fig-tree, the dog of a dog, and the bee of a bee.

15. See on x. 16.

16. Capitolinus and Ammianus call Marcus *verecundus*.

Ammianus Marcellinus was a Latin historian of the 4th century. *Verecundus*, "modest."

17. Only two kings have had the honourable cognomen of *Truthteller*, Marcus and Alfred the Great. The former was given *Verissimus* as a pet name by Hadrian when a child, and the town of Tyras in Scythia stamped it on its coins and Justin and Syncellus use it to designate Marcus.

Verissimus, "most true," plays on Marcus's family name Verus, "true"; Justin Martyr addresses his *First Apology* in part to "Verissimus the philosopher." Tyras was a Greek city at the mouth of the Dniester. George Syncellus was a Byzantine chronicler of the early 9th century.

18. For Marcus' views on suicide see iii. 1; v. 29; viii. 47, near the end; ix. 2; x. 22, 32. He permits it when external conditions render the life of virtue impossible, or when a man finds in himself a failure to live the true life (compare St. Augustine's "Let me die lest I die").

Augustine's phrase, in the *Confessions*, is *moriar ne moriar*: that he might die, lest he die, in order to see the face of God.

19. Compare Diogenes Laertius, *Life of Plato* 42; Ignatius's *Letter to the Ephesians* §§ 1, 10; Justin Martyr, *Apology* i. 21; the *Epistle to Diognetus* § 10; Julian's *The Caesars* 427. 21, puts similar words in the mouth of Marcus.

The *Epistle to Diognetus* is an anonymous early Christian apology; in its tenth chapter it urges the reader to become an imitator of God by kindness to others.

- X.9 Stage-apery, warfare, cowardice, torpor, servility—these will day by day obliterate all those holy principles of thine which, as a student of Nature,²⁰ thou dost conceive and accept. But thou must regard and do everything in such a way that at one and the same time the present task may be carried through, and full play given to the faculty of pure thought, and that the self-confidence engendered by a knowledge of each individual thing be kept intact, unobtruded yet unconcealed. *

When *wilt thou find thy delight in simplicity?* When *in dignity?* When* in the knowledge of each separate thing, what it is in its essence, what place it fills in the Universe, how long it is formed by Nature to subsist, what are its component parts, to whom it can pertain, and who can bestow and take it away?

20. ἀφυσιολογήτως, would mean *without due study of Nature*.

- X.10 A spider prides itself on capturing a fly; one man on catching a hare, another on netting a sprat, another on taking wild boars, another bears, another Sarmatians.²¹ Are not these brigands, if thou test their principles?

21. See Domaszewski's plates in *The Column of Marcus Aurelius on the Piazza Colonna*, 62. 102, for Marcus "taking Sarmatians"; and compare the story of Alexander and the Scythian, Quintus Curtius vii. 8.

The Column of Marcus Aurelius in Rome's Piazza Colonna is carved with a spiral frieze of his Danube campaigns; Alfred von Domaszewski published its reliefs. The Sarmatians were nomadic peoples north of the Danube, among them the Iazyges, against whom Marcus fought in the 170s. Quintus Curtius Rufus was a Roman historian of Alexander the Great; at vii. 8 Scythian envoys rebuke Alexander for making war on peoples who had done him no wrong.

- X.11 Make thy own a scientific system of enquiry into the mutual change of all things, and pay diligent heed to this branch of study and exercise thyself in it. For nothing is so conducive to greatness of mind. Let a man do this and he divests himself of his body and, realizing that he must almost at once relinquish all these things and depart from among men, he gives himself up wholly to just dealing in all his actions, and to the

Universal Nature in all that befalls him. What others may say or think about him or do against him he does not even let enter his mind, being well satisfied with these two things—justice in all present acts and contentment with his present lot.²² And he gives up all engrossing cares and ambitions, and has no other wish than to achieve the straight course through the Law and, by achieving it, to be a follower of God.

22. See ix. 6 etc.

- X.12** What need of surmise when it lies with thee to decide what should be done, and if thou canst see thy course, to take it with a good grace and not turn aside; but if thou canst not see it, to hold back and take counsel of the best counsellors and if any other obstacles arise therein, to go forward as thy present means shall allow with careful deliberation holding to what is clearly just? For to succeed in this is the best thing of all, since in fact to fail in this would be the only failure.

Leisurely without being lethargic and cheerful as well as composed shall he be who follows Reason in everything.

- X.13** Ask thyself as soon as thou art roused from sleep: *Will it make any difference to me if another does what is just and right?* It will make none. Hast thou forgotten that those who play the wanton²³ in their praise and blame of others, are such as they are²⁴ in their beds, at their board; and what are the things that they do, the things that they avoid or pursue, and how they pilfer and plunder, not with hands and feet but with the most precious part of them, whereby a man calls into being at will faith, modesty, truth, law, and a good ‘genius’?²⁵

23. See vii. 3; ix. 41.

24. See iii. 4, near the end; vi. 59; vii. 62; viii. 52, 53; ix. 34.

25. See vii. 17.

X.14 Says the well-schooled and humble heart to Nature that gives and takes back all we have; *Give what thou wilt, take back what thou wilt.*²⁶ But he says it without any bravado of fortitude, in simple obedience and good will to her.

26. Compare Job i. 21.

Job 1:21 has “the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away” (King James).

X.15 Thou has but a short time left to live. Live as on a mountain²⁷; for whether it be here or there, matters not provided that, wherever a man live, he live as a citizen of the World-City.²⁸ Let men look upon thee, cite thee, as a man in very deed that lives according to Nature. If they cannot bear with thee, let them slay thee. For it were better so than to live their life.

27. x. 23. This striking phrase seems from a comparison of § 23 to mean: Count your life here in the city and Court, or, maybe, camp, as no whit worse than life in the free and health-giving air of a mountain-top with all its serenity and leisure for study and contemplation. It rests with you to make your “little plot within you” what you please. But, taken alone, “Live as on a mountain” might mean “Live in the open light of day under the eyes of God and men in a purer atmosphere above the pettinesses of the world.”

28. See iv. 3, § 2.

X.16 Put an end once for all to this discussion of what a good man should be, and be one.²⁹

29. Dio’s *Roman History* (71. 34, § 5) says of Marcus ὡς ἀληθῶς ἀγαθὸς ἀνὴρ ἦν.

The historian Dio’s Greek, in translation: “he was truly a good man.”

X.17 Continually picture to thyself Time as a whole, and Substance as a whole, and every individual thing, in respect of substance, as but a fig-seed and, in respect to time, as but a twist of the drill.

X.18 Regarding attentively every existing thing reflect that it is already disintegrating and changing, and as it were in a state of decomposition and dispersion, or that everything is by nature made but to die.

X.19 What are they like when eating, sleeping, coupling, evacuating, and the rest! What again when lording it over others, when puffed up with pride, when filled with resentment or rebuking others from a loftier plane! Yet but a moment ago they were lackeying how many and for what ends, and anon will be at their old trade.³⁰

30. Or, taking Gataker's emendation (ὁποίοις), *in what plight will they be!*

X.20 What the Universal Nature brings to every thing is for the benefit of that thing, and for its benefit then when she brings it.³¹

31. See iv. 23.

X.21 *The earth is in love with showers and the majestic sky is in love.*³² And the Universe is in love with making whatever has to be. To the Universe I say: *Together with thee I will be in love.* Is it not a way we have of speaking, to say, *This or that loves to be so?*

32. Euripides, *Fragment* 890. After σεμνός Euripides has οὐρανὸς πληρούμενος Ὀμβροῦ πεσεῖν εἰς γαῖαν Ἀφροδίτης ὕπο. Compare Aeschylus's *Danaids*, *Fragment* 41, imitated by Shelley in his *Love's Philosophy*.

The Greek of Euripides, in translation: "the majestic sky, filled with rain, loves to fall upon the earth, by the power of Aphrodite." Aeschylus's *Danaids* is a lost play; Shelley's "Love's Philosophy" opens, "The fountains mingle with the river / And the rivers with the ocean."

X.22 Either thy life is here and thou art inured to it; or thou goest elsewhere and this with thine own will; or thou diest and hast served out thy service. There is no other alternative. Take heart then.

X.23 Never lose sight of the fact that a man's 'freehold'³³ is such as I told thee, and how all the conditions are the same here as on the top of a mountain³⁴ or on the sea-shore or wherever thou pleasest. Quite apposite shalt thou find to be the words of Plato³⁵: *Compassed about (by the city wall as) by a sheep-fold on the mountain*, and milking flocks.

33. See v. 3, § 4.

34. See iv. 3, near the beginning; x. 15.

35. Plato's *Theaetetus* 174 D: Ἀγροικὸν καὶ ἀπαίδευτον ἀπὸ ἀσχολίας οὐδὲν ἦττον τῶν νομέων τὸν τοιοῦτον ἀναγκαῖον γενέσθαι σηκὸν ἐν ὄρει τὸ τεῖχος περιβεβλημένον. It is not easy to see the application of the words here. Marcus seems to mean that the king in the midst of his royal city is no better off, *ipso facto*, than the shepherd in his mountain fold. It is the little "plot within him," his ruling Reason that makes the difference. The use of ἐν ὄρει twice in this section appears to have a reference to its use in § 15.

The Greek of Plato, in translation: "such a man must become no less boorish and uneducated than herdsmen, for lack of leisure, with his wall thrown round him like a fold on a mountain." The man Plato describes is a king.

X.24 What is my ruling Reason and what am I making of it now? To what use do I now put it? Is it devoid of intelligence? Is it divorced and severed from neighbourliness? Does it so coalesce and blend with the flesh as to be swayed by it?

X.25 He that flies from his master is a runaway. But the Law is our master,³⁶ and he that transgresses the Law is a runaway. Now he also, that is moved by grief or wrath or fear, is fain that something should not have happened or be happening or happen in the

future of what has been ordained by that which controls the whole Universe, that is by the Law laying down all that falls to a man's lot. He then is a runaway who is moved by fear, grief, or wrath.

36. See ii. 16, near the end.

X.26 A man passes seed into a womb and goes his way, and anon another cause takes it in hand and works upon it and perfects a babe—what a consummation from what a beginning!³⁷ Again he³⁸ passes food down the throat, and anon another cause taking up the work creates sensation and impulse and in fine, life and strength and other things how many and how mysterious! Muse then on these things that are done in such secrecy, and detect the efficient force, just as we detect the descensive and the ascensive none the less clearly that it is not with our eyes.

37. Compare the remarkable parallel in Justin Martyr, *Apology* i. 19.

In *First Apology* 19 Justin Martyr argues for the resurrection from the formation of a human being out of a drop of seed, which would be as incredible as resurrection to one who had not seen it.

38. There is no subject expressed. It is possible to take the child as the subject.

X.27 Bear in mind continually how all such things as now exist existed also before our day³⁹ and, be assured, will exist after us. Set before thine eyes whole dramas and their settings, one like another, all that thine own experience has shewn thee or thou hast learned from past history, for instance the entire court of Hadrianus,⁴⁰ the entire court of Antoninus, the entire court of Philip, of Alexander, of Croesus. For all those scenes were such as we see now, only the performers being different.

39. See vii. 49.

40. See viii. 25, 31.

X.28 Picture to thyself every one that is grieved at any occurrence whatever or dissatisfied, as being like the pig which struggles and screams when sacrificed; like it too him who, alone upon his bed, bewails in silence the fetters of our fate; and that to the rational creature alone has it been granted to submit willingly to what happens, mere submission being imperative on all.⁴¹

41. Compare Seneca's *Epistles* 107: *ducunt volentem fata nolentem trabunt*; *On the Happy Life* 15; Cleanthes, *Hymn to Zeus*: ὡς ἔψομαι γ' ἄοκνος· ἥν δὲ μὴ θέλω κακὸς γενόμενος, οὐδὲν ἥττον ἔψομαι.

Seneca's Latin, in translation: "the fates lead the willing, and drag the unwilling." It renders the lines of Cleanthes that open "Lead me, O Zeus, and thou, Destiny," which Epictetus quotes at the close of the *Manual*; the Greek, in translation: "for I will follow unflinching; and if I am unwilling, becoming base, I shall follow none the less."

X.29 In every act of thine pause at each step and ask thyself: *Is death to be dreaded for the loss of this?*

X.30 Does another's wrong-doing shock thee? Turn incontinently to thyself and bethink thee what analogous wrong-doing there is of thine own,⁴² such as deeming money to be a good,⁴³ or pleasure⁴⁴ or a little cheap fame⁴⁵ and the like. For by marking this thou wilt quickly forget thy wrath, with this reflection too to aid thee, that a man is under constraint⁴⁶; for what should he do? Or, if thou art able, remove the constraint.

42. See vii. 26; xi. 18, § 4.

43. Marcus had a horror of avarice; compare Vulcarius Gallicanus's *Life of Avidius Cassius* viii. 5: *in imperatore avaritiam acerbissimum esse malum*. Yet he was accused of it and repudiated the charge (Capitolinus's *Life of Marcus* xxix. 5); and he is also exculpated by Dio's *Roman History* (71. 32, § 3), and in the Oxyrhynchus Papyri (i. p. 62) we find an Egyptian official expressly calling him ἀφιλάργυρος.

Vulcarius Gallicanus is another of the purported authors of the *Historia Augusta*; the Latin, in translation: "in an emperor avarice is the bitterest evil." The Oxyrhynchus Papyri are documents recovered from the site of Oxyrhynchus in Egypt; *aphilargyros*, "free from the love of money."

44. See on v. 5.

45. See on iv. 19.

46. See vii. 63.

X.31 Let a glance at Satyron call up the image of Socraticus or Eutyches or Hymen, and a glance at Euphrates the image of Eutychion or Silvanus, and a glance at Alciphron Tropaeophorus, and at Severus Xenophon or Crito.⁴⁷ Let a glance at thyself bring to mind one of the Caesars, and so by analogy in every case. Then let the thought strike thee: *Where are they now?* Nowhere,⁴⁸ or none can say where. For thus shalt thou habitually look upon human things as mere smoke,⁴⁹ and as naught; and more than ever so, if thou bethink thee that what has once changed will exist no more throughout eternity. Why strive then and strain,⁵⁰ Why not be content to pass this thy short span of life in becoming fashion?

What material, what a field for thy work dost thou forgo! For what are all these things but objects for the exercise of a reason that hath surveyed with accuracy and due inquiry into its nature the whole sphere of life? Continue then until thou hast assimilated these truths also to thyself, as the vigorous digestion assimilates every food, or the blazing fire converts into warmth and radiance whatever is cast into it.⁵¹

47. Xenophon and Crito are well known. Severus was probably the father of Marcus' son-in-law (i. 14). Euphrates was the philosopher friend of Pliny and Hadrian. Nothing certain is known of the others.

Pliny is Pliny the Younger, whose letters praise the Stoic Euphrates.

48. See vii. 58.

49. xii. 33 and verses at end of manuscript A. See Introduction p. 1.

50. The manuscript reading *what then* (or, *thou then*) *in what?* is unintelligible.

51. See iv. 1.

- X.32** Give no one the right to say of thee with truth that thou art not a sincere, that thou art not a good man, but let anyone that shall form any such an idea of thee be as one that maketh a lie. All this rests with thee. For who is there to hinder thee from being good and sincere⁵²? Resolve then to live no longer if thou be not such.⁵³ For neither doth Reason in that case insist that thou shouldest.

52. See viii. 32.

53. See v. 29; x. 8, § 2.

- X.33** Taking our ‘material’ into account, what can be said or done in the soundest way? Be it what it may, it rests with thee to do or say it. And let us have no pretence that thou art being hindered.

Never shalt thou cease murmuring until it be so with thee that the utilizing, in a manner consistent with the constitution of man, of the material presented to thee and cast in thy way shall be to thee what indulgence is to the sensual. For everything must be accounted enjoyment that it is in a man’s power to put into practice in accordance with his own nature; and it is everywhere in his power.

A cylinder we know has no power given it of individual motion everywhere, nor has fire or water or any other thing controlled by Nature or by an irrational soul. For the interposing and impeding obstacles are many. But Intelligence and Reason make their way through every impediment just as their nature or their will prompts them. Setting before thine eyes this ease wherewith the Reason can force its way through every obstacle, as fire upwards, as a stone downwards, as a cylinder down a slope,⁵⁴ look for nothing beyond. For other hindrances either concern that veritable corpse, the body,⁵⁵ or, apart from imagination and the surrender of Reason herself, cannot crush us or work any harm at all.⁵⁶ Else indeed would their victim at once become bad.

In fact in the case of all other organisms, if any evil happen to any of them, the victim itself becomes the worse for it. But a man so circumstanced becomes, if I may so say, better and more praiseworthy by putting such contingencies to a right use.⁵⁷ In fine, remember that nothing that harms not the city can harm him whom Nature has made a citizen⁵⁸; nor yet does that harm a city which harms not law. But not one of the so-called mischances harms law. What does not harm law, then, does no harm to citizen or city.

54. Aulus Gellius, *Attic Nights* vi. 2, § 11 (from Chrysippus).

Aulus Gellius reports Chrysippus's image of a cylinder, which must be pushed to start moving but then rolls according to its own shape, used to reconcile fate with human responsibility.

55. See iv. 41.

56. See iv. 7.

57. See vii. 58.

58. See x. 6.

X.34 Even an obvious and quite brief aphorism can serve to warn him that is bitten with the true doctrines against giving way to grief and fear; as for instance, *Such are the races of men as the leaves that the wind scatters earthwards*.⁵⁹

And thy children too are little leaves. Leaves also they who make an outcry as if they ought to be listened to, and scatter their praises or, contrariwise, their curses, or blame and scoff in secret. Leaves too they that are to hand down our after-fame. For all these things *Burgeon again with the season of spring*,⁶⁰

anon the wind hath cast them down,⁶¹ and the forest puts forth others in their stead. Transitoriness is the common lot of all things, yet there is none of these that thou huntest not after or shunnest, as though it were everlasting. A little while and thou shalt close thine eyes; aye, and for him that bore thee to the grave shall another presently raise the dirge.⁶²

59. Homer's *Iliad* vi. 147.

In *Iliad* vi. 146–149 the Trojan ally Glaucus, asked his lineage by Diomedes, compares the generations of men to leaves.

60. The same.

61. Compare Psalm 103. 16.

Psalm 103:16 has “For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more” (King James).

62. See iv. 48.

X.35 The sound eye should see all there is to be seen, but should not say: *I want what is green only*. For that is characteristic of a disordered eye. And the sound hearing and smell should be equipped for all that is to be heard or smelled. And the sound digestion should act towards all nutriment as a mill towards the grist which it was formed to grind. So should the sound mind be ready for all that befalls. But the mind that says: *Let my children be safe!*⁶³ *Let all applaud my every act!* is but as an eye that looks for green things or as teeth that look for soft things.

63. i. 8; vii. 41; viii. 49; ix. 40; xi. 34. Marcus was intensely fond of his children. Galen describes (Kühn's edition, volume 14 page 3) his anxiety about Commodus; compare also Fronto's letter to Marcus as Caesar, iv. 12.

Commodus was Marcus's son, co-emperor from 177 and sole emperor from 180 until his assassination in 192.

X.36 There is no one so fortunate as not to have one or two standing by his death-bed who will welcome the evil which is befalling him. Say he was a worthy man and a wise; will there not be some one at the very end to say in his heart, *We can breathe again at last, freed from this schoolmaster*,⁶⁴ *not that he was hard on any of us, but I was all along conscious that he tacitly condemns us?* So much for the worthy, but in our own case how many other reasons can be found for which hundreds would be only too glad to be quit of us! Think then upon this when dying, and thy passing from life will be easier if

thou reason thus: I am leaving a life in which even my intimates for whom I have so greatly toiled, prayed, and thought,⁶⁵ aye even they wish me gone, expecting belike to gain thereby some further ease.⁶⁶ Why then should anyone cling to a longer sojourn here?

Howbeit go away with no less kindness towards them on this account, but maintaining thy true characteristics be friendly and goodnatured and gracious; nor again as though wrenched apart, but rather should thy withdrawal from them be as that gentle slipping away of soul from body which we see when a man makes a peaceful end. For it was Nature that knit and kneaded thee with them, and now she parts the tie. I am parted from kinsfolk, not dragged forcibly away, but unresistingly. For this severance too is a process of Nature.⁶⁷

64. Compare Vopiscus, *Life of Aurelian*, 37, § 3; Seneca's *Epistles* 11.

Flavius Vopiscus is another of the purported authors of the *Historia Augusta*. In his eleventh letter Seneca advises choosing a good man to keep always before one's eyes, as a guardian of one's conduct.

65. Herodian, i. 4, § 3.

66. Is he thinking of Commodus?

67. See ix. 3.

X.37 In every act of another habituate thyself as far as may be to put to thyself the question: *What end has the man in view?*⁶⁸ But begin with thyself, cross-examine thyself first.

68. See ii. 16.

X.38 Bear in mind that what pulls the strings is that Hidden Thing within us: *that* makes our speech, *that* our life, *that*, one may say, makes the man. Never in thy mental picture of it include the vessel that overlies it⁶⁹ nor these organs that are appurtenances thereof. They are like the workman's adze, only differing from it in being naturally

attached to the body. Since indeed, severed from the Cause that bids them move and bids them stay, these parts are as useless as is the shuttle of the weaver, the pen of the writer, and the whip of the charioteer.

69. See iii. 3, near the end; xii. 1.

BOOK XI

XI.1 The properties of the Rational Soul are these: it sees itself, dissects itself, moulds itself to its own will,¹ itself reaps its own fruits²—whereas the fruits of the vegetable kingdom and the corresponding produce of animals are reaped by others,—it wins to its own goal wherever the bounds of life be set. In dancing and acting and such-like arts, if any break occurs, the whole action is rendered imperfect; but the rational soul in every part and wheresoever taken³ shews the work set before it fulfilled and all-sufficient for itself, so that it can say: *I have to the full what is my own*.

More than this, it goeth about the whole Universe and the void surrounding it and traces its plan, and stretches forth into the infinitude of Time, and comprehends the cyclical Regeneration⁴ of all things, and takes stock of it, and discerns that our children will see nothing fresh,⁵ just as our fathers too never saw anything more than we.⁶ So that in a manner the man of forty years, if he have a grain of sense, in view of this sameness has seen all that has been and shall be. Again a property of the Rational Soul is the love of our neighbour, and truthfulness, and modesty, and to prize nothing above itself⁷—a characteristic also of Law. In this way then the Reason that is right reason and the Reason that is justice are one.

1. i. 8; viii. 35. Compare Epictetus's *Discourses* i. 17, § 1.

2. Compare Epictetus's *Discourses* i. 19, § 11: γέγονε τὸ ζῶον ὥστε αὐτοῦ ἕνεκα πάντα ποιεῖν.

Epictetus's Greek, in translation: "the living creature is so made as to do everything for its own sake."

3. See xii. 36.

4. See v. 13, 32; x. 7, § 2.

5. See vi. 37; vii. 1 etc.

6. Compare Lucretius ii. 978: *eadem sunt omnia semper*; Florio's Montaigne, i. 19: "If you have lived one day you have seene all."

Lucretius's Latin, in translation: "all things are always the same."

7. St. Mark viii. 36.

Mark 8:36 has “what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?” (King James).

XI.2 Thou wilt think but meanly of charming songs and dances and the pancratium,⁸ if thou analyze the melodious utterance into its several notes and in the case of each ask thyself: Has this the mastery over me? For thou wilt recoil from such a confession.’⁹ So too with the dance, if thou do the like for each movement and posture. The same holds good of the pancratium. In fine, virtue and its sphere of action excepted, remember to turn to the component parts,’¹⁰ and by analyzing them come to despise them. Bring the same practice to bear on the whole of life also.

8. A rather brutal combination of boxing and wrestling.

9. See viii. 36.

10. See iii. 11.

XI.3 What a soul is that which is ready to be released from the body at any requisite moment, and be quenched¹¹ or dissipated or hold together! But the readiness must spring from a man’s inner judgment, and not be the result of mere opposition [as is the case with the Christians].’¹² It must be associated with deliberation and dignity and, if others too are to be convinced, with nothing like stage-heroics.

11. See v. 33; vii. 32.

12. See p. 382.

Haines prints the words in square brackets because many editors regard them as a marginal gloss later taken into the text. His “p. 382” refers to his appended note on Marcus and the Christians.

XI.4 Have I done some social act? Well, I am amply rewarded.¹³ Keep this truth ever ready to turn to, and in no wise slacken thine efforts.

13. vii. 13, 73; ix. 42, § 5; compare Proverbs xi. 17: τῇ ψυχῇ αὐτοῦ ἀγαθὸν ποιεῖ ἀνὴρ ἐλεήμων.

Proverbs 11:17 has “The merciful man doeth good to his own soul” (King James); Haines quotes the Greek of the Septuagint.

XI.5 What is thy vocation? *To be a good man*. But how be successful in this save by assured conceptions on the one hand of the Universal Nature and on the other of the special constitution of man?

XI.6 Originally tragedies were brought on to remind us of real events, and that such things naturally occur, and that on life’s greater stage you must not be vexed at things, which on the stage you find so attractive. For it is seen that these things must be gone through, and they too have to endure them, who cry *Ah, Kithaeron!*¹⁴ Aye, and the dramatic writers contain some serviceable sayings. For example this more especially: *Though both my sons and me the gods have spurned, For this too there is reason;*¹⁵ and again: *It nought availeth to be wroth with things;*¹⁶ and this: *Our lives are reaped like the ripe ears of corn;*¹⁷ and how many more like them.

And after Tragedy the old Comedy was put on the stage, exercising an educative freedom of speech, and by its very directness of utterance giving us no unserviceable warning against unbridled arrogance. In somewhat similar vein Diogenes¹⁸ also took up this role. After this, consider for what purpose the Middle Comedy was introduced, and subsequently the New, which little by little degenerated into ingenious mimicry. For that some serviceable things are said even by the writers of these is recognized by all. But what end in view had this whole enterprize of such poetical and dramatic composition?¹⁹

14. Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* 1391; Epictetus's *Discourses* i. 24, § 16. Perhaps Marcus had in mind the lines of Timocles (Athenaeus, *The Learned Banqueters* vi. 2): πρὸς ἄλλοτρίῳ τε ψυχαγωγηθεὶς πάθει Μεθ' ἡδονῆς ἀπῆλθε παιδευθεὶς ἄμα.

In Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex*, the blinded Oedipus cries out to Mount Cithaeron (Haines's "Kithaeron"), where he had been exposed as an infant. Timocles was an Athenian comic poet of the 4th century BC. Athenaeus's *The Learned Banqueters* (c. 200) is an anthology of quotations set as dinner-table conversation; the Greek, in translation: "absorbed in another's suffering, he goes away with pleasure, and instructed at the same time."

