

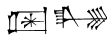
NATURAL LAW AND
ENLIGHTENMENT CLASSICS

*The Meditations
of the Emperor
Marcus Aurelius
Antoninus*

Translated by Francis Hutcheson and James Moor

Edited and with an Introduction by James Moore
and Michael Silverthorne

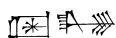
*The Collected Works and Correspondence
of Francis Hutcheson*



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THE
MEDITATIONS
OF THE EMPEROR
MARCUS AURELIUS
ANTONINUS

❧ BOOK I ❧

1. From¹ my grandfather * Verus I learned to relish the beauty of manners, and to restrain all anger. From the fame and character my † father obtain'd, modesty, and a manly deportment. ‡ Of my mother; I learned to be religious, and liberal; <47> and to guard, not only against evil actions, but even against any evil intention's entering my thoughts; to content myself with a spare diet, far different from the softness and luxury so common among the wealthy. Of my great- § grandfather; ** not to frequent public schools and auditories; but to have good and able teachers at home; and for things of this nature, to account no expence too great.

2. He who had the charge of my education, taught me not to be fondly attached to any of the contending parties †† in the chariot-races, or in the combats of the gladiators.² He taught me also to endure labour; not to need

* Annius Verus, who had been thrice Consul, and was made a Senator under Vespasian.

† Annius Verus, who died when Antoninus was a child.

‡ Domitia Calvilla Lucilla, daughter of Calvisius Tullus, who had been twice Consul.

§ Probably by the mother, *viz.* Catilius Severus.

** 'Tis not certain whether the negative particle should be here or not.³

†† The keenness of these contentions among the Romans in that age, is abundantly known.

many things; to serve myself, without troubling others; not to intermeddle with the affairs of others, and not easily to admit of accusations against them.

3. Of Diogenetus;⁴ not to busy myself about vain things, not to credit the great professions of such as pretend to work wonders, or of sorcerers, about their <48> charms, and their expelling Demons; and the like. Not to keep * Quails, nor to be keen of such things; to allow others all freedom in conversation; and to apply myself heartily to philosophy. Him also I must thank, for my hearing first Bacchius, then Tandasis, and Marcianus;⁵ that I wrote dialogues in my youth, and took a liking to the philosopher's little couch and skins, and such other things, which by the Grecian discipline belong to that profession.

4. To Rusticus⁶ I owe my first apprehensions, that my temper needed redress and cure, and that I did not fall into the ambition of the common Sophists, either in writing upon the sciences, or exhorting men to philosophy by public harangues; as also, that I never affected to be admired by ostentation of great patience in an ascetic life, or of activity and application; and that I gave over the study of rhetoric, poetry, and the elegance of language; that I did not affect any airs of grandeur, by walking at home in my senatorial robe, or by any such things. I observed also the simplicity of style in his letters, particularly in that, which he wrote to my mother from Sinuessa. I learned also from him an easiness and proneness to be reconciled and well pleased again with those who had offended me, as soon as any of them inclined to be reconciled; to read with diligence; not to rest satisfied with a light and superficial knowledge; nor quickly to assent to great talkers: Him also I must thank, that I met with the discourses of Epictetus⁷ which he gave me.

5. From Apollonius⁸ I learned true liberty, and invariable steadfastness; and to regard nothing else, not even in the smallest degree, but right and reason; and always to remain the same man, whether in the sharpest pains, or after the loss of a child, or in long diseases. To him I owe my seeing in a living example, that it was possible for the same man to be both vehement and remiss, as occasion requir'd. I learn'd of him, not to fret when my reasonings were not apprehended. In him I saw an instance of a man, who esteem'd his excellent skill and ability in teaching others the principles of

* For fighting, or incantations.

philosophy, the least of all his endowments. Of him also I learned how to receive from friends, what are thought <50> favours, so as neither to be on that account subjected to them, nor yet seem insensible and ungrateful.

6. From Sextus⁹ a pattern of a benign temper, and of a family, governed with true paternal affection and a stedfast purpose of living according to nature; to be grave and venerable, without affectation; to observe sagaciously the several dispositions and inclinations of my friends; not to be offended with the ignorant, or with those who follow the vulgar opinions without examination: His conversation was an example, how a man may accomodate himself to all men and companies; for tho' his company was sweeter, and more pleasing than any sort of flattery, yet he was at the same time highly respected and revered. No man was ever more happy than he in comprehending, finding out, and arranging in exact order, the great maxims necessary for the conduct of life. He taught me by his example, to suppress even the least appearance of anger, or any other passion; but still, notwithstanding this perfect tranquillity, to possess the tenderest and most affectionate heart; and to be apt to approve and applaud others, and yet with-<51>out noise: to desire much literature, without ostentation.

