

OXFORD WORLD'S CLASSICS

*For over 100 years Oxford World's Classics have brought readers closer to the world's great literature. Now with over 700 titles—from the 4,000-year-old myths of Mesopotamia to the twentieth century's greatest novels—the series makes available lesser-known as well as celebrated writing.*

*The pocket-sized hardbacks of the early years contained introductions by Virginia Woolf, T. S. Eliot, Graham Greene, and other literary figures which enriched the experience of reading.*

*Today the series is recognized for its fine scholarship and reliability in texts that span world literature, drama and poetry, religion, philosophy and politics. Each edition includes perceptive commentary and essential background information to meet the changing needs of readers.*

OXFORD WORLD'S CLASSICS



PLINY THE YOUNGER

## *Complete Letters*



*Translated with an Introduction and Notes by*

P. G. WALSH

OXFORD  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

15 *Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan* August 110 (7109)

My lord, I am reporting to you that I have reached Ephesus by sea with my entire entourage, having rounded Cape Malea\* after being

held back by opposing winds. I am confident that you regard this as your concern. I now intend to make for my province, partly by coastal shipping and partly by carriages,\* for on the one hand the oppressive heat impedes overland travel, and on the other the Etesian winds\* are a bar to uninterrupted sailing.

16 *Trajan to Pliny* August-September 110 (?109)

My most dear Secundus, you did well to report back, for I am interested to know the nature of your route to the province. It is wise of you to decide to make use of shipping for part of the journey, and carriages overland for the rest, according as local conditions advise.

17A *Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan* September 110 (?109)

1 My lord, I enjoyed a most bracing voyage by sea to Ephesus, but once I began to journey by carriage from there, I was oppressed by the most intense heat and minor bouts of fever, so I called a halt at Pergamum.\* Then again, when I transferred to coastal vessels, I was detained by opposing winds, so I reached Bithynia rather later than I had expected, on 17 September. I cannot, however, grumble about the delay, since it was my good fortune to celebrate your birthday\* in 3 the province, the best of omens. At present I am reviewing the expenditure, revenues, and debtors of the city of Prusa, and the process of handling these makes me realize that this exercise is more and more essential, for many sums of money are for various reasons being held back in private hands, and, again, some are being disbursed on wholly illegal outlays. This is my written report to you, my lord, upon arrival here.

17B *Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan* September 110 (?109)

1 I entered the province, my lord, on 17 September, and found it in that sense of obedience and loyalty towards you such as you 2 deserve from the whole human race. You must ponder, my lord, whether you consider it necessary to send a quantity-surveyor\* here, for it appears that not inconsiderable amounts of money could be recovered from contractors of public works if measurements were

conducted honestly. This at any rate is how I foresee it on the evidence of the Prusians, with whose accounts I am particularly exercised.

18 *Trajan to Pliny* October-November 110 (?109)

If only you could have arrived in Bithynia without distress to your 1 dear person and to your entourage, and if only your journey from Ephesus had been as pleasant as that which you experienced on your voyage there! I have gathered from your letter, fondest Secundus, 2 the date of your arrival in Bithynia. I believe that the provincials will understand that I have taken thought for their interests, for you too will ensure that it is clear to them that you were chosen to be dispatched to them in my place.

You must take particular care to examine the financial accounts 3 of the cities, for it is quite clear that they are not in order. As for a quantity-surveyor, I have scarcely enough for the works being conducted in Rome or the neighbourhood. But in every province men can be found who can be trusted, so you will not be without them so long as you are willing carefully to seek them out.

19 *Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan* late 110 (?109)

My lord, I am writing for the guidance of your advice. I am in doubt 1 whether I should maintain guard over prisoners by employing the public slaves of the cities, which has hitherto been the practice, or whether I should employ soldiers;\* for my fear is that the use of public slaves may result in less reliable supervision, but on the other hand this duty may divert a not inconsiderable number of soldiers 2 from military tasks. Meanwhile I have reinforced the public slaves with a few soldiers, but I see that there is a danger that this practice may lead to neglect of duty by both, as each side feels sure that they can pin the guilt they share on the other.

20 *Trajan to Pliny* late 110 (?109)

There should be no need, my fondest Secundus, for more of our 1 fellow soldiers to be diverted to guard duties over the prisons. Let us continue with the practice which obtains in your province of

<sup>2</sup> employing public slaves for guard-duties. Indeed, it lies with your discipline and careful attention to ensure that they do the job conscientiously; for, as you write, we must be especially apprehensive, if soldiers are mingled with public slaves, that they become more careless through relying on each other. We must rather abide by the practice that as few soldiers as possible should be called away from the standards.