15. Euripides, *Antiope*, Fragment 207; vii. 41.

16. Euripides, *Bellerophon*, Fragment 289; vii. 38.

17. Euripides, *Hypsipyle*, Fragment 757; vii. 40.

18. Diogenes Laertius, *Life of Diogenes* 7.

19. Lucian's *On the Dance* 35 says of the Art of Dancing (Pantomime) that it requires the acme of culture and even of philosophy!

XI.7 How clearly is it borne in on thee that there is no other state of life so fitted to call for the exercise of Philosophy as this in which thou now findest thyself.²⁰

20. Compare Lucan's *Pharsalia* i. 493: "exeat aula qui vult esse pius"; Montaigne iii. 9 (Florio's translation): "Plato saith that who escapes untainted and clean-handed from the managing of the world escapeth by some wonder." See also above, viii. 1.

Lucan was a Roman poet of Nero's reign whose *Pharsalia* narrates the civil war between Caesar and Pompey; the Latin, in translation: "let him who would be righteous leave the court."

XI.8 A branch cut off from its neighbour branch²¹ cannot but be cut off from the whole plant. In the very same way a man severed from one man has fallen away from the fellowship of all men. Now a branch is cut off by others, but a man separates himself²² from his neighbour by his own agency in hating him or turning his back upon him; and is unaware that he has thereby sundered himself from the whole civic community.²³ But mark the gift of Zeus who established the law of fellowship. For it is in our power to grow again to the neighbour branch, and again become perfective of

the whole. But such a schism constantly repeated makes it difficult for the seceding part to unite again and resume its former condition. And in general the branch that from the first has shared in the growth of the tree and lived with its life is not like that which has been cut off and afterwards grafted on to it, as the gardeners are apt to tell you. Be of one bush, but not of one mind.

21. St. Paul, Romans xi. 19.

Romans 11:19 has “The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in” (King James).

22. See iv. 29; viii. 34.

23. See ix. 23.

XI.9 As those who withstand thy progress along the path of right reason will never be able to turn thee aside from sound action, so let them not wrest thee from a kindly attitude towards them²⁴; but keep a watch over thyself in both directions alike, not only in steadfastness²⁵ of judgment and action but also in gentleness towards those who endeavour to stand in thy path or be in some other way a thorn in thy side. For in fact it is a sign of weakness to be wroth with them, no less than to shrink from action and be terrified into surrender. For they that do the one or the other are alike deserters of their post,²⁶ the one as a coward, the other as estranged from a natural kinsman and friend.

24. See x. 36, § 2 etc.

25. See v. 18.

26. See x. 25.

XI.10 ‘*Nature in no case cometh short of art.*’ For indeed the arts are copiers of various natures. If this be so, the most consummate and comprehensive Nature of all cannot be outdone by the inventive skill of art. And in every art the lower things are done for the sake of the higher²⁷; and this must hold good of the Universal Nature also. Aye and

thence is the origin of Justice, and in justice all the other virtues have their root,²⁸ since justice will not be maintained if we either put a value on things indifferent, or are easily duped and prone to slip and prone to change.

27. See v. 16, 30; vii. 55.

28. iv. 37; v. 34. Compare Theognis 147: ἐν δὲ δικαιοσύνῃ συλλήβδην πᾶσ' ἀρετὴ 'στιν.

Theognis of Megara was an archaic Greek elegiac poet; the Greek, in translation: “in justice all virtue is summed up.”

XI.11 If therefore the things, the following after and eschewing of which disturb thee, come not to thee, but thou in a manner dost thyself seek them out, at all events keep thy judgment at rest about them and they will remain quiescent, and thou shalt not be seen following after or eschewing them.

XI.12 The soul is ‘a sphere truly shaped,’²⁹ when it neither projects itself towards anything outside nor shrinks together inwardly, neither expands nor contracts,³⁰ but irradiates a light whereby it sees the reality of all things and the reality that is in itself.

29. See viii. 41; xii. 3.

30. See viii. 51.

XI.13 What if a man think scorn of me? That will be his affair. But it will be mine not to be found doing or saying anything worthy of scorn. But what if he hate me? That will be his affair.³¹ But I will be kindly and goodnatured to everyone, and ready to shew even my enemy where he has seen amiss, not by way of rebuke,³² nor with a parade of forbearance, but genuinely and chivalrously like the famous Phocion,³³ unless indeed he was speaking ironically. For such should be the inner springs of a man’s heart³⁴ that the Gods see him not wrathfully disposed at any thing or counting it a hardship. What

evil can happen to thee if thou thyself now doest what is congenial to thy nature, and welcomest what the Universal Nature now deems well-timed, thou who art a man intensely eager that what is for the common interest should by one means or another be brought about?

31. v. 25; Epictetus's *Discourses* iii. 18, § 9; x. 32.

32. See xi. 18, § 9.

33. Marcus is probably thinking of Phocion's last words, see Aelian, *Historical Miscellany* xii. 49: μηδὲν Ἀθηναίοις μνησικακήσειν ὑπὲρ τῆς παρ' αὐτῶν φιλοτησίας ἣς νῦν πίνω (namely, the cup of hemlock); but Heylbut (*Rheinisches Museum* 39, p. 310) refers to a story in Musonius Rufus, p. 55, Hense's edition.

Phocion was an Athenian general and statesman, condemned and executed by the Athenians in 318 BC. Aelian compiled the *Historical Miscellany*, a collection of anecdotes; the Greek, in translation: "to bear the Athenians no grudge for the loving-cup from them which I now drink." The *Rheinisches Museum* is a German classical journal; Otto Hense edited the remains of Musonius Rufus.

34. Compare St. Luke xi. 39: τὸ ἔσωθεν ὑμῶν—"the inward parts."

XI.14 Thinking scorn of one another, they yet fawn on one another, and eager to outdo their rivals they grovel one to another.

XI.15 How rotten at the core is he, how counterfeit, who proclaims aloud: *I have elected to deal straightforwardly with thee!* Man, what art thou at? There is no need to give this out. The fact will instantly declare itself. It ought to be written on the forehead. There is a ring in the voice that betrays it at once, it flashes out at once from the eyes, just as the loved one can read at a glance every secret in his lover's looks. The simple and good man should in fact be like a man who has a strong smell about him, so that, as soon as ever he comes near, his neighbour is, will-he nill-he, aware of it. A calculated simplicity

is a stiletto.³⁵ There is nothing more hateful than the friendship of the wolf for the lamb. Eschew that above all things. The good man, the kindly, the genuine, betrays these characteristics in his eyes and there is no hiding it.³⁶

35. The word is Thracian for a native sword (Pollux, *Onomasticon* x. 38), as we might say a *kukri*. Here any concealed weapon to stab the unsuspecting.

Marcus's word is *skalmē*. Julius Pollux was a 2nd-century Greek lexicographer whose *Onomasticon* is a thesaurus arranged by subject. A *kukri* is the curved knife of the Gurkhas.

36. Compare Ecclesiasticus xix. 29: "A man shall be known by his look."

XI.16 Vested in the soul is the power of living ever the noblest of lives, let a man but be indifferent towards things indifferent. And he will be indifferent, if he examine every one of these things both in its component parts³⁷ and as a whole, and bear in mind that none of them is the cause in us of any opinion about itself, nor obtrudes itself on us. *They* remain quiescent,³⁸ and it is we who father these judgments about them and as it were inscribe them on our minds, though it lies with us not to inscribe them and, if they chance to steal in undetected, to erase them at once.³⁹ Bear in mind too that we shall have but a little while to attend to such things and presently life will be at an end. But why complain of the perversity of things? If they are as Nature wills, delight in them and let them be no hardship to thee. If they contravene Nature, seek then what is in accord with thy nature and speed towards that, even though it be unpopular.⁴⁰ For it is pardonable for every man to seek his own good.

37. See iii. 11; xii. 18.

38. See xi. 11.

39. See viii. 47.

40. See v. 3; vi. 2.

XI.17 Think whence each thing has come, of what it is built up,⁴¹ into what it changes, what it will be when changed; and that it cannot take any harm.

41. See iii. 11.

XI.18 *Firstly: Consider thy relation⁴² to mankind and that we came into the world for the sake of one another⁴³; and taking another point of view, that I have come into it to be set over men, as a ram over a flock or a bull over a herd.⁴⁴ Start at the beginning from this premiss: If not atoms,⁴⁵ then an all-controlling Nature. If the latter, then the lower are for the sake of the higher and the higher for one another.⁴⁶ **

Secondly: What sort of men they are at board and in bed and elsewhere.⁴⁷ Above all how they are the self-made slaves of their principles, and how they pride themselves on the very acts in question.

Thirdly: That if they are acting rightly in this, there is no call for us to be angry. If not rightly, it is obviously against their will and through ignorance.⁴⁸ For it is against his will that every soul is deprived, as of truth, so too of the power of dealing with each man as is his due. At any rate, such men resent being called unjust, unfeeling, avaricious, and in a word doers of wrong to their neighbours.

Fourthly: That thou too doest many a wrong thing thyself and art much as others are,⁴⁹ and if thou dost refrain from certain wrong-doings, yet hast thou a disposition inclinable thereto⁵⁰ even supposing that through cowardice or a regard for thy good name or some such base consideration thou dost not actually commit them.

Fifthly: That thou hast not even proved that they are doing wrong, for many things are done even 'by way of policy.'⁵¹ Speaking generally a man must know many things before he can pronounce an adequate opinion on the acts of another.

Sixthly: When thou art above measure angry or even out of patience, bethink thee that man's life is momentary, and in a little while we shall all have been laid out.⁵²

Seventhly: *That in reality it is not the acts men do that vex us—for they belong to the domain of their ruling Reason—but the opinions we form of those acts.*⁵³ *Eradicate these, be ready to discard thy conclusion that the act in question is a calamity, and thine anger is at an end.*⁵⁴ *How then eradicate these opinions? By realizing that no act of another debases us. For unless that alone which debases is an evil, thou too must perforce do many a wrong thing and become a brigand*⁵⁵ *or any sort of man.*

Eighthly: *Bethink thee how much more grievous are the consequences of our anger and vexation at such actions than are the acts themselves which arouse that anger and vexation.*

Ninthly: *That kindness is irresistible,*⁵⁶ *be it but sincere and no mock smile or a mask assumed. For what can the most unconscionable of men do to thee, if thou persist in being kindly to him, and when a chance is given exhort him mildly and, at the very time when he is trying to do thee harm, quietly teach him a better way*⁵⁷ *thus: Nay, my child, we have been made for other things. I shall be in no wise harmed, but thou art harming thyself,*⁵⁸ *my child*. Shew him delicately and without any personal reference that this is so, and that even honey-bees do not act thus nor any creatures of gregarious instincts. But thou must do this not in irony*⁵⁹ *or by way of rebuke, but with kindly affection and without any bitterness at heart, not as from a master's chair, nor yet to impress the bystanders, but as if he were indeed alone even though others are present.*

Bethink thee then of these nine heads, taking them as a gift from the Muses, and begin at last to be a *man* while life is thine. But beware of flattering⁶⁰ men no less than being angry with them.⁶¹ For both these are non-social and conducive of harm. In temptations to anger a precept ready to thy hand is this to be wroth is not manly, but a mild and gentle disposition, as it is more human, so it is more masculine. Such a man, and not he who gives way to anger and discontent, is endowed with strength and sinews and manly courage. For the nearer such a mind attains to a passive calm,⁶² the nearer is the man to strength. As grief is a weakness, so also is anger. In both it is a case of a wound and a surrender.

But take if thou wilt as a tenth gift from Apollo, the Leader of the Muses, this, that to expect the bad not to do wrong is worthy of a madman; for that is to wish for impossibilities.⁶³ But to acquiesce in their wronging others, while expecting them to refrain from wronging thee, is unfeeling and despotic.⁶⁴

42. See v. 16, 30; viii. 27.

43. See viii. 56, 59.

44. Dio Chrysostom, *Orations* ii, *On Kingship*, 97, Reiske's edition: ὁ δὲ ταῦρος σαφῶς πρὸς βασιλέως εἰκόνα πεποιήται. Epictetus's *Discourses* i. 2, § 30.

Dio Chrysostom's second oration, *On Kingship*; the Greek, in translation: "the bull is plainly made as an image of a king."

45. See iv. 3, § 2; viii. 17; ix. 39; x. 6.

46. See ii. 1; v. 16.

47. See viii. 14; x. 19.

48. See ii. 1; iv. 3; vii. 22, 63.

49. See vii. 70; x. 30.

50. See i. 17, near the beginning.

51. Or, "with an eye to circumstances," "with some further end in view," knowledge of which would justify the action or shew its necessity.

52. See ix. 38.

53. See vii. 16; viii. 40; ix. 13; xi. 11, 16.

54. See vii. 16.

55. See x. 10.

56. Seneca's *On Benefits* vii. 31: *vincit malos pertinax bonitas*.

Seneca's Latin, in translation: "persistent goodness overcomes the wicked."

57. See v. 28; vi. 27; viii. 59; x. 4; xi. 13.

58. See ix. 4.

59. See xi. 13.

60. Compare Dio's *Roman History* 71. 3, § 4.

61. See iv. 31.

62. The Stoic ἀπάθεια.

Apatheia: the Stoic freedom from the passions.

63. See v. 17; vii. 71; ix. 42.

64. vi. 27; Seneca's *On Anger* ii. 31. ἀγνώμων might also be translated *senseless*.

XI.19 Against four perversions of the ruling Reason thou shouldest above all keep unceasing watch, and, once detected, wholly abjure them,⁶⁵ saying in each case to thyself: *This thought is not necessary;*⁶⁶ *this is destructive of human fellowship; this could be no genuine utterance from the heart.*—And not to speak from the heart, what is it but a contradiction in terms?—The fourth case is that of self-reproach,⁶⁷ for that is an admission that the divine part of thee has been worsted by and acknowledges its inferiority to the body, the baser and mortal partner, and to its gross notions.

65. See xi. 16.

66. See iv. 24.

67. v. 36; viii. 10. Compare Fronto's letter to Marcus as Caesar, iv. 13, where Marcus reproaches himself when 19 years old for backwardness in philosophy.

XI.20 Thy soul and all the fiery part that is blended with thee, though by Nature ascensive, yet in submission to the system of the Universe are held fast here in thy compound personality. And the entire earthy part too in thee and the humid, although naturally descensive, are yet upraised and take up a station not their natural one. Thus indeed, we find the elements also in subjection to the Whole and, when set anywhere, remaining there under constraint until the signal sound for their release again therefrom.

Is it not then a paradox that the intelligent part alone of thee should be rebellious and quarrel with its station? Yet is no constraint laid upon it but only so much as is in accordance with its nature. Howbeit it does not comply and takes a contrary course. For every motion towards acts of injustice and licentiousness, towards anger and grief and fear, but betokens one who cuts himself adrift from Nature. Aye and when the ruling Reason in a man is vexed at anything that befalls, at that very moment it deserts

its station.⁶⁸ For it was not made for justice alone, but also for piety⁶⁹ and the service of God. And in fact the latter are included under the idea of a true fellowship, and indeed are prior to the practice of justice.⁷⁰

68. See xi. 9.

69. xii. 2. *δσιότης* = *δικαιοσύνη πρὸς θεούς*, see Stobaeus's *Eclogues* ii. 104.

Hosiotēs, "piety"; *dikaíosynē pros theous*, "justice towards the gods."

70. But compare xi. 10.

XI.21 He who has not ever in view one and the same goal of life cannot be throughout his life one and the same.⁷¹ Nor does that which is stated suffice, there needs to be added what that goal should be. For just as opinion as to all the things that in one way or another are held by the mass of men to be good is not uniform, but only as to certain things, such, that is, as affect the common weal, so must we set before ourselves as our goal the common and civic weal. For he who directs all his individual impulses towards this goal will render his actions homogeneous and thereby be ever consistent with himself.⁷²

71. Compare Dio's *Roman History* 71. 34, § 5: ὁμοιος διὰ πάντων ἐγένετο καὶ ἐν οὐδενὶ ἡλλοιώθη. Aristides, *To the King* § 113 (Jebb's edition), says he was ὁ αὐτὸς διὰ τέλους.

The historian Dio's Greek, in translation: "he was the same in all things and in nothing changed"; Aristides': "the same to the end."

72. See i. 8.

XI.22 Do not forget the story of the town mouse and the country mouse, and the excitement and trepidation of the latter.⁷³

73. Aesop, *Fables* 297; Horace's *Satires* ii. 6 ff.

The fable of the town mouse and the country mouse is told by Aesop and, at the close of the sixth satire of his second book, by Horace.

XI.23 Socrates used to nickname the opinions of the multitude *Ghouls*,⁷⁴ bogies to terrify children.

74. *Lamiae*, or “vampires,” “fabulous monsters said to feed on human flesh,” Horace’s *Ars Poetica* 540; Apuleius’s *Metamorphoses* i. 57. Compare Epictetus’s *Discourses* ii. 1, § 14: ταῦτα Σωκράτης μορμολυκεῖα ἐκάλει. Philostratus’s *Life of Apollonius of Tyana* iv. 25, whence Keats took his *Lamia*.

The *Lamiae* were monsters of folklore said to devour children. Epictetus’s Greek, in translation: “these Socrates called bugbears.” Apollonius of Tyana was a 1st-century Pythagorean sage; Philostratus’s *Life* of him tells how he unmasked a lamia who had taken the form of a bride at Corinth, the story Keats retold in *Lamia* (1820).

XI.24 The Spartans at their spectacles assigned to strangers seats in the shade, but themselves took their chance of seats anywhere.

XI.25 Socrates refused the invitation of Perdiccas⁷⁵ to his court, *That I come not*, said he, *to a dishonoured grave*, meaning, that I be not treated with generosity and have no power to return it.⁷⁶

75. According to Diogenes Laertius, *Life of Socrates* 9; Seneca’s *On Benefits* v. 6, § 2; Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* i. 23, this was Archelaus, son of Perdiccas.

Perdiccas II and his son Archelaus were successive kings of Macedon in the later 5th century BC.

76. Compare Fronto’s letter to Appian, Naber’s edition p. 251.

XI.26 In the writings of the Ephesians⁷⁷ was laid down the advice to have constantly in remembrance some one of the ancients who lived virtuously.

77. Seneca's *Epistles* 11 attributes the precept to the Epicureans: *aliquis vir bonus nobis eligendus est ac semper ante oculos habendus ut sic tanquam illo spectante vivamus et omnia illo vidente faciamus. Hoc Epicurus praecepit*. See, however, Plutarch's *Table Talk* vii. 5, near the end.

Seneca's Latin, in translation: "we must choose some good man and keep him always before our eyes, so that we may live as though he were watching and do everything as though he saw. This Epicurus taught."

XI.27 Look, said the Pythagoreans, at the sky in the morning, that we may have in remembrance those hosts of heaven that ever follow the same course and accomplish their work in the same way, and their orderly system, and their purity, and their nakedness; for there is no veil before a star.

XI.28 Think of Socrates with the sheepskin wrapped round him, when Xanthippe had gone off with his coat, and what he said to his friends when they drew back in their embarrassment at seeing him thus accoutred.

XI.29 In reading and writing thou must learn first to follow instruction before thou canst give it. Much more is this true of life.

XI.30 *'Tis not for thee, a slave, to reason why.*⁷⁸

78. It is not clear whether λόγος here means speech or reason or both. The citation, of which the author is not known, has no obvious application; still less has the following quotation from Homer.

Sections XI.30 through XI.39 are quotations rather than Marcus's own reflections. Haines's footnotes identify a line from Homer's *Odyssey* (XI.31) and one from Hesiod's *Works and Days* (XI.32); the sayings at XI.33–38 come from Epictetus's *Discourses*, sometimes named and sometimes not, and "quoted, not *verbatim*"; the saying of Socrates at XI.39 is "only found here."

XI.31 *and within me my heart laughed.*⁷⁹

79. Homer's *Odyssey* ix. 413.

In *Odyssey* ix. 413 Odysseus laughs inwardly when the Cyclops's neighbours, told that "Nobody" is harming him, go away.

XI.32 *Virtue they will upbraid and speak harsh words in her hearing.*⁸⁰

80. Hesiod's *Works and Days* 185, where the reading is ἄρα τοῖς for ἀρετήν.

In *Works and Days* the line describes children who reproach their aging parents; Hesiod's text has *ara tois*, "then... them," where Marcus's quotation reads *aretēn*, "virtue."

XI.33 *Only a madman will look for figs in winter. No better is he who looks for a child when he may no longer have one.*⁸¹

81. Epictetus's *Discourses* iii. 24, § 87, quoted, not *verbatim*.

XI.34 *A man while fondly kissing his child, says Epictetus, should whisper in his heart*⁸²: *'To-morrow peradventure thou wilt die.'* Ill-omened words these! *Nay*, said he, *nothing is ill-omened that signifies a natural process. Or it is ill-omened also to talk of ears of corn being reaped.*

82. The same, iii. 24, § 88.

XI.35 The grape unripe, mellow, dried-in every stage we have a change, not into non-existence, but into the not now existent.⁸³

83. Epictetus's *Discourses* iii. 24, § 91.

XI.36 Hear Epictetus: *no one can rob us of our free choice.*⁸⁴

84. The same, iii. 22, § 105.

XI.37 *We must, says he,⁸⁵ hit upon the true science of assent and in the sphere of our impulses pay good heed that they be subject to proper reservations,⁸⁶ that they have in view our neighbour's welfare; that they are proportionate to worth. And we must abstain wholly from inordinate desire and shew avoidance in none of the things that are not in our control.*

85. That is, Epictetus. Compare iii. 22, § 105, and *Manual*, ii. 2.

86. iv. 1; v. 20; vi. 50; that is, not unconditionally, but subject to modification by circumstances.

XI.38 *It is no casual matter, then, said he, that is at stake, but whether we are to be sane or no.*⁸⁷

87. Epictetus's *Discourses* i. 22, §§ 17–21; Horace's *Satires* ii. 3. 43.

In the third satire of Horace's second book, the Stoic convert Damasippus expounds the doctrine that all but the wise are mad.

XI.39 Socrates was wont to say:⁸⁸ *What would ye have? The souls of reasoning or unreasoning creatures? Of reasoning creatures. Of what kind of reasoning creatures? Sound or vicious? Sound. Why then not make a shift to get them? Because we have them already. Why then fight and wrangle?*

88. Only found here.

BOOK XII

XII.1 All those things, which thou prayest to attain by a roundabout way, thou canst have at once if thou deny them not to thyself¹; that is to say, if thou leave all the Past to itself and entrust the Future to Providence,² and but direct the Present in the way of piety and justice: piety, that thou mayest love thy lot, for Nature brought it to thee and thee to it; justice, that thou mayest speak the truth freely and without finesse, and have an eye to law and the due worth of things³ in all that thou doest; and let nothing stand in thy way, not the wickedness of others, nor thine own opinion, nor what men say, nor even the sensations of the flesh that has grown around thee⁴; for the part affected will see to that.

If then, when the time of thy departure is near, abandoning all else thou prize thy ruling Reason alone and that which in thee is divine,⁵ and dread the thought, not that thou must one day cease to live, but that thou shouldst never yet have begun to live according to Nature, then shalt thou be a man worthy of the Universe that begat thee, and no longer an alien⁶ in thy fatherland, no longer shalt thou marvel at what happens every day as if it were unforeseen, and be dependent on this or that.

1. x. 33; Horace's *Epistles* i. 11, near the end.

The close of Horace's eleventh epistle holds that those who run across the sea "change their sky, not their mind," and that what one seeks is at hand for a balanced mind.

2. vii. 8; St. Matthew vi. 34.

Matthew 6:34 has "Take therefore no thought for the morrow" (King James).

3. xi. 37 (Epictetus).

4. See vii. 68.

5. See xii. 26.

6. See iv. 29; xii. 13.

XII.2 God sees the Ruling Parts of all men stripped of material vessels and husks and sloughs. For only with the Intellectual Part of Himself is He in touch with those emanations only which have welled forth and been drawn off from Himself into them. But if thou also wilt accustom thyself to do this, thou wilt free thyself from the most of thy distracting care. For he that hath no eye for the flesh that envelopes him will not, I trow, waste his time with taking thought for raiment and lodging and popularity and such accessories and frippery.⁷

7. Literally *stage-scenery*; compare Seneca's *Consolation to Marcia* 10.

In the *Consolation to Marcia* Seneca describes the goods of fortune as borrowed stage properties, to be returned.

XII.3 Thou art formed of three things in combination—body, vital breath, intelligence.⁸ Of these the first two are indeed thine, in so far as thou must have them in thy keeping, but the third alone is in any true sense thine.⁹ Wherefore, if thou cut off from thyself, that is from thy mind, all that others do or say and all that thyself hast done or said, and all that harasses thee in the future, or whatever thou art involved in independently of thy will by the body which envelopes thee and the breath that is twinned with it, and whatever the circumambient rotation outside of thee sweeps along, so that thine intellectual faculty, delivered from the contingencies of destiny, may live pure and undetached by itself, doing what is just, desiring what befalls it, speaking the truth—if, I say, thou strip from this ruling Reason all that cleaves to it from the bodily influences and the things that lie beyond in time and the things that are past, and if thou fashion thyself like the Empedoclean *Sphere with its circle true in its poise well-rounded rejoicing*,¹⁰

and school thyself to live that life only which is thine, namely the present, so shalt thou be able to pass through the remnant of thy days calmly, kindly, and at peace with thine own 'genius.'¹¹

8. ii. 2; iii. 16. Here πνευμάτιον = ψυχή (soul) in its lower sense, see Index III.

Pneumation, “little breath”; *psychē*, “soul.”

9. See x. 38.

10. viii. 41; xi. 12. Compare Horace’s *Satires* ii. 7, 95: *in seipso totus teres atque rotundus*.

The quoted line is from Empedocles, the 5th-century BC philosopher of Acragas, describing the Sphere, the perfectly unified state of the cosmos. Horace’s Latin, in translation: “whole in himself, smooth and round,” said of the Stoic wise man.

11. See ii. 13; iii. 5 etc.

XII.4 Often have I marvelled how each one of us loves himself above all men, yet sets less store by his own opinion of himself than by that of everyone else. At any rate, if a God or some wise teacher should come to a man and charge him to admit no thought or design into his mind that he could not utter aloud as soon as conceived,¹² he could not endure this ordinance for a single day. So it is clear that we pay more deference to the opinion our neighbours will have of us than to our own.

12. See iii. 4.

XII.5 How can the Gods, after disposing all things well and with good will towards men, ever have overlooked this one thing, that some of mankind, and they especially good men, who have had as it were the closest commerce with the Divine, and by devout conduct and acts of worship have been in the most intimate fellowship with it, should when once dead have no second existence but be wholly extinguished?¹³ But if indeed this be haply so, doubt not that they would have ordained it otherwise, had it needed to be otherwise. For had it been just, it would also have been feasible, and had it been in conformity with Nature, Nature would have brought it about. Therefore from its not being so, if indeed it is not so, be assured that it ought not to have been so. For even thyself canst see that in this presumptuous enquiry of thine thou art reasoning

with God.¹⁴ But we should not thus be arguing with the Gods were they not infinitely good and just. But in that case they could not have overlooked anything being wrongly and irrationally neglected in their thorough Ordering of the Universe.