7. From Alexander the critic,¹⁰ to avoid censuring others, or flouting at them for a barbarism, solecism, or any false pronounciation; but dextrously to pronounce the words as they ought, in my answering, approving, or arguing the matter, without taking direct notice of the mistake; or by some other such courteous insinuation.

8. From Fronto;¹¹ to be sensible, how much envy, deceit, and hypocrisy, surrounds princes; and that generally those we account nobly born, have somehow less natural affection.

9. Of Alexander the platonist;¹² not often, nor without great necessity, to say, or write to any man in a letter, that I am not at leisure, nor thus under pretext of urgent affairs, to decline or defer the duties, which, according to our various ties, we owe to those among whom we live.

10. Of Catulus;¹³ not to condemn any friend's expostulation, tho' unjust; but to strive to reduce him to his former disposition: freely and heartily to speak well of all my masters, upon any oc-<52>asion, as it is reported of * Domitius, and Athenodotus; and to love my children with true affection.

* There are no other memorials of these two persons.¹⁴

11. From my brother * Severus, to love my kinsmen, and to love truth and justice. To him I owe my acquaintance with † Thraseas, Helvidius, Cato, Dion, and Brutus. He gave me also the first conception of a republic, founded upon equitable laws, and administred with equality of right; and of a monarchic government, which chiefly regards the liberty of the subjects. Of him I learned likewise, to maintain a constant, disengaged, and uninterrupted study and esteem of philosophy; to be bountiful and liberal in the largest measure; always to hope the best; and to be unsuspicious about the affections of my friends. I observed in him a candid openness in declaring what he disliked in the conduct of others; and that his friends might easily see, without the trouble of conjectures, what he liked or <53> disliked; so open and plain was his behaviour.

12. From Claudius Maximus;¹⁵ in all things to have power over myself, and in nothing to be hurried away by any passion: to be chearful and courageous in all sudden accidents, as in sicknesses to have an easy command of my own temper; to maintain a kind, sweet, and yet grave deportment; to execute my designs vigorously without fretting. Whatever he said, all men believed, he spake, as he thought; and that whatever he did, it was with a good intent. He taught me, not to be easily astonished or confounded with any thing, never to seem in a hurry, nor yet to be dilatory, or perplexed, without presence of mind, or dejected, fretful, angry, or suspicious; and to be ready to do good to others, to forgive, and to speak truth; and in all this, to appear rather like one who had always been straight and right, than ever rectified or redressed; nor was there any, who thought himself undervalued by him, or who could find in his heart to think himself a better man than him: Nor did he ever affect the praise of being witty. <54>

13. ‡ From my father I learned meekness, and constancy, without wavering in those things, which after a due examination and deliberation were determined; to be little solicitous about the common honours; patience of labour, and assiduity, and readiness to hear any man, who offered any thing tending to the common good; an inflexible justice toward all men; a just

* This either the philosopher Claudius Severus, whom he calls his brother from his strong love to him, or some cousin whose memory is not otherways preserved to us.¹⁶

† These were eminent characters, in the two preceeding ages.¹⁷

‡ Antoninus Pius, his father by adoption.

apprehension when rigour and extremity, or when remissness and moderation were in season; abstinence from all impure lusts: and a sense of humanity toward others. Thus he left his friends at liberty, to sup with him or not, to go abroad with him or not, as they inclined; and they still found him the same, after their affairs had hindered them to attend him. I learned of him accuracy and patience of inquiry in all deliberations and counsel. He never quitted the search, satisfied with the first appearances. I observed his zeal to retain his friends, without cloying them, or shewing any foolish fondness; his contentment in every condition; his cheerfulness; his forethought about very distant events; <55> his exact care even about small matters, without noise. How he restrained all acclamations and flattery: How vigilantly he observed all things necessary to the government, and managed accurately the public revenue, and bore patiently the censures of others about these things: How he was neither a superstitious worshipper of the Gods, nor an ambitious pleaser of men, nor studious of popularity; but sober in all things, stedfast, well-skilled in what was honourable, never affecting novelties. As to these things which are subservient to ease and conveniency, of which his fortune supplied him with great affluence; he used them without pride, and yet with all freedom; enjoyed them without affectation when they were present; and when absent, he found no want of them. He was not celebrated, either as a learned acute man, or one of a sharp wit, or as a great declaimer; but a wise, experienced, complete man; one who could not bear to be flattered; able to govern both himself and others; I further observed the great honour he paid to all true philosophers, without upbraiding those who were not so; his sociableness, his gracious and delightful conversation, <56> without cloying. His regular moderate care of his body, neither like one desirous of long life, or over studious of neatness, and elegancy; and yet not as one who despised it: Thus, through his own care, he seldom needed any internal medicines, or outward applications: But especially how ingenuously he would yield without envy, to any who had obtained any peculiar faculty, as either eloquence, or the knowledge of the laws, or of ancient customs, or the like; and how he concurred with them strenuously, that every one of them might be regarded and esteemed, for that in which he excelled; and altho' he observed carefully the ancient customs of his fore-fathers, yet it was without ostentation.