**21 Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan** late 110 (?109)

<sup>1</sup> Gavius Bassus, prefect of the Pontic shore,\* has paid me a most respectful and dutiful visit, my lord, and has stayed with me for several days. So far as I could ascertain, he is an outstanding man, worthy of your kindness. I acquainted him with your order that, from the cohorts which you wished me to command, he should be satisfied with ten first-class privates,\* two cavalrymen, and one centurion. He replied that this number was insufficient for him, and that he would write to you to say this. This was the reason which deterred me from opining that the troops which he has in excess of that number should be at once recalled.

**22 Trajan to Pliny**

late 110 (?109)

<sup>1</sup> Gavius Bassus has likewise written to me to say that the number of troops I had included in my instructions to be entrusted to him was not enough for him. I have ordered that my reply to him\* should be attached to this letter for your information. There is a world of difference between the needs of his situation and whether on this pretext he wishes to employ them more widely. But my concern must be solely for what is useful, and as far as possible to ensure that the soldiers are not absent from the standards.

**23 Pliny to the emperor Trajan**

late 110 (?109)

<sup>1</sup> The citizens of Prusa, my lord, have public baths which are filthy and out of date, and they think it important to have a new building.\*  
<sup>2</sup> In my view you can show favour to their request, for there will be money to finance it. In the first place, there are the sums which I have already begun to recover and to exact from private citizens, and

secondly, amounts which they habitually expend on olive oil they are ready to contribute towards the building of the baths. In general, both the prestige of the town and the splendour of your reign make this demand.

**24 Trajan to Pliny**

late 110 (?109)

If the construction of the new baths is not going to impose a burden on the resources of the Prusians, we can grant this request, so long as no levy is imposed on them for that purpose, and that they do not have fewer resources available for necessary expenditure in the future.

**25 Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan** late 110 (?109)

My deputy, Servilius Pudens,\* arrived at Nicomedia on 24 November, my lord, thus freeing me from the anxiety caused by the lengthy wait.

**26 Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan** late 110-early 111 (?109-10)

Your kindnesses bestowed on me, my lord, have united Rosianus<sup>1</sup> Geminus\* with me in the closest bond of friendship, for I had him as quaestor in my consulship. I found him most attentive to me, and after my consulship he has shown me the same degree of respect, and he has enhanced the allegiance of his official relationship by informal gestures of service. So I am requesting your personal<sup>2</sup> indulgence that you should take to your heart his high status. You will also, if you repose any trust in me, grant him your favour. He himself will ensure, in the tasks which you enjoin on him, that he is deserving of greater things. What makes me less effusive in praise of him is my hope that his sincerity, honesty, and hard work are abundantly known to you, not only from the offices which he has held in the city before your eyes, but also from his military service with you in the field.

This one request, which because of my affection for you I do not<sup>3</sup> yet seem to have made in sufficient fullness, I make again and again, and I beg you, my lord, to assent at the earliest possible moment to my joy at the illustrious standing of my quaestor, which through him affects my own.

27 *Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan* late 110 (?109)  
 Your freedman and procurator Maximus, my lord, maintains that in addition to the ten first-class private soldiers which you ordered me to allocate to the excellent Gemellinus,\* he needs six soldiers more. I thought that for the moment those soldiers should be left in his retinue as I had found them, especially as he was journeying to Paphlagonia to obtain grain.\* I had in fact at his request given him two cavalymen in addition as bodyguards. Please let me know what procedure you wish to maintain in future.

28 *Trajan to Pliny* late 110 (?109)  
 You acted rightly in equipping my freedman Maximus with troops, as he was setting out at the time to collect grain, for he was undertaking a special mission. When he returns to his former activity, the two soldiers you have assigned to him will be enough for him, together with the same number supplied by my procurator Viridius Gemellinus, whose assistant he is.

29 *Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan* late 110 (?109)  
 Sempronius Caelianus,\* an outstanding young man, has discovered and sent to me two slaves who were among the new recruits. I have postponed punishing them until I could consult you about the nature of the punishment, for you are the one who established the military discipline we uphold. I am hesitant chiefly because, though they had already taken the oath, they had not yet been allocated among the units. Please write, my lord, to tell me what course I must follow, especially since this involves a precedent.