13. For Marcus' views on Immortality, see Introduction.

14. Compare Job (xiii. 3), *I desire to reason with God*, where a similar point is argued.

Job 13:3 has "Surely I would speak to the Almighty, and I desire to reason with God" (King James).

XII.6 Practise that also wherein thou hast no expectation of success. For even the left hand, which for every other function is inefficient by reason of a want of practice, has yet a firmer grip of the bridle than the right. For it has had practice in this.

XII.7 Reflect on the condition of body and soul befitting a man when overtaken by death, on the shortness of life,¹⁵ on the yawning gulf¹⁶ of the past and of the time to come, on the impotence of all matter.

15. See iv. 26.

16. See iv. 50; v. 23; xii. 32.

XII.8 Look at the principles of causation stripped of their husks; at the objective of actions; at what pain is, what pleasure, what death, what fame. See who is to blame for a man's inner unrest; how no one can be thwarted by another¹⁷; that nothing is but what thinking makes it.¹⁸

17. See v. 34; vii. 16.

18. v. 2; viii. 40; xii. 22. Shakespeare's *Hamlet* ii. 2. 256.

XII.9 In our use of principles of conduct we should imitate the pancratiast not the gladiator.¹⁹ For the latter lays aside the blade which he uses, and takes it up again, but the other always has his hand and needs only to clench it.

19. Or, *the prize-fighter not the duellist*. Some take ἀναιρείται to mean ‘*is slain*.’

XII.10 See things as they really are, analyzing them into Matter, Cause, Objective.²⁰

20. See viii. 11; xii. 18, 29.

XII.11 What a capacity Man has to do only what God shall approve and to welcome all that God assigns him!

XII.12 Find no fault with Gods for what is the course of Nature, for they do no wrong²¹ voluntarily or involuntarily; nor with men, for they do none save involuntarily.²² Find fault then with none.²³

21. See ii. 11.

22. See vii. 22 etc.

23. Epictetus’s *Manual* 5.

XII.13 How ludicrous is he and out of place who marvels at anything that happens in life.²⁴

24. See xii. 1.

XII.14 There must be either a predestined Necessity and inviolable plan, or a gracious Providence, or a chaos without design or director. If then there be an inevitable Necessity, why kick against the pricks? If a Providence that is ready to be gracious,

render thyself worthy of divine succour. But if a chaos without guide, congratulate thyself that amid such a surging sea thou hast in thyself a guiding Reason. And if the surge sweep thee away, let it sweep away the poor Flesh and Breath with their appurtenances: for the Intelligence it shall never sweep away. (15.) What shall the truth that is in thee and the justice and the temperance be extinguished ere thou art, whereas the light of a lamp shines forth and keeps its radiance until the flame be quenched?

XII.16 Another has given thee cause to think that he has done wrong: *But how do I know that it is a wrong?*²⁵ And even if he be guilty, suppose that his own heart has condemned him, and so he is as one who wounds his own face?

Note that he who would not have the wicked do wrong is as one who would not have the fig-tree secrete acrid juice²⁶ in its fruit, would not have babies cry, or the horse neigh, or have any other things be that must be. Why, what else can be expected from such a disposition? If then it chafes thee, cure the disposition.

25. See vii. 29; ix. 38.

26. See iv. 6.

XII.17 If not meet, do it not: if not true, say it not. For let thine impulse be in thy own power.

XII.18 Ever look to the whole of a thing, what exactly that is which produces the impression on thee, and unfold it, analyzing it into its causes, its matter, its objective,²⁷ and into its life-span within which it must needs cease to be.

27. xii. 10. Or, *application*.

XII.19 Become conscious at last that thou hast in thyself something better and more god-like than that which causes the bodily passions and turns thee into a mere marionette.²⁸ What is my mind now occupied with?²⁹ Fear? Suspicion? Concupiscence³⁰? Some other like thing?

28. See ii. 2 etc.

29. See v. 11.

30. See ii. 16; ix. 40.

XII.20 Firstly, eschew action that is aimless and has no objective. Secondly, take as the only goal of conduct what is to the common interest.³¹

31. See v. 16; xi. 21.

XII.21 Bethink thee that thou wilt very soon be no one and nowhere, and so with all that thou now seest and all who are now living. For by Nature's law all things must change, be transformed, and perish, that other things may in their turn come into being.³²

32. See ix. 28, 32.

XII.22 Remember that all is but as thy opinion of it,³³ and that is in thy power. Efface thy opinion then, as thou mayest do at will, and lo, a great calm! Like a mariner that has turned the headland thou findest all at set-fair and a halcyon sea.³⁴

33. See ii. 15 etc.

34. Compare Lucian's *The Scythian*, near the end.

Lucian's *The Scythian* tells of the arrival in Athens of the Scythian Anacharsis.

XII.23 Any single form of activity, be it what it may, ceasing in its own due season, suffers no ill because it hath ceased, nor does the agent suffer in that it hath ceased to act.³⁵ Similarly then if life, that sum total of all our acts, cease in its own good time, it suffers no ill from this very fact, nor is he in an ill plight who has brought this chain of acts to an end in its own due time. The due season and the terminus are fixed by Nature, at times even by our individual nature, as when in old age, but in any case by the Universal Nature, the constant change of whose parts keeps the whole Universe ever youthful³⁶ and in its prime. All that is advantageous to the Whole is ever fair and in its bloom. The ending of life then is not only no evil to the individual—for it brings him no disgrace,³⁷ if in fact it be both outside our choice and not inimical to the general weal—but a good, since it is timely for the Universe, bears its share in it and is borne along with it.³⁸ For then is he, who is borne along on the same path as God, and borne in his judgment towards the same things, indeed a man god-borne.³⁹

35. See ix. 21.

36. See vii. 25.

37. See ii. 11; iv. 3; viii. 1.

38. See ii. 3; iii. 4.

39. Epictetus's *Discourses* ii. 16, § 42: πρὸς τὸν θεὸν ἀναβλέψας εἰπεῖν, ὁμογνωμονῶ σοι.

Epictetus's Greek, in translation: "looking up to God, to say: I am of one mind with you."

XII.24 Thou must have these three rules ready for use. *Firstly*, not to do anything, that thou doest, aimlessly,⁴⁰ or otherwise than as Justice herself would have acted; and to realize that all that befalls thee from without is due either to Chance or to Providence, nor hast thou any call to blame Chance or to impeach Providence. *Secondly* this: to think what each creature is from conception till it receives a living soul, and from its reception of a living soul till its giving back of the same,⁴¹ and out of what it is built up and into what it is dissolved. *Thirdly*, that if carried suddenly into mid-heaven thou shouldest look down upon human affairs⁴² and their infinite diversity, thou wilt

indeed despise them,⁴³ seeing at the same time in one view how great is the host that peoples the air and the aether around thee; and that, however often thou wert lifted up on high, thou wouldst see the same sights, everything identical in kind, everything fleeting. Besides, the vanity of it all!

40. See iv. 2; viii. 17; ix. 28.

41. The living soul was supposed by the Stoics to be received at birth, see *Opinions of the Philosophers* (attributed to Plutarch) v. 15, and *On Stoic Self-Contradictions* 38; and for a reputed conversation on this subject between Marcus and the rabbi Jehuda, see Talmud, *Sanhedrin* 91 b (*The Jewish Encyclopedia*, Funk & Wagnalls, 1902).

The *Opinions of the Philosophers* is a summary of philosophical doctrines transmitted among Plutarch's works. The Talmud passage (*Sanhedrin* 91b) records a conversation on when the soul enters the body between the rabbi Jehuda, usually taken to be Judah ha-Nasi, the redactor of the Mishnah, and an emperor it calls only "Antoninus"; Haines, citing *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, calls it a "reputed" conversation with Marcus, and which emperor is meant is uncertain.

42. See vii. 48; ix. 30.

43. Compare Lucian's *Charon* (throughout). What Marcus means by ἐναέριοι and ἐναυθήριοι (or the neuters of these) is not clear. But compare Apuleius's *On the God of Socrates*, about the middle, and his disquisition on δαίμονες; and the interesting parallel 2 Kings vi. 17.

Enaerioi, "beings of the air"; *enaitherioi*, "beings of the ether." Apuleius's *On the God of Socrates* is a treatise on *daimones*, beings intermediate between gods and men. In 2 Kings 6:17 Elisha's servant is shown the mountain "full of horses and chariots of fire" (King James).

XII.25 Overboard with opinion⁴⁴ and thou art safe ashore. And who is there prevents thee from throwing it overboard?

44. See iv. 7; vii. 17, 29; viii. 29; ix. 7; xii. 22.

XII.26 In taking umbrage at anything, thou forgettest this, that everything happens in accordance with the Universal Nature⁴⁵; and this, that the wrong-doing is another's⁴⁶; and this furthermore that all that happens, always did happen,⁴⁷ and will happen so, and is at this moment happening everywhere. And thou forgettest how strong is the

kinship between man and mankind, for it is a community not of corpuscles, of seed or blood, but of intelligence.’⁴⁸ And thou forgettest this too, that each man’s intelligence is God’⁴⁹ and has emanated from Him; and this, that nothing is a man’s very own, but that his babe, his body, his very soul came forth from Him’⁵⁰; and this, that everything is but opinion’⁵¹; and this, that it is only the present moment that a man lives and the present moment only that he loses.’⁵²

45. See v. 8, 10.

46. See ix. 38.

47. See vii. 1.

48. See ii. 1.

49. Compare Euripides, *Fragment* 1007: ὁ νοῦς γὰρ ἡμῶν ἐστὶν ἐν ἐκάστῳ θεός; Cicero’s *Tusculan Disputations* i. 26, § 65.

The Greek of Euripides, in translation: “for the mind in each of us is a god.” In the passage of the *Tusculan Disputations* cited, Cicero argues that the mind is divine.

50. See ii. 3.

51. See xii. 8, 22 etc.

52. See ii. 14; xii. 3.

XII.27 Let thy mind dwell continually on those who have shewn unmeasured resentment at things, who have been conspicuous above others for honours or disasters or enmities or any sort of special lot. Then consider, *Where is all that now?*⁵³ Smoke and dust and a legend or not a legend even.’⁵⁴ Take any instance of the kind—Fabius Catullinus in the country, Lusius Lupus in his gardens, Stertinius at Baiae, Tiberius in Capreae, and Velius Rufus—in fact a craze for any thing whatever arrogantly’⁵⁵ indulged. How worthless is everything so inordinately desired! How much more worthy of a philosopher is it for a man without any artifice to shew himself in the sphere assigned to him just, temperate, and a follower of the Gods. For the conceit that is conceited of its freedom from conceit is the most insufferable of all.’⁵⁶

53. See vi. 47; viii. 25; x. 31.

54. Compare Persius, *Satires* v. 132: *cinis et manes et fabula fies*.

Persius was a Roman satirist of Stoic outlook; the Latin, in translation: “you will become ashes, a shade, and a tale.”

55. For οἷσις see Epictetus’s *Discourses* i. 8, § 6.

Oiēsis, “conceit.”

56. See the story of Plato and Diogenes, Diogenes Laertius, *Life of Diogenes* vi. 2, § 4.

Diogenes, trampling on Plato’s carpets, said, “I trample on Plato’s pride”; Plato replied, “With another kind of pride, Diogenes.”

XII.28 If any ask, *Where hast thou seen the Gods or how hast thou satisfied thyself of their existence that thou art so devout a worshipper?*⁵⁷ I answer: In the first place, they are even visible to the eyes.⁵⁸ In the next, I have not seen my own soul either, yet I honour it.⁵⁹ So then from the continual proofs of their power I am assured that Gods also exist and I reverence them.

57. Compare Dio’s *Roman History* 71. 34 § 2.

58. The stars were Gods in the Stoic view. Compare above, viii. 19, and Seneca’s *On Benefits* iv. 8.

59. Theophilus of Antioch, *To Autolycus* i. 2 and 5.

Theophilus was bishop of Antioch in the later 2nd century; in *To Autolycus*, a defence of Christianity, he argues that God, though invisible, is known from his works, as the soul is known though unseen.

XII.29 Salvation in life depends on our seeing everything in its entirety and its reality, in its Matter and its Cause⁶⁰: on our doing what is just and speaking what is true with all our soul. What remains but to get delight of life by dovetailing one good act⁶¹ on to another so as not to leave the smallest gap between?

60. See xii. 10, 18 etc.

61. See v. 6; ix. 23.

XII.30 There is one Light of the Sun, even though its continuity be broken by walls, mountains,⁶² and countless other things. There is one common Substance, even though it be broken up into countless bodies individually characterized. There is one Soul, though it be broken up among countless natures and by individual limitations. There is one Intelligent Soul, though it seem to be divided. Of the things mentioned, however, all the other parts, such as Breath, are the material Substratum of things,⁶³ devoid of sensation and the ties of mutual affinity—yet even they are knit together by the faculty of intelligence and the gravitation which draws them together. But the mind is peculiarly impelled towards what is akin to it, and coalesces with it, and there is no break in the feeling of social fellowship.

62. See viii. 57.

63. With an alteration of stops these words may mean *such as Breath and Matter, are devoid of sensation.*

XII.31 What dost thou ask for? Continued existence? But what of sensation? Of desire? Of growth? Of the use of speech? The exercise of thought? Which of these, thinkest thou, is a thing to long for? But if these things are each and all of no account, address thyself to a final endeavour to follow Reason and to follow God.⁶⁴ But it militates against this to prize such things, and to grieve if death comes to deprive us of them.

64. See vii. 31; xii. 27.

XII.32 How tiny a fragment of the boundless abyss of Time has been appointed to each man!⁶⁵ For in a moment it is lost in eternity. And how tiny a part of the Universal Substance!⁶⁶ How tiny of the Universal Soul! And on how tiny a clod of the whole Earth dost thou crawl! Keeping all these things in mind, think nothing of moment save to do what thy nature leads thee to do, and to bear what the Universal Nature brings thee.⁶⁷

65. See iv. 50; v. 24.

66. Epictetus's *Discourses* i. 12 § 26: οὐκ οἶσθα ἡλίκον μέρος εἶ πρὸς τὰ ὄντα;

Epictetus's Greek, in translation: "do you not know how small a part you are compared with the whole?"

67. See iii. 4.

XII.33 How does the ruling Reason treat itself?⁶⁸ That is the gist of the whole matter. All else, be it in thy choice or not, is but as dust and smoke.⁶⁹

68. See v. 11; x. 24.

69. See x. 31.

XII.34 Most efficacious in instilling a contempt for death is the fact that those who count pleasure a good and pain an evil have nevertheless contemned it.⁷⁰

70. For example, Otho, Petronius, and Epicurus, for whose famous syllogism on death see Aulus Gellius, *Attic Nights* ii. 8; Diogenes Laertius, *Life of Epicurus* xxxi. § 2, and compare Bacon's Essay "On Death."

Otho, emperor for three months in 69, took his own life after his army's defeat at Bedriacum; Petronius, Nero's arbiter of taste, was forced to suicide in 66. Epicurus's syllogism runs: death is nothing to us, for what is dissolved has no sensation, and what has no sensation is nothing to us. Bacon's essay is titled "Of Death" in his *Essays* (1625).

XII.35 Not even death can bring terror to him who regards that alone as good which comes in due season,⁷¹ and to whom it is all one whether his acts in obedience to right reason are few or many, and a matter of indifference whether he look upon the world for a longer or a shorter time.⁷²

71. See x. 20; xii. 23.

XII.36 Man, thou hast been a citizen in this World-City,⁷³ what matters it to thee if for five years or a hundred? For under its laws equal treatment is meted out to all. What hardship then is there in being banished from the city, not by a tyrant or an unjust judge but by Nature who settled thee in it? So might a praetor who commissions a comic actor, dismiss him from the stage. *But I have not played my five acts, but only three.* Very possibly, but in life three acts count as a full play.⁷⁴ For he, that is responsible for thy composition originally and thy dissolution now, decides when it is complete. But thou art responsible for neither. Depart then with a good grace, for he that dismisses thee is gracious.

73. See ii. 16; iii. 11; iv. 4.

74. iii. 8; xi. 1; Epictetus's *Manual* 17.

The image is of a praetor, one of the senior magistrates of Rome, dismissing a comic actor he has engaged before the actor has played his five acts. The seventeenth chapter of Epictetus's *Manual* compares a man to an actor in a play, whose part, long or short, is chosen by the author.

THE SPEECHES OF MARCUS

INTRODUCTION

Marcus learnt from Rusticus to “eschew rhetoric and fine language”¹ and thanked the Gods that “he had not made more progress in his rhetorical studies,”² but the Greek in which he clothed his *Thoughts* shews that he had made some progress in them, and Dio says he was “practised in the principles of rhetoric.”³

Only three speeches, purporting to be by Marcus, have come down to us. It is not certain how far we can accept them as authentic. The first is reported by Dio Cassius, who was twenty at the time of its delivery, and as he lived at Rome, and afterwards held high office in the state, he had ample sources of information. He expressly states that Marcus read this address to the soldiers on the rebellion of Cassius, and being written it was more likely to have been preserved verbatim. It cannot be denied that the speech has touches characteristic of Marcus, but of course these might have been purposely introduced by a skilful forger. On the other hand the style is rather rhetorical and artificial and more in keeping with Dio’s known proclivities. Still there is a dignity and restraint, not altogether unworthy of the occasion, noticeable throughout. Unfortunately it only comes to us in the epitome of Xiphilinus, and we do not know how far he has curtailed it, and it certainly seems too short for such an occasion. In any case it must have been delivered in Latin.

The last remark applies also to the dying speech of Marcus as given by Herodian, another contemporary authority, but one who was fond of composing suitable speeches for his characters when what they had actually said was not recoverable. The shortness of this speech may be said to be in its favour, as the Emperor was in the last stages of his illness. The opening words are perhaps too plaintive and personal, but the remainder is natural and appropriate. The last few words of such a ruler and friend must have impressed his hearers and may well have been taken down at the time. Still it is strange that there is no hint of this speech in the description of the last scene given by Capitolinus.⁴

The third speech, from the “Life of Avidius Cassius” by Gallicanus, is much less likely to be genuine. That particular piece of work is full of suspected material, and Marius Maximus, from whom this speech is probably taken, though a contemporary, is not a trustworthy authority, while

the diction and absurd rhetoric of the missive, for it was a speech sent to the Senate and not delivered in it, are decidedly against its genuineness.

SPEECH TO THE ARMY ON THE NEWS OF THE REVOLT OF CASSIUS, 175 A.D.

Marcus, learning of the revolt from Verus,⁵ the Governor of Cappadocia, kept the news secret for a time, but as the soldiers were both greatly perturbed by the rumour and were freely discussing it, he called them together and read the following speech:

“It is not, O fellow soldiers, to give way to resentment or lamentations that I am come before you. For what avails it to be wroth with the Divinity that can do whatever pleaseth Him? Still, perhaps, they that are undeservedly unfortunate cannot but bewail their lot; and that is the case with me now. For it is surely a terrible thing for us to be engaged in wars upon wars; surely it is shocking to be involved even in civil strife, and surely it is more than terrible and more than shocking that there is no faith to be found among men,⁶ and that I have been plotted against by one whom I held most dear and, although I had done no wrong and committed no transgression, have been forced into a conflict against my will.⁷ For what rectitude shall be held safe, what friendship be any longer deemed secure, seeing that this has befallen me? Has not Faith utterly perished,⁸ and good Hope perished with it? Yet I had counted it a slight thing, had the danger been mine alone—for assuredly I was not born immortal—but now that there has been a defection, or rather a revolt, in the state, and the war comes home to all of us equally, I would gladly, had it been possible, have invited Cassius to argue the question out before you or before the Senate, and willingly without a contest have made way for him in the supreme power, had that seemed expedient for the common weal. For it is only in the public interest that I continue to incur toil and danger, and have spent so much time here beyond the bounds of Italy, an old man as I now am⁹ and an ailing,¹⁰ unable to take food without pain, or sleep without care.

“But since Cassius would never agree to meet me for this purpose for what faith could he have in me who kept so ill his faith to me?—you, my fellow soldiers, must in any case be of good cheer. For never, I take it, have Cilicians and Syrians and Jews and Egyptians been a match for you, and never will be, no, not though their muster was as many thousand times more numerous than yours as it is now less. Nor need even Cassius himself, ever so good a commander though he is reputed to be, and credited with many successful campaigns, be held of any great account at the present crisis. For an eagle at the head of daws makes no formidable foe, nor a lion at the head of fawns, and as for the

Arabian war and the great Parthian war, it was you, not Cassius, who brought them to a successful end. Moreover, even if he has won distinction by his Parthian campaigns, you too have Verus,¹¹ who has won not less but even far more victories, and made greater acquisitions than he.

“But perhaps even now, learning that I am alive, he has repented of his action; for surely it was only because he believed me dead, that he acted thus. But if he still maintain his opposition, yet when he learns that we are indeed marching against him, he will doubtless take a different view both from dread of you and from reverence for me. I at any rate, fellow soldiers, have but one fear—for I will tell you the whole truth—that either he should take his own life from very shame of coming into our presence, or that another should slay him, learning both that I shall come and that I am actually setting out against him. For great is the prize of war and of victory—a prize such as no one among men has ever won—of which I shall be deprived. And what is that? To forgive a man who has done wrong, to be still a friend to one who has trodden friendship underfoot, to continue faithful to one who has broken faith.¹² What I say may perhaps seem to you incredible, but you must not disbelieve it; for, I take it, all that is good has not vanished utterly from among men, but there still remains among us a vestige of pristine virtue. But if any be incredulous, the greater even on that account is my desire that he should with his own eyes see actually done that which no man would believe could be done. For this would be the only gain I could get from my present troubles, if I were able to bring the matter to an honourable conclusion,¹³ and show to all the world that even civil war can be dealt with on right principles.”¹⁴

FROM A SPEECH OF MARCUS ANTONINUS (SENT TO THE SENATE).

“In return, then, for your congratulations on our victory, Conscript Fathers, you have as consul my son-in-law Pompeianus,¹⁵ whose mature years should long ago have been rewarded with a consulship had not other brave men had prior claims for recognition from the state. Now with regard to the rebellion of Cassius, I beg and beseech you, Conscript Fathers, to lay aside all thoughts of severity and safeguard my or rather your humanity and clemency, and let no single person be put to death by the Senate. Let no Senator be punished, the blood of no man of noble birth be spilt; let the exiles return, the proscribed recover their goods. Would that I could recall the condemned also from the Shades! For revenge for his own wrongs never sits well on an emperor; the more it is deserved, the more severe it seems. So you must pardon the sons of Avidius Cassius, and his son-in-law, and his wife. But why do I say “pardon,” since *they* have done no wrong? Let them live, then, in security, knowing that they live under Marcus. Let them live on their patrimony

proportionately divided;¹⁶ let them enjoy their gold, their silver, their raiment; let them be unmolested, let them be free to come and go as they please, and let them bear witness among all peoples everywhere to my humanity and yours. Nor is this any great clemency, O Conscript Fathers, that the children and wives of the proscribed should be pardoned: but what I ask of you is that you should shield all accomplices of Cassius among the Senators or Knights from death, proscription, apprehension, degradation, hatred, and in fact from all injury,¹⁷ and grant this glory to my reign, that in a rebellion against the throne death should overtake only those who have fallen in the revolt.”

THE LAST WORDS OF MARCUS.

Calling together his friends and as many of his relations as were at hand, and setting his child before them, when all had come together, he raised himself gently on his pallet-bed, and began to speak as follows:

“That you should be grieved at seeing me in this state is not surprising, for it is natural to mankind to pity¹⁸ the misfortunes of their kinsfolk, and the calamities which fall under our own eyes call forth greater compassion. But I think that something even more will be forthcoming from you to me; for the consciousness of my feelings towards you has led me to hope for a recompense of goodwill from you. But now the time is well-timed both for me to learn that I have not lavished love and esteem upon you in vain for all these years, and for you by showing your gratitude to prove that you are not unmindful of the benefits you have received. You see here my son, whose bringing-up has been in your own hands, just embarking upon the age of manhood¹⁹ and, like a ship amid storm and breakers, in need of those who shall guide the helm, lest in his want of experience²⁰ of the right course he should be dashed upon the rock of evil habits. Be ye therefore to him many fathers in the place of me, his one father, taking care of him and giving him the best counsel. For neither can any wealth, however abundant, suffice for the incontinence of a tyranny, nor a bodyguard be strong enough to protect the ruler, unless he has first of all the good-will of the governed. For those rulers complete a long course of sovereignty without danger²¹ who instil into the hearts of their subjects not fear by their cruelty, but love by their goodness. For it is not those who serve as slaves under compulsion, but those who are obedient from persuasion, that are above suspicion, and continue doing and being done by without any cloak of flattery, and never show restiveness unless driven to it by violence and outrage. And it is difficult to check and put a just limit to our desires when Power is their minister. By giving my son then such advice, and bringing

to his memory what he now hears with his own ears, you will render him both for yourselves and all mankind the best of kings, and you will do my memory the greatest of services,²² and thus alone be enabled to make it immortal.”

1. See above, i. 7; Fronto, *De Eloq.* 3.
2. See above, i. 17, § 4.
3. Dio, 71. 35, §1.
4. Who here uses as his authority “The last great historian of Rome”; see *Das Kaiserhaus der Antonine und der Letzte Historiker Roms*, Otto Th. Schulz, p. 128, who thinks the anonymous writer may have been Lollius Urbicus. See Lampridius, *Life of Diadumenianus* ix. 2.
5. *i.e.* Martius Verus, see below.
6. He forgot his own precepts; see *Meditations* ix. 42, unless, as is possible, the speech came first.
7. Dio’s *Roman History* 71. 34, § 3, οὔτε ἐκῶν οὔτε ἄκων ἐπλημύλει. Compare Aristides, *To the King* § 106 (Jebb’s edition).
8. Compare *Meditations* v. 33.
9. He was 54. Compare *Thoughts*, i. 17, § 6; ii. 2, 6.
10. Yet five years more of this anxious and strenuous life were to be his. Compare Dio’s *Roman History* 71. 22, § 3.
11. Martius Verus. Suidas credits him with tact, slimness, and warlike ability. He gave Marcus the first news of the revolt.
12. Compare *Meditations* ix. 42.
13. Compare *Meditations* vi. 2.
14. Or, *made a right use of*.
15. Incorrect. This Pompeianus was consul in 173. In 176 Claud. Pompeianus Quintianus, who married the daughter of Verus and Lucilla (see Dio 72. 4, 4), was cons. suff. As for the victory, there had been no battle, but Cassius after “a three months dream, of empire” was assassinated by one of his own soldiers.
16. Capitolinus, *Life of Marcus* xxvi. 11, 12: filii Cassii et amplius media parte acceperunt paterni patrimonii et auro atque argento adiuti.
17. This frigid rhetoric does not savour of Marcus.
18. Pity was scouted by the sterner Stoics; but see *Meditations* ii. 13.
19. Commodus would be nineteen, but *μειράκιον* means a boy of fourteen or fifteen. Would *ἀποβαίνοντα*, unless it clashes with the metaphor that follows, meet the difficulty?

