

The EPISTLES of PAUL the APOSTLE to SENECA, with  
SENECA'S to PAUL.

[Several very learned writers have entertained a favourable opinion of these Epistles. They are undoubtedly of high antiquity. Salmeron cites them to prove that Seneca was one of Cæsar's household, referred to by Paul, *Philip.* iv. 22, as saluting the brethren at Philippi. In Jerome's enumeration of illustrious men, he places Seneca, on account of these Epistles, amongst the ecclesiastical and holy writers of the Christian Church. Sixtus Senensis has published them in his *Bibliothèque*, pp. 89, 90; and it is from thence that the present translation is made. Baronius, Bellarmine, Dr. Cave, Spanheim, and others, contend that they are not genuine.]

CHAP. I.

ANNÆUS SENECA to PAUL *Greeting.*

I SUPPOSE, Paul, you have been informed of that conversation, which passed yesterday between me and my Lucilius, concerning hypocrisy and other subjects; for there were some of your disciples in company with us;

2 For when we were retired into the Sallustian gardens, through which they were also passing, and would have gone another way, by our persuasion they joined company with us.

3 I desire you to believe, that we much wish for your conversation:

4 We were much delighted with your book of many Epistles, which you have wrote to some cities and chief towns of provinces, and contain wonderful instructions for moral conduct:

5 Such sentiments, as I suppose you were not the author of, but only the instrument of conveying, though sometimes both the author and the instrument.

6 For such is the sublimity of those doctrines, and their grandeur, that I suppose the age of a man is scarce sufficient to be instructed and perfected in the knowledge of them. I wish your welfare, my brother. Farewell.

CHAP. II.

PAUL to SENECA *Greeting.*

I RECEIVED your letter yesterday with pleasure: to

which I could immediately have wrote an answer, had the young man been at home, whom I intended to have sent to you:

2 For you know when, and by whom, at what seasons, and to whom I must deliver every thing which I send.

3 I desire therefore you would not charge me with negligence, if I wait for a proper person.

4 I reckon myself very happy in having the judgment of so valuable a person, that you are delighted with my Epistles:

5 For you would not be esteemed a censor, a philosopher, or be the tutor of so great a prince, and a master of every thing, if you were not sincere. I wish you a lasting prosperity.

CHAP. III.

ANNÆUS SENECA to PAUL *Greeting.*

I HAVE completed some volumes, and divided them into their proper parts.

2 I am determined to read them to Cæsar, and if any favourable opportunity happens, you also shall be present, when they are read;

3 But if that cannot be, I will appoint and give you notice of a day, when we will together read over the performance.

4 I had determined, if I could with safety, first to have your opinion of it, before I published it to Cæsar, that you might be convinced of my affection to you. Farewell, dearest Paul.

## PAUL TO SENECA.

### CHAP. IV.

PAUL to SENECA *Greeting.*

**A**S often as I read your letters, I imagine you present with me; nor indeed do I think any other, than that you are always with us.

2 As soon therefore as you begin to come, we shall presently see each other. I wish you all prosperity.

### CHAP. V.

ANNÆUS SENECA to PAUL *Greeting.*

**W**E are very much concerned at your too long absence from us.

2 What is it, or what affairs are they, which obstruct your coming?

3 If you fear the anger of Cæsar, because you have abandoned your former religion, and made proselytes also of others, you have this to plead, that your acting thus proceeded not from inconstancy, but judgment. Farewell.

### CHAP. VI.

PAUL to SENECA and LUCILIUS *Greeting.*

**C**ONCERNING those things about which ye wrote to me it is not proper for me to mention anything in writing with pen and ink: the one of which leaves marks, and the other evidently declares things.

2 Especially since I know that there are near you, as well as me, those who will understand my meaning.

3 Deference is to be paid to all men, and so much the more, as they are more likely to take occasions of quarrelling.

4 And if we show a submissive temper, we shall overcome effectually in all points, if so be they are, who are capable of seeing

and acknowledging themselves to have been in the wrong. Farewell.

### CHAP. VII.

ANNÆUS SENECA to PAUL *Greeting.*

**I** PROFESS myself extremely pleased with the reading your letters to the Galatians, Corinthians, and people of Achaia.

2 For the Holy Ghost has in them by you delivered those sentiments which are very lofty, sublime, deserving of all respect, and beyond your own invention.

3 I could wish therefore, that when you are writing things so extraordinary, there might not be wanting an elegance of speech agreeable to their majesty.

