



EPICTETUS

ENCHIRIDION

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NOTE ON THE TEXT

The text of the second edition is a reprint of the first edition except for a few minor corrections in style, punctuation, and spelling, which have been revised to conform to current American usage.

The editorial staff of the publishers has added a few explanatory notes which are set in brackets and marked "Ed."

O.P.

INTRODUCTION

The little book by Epictetus called *Enchiridion* or “manual” has played a disproportionately large role in the rise of modern attitudes and modern philosophy. As soon as it had been translated into the vernacular languages, it became a bestseller among independent intellectuals, among anti-Christian thinkers, and among philosophers of a subjective cast. Montaigne had a copy of the *Enchiridion* among his books. Pascal violently rejected the megalomaniac pride of the Stoic philosopher. Frederick the Great carried the book with him on all campaigns. It was a source of inspiration and encouragement to Anthony, Earl of Shaftesbury, in the serious illness which ended only in his death; many pages of his diaries contain passages copied from the *Enchiridion*. It has been studied and widely quoted by Scottish philosophers like Francis Hutcheson, Adam Smith, and Adam Ferguson who valued Stoic moral philosophy for its reconciliation of social dependency and personal independence.

That there was a rebirth of Stoicism in the centuries of rebirth which marked the emergence of the modern age was not mere chance. Philosophical, moral, and social conditions of the time united to cause it. Roman Stoicism had been developed in times of despotism as a philosophy of lonely and courageous souls who had recognized the redeeming power of philosophical reason in all the moral and social