20. Dio (*Roman History* 72. 1. 1) says Commodus was by nature ἄκακος, but from too great ἀπλότης (compare 71. 22. 3) and cowardice easily influenced by his entourage, and was thus by ignorance led into bad ways. See also Julian's *The Caesars* 429. 14.

21. Compare Vulcarius Gallicanus, *Life of Avidius Cassius* viii. 3

22. This aspiration does not tally with the repeated denunciations of fame in the *Meditations* iii. 10; iv. 19, 33, τί δὲ καὶ ἔστιν ὄλως τὸ ἀείμνηστον; ὄλον κενόν.

SAYINGS OF MARCUS

INTRODUCTION

Nothing lets us into the secret of a man's character better than little anecdotes about him, and even seemingly trivial sayings uttered by him without any thoughts of a listening posterity.

Unfortunately few such reminiscences of Marcus are extant, but the little that remains will be found to throw some light on a character which it has become too much the fashion to accuse of feebleness, criminal complaisance and inefficiency on the one hand, and on the other of harshness and cruelty. No support is given here to either of these mutually destructive views of a personality that was a striking combination of 'sweetness and gravity',¹ of mildness and tenacity, of justice and mercy. We see a truly religious man who lived up to his creed,² a tempered Stoicism.

(1) CAPITOLINUS, *LIFE OF MARCUS* IV. 7.

After this³ he gave up to his sister⁴ all that he had inherited from his father, though his mother invited him to share it equally, and replied that *he was content with being his grandfather's heir*, adding that *his mother too, if she were willing, should bestow her property upon his sister, that his sister might be on an equality with her husband*.⁵

(2) CAPITOLINUS, *LIFE OF MARCUS* V. 3, 4.

When however he learnt that he had been adopted by Hadrian, he was more abashed than pleased, and when bidden to migrate to Hadrian's private house, he left his mother's mansion⁶ with regret. And when the household asked him why he took his adoption into the royal house so sadly, he enlarged upon *the evils inseparable from sovran power*.

(3) CAPITOLINUS, *LIFE OF MARCUS* XXVII. 7.

The sentence of Plato⁷ was for ever on his lips: *Well was it for states, if either philosophers were rulers or rulers philosophers*.⁸

(4) DIO, *ROMAN HISTORY* 71. 34, § 4 = SUIDAS, UNDER *Μάρκος*.

If anyone did anything excellent, he praised him and utilized him for that,⁹ but did not expect other things from him, saying, *It is impossible to make men exactly as one wishes them to be, but it is our duty to utilize them,*¹⁰ *such as they are, for any service in which they can be useful to the common weal.*

(5) CAPITOLINUS, *LIFE OF MARCUS* XXII. 3, 4.

Not only in military but also in civil affairs, before doing anything, he always consulted the chief men of the State. In fact this was ever a favourite saying of his: *It is fairer that I should follow the advice of Friends*¹¹ *so many and so wise, than that Friends so wise and so many should follow my single will.*¹²

(6) DIO, *ROMAN HISTORY* 71. 29, § 3.

So averse from all bloodshed was his disposition that, though at the people's request he allowed a lion trained to devour men to be introduced into the arena, yet he not only refused to look at it himself or to enfranchise its trainer, in spite of a persistent demonstration of the audience against him, but even had it proclaimed that *the man had done nothing to deserve freedom.*^{13,14}

(7) CAPITOLINUS, *LIFE OF MARCUS* XIX. 8.

When it was said to Marcus Antoninus of his wife, that he should divorce her, if he did not slay her, he is reported to have said, *If we dismiss the wife, let us also surrender the dowry.*¹⁵ But what was meant by the dowry if not the Empire, which he had received when adopted by his father-in-law at Hadrian's wish?¹⁶

(8) *DIGEST* IV. 2. 13 = XLVIII. 7. 7 (CALLISTRATUS).

When Marcianus said, "I have done no violence," Caesar said, *Do you think that violence is shewn only if men are wounded? There is violence then also, whenever a man demands back what he thinks due to him otherwise than by judicial process. But I do not think it consistent with either your modesty or your dignity or your loyalty to the state that you should do anything except legally.*

(9) GALEN, XIV. 658 (KÜHN'S EDITION).

And he said to Peitholaus¹⁷ that *he had but one physician and he was a free man*, and he went on to say repeatedly about me that *I was the first of physicians and the only philosopher*.¹⁸

(10) DIO, *ROMAN HISTORY* 71. 3. 3 = *FRAGMENTS*, DINDORF'S EDITION, V. P. 206 = ZONARAS XII. 2.

And yet, though a most stubborn contest had been followed by a brilliant victory, nevertheless, when petitioned by the soldiers, the Emperor refused to give them a largess, saying only this, that *the more they received beyond their fixed pay, the more would be wrung from the life-blood of their parents and kinsfolk; for in the matter indeed of his sovereignty God alone could be judge*. With such wisdom and self-command did he rule them that, though engaged in so many and such great wars, he never swerved from what was right so as either to say anything from flattery or do anything from fear.¹⁹

(11) PHILOSTRATUS, *LIVES OF THE SOPHISTS* II. I, P. 242, KAYSER'S EDITION.

Herodes was driven frantic by this calamity²⁰ and came up to the Emperor's seat of judgment²¹ no longer in his right mind and in love with death. For coming forward he set himself to rail at the Emperor, and without measuring his words or keeping his anger in hand, as might have been expected from one who was practised in speaking, but in defiant and unbridled language he gave vent to his passion, saying "This is all that comes of my friendship with Lucius,²² whom you sent to me, that in judging me you gratify your wife and three-year old child."²³ But when Bassaeus,²⁴ who had been invested with the power of capital punishment, threatened him with death, Herodes said, "My fine fellow, an old man has little more to fear." Saying this he left the court without availing himself of his full time for speaking. But in our opinion the conduct of Marcus at this trial too was signally in keeping with his philosophical tenets; for he did not frown, or so much as turn his eyes, as even an arbitrator might have done, but turning to the Athenians said: *Make your plea, men of Athens, even though Herodes is not for allowing you to do so*. And as he listened to their case, at many points he was secretly grieved, but when the complaint of the Athenian Assembly was being read to him, in which they openly attacked Herodes for trying to win over the Governors of Greece with many honeyed words, and somewhere or other even cried out, "O bitter honey!" and again, "Happy they that perish in the pestilence!" he was so deeply moved by what he heard, that he was brought to tears in the sight of all. But as the case of the Athenians comprised an accusation

against his freedmen as well as against Herodes, Marcus diverted his anger on to the freedmen, punishing them however as leniently as possible—for that is how he himself characterizes his sentence,—but to Alcimedon alone he remitted the punishment, alleging that his calamity in respect of his children was punishment enough.²⁵ In a way then thus worthy of a philosopher did Marcus act on this occasion.

(12) THEMISTIUS, *ORATIONS* 15. 191B.

When the army of Antoninus the Roman Emperor, who also had the cognomen of Pius, was perishing of thirst,²⁶ the king, raising both his hands to heaven, said, *With this hand, wherewith I have taken away no life, have I implored Thee and besought the Giver of life.* And he so prevailed with God by his prayer that upon a clear sky there came up clouds bringing rain to his soldiers.

(13) AMMIANUS MARCELLINUS, XXII. 5.

When he was crossing Palestine on his way to Egypt, constantly moved with disgust at the unsavoury and turbulent Jews, he is said to have cried out, *O Marcomanni, O Quadi, O Sarmatians, at length have I found others more useless than you.*²⁷

(14) DIO, *FRAGMENTS*, DINDORF'S EDITION, V. P. 206.

When Marcus was making preparations for the war against Cassius he would not accept any aid from barbarians, though many offered him their services, saying that *the barbarians must not know the troubles that were being stirred up between Romans.*²⁸

(15) VULCACIUS GALLICANUS, *LIFE OF AVIDIUS CASSIUS* VIII.

When the head of Cassius was brought to him, Antoninus shewed no exultation or pride, but even lamented that *he had been robbed of an opportunity for compassion, for he had wished to take him alive, he said, that he might reproach him with the benefits he had done him, and then spare his life.* Lastly when one said that Antoninus was to blame for his clemency toward his enemy and his enemy's children and relations and all whom he had found to be accomplices in the usurpation, the man who had imputed the blame going on to say, "What if he had been successful?" Marcus is said to have answered, *My worship of the Gods has not been such, my life is not such, that he could be successful.* He then, enumerating all the Emperors who had been killed, pointed out that *they had deserved their fate, and that no good Emperor had easily been overcome by a usurper or slain, adding*

that Nero had deserved, Caligula had earned his death, Otho and Vitellins ought never to have reigned. His opinion of Galba was similar, for he remarked that in an Emperor avarice²⁹ was the most hateful of faults. In a word, rebels had never been able to overcome either Augustus or Trajan or Hadrian or his own father, for many as they were, they had been crushed against the wish or without the knowledge of the reigning Emperor. *Antoninus himself, however, besought the Senate not to proceed with severity against accomplices in the rebellion, asking at the same time that no Senator should in his reign be punished with death; and this won for him the love of all.*

(16) PHILOSTRATUS, *LIVES OF THE SOPHISTS* II. 9, P. 252, KAYSER'S EDITION.

It is no flatterer's praise but the truest and most just to call Aristides the founder of Smyrna. For he made so moving a lament to Marcus over the utter destruction of this city by earthquakes and openings in the ground, that over the rest of the mournful tale the Emperor sighed repeatedly, but at the "breezes blowing over a city of desolation" he even let tears fall upon the writing,³⁰ and granted the restoration of the city in accordance with the suggestions of Aristides.³¹ It chanced also that Aristides had already made the acquaintance of Marcus in Ionia, for when they were attending the lectures of the Athenian Damianus, the Emperor who had already been three days in Smyrna, not yet knowing Aristides personally, requested the Quintilii³² to see that the man should not be passed over unnoticed in the imperial levée. They said they had not seen him themselves, for they would not have failed to introduce him; and on the next day they both arrived acting as body-guard to Aristides, and the Emperor addressing him said, *Why have you been so slow in letting me see you?* And Aristides said, "A professional problem, O King, occupied me, and the mind, when so engaged, must not be detached from the prosecution of its enquiry." The Emperor, charmed by the man's character, his extreme naïveté and studiousness, said, *When shall I hear you?* And Aristides replied, "Suggest a subject to-day and hear me to-morrow; for I am not of those who 'throw up' what is in their minds but of those who speak with precision. But grant, O King, that my pupils also may be present at the hearing." *Certainly*, said Marcus, *they may, for it is free to all.* And on Aristides saying, "Permit them, O King, to cheer and applaud as loud as they can," the Emperor smiling said, *That depends on yourself.*

(17) DIO, *ROMAN HISTORY* 71. 32, § 1 = *FRAGMENTS*, DINDORF'S EDITION, V. P. 207.

On his return to Rome, when, in addressing the people, he mentioned among other things that he had been absent many years, they shouted "Eight,"³³ and signified this besides with their fingers, of course that they might get so many pieces of gold for a congiarium.³⁴ The Emperor smiled, and himself said, *Yes, eight*, and afterwards distributed 200 drachmas³⁵ apiece, a larger sum than they had ever received before.

(18) DIO, *ROMAN HISTORY* 71. 33, § 2.

Marcus even begged of the Senate money³⁶ from the public treasury, not that it was not in the ruler's power to demand it, but because Marcus said that everything, both money and all else, belonged to the Senate and the people; for *We*, he said,³⁷ speaking to the Senate *so far from having anything of our own, even live in a house that is yours*.³⁸

(19) PHILOSTRATUS, *LIVES OF THE SOPHISTS* II. 9, P. 240, KAYSER'S EDITION.

Of this Lucius³⁹ another surprising story is told. The Emperor Marcus was an eager disciple of Sextus the Boeotian philosopher,⁴⁰ being often in his company and frequenting his house. Lucius, who had just come to Rome, asked the Emperor, whom he met on his way, where he was going to and on what errand, and Marcus answered, *It is good even for an old man to learn*;⁴¹ *I am now on my way to Sextus the philosopher to learn what I do not yet know*. And Lucius, raising his hand to heaven, said, "O Zeus, the king of the Romans in his old age takes up his tablets and goes to school. But my king Alexander died before he was thirty-two."⁴²

(20) CAPITOLINUS, *LIFE OF MARCUS* XXVIII.

When he began to sicken, he sent for his son,⁴³ and at first besought him not to neglect the relics of the war,⁴⁴ lest he should seem to betray the State. But when his son answered that his first care was for health, he let him do as he would, begging him however to wait a few days and not take his departure at once. Then he abstained from food and drink,⁴⁵ wishing to die, and aggravated the disease. On the sixth day he called for his friends, and mocking earthly things, but setting death at naught, he said to them, *Why weep for me and not rather think on the pestilence and the death that*

awaits all? And when they made as though to retire he said, sighing, If you now give me my dismissal, I give you my farewell and lead the way for you. And when it was asked of him to whom he commended his son, he answered, To you, if he be worthy, and to the immortal Gods. On the seventh day he grew worse, and allowed only his son to be admitted, but dismissed him at once that he might not take the infection. After parting from his son he veiled his head as if he would sleep, but in the night he breathed his last.

(21A) DIO, *FRAGMENTS*, DINDORF'S EDITION, V. P. 206.

When Marcus was seriously ill, so as to have little hope of recovery, he would often cry out in his illness this verse from the tragedy,

SUCH IS WAR'S DISASTROUS WORK.[46][47]

(21B) DIO, *ROMAN HISTORY* 71. 33, § 4.

When near his death, being asked by the tribune for the watchword, he said, *Go to the rising sun, for I am setting.*

1. *Meditations* i. 15.
2. Dio's *Roman History* 71. 30, § 2; Philostratus, *Lives of the Sophists* ii. 11 (p. 242, Kayser's edition); *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* ii. 6278 = *Ephemeris Epigraphica* vii. 385.
3. About 136 A.D., when Marcus was 15.
4. His only sister Cornificia.
5. Ummidius Quadratus.
6. These "Gardens," that is, Lucilla's private residence in its own private grounds, were probably on the Caelian hill.
7. Plato, *Republic* 473 D, quoted also by Cicero in his letter to his brother Quintus, *de provincia administranda*.
8. Aurelius Victor (*On the Caesars* xv. 3) applies the saying to Pius. Justin was well advised therefore in his Apology (i. 3), addressed to Pius and Marcus, in quoting the similar aphorism: *ἔφη που καὶ τις τῶν παλαιῶν· ἂν μὴ οἱ ἄρχοντες φιλοσοφήσωσι καὶ οἱ ἀρχόμενοι, οὐκ ἂν εἴη τὰς πόλεις εὐδαιμονῆσαι.*
9. A lesson learnt from Pius; see *above*, i. 16, § 6.
10. See *above*, ix. 42, and compare vii. 7.

11. *Amici* was a usual name for the *Concilium*, or Privy Council, of the Emperor, a body of advisers first organized by Hadrian, and they may be meant here. Of a difficult case, where his own interests were involved, Marcus says to Fronto (letters to Marcus as Caesar, i. 17): “*Duas res animo meo carissimas secutus sum, rationem veram et sententiam tuam. Di velint, ut semper quod agam, secundo iudicio tuo agam.*”
12. Compare Capitolinus xi. 10, where we are told that Marcus consulted his *praefecti* (i.e. *praetorio*) and relied especially on the jurist Scaevola. In the *Digest* he calls Rusticus, Volusius Maecianus and Salvius Julianus *amici*. A maxim of his was Blush not to be helped (*Meditations* vii. 7); compare also Fronto, letters to Marcus as Caesar, i. 17, “*post consultationem amicorum.*”
13. Yet his bias towards the enfranchisement of slaves was notorious. See *Digest*, xxxviii. 4. 3: “*quod videlicet favore constituit libertatis.*”
14. The jurist Paulus (*Digest* xl. 9. 17) tells us that Marcus “*prohibuit ex acclamatione populi manumittere*”; compare the *Code* vii. 11. 3. Fronto (letters to Marcus as Caesar, i. 8) seems to imply that Pius was more indulgent in this matter.
15. The same thing had been said long before by Burrhus to Nero of his wife Octavia, and in that case was applicable, but it was not so in this, and besides Marcus was devoted to his wife to the last. See *above*, i. 17, §7; Capitolinus xxvi. 4 ff.; Dio’s *Roman History* 71. 30, § 1.
16. Marcus did not receive the Empire through Pius, but by Hadrian’s direct nomination. The latter arranged for Marcus to marry Fabia, the sister of Lucius Commodus, but Pius broke this arrangement in favour of his own daughter Faustina. She inherited an immense patrimonium from her father for Marcus.
17. One of the court physicians, who had been utterly wrong in their diagnosis of the illness of Marcus, while Galen had accurately divined it by merely feeling the patient’s pulse.
18. Galen was one of the most remarkable men of ancient times.
19. This incident recorded by Dio belongs to the earlier stage of the Marcomannic war, when the Emperor was in great straits for money.
20. The calamity was the death by lightning of his adopted daughters, the children of Alcimedon.
21. The trial took place at Sirmium in Pannonia about 170 A.D., Herodes being accused of cruel and illegal conduct at Athens. He had been accused by the same persons of similar malpractices nearly thirty years before (see Fronto, letters to Marcus as Caesar, iii. 2–6). This Herodes was an Athenian famous for his riches, his generosity, and his oratory. He had been the teacher of Marcus in Greek rhetoric.
22. Lucius Verus, the colleague of Marcus, who had died about a year before. He stayed with Herodes on his way to the East in 162
23. Vibia Sabina, the last child of Marcus, who with Faustina, hence called *Mater Castrorum*, was with him at Sirmium.

24. Bassaeus Rufus, praetorian prefect 168–177.
25. Compare his words in the *Digest*, i. 18. 14: *his madness is in itself punishment enough*.
26. At the time of the so-called “miraculous victory” over the Quadi in 174; see Dio, 71. 8.
27. The date would be 176.
28. So in the Boer War, in view of the native question in South Africa, England refused to employ her Indian and Maori troops.
29. Compare Capitolinus xxix. 5: *Nilhil magis et timuit et depre catus est quam avaritiae famam de qua se multis epistulis purgat*. Dio, after speaking of his liberality and public benefactions, says (71. 32, § 3): ἀφ’ οὗπερ καὶ νῦν θαυμάζω τῶν αἰτιωμένων αὐτὸν ὡς οὐ μεγαλόφρονα γενόμενον.
30. We have the letter, addressed to Marcus and Commodus, in the works of Aristides (Jebb, § 209). Its date would be 177–180.
31. Lit. *to the tune set by Aristides*.
32. Two brothers, famed for their character, ability, and fraternal affection. They exercised conjointly the governorship of Achaia, and later a military command in Pannonia. They also shared an unjust death at the hands of Commodus.
33. From 169 to 176 A.D.
34. The *congiarium* was originally a distribution of food by measure. The largess to soldiers was called *donativum*.
35. Seven or eight pounds, the denarius aureus being = 25 silver denarii.
36. *i.e.* the *aerarium*. The Emperor’s privy purse was called *fiscus*.
37. The date would be in 178, just before the Emperor’s last departure for the war.
38. The Emperor, if he said these words, can hardly be acquitted of some affectation, as he had a very large fortune in his own right, inherited from his mother and also through Faustina.
39. A philosopher friend of Herodes Atticus.
40. Sextus was grandson of Plutarch and a teacher of Marcus; see Capitolinus iii. 2, and Marcus himself (i. 9 and note), from which we see what he learnt “in his old age.” He also “shewed off” his philosophy before Sextus; see Themistius, *Orations* xi. 145*b*.
41. In this he was in the good company of our own great Alfred. Compare also Seneca, *Epistles* 76: tamdiu discendum est, quamdiu nescias; Solon, *Fragment* 8, Bergk’s edition, γηράσκων δ’ αἰεὶ πολλὰ διδασκόμενος.

42. For this anecdote compare Dio's *Roman History* 71. 1, § 2: λέγεται καὶ αὐτοῦ κράτωρ ἂν μὴ αἰδεῖσθαι ἐς διδασκάλου φοιτῶν, ἀλλὰ καὶ Σέξτωι προσιέναι τῷ ἐκ Βοιωτῶν φιλοσόφῳ καὶ ἐς ἀκρόασιν τῶν ῥητορικῶν Ερμολογένοιο λόγων μὴ ὀκνηῖσαι παραγενέσθαι. The date is most likely 177–8, before the last departure to the war. At this time Marcus was engaged himself in giving lectures on philosophy. See Aurelius Victor, *On the Caesars* xvi. 9; compare Vulcarius Gallicanus, *Life of Avidius Cassius* iii. 7.
43. His son Commodus, now 19 years old. He was perhaps more weak than vicious. As a matter of fact Pompeianus and the other *amici* of Marcus persuaded Commodus to remain for six months.
44. The parallel with our Edward II. is very close.
45. The latter is not likely. He had long been unable to take solid food; see Dio (71. 6, § 4), who says positively that he was poisoned by order of Commodus. Others say he died of the pestilence.
46. This quotation occurs again in Dio, 71. 22, but with a different application, as a sarcasm against the rise of Pertinax, a man of humble birth, to the consulship.
47. Pius in the delirium of his last fever *nihil aliud quam de re publica et de regibus, quibus iruscebatur, locutus est* (Capitolinus, *Life of Pius* xii. 8). Napoleon's last words were *tête d'armée*.

NOTE ON CHRISTIANS

A NOTE ON THE ATTITUDE OF MARCUS TOWARDS THE CHRISTIANS, WITH HIS EDICT ADDRESSED TO THE COMMON ASSEMBLY OF ASIA

Nothing has done the good name of Marcus so much harm as his supposed uncompromising attitude towards the Christians, and in this connexion great emphasis has been laid upon a passage in the present book where the Christians, according to our accepted text, are mentioned. It will be worth while to examine this and certain other passages in the book and see if they throw any light on Marcus real sentiments towards the Christians.

Taking xi. 3 first, we note that *παράταξις*, which is persistently translated *obstinacy* to bring it into line with Pliny's *obstinatio*, does not mean obstinacy at all, but *opposition*.¹ This is clear from the use of the word and its verb elsewhere by Marcus. In iii. 3 it is used in its primary sense of armies opposite one another on the field of battle. The only passage where the verb occurs (viii. 48) is very instructive. "Remember," he says, "that the riding Reason shows itself unconquerable when, concentrated in itself, it is content with itself, so it do nothing that it doth not will, even if it refuse from mere unreasoning opposition (*κὰν ἀλόγως παρατείχεται*)." Here the word is used in exactly the same connexion as in xi. 3, and by no means in a sense entirely condemnatory. It seems to me quite possible that the Emperor may have had the Christians in mind here as well as in xi. 3. Conduct such as that of the Christians was precisely what Marcus is never tired of recommending, viz., not under any compulsion to transgress the demands of the ruling Reason,² and if it were found impossible to act up to the standard of right set by the conscience (*τὸ ἐνδον ἰδρύμενον*) owing to external causes, then to depart cheerfully from life. It appears to me that Marcus in both these passages is really approving of the resistance.

Again the actual mention of the Christians here requires to be considered. The word itself was taboo with the pagan stylists as a barbarism. Even when they are apparently alluding to Christians, such writers as Epictetus, Dio Chrysostom, Plutarch, Aristides, Apuleius, Dio Cassius, Philostratus, do not use the term—much as an Arnold or a Pater would hesitate to use the word "Salvationist." We do not find it in Fronto's extant works nor Galen's. Lucian, however, employed it in the *Alexander* and the *Peregrinus*, if (which some deny) these works are by him. Marcus would no doubt have used the word, as Trajan, Pliny and Hadrian did, in rescripts and official documents,

but it is a question whether his literary purism and the example of his favourite Epictetus would have allowed him to employ it in a Greek philosophical treatise. When we look at the clause, *ὥς οἱ Χριστιανοί*, as here inserted, we see that it is outside the construction, and in fact ungrammatical. It is in the very form of a marginal note,³ and has every appearance of being a gloss foisted into the text. But even if the words be omitted, Marcus may still have had the Christians in mind when he wrote the passage, which only condemns an eagerness to meet death without real justification and without due dignity.⁴

There are other expressions in this book which seem to glance at a body of men who must have been often in Marcus's thoughts. For instance, when he speaks (vii. 68) of those who "can live out their lives in the utmost peace of mind, *even though all the world cry out against them what they choose, and the beasts tear them limb from limb*," he cannot be thinking of criminals in the ordinary sense of the word, for it is evident that innocent people are meant, and if so, what innocent people received such treatment? It is not at all impossible—I think it highly probable—that Marcus looked upon the Christians as misguided enthusiasts, who had to be punished as the law then stood,⁵ but whom he no more than Hadrian and Pius⁶ wished to punish. Again (vii. 51) he quotes the indignant cry of whom but the Christians? *They kill us, they cut us limb from limb, they execrate us! Adding the comment: How does that prevent you from being pure, sane, sober, just?* In yet another place (iii. 16), in words that point still more conclusively to the Christians, he acknowledges that to own the Intelligence as ruler and guide to what is a clear duty is found also among "*those who do not believe in Gods, and those who will not stand by their country, and those who do their (evil) work behind closed doors*." Now all these three were the stock charges against Christians, and who can doubt they are hinted at here? Lastly there is the reference to exorcism (i. 6),⁷ in which Marcus says that Diognetus taught him to disbelieve.

As a matter of fact, Marcus has been condemned as a persecutor of the Christians on purely circumstantial and quite insufficient grounds. The general testimony of contemporary Christian writers is against the supposition. So is the known character of Marcus. His distinguishing characteristic, in which he excelled all recorded rulers, was humanity. His *φιλανθρωπία* is mentioned by Galen, Dio, Philostratus, Athenagoras (twice), Melito, and Aristides (eleven times); and his *humanitas* by the eminent jurist Callistratus.⁸ As soon could Alexander have turned his back in the day of battle as Marcus shown cruelty to his subjects, however lowly. "Never," says Marcus in the eighth book of his self-communings, "have I willingly injured another," and Themistius (*Orat.* 15) records how, when penned in by his enemies in a new Caudine Forks, he

raised his hands to Heaven and cried, “With this hand wherewith I have shed no blood, I appeal to Thee and beseech the Giver of life.”

