

**THE APOLOGY OF TERTULLIAN,  
AND THE MEDITATIONS OF THE  
EMPEROR MARCUS AURELIUS  
ANTONINUS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649086238

The apology of Tertullian, and the meditations of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius Antoninus by  
Wm. Reeve & Jeremy Collier

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**WM. REEVE & JEREMY COLLIER**

**THE APOLOGY OF TERTULLIAN,  
AND THE MEDITATIONS OF THE  
EMPEROR MARCUS AURELIUS  
ANTONINUS**



#15913  
THE  
APOLOGY OF TERTULLIAN

*Translated and Annotated by*

WM. REEVE, A.M.

SOMETIME VICAR OF CRANFORD, MIDDLESEX

AND THE

MEDITATIONS OF THE EMPEROR  
MARCUS AURELIUS ANTONINUS

*Translated by*

JEREMY COLLIER, A.M.



LONDON

GRIFFITH FARRAN & CO.

NEWBERY HOUSE, 39 CHARING CROSS ROAD

SECRET

*The Rights of Translation and of Reproduction are Reserved.*

## CONTENTS.

CHAP.	PAGE
BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICES, . . . . .	vii
PREFACE TO M. AURELIUS'S MEDITATIONS, . . . . .	xiii
I. THAT THE GENTILES' HATRED TO THE CHRISTIANS IS NOTORIOUSLY UNJUST, . . . . .	1
II. CONCERNING THE MALICE AND PERVERSENESS OF THE JUDGES, IN THE WAY OF CONDEMNING OR ABSOLVING THE CHRISTIANS, . . . . .	6
III. CONCERNING THE ODISIOUS TITLE OF CHRISTIAN, . . . . .	11
IV. THAT HUMAN LAWS MAY ERR, AND THEREFORE MAY BE MENDED, . . . . .	13
V. THAT THE WISEST OF THE EMPERORS HAVE BEEN PROTECTORS OF THE CHRISTIANS, . . . . .	16
VI. THAT THE ROMANS ARE MIGHTY PRAISERS OF THE ANTIQUITY OF THEIR RELIGION, AND YET ADMIT OF NOVELTIES INTO IT EVERY DAY, . . . . .	20
VII. THAT COMMON FAME IS BUT AN ILL EVIDENCE, . . . . .	24
VIII. THAT THE CRIMES CHARGED UPON THE CHRISTIANS ARE NEITHER POSSIBLE NOR PROBABLE, . . . . .	27
IX. THAT THE PAGANS ARE GUILTY BOTH IN PRIVATE AND PUBLIC OF THE SAME CRIMES THEY CHARGE UPON CHRISTIANS, . . . . .	30
X. THAT THE GODS OF THE GENTILES ARE NO GODS, . . . . .	35
XI. THAT THE FANCY OF MAKING GODS OF DEAD MEN IS A VERY FOOLISH FANCY, . . . . .	38
XII. CONCERNING THE VANITY OF IMAGE-WORSHIP, . . . . .	40
XIII. CONCERNING THE IRREVERENCE OF THE HEATHEN TO THEIR GODS, . . . . .	42
XIV. THAT THE HEATHENS DO BUT MOCK THEIR GODS IN OFFERING THE REFUSE AND THE VILEST PARTS OF THE SACRIFICE, . . . . .	45
XV. CONCERNING THE SHAMEFUL REPRESENTATION OF THE GODS UPON THE STAGE AND AMPHITHEATRE, . . . . .	47
XVI. CONCERNING THE ASS'S HEAD, AND OTHER SUCH LIKE VANITIES CHARGED UPON THE CHRISTIANS, . . . . .	49
XVII. CONCERNING THE GOD OF CHRISTIANS, . . . . .	53
XVIII. CONCERNING THE SEPTUAGINT, OR THE WRITINGS OF THE PROPHETS TRANSLATED INTO GREEK BY THE ENDEAVOURS OF PTOLEMY PHILADELPHUS, . . . . .	55
XIX. CONCERNING THE ANTIQUITY OF THE WRITINGS OF THE PROPHETS, . . . . .	57
XX. THAT THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THE PROPHECIES IN HOLY SCRIPTURES PROVE THEM TO BE OF AUTHORITY DIVINE, . . . . .	59
XXI. CONCERNING THE BIRTH AND CRUCIFIXION OF JESUS CHRIST, . . . . .	61
XXII. CONCERNING DEMONS, THEIR POWER, AND THEIR WAYS OF OPERATION, . . . . .	69