Again, how he was not fickle and capricious, but loved to continue both in the same places and businesses; and how after his violent fits of the head-ach, he returned fresh and vigorous to his wonted affairs. Again, that he neither had many secrets, nor often; and such only as concerned public matters: His discretion and moderation, in exhibiting of shows for the entertainment of the people, in public buildings, largesses, and the like. In all these things he acted <57> like one who regarded only what was right and becoming in the things themselves, and not the applauses which might follow. He never bathed at unseasonable hours; had no vanity in building; was never solicitous, either about his meat, or about the nice workmanship or colour of his cloaths, or about the beauty of his servants. His apparel was plain and homely, such as that he chose to wear at Lorium, cloath made at Lunuvium;¹⁸ and at Tusculum, he wore a short cloak, sometimes making apologies for the plainness of his dress. His conversation was far from any inhumanity; or incivility, or impetuosity; never doing any thing with such keenness that one could say * he was sweating about it; but on the contrary, in all things, he acted distinctly, as at leisure, without confusion, regularly, resolutely, and gracefully. A man might have applied that to him which is recorded of Socrates, that he knew both how to abstain from or enjoy those things, in want whereof most men shew themselves weak; and in the fruition, intemperate: He remained firm and constant in both events, <58> with a just self-government, and shewed a perfect and invincible soul; such as appeared in him during the sickness of Maximus.

14. To the Gods I owe my having good grand-fathers, and parents, a good sister, good masters, good domesticks, affectionate kinsmen, and friends, and almost all things good: and that I never thro' haste and rashness offended any of them; tho' I had such a temper as might have led me to it, had occasion offer'd; but by the goodness of the Gods, no such concurrence of circumstances happen'd as could discover my weakness: that I was not long brought up with my father's concubine; that I retained my modesty, and refrained from all venereal enjoyments, even longer than was necessary; that I lived under the government of such a prince and father, who took away from me all pride and vain-glory, and convinced me, that it was not

* This was a proverbial expression.

impossible for a prince to live in a court, without guards, extraordinary apparel, torches, statues, or such pieces of state and magnificence; but that he may reduce himself almost to the state of a private man, and yet not become more <59> mean or remiss in those publick affairs, wherein power and authority are requisite. That I have had such a brother, * as by his disposition might stir me up to take care of myself; and yet by his respect and love delighted me; that my children wanted not good natural dispositions, nor were distorted or deformed in body; that I was no great proficient in the studies of rhetoric and poetry, and in other faculties, which might have engrossed my mind, had I found myself successful in them; that I prevented the expectations of those, by whom I was brought up, in promoting them to the places and dignities, they seem'd most to desire; that I did not put them off, in the common way, with hopes and excuses that since they were but young I would do it hereafter. I owe to the Gods that ever I knew Apollonius, Rusticus and Maximus; that I have had occasion often and effectually to meditate with myself and inquire <60> what is truly the life according to nature; so that, as for the Gods, and such suggestions, helps and inspirations, as might be expected from them, I might have already attained to that life which is according to nature; and it was my own fault that I did not sooner, by not observing the inward motions and suggestions, yea, and almost plain and apparent instructions of the Gods; that my body, in such a life, hath been able to hold out so long; that I never had to do with † Benedicta and Theodotus, yea, and afterwards, when I fell into some foolish passions, that I was soon cured; that, having been often displeased with Rusticus, I never did any thing to him, for which afterwards I had occasion to repent: that since it was my mother's fate to die young, she lived with me all her latter years: that as often as I inclined to succour any who were either poor, or fallen into some distress, I was never answered by the managers of my revenues that there was not ready money <61> enough to do it; and that I myself never had occasion for the like

* Probably Verus, whose vicious passions might rouse this excellent man's attention to himself, or perhaps Antoninus did not know his vices for a great part of his life, and 'tis certain Verus had a great esteem for Antoninus, and was a man of ability.

† These two persons are unknown, 'tis possible they have been remarkably dangerous to the youth at court.

succour from any other; that I have such a wife, so obedient, so loving, so ingenuous; that I had choice of fit and able men, to whom I might commit the education of my children; that by dreams I have received divine aids, as, for other things, so, in particular, how I might stay my spitting of blood, and cure my vertigo, which happen'd successfully to me at Cajeta; and, that, when I first applied myself to philosophy, I did not fall into the hands of some sophist, nor spent my time in reading many volumes, nor embarrassed myself in the solution of sophisms, nor dwelt upon the study of the meteors. All these things could not have thus concurred, without the assistance of the Gods and * fortune.

These things in the country of the Quadi near Granua.¹⁹ <62>

* See, B. II. art. 3.

