

CICERO

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649549726

Cicero by W. Lucas Collins

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

W. LUCAS COLLINS

CICERO

The Volumes published of this Series contain

HOMER: THE ILIAD, BY THE EDITOR.

HOMER: THE ODYSSEY, BY THE SAME.

HERODOTUS, BY GEORGE C. SWAYNE, M.A.

CÆSAR, BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

VIRGIL, BY THE EDITOR.

HORACE, BY THEODORE MARTIN.

ÆSCHYLUS, BY REGINALD S. COPLESTON, B.A.

XENOPHON, BY SIR ALEXANDER GRANT, BART.,
LL.D.

The following Authors, by various Contributors, are
in preparation :—

PLINY'S LETTERS.

SOPHOCLES.

EURIPIDES.

ARISTOPHANES.

JUVENAL.

HESIOD.

OTHERS WILL FOLLOW.

A Volume will be published Quarterly, price 2s. 6d.

CICERO

BY THE

REV. W. LUCAS COLLINS, M.A.

AUTHOR OF

'ETONIANA,' 'THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS,' ETC.



WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS
EDINBURGH AND LONDON
MDCCLXXI

I HAVE to acknowledge my obligations to Mr Forsyth's well-known 'Life of Cicero,' especially as a guide to the biographical materials which abound in his Orations and Letters. Mr Long's scholarly volumes have also been found useful. For the translations, such as they are, I am responsible. If I could have met with any which seemed to me more satisfactory, I would gladly have adopted them.

W. L. C.

C I C E R O.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY LIFE AND EDUCATION.

WHEN we speak, in the language of our title-page, of the 'Ancient Classics,' we must remember that the word 'ancient' is to be taken with a considerable difference, in one sense. Ancient all the Greek and Roman authors are, as dated comparatively with our modern era. But as to the antique character of their writings, there is often a difference which is not merely one of date. The poetry of Homer and Hesiod is ancient, as having been sung and written when the society in which the authors lived, and to which they addressed themselves, was in its comparative infancy. The chronicles of Herodotus are ancient, partly from their subject-matter and partly from their primitive style. But in this sense there are ancient authors belonging to every nation which has a literature of its own. Viewed in this light, the history

of Thucydides, the letters and orations of Cicero, are not ancient at all. Bede, and Chaucer, and Matthew of Paris, and Froissart, are far more redolent of antiquity. The several books which make up what we call the Bible are all ancient, no doubt; but even between the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel and the Epistles of St Paul there is a far wider real interval than the mere lapse of centuries.

In one respect, the times of Cicero, in spite of their complicated politics, should have more interest for a modern reader than most of what is called Ancient History. Forget the date but for a moment, and there is scarcely anything ancient about them. The scenes and actors are modern—terribly modern; far more so than the middle ages of Christendom. Between the times of our own Plantagenets and Georges, for instance, there is a far wider gap, in all but years, than between the consulships of Cæsar and Napoleon. The habits of life, the ways of thinking, the family affections, the tastes of the Romans of Cicero's day, were in many respects wonderfully like our own; the political jealousies and rivalries have repeated themselves again and again in the last two or three centuries of Europe: their code of political honour and morality, debased as it was, was not much lower than that which was held by some great statesmen a generation or two before us. Let us be thankful if the most frightful of their vices were the exclusive shame of paganism.

It was in an old but humble country-house, near the town of Arpinum, under the Volscian hills, that Marcus Tullius Cicero was born, one hundred and six years before the Christian era. The family was of an-

cient 'equestrian'* dignity, but as none of its members had hitherto borne any office of state, it did not rank as 'noble.' His grandfather and his father had borne the same three names—the last an inheritance from some forgotten ancestor, who had either been successful in the cultivation of vetches (*cicer*), or, as less complimentary traditions said, had a wart of that shape upon his nose. The grandfather was still living when the little Cicero was born; a stout old conservative, who had successfully resisted the attempt to introduce vote by ballot into his native town, and hated the Greeks (who were just then coming into fashion) as heartily as his English representative, fifty years ago, might have hated a Frenchman. "The more Greek a man knew," he protested, "the greater rascal he turned out." The father was a man of quiet habits, taking no part even in local politics, given to books, and to the enlargement and improvement of the old family house, which, up to his time, seems not to have been more than a modest grange. The situation (on a small island formed by the little river Fibrenus†) was beautiful and romantic; and the love for it, which grew up with the young Cicero as a child, he never lost in the

* The *Equites* were originally those who served in the Roman cavalry; but latterly all citizens came to be reckoned in the class who had a certain property qualification, and who could prove free descent up to their grandfather.

† Now known as Il Fiume della Posta. Fragments of Cicero's villa are thought to have been discovered built into the walls of the deserted convent of San Dominico. The ruin known as 'Cicero's Tower' has probably no connection with him.