CHAP.	PAGE
XXIII. CONCERNING THE SUBJECTION OF EVIL SPIRITS TO THE COMMAND OF CHRISTIANS, . . . . .	74
XXIV. THAT THE ROMANS ARE THE CRIMINALS IN POINT OF RELIGION, AND NOT THE CHRISTIANS, . . . . .	80
XXV. THAT THE ROMAN GRANDEUR IS NOT OWING TO THE ROMAN RELIGION, . . . . .	82
XXVI. THAT KINGDOMS ARE ONLY AT HIS DISPOSE WHO IS THE TRUE GOD, . . . . .	86
XXVII. THAT THE GENTILES ARE SET AGAINST CHRISTIANS BY THE INSTIGATION OF EVIL SPIRITS, . . . . .	87
XXVIII. THAT THE ROMANS HAVE THEIR EMPERORS IN GREATER VENERATION THAN THEIR GODS, . . . . .	89
XXIX. THAT THE EMPERORS MAINTAIN THE GODS RATHER THAN THE GODS THE EMPERORS, . . . . .	90
XXX. CONCERNING THE GOD OF CHRISTIANS, BY WHOM KINGS REIGN, AND THE PRAYERS OF CHRISTIANS FOR THE LIFE OF THE EMPERORS, . . . . .	91
XXXI. THAT CHRISTIANS ARE COMMANDED TO LOVE THEIR ENEMIES, . . . . .	94
XXXII. CONCERNING ANOTHER REASON OF THE CHRISTIANS IN PRAYING FOR THE EMPERORS, . . . . .	95
XXXIII. A FURTHER ACCOUNT OF CHRISTIAN LOYALTY, AND THEIR REFUSING TO CALL THE EMPEROR BY THE TITLE OF GOD, . . . . .	96
XXXIV. CONCERNING AUGUSTUS CÆSAR, . . . . .	98
XXXV. CONCERNING THE DIFFERENT OBSERVATION OF PUBLIC FESTIVALS BETWEEN THE CHRISTIANS AND THE HEATHENS, . . . . .	99
XXXVI. CONCERNING THE CHRISTIAN DUTY OF LOVING ENEMIES, . . . . .	102
XXXVII. A CONTINUATION OF THE UNLIMITED LOVE OF CHRISTIANS, . . . . .	103
XXXVIII. THAT CHRISTIANS CAN NEVER BE JUSTLY SUSPECTED OF DESIGNS AGAINST THE STATE, . . . . .	106
XXXIX. CONCERNING THE DISCIPLINE OF CHRISTIANS AND THEIR EMPLOYMENT AND WAYS OF LIVING, . . . . .	107
XL. THAT THE CAUSES OF PUBLIC EVILS ARE MOST MALICIOUSLY THROWN UPON THE CHRISTIANS, . . . . .	114
XLI. CONCERNING THE CAUSE AND REASON OF PUBLIC CALAMITIES, . . . . .	116
XLII. THAT THE CHRISTIANS ARE A VERY USEFUL SORT OF PEOPLE, . . . . .	118
XLIII. A FURTHER VINDICATION OF THE USEFULNESS OF CHRISTIANS TO THE PUBLIC, . . . . .	120
XLIV. THAT THE CHRISTIANS ARE CONDEMNED MERELY UPON THE ACCOUNT OF THEIR NAME, . . . . .	121
XLV. CONCERNING ONE GREAT REASON FOR THE INNOCENCE OF CHRISTIANS ABOVE THAT OF ALL OTHER PEOPLE, . . . . .	122
XLVI. THAT CHRISTIANS HAVE A BETTER RIGHT TO A TOLERATION THAN PHILOSOPHERS, . . . . .	124
XLVII. THAT THE HEATHEN POETS AND PHILOSOPHERS STOLE MANY OF THEIR NOTIONS FROM THE HOLY SCRIPTURES, . . . . .	129
XLVIII. CONCERNING THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY, . . . . .	135
XLIX. THAT THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OUGHT NOT TO BE PERSECUTED, BECAUSE THE WORLD CANNOT BE WELL WITHOUT IT, . . . . .	139
L. THE CHRISTIAN TRIUMPH, . . . . .	140
THE CONVERSATION OF THE EMPEROR MARCUS ANTONIUS: A DISCOURSE WITH HOISELF, . . . . .	145



## BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICES.

---

WITHIN the present volume we have given two of the most interesting and important works of the days of early Christianity. The one is the great Apology of the most eloquent of the early Fathers of the Church—"the father of Latin Christianity," as Dean Milman calls him; the other is the ethical treatise of the pure-souled Stoic Emperor, the first great general persecutor of the Christian Church. A few prefatory words are needed upon each, but the reader is referred to the previous volume of this series—Bishop Kaye's account of Tertullian—for fuller details about him.