1. Say thus to thyself every morning: to day I may have to do with some intermeddler in other mens affairs, with an ungrateful man; an insolent, or a crafty, or an envious, or an unsociable selfish man. These bad qualities have befallen them through their ignorance of what things are truly good or evil. But I have fully comprehended the nature of good, as * only what is beautiful and honourable; and of evil, that it is always deformed and shameful; and the nature of those persons too † who mistake their aim; that they are my kinsmen, by partaking, not of the same blood or seed, but of the same ‡ intelligent divine part; and that I cannot be <63> hurt by any of them, since none of them can involve me in any thing dishonourable or deformed. I cannot be angry at my kinsmen, or hate them. We were formed by nature for mutual assistance, as the two feet, the hands, the eye-lids, the upper and lower rows of teeth. Opposition to each other is contrary to nature: All anger and aversion is an opposition.

2. Whatsoever I am, is either this § poor flesh, or the animal spirit, or the governing part. Quit your books: Be no longer distracted with different views. You have it in your own power. As one who is shortly to die, despise

* This, according to the high style of the Stoics, that virtuous affections and actions are the sole good, and the contrary the sole evil.¹

† This is the meek sentiment of Socrates, that as all error is involuntary, so no man is willingly unjust or wicked in his actions: Since all desire truth and goodness.

‡ The Stoics spoke of the rational soul, as a part of the divinity, taken from that infinite intelligent aetherial nature, which pervades and surrounds all things.²

§ The apostle Paul alludes to this notion in praying that we may be sanctified in soul, spirit, and body: many ancients conceived in men two principles distinct from the body, one the animal soul or life, like that in beasts, the other the rational, like the divinities or angels. In the former which they supposed to be air, they placed all the sensations and passions. See B. III. art. 16.

this fleshly part, this putrifying blood, and bones, and the net-work texture of nerves, veins, arteries. Consider the nature of mere animal spirit or life, air, and that always changing, breathed forth and drawn in again. The third part is that which go-<64>verns. Think thus: you are now old; suffer not that noble part to be enslaved, or moved about by * unsociable passions, without its own approbation. Repine no more at what now befalls you according to fate, nor dread what may befall you hereafter.

3. Whatever the Gods ordain, is full of wise providence. What we ascribe to fortune, happens not without a presiding nature, nor without a connexion and intertexture with the things ordered by providence. Thence all things flow. Consider, too, the necessity of these events; and their utility to that whole universe of which you are a part. In every regular structure, that must always be good to a part, which the nature of the whole requires, and which tends to preserve it. Now, the universe is preserved, as, by the † changes of the <65> Elements, so, by the changes of the complex forms. Let these thoughts suffice; let them be your maxims, laying aside that thirst after multitudes of books; that you may die without repining, meek, and well satisfied, and sincerely grateful to the Gods.

4. Remember how long you have put off these things; and how often you have neglected to use the opportunities offered you by the Gods. It is high time to understand what sort of whole you are a part of; and who that President in the universe is, from whom you flowed, as a small stream from a great fountain. There is a certain time appointed for you, which, if you don't employ in making all calm and serene within you, it will pass away, and you along with it; and never more return.

5. Let this be your stedfast purpose to act continually, in all affairs, as becomes a Roman, and a man, with true unaffected dignity, kindness of heart, freedom, and justice; and disentangle your soul from other solitudes. You shall thus disentangle yourself, if you perform each action as if

* A metaphor from puppets, mov'd by others. Such are men when led by their passions against what their higher faculties incline to and recommend.³

† The Stoics supposed that aether condensed, produced air, air condensed became water, and water thus too became earth: That earth was rarified into water; water into air, and air into aether, and these changes were always going on in the universe.⁴

it were your last: without temerity, or any passionate aversion to what reason approves; with-^{<66>}out hypocrisy or selfishness, or fretting at what providence appoints. You see how few these maxims are, to which, whoever adheres, may live a prosperous and divine life. If a man observe these things, the Gods require no more of him.

6. Go on, go on, o my soul! to affront and dishonour thy self! yet a little while, and the time to honour thyself shall be gone. Each man's life is flying away, and thine is almost gone, before thou hast paid * just honour to thyself; having hitherto made thy happiness dependent on the minds and opinions of others.

7. Let nothing which befalls thee from without distract thee; and take leisure ^{<67>} to thy self, to learn something truly good. Wander no more to and fro; and guard also against this other wandering. For there are some too who trifle away their activity, by wearying themselves in life, without having a settled scope or mark, to which they may direct all their desires and all their projects.

8. Seldom are any found unhappy for not observing the motions and intentions in the souls of others. But such as observe not well the motions of their own souls, or their affections, must necessarily be unhappy.

9. Remember these things always: what the nature of the universe is: what thine own nature: and how related to the universe: What sort of part thou art, and of what sort of whole: and that no man can hinder thee to act and speak what is agreeable to that whole, of which thou art a part.