He had a passion for justice, and was most scrupulous in his observance of law, as Papinian, the greatest of jurists, has told us. That he should have encouraged mob-violence against unoffending persons, ordered the torture of innocent women and boys, and violated the rights of citizenship in his insensate fury, is as inconceivable as that St. Louis should have broken the Christian law or become a Mohammedan. That some Christians suffered for their religion in the reign of Marcus is most probable, though there is perhaps no single martyrdom attributed to this period of which the date⁹ is certain beyond cavil. That there was in any sense a general persecution of the Christians at this time is contrary to all the facts. There were numbers of them in Rome itself, with a Bishop at their head. There were actually Christians in the Emperor’s household and probably (*e.g.* Apollonius) in the Senate itself. Of all these Roman Christians we only hear of Justin and his six companions being martyred, one of them being a slave of the Emperor. Other Christian slaves in the royal household survived him. If he wished to put down Christianity, why did he not begin with his own palace and with Rome?¹⁰

So far from persecuting them, we know that as subordinate ruler with Pius¹¹ he was responsible for the letter to the Greek cities forbidding outrages against the Christians. The letter to the Common Assembly of Asia, given below, if authentic, emanated from him in conjunction with Pius or from him alone. Its genuineness in the main has been upheld by Harnack, and is certainly capable of defence.

LETTER OF ANTONINUS TO THE COMMON ASSEMBLY OF ASIA (ABOUT OUR RELIGION).

The Emperor Caesar Marcus Aurelius Antoninus Augustus [Armenius¹²] Pontifex Maximus, in the fifteenth year of his Tribunate, Consul for the third time,¹³ to the Common Assembly of Asia greeting.

I am confident¹⁴ that the Gods also look to it that such persons should not escape detection. For it is much more their concern than yours to punish those who refuse to worship them. But you harass these men,¹⁵ and harden them in their conviction, to which they hold fast, by accusing them of being atheists. For indeed they would rather be thought to be accused and die for their own God than live. Consequently they even come off victorious, giving up their lives rather than comply

with your demands. And with respect to the past and present earthquakes,¹⁶ it is not amiss to remind you of them, despondent as you are whenever they occur and yet for ever contrasting your belief and conduct with theirs. They indeed show the more outspoken confidence in their God, while you during the whole time of your apparent ignorance both neglect all the other Gods and the worship of the Ever-living One,¹⁷ whose worshippers, the Christians, you in fact harass and persecute to the death.

And on behalf of such persons many Governors also of provinces have before now both written to our deified father, whose answer in fact was not to molest such persons unless they were shewn to be making some attempt in respect to the Roman Government,¹⁸ and to me also many,¹⁹ have given information about such men, to whom indeed I also replied in accordance with my father's view. And if any one persist in bringing any such person into trouble for being what he is, let him, against whom the charge is brought, be acquitted even if the charge be made out, but let him who brings the charge be called to account.²⁰

Published at Ephesus in the Common Assembly of Asia.

1. Since this was written I find that M. A. P. Lemerrier (*Les Pensées de Marc-Aurèle*, Introd. p. viii. note 2) quotes with approval E. Havet's similar interpretation. Suidas glosses παράταξις with πόλεμος ἐμπειράσκειος.
2. He says (viii. 41) that 'nothing can overbear this Reason, not steel, nor tyrant, nor obloquy.'
3. I see Lemerrier holds the same view.
4. This is not much more than what Clement of Alexandria says, *Stromata* iv. 4. There were some egregious cases of voluntary martyrdom in Spain under the Moslems (see the present writer's *Christianity and Islam in Spain*, pp. 37 ff.). See also the conduct of Callistus, afterwards Bishop of Rome. Hippolytus, *Refutation of All Heresies* ix. 12. Nor were philosophers exempt from the reproach of dying *iactationis causa* (see *Digest*, xxvii. 3. 6. 7).
5. This was the view of Rusticus, his 'domestic philosopher.' (See *Acts of Justin Martyr*.)
6. This is clear from the joint letter of Marcus and Pius to the Larissaeans, Thessalonians, Athenians, and all the Greeks against mob-violence towards the Christians; see Melito in Eusebius, iv. 26, § 10).
7. On which see note above, and compare Lucian, *The Lover of Lies* § 16 (of Christ).
8. Marcus himself in his laws repeatedly appeals to this principle. Capitolinus says he was noted for the mildness of his punishments, and see p. 369.

9. Dr. Abbott has given plausible reasons for doubting the date of the Lyons martyrdom, and some (*e.g.* Havet) deny the authenticity of the letter in Eusebius.
10. The famous caricature of the Christian religion found in the pages' quarters in the Palatine (see Lanciani, *Ancient Rome* 122) dates from this reign.
11. Melito says distinctly σοῦ τὰ συμπάντα διοικούντος αὐτοῦ, Euseb. iv. 26. 10 (? πάντα συνδιοικούντος).
12. An unusual form for Ἀρμενιᾱκός, a title not given till 163.
13. Marcus was consul for the third time and renewed his *Trib. pot.* for the fifteenth time in 161, in which year he became emperor on 7 March and within a few days associated Lucius Verus in the empire with himself.
14. The beginning of the rescript is apparently lost. Compare, for the opening words, the *deorum iniuriae dis curae* of Tacitus.
15. The Justin text says "charge them with disorder," and adds "and bring other charges against them which we cannot prove."
16. There were several earthquakes in Asia Minor between 138 and 180, Rhodes, Smyrna, and Cyzicus being destroyed, but the dates are not accurately settled. There was certainly one at Smyrna about 177, but that is too late. There was one at least in the reign of Pius, and the one here mentioned is supposed by some to have occurred about 152, but I think it may possibly be identified with one by which Cyzicus was chiefly affected; see Fronto, *Ad Ant.* 2 (A.D. 162).
17. Harnack thinks Δία should be supplied and for the following five words substitutes ἐκεῖνος δέ.
18. If this edict is by Pius, we should expect to find some such injunction in his "deified father" Hadrian's edict about the Christians (see Euseb. iv. 9), but there is none. On the other hand it may have been in the edict of Pius "to all the Greeks" mentioned by Melito (Euseb. iv. 10).
19. This is the one word in the document which does not seem consistent with the date 161, when Marcus had only just become emperor.
20. This portion of the edict seems too favourable to the Christians for even Marcus to have promulgated.

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Suidas (circa 900) quotes Marcus 29 times, and most probably refers to him without name on 30 other occasions. Half of the quotations are from the first two books, and three-quarters under the first five letters of the alphabet

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Diognetus, **I.** 6. Some connect him with the recipient of the Christian *Epistle to Diognetus*

Dion, **I.** 14, generally taken to be the Syracusan Dion. But Dion of Prusa was a truer philosopher and better man, and he matches better with Thræsea and Helvidius. Moreover, Arethas (?) twice quotes Marcus in notes to Dio (*see* under “Arethas,” Index **I.**)

Diotimus, a freedman or favourite of Hadrian, **VIII.** 25, 37

Domitius (Dometius), **I.** 13. The Domitii were maternal (adoptive) ancestors of Marcus

Empedocles, quoted, “the sphere,” **XII.** 3; (?) **VIII.** 41; *ἀλλοίωσις*, **IV.** 3; **V.** 15; **IX.** 19, 28

Epictetus, mentioned, **vn.** 19; his “Memorabilia,” **I.** 7; “a little soul bearing a corpse” (Epict. *Frag.* 26), **IV.** 41; **IX.** 24; “words of ill-omen” (Epict. **III.** 24, 88, 89), **XI.** 34; looking for impossibilities (Epict. **III.** 24, 86, 87), **XI.** 33; “no man can rob us of our free will” (Epict. **III.** 22, 105), **XI.** 36; “O Cithæron” (from Soph. *Oed. Rex* 1390, Epict. **I.** 24, 16), **XI.** 6; “the house is smoky and I quit it” (suicide, Epict. **I.** 25, 18), **V.** 29; “a soul deprived of truth only against its will” (Epict. **I.** 28, 4; **II.** 22, 37; *cp.* Plato *Rep.* in. 412), **VII.** 63; **XI.** 18, § 3; Socrates called the opinions of the many Lamiae (or *μορμολυκεῖα*, Epict. **II.** 1, 15), **XI.** 23; change, illustrated from the grape (Epict. **III.** 24, 91–3), **XI.** 35; “’tis royal to do good and be abused” (Antisthenes, Epict. **IV.** 6, 20), **VII.** 36; rules of life (Epict. *Frag.* 27), **XI.** 37; *cp.* **VIII.** 7 *ad. init.*; “the question is about being mad or sane” (Epict. *Frag.* 28), **XI.** 38; elenchus on quarrelling (Socrates, (?) from Epictetus), **XI.** 39; life a drama, (Epict. *Man.* 17), **XII.** 36; Marcus plainly Epictetizes (Schol. to Codex D.), **II.** 1; *cp.* also **V.** 27

Epicurus, on intolerable pain, **VII.** 33, 64; account of his illness, **IX.** 41; atoms (*see* also Democritus), **VI.** 10 (so Schol. to Codex D.); **VII.** 33; **IX.** 28; “to think on great men,” **XI.** 26 (by emendation *Ἐπικουρείων* for *Ἐφειών*)

Epitynchanus, possibly one of Hadrian’s clientèle, **VIII.** 25

Eudaemon, unknown, though named for ability, **VIII**. 25. Vitruvius (but the reading is not above suspicion) mentions a celebrated astrologer of this name

Eudoxus, mentioned with Hipparchus and Archimedes, **VI**. 47. He was renowned as astronomer, physician and geometer

Euphrates, mentioned as recently alive, **X**. 31. A Stoic philosopher much praised by Pliny (Ep. **I**. 10) who held that a philosopher should be a man of affairs, an administrator, and judge. Hadrian allowed him to commit suicide by drinking hemlock (Dido 69, 8, § 2) in 118 Euripides, quotations from, Bellerophon (*Frag.* 289 Dind.) **VIII**. 38; **XI**. 6; Hypsipyle (*Frag.* 757 D.), **VII**. 40; **XI**. 6; Antiope (*Frag.* 207 D.), **VII**. 41; **XI**. 6; Chrysippus (*Frag.* 836 D.), **VII**. 50; Supplices (1. 1110), **VII**. 51; unknown plays (*Frag.* 890, 1007, Dind.), **X**. 21; **VII**. 42 or Aristophanes *q.v.*; **XII**. 26

Europe, a corner of the Universe, **VI**. 36

Eutyches, an unknown philosopher, of previous times, **X**. 31

Eutychnion, an unknown philosopher of previous times, **X**. 31

Fabius, an unknown long-liver, **IV**. 50; Fabius Catullinus, a lover of the country, **XII**. 27. *See also* Caeso Father, and grandfather of Marcus, *see* Verus

Faustina, wife of Marcus, **I**. 17, § 7; v. 31; (?) **IX**. 3; *see also* pp. 362, 365, 367

Faustina, wife of Pius, **VIII**. 25

[Gnomologia], anecdote of Socrates and Perdiccas (Archelaus) from (?), **XI**. 25

Granua, **I**. 17 *ad. fin.* The river Gran, near Buda-Pesth

Hadrian, as a type of departed grandeur, **IV**. 33; **VIII**. 5, 25, 37; **X**. 27. *See also* under Benedicta, and p. 360

Helvidius (Prisons), an upright but impracticable Stoic, who drove Vespasian to banish and put him to death, **I**. 14

Helice, a city of Achaia, swallowed by the sea 373 b.c., **IV**. 48

Hellenes, the Ancient Greeks, **III**. 14

Heraclitus, about 500 b.c. The Stoics borrowed their ideas of Physics largely from him. Mentioned with Pythagoras, Socrates, and Diogenes, **VI**. 47; **VIII**. 3; manner of death, **III**. 3; theory of periodic conflagrations of the Universe, **III**. 3; **X**. 7; cycles of change **V**. 13; **IX**. 28; **XI**. 1; flux of things, **II**. 17; **IV**. 3 *ad. fin.*, 36; **V**. 10, 15; **VI**. 4; **VII**. 19, 25; **IX**. 19; **X**. 7; simile of river, **II**. 17; **IV**. 43; **V**. 23; **VI**. 15; motion above and below, **VI**. 17; [**VII**. 1]; **IX**. 28; Interchange of elements, **IV**. 46; the man that forgets his way, **IV**. 46; even sleepers seem to act and speak **IV**. 46; **VI**. 42; "children from parents" or "what our fathers have told us," **IV**. 40; the soul "an exhalation from blood," **V**. 33; **VI**. 15; men at variance with the

Reason of the Universe, **IV.** 46; what they “encounter” every day, they deem strange, **IV.** 46; “to think on great men” (? from Heracl.), **XI.** 26

Herculaneum (Herclanum), destroyed 79 a.d., **IV.** 48

Hesiod, quoted (*Opp.* 186), **XI.** 32; (*ibid.* 197), **V.** 33

Hipparchus, a great mathematician and astronomer about 150 b.c., here mentioned with Archimedes and Eudoxus, **VI.** 47. Aur. Victor has a curious story (*De Caes.* xli. 20) of Marcus punishing the people of Nicaea (in Bithynia) for not knowing (the text here is doubted) that Hipparchus was born there
Hippocrates (about 450 b.c.) **III.** 3. Till Galen the greatest of old-time physicians. A tree under which he is said to have taught still exists at Cos, his birthplace Homer, quoted (*Il.* **VI.** 147–9), **X.** 34: (*ibid.*, **VII.** 99), **VI.** 10; (*Od.*, **I.** 242), **IV.** 33; (*ibid.*, **IV.** 690), **V.** 31; (*ibid.*, **IX.** 413), **XI.** 31; (? The *Νέκυνια*, *Od.* **XI.** but see Menippus,) **IX.** 24

Hymen, an unknown philosopher of a previous age, **X.** 31

Julianus, an unknown long-liver, **IV.** 50

Lacedaemonians, *see* Spartans

Lanuvium, on the Appian Way, where Pius was born, and had a villa, **I.** 16, § 8

Leonnatus, **IV.** 33. One of Alexander’s Generals, and quite out of place among Roman worthies, *see* *Dentatus*

Lepidus, a lover of long-life, **IV.** 50. Possibly the triumvir

Lorium, a villa of Pius on the Via Aurelia, where he died 7 March, 161, **I.** 16, § 8

Lucilla, Domitia (C alvilla, *Capit.*), mother of Marcus, **I.** 17, § 1; **V.** 4, 13, 31; lessons learnt from her, **I.** 3; letter of Rusticus to, **I.** 7; early death of, **I.** 17, § 6; **VIII.** 25; life with, **IX.** 21. *See also* p. 360

Lucian, possibly referred to in “Menippus *and others like him*,” **VI.** 47

Lupus, Lusius, unknown, possibly a mistake for L. Licinius Lucullus, the conqueror of Mithridates, whose luxurious gardens and villas were well-known, **XII.** 27

Maecenas, the minister of Augustus and friend of Horace, **VIII.** 31

Marcianus, an unknown philosopher, **I.** 6. There was a notable physician of this name (Martianus) in the time of Marcus

Maximus, Claudius, a Stoic philosopher and teacher, highly esteemed by Marcus, whom he thanks the Gods that he knew, **I.** 17, § 10; whose character he draws as that of a perfect man, **I.** 15; his illness, **I.** 10 *ad. fin.*; survived by his wife, **VIII.** 25; possibly consul *circa* 145, legatus of Pannonia 154 and proconsul of Africa *circa* 157; the *vir sanctissimus* of Apuleius

Menander, quoted, in reference to the saying of Monimus, “all is vanity” (*Frag.* 249 Kock), II. 15 ; more luxury than comfort (*Frag.* 491 Kock), V. 12

Menippus, mentioned as a mocker of man’s life, VI. 47 ; his *Νέκνυια* possibly referred to, IX. 24. A Cynic and satirical writer, compatriot of Lucian, and often introduced by him into his works. The Scholiast (Arethas, *q.v.*) on Luc. *Pisc.* 26, refers to this passage of Marcus

Monimus, a Cynic and pupil of Diogenes, quoted from Menander (*q.v.*), “all opinion is vanity,” II. 15

Nero, coupled with Phalaris, III. 16

Origanion, unknown, lately dead, VI. 47

Pantheia, the concubine of Lucius Verus, and mentioned as watching his tomb (urn). The writer of the dialogues *Imagines* and *Pro Imaginibus* (attributed to Lucian) speaks in very high terms of her beauty and character, VIII. 37

Pergamus, a freedman or favourite of Lucius Verus, VIII. 37

Perdiccas, king of Macedonia (probably a mistake for Archelaus) in connection with Socrates, XI. 25

Phalaris, the typical tyrant, III. 16

Phalereus, *see* Demetrius, IX. 29

Philip, King of Macedonia, mentioned with Alexander and Demetrius of Phalerum. IX. 29; with Alexander and Croesus, X. 27

Philistion, unknown, lately dead, VI. 47

Phocion, the great Athenian, anecdote of (*cp.* Musonius Rufus, p. 55, ed. Hense), XI. 13

Phoebus, unknown, lately dead, VI. 47

Pindar, quoted (from Plato, *q.v.*), “the secrets of Hades,” II. 13

Plato, his Utopia, IX. 29 ; quotation (? dropped out) VII. 48 : or, “the stars in their courses,” “the mire of earthly life,” VII. 47 ; Socrates on his trial (*Apol.* 28, b.d.), VII. 44, 45 ; Pindar quoted by (*Theaet.* 173 E.), II. 13 ; wise man in city like shepherd on the hills (*Theaet.* 174 D.), X. 23 ; goodness, and love of life (*Gorg.* ch. 68, 512 D.), VII. 46 ; death no evil, *Rep.* VI. 486 A., VII. 35 ; Socrates as the true philosopher (Plato, *Tim.* 61, D.), III. 6. *See also* p. 360

[Plutarch], perhaps quoted, IV. 16 ; VII. 52 ; referred to, V. 1, § 2. *See also* under Sextus

Pompeii, destroyed by Vesuvius, 79 a.d., IV. 48

Pompeius, named with Caesar and Alexander, III. 3 ; VIII. 3 ; the *Gens Pompeia* has died out, VIII. 31

Prasianus (Prasinus), a partizan of the Green Faction in the Circus I. 5 ; Lucius Verus, whose horse Flier (Volucris) was ridden under the Green colours, unfairly favoured the Greens, and on one occasion,

while presiding at the games with Marcus, had a hostile reception from the spectators Capit. *Vit. Ver.*, VI. 2

Pythagoras, named with Heraclitus and Socrates, VI. 47 ; tenet quoted, “the stars in their courses,” XI. 27

Quadi, I. 17 *ad. fin.* A German tribe of the modern Moravia, who with the Marcomanni were the chief enemies of Marcus in the first war, 170–174. They nearly repeated the exploit of Arminius in the so-called “miraculous victory” in 174 (or, as Domaszewski, 171), pp. 369, 371

Quotations from unknown authors, *see* Anonymous

Rome, VI. 44

Rufus, *see* Velius

Rusticus, Stoic philosopher, teacher and intimate friend of Marcus, who, as *praefectus urbi*, condemned Justin to martyrdom; lessons learnt from him, self-discipline, contempt of dialectics, theoretic, rhetoric, poetry and fine writing, not to be a prig, to cultivate good taste, simplicity in letter-writing, sweet reasonableness, care in reading, suspicion of volubility, and a knowledge of Epictetus, I. 7, 17, § 4; M. sometimes offended with, I. 17, § 6

Salaminian, the (Leo), Socrates sent by the Thirty Tyrants for, VII. 66

Sarmatians, these appear as enemies about 174, a.d., X. 10. They were a Slav people from the present Poland and Russia. Their women fought.

Satyrion, an unknown philosopher of recent time, X. 31

Scipio, IV. 33

Secunda, wife of Maximus. VIII. 25

Severns, called “brother,” I. 14; and so probably the father of Claudius Severus, who married one of Marcus’ daughters (? Fadilla). But he seems to have been a philosopher and is possibly identical with the Peripatetic philosopher Severus (Capit. *Vit. Mar.*, III. 3), mentioned, X. 31. Marcus was himself at one time called Severus, Capit. I. 9, *cp.* Galen, VII. 478 Kühn

Severus, Catilius, maternal great grandfather of Marcus, who expected to succeed Hadrian, I. 4

Sextus of Chaeronea, a Stoic philosopher, grandson of Plutarch, I. 9. Marcus made him his assessor on the bench (so Suidas) and attended his lectures late in life (Philost. *Vit. Soph.*, n. 9)

Sextus Empiricus, of date uncertain but probably near the end of the 2nd century. He was an “empiric” physician and the great champion of Sceptical Philosophy, possibly quoted (*adv. Math.* IV. 81), VI. 14; “all is vanity” (from Monimus, *see also* Menander; Sext. Emp. II. 1), II. 15

Silvanus, an unknown philosopher of a previous age, X. 31

Sinuessa, a coast town on the border of Latium and Campania, letter of Rusticus from, I. 7

Socrates, named with Heraclitus and Pythagoras and Diogenes, **VI.** 47; **VII.** 3, with Chrysippus and Epictetus, **VII.** 19; public acts and character, **VII.** 66; conduct with Xanthippe, **XI.** 28; his self-control (? from Xenophon, *q.v.*), **I.** 16, *ad. fin.*; his trial, **VII.** 44, 45; killed by (human) vermin, **III.** 3; quoted (from Epictetus, *q.v.*) on the notions of the vulgar, **XI.** 23; (? from Epictetus, *q.v.*) on rational souls, **XI.** 39; (from Plato, *q.v.*) on a soul freed from sense-impressions, **III.** 6

Socraticus, an unknown philosopher of previous times, **X.** 31

Sophocles, quoted from Epictetus (*Oed. Rex.* 1391), **XI.** 6

Spartans, courtesy to strangers, **XI.** 24

Stertinius of Baiae, **XII.** 27. Possibly the rich physician of Naples, Pliny, *N.H.*, **XXIX.** 5

Stoics, facts of the Universe unintelligible even to. **V.** 10

Tandasis, an unknown philosopher, **I.** 6

Telauges, son of Pythagoras and Theano (*see* Diog. Laert. *Pyth.* **XXII.** 26), **VII.** 66

Theodotus. a freedman or minion of Hadrian (probably), **I.** 17, § 6

Theophrastus, the successor of Aristotle in the Peripatetic Philosophy, quoted from with approval, “offences due to lust, and to anger,” **II.** 10

Thrasea, the noble Stoic put to death by Nero in 63. His last words were addressed to Demetrius the Cynic (for whom *see* on Demetrius), **I.** 14

Tiberius, at Capreae, **XII.** 27

Trajan, an instance of past grandeur **IV.** 32

Tropaeophorus, unknown philosopher of a previous age, **X.** 31

Tusculum, now Frascati, in Latium, **I.** 16

Valerius, *see* Volesus

Velius Rufus, unknown, **XII.** 27

Verus, M. Annii, grandfather of Marcus, **I.** 1; **I.** 17, § 1; **IX.** 21

Verus, Annii, father of Marcus, **I.** 2, **V.** 4, 13, 31; **VIII.** 25; **IX.** 21

Verus, Lucius Aurelius, adopted brother and son-in-law of Marcus, **I.** 17, 4; **VIII.** 37. *See also* pp. 367, 387

Volesus, or Volusus, undoubtedly P. Valerius Volusi filius Poplicola, the hero of the first years of the Republic, descended from the Sabine chief Volesus (*Sil. Ital.* **II.** 8), **IV.** 33

Xanthippe, the shrewish wife of Socrates, **XI.** 28

Xenocrates, a Platonist philosopher from Chalcedon, **VI.** 13 *see* Crates

Xenophon, perhaps quotation from (*Mem.* I. 3, 15), I. 16, 9, x. 31

III. GLOSSARY OF GREEK TERMS

ἀδιάφορα (=μέσα), V. 20; VI. 32, 41, 45; VII. 31; VIII. 56; XI. 16; things indifferent, *i.e.* neither good nor bad = (1) things absolutely indifferent, such as the number of pebbles on the shore; (2) *προηγμένα*, things to be chosen as having a relative value, as good health; (3) *ἀπροηγμένα*, to be rejected, as of less relative value, *cp.* Fronto, *De Eloq.* Nab. p. 143

ἀερῶδες, τό, IV. 4, 21; VIII. 54; IX. 9; x. 7, § 2. From a comparison of these we get τὸ σπερέμνιον = τὸ γεῶδες (earth), τὸ ὕγρὸν (water), τὸ πνευματικὸν = τὸ ἀερῶδες (X. 7, § 2, the spiritual or pneumatic into airy or aerial), τὸ πυρῶδες (fire) = ? τὸ νοερὸν, *cp.* XI. 20

αἰτία, τὸ αἴτιον, τὸ αἰτιῶδες (*see* Seneca. *Ep.* 65), the Causal. Formal, Formative Principle which makes a thing what it is, contrasted with *ἔλγ* (matter), IV. 21; VI. 5; VII. 29; VIII. 3, 11; XII. 8, 10, 18, 29; the Primary Cause, or Nature, or God, VIII. 27; IX. 29; the Individual Cause in Man. VIII. 7; IX. 31; x. 26; the Quality of the Cause, *i.e.* the power it has of making a thing what it is, IX. 25; absorbed into the λόγος of the Universe, VII. 10; Destiny, the primal Cause and sum of all lower causes, v. 8

ἀκατάληπτος, ἀκαταληψία, impossibility of any certain conviction, v. 10; VII. 54. It was the main position of the Sceptics that nothing could be really known, but even Socrates and his successors said similar things. Epictetus stoutly maintains the contrary

ἀκοινῶνητος, one who selfishly disregards the common interests and cuts himself adrift from his fellows, II. 1, 2; III. 5; VIII. 34; x. 6; XI. 18 *ad fin.*; XII. 23

ἀναφορά, the reference of a thing to its end or purpose, its relation to its objective, with Cause and Matter making up the whole thing, xii. 8, 10, 18, 20

ἀξία, (i) the true value or worth of things, (2) the relative value of things preferential, III. 11; VI. 3, etc.

