

**THE THOUGHTS OF THE
EMPEROR M.
AURELIUS ANTONIUS.
[LONDON-1862]**

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The Thoughts of the Emperor M. Aurelius Antonius. [London-1862] by M. Aurelius Antonius & George Long

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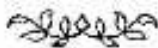
M. AURELIUS ANTONIUS & GEORGE LONG

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"I read today part of the meditations of Marcus Antoninus.
What a strong emperor! And what a strong heart! giving thanks
to God for all the good things he enjoyed — in particular for his own
infirmities for their recalling to him, in prayer, things which he was
aware of otherwise invariable distempers. I make no doubt that this is one
of those "maury" who were "come from the East & the West & did dwell
with Abraham, Isaac & Jacob" while "the children of the kingdom"
remained Christians — see "shut out". Monday Journal Oct 11. 1745.



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ΤΑΝ ΕΙΣ ΕΑΥΤΟΝ
M. AURELIUS ANTONINUS.



THE THOUGHTS OF
THE EMPEROR M. AURELIUS
ANTONINUS.



TRANSLATED BY GEORGE LONG.



LONDON:
BELL AND DALDY, FLEET STREET.

1862.



M. AURELIUS ANTONINUS.

M ANTONINUS was born at Rome A. D. 121, on the 26th of April. His father Annius Verus died while he was praetor. His mother was Domitia Calvilla also named Lucilla. The Emperor Antoninus Pius married Annia Galeria Faustina, the sister of Annius Verus, and was consequently Antoninus' uncle. When Hadrian adopted Antoninus Pius and declared him his successor in the empire, Antoninus Pius adopted both L. Ceionius Commodus, the son of Aelius Caesar, and M. Antoninus, whose original name was M. Annius Verus. Antoninus took the name of M. Aelius Aurelius Verus to which was added the title of Caesar in A. D. 139: the name Aelius belonged to Hadrian's family, and Aurelius was the name of Antoninus Pius. When M. Antoninus became Augustus, he dropped the name of Verus and took the name of Antoninus. Accordingly he is generally named M. Aurelius Antoninus or simply M. Antoninus.

20th Sept. 160
died 17th March
160

Notes adapted of
Hadrian's Hist. 138.

The youth was most carefully brought up. He thanks the gods (i. 17) that he had good grandfathers, good parents, a good sister, good teachers, good associates, good kinsmen and friends, nearly everything good. He had the happy fortune to witness the example of his uncle and adoptive father Antoninus Pius, and he has recorded in his work (i. 16; vi. 30) the virtues of this excellent man and prudent ruler. Like many young Romans he tried his hand at poetry and studied rhetoric. Herodes Atticus and M. Cornelius Fronto were his teachers in eloquence. There are extant letters between Fronto and Marcus, which show the great affection of the pupil for the master, and the master's great hopes of his industrious pupil. M. Antoninus mentions Fronto (i. 11) among those to whom he was indebted for his education.

When he was eleven years old, he assumed the dress of philosophers, something plain and coarse, became a hard student, and lived a most laborious abstemious life, even so far as to injure his health. Finally, he abandoned poetry and rhetoric for philosophy, and he attached himself to the sect of the Stoics. But he did not neglect the study of law, which was a useful preparation for the high place which he was designed to fill. His teacher was L. Volusianus Maecianus a distinguished jurist. We must suppose that he learned the Roman discipline of arms, which was a necessary part of the education of a man who afterwards led his troops to battle against a warlike race.

Antoninus has recorded in his first book the names of his teachers and the obligations which he owed to each of them. The way in which he speaks of what he learned from them might seem to savour of vanity or self-praise, if we look carelessly at the way in which he has expressed himself; but if any one draws this conclusion, he will be mistaken. Antoninus means to commemorate the merits of his several teachers, what they taught and what a pupil might learn from them. Besides, this book like the eleven other books was for his own use, and if we may trust the note at the end of the first book, it was written during one of M. Antoninus' campaigns against the Quadi, at a time when the commemoration of the virtues of his illustrious teachers might remind him of their lessons and the practical uses which he might derive from them.

Among his teachers of philosophy was Sextus of Chaeroneia a grandson of Plutarch. What he learned from this excellent man is told by himself (i. 9). His favourite teacher was Q. Junius Rusticus (i. 7), a philosopher and also a man of practical good sense in public affairs. Rusticus was the adviser of Antoninus after he became emperor. Young men who are destined for high places are not often fortunate in those who are about them, their companions and teachers; and I do not know any example of a young prince having had an education which can be compared with that of M. Antoninus. Such a body of teachers distinguished by their acquirements and

their character will hardly be collected again ; and as to the pupil, we have not had one like him since.

Hadrian died in July A. D. 138, and was succeeded by Antoninus Pius. M. Antoninus married Faustina, his cousin, the daughter of Pius, probably about A. D. 146, for he had a daughter born in 147. M. Antoninus received from his adoptive father the title of Caesar and was associated with him in the administration of the state. The father and the adopted son lived together in perfect friendship and confidence. Antoninus was a dutiful son, and the emperor Pius loved and esteemed him.

Antoninus Pius died in March 161. The Senate, it is said, urged M. Antoninus to take the sole administration of the empire, but he associated with himself the other adopted son of Pius, L. Ceionius Commodus, who is generally called L. Verus. Thus Rome for the first time had two emperors. Verus was an indolent man of pleasure and unworthy of his station. Antoninus however bore with him, and it is said that Verus had sense enough to pay to his colleague the respect due to his character. A virtuous emperor and a loose partner lived together in peace, and their alliance was strengthened by Antoninus giving to Verus for wife his daughter Lucilla.

The reign of Antoninus was first troubled by a Parthian war, in which Verus was sent to command, but he did nothing, and the success that

was obtained by the Romans in Armenia and on the Euphrates and Tigris was due to his generals. This Parthian war ended in 165.

The north of Italy was also threatened by the rude people beyond the Alps from the borders of Gallia to the eastern side of the Hadriatic. These barbarians attempted to break into Italy, as the Germanic nations had attempted near three hundred years before; and the rest of the life of Antoninus with some intervals was employed in driving back the invaders. In 169 Verus suddenly died, and Antoninus administered the state alone.

In A. D. 175 Avidius Cassius a brave and skilful Roman commander who was at the head of the troops in Asia revolted and declared himself Augustus. But Cassius was assassinated by some of his officers, and so the rebellion came to an end. Antoninus showed his humanity by his treatment of the family and the partizans of Cassius, and his letter to the senate in which he recommends mercy is extant. (Vulcatius, Avidius Cassius, c. 12.)

Antoninus set out for the east on hearing of Cassius' revolt. We know that in A. D. 174 he was engaged in a war against the Quadi, Marcomanni and other Germanic tribes, and it is probable that he went direct from the German war without returning to Rome. His wife Faustina who accompanied him into Asia died suddenly at the foot of the Taurus to the great grief of her husband. Capitolinus who has written the life