10. Theophrastus,⁵ as becomes a philosopher, says justly, that in comparing crimes together, † (for in a popular style they may be compared)

* 'Tis one of the most ancient maxims or precepts, "Reverence or stand in awe of thyself" which is the most remote from any encouraging of pride or vanity. It means, that men, conscious of the dignity of their nature, and of that temper of soul, and course of action which they must approve, should continually endeavour to behave suitably to their dignity, in preserving that temper, and practising such actions, with a sincere simple view to answer the end for which God created them, with such dignity and such endowments; and be ashamed to act unsuitably to them. Now, to be influenced by views of glory from men, is what Antoninus here reckons among the dishonours or affronts done to ourselves. See, art. 16 of this book. And B. III. art. 6. and others.⁶

† It was one of the paradoxes of the Stoics, that all crimes were equal, and so no occasion for comparisons.

these are greater, which men are incited to, by <68> lust, or desire of pleasure, than those which flow from anger. For the angry man seems to be turned from right reason, by a sort of pain and contraction seizing him unawares. But he who sins from lust, conquer'd by pleasure, seems more dissolute, weak, and effeminate in his vices. He says justly, and as becomes the dignity of a philosopher, that the crime committed for pleasure, deserves an higher censure, than that committed from the impulse of pain. One in the latter case seems like a person who is forced into anger by injuries first received; but one in the former, like him who first injures another, at the instigation of some lust of pleasure.

11. Undertake each action as one aware he may next moment depart out of life. To depart from men, if there be really Gods, can have nothing terrible in it. The Gods will involve you in no evil. If there are no Gods, or, if they have no regard to human affairs, why should I desire to live in a world without Gods, and without providence? But Gods there are, undoubtedly, and they regard human affairs; and have put it wholly in our power, that <69> we should not fall into what is * truly evil. Were there any real evil in other things, they would have also put it in the power of man to have avoided them altogether. But how can that which makes not one a worse man, be said to make a man's life worse? And it could neither be from any ignorance, or want of power, to prevent or rectify them, when it knew them, that the nature presiding in the whole has overlooked such things. We cannot ascribe such gross misconduct to it, either from want of power, or want of skill, as that good and evil should happen confusedly and promiscuously, both to good and bad men. Now, death and life, glory and reproach, pain and pleasure, riches and poverty, all these happen promiscuously to the good and bad. But as they are neither honourable nor shameful, they are therefore neither good nor evil.

12. 'Tis the office of our rational power, to apprehend how swiftly all things vanish. How the corporeal forms, are swallowed up in the material World, and the memory of them in the tide of ages. Such are all sensible things, especially <70> those which ensnare us by pleasure, or terrify us by

* That is, moral evil, or, vice.

pain, or are celebrated with such vanity. How mean, how despicable, how sordid, how perishable, how dead are they! What sort of creatures are they, whose voices bestow renown? What is it to die? Would one consider it alone, and by close thought strip it of those horrible masks with which it is dressed, would he not see it to be a work of nature, and nothing else? He must be a child, who dreads what is natural. Nay, it is not only a work of nature, but useful to nature. Our rational power should apprehend, too, how a man is related to God, and by what part; and in what state this part shall be, when it returns to him again.

13. Nothing is more miserable, says one, than he who ranges over all things, and dives even into things below the earth, and strives by conjectures to discover what is in the souls of others around him, and yet is not sensible of this, that 'tis sufficient for a man to dwell and converse with that * divinity which is within him, and pay it the genuine worship. <71> It is then worshipped and honoured, when it is kept pure from every passion, and folly, and from repining at any thing done by Gods or men. Whatever is done by the Gods, is venerable for its excellence. What flows from men, we should entertain with love, since they are our kinsmen; or, sometimes, with pity, as proceeding from their ignorance of good and evil. They are not less pityably maimed by this defect, this blindness, than by that which hinders them to distinguish between black and white.

14. † If thou shouldst live three thousand years, or as many myriads, yet remember this, that no man loses any other life than that he now lives; and that he now lives no other life than what he is parting with, every instant. The longest life, and the shortest, come to one effect: since the present time is equal to all, what is lost or parted with is equal to all. And for the same reason, what is parted with, is only a moment. No man at death parts with, or, is deprived of, what is either past or future. For how can one take from a man what <72> he hath not? We should also remember these things, first, That all things which have happened in the continued revolutions from

* Thus the Stoics call the rational soul, the seat of knowledge and virtue: deeming it a part of the divinity, ever pervaded, attracted, and inspired by it to all moral good, when the lower passions are restrained.

† The first sentiment in this paragraph, is too subtile and frigid.

eternity, are of the same kind with what we behold: And 'tis of little consequence, whether a man beholds the same things for an hundred years, or an infinite duration. Again that the longest and the shortest lives have an equal loss at Death. The present moment is all which either is deprived of, since that is all he has. A man cannot part with what he has not.

