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# PLINY'S LETTERS

BY THE

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## ADVERTISEMENT.

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MANY of the translations in this volume are our own. Sometimes we have borrowed from the versions of Lord Orrery and Melmoth. Occasionally we have had the advantage, of which we beg to express our hearty appreciation, of the versions which Dean Merivale gives in his 'History of the Romans under the Empire.'

## INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

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As this work is not arranged in a regular biographical form, it seems advisable to give a brief sketch of the main events in the life of the Author of these Letters. Most of these events the reader will find related at greater length as he proceeds.

Pliny the younger was born A.D. 62. In A.D. 79 he witnessed the great eruption of Vesuvius. In the following year he commenced practice as an advocate in Rome. For a short time he served as a military tribune in Syria. Returning to Rome, he was made Quæstor; and in A.D. 93, Prætor. In A.D. 100, he was Consul. He also filled at some time the office of Prefect of the Treasury, and he was one of the Commissioners of the Tiber. He belonged to the College of Augurs. In A.D. 103, he went as Proprætor to the province of Pontus and Bithynia, an office which he held for about two years. We know nothing of him later than the year 107. He was twice married, but left no children.

# PLINY'S LETTERS.

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## CHAPTER I.

PLINY'S EARLY DAYS—SKETCH OF THE REIGNS OF  
VESPASIAN AND TITUS—PLINY THE ELDER.

No reading can be pleasanter or more instructive than the correspondence of a clever and accomplished man, whose circumstances have brought him into continual contact with the politics and literature of his day. Cicero's letters are certainly among the most interesting remains of antiquity. Those of the younger Pliny are indeed the work of a man many degrees intellectually inferior to Cicero, but they have deservedly found many attentive readers in modern times. They throw much light on that period of transition in the history of mankind which began with the origin and rise of the Christian Church ; and, as we read them, we feel that there is something in their general tone and character which makes them a sort of link between the old and new worlds.