30 *Trajan to Pliny* late 110  
 1 Sempronius Caelianus acted in accordance with my instructions by sending to you those who must be subject to a formal inquiry to decide whether they appear to have deserved the death penalty. It makes a difference whether they volunteered, or whether they were conscripted, or were provided as substitutes. If they were  
 2 conscripted, the scrutiny at recruitment was at fault. If they were

supplied as substitutes, the blame lies with those who supplied them. If they volunteered in full knowledge of their status, they are to be executed. It does not make much difference that they had not been allocated among the units, for the day on which they first passed muster was the time when truth of their origin was demanded of them.

31 *Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan* late 110  
 Saving your eminence, my lord, you must condescend to confront 1 my worries, since you have given me the right to refer to you issues on which I was doubtful. In most cities, and notably at Nicomedia 2 and Nicaea, certain men who had been condemned to forced labour, or to the arena and to punishments similar to these,\* are performing the duties and functions of public slaves, even to the point of drawing the yearly emolument of the public slave. On being apprised of this, I pondered long and hard about what I should do, for I thought 3 it extremely harsh after such a long interval to return them to their punitive status, when several of them were now old, and by all accounts were living frugal and moderate lives. Yet I thought it insufficiently fitting to keep condemned men engaged on public projects. On the other hand, I considered it inexpedient to feed them at public expense for doing nothing, while not to feed them was also dangerous. Of necessity therefore I have left the whole issue hanging 4 until I could consult you. Perhaps you will ask how it came about that they were released from the punishment to which they had been condemned. I too made enquiries, but discovered nothing to enable me to make a firm declaration. Though the decrees by which they had been condemned were adduced, there were no proofs which could establish that they were freed. There were, however, some 5 who spoke up, entering pleas for them, that they had been released by orders of proconsuls or their deputies. What lent substance to this claim was that it was credible that no one had dared to maintain this without authority.

32 *Trajan to Pliny* late 110 (?109)  
 We are to remember that you were sent to this province of yours 1 because many things appeared in need of improvement. What will

stand especially in need of correction is the fact that those condemned to punishment were not merely, as you write, freed without authority, but are also enrolled in the status of responsible officials.\*

2 Accordingly, those who have been condemned within the past ten years and have not been released by any appropriate authority must be returned to continue their sentences. Any of more advanced years, and the elderly who are found to have been condemned more than ten years ago, are to be spread among duties not much different from the punishment earlier prescribed. Such slaves are usually assigned to the baths, or to clearing the sewers, or again, to laying roads and streets.

### 33 *Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan* late 110 (?109)

1 As I was touring round a different area of the province, a massive fire at Nicomedia burnt down many dwellings of private citizens and two public buildings, the Gerousia and the temple of Isis,\* in spite of the road lying between them. The fire spread quite extensively, in the first place because of the violence of the wind, and secondly because of the inactivity of the people. It is clear that they stood idly by throughout, taking no action as they watched the disastrous event. In general, there was no state provision of a pump or bucket or in short any means of controlling fires. I have now given instructions, and these things will be made available. But you, my lord, must consider

3 whether you think that an association of firemen\* should be established, confined to a total of 150. I shall ensure that firemen only are enrolled, and that they do not exploit the rights they are granted for any other purpose. It will not be difficult to control such a small number.

### 34 *Trajan to Pliny* late 110 (?109)

1 Following the precedent of several others, you have in mind the possibility that an association of firemen should be set up among the citizens of Nicomedia. But we are to remember that the province, and notably these cities, have suffered disturbances through factions of this kind. Whatever title and for whatever reason we bestow on those who join together for the same purpose, they will become

2 cabals, and that within a short time. So it is better to make provision

for the equipment which can be of help in controlling fires, and to advise owners of properties both to make use of this themselves, and if the situation demands it, to deploy for this purpose the bystanders who assemble there.

### 35 *Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan* early 111 (?110)

My lord, we have both organized and discharged the vows for your well-being,\* by which the safety of the state is preserved. We have prayed to the gods that these vows will be for ever discharged and for ever fulfilled.

### 36 *Trajan to Pliny* early 111 (?110)

My fondest Secundus, I have learnt with pleasure from your letter that you and the provincials have discharged and pronounced the vows for my safety and well-being.