15. All depends upon opinion; as the sayings of Monimus⁷ make evident. The usefulness of his sayings appear, if one attend to his pleasantries, as far as truth confirms them.

16. The soul affronts itself, when it becomes, as far as it can, an abscess or wen in the universe. Freting at what happens, is making itself an abscess from that nature, which contains all other parts. Again, when it has aversion to any man, and opposes him with intention to hurt him, as wrathful men do. And thirdly, it affronts itself, when conquered by pleasure or pain. Fourthly, when it does or says any thing hypocritically, feignedly, or falsly. Fifthly, when it does not <73> direct to some proper end all its desires and actions, but exerts them inconsiderately, without understanding. Whereas, even the smallest things should be refered to the end. Now, the end of rational beings should be this, to follow the * reason and law of their most antient and venerable city or country.

17. The duration of human life is a point; its substance perpetually flowing; the senses obscure; and the compound body tending to putrefaction: The soul is restless, fortune uncertain, and fame injudicious. To sum up all, the body, and all things related to it, are like a river; what belongs to the animal life, is a dream, and smoak; life a warfare, and a journey in a strange land; surviving fame is but oblivion. What is it then, which can conduct us honourably out of life, and accompany us in our future progress? philosophy alone. And this consists in preserving the divinity within us free from all affronts and injuries, superior to pleasure and pain, doing nothing either inconsiderately, or insincerely and hypo-<74>critically; independent on what others may do or not do: embracing chearfully whatever befalls or is appointed, as coming from him, from whom itself was derived; and,

* By this country or state is understood the universe governed by God. The end therefore is acting the part God has appointed to us by the constitution of our nature.

above all, expecting death with calm satisfaction, as conceiving it to be only a dissolution of these elements, of which every animal is compounded. And if no harm befalls the elements when each is * changed into the other, why should one suspect any harm in the changes and † dissolution of them all? It is natural, and nothing natural can be evil. This at Carnuntum.⁸ <75>

* Earth to water, water to air, air to fire, and so backwards.

† Perhaps he intends the universal destruction of this world. See X. 7.

1. One ought to consider, not only that, each day, a part of his life is spent, and the remainder grown less, but that it is very uncertain, tho' he should live longer, whether his understanding shall continue equally sufficient for his business, and for those theories which make one skilled in things divine and human. For if one begin to dote in these things, he may, perhaps, continue to breathe, to receive nourishment, to have vain imaginations, and exert the low appetites; but the true power of governing himself, of performing completely the duties of life, of considering distinctly all appearances which strike the imagination, and of judging well this very point, whether he should depart from life or not, and all other powers which require a well exercised vigorous understanding, must be intirely extinguished in him. We should, therefore, make haste, not only because death is every day so much nearer, but because the power of considering well and understanding things, often leaves us before death.

2. This also should be observed, that such things as ensue upon what is well constituted by nature, have also something graceful and attractive. Thus, some parts of a well baked loaf will crack and become rugged. What is thus cleft beyond the design of the baker, looks well, and invites the appetite. So when figs are at the ripest, they begin to crack. Thus in full ripe olives, their approach to putrefaction gives the proper beauty to the fruit. Thus, the laden'd ear of corn hanging down, the stern brow of the lyon, and the foam flowing from the mouth of the wild boar, and many other things, considered apart, have nothing comely; yet because of their connexion with things natural, they adorn them, and delight the spectator. Thus, to one who has a deep affection of soul, and penetration into the constitution of the whole, scarce any thing connected with nature will fail to recommend itself agreeably to him. Thus, the real vast jaws of savage

beasts will please him, no less than the imitations of them by painters or statuaries. With like pleasure will his chaste eyes behold <77> the maturity and grace of old age in man or woman, and the inviting charms of youth. Many such things will he experience, not credible to all, but only to those who have the genuine affection of soul toward nature and its works.¹

3. Hippocrates² after conquering many diseases, yielded to a disease at last. The Chaldeans foretold the fatal hours of multitudes, and fate afterwards carried themselves away.³ Alexander, Pompey, and Caius Caesar,⁴ who so often razed whole cities, and cut off in battle so many myriads of horse and foot, at last departed from this life themselves. Heraclitus,⁵ who wrote so much about the conflagration of the universe, died swollen with water, and bedaubed with ox-dung. Vermin destroyed Democritus,⁶ [the inventor of the atomical philosophy:] and another sort of vermin destroyed Socrates.⁷ To what purpose all this? You have gone aboard, made your voyage, arrived to your port, go ashore. If into another life and world, the Gods are also there: if into a state of insensibility; at least you shall be no longer disturbed by sensual pleasure or pain, or be in slavery to this mean corporeal vessel. Is not the soul, which is often enslaved to it, much more excellent than the body? The soul is intelligence and deity. The body, earth, and putrifying blood.