ἀπάθεια, the passionless calm of the true Stoic, I. 9 (of Sextus); VI. 16; xi. 18 *ad fin.*; *cp.* ἀταραξία

ἀπαξ λεγόμενα, words only found (it seems) in Marcus are: ἀκύβευτος I. 8; † ἀνδρονομεῖσθαι X. 19; ἀνθύλλιον IV. 20; ἀπαλλακτιᾶν X. 36; ἀποκαισαριουῖσθαι VI. 30; ἀπορρέμβεσθαι III. 4; IV 22;

ἀπροσπάτητος XII. 14; ἀρεσκευτικός I. 16; ἀφυσιολογήτως X. 9; ἀψικάρδιος IX. 3; γαλάκτιον V. 4; γλισχρεύεσθαι V. 5; γλώσσημα IV. 33; ἐμφιλοτεχνεῖν VII. 54; †ἐνεργησεῖν III. 7; ἐντέριον (?) vi. 13; †εὐχαριεντίζεσθαι I. 15; καλοήθης I. 1; κοινονοημοσύνη I. 16; μυίδιον VII. 3; μυξάριον IV. 48; vi. 13; ὁμοδογματεῖν IX. 3; XI. 8; ὁμοθαμνεῖν X. 8; παραζητεῖν XII. 5; περίφορος I. 15; προπτωτικός XI. 10; προσβήσσεσθαι IV. 49; ρίπταστικός I. 16; σεμνοτυφία IX. 29; σμαράγδιον IV. 20; στρωμάτιον V. 1; συγκατατήκεσθαι V. 1; συμμηρύεσθαι III. 11; VII. 23; συμμήρυσις IV. 40; συμπεριφαντάζεσθαι X. 38; συμπροσπίπτειν VII. 22; X. 31; XII. 27; συνεμφέρειν III. 4; συννήθειν (?) IV. 34; τριγεργήνιος, IV. 50; ὑπέρτασις, X. 8; φαντασιοπλήκτως, I. 7; χυλάριον vi. 13

ἀπροαίρετα, things not in our choice or power, XII. 3, 23, 33

ἀρχαί, Zeno recognized θεός (τὸ ποιῶν) and ὕλη (τὸ πάσχον) as ἀρχαί or Beginnings

ἀταραξία (cp. ἀπάθεια) IX. 31, freedom from perturbation at external things

ἄτομοι, IV. 3; VI. 24; VI. 32, 50; VIII. 17; IX. 28, 39; x. 6; XI. 18. Indivisible atoms endowed with motion were, according to Democritus, and after him Epicurus and Lucretius, the origin of all things without any First Cause. Marcus often puts this view, but only to reject it

ἀφορμή = means. Marcus does not use the word in its Stoic sense of “disinclination”)(ὁρμή

δαίμων, evil spirit, I. 6; good, x. 13; εὐδαιμονία, vii. 17; the “genius” or “daemon” within us, II. 13, 17; III. 6, 7, 12, 16; VIII. 45; XII. 3; given by Zeus to us, v. 27; θεός, V. 10; = νοῦς, III. 3

διάλυσις, VII. 50, etc., a breaking up of things into their component parts, and the subsequent sifting out of these into the elements

διάνοια, faculty of thought, or mind, III. 1; = λογικὴ ψυχή, vi. 32; not affected by the motions of the πνεῦμα, IV. 3

διαπνεῖσθαι, to breathe through the veins and arteries, a medical theory (see Gataker in loc. for illustrations from Galen), III. 1; VI. 16

δόγμα, a postulate, axiom, or principle established by reason and experience; what the sensations are to the body and impulses to the soul, δόγματα are to the intelligence, III. 16; called “sacred,” X. 9. See κρίμα and θεώρημα

εἶδος, only used once (XI. 20) in its philosophical sense of “general term,” “class,” or “species”

είμαρμένη, ἦ, destiny, III. 6; v. 8, etc.; = Clotho, IV. 34; τὰ συγκλωθόμενα, III. 4, 11, 16; IV. 26; ἡ πεπωμένη, III. 8; τὸ συμβαῖνον, IV. 44 etc.

ἔκκλισις, avoidance)(ὄρεξις (*q.v.*), VIII. 7; XI. 37. The things that are “within the man” are κρίσις judgment, ὄρμη impulse, ὄρεξις propension towards, ἔκκλισις aversion from, a thing, VIII. 28; but the latter must be reserved only for things in our power, VIII. 7; XI. 37

ἐκπύρωσις, cyclical conflagration of the Universe, a doctrine of Heraclitus (*q.v.*), III. 3. Justin *Apol.* ii. 7 points out the difference between the Stoic and Christian view of this conflagration (2 St. Peter iii. 7, 10)

ἐννοια, conception, thought, or notion not amounting to a conviction (δόγμα), but κοινή ἐννοια = φαντασία καταληπτική, a conclusive conviction. See πρόληψις

ἐξαγωγή = suicide does not occur, but see III. 1 (ἐξακτέον)

ἐξις, VI. 14; VII. 16; XI. 18; XII. 16. Lucian, *Conviv.* 23, says, τί διαφέρει σχέσις ἔξεως ; and in *Hermot.* 81 he laughs at the jargon of philosophy with its ἐξεις and σχέσεις, its καταλήψεις and φαντασῖαι. Σχέσις, feature; ἐξις, a simple essential form or quality (*ποιότης*); φύσις, a forming power, VI. 14

εὐδαιμονία, harmony of man's will (δαίμων) with God's = εὐροια βίου, VII. 17

εὐρους, εὐροεῖν (εὐροια, Epict. i. 4. 6), the calm even flow of the virtuous life = εὐοδεῖν, V. 34; x. 6; even of Zeus himself, v. 8; εὐρουν καὶ θεοῦδε βίον, II. 5

ἐνέργεια, the activity of the ψυχή contrasted with πεῖσις (*q.v.*) = the passivity of the body, v. 20, etc.

ἡγεμονικόν, τό (or τὸ κυριεῦον, τὸ προαιρετικόν, VIII. 56), the Ruling Reason (*q.v.*) or Principle (or Inner Self, *Rendall*), II. 2; IV. 1; v. 26; XII. 14, etc. = λόγος, φύσις, or even τέχνη λογική, V. 4; VII. 7 (*cp.* ψυχή, V. 32); διάνοια, VII. 64, 68; vous, IX. 22; III. 16; X. 24; XII. 3; sometimes even of God, VII. 75; IX. 22

θεώρημα, a truth perceived in Science, I. 7, § 4, 8; IV. 2; in Ethics = δόγμα, a principle or conviction; τὸ θεωρητικόν, the faculty of pure thought, x. 9; p. 375

καθήκον, τό = *officium*, duty. Among τὰ καθήκοντα, duty in the highest sense perfectly performed, is κατόρθωμα (not used by M.). κατορθώσεις, V. 14, are acts that are the outcome of right reason

κατάληψις, VI. 30 (καταλαμβάνειν, καταληπτικός (IX. 6), ἀκατάληπτος); an important term in the Stoic philosophy meaning a “true comprehension” or “clear perception” of a thing, without which no right conduct in life is possible. *See under συγκατάθεσις*

κατόρθωσις, *see καθήκον*

κίνησις, motion = change, v. 10 ; in the flesh (Epicurus), IX. 41; of the senses, VIII. 26; of the flesh (smooth or rough), x. 8; to anger, fear, etc., XI. 20; of the mind, VII 55; of virtue, VI. 17;)(σχέσις, VII. 60; XI. 2; tension (τόνος), VI. 38

κοινός and its kindred words occur over eighty times, and Marcus apparently coining the beautiful word *κοινονοημοσύνη* (I. 16), which deserves to rank with the “loving-kindness” of Coverdale’s Bible. *See under Fellowship*

κρίμα, conviction, almost δόγμα, iv 3, § 2; judgment, v. 19; VII. 47; XI. 11: cp. κρίσις, VI. 52, etc., the antecedent to ὁρμή, VIII. 16, 28; of the Christians, XI. 3; = ὑπόληψις (φαντασία), xi. 16, 18, § 7

λόγος (λογικός), reason or the reason, I. 8; II. 10; IV. 13, 16, 19, 24, 30, 33; v. 8, 9, 14, 28; VI. 23, 30; VII. 8, 11, 24; VIII. 48; IX. 10, 42; x. 31, 32 (νοῦς καὶ λ.); right reason, (= virtue, *Cic. Tusc.* iv. 15. 34), III. 6, 12; XI. 9; XII. 35; civic reason, IV. 29; IX. 12; common to Gods and men, VII. 53; λ. of Nature, IV. 29; v 32; VI. 58; VII. 10; common to all intelligent creatures, IV. 4; VII. 9; = a man’s self (τὸ ἡγεμονικόν, *q.v.*), VIII. 40; convincing reason II. 5; IV. 24; σπερματικοὶ λόγοι, of the Universe into which all things are taken back = seminal principles, IV. 14, 21; VI 24; = λόγος only, VII. 10; x. 7; λογικός, applied to ζῶον, ἡγεμονικόν, τέχνη, φύσις, ψυχή

οἷησις, self-conceit or illusion, iv. 12; IX. 34; XII. 27

οἰκονομία, IV. 19, 51; XI. 18, § 5; management, and so policy, expediency, adaptation to circumstances, ulterior end, secondary purpose, and even finesse. We keep the double sense of the word in our “economy of truth”

ὄρεξις, propension or inclination towards a thing, of which the result is ὁρμή and the incentive φαντασία, IX. 7: cp. VIII. 23.)(ἔκκλισις, VIII. 7. *See under πάθος*

ὁρμή = φορὰ ψυχῆς ἐπὶ τι (Stob. *Ecl.* ii. 160), impulse of the mind towards a thing (see ὄρεξις), resulting in a πάθος

δσιότης = δικαιοσύνη πρὸς θεόν, piety, sanctity, holiness

οὐσία, Substance or Being, sometimes = ὕλη, matter;)(ψυχή, IV. 40

πάθος, the “affect” resulting through πείσις from ὁρμή, the second stage of ὄρεξις, which depends itself on assent (συγκατάθεσις). Stobaeus defines it (*Ecl.* ii. 164) as a motion of the Soul contrary to Nature; παθολογεῖν. VIII. 13, to study the πάθη = Ethics

παλιγγενεσία, XI. 1; cp. VII. 19. The Stoic theory was that everything repeated itself in periodic cycles, when the world was renewed again after each conflagration (see ἐκπύρωσις and under Heraclitus); cp. Chrysippus, *περὶ προνοίας*, “there will be another Socrates to live the same life again”; and Seneca, *Ep.* 36. 10, “veniet iterum qui nos in lucem reponat dies.” But whether Marcus believed in this dismal theory is very doubtful, cp. X. 31.

παράταξις. opposed line in battle, so opposition, not obstinacy (XI. 3) III. 3; VIII. 48. *See also* p. 381.

πείσις)(ἐνέργεια. V. 1, a passive condition antecedent to a κίνησις in the case of the body, corresponding to an ἐνέργεια of the mind, III. 6; V. 26; VI. 51; VII. 55; IX. 16

περίοδοι, V. 13,32; x. 7. *See* παλιγγενεσία

πνεῦμα = ἄνεμος, II. 2; the surrounding air, IX. 2; the inferior part of the ψυχὴ as distinct from νοῦς, IV. 3; it and its motion quite distinct from the διάνοια, IV. 3. Marcus does not seem to use the word in the sense of Atmospheric Current unless XII. 30 affords an instance.

πνεύματα, what remains of things when οὐσία, ψυχὴ, and νοερά ψυχὴ are subtracted, XII. 30

πνευματικόν, τό, the Soul (= τὸ πνευμάτιον) of which the πνεῦμα or breath element at death goes back into τὸ ἀερῶδες, and the νοῦς into τὸ πυρῶδες, IV. 4; X.7 ; XI. 20

πνευμάτιον, τό = (1) ψυχὴ (Soul) in its lower sense (σῶμα, πνευμάτιον, νοῦς, XII. 14) II. 2; VIII. 56; IX. 36; XII. 3, 14; (2) ψυχὴ in its higher sense, including the nous, V. 26. 33; VI. 14; IX. 8, 34; XII. 30; the enveloping body and the πνευμάτιον that has grown with its growth, XII. 3; the vital breath which will be quenched or transferred elsewhere, VIII. 25; the sphere of it and the body outside our power, v. 33; unstable like all matter, IX. 36; burdened with the body, IX. 24. *See under* ψύχωσις

ποιότης, τὸ ποιόν, the property, quality, or form of a thing (almost the Cause which makes it what it is, IX. 25); τὸ ἰδίως ποιόν, separate individuality, VI. 3; IX. 25; X. 7; XII. 30

πολιτικός, mostly = κοινωνικός. *See* κοινός

προαιρεσις, free will or choice. *See under* ἀπροαίρετα

προαιρετικόν, τό (= τὸ ἡγεμονικόν), the faculty of choice, VIII. 56 προηγούμενον, τό, the leading or cardinal thing, VII. 55; VIII. 49; IX. 41. Marcus does not use the Stoic expression τὰ προηγμένα things preferential

πρόληψις = a primary conception possessed by all rational beings, Chrysippus in Diog. Laert. vii 53 (έννοια φυσική τῶν καθ' όλου). Perceptions (φαντασίαι) resulting from sensation (αἰσθησις) produce impressions (τυπώσεις) which repeated form memory and many memories make experience which gives us conceptions (προλήψεις)

σκεδασμός, σκορπισμός (*cp.* διάλυσις), a disintegration of things into their component atoms (VI. 24; VII. 32; VIII. 25) or elements. *See under* Dispersion and Dissolution

σκοπός (or τέλος, V. 15, 16), the end or objective of life, II. 16; VII. 4; XI. 6, 21; to which every ὁρμή and φαντασία should be directed, II. 7. *See under* Aim, Objective

σπερματικός λόγος (*see under* λόγος), IV. 14, 21; VI. 24; IX. 1 *ad fin.* = the Generative Reason, because the Primary Fire or Reason contains in it the Germs of all things. The σπερμ. λόγοι are the creative and forming forces in Nature which have produced (1) the Universe as a whole, and (2) individual things individually. Justin, *Apol.* ii. 8. 13, applies the Stoic term to Christ

στοιχεῖα, τά, the elements, earth, water, air, fire, II. 3, 17; VI. 17; IV. 4; X. 7; XI. 20, etc.; almost = atoms, VI. 17; VII. 31

συγκατάθεσις, the full mental assent required for a convincing impression (φαντασία καταληπτική) before convictions (δόγματα) can be translated into movement and action, but even this is liable to error, v. 10. *See under* πάθος

σύγκριμα, συγκριμάτιον, the compound—man, vii. 67; VIII. 25; XI. 20; composite things)(στοιχεῖα, II. 3; VI. 10 = κυκεών, the 'farrago' of things; σύγκρισις και λύσις, XII. 24, 36; the elements comprising the σῶμα, II. 17

συμπάθεια, sympathetic connexion or affinity of the parts in an organic whole, v. 26; IX. 9, § 3; mutual interdependence, IV. 27

συνείδησις, It is curious that Marcus never uses this Stoic equivalent for 'Conscience,' but *see* εὐσυνείδητος, vi. 30 *ad fin.*

σύστημα, an organized body, or organism, the parts of which have a relation to one another

σχέσις, a non-essential quality or feature of a thing,)(κίνησις = rest (Rendall), VII. 60; XI. 2; attitude or relation towards other things, I. 12; VI. 38; VIII. 27; XI. 18. Three σχέσεις, (1) towards the body, (2) towards God, (3) towards our neighbour, VIII. 27. *See under* ἔξις, κίνησις

σῶμα, τὸ [σωμάτιον, σάρξ, σαρκία (plur.), σαρκίδιον, κρεάδιον] a compound of τὸ γεῶδες and τὸ ὑγρόν, together forming τὸ στερέμνιον, IV. 4; x. 7; the vessel or sheath of Soul, III. 3; VIII. 27; IX. 3; that which overlays the Soul. XII. 2, 3

τέλος, *see* σκοπός

τόνος (τονικός) = tension imparted to soul by atmospheric substance therein existing (Zeller), the cause of virtues and vices. Zeller also says that the Stoics imagined two sorts of motion, the one (= our Repulsion) tending outwards and giving rise to the qualities of matter, the other (our Attraction) tending inwards and causing condensation. Cleanthes calls τόνος a πληγὴ πυρός

ὕλη, τὸ ὑλικόν, matter on which the αἴτιον (*q.v.*) acts

ὑποκείμενον, τό (or plural), matter not in its primary condition but as formed by the αἴτιον, VII. 29; ὑποκειμένη ὕλη, IX. 36; all material things and objects, V. 10; vI. 4, 23; VIII. 22, 24; IX. 3; X. 18

ὑπεξαίρεσις, IV. 1; v. 20; VI. 50; XI. 37, exception or reservation; *cp.* "sapiens ad omnia cum exceptione (μεθ' ὑπεξαίρέσεως) veniet, si nihil inciderit, quod impediat" (Seneca, *De Benef.* iv. 34)

ὑπόληψις, opinion, imagination; all things are merely what we think them to be, II. 15; IV. 3, *ad fin.*: XII. 8, 26; away with opinion! IV. 7; VIII. 40; XI. 18, § 7; XII. 22, 25; leave the fact as it is and add no opinion to it, v. 26; hold the power of forming opinions sacred, III. 9; a ὑπολ καταληπτική (*q.v.*) amounts to a truth, IX. 6. *See under* φαντασία and κρίσις

ὑπόστασις, substance, ix. 1 *ad fin.* subsistence, IX. 42; X. 5

φαντασία, impression, thought, notion; don't go beyond first impressions, VIII. 49; they dye or stamp the soul, v. 16; vi. 16; sift them, VIII. 26; appraise them aright, v. 36; *φαντασία καταληπτική*, irresistible impression that carries assent, iv. 22; VII. 54; wipe it out, Iv. 24; v. 2: VII. 17, 29; VIII. 29; IX. 7. *See under ὑπόληψις and κρίσις*

φυσιολογεῖν, VIII. 13 = Physics; *cp.* IX. 41; x. 9: so of the physiological disquisitions of Heraclitus, III. 3; *cp.* IX. 41 (from Epicurus).

ψυχή, *ψυχάριον*, Man = *σῶμα*, *ψυχή*, *νοῦς*, III. 16; but the Soul (*ψυχή*) twofold, (*α*) = *πνευμάτιον* (*πνεῦμα*), an exhalation from blood (*ἀναθυμίασις*, v. 33, vi. 15), and an inhalation (*ἀνάπνευσις*) from the air; (*β*) *ἡ νοερά, λογική*, VI. 14, 32; ix. 8; xi. 1; xii. 30; *ψυχή* = *τὸ ἡγεμονικόν*, I. 16 *ad fin.*; IV. 41; V. 26; IX. 3, 27, 34; an emanation from God, xii. 26; imprisoned in the body, iii. 7; *cp.* Int. p. xiv. The natural soul is called *ῥομβός* a vortex or current, ii. 17, § 1; the rational soul a sphere, xi. 12; its attributes, XI. 1, 2. There is a Soul of the Universe, XII. 30, 32, and of God, V. 34, the two being really the same

ψύχωσις It was a view of the Stoics that the embryo in the womb had only the *φυσικὴ ψυχή* of plants, and that the *νοερά ψυχή* came gradually to the child after birth by contact with the (cold) air, xii. 24. It was by the respiration of the atmospheric *πνεῦμα* that the child received the *πνευμάτιον*, VI. 15; X. 7

PART TWO — ADDITIONS IN THIS EDITION

Original to this edition — not part of Haines's 1916 text.

NAMES IN THE TEXT

Book I of the *Meditations* is seventeen sections of debts owed — mostly to teachers and relatives, named but never introduced, ending with a section of thanks to the gods themselves. Marcus is writing for himself, not for a reader who needs “Rusticus” explained. The entries cover everyone named in the book: everyone from Book I, the philosophers and historical figures Marcus cites throughout the other eleven, and a fourth group covering a stranger recurring habit — lists of otherwise-forgotten names Marcus reaches for as memento mori. Every name is either mentioned by Marcus directly or identified in Haines’s own footnotes, with links to the main passages in which it appears.

FAMILY & EMPERORS

ANTONINUS PIUS

I.16, VI.30

Marcus’s adoptive father and predecessor as emperor (r. 138–161). Adopted Marcus and Lucius Verus at Hadrian’s direction, then ruled for over twenty years with a reputation for mildness and integrity that Marcus holds up repeatedly as a model — including a full character sketch late in Book I.

HADRIAN

IV.33, VIII.5

Emperor (r. 117–138) who engineered the whole succession: he had Antoninus Pius adopt both Marcus and Lucius Verus as his condition for adopting Antoninus in the first place. He nicknamed the young Marcus “Verissimus” — “most truthful.” By the time Marcus is writing, Hadrian is already one of his go-to examples of a once-towering name fading from memory.

LUCIUS VERUS

I.17, VIII.37

Marcus’s adoptive brother and co-emperor (r. 161–169) — the first time Rome had two emperors ruling jointly. Marcus thanks the gods for “such a brother” at I.17; at VIII.37 the Greek names him where Haines’s English has Pantheia watching by “the urn of her lord.” Capitolinus records that he was insulted by the Blues for openly taking sides against them in the chariot races (Haines’s footnote at I.5).

FAUSTINA THE YOUNGER

I.17

Marcus’s wife and Antoninus Pius’s daughter. They married in 145 and had at least thirteen children together, including the future emperor Commodus. Marcus calls her “so docile, so affectionate, so unaffected” among the things he’s grateful for.

MARCUS ANNIUS VERUS (THE ELDER)

I.1, I.17

Marcus's paternal grandfather — three-time consul and city prefect of Rome. Raised Marcus after his father died young, and is the very first name in the entire book: Book I opens with what Marcus learned from him.

MARCUS ANNIUS VERUS (HIS FATHER)

I.2

Marcus's biological father — confusingly, same name as his grandfather — who died before Marcus turned three. Book I's second entry credits him with “modesty and manliness,” but Marcus is explicit that this comes from what he heard about his father, not his own memory. See the modern note at I.16 for the related confusion between this man and Antoninus Pius, both later called “my Father.”

DOMITIA LUCILLA

I.3, I.17

Marcus's mother, praised for piety, generosity, and a simple style of living “far removed from the habits of the rich.” She died relatively young, around 155–156, having spent her last years with him.

CATILIUS SEVERUS

I.4

Marcus's great-grandfather (his paternal grandfather's father) and city prefect of Rome, who once hoped to succeed Hadrian as emperor himself. Credited in Book I with keeping the young Marcus out of public schools in favor of private tutors at home — a decision that shaped everything that follows in the rest of Book I.

TEACHERS MARCUS KNEW PERSONALLY

RUSTICUS

I.7

Stoic teacher, later a close advisor and twice consul. Supplied Marcus with the “Memoirs of Epictetus” from his own library — a debt Marcus records by name. In a detail the *Meditations* itself never mentions, Rusticus later presided as urban prefect over the trial that condemned the Christian philosopher Justin Martyr.

APOLLONIUS OF CHALCEDON

I.8

Stoic teacher summoned to Rome specifically to tutor Marcus. Praised in the *Meditations* for self-reliance and unshakeable evenness of temper; other ancient sources describe him far less flatteringly, as ill-mannered and grasping.

SEXTUS OF CHAERONEA

I.9

Stoic teacher and grandson of the biographer Plutarch. Praised for running a household “patriarchally governed” and for a dignity that never tipped into affectation.

CLAUDIUS MAXIMUS I.15

Stoic-leaning senator and teacher, praised for self-mastery and staying cheerful through illness — qualities that recur as a small motif whenever Marcus writes about facing his own declining health.

FRONTO I.11

Marcus's teacher of rhetoric and one of the era's most celebrated literary figures. Their private letters survive independently of the *Meditations* and are one of the best windows into Marcus's early life — including, oddly, that Marcus more or less gave up rhetoric and poetry for philosophy, a decision Book I frames as a debt owed to Rusticus rather than a rejection of Fronto.

DIOGNETUS I.6

An early teacher, credited with steering the young Marcus away from superstition and miracle-mongers and toward serious philosophical reading — and, according to other sources, with teaching him to paint.

ALEXANDER OF COTIAEUM ("THE GRAMMARIAN") I.5, I.10

Marcus's grammar tutor, credited in Book I with a lesson in tact — correcting people's bad grammar by modeling the right phrase back rather than calling out the mistake. He's also, per Haines's own footnote, almost certainly the unnamed "Tutor" three entries earlier: I.5's debt (staying out of the chariot-racing factions) is explicitly cross-referenced to this same man.

ALEXANDER THE PLATONIST I.12

A different Alexander from the grammarian of Cotiaeum — a Platonist philosopher Marcus later summoned to serve as his Greek secretary during the Danube campaigns. Credited in Book I with a lesson in not pleading busyness as an excuse to neglect the people in one's own circle.

CATULUS I.13

A Stoic teacher, credited with the lesson that a friend's complaint deserves a real hearing even when it seems unreasonable — and with modeling genuine, unforced affection for one's own children.

GNAEUS CLAUDIUS SEVERUS ("MY BROTHER") I.14, X.31

Not a blood relative — "brother" here is honorific — but father of Marcus's son-in-law, and by far the richest single entry in Book I. Through him Marcus says he came to know the great Republican-era exemplars of principled opposition and formed his idea of a state governed by one law applied equally to everyone, with maximal respect for individual liberty — about as close as the *Meditations* comes to stating a political philosophy. He may reappear, unnamed by title but identifiable by name, much later in the book.

BACCHEIUS, TANDASIS & MARCIANUS

I.6

The philosophy lecturers Diognetus first set Marcus to hearing as a boy, listed in a single breath and never mentioned again. Little is recorded about any of the three beyond this line.

DOMITIUS & ATHENODOTUS

I.13

Cited by Catulus as a model of speaking well of one's teachers: Domitius, an ancestor of Marcus's, was known for his warm praise of his own teacher Athenodotus — who, per Haines's footnote, was probably also Fronto's teacher.

PHILOSOPHERS & HISTORICAL FIGURES HE CITES

These names don't come from Book I — they're scattered across the other eleven books, invoked as examples rather than introduced as people Marcus knew personally. Most recur more than once.

EPICETETUS

I.7, IV.41, VII.19, XI.34

Former slave turned Stoic teacher (c. 50–135 CE) and, though the two never met, arguably the single greatest influence on the *Meditations*. Marcus first encountered his teaching through the copy of Epictetus's *Discourses* that Rusticus lent him — a debt recorded by name in Book I. The line “thou art a little soul bearing up a corpse” is Marcus quoting him directly.

SOCRATES

I.16, VII.19, VIII.3

The Athenian philosopher (c. 470–399 BCE) Marcus cites more than any other named figure — well over a dozen times — almost always as proof that a mind can stay untouched by circumstance, up to and including one's own execution.

PLATO

VII.35, VIII.25

Founder of the Academy and Socrates's most famous student (c. 428–348 BCE). Marcus quotes and paraphrases him repeatedly, often on the difficulty of governing well as a philosopher — a subject with obvious personal stakes for an emperor.

HERACLITUS

III.3, VI.42, VIII.3

Pre-Socratic philosopher of Ephesus (c. 535–475 BCE), remembered for the doctrine that everything is in constant flux. Marcus borrows that image constantly — and, with some grim satisfaction, notes elsewhere that even Heraclitus himself died the same way as everyone else.

CHRYSIPPUS**VI.42, VII.19**

Third head of the Stoic school (c. 279–206 BCE) and its most systematic early theorist. Marcus cites him alongside Socrates and Epictetus as proof that even towering minds are eventually forgotten by time.

DIOGENES (THE CYNIC)**VIII.3, XI.6**

Diogenes of Sinope (c. 412–323 BCE), famous for a life of deliberate poverty and provocation. Marcus groups him with Heraclitus and Socrates as examples of men whose “ruling Reason was their very own” — the opposite of Alexander, Gaius Caesar, and Pompeius in the same passage.

