

II.

From the Apology Addressed to Marcus Aurelius Antoninus.³⁶⁰⁸

For the race of the pious is now persecuted in a way contrary to all precedent, being harassed by a new kind of edicts³⁶⁰⁹ everywhere in Asia. For unblushing informers, and such as are greedy of other men's goods, taking occasion from the orders *issued*, carry on their robbery without any disguise, plundering of their property night and day those who are guilty of no wrong.

If these proceedings take place at thy bidding,³⁶¹⁰ well and good.³⁶¹¹ For a just sovereign will never take unjust measures; and we, on our part, gladly accept the honour of such a death. This request only we present to thee, that thou wouldst first of all examine for thyself into the behaviour of these *reputed* agents of so much strife, and then come to a just decision as to whether they merit death and punishment, or deserve to live in safety and quiet. But if, on the contrary, it shall turn out that this measure, and this new sort of command, which it would be unbecoming to employ even against barbarian foemen, do not proceed from thee, then all the more do we entreat thee not to leave us thus exposed to the spoliation of the populace.

For the philosophy current with us flourished in the first instance among barbarians;³⁶¹² and, when it afterwards sprang up among the nations under thy rule, during the distinguished reign of thy ancestor Augustus, it proved to be a blessing of most happy omen to thy empire. For from that time the Roman power has risen to greatness and splendour. To this power thou hast succeeded as the much desired³⁶¹³ possessor; and such shalt thou continue, together with thy son,³⁶¹⁴ if thou protect that philosophy which has grown up with thy empire, and which took its rise with Augustus; to which also thy *more recent* ancestors paid honour, along with the other religions *prevailing in the empire*. A very strong proof, moreover, that it was for good that the system we profess came to prevail at the same time that the empire

3608 In Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, l. c.

3609 Migne thinks that by these are meant the orders given by magistrates of cities on their own authority, in distinction from those which issued from emperors or governors of provinces.

3610 The reference must be to private letters: for in any of the leading cities of Asia a mandate of the emperor would have been made public before the proconsul proceeded to execute it.—Migne.

3611 Ἔστω καλῶς γινόμενον seems to be here used in the sense of καλῶς alone. The correctness of Migne's translation, *recte atque ordine facta sunt*, is open to doubt.

3612 The Jews. Porphyry calls the doctrines of the Christians βάρβαρον τόλμημα. See Euseb., *Hist. Eccl.*, vi. 19.—Migne.

3613 Εὐκταῖος.

3614 Commodus, who hence appears to have been not yet associated with his father in the empire.—Migne.

of such happy commencement was established, is this—that ever since the reign of Augustus nothing untoward has happened; but, on the contrary, everything has contributed to the splendour and renown *of the empire*, in accordance with the devout wishes³⁶¹⁵ of all. Nero and Domitian alone of all *the emperors*, imposed upon by certain calumniators, have cared to bring any impeachment against our doctrines. They, too, are the source from which it has happened that the lying slanders on those who profess them have, in consequence of the senseless habit which prevails *of taking things on hearsay*, flowed down to our own times.³⁶¹⁶ But the course which they in their ignorance pursued was set aside by thy pious progenitors, who frequently and in many instances rebuked by their rescripts³⁶¹⁷ those who dared to set on foot any hostilities against them. It appears, for example, that thy grandfather Adrian wrote, among others, to Fundanus, the proconsul then in charge of the government of Asia. Thy father, too, when thou thyself wast associated with him³⁶¹⁸ in the administration of the empire, wrote to the cities, forbidding them to take any measures adverse to us: among the rest to the people of Larissa, and of Thessalonica, and of Athens, and, *in short*, to all the Greeks. And as regards thyself, seeing that thy sentiments respecting the Christians³⁶¹⁹ are not only the same as theirs, but even much more generous and wise, we are the more persuaded that thou wilt do all that we ask of thee.



3615 Εὐχάς.

3616 Ἐφ' ὧν καὶ τὸ τῆς συκοφαντίας ἀλόγῳ συνηθείᾳ περὶ τοῦς τοιοῦτους ῥυῆναι συμβέβηκε ψεῦδος.

3617 Ἐγγράφως.

3618 The reading of Valesius, σοῦ τὰ πάντα συνδιοικοῦντος αὐτῷ, is here adopted.

3619 Περὶ τούτων.

III.

From the Same Apology.³⁶²⁰

We are not those who pay homage to stones, that are without sensation; but of the only God, who is before all and over all, and, moreover, we are worshippers of His Christ, who is veritably God the Word³⁶²¹ existing before all time.

3620 In the *Chronicon Alexandrinum*.

3621 ὄντως Θεοῦ Λόγου.