4. Spend not the remainder of your life in conjectures about others, except where it is subservient to some public interest: conjecturing what such a one is doing, and with what view, what he is saying, what he is thinking, what he is projecting, and such like; this attention to the affairs of others, makes one wander from his own business, the guarding of his own soul. We ought, therefore, to exclude from the series of our thoughts, whatever is superfluous or vain; and much more every thing intermeddling and ill-natured; and enure ourselves to think on such things, as, if we were of a sudden examined, what are we now musing upon, we could freely answer, such or such matters: so that all within might appear simple and good-natured, such as becomes a social being, who despises pleasure, and all sensual enjoyment, and is free from emulation, envy, suspicion, or any other passion that we would blush to own we were now indulging in our minds. A man <79> thus disposed wants nothing to entitle him to the highest dignity, of a priest and fellow-worker with the Gods, who rightly employs

the divinity within him; which can make the man undefiled by pleasure, invincible by pain, inaccessible to reproach, or any injuries from others: A victorious champion in the noblest contention, that against the passions: deeply tintured with justice; embracing with all his heart whatever befalls, or is appointed by providence. Seldom solicitous, and that not without some generous public view, what another says, does, or intends: Solely intent on his own conduct, and thinking continually on what is appointed to him by the governor of the universe. Making his own conduct beautiful and honourable; and persuaded that what providence orders is good. For, each one's lot is brought upon him by providence, and is advantageous to him. Remember, that, whatever is rational, is a-kin to thee, and that it suits human nature to take care of every thing human. Nor ought we to desire glory from all, but only from those who live agreeably to nature. For others; still remember, how they live at home, how abroad, how in the <80> dark, how in the light, and with what a wretched mass they are blended. Thus, one won't value the praise of such men, for they cannot please or applaud themselves.

5. Do nothing with reluctance, or forgetting the * kind social bond, or without full inquiry, or hurried into it by any passion. Seek not to set off your thoughts with studied elegance. Be neither a great talker, nor undertaker of many things. And let the God within thee find he rules a man of courage, an aged man, a good citizen, a Roman, who regulates his life, as waiting for the signal to retreat out of it, without reluctance at his dissolution; who needs not for a bond of obedience, either the tie of an oath, or the observation of others. Join also a chearful countenance, an independence on the services of others, a mind which needs not retirement from the world, to obtain tranquillity; but can maintain it without the assistance of others. One should rather appear to have been always straight and right, and not as amended or rectified.

6. If you can find any thing in human life better than justice, truth, temperance, fortitude; or, to sum up all, than to have your mind perfectly

* The Stoics always maintained, that by the very constitution of our nature, all men are recommended to the affectionate good-will of all: which would always appear, were it not for the interfering of falsely imagined interests.⁸

satisfied with what actions you are engaged in by right reason, and what providence orders independently of your choice: if you find any thing better, I say, turn to it with all your soul, and enjoy the noble discovery. But if nothing appears more excellent than the divinity seated within you, when it hath subjected to its self all its passions, examined all appearances which may excite them, and, as Socrates expresses it, has torn itself off from the attachments to sense; has subjected it self to the Gods, and has an affectionate care of mankind: If you find all things mean and despicable in comparison with this, give place to nothing else: for, if you once give way, and lean towards any thing else, you will not be able, without distraction of mind, to preserve the preference of esteem and honour to your own proper and true good. For it is against the law of justice, that any thing of a different kind withstand the proper good of the rational and <82> social nature; such as the views of popular applause, power, riches, or sensual enjoyments. All these things, if we allow them even for a little to appear suitable to our nature, immediately become our masters and hurry us away. But do you I say, with liberty, and simplicity of heart, chuse what is most excellent, and hold to it resolutely. What is most excellent is most advantageous. If so to the rational nature, retain it; but if only to the animal, renounce it. And preserve the judging power unbyassed by external appearances, that it may make a just and impartial inquiry.

7. Never value that as advantageous, which may force you to break your faith; to quit your modesty, or sense of honour; to hate, suspect, or imprecate evil on any one; to dissemble; or to desire any of these things which need walls or curtains to conceal them. He who to all things prefers the soul, the divinity within him, and the sacred mysteries of its virtues, makes no tragical exclamations, complaints, or groans. He needs neither solitude nor a croud; and, what is greatest of all, he lives without either desires or fears of death. And whether the soul shall use this surrounding <83> body, for a longer or shorter space, gives him no solicitude. Were he to depart this moment, he is as ready for it, as for any other work, which can be gracefully, and with honour, accomplished; guarding in the whole of life against this alone, that his soul should ever decline, or be averse to any thing which becomes the rational and social nature.