4 And I must own my brother, that I may not at once dishonestly conceal anything from you, and be unfaithful to my own conscience, that the emperor is extremely pleased with the sentiments of your Epistles;

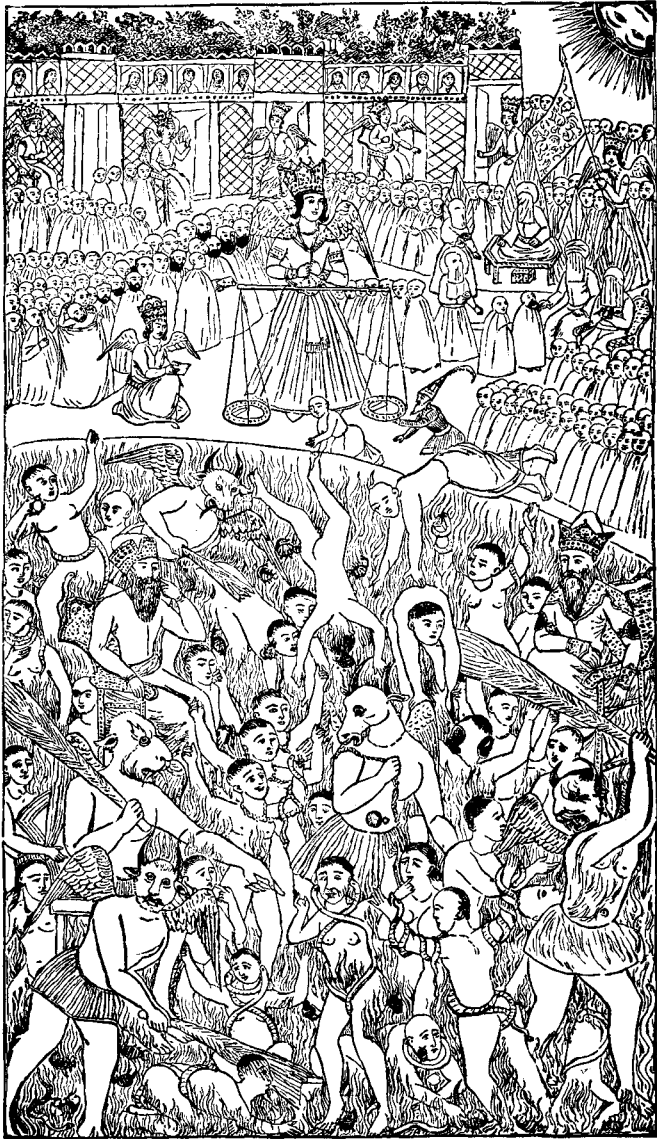
5 For when he heard the beginning of them read, he declared, That he was surprised to find such notions in a person, who had not had a regular education.

6 To which I replied, That the Gods sometimes made use of mean (innocent) persons to speak by, and gave him an instance of this in a mean countryman, named Vatienus, who, when he was in the country of Reate, had two men appeared to him, called Castor and Pollux, and received a revelation from the gods. Farewell.

### CHAP. VIII.

PAUL to SENECA *Greeting.*

**A**LTHOUGH I know the emperor is both an admirer and favourer of our (religion), yet give me leave to advise you against your suffering any injury, (by shewing favour to us.)



THE LAST JUDGMENT.

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FROM A PERSIAN MINIATURE OF THE EIGHTH CENTURY.

2 I think indeed you ventured upon a very dangerous attempt, when you would declare (to the emperor) that which is so very contrary to his religion, and way of worship; seeing he is a worshipper of the heathen gods.

3 I know not what you particularly had in view, when you told him of this; but I suppose you did it out of too great respect for me.

4 But I desire that for the future you would not do so; for you had need be careful, lest by shewing your affection for me, you should offend your master:

5 His anger indeed will do us no harm, if he continue a heathen; nor will his not being angry be of any service to us:

6 And if the empress act worthy of her character, she will not be angry; but if she acts as a woman, she will be affronted. Farewell.

#### CHAP. IX.

ANNÆUS SENECA to PAUL *Greeting.*

I KNOW that my letter, wherein I acquainted you, that I had read to the Emperor your Epistles, does not so much affect you as the nature of the things (contained in them),

2 Which do so powerfully divert men's minds from their former manners and practices, that I have always been surprised, and have been fully convinced of it by many arguments heretofore.

3 Let us therefore begin afresh; and if any thing heretofore has been imprudently acted, do you forgive.

4 I have sent you a book *de copia verborum*. Farewell, dearest Paul.

#### CHAP. X.

PAUL to SENECA *Greeting.*

AS often as I write to you, and place my name before yours, I do a thing both disagreeable to myself, and contrary to our religion:

2 For I ought, as I have often declared, to become all things to all men, and to have that regard to your quality, which the Roman law has honoured all senators with; namely, to put my name last in the (inscription of the) Epistle, that I may not at length with uneasiness and shame be obliged to do that which it was always my inclination to do. Farewell, most respected master. Dated the fifth of the calends of July, in the fourth consulship of Nero, and Messala.

#### CHAP. XI.

ANNÆUS SENECA to PAUL *Greeting.*

ALL happiness to you, my dearest Paul.

2 If a person so great, and every way agreeable as you are, become not only a common, but a most intimate friend to me, how happy will be the case of Seneca!

3 You therefore, who are so eminent, and so far exalted above all, even the greatest, do not think yourself unfit to be first named in the inscription of an Epistle;

4 Lest I should suspect you intend not so much to try me, as to banter me; for you know yourself to be a Roman citizen.

5 And I could wish to be in that circumstance or station which you are, and that you were in the same that I am. Farewell, dearest Paul. Dated the xth of the calends of April, in the consulship of Aprianus and Capito.

CHAP. XII.