ALEXANDER, JULIUS CAESAR & POMPEY**III.3, VIII.3**

Marcus invokes the three together, twice, as a matched set: history’s great conquerors, contrasted unfavorably with philosophers. At VIII.3 they’re weighed against Diogenes, Heraclitus, and Socrates and found wanting — “what a host of cares, what a world of slavery.” At III.3 they’re simply added to the long list of once-great names death caught up with regardless.

PHILIP & DEMETRIUS OF PHALERUM**IX.29**

Named alongside Alexander in a single line at IX.29: Philip II of Macedon was Alexander’s father and himself a formidable conqueror; Demetrius of Phalerum is the odd one out, a philosopher who governed Athens for a decade as a Macedonian-backed ruler before being driven into exile. Marcus’s point applies to all three regardless of the kind of ambition involved — whether they lived according to Nature “is their concern,” not a model he owes anyone an opinion on.

EPICURUS**VII.64, IX.41**

Founder of Epicureanism (341–270 BCE) — the Stoics’ great rival school, which held that pleasure and the absence of pain were the highest good. Marcus disagrees with Epicurean physics elsewhere, but quotes him twice, approvingly and at length, on how to bear physical pain without complaint.

DEMOCRITUS**III.3**

Pre-Socratic philosopher (c. 460–370 BCE) best known for originating atomic theory — the “Atoms” side of IV.3’s “Providence or Atoms” — and, in later legend, for laughing at human folly (as against Heraclitus’s proverbial weeping). Marcus lists him alongside Heraclitus among the great minds death caught up with regardless.

ANTISTHENES**VII.36**

A direct student of Socrates and the philosopher generally credited as the founder of Cynicism, the school Diogenes later made famous. Marcus quotes him directly, and with evident approval: “’Tis royal to do well and be ill spoken of.”

MONIMUS THE CYNIC

II.15

A minor Cynic philosopher, cited for the maxim that everything is simply what we judge it to be — a compact statement of the same Stoic idea Marcus builds much of the book around.

CRATES & XENOCRATES

VI.13

Crates (a Cynic philosopher) is quoted making some observation about Xenocrates (Plato's successor as head of the Academy) — though, as Haines's own footnote admits, exactly what Marcus is referring to here "is not known." Included for completeness despite the uncertainty.

PYTHAGORAS, ARCHIMEDES, EUDOXUS & HIPPARCHUS

VI.47

Grouped together in a single sweeping list of "wonderful orators... grave philosophers... men of large minds" now all equally dead: Pythagoras (mathematics and metempsychosis), Archimedes (mathematics and engineering), and the astronomers Eudoxus and Hipparchus. Listed alongside them: Menippus, a satirist and Cynic philosopher from Gadara known for mocking exactly this kind of solemn reputation, and Philistion, Phoebus, and Origanion — ordinary names Haines could identify no further, included here for the sake of completeness.

TELAUGES

VII.66

A minor, semi-legendary Pythagorean, invoked in a pointed rhetorical question: how do we know Telauges didn't have better character than Socrates, even though Socrates died more famously and argued more skillfully? One of the book's more direct challenges to reputation as a measure of virtue.

PHALARIS & NERO

III.16

Two proverbial tyrants a full six centuries apart — Phalaris, the legendary cruel ruler of Agragass in Sicily, and Nero, the Roman emperor — paired as the standard ancient shorthand for cruelty, and set against the "good man" who is guided by intelligence rather than desire like they were.

ZEUS

IV.23, V.7, V.8

The supreme god of the Greco-Roman pantheon, invoked directly several times — most memorably in a quoted address to him as guardian of the "Dear City of Cecrops" (i.e. Athens), which Marcus immediately universalizes into "Dear City of Zeus," extending Athenian civic loyalty to the whole rational cosmos.

CECROPS

IV.23

The legendary serpent-tailed founder-king of Athens in Greek myth, named only as part of the "Dear City of Cecrops" quotation at IV.23 — a stand-in for Athens itself rather than a figure Marcus discusses in his own right.

AUGUSTUS

IV.33, VIII.5, VIII.31

Rome's first emperor (r. 27 BCE – 14 CE), cited repeatedly as Marcus's go-to example of a name that once dominated the world and has since faded to nothing — including a full passage (see the modern note there) built entirely from the vanished members of his own court.

AGRIPPA & MAECENAS

VIII.31

Two names from Augustus's inner circle, singled out within the longer list at VIII.31: Agrippa, his indispensable general and son-in-law, and Maecenas, his political fixer and the great patron of Roman poetry — backer of Virgil and Horace.

VESPASIAN & TRAJAN

IV.32

Two more emperors (r. 69–79 and 98–117 respectively) invoked as a thought experiment on an entire vanished era — the marrying, scheming, striving, dying — of which not a trace remains. Neither is discussed individually; both are stand-ins for “an entire vanished age.”

CAMILLUS, CAESO, VOLESUS, DENTATUS & SCIPIO

IV.33

Legendary early Roman heroes and generals — Camillus above all, credited by tradition with saving Rome from the Gauls — listed together as proof that even “much be-sung” names eventually become obsolete, the same way old words fall out of use.

THRASEA, HELVIDIUS, CATO, DION & BRUTUS

I.14

Republican-era exemplars of principled opposition to tyranny, whom Marcus says he came to know through Claudius Severus: Thrasea Paetus and Helvidius Priscus (Stoic senators executed under Nero and Vespasian for refusing to flatter the throne), Cato (the Younger, who died rather than live under Caesar's rule), Dio (Dion of Syracuse, student of Plato who tried and failed to create a philosopher-ruled city), and Brutus (Caesar's assassin, acting — in the Republican reading Marcus inherits — from principle rather than ambition).

NAMES TIME HAS ERASED

A stranger pattern, repeated at least four times across the book: Marcus reaches for a list of names — some illustrious, most already obscure even to Haines in 1916 — purely to make the point that all of them are equally gone now. Haines's own footnotes cross-reference these passages to one another, treating them as one recurring device rather than four unrelated ones. A few of the names resolve into people who show up elsewhere in this book: at VIII.25, “Lucilla” and “Verus” are almost certainly Marcus's own mother and father reappearing (Domitia Lucilla outlived her husband, then died herself), and in “Secunda Maximus, then Secunda,” Secunda, who buried Maximus, is identified by

Haines's index as the wife of the Claudius Maximus of I.15. At VIII.37, Pantheia is named elsewhere (Lucian) as the beloved concubine of Lucius Verus. At X.31, "Severus" is probably Claudius Severus again — and he's compared to the real Xenophon and Crito, Socrates's own companions. Euphrates in that same list was a well-known Stoic philosopher, praised in the letters of Pliny the Younger; Haines's index records that Hadrian allowed him to take his own life. Most of the rest — Satyron, Socraticus, Eutyches, Hymen, Eutychion, Silvanus, Alciphron, Charax, Demetrius, Eudaemon, Cadicianus, Fabius, Julianus, Lepidus, Fabius Catullinus, Lusius Lupus, Stertinius, Velius Rufus, Pantheia's companion Pergamus, and Chabrias — are exactly what Marcus intends them to be: names that meant something once, and now mean nothing at all. Haines's footnote to one of them is blunt: "Nothing certain is known of the others."

VI.47

Philistion, Phoebus, Origanion (the philosophers named in the same passage have their own entries)

VIII.25

Lucilla, Verus, Secunda, Maximus, Epitynchanus, Diotimus, Antoninus, Faustina, Celer, Hadrianus, Charax, Demetrius, Eudaemon

VIII.37

Pantheia, Pergamus, Chabrias, Diotimus

IV.50

Cadicianus, Fabius, Julianus, Lepidus, Nestor

X.31

Satyron, Socraticus, Eutyches, Hymen, Euphrates, Eutychion, Silvanus, Alciphron, Tropaeophorus, Severus, Xenophon, Crito

XII.27

Fabius Catullinus, Lusius Lupus, Stertinius, Tiberius, Velius Rufus

KEY TERMS GLOSSARY (MODERN)

Unlike some modern translations, Haines mostly avoids leaving Greek philosophical terms untranslated — “hegemonikon” does not appear printed in the English text. Instead he renders them with a recurring set of English phrases, though not always the same phrase for the same Greek word, so the Stoic technical vocabulary remains present in translated form. The counts given are of the Greek term in Marcus’s text, not of Haines’s English.

THE RULING REASON

HĒGEMONIKÓN

Greek term: about 46 occurrences

The governing part of the mind — the faculty that forms judgments, gives or withholds assent, and directs action. For the Stoics this is the one thing genuinely one’s own: the body can be constrained, circumstances can be terrible, but the ruling Reason judges freely. Most of the *Meditations* is Marcus coaching his own.

OPINION

HYPÓLĒPSIS

Greek term: about 29 occurrences

Not “opinion” in the casual modern sense, but the judgment the mind adds on top of a bare event. The Stoic claim that recurs constantly in the *Meditations* — “efface the opinion, *I am harmed*, and at once the feeling of being harmed disappears” (IV.7) — is that events themselves are neutral; it’s the opinion about them that causes distress.

NATURE OF THE UNIVERSE / NATURE OF THE WHOLE

PHÝSIS TOÚ HÓLOU

Greek term: about 27 occurrences

The rational, providential order the Stoics believed runs through everything — not “nature” as in trees and weather, but the cosmos considered as a single rational, ensouled organism. When Marcus says something is “according to Nature,” this is the Nature he means.

ACCORDING TO NATURE

KATÁ PHÝSIN

Greek term: about 29 occurrences

The core Stoic ethical formula: living well means living in harmony with this rational cosmic order, which for a human being means living in accordance with reason and in cooperation with other rational beings. It’s less a rule than the book’s entire argument, compressed into three words.

PROVIDENCE

PRÓNOIA

Greek term: about 12 occurrences

The idea that the Universe is not random but rationally ordered and provident — the position Marcus sets against pure chance (“Atoms”) at IV.3, and generally assumes rather than argues for.

GENIUS

DAÍMŌN

Greek term: about 23 occurrences

Not “genius” as in talent, but the indwelling divine spirit or guardian each person carries — in practice, close to a personification of the ruling Reason at its best. Keeping this “genius” undefiled is one of the book’s recurring images for staying true to one’s better judgment.

IMPRESSIONS / SENSE-IMPRESSIONS

PHANTASÍAI

Greek term: about 40 occurrences

The raw perceptions and mental representations that arrive before any judgment is made about them. Stoic practice is largely about examining impressions before assenting to them — catching the gap between “something happened” and “this is bad,” which is exactly where Marcus’s advice usually lives.

AXIOMS

DÓGMATA

Greek term: about 25 occurrences

Short, memorable principles kept ready for immediate use — Marcus explicitly recommends keeping these “short and elemental” (IV.3) precisely so they can be recalled instantly under pressure, rather than reasoned out from scratch each time.

VITAL BREATH

PNEŪMA

Greek term: about 17 occurrences

The “breath” or animating principle, the second element in Marcus’s recurring three-part division of the self into body, breath, and intelligence (e.g. XII.3). More physical than “soul” in the modern sense — the Stoics thought of it as a literal substance, a warm current running through the body.

WORLD-CITY

KÓSMOS HŌS PÓLIS

the idea recurs; not a fixed technical term

Stoic cosmopolitanism: the idea that all rational beings, human and divine, are fellow citizens of a single rational community that transcends any actual city or nation. There’s no single Greek word for this in the text — Marcus reaches for the same simile more than once, that the *kósmos* (universe) is itself a *polis* (city), rather than coining a fixed compound term. He states the idea directly at IV.4 (“the Universe is as it were a state”), then invokes it again near the very end of the book (XII.36), where Haines’s English rendering — “this World-City” — is his own translation choice for the plainer Greek “this great city,” framing Marcus’s life as a term of citizenship in something much larger than Rome.

HAINES'S FOOTNOTE KEY

Haines's own footnotes lean on classical-scholarship shorthand that was ordinary for a 1916 reader and opaque now — bare abbreviations for other ancient authors and editions, with no expansion given. A footnote like “Capit. *Vit. Mar.* vi. 1; *Vit. Pii* iv. 2” means Capitolinus's *Life of Marcus*, chapter 6 section 1, and his *Life of Pius*, chapter 4 section 2, both part of the *Historia Augusta*. The key is grouped by what kind of source each abbreviation points to, covering every abbreviation that recurs in the footnotes.

Once decoded, a single passage's footnotes rarely turn out to do just one job. Some defend a specific translation choice — showing the actual Greek behind an English word so the rendering can be judged independently. Others fact-check Marcus against outside sources, confirming that a person or relationship he mentions in passing was real. And some do something less comfortable: quietly noting a place where Marcus's account of himself doesn't quite square with what other ancient writers say about him, without trying to resolve the tension. Haines treats the *Meditations* as a primary source to be checked against the other evidence, and leaves contradictions standing where he finds them.

COMMON LATIN SHORTHAND

CP.

“Compare” — by far the most common abbreviation in the footnotes, introducing a cross-reference to another ancient author or another passage in the *Meditations* itself.

§

A “clause” marker used within one long, multi-idea section of the *Meditations* — some sections (like I.16, Marcus's long tribute to Antoninus Pius) run to a full paragraph covering many separate points, so Haines numbers each one internally. A footnote reading “i. 16, § 9” doesn't mean a ninth section — it means the ninth numbered clause within section 16 itself.

IBID.

“In the same place” — refers back to the source just cited in the previous footnote, without repeating it.

SC.

Scilicet, “namely” or “that is to say” — clarifies who or what an ambiguous pronoun in a quoted passage refers to.

FIN. / AD FIN.

“The end” / “near the end” — a location within the work just cited, rather than an author or title.

INIT. / AD INIT.

“The beginning” / “near the beginning” — same idea as *ad fin.*, at the other end of the work.

MED. / AD MED.

“The middle” / “about the middle” of the work cited.

FF.

“And following” — the citation continues for several more pages or lines past the one given.

P. / PP.

“Page” / “pages,” in a citation to a specific printed edition rather than to the ancient work’s own internal numbering.

LIT.

“Literally” — Haines offering a more word-for-word alternative to his own looser translation of a phrase.

PRAEF.

Short for *praefectus* — as in *praefectus urbi*, “urban prefect,” a senior Roman magistrate in charge of the city of Rome, an office several people in Marcus’s circle held.

CONS. / CONS. SUFF.

“Consul” / “suffect consul” (*consul suffectus*) — a replacement consul who took the office partway through the year after the original holder stepped down or died, common in the imperial period.

ADV.

Adversus, “against” — part of the title of a polemical work (e.g. Sextus Empiricus’s *Adversus Mathematicos*, “Against the Mathematicians”).

THE HISTORIA AUGUSTA

The *Historia Augusta* is one book — a single collection of Latin biographies of emperors, heirs, and usurpers — but Haines cites it in two parts at once: **who** supposedly wrote the biography, and **which** biography within the collection. “Capit. *Vit. Mar.*” reads as “Capitolinus, in his *Life of Marcus*”: the name before is the author, the “Vit.” plus emperor’s name after is the specific chapter.

VIT.

names the book

Vita, “Life,” followed by the emperor’s name: *Vit. Mar.* (Life of Marcus), *Vit. Pii* (Life of Antoninus Pius), *Vit. Ver.* (Life of Lucius Verus), *Vit. Cass.* (Life of Avidius Cassius), and so on — each its own chapter within the single *Historia Augusta* collection.

CAPIT.

names the author

Julius Capitolinus, one of six authors the *Historia Augusta* traditionally credits — modern scholars mostly think it’s really one person writing under six invented names, but Haines follows the traditional attribution. Capitolinus is credited with the *Life of Marcus* among others. See Ancient Historians & Modern Scholars.

VULC. / VULC. GALLIC.

names the author

Vulcacius Gallicanus, another of the six traditional *Historia Augusta* authors — credited with its *Life of Avidius Cassius*, the general whose brief revolt against Marcus is covered in The World of Marcus Aurelius.

MARCUS’S OWN CIRCLE, IN CITATIONS

M.

Marcus himself, referred to by bare initial in Haines’s own scholarly prose (not in the translated text) — e.g. “the grandfather of M.”

AD ANT. / AD CAES. / AD VER. / AD APPIAN.

“To Antoninus” / “to Caesar” / “to Verus” / “to Appian” — the addressee headings within Fronto’s own letter collection: to Marcus after his accession, when he reigned as Antoninus (*Ad Antoninum Imperatorem*, distinct from the letters to Antoninus Pius, which Haines cites as *ad Pium*), to the young Marcus while he still held the junior title *Caesar* rather than emperor, to Lucius Verus, and — the one name here outside Marcus’s own family — to Appian, almost certainly the historian Appian of Alexandria, a contemporary of both men. See Fronto in Names in the Text.

FRONTO’S LETTERS, BEYOND THE ADDRESSEE HEADINGS

NAB.

Page references to Samuel Naber’s 1867 edition of Fronto’s letters (e.g. “Nab. p. 96”) — the standard scholarly edition when Haines was writing.

DE FER. ALS.

De Feriis Alsiansibus, “On the Alsian Holidays” — one of Fronto’s individual letters, named (as many were) for its subject rather than a book number.

DE NEP.

De Nepote Amisso, “On the Loss of a Grandson” — another individually-named Fronto letter, consoling Marcus after a grandchild’s death.

DE ELOQU.

De Eloquentia, “On Eloquence” — a Fronto letter on the art of rhetoric, his own specialty as Marcus’s tutor.

THE TWO DIOS

DIO

Cassius Dio, the Roman senator and historian whose *Roman History* is one of the two main ancient narrative sources for Marcus’s reign — cited by book, chapter, and section (e.g. “Dio 71. 6, § 2”). See Ancient Historians & Modern Scholars.

DIO CHRYS.

A different person entirely: Dio Chrysostom, a Greek orator and philosopher active a generation before Marcus. Cited for his *Orations* — easy to confuse with plain “Dio” (Cassius Dio), since Haines doesn’t always spell out “Chrys.”

STOIC & PHILOSOPHICAL SOURCES

EPICT. / MAN.

Epictetus, usually cited for his *Discourses* (bare “Epict.”) or his *Manual* (*Enchiridion*, abbreviated “Man.”), the condensed handbook version of his teaching. See Names in the Text.

SEN. / EP. / N.Q. / DE VIT. BEAT. / DE PROV. / DE CLEM. / DE BEN.

Seneca the Younger, cited by individual work: *Ep.* (*Epistulae*, his letters), *N.Q.* (*Naturales Quaestiones*, Natural Questions), *de Vit. Beat.* (*De Vita Beata*, On the Happy Life), *de Prov.* (*De Providentia*, On Providence), *de Clem.* (*De Clementia*, On Mercy), and *de Ben.* (*De Beneficiis*, On Benefits).

CIC. / TUSC.

Cicero, almost always cited for his *Tusculan Disputations* (*Tusculanae Disputationes*, “Tusc.”), a philosophical dialogue on facing death and hardship.

PLUT. / STOIC. PARAD. / ADV. STOIC. / DE LEG. POET. / SYMP.

Plutarch, cited across several works: his essays criticizing Stoic paradoxes and contradictions (variously “Stoic. Parad.” or “adv. Stoic.”), his essay on reading poetry (“de Leg. Poet.,” *De Legendis Poetis*), and his *Symposium* (“Symp.,” sometimes called *Table Talk*).

DIOG. LAERT.

Diogenes Laertius, the ancient biographer whose *Lives of the Eminent Philosophers* is the source for most surviving anecdotes about Socrates, the Cynics, and other philosophers Marcus cites.

ARIST. / RHET. / POL. / ETH.

Aristotle, cited by individual work: *Rhet.* (*Rhetoric*), *Pol.* (*Politics*), *Eth.* (the *Nicomachean Ethics*).

SEXT. EMP. / ADV. MATH.

Sextus Empiricus, a later Skeptic philosopher, cited mainly for his *Adversus Mathematicos* (“Against the Mathematicians” — despite the name, a critique of dogmatic philosophy generally, not just mathematics).

AUL. GELL.

Aulus Gellius, author of the *Attic Nights* (*Noctes Atticae*), a miscellany of anecdotes and quotations — a useful secondary source for lost sayings of Epictetus and other philosophers.

POETS & PLAYWRIGHTS

HOM. / OD. / IL.

Homer, cited from either epic: the *Odyssey* (“Od.”) or the *Iliad* (“Il.”).

FRAG.

“Fragment” — used whenever the line quoted survives only as an isolated fragment of an otherwise lost work, common for Euripides, Aeschylus, Menander, and Pindar.

EUR.

Euripides, the tragedian — several of the lines Marcus quotes survive only because he happened to copy them, per the fragment-heavy stretch discussed in the modern note at VII.35.

AESCH.

Aeschylus, the tragedian, cited for a handful of quoted lines and fragments.

SOPH.

Sophocles, the tragedian, cited occasionally alongside Aeschylus and Euripides.

MEN.

Menander, the comic playwright — the source of the joke discussed in the modern note at V.12.

HOR. / SAT. / A.P.

Horace, cited from his *Satires* (“Sat.”) or his *Ars Poetica* (“A.P.,” “The Art of Poetry”).

LUCR.

Lucretius, the Epicurean poet, author of *De Rerum Natura* — cited occasionally despite Marcus’s own Stoic (not Epicurean) commitments, usually for a shared image or phrase.

RHETORICIANS & ORATORS

THEM. / ORAT. / OR.

Themistius, a later Greek orator, cited for his *Orations* (“Orat.” or “Or.”) — a title shared with several other orators, so the name preceding it identifies the author.

ARISTIDES / AD REG.

Aelius Aristides, a Greek orator and near-contemporary of Marcus, cited mainly for his oration *Ad Regem* (“To the King,” abbreviated “ad Reg.”).

BIBLICAL & EARLY CHRISTIAN SOURCES

These cluster around Haines’s Note on Christians, where he compares Marcus’s language to the New Testament and early Church writers.

ST. / MATT. / ROM. / COR. / EPH. / TIT.

“Saint,” followed by a New Testament book: the Gospel of Matthew, Romans, Corinthians, Ephesians, or Titus — all epistles attributed to St. Paul except Matthew.

PROV.

The Old Testament book of Proverbs.

JUSTIN / TERT. / APOL.

Justin Martyr and Tertullian, two early Christian apologists, both cited for works titled *Apologia* (“Apol.”) — formal defenses of Christianity addressed to Roman authorities.

IREN. / LACT. / IGNAT.

Irenaeus, Lactantius, and Ignatius of Antioch — three more early Church writers Haines draws on in the same discussion.

CLEM. ALEX. / STROM.

Clement of Alexandria, an early Christian theologian, cited for his *Stromata* (“Strom.,” literally “Miscellanies”) — not to be confused with Marcus’s teacher’s father-in-law Athenodotus or any other “Clement.”

EUSEB.

Eusebius of Caesarea, the early Church historian whose *Ecclesiastical History* preserves several documents relevant to Marcus's actual policy toward Christians — see Note on Christians.

LATER & BYZANTINE SOURCES

SUID.

The *Suda*, a massive Byzantine encyclopedia (c. 10th century) preserving fragments and anecdotes from much earlier, otherwise-lost sources.

TZETZ. / CHIL.

John Tzetzes, a 12th-century Byzantine scholar, cited for his *Chiliades* ("Chil."), a sprawling verse work covering history, myth, and literary anecdote.

STOB. / ECL.

Stobaeus, a 5th-century anthologist whose *Eclogues* ("Ecl.") preserve excerpts from many otherwise-lost Stoic and philosophical texts.

MODERN EDITORS & SCHOLARS

GATAKER

Thomas Gataker, the 17th-century English scholar whose 1652 edition and commentary on the *Meditations* was the standard scholarly reference for the text well into Haines's own time.

JEBB

Richard Claverhouse Jebb, a 19th-century Cambridge classicist whose editions and translations Haines cites for Aristides and Themistius.

KAYSER

The editor of the standard edition of Philostratus's *Lives of the Sophists*, cited whenever Haines references that work by page number.

DIGEST.

Justinian's *Digest*, the sixth-century compilation of Roman legal writing — cited occasionally for points of law contemporary with, or referencing, Marcus's own reign.

SOURCES BEHIND THE FOOTNOTES

Haines's footnotes cite dozens of other ancient and later authors, usually in a single compressed line — see Haines's Footnote Key for the abbreviation itself decoded. *What the work is*, and why it matters for understanding Marcus or the *Meditations*, is a different question from what the abbreviation stands for — a primary eyewitness account, a secondhand anecdote collection, a philosophical school text, or something else entirely. Not every one-off citation is included; the entries cover the works Haines cites most often and those that bear directly on Marcus's life.

PRIMARY HISTORICAL SOURCES ON MARCUS'S REIGN

CASSIUS DIO, *ROMAN HISTORY*

A history by a Roman senator of the next generation, a younger contemporary of Marcus, and one of only two substantial ancient narrative sources for Marcus as a ruler rather than a private philosopher. The book on Marcus (71 in Haines's numbering) covers the Marcomannic Wars, the Avidius Cassius revolt, and Marcus's own habits and temperament, but it survives only through later Byzantine abridgements, not the original unabridged text. See *Ancient Historians & Modern Scholars*.

THE *HISTORIA AUGUSTA*

A collection of Latin biographies of emperors, heirs, and usurpers, including a *Life of Marcus Aurelius*, a *Life of Antoninus Pius*, and a *Life of Avidius Cassius* — the other major ancient narrative source alongside Dio, and the source for most biographical detail the *Meditations* itself never mentions (Marcus's childhood, his marriage, the Avidius Cassius revolt in more depth). Its six named authors (Capitolinus and Vulcacius Gallicanus among them, per Haines's Footnote Key) are widely regarded as fictitious, its date and authorship are disputed, and it is embellished in places, so historians use it with caution. See *Ancient Historians & Modern Scholars*.

HERODIAN, *HISTORY OF THE EMPIRE*

A Greek history of the emperors that begins with the death of Marcus in 180. Haines cites its opening chapters for Marcus's last days, his manner with those who approached him, and his concern for his son Commodus.

GALEN

The leading physician of the age, who attended Marcus. Haines cites him by volume and page in Kühn's 19th-century edition of his collected works, for Marcus's health and sleeplessness, the theriac Galen prepared for him, his anxiety about Commodus, and the words Galen uses of his character.

FRONTO'S LETTERS

The surviving private correspondence between Marcus and Cornelius Fronto, his teacher of rhetoric — a firsthand source, independent of the *Meditations*, for Marcus's own voice as a young man, and for the tension between rhetoric, Fronto's specialty, and the philosophy Marcus was increasingly drawn to. The letters were rediscovered in the early 19th century in a palimpsest manuscript. See Fronto in Names in the Text.

JULIAN, *THE CAESARS*

A satire by the emperor Julian, who reigned from 361 to 363, in which the gods judge the past emperors. Haines cites it for its portraits of Antoninus Pius and of Marcus, and for Marcus's answer there when asked in what the imitation of the gods consists: "having the fewest possible needs, and doing good to the greatest possible number."