The life of Tertullian is only known to us through his writings. He was born at Carthage about A.D. 160, and died about 240; but the precise dates are uncertain. He was trained as a lawyer, but was converted to Christianity in 192, and became a priest. He was married, but childless. It was probably about ten years after his conversion that he became a Montanist, moved, as Bishop Kaye believes, by the laxity of the clergy that he saw around him, and the longing to find a stricter life. The same learned writer shows that his Montanist writings are among the most valuable, simply because, in his unsparing attacks on what he held to be faulty in the practices and discipline of the Church, he unconsciously preserves for our information what these were.

The work before us is the greatest of Tertullian's writings. The deeply religious heathen Emperor, M. Aurelius, died in 180, and was succeeded by his unworthy son, Commodus. He was followed by Septimius Severus, the first of the "Barrack Emperors," in other words, of those military adventurers who held the Roman Empire down to the days of Dioclesian, following one another rapidly, and, with hardly a single exception, dying violent deaths. The golden age of the Empire was gone, it was the iron age now. But the Christian Church, after a period of silent growth, after worship in

caves and catacombs, was now a recognised power in the Empire. It had a new philosophy to offer men, and a nascent literature; it boldly put forth its claims to obedience, and made converts among the rich and learned. M. Aurelius had done his utmost to crush it; Commodus had not done so, some of his courtiers were Christians, and persuaded him to leave their co-religionists alone. And Sept. Severus pursued in the main the same policy.

But the African Church was an exception to the general immunity. Much depended everywhere on the disposition of the several pro-consuls towards the faith. There had been laws in existence against it ever since the days of Nero, and it depended altogether on the various governors whether these laws should stand in abeyance or be put in vigorous exercise. There were by this time many thousands of believers in Africa; and now heathen fanaticism, which had been long smouldering, broke out. The priestesses of the "Dea Cœlestis" had raised seditious mobs, and allied heathens and Jews had destroyed Christian churches, and rifled and desecrated their burial-places. Caricatures of Christ were paraded through the streets, and the usual ridiculous charges of incest and cannibalism were brought against his disciples. It was all this which produced Tertullian's Apology.

He first addresses himself (chaps. i.-vi.) to this general argument, that the rulers at Carthage are persecuting a body of men, who are undeserving of condemnation. Trajan's counsel to Pliny, that Christians were not to be sought out, but if brought before him were to be punished, as the apologist rightly maintains, was illogical and confused. But the present action of the governing power was yet worse; it was persecuting a religion which confessedly was a strong agent in the reformation of popular morals. He then goes on to state what are the charges brought against Christians, and to assert their falsity (vii.-ix.), then takes them in detail. First, "sacrilege" and "treason." He meets the first by declaring that the gods of the heathen are no gods (x.-xv.), and then by demonstrating that Christians have a devout worship of their own, and profound reverence for Him whom they recognise as their God, and in doing this he refutes certain calumnies which have been brought against this worship (xvi.-xxiii.). These chapters are full of information concerning early Church customs. He goes on to say that it is the heathens and not the Christians who are really the impious, and that it is not true that Christians are enemies of the Commonwealth, seeing that the greatness of Rome owes nothing to

its heathen faith. And he retorts upon them the charge of impiety, by declaring that they hold Cæsar in greater dread than they do their gods, whilst the Christians pray to their God for Cæsar's welfare, though they will not pay that Cæsar lying honour. Then our apologist, dealing with details, argues passionately and grandly on behalf of a body of men who do not take vengeance for the wrongs that they are suffering. It has been many a time within their power to have raised the whirlwind against the government, but they have refrained; but they are strong in the knowledge of their coming victory. And he demands that therefore they should at once be admitted amongst the licensed "sects." Gathering strength as he is carried along on the stream of his majestic eloquence, and with the consciousness that he is gaining the better of his opponents at every turn, he breaks out into a magnificent peroration, partly of the deepest feeling, partly of withering scorn, and ends in a climax of impassioned and confident appeal.

The author of the present translation, as I learn from a letter sent to me by the present Rector, was Rector of Cranford from 1694 to 1726.

---

MARCUS AURELIUS ANTONINUS, who was Emperor of Rome from A.D. 161-180, was the noblest and purest of all who wore the purple. He came of a noble race, his two grandfathers had both been consuls. He was a favourite with the Emperor Hadrian from infancy; and whereas his father's surname was Verus, Hadrian familiarly called the child "Verissimus" from his disposition; and further, when he adopted Antoninus Pius as his heir, he made it a condition that he in turn should adopt the father of the young Aurelius. The boy's father dying early, his education was carried on by his grandfather, who assiduously sought out the best teachers that were to be found; and thus it was that M. Aurelius was trained as a Stoic. As he grew up he justified the expectations that were formed of him, attending strictly to all duties committed to him, and never yielding to the temptation to subordinate them to the studies that he loved. Antoninus Pius, on becoming Emperor, A.D. 138, bestowed his daughter upon him, and on his death was succeeded by him, at the urgent request of the Senate, for Aurelius was unwilling.