

**SELECTIONS
FROM EPICTETUS**

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Selections from Epictetus by George Long & Edwin Ginn

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GEORGE LONG & EDWIN GINN

**SELECTIONS
FROM EPICTETUS**

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FROM
EPICTETUS

GEORGE LONG'S TRANSLATION

ABRIDGED BY
EDWIN GINN

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PREFACE.



IT has been the aim of the editor to give in a small compass some of the choice sayings of this great man, from whom Marcus Aurelius drew much of his inspiration. Well would it be for our children, in this age of haste and nervous tension, to have these calm old philosophers for companions and to form a habit early in life of saving a portion of each day for the study of good literature; to dwell upon the lives of great men, and learn, if they can, the sources of their greatness. They all tell us that good habits lie at the foundation. What we do to-day will become easier to-morrow, and repeating the same thing only a few times forges a chain hard to be broken. We all remember in our childhood how hard it was the first time even on a steep hill to drag the sled down through the soft driven snow. The second time it was easier, and after a little while it would glide very swiftly

to the foot of the hill. Life's great plain seems very broad, level, and soft to young eyes, and they are careless of the tracks they are making. The broad plain narrows, the slopes grow steep, and too soon we find the stray tracks have become well-beaten roads which we follow with little thought whither they lead.

How important, then, that the young have the best models placed before them, and learn what the wisest of men in all ages have regarded as most desirable. While the great majority will prefer to learn from their own experience, some may save themselves many bitter trials by adopting the counsels of others. True, our lot has fallen in different times. We have many advantages the past ages had not. We may travel rapidly, acquire knowledge and wealth quickly, and surround ourselves with luxuries the past could not have. Without attempting to value the advantages to the human race from the application of electricity and steam to modes of travel, manufacture, etc., there seem to be many disadvantages from the effects of which we

are suffering. We are overvaluing, perhaps, the advantages of circumnavigating the whole globe in a manner so rapid that we can see or enjoy little in passing. We have in mind as the main thing traveling over the ground. In the rapidity with which we are able to accumulate wealth and manufacture articles of use, we perhaps forget the desirable limit, and to the end of our days we keep on accumulating. The great majority of mankind are not satisfied until their nervous energy is exhausted and they are unable to enjoy the results of their accumulations. They have been working on these lines so constantly and developing their powers in this one direction to such an extent that they are not able to work in other lines or secure enjoyment in broader fields of activity. These very energies that we have called to our aid are still, to many of us, our greatest misfortunes, for they cause us all to move and think with such a degree of haste that we neither act nor speak at our best. To do that requires deliberation. Better would it be for this age if it moved slowly and studied more on the

way, accumulated less and enjoyed the result of its labors as it went along.

Would it not be well under these circumstances that we should study the great principles underlying all activity and character, so well stated by this great philosopher?

EDWIN GINN.

BOSTON, January, 1896.

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