ANNÆUS SENECA to PAUL *Greeting.*

ALL happiness to you, my dearest Paul. Do you not suppose I am extremely concerned and grieved that your innocence should bring you into sufferings?

2 And that all the people should suppose you (Christians) so criminal, and imagine all the misfortunes that happen to the city, to be caused by you?

3 But let us bear the charge with a patient temper, appealing (for our innocence) to the court (above), which is the only one our hard fortune will allow us to address to, till at length our misfortunes shall end in unalterable happiness.

4 Former ages have produced (tyrants) Alexander the son of Philip, and Dionysius; ours also has produced Caius Cæsar; whose inclinations were their only laws.

5 As to the frequent burnings of the city of Rome, the cause is manifest; and if a person in my mean circumstances might be allowed to speak, and one might declare these dark things without danger, every one should see the whole of the matter.

6 The Christians and Jews are indeed commonly punished for the crime of burning the city; but that impious miscreant, who delights in murders and butcheries, and disguises his villainies with lies, is appointed to, or reserved till, his proper time.

7 And as the life of every excellent person is now sacrificed instead of that one person (who is the author of the mischief), so this one shall be sacrificed for many, and he shall be devoted to be burnt with fire instead of all.

8 One hundred and thirty-two houses, and four whole squares (or islands) were burnt down in six days: the seventh put an end to the burning. I wish you all happiness.

9 Dated the fifth of the calends of April, in the consulship of Frigius and Bassus.

CHAP. XIII.

ANNÆUS SENECA to PAUL *Greeting.*

ALL happiness to you, my dearest Paul.

2 You have wrote many volumes in an allegorical and mystical style, and therefore such mighty matters and business being committed to you, require not to be set off with any rhetorical flourishes of speech, but only with some proper elegance.

3 I remember you often say, that many by affecting such a style do injury to their subjects, and lose the force of the matters they treat of.

4 But in this I desire you to regard me, namely, to have respect to true Latin, and to choose just words, that so you may the better manage the noble trust which is reposed in you.

5 Farewell. Dated v<sup>th</sup> of the names of July, Leo and Savinus consuls.

CHAP. XIV.

PAUL to SENECA *Greeting.*

YOUR serious consideration required with these discoveries, which the Divine Being has granted but to few.

2 I am thereby assured that I sow the most strong seed in a fertile soil, not anything material, which is subject to corruption, but the durable word of God, which shall increase and bring forth fruit to eternity.

## PAUL AND THECLA.

3 That which by your wisdom you have attained to, shall abide without decay for ever.

4 Believe that you ought to avoid the superstitions of Jews and Gentiles.

5 The things which you have in some measure arrived to, prudently make known to the emperor, his family, and to faithful friends;

6 And though your sentiments

will seem disagreeable, and not be comprehended by them, seeing most of them will not regard your discourses, yet the Word of God once infused into them, will at length make them become new men, aspiring towards God.

7 Farewell Seneca, who art most dear to us. Dated on the Calends of August, in the consulship of Leo and Savinus.

### The ACTS of PAUL and THECLA.

[Tertullian says that this piece was forged by a Presbyter of Asia, who being convicted, "confessed that he did it out of respect of Paul," and Pope Gelasius, in his Decree against apocryphal books, inserted it among them. Notwithstanding this, a large part of the history was credited, and looked upon as genuine among the primitive Christians. Cyprian, Eusebius, Epiphanius, Austin, Gregory Nazianzen, Chrysostom, and Severus Sulpitius, who all lived within the fourth century, mention Thecla, or refer to her history. Basil of Seleucia wrote her acts, sufferings, and victories, in verse; and Euagrius Scholasticus, an ecclesiastical historian, about 590, relates that "after the Emperor Zeno had abdicated his empire, and Basilik had taken possession of it, he had a vision of the holy and excellent martyr Thecla, who promised him the restoration of his empire; for which, when it was brought about, he erected and dedicated a most noble and sumptuous temple to this famous martyr Thecla, at Seleucia, a city of Isauria, and bestowed upon it very noble endowments, which (says the author) are preserved even till this day." Hist. Eccl., lib. 3, cap. 8.—Cardinal Baronius, Loerinus, Archbishop Wake, and others; and also the learned Grabe, who edited the Septuagint, and revived the Acts of Paul and Thecla, consider them as having been written in the Apostolic age; as containing nothing superstitious, or disagreeing from the opinions and belief of those times; and, in short, as a genuine and authentic history. Again, it is said, that this is not the original book of the early Christians; but however that may be, it is published from the Greek MS. in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, which Dr. Mills copied and transmitted to Dr. Grabe.]

*The Martyrdom of the holy and glorious first Martyr and Apostle Thecla.*

#### CHAP. I.

1 Demas and Hermogenes become Paul's companions. 4 Paul visits Onesiphorus. 8 Invited by Demas and Hermogenes. 11 Preaches to the household of Onesiphorus. 12 His sermon.

WHEN Paul went up to Iconium, after his flight from Antioch, Demas and Hermogenes became his companions, who were then full of hypocrisy.

2 But Paul looking only at the goodness of God, did them no harm, but loved them greatly.

3 Accordingly he endeavoured to make agreeable to them, all