8. In the well-disciplined and purified mind you will find nothing putrid, impure, or unsound. Fate can never surprise his life unfinished, as one says of a tragedian who goes off before he ends his part: You will find nothing servile or ostentatious, or subjected to others by any partial bond; nor yet broken off from them, by any hatred; nothing which needs correction or concealment.

9. Cultivate with all care that power which forms opinions: All depends on this, that no opinion thy soul entertains, be inconsistent with the nature and constitution of the rational animals. Our natural constitution and furniture is intended to secure us from false and rash assent, to engage us in kindness to all men, and in obedience to the Gods. <84>

10. Quit, therefore, other things, and retain these few. Remember also that each man lives only the present moment: The rest of time is either spent and gone, or is quite unknown. It is a very little time which each man lives, and in a small corner of the earth; and the longest surviving fame is but short, and this conveyed through a succession of poor mortals, each presently a-dying; men who neither knew themselves, nor the persons long since dead.

11. To the former subjoin this further rule: To make an accurate definition or description of every thing which strikes the imagination, so as to view what sort of thing it is in its own nature, and in all its parts considered distinctly; and give it, with thy self, its proper name, and to all the parts in its composition, into which also it must be resolved. Nothing is more effectual for giving magnanimity, than a methodical true examination of every thing which may happen in life, and while you consider them, to revolve at the same time, in what sort of regular universe they happen, for what use they are fit, of what importance they are to the whole, of what to man, the citizen of that higher city, of <85> which the other cities and states are but as families. To examine what that is which affects the mind, of what compounded, how long it can endure, and what virtue it is fit to exercise; such as meekness, fortitude, truth, fidelity, simplicity, contentment, or the rest? We should therefore say of each event, this comes from God; this happens according to that destined contexture and connexion of events, or by conjunction with them in fortune; this comes from one of my own tribe, my kinsman, my friend, ignorant, perhaps, of what is agreeable to nature:

but I am not ignorant of what is so; and, therefore, I must behave toward him with good-will and justice, according to the natural and social law. As to things * indifferent, I pursue them according to their real estimation or value.

12. If, in consequence of right reasoning upon natural principles you discharge your present duty with diligence, resolution, and benignity, without any <86> bye views, and keep unviolated and pure the divinity within you as if just now about to restore it to the Gods who gave it: If you adhere to this without further desires or aversions, completely satisfied in discharging your present offices according to nature, and in the heroic sincerity of all your professions, you will live happily. Now your doing this none can hinder.

13. As † physicians have always their machines and instruments at hand for sudden occasions, so have you always at hand the grand maxims requisite for understanding things divine and human, and for doing every thing, even the most minute, as aware of the connexion between these two. For, neither will you rightly discharge any duty to men, nor any duty to God, if, at the same time, you regard not the connexion between things human and divine.

14. Quit your wandering: for you are neither like to read over again your own commentaries and meditations, or the actions of the ancient Greeks and Romans, or the collections you have made <87> out of the writings of others, which you have been storing up for your old age. Make haste, then, to your proper end: cast away vain hopes and speedily succour yourself if you have that care of yourself; you may at present.

15. Men don't understand how many things are signified by these words, ‡ to steal, to sow, to purchase, to be in tranquillity, to discern what's to be

* Thus the Stoics call all the goods or evils of fortune, relating to our bodies or estates: Which they allowed to have some value, or estimation, or importance, but would not call them absolutely good or evil.⁹

† The same person was physician, chirurgion, and apothecary among the antient Greeks and Romans.

‡ The Stoics made frequent use of these words metaphorically in their moral reasonings about the virtues and vices of their conduct, and the natural events in the universe. See, B. IV. 36. for one Instance.

done. The bodily eye sees not these things: another sort of sight must discern them.

16. The body, the * animal soul, the intellectual. To the body belong the senses: to the animal soul, the appetites and passions: to the intellectual, the maxims of life. To have sensible impressions exciting imaginations, is common to us with the cattle. To be moved, like puppets, by appetites and passions, is common to us with the wild beasts, with the most effeminate wretches, Phalaris,¹⁰ and Nero, with atheists, and with traitors to their country.¹¹ If these things, then, are common to the lowest and most odious <88> characters, this must remain as peculiar to the good man; to have the intellectual part governing and directing him in all the occurring offices of life; to love and embrace all which happens to him by order of providence; to preserve the divinity placed in his breast, pure, undisturbed by a croud of imaginations, and ever calm and well-pleased, and to follow with a graceful reverence the dictates of it as of a God; never speaking against truth, or acting against justice. And, tho' no man believe he thus lived, with simplicity, modesty, and tranquillity; he neither takes this amiss from any one; nor quits the road which leads to the true end of life; at which he ought to arrive pure, calm, ready to part with life, and accommodated to his lot without reluctance. <89>

* See above, B. II. art. 2.