THE STOIC TRADITION MARCUS INHERITED

EPICETETUS, *DISCOURSES & MANUAL*

The Stoic teacher Haines cites most often, in 48 footnotes. Epictetus was a former slave who taught at Nicopolis; his *Discourses* were written up by his student Arrian, and the *Manual* (*Enchiridion*) condenses them. They set out the distinction between what is "up to us" and what is not, which underlies much of what Marcus writes to himself. The two men never met; Marcus knew the teaching through the "Memoirs of Epictetus," which Rusticus supplied him from his own library (I.7), and he quotes Epictetus by name several times, most of all in the run of quotations at XI.33–38. See Names in the Text.

SENECA THE YOUNGER'S ESSAYS & LETTERS

The Stoic philosopher, dramatist, and adviser to Nero, whom Marcus never names or quotes in the *Meditations*. Haines cites him in some 40 footnotes (the *Moral Letters*, *On Anger*, *On Providence*, *Natural Questions*, and others) as the standard comparison for how Roman Stoicism expressed a given idea, at greater length than Marcus's compressed notes.

DIOGENES LAERTIUS, *LIVES OF THE EMINENT PHILOSOPHERS*

A 3rd-century biographical compendium and the source for most surviving anecdotes about Socrates, the Cynics, and the early Stoics — secondhand and centuries removed from its subjects, but often the only source for figures Marcus mentions in passing, like Monimus the Cynic or Telauges.

STOBAEUS, *ANTHOLOGY*

A 5th-century compiler whose *Eclogues* preserve excerpts from many otherwise lost Stoic and philosophical texts — a very late, secondary source that is nonetheless the only one for much of what it quotes.

WIDER PHILOSOPHICAL BACKGROUND

PLATO'S DIALOGUES

Marcus quotes Plato directly at VII.35 and VII.44–46, within the run of quotations in Book VII, marked as from Plato in Haines's text, and again at X.23. Haines identifies the passages in the *Apology*, *Republic*, *Gorgias*, and *Theaetetus*, and cites the *Symposium* and *Phaedo* for Socrates' conduct and sayings.

CICERO, *TUSCULAN DISPUTATIONS*

A Roman philosophical dialogue on facing death, pain, and hardship, written two centuries before Marcus. Cicero was not a Stoic (he aligned himself with the Academy), but Haines cites the work as a comparison for how a Roman writer treated the same problems.

ARISTOTLE'S *RHETORIC*, *POLITICS* & *ETHICS*

Philosophical works of the 4th century BC, not Stoic (Aristotle founded his own school), but part of the shared inheritance of any philosophically trained Roman, cited occasionally to clarify a term or distinction Marcus uses without explanation.

SEXTUS EMPIRICUS

A later Skeptic philosopher, cited mainly for his *Adversus Mathematicos* ("Against the Mathematicians," a broad critique of dogmatic philosophy) — evidence less for Marcus himself than for how a rival school characterized Stoic positions.

PLUTARCH'S ESSAYS

A biographer and moral essayist of the generation before Marcus, cited across several works — including *On Stoic Self-Contradictions*, which criticizes Stoic doctrine from outside the school.

AULUS GELLIUS, *ATTIC NIGHTS*

A miscellany of anecdotes, quotations, and grammatical notes by a 2nd-century Roman writer, cited for sayings of philosophers, among them Epictetus's two-word summary of ethics, "bear and forbear," and Chrysippus's image of the rolling cylinder.

POETS

HOMER, *ILIAD* & *ODYSSEY*

The foundational texts of Greek literary education. Marcus quotes both epics, usually for a single line or image, as at X.34 (the generations of leaves) and XI.31.

THE TRAGEDIANS: EURIPIDES, AESCHYLUS & SOPHOCLES

Marcus quotes all three, Euripides most, including lines from lost plays that Haines identifies by fragment number, noting where Plutarch or Cicero quotes the same lines (see the modern note at VII.35 on the run of quotations in Book VII).

MENANDER

The leading playwright of Greek New Comedy, quoted at V.12 for a coarse joke about wealth that Haines's English softens — see the modern note at V.12.

HORACE

The Roman lyric poet and satirist of the age of Augustus, whom Marcus does not quote. Haines cites his *Epistles*, *Satires*, and *Ars Poetica* for parallels, among them "they change their sky, not their mind, who run across the sea" (XII.1) and the wise man "whole in himself, smooth and round" (XII.3).

RHETORICIANS & ORATORS

LUCIAN OF SAMOSATA

A Greek satirist of Marcus's own time, cited in 22 footnotes: most often for parallels, such as the view of human affairs from a height in *Charon* and *Icaromenippus* or the sayings of the philosopher in *Demonax*, and also for anecdotes about Marcus's contemporaries, among them his teacher Apollonius of Chalcedon.

DIO CHRYSOSTOM, *ORATIONS*

Dio of Prusa, a Greek orator and philosopher, called Chrysostom, literally “golden-mouthed.” Haines cites his *Orations*, among them the discourses *On Kingship*, by page in Reiske’s 18th-century edition for parallels to Marcus’s language, and his index suggests that the “Dion” Marcus names at I.14 may be Dio rather than Dion of Syracuse.

AELIUS ARISTIDES

A Greek orator of Marcus’s own time, cited mainly for his oration *To the King*, whose praise of the emperor Haines applies to Marcus, and for his *Sacred Tales*, a record of his own illnesses and dream-cures.

THEMISTIUS

A 4th-century Greek orator, two centuries after Marcus, cited for his *Orations* — evidence for how later antiquity remembered Marcus, his teachers, and his reputation.

THE BIBLE

Fifty-three of Haines’s footnotes cite the Bible in the King James wording, as parallels rather than as evidence that Marcus knew the texts; see *About This Edition*.

THE NEW TESTAMENT

Cited most often, chiefly Paul’s letters and the Gospels, for parallels to Marcus’s moral language, as at V.18, set beside 1 Corinthians 10:13.

THE OLD TESTAMENT & APOCRYPHA

Chiefly the wisdom books — Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and, from the Apocrypha, Ecclesiasticus — cited for parallels on mortality and the transience of things, as at X.14, set beside Job 1:21.

EARLY CHRISTIAN SOURCES

These cluster around Haines’s Note on Christians, where he weighs the evidence for Marcus’s policy toward Christians and concludes that Marcus has been judged a persecutor on insufficient evidence. In support he prints a letter of Marcus to the Common Assembly of Asia protecting Christians, “if authentic,” and questions the traditional date of the martyrdoms at Lyon. Modern scholarship generally regards that letter as a later forgery and dates the Lyon martyrdoms to 177, within Marcus’s reign.

JUSTIN MARTYR & TERTULLIAN'S *APOLOGIES*

Defences of Christianity addressed to Roman authorities. Justin, the philosopher later condemned by Rusticus as urban prefect, addressed his *First Apology* to Antoninus Pius and his adopted sons, Marcus among them, and Haines cites it more than any other Christian work, mostly for parallels. Tertullian's *Apology*, in Latin, is cited by Eusebius for a letter of Marcus crediting the prayers of Christian soldiers (see The Rain Miracle on the Wars and Battles page).

EUSEBIUS, *ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY*

The first major history of the Church, written more than a century after Marcus died. It preserves documents, among them the letter describing the martyrdoms at Lyon and the Christian account of the Rain Miracle, that are otherwise lost.

BYZANTINE PRESERVERS

THE *SUDA*

A 10th-century Byzantine encyclopedia, compiled some eight centuries after Marcus, which preserves fragments and anecdotes from earlier, otherwise lost sources. Haines's back matter notes that the *Suda* quotes Marcus by name 29 times, and probably alludes to him without naming him on 30 more occasions.

JOHN TZETZES, *CHILIADES*

A 12th-century Byzantine verse work on history, myth, and literary anecdote — very late and secondhand, but occasionally the only surviving source for a detail Haines cites.

MODERN SCHOLARLY EDITIONS

SAMUEL NABER'S EDITION OF FRONTO (1867)

The standard scholarly edition of Fronto's letters when Haines was writing, cited by page number throughout his footnotes ("Nab. p. 96" and similar).

THOMAS GATAKER'S EDITION OF THE *MEDITATIONS* (1652)

The English scholar Thomas Gataker's edition, with a Latin translation and commentary, which Haines cites throughout for readings and interpretations, sometimes to disagree with them.

WORKS CONSULTED FOR THIS EDITION'S NOTES

The commentary beneath Haines's footnotes and the reference pages cite little inline; they set out what Haines is pointing to. Each statement of fact in them was checked against a primary text or an academic reference work, read in the edition or translation listed below. Wikipedia and web-search summaries were used only to locate sources, never as sources themselves, and statements that could not be checked in this way were removed.

WORKS CONSULTED: HAINES'S OWN APPARATUS

HAINES, *MARCUS AURELIUS* (LOEB CLASSICAL LIBRARY, 1916)

Introduction, Index of Proper Names, Index of Matters, Bibliography, Sayings of Marcus, and Note on the Christians, reproduced on this site; page scans of the printed volume, Wikisource.

HAINES, *THE CORRESPONDENCE OF MARCUS CORNELIUS FRONTO* (LOEB CLASSICAL LIBRARY, 1919–1920)

Vol. 1, Internet Archive; vol. 2 and its index, Wikisource.

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THE WORLD OF MARCUS AURELIUS

The *Meditations* almost never mentions current events directly. The Marcomannic Wars go unnamed, as do the plague and the revolt that briefly declared someone else emperor. The book was written in the middle of all of it, mostly in military camps rather than in Rome.

TIMELINE OF THE REIGN

121

Born in Rome, named Marcus Annius Verus.

138

Adopted by Antoninus Pius at the direction of the dying emperor Hadrian, who also required Pius to adopt Lucius Verus.

145

Marries Faustina the Younger, Antoninus Pius's daughter.

161

Antoninus Pius dies. Marcus becomes emperor and immediately elevates his adoptive brother Lucius Verus to co-emperor — the first time the empire had two co-equal Augusti ruling jointly.

161–166

War against Parthia in the East, nominally led by Verus.

C. 165

Troops returning from the Parthian campaign bring back a devastating plague — probably smallpox or measles, though the evidence doesn't allow certainty — that spreads through the empire for years and weakens Rome's capacity to fight on other fronts.

166

The Marcomannic Wars begin: Germanic tribes, chiefly the Marcomanni and Quadi, breach the Danube frontier.

169

Lucius Verus dies. Marcus becomes sole emperor and spends most of the next decade commanding from the Danube frontier rather than Rome.

175

Avidius Cassius, a general in the East, declares himself emperor after a false rumor that Marcus had died. The revolt collapses within months when Cassius is killed by his own officers; Marcus is reported to have shown clemency toward the conspirators.

177

Marcus elevates his son Commodus to co-emperor.

180

Dies while on campaign on the Danube frontier — ancient sources place it near Vindobona (modern Vienna) or Sirmium, and don't agree which. Commodus succeeds him as sole emperor.

THE DANUBE FRONTIER

Most of the *Meditations* was written during the Marcomannic Wars (166–180), a grinding, multi-front conflict along the Danube that occupied nearly all of Marcus's last decade. The book itself confirms this in two of its own closing lines: Book I ends “written among the Quadi on the Gran” — the Quadi being one of the Germanic peoples Rome was fighting, and the Gran (the Granua, now the Hron, in modern Slovakia) a Danube tributary running through their territory. Book II ends “written at Carnuntum,” a legionary fortress on the Danube near modern Vienna that served as one of Marcus's main headquarters during the war. Haines himself flags some uncertainty about exactly where these lines belong — his footnote on the first, and his Introduction on both, take them as more likely headings for the following book (II and III respectively) than sign-offs for the one they are printed after — but either way, both name real, identifiable places on the Danube frontier. A third location, not appearing as a dateline in the text: Sirmium (modern Sremska Mitrovica, Serbia), on the Sava — a Danube tributary further south, in the province of Pannonia — which also functioned as a major military base during the same campaigns. Between Carnuntum, Sirmium, and the field camps beyond the river, Marcus spent much of the 170s closer to the empire's northern frontier than to Rome.

WARS AND BATTLES

Marcus names none of the wars of his own reign in the *Meditations*, and the wars of the past appear only through the names of the men who fought them. The conflicts that bear on the text fall into three groups: the wars Marcus conducted, those he recalls from history, and a few modern battles Haines brings in by way of comparison.

WARS OF MARCUS'S REIGN

THE PARTHIAN WAR (161–166)

I.17

Fought against the Parthian Empire after its king Vologeses IV invaded Roman territory in 161, and conducted nominally under the command of Lucius Verus. Its generals, among them Avidius Cassius, captured Ctesiphon and Seleucia before peace was made in 166; the returning armies are traditionally held to have brought the plague that then spread through the empire.

Marcus refers to Verus twice: in his thanks that it was his lot “to have such a brother” (I.17), and at VIII.37, where the Greek names him (“the urn of her lord,” in Haines’s English). Haines’s footnote to I.17 cites the triumph the two emperors celebrated together in 166, at which, Capitolinus records, Verus shared his victory titles with Marcus.

THE MARCOMANNIC WARS (C. 166–180)

I.6, I.12, I.17, II.17, VII.7, X.10

A series of campaigns against Germanic and Sarmatian peoples north of the middle Danube, chiefly the Marcomanni, the Quadi, and the Sarmatian Iazyges. The wars began with invasions across the frontier in the late 160s, reached as far as Aquileia in northern Italy, and kept Marcus on the Danube for most of the 170s, until his death there in 180.

The headings “Written among the Quadi on the Gran,” at the end of Book I, and “Written at Carnuntum,” at the end of Book II, place the writing of at least the early books in camp. At X.10 Marcus turns his philosophy on his own campaigns: one man prides himself “on catching a hare, another on netting a sprat, another on taking wild boars, another bears, another Sarmatians. Are not these brigands, if thou test their principles?” The soldier storming the breach at VII.7 may draw on the same setting. Haines’s footnotes connect several further passages to the war: the prophet on the fig tree during its preparations and the “Rain Miracle” of the campaign against the Quadi (I.6); the Column of Marcus Aurelius, whose reliefs show Marcus “taking Sarmatians” (X.10); Alexander the Platonist, summoned to Pannonia as Marcus’s Greek secretary (I.12); and Faustina’s presence with Marcus on campaign (I.17).

An engagement against the Quadi in the Marcomannic Wars, which Haines dates to 174, noting that Domaszewski placed it in 171. In the abridged text of Cassius Dio, a Roman force surrounded by the Quadi and near collapse from heat and thirst was relieved by a sudden downpour, while hail and thunderbolts fell on the enemy, and Marcus was saluted imperator for the seventh time. Dio credited the rain to Arnuphis, an Egyptian magician in Marcus's company, who invoked Mercury as god of the air. Dio's abridger Xiphilinus rejects this and credits the prayers of Christian soldiers of a legion from Melitene, which Marcus, he says, then named the "Thundering" Legion; Eusebius's *Church History* (5.5) tells the same story on the authority of the Christian writer Apollinaris, and reports Tertullian's claim that a letter of Marcus credited the Christians' prayers. The 4th-century Greek orator Themistius credits the rain to Marcus's own prayer.

The *Meditations* does not mention the battle. Haines's footnote at I.6, where Marcus thanks Diognetus for teaching him not to believe "miracle-mongers and wizards," cites Xiphilinus's account of it. In his Index of Proper Names Haines writes that the Quadi "nearly repeated the exploit of Arminius" there, the German chieftain who destroyed three Roman legions under Varus in AD 9, and his appendix of Marcus's sayings gives Themistius's version of the prayer: "With this hand, wherewith I have taken away no life, have I implored Thee and besought the Giver of life."

THE REVOLT OF AVIDIUS CASSIUS (175)

V.6, VII.22, IX.42

Avidius Cassius, a general of the Parthian War who had come to hold command over the eastern provinces, proclaimed himself emperor in 175 on a rumour of Marcus's death, and was killed by his own soldiers. Haines cites the historian Dio's version of Marcus's speech on the revolt, in which Marcus hopes to be able to pardon Cassius, beside the passages on forgiving wrongdoers (V.6, VII.22). At IX.42, on faithlessness and ingratitude, Haines writes that he "cannot help thinking" the section was written at the time of the rebellion.

WARS MARCUS RECALLS

THE CONQUESTS OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT (334–323 BC)

III.3, VI.24, VIII.3, IX.29, X.10

Alexander's campaigns carried Macedonian power from Greece through the Persian Empire to Egypt, Central Asia, and the Indus.

Alexander is Marcus's standard figure for conquest measured against death and philosophy. He "utterly destroyed whole cities" and yet "departed this life" (III.3); death reduced him and his muleteer to the same condition (VI.24); set beside Diogenes, Heraclitus, and Socrates, he stands for "a world of slavery" (VIII.3); and with his father Philip he is one of those who "played the tragedy-hero," whom Marcus declines to copy (IX.29). Haines's footnote at X.10 adds Quintus Curtius's account of the Scythian envoys who rebuked Alexander for making war on peoples who had done him no wrong.

THE ROMAN CIVIL WAR: CAESAR AND POMPEY (49–45 BC)

I.14, III.3, VIII.3, XI.7

Julius Caesar's war against Pompey and the senatorial party began with his crossing of the Rubicon in 49 BC, turned on his victory at Pharsalus in 48, and ended with the defeat of the last Pompeian forces in Africa and Spain. Cato the Younger took his own life at Utica in 46 rather than surrender to Caesar; Brutus, one of Caesar's assassins in 44, died after defeat at Philippi in 42.

"Pompeius and Gaius Caesar" appear with Alexander as the great destroyers of cities (III.3, VIII.3), while Cato and Brutus are among the figures, remembered for opposing tyranny, whom Severus taught Marcus to know (I.14). Haines quotes Lucan's epic of the war, the *Pharsalia* (XI.7).

THE PELOPONNESIAN WAR (431–404 BC)

VII.66

The war between Athens and Sparta and their allies, which ended in Athens's defeat and the brief rule of the Thirty Tyrants (404–403 BC). Socrates served as an Athenian hoplite, at Potidaea (432) and in the retreat from Delium (424).

VII.66 asks what sort of soul Socrates had, citing his endurance of nights in the frost, which Alcibiades in Plato's *Symposium* describes from the campaign at Potidaea; his refusal of the Thirty's order to arrest Leon of Salamis; and his carrying his head high, which Alcibiades describes from the retreat from Delium.

THE PUNIC WARS (264–146 BC)

IV.33

Rome's three wars with Carthage: the first (264–241 BC), fought chiefly over Sicily; the second (218–201), Hannibal's invasion of Italy, ended by Scipio Africanus's victory at Zama in 202; and the third (149–146), which ended with the destruction of Carthage by Scipio Aemilianus.

The wars are never named. They enter only through "Scipio and Cato" in IV.33's list of once-celebrated names now fading from memory. Marcus does not say which Scipio he means, and Haines's Index of Proper Names tentatively identifies the Cato as Cato the Censor, remembered for urging the destruction of Carthage.

THE CIVIL WAR OF 69

XII.34

After Nero's death in 68, four men held power in succession during 69: Galba, Otho, Vitellius, and Vespasian. Otho, emperor for three months, took his own life after his army's defeat at the first battle of Bedriacum in northern Italy. Haines names Otho, with Petronius and Epicurus, among those who counted pleasure a good and pain an evil yet met death with contempt (XII.34).

THE BATTLE OF DUNBAR (1650)

II.2

Oliver Cromwell's victory over the Scottish army at Dunbar on 3 September 1650. At II.2 Marcus tells himself "thou art an old man," and Haines sets beside it the letter Cromwell, then 51, wrote from Dunbar after the battle: "I grow an old man."

THE SIEGE OF KHARTOUM (1884–1885)

IX.3

The siege of Khartoum in the Sudan by the forces of the Mahdi, which ended with the city's fall and the death of its commander, General Charles Gordon, in January 1885. At IX.3 Marcus writes, "Tarry not, O Death, lest peradventure I too forget myself," and Haines quotes Gordon, "who was a reader of Marcus," writing from Khartoum in a despairing echo of the line.

FAMILY & IMPERIAL LINEAGE

THREE GENERATIONS BEFORE MARCUS — THE ADOPTIVE CHAIN

From Nerva to Antoninus Pius, each emperor adopted his successor, and Marcus was the last to inherit this way. The five rulers from Nerva to Marcus are often called the “Five Good Emperors.”

98–117

Trajan — reigned as emperor after his own adoption by Nerva in 97. Expanded the empire to its largest territorial extent. On his deathbed in 117 (by tradition, with his wife Plotina managing the announcement), adopted his young kinsman and ward Hadrian as successor. Hadrian’s father was Trajan’s cousin, and Trajan became Hadrian’s guardian when he was orphaned at ten (*Historia Augusta, Hadrian* 1).

117–138

Hadrian — Trajan’s adopted heir. With his own health failing and no son, he first adopted Lucius Ceionius Commodus as heir in 136; when that man died in January 138, Hadrian adopted Antoninus Pius the following month — on the explicit condition that Antoninus adopt both his own nephew-by-marriage Marcus (then 16, later Marcus Aurelius) and the son of the first, deceased heir (later Lucius Verus).

138–161

Antoninus Pius — Hadrian’s adopted heir, and Marcus’s adoptive father under that same 138 arrangement. Married his daughter Faustina the Younger to Marcus in 145, tying the adoption to a marriage as well. Reigned 23 years, the longest of the five, largely without major wars.

161

Marcus Aurelius becomes emperor on Antoninus’s death, and immediately elevates his adoptive brother Lucius Verus to co-emperor — the first time the empire had two co-equal Augusti ruling jointly. See *The World of Marcus Aurelius* for the reign that follows.

MARCUS'S IMMEDIATE FAMILY

WIFE

Faustina the Younger — daughter of Antoninus Pius and Faustina the Elder, married to Marcus from 145 until her death in 175 or 176. She traveled with him on campaign, including to the Danube frontier and the East, and was given the title *Mater Castrorum* (“Mother of the Camp”). See her full entry in Names in the Text.

CHILDREN

Marcus and Faustina had thirteen or fourteen children together, unusually well documented for a Roman family. Most died young. Two are historically consequential: Lucilla, married first to co-emperor Lucius Verus and later, after his death, to the general Tiberius Claudius Pompeianus — she was executed in 182 for conspiring to assassinate her own brother Commodus. And Commodus himself, the only son to survive to adulthood, who succeeded Marcus as sole emperor. A handful of other daughters (Fadilla, Cornificia, Vibia Aurelia Sabina among them) outlived their father as well.

THREE GENERATIONS AFTER MARCUS — BLOOD, THEN A NEW FAMILY ENTIRELY

Marcus's line ended with his son: Commodus left no heir, and the Severan emperors who followed were not related to Marcus, though Septimius Severus claimed descent from him by adoption.

180–192

Commodus (Marcus's son, co-emperor from 177) — the first son to inherit the throne directly from his father in a century, breaking the adoptive pattern. His reign — twelve years as sole emperor, fifteen counting his co-emperorship from 177 — is remembered for erratic personal rule, including performing as a gladiator in the arena, and ended when he was strangled in his bath on the last night of 192 in a palace conspiracy involving his mistress and his own Praetorian prefect.

193

The “Year of the Five Emperors”: Pertinax is proclaimed emperor, then murdered by his own Praetorian Guard within three months; Didius Julianus buys the throne from the Guard at auction and is executed within weeks; Septimius Severus in Pannonia and Pescennius Niger in Syria are each declared emperor by their own armies, while Severus secures Clodius Albinus in Britain by naming him Caesar. Severus reaches Rome first and removes both rivals by force.

193–211

Septimius Severus — no blood relation to Marcus's family at all, but Cassius Dio, describing the aftermath of his victory over Albinus in 197, records that he was constantly styling himself the son of Marcus and the brother of Commodus, and that he gave Commodus divine honours — a political fiction grafting the Severan dynasty onto the Antonine name.

211–217

Caracalla, jointly with his brother Geta from their father's death — Severus's actual sons. Caracalla had Geta murdered within the year, reportedly in their mother Julia Domna's arms, and ruled alone until his own assassination in 217.

BOOK-BY-BOOK SYNOPSIS

Marcus at his most list-like (Book I), his most quotable (Book IV), his most valedictory (Book XII). The twelve books aren't equal in length or in character; some read like a diary of a single season in the field, others like a private commonplace book assembled over years. Each entry links to that book's complete translation in the full annotated text.

BOOK I

Not a meditation but a ledger: seventeen numbered debts of gratitude to family, tutors, and his adoptive father Antoninus Pius, ending with thanks to the Gods themselves. Different in kind from every other book — the aphorisms readers usually come for start in Book II. It closes with the line “Written among the Quadi on the Gran,” which Haines thinks more likely heads Book II; either way, it places the writing in camp during the Marcomannic Wars.

BOOK II

The book most readers meet first in excerpts: “Say to thyself at daybreak, I shall come across the busy-body, the thankless, the bully...” Morning self-talk about the people he'll deal with that day, the shortness of life, and the discipline of retreating into his own ruling Reason. The place-headings on either side of it, “among the Quadi on the Gran” and “at Carnuntum,” a Roman legionary fortress on the Danube, place it in camp on the frontier.

BOOK III

On the integrity of one's own judgments — the idea that a rightly-ordered mind belongs to him more completely than his body ever will. Organized loosely around a recurring three-part scheme: body, soul, and intelligence.

BOOK IV

The longest book so far: “Thou hast the power to retire into thyself”; providence or atoms; everything in flux; “run the short way.” Many of the lines readers already know secondhand come from here.

BOOK V

Opens with the case for getting out of bed: “I am rising for a man's work.” A practical book about duty, plain dealing, and doing the job in front of him without complaint.

BOOK VI

The most cosmological book: the Universe as a single living, rational substance, with Marcus's own reasoning worked out at length rather than in aphorisms. Includes his wary self-address about power — "see thou be not Caesarified."

BOOK VII

The book with the most sections, and one of the most repetitive: on recurrence and change, where nothing under the sun is new, vice is "a familiar sight," and the right response to almost anything is to have already rehearsed it beforehand.

BOOK VIII

Self-correction turns outward: the vanished courts of dead emperors — Augustus's wife, daughter, ministers, all gone — used as a *memento mori*, alongside repeated advice to judge his own conduct rather than other people's.

BOOK IX

Injustice as a kind of impiety against the rational order binding all things together, plus more on anger, the "cosmic sympathy" between rational beings, and accepting what genuinely can't be otherwise.

BOOK X

Written with an older man's voice: aging, acceptance, the soul learning to be "simple and single and naked." Returns often to Nature's cycles of growth and decay, and to the recurring image of a hidden power pulling the strings within.

BOOK XI

More list-like and practical than most: a definition of the rational soul, a passage on Old Comedy and tragedy as moral education, and a set of maxims (XI.18) for dealing with wrongdoers.

BOOK XII

The last book, and the most valedictory in tone: death as a comic actor dismissed from the stage before his five acts are played, a whole life as a brief citizenship in the "World-City," and a closing summation of the case the previous eleven books have been building.