### 37 *Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan* early 111 (?110)

1 The citizens of Nicomedia, my lord, have spent 3,318,000 sesterces on an aqueduct.\* It was abandoned before it was completed, and also demolished; 200,000 sesterces were then contributed towards another aqueduct, but this too was abandoned. Hence there is need of a fresh contribution so that the citizens who have disastrously squandered all that money may obtain water. I have myself visited the source

2 from which the purest water should apparently be drawn. This was attempted on that first occasion. An arched structure was built so that the water would reach not merely the level and the low-lying areas of the city. Arches, though very few, are still in place, and some can be erected from the dressed stone removed from the previous structure. In my view some part of it should be fashioned from brickwork, an easier and cheaper process. But what is above all

3 necessary is that you send out a water-engineer or an architect so that there may be no repetition of the previous occurrence. The one point I emphasize is that the usefulness and beauty of the structure are to be worthy of your reign.

38 *Trajan to Pliny*

Every effort must be made to have water brought to the city of Nicomedia, and indeed I am sure that you will tackle the project with the necessary application. But for heaven's sake, it is up to you to make careful enquiry on whose fault it is that the citizens of Nicomedia have wasted so much money up to now. One fears that people were doing each other favours when they began work on the aqueducts and then abandoned them. So let me know your findings.

early III (?110)

39 *Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan* January III (?110)

<sup>1</sup> My lord, the theatre at Nicaea,\* which is well on the way to completion but remains unfinished, has sucked in more than 3 million sesterces; this is what I am told, for the calculation of the cost of the work has not been examined. But I fear that it is all in vain, for it is subsiding with huge cracks and holes, whether because the soil beneath is wet and yielding, or because the stone itself is porous and crumbling. It is at any rate worth pondering whether it should be completed or abandoned or even destroyed, for the props and bases on which it is supported below appear to me to be not as solid as the expense indicated. Many additional features in the theatre—for example, halls on each side, and a colonnade above the auditorium—are promised by private individuals and are still due to be built, but they are now all postponed since the theatre which is to be finished first is not forthcoming. The Nicaeans have also begun to restore a gymnasium,\* which was destroyed by fire before my arrival, on a far more ambitious and extensive scale than its predecessor, and they have already contributed a considerable sum towards it. But the danger is that their money may be wasted, for the building is badly arranged and scattered; moreover, an architect (doubtless a rival of the one who made a start on the building) maintains that the walls though 22 feet thick are unable to bear the weight placed on them because they are centred on rubble within, and are not faced with brick.

<sup>5</sup> The inhabitants of Claudiopolis\* are also at work on a huge baths, but they are excavating rather than building it, for it lies on a hollow site overhung by a mountain. The cost is being borne by those councillors who owing to your kindness were additionally appointed.

They have already on their appointment disbursed the money, or they will make their contribution when we demand it. Accordingly, since I fear that in the first building the money of the community, and in the second your generosity, which is more precious than any money, is being wasted, I am compelled to ask you to send out an architect not only for the theatre, but also for the baths. He would consider whether it is more useful, in view of the outlays already made, to complete the work somehow or other in the way it has been begun, or to make the adjustments that appear necessary to be made, and to transfer to other sites what needs to be moved, in case in seeking to save the money which has been spent we spend badly the additional sums necessary.

40 *Trajan to Pliny* January III (?110)

At the present juncture you must best ponder and decide what must be done about the theatre begun at Nicaea. It will be enough for me to be told of the decision which you have reached. You must then exact from private citizens the additional buildings, once the theatre which prompted their promises is completed. The wretched Greeks\* are addicted to gymnasia, so perhaps this is why the citizens of Nicaea are tackling one with greater zest. But they must remain content with a building which can meet their basic needs.

As for the advice to be given to the citizens of Claudiopolis, in connection with the baths which you state have been mounted on an unsuitable site, you must decide. You can have no shortage of architects,\* for no province is without experienced and clever individuals. Do not imagine that dispatching one from Rome is quicker; all architects usually hail from Greece to us as well.

41 *Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan* January III (?110)

As I contemplate the greatness of both your position and your cast of mind, it seems to me most appropriate that buildings should be shown to be worthy of your personal fame no less than of your glory and that they should be as useful as they are beautiful.

In the territory of Nicomedia there is an extensive lake.\* Marble, agricultural produce, logs, and timber are transported by ship across it to the highway\* at little cost and labour, but then with great toil and

greater expense on carts to the sea. The operation demands many hands, and indeed these are not lacking, for there are large resources of men in the countryside and a huge number in the city, and there is a sure expectation that they will gladly undertake a project which will be advantageous to all. It remains for you to dispatch a surveyor or architect, if you are agreeable, to study carefully whether the lake lies higher than the sea. The draughtsmen in this area maintain that it is 40 cubits\* above sea level. I have discovered that a canal was cut through the same region by a king,\* but it is uncertain whether this was to drain the water from the fields around or to join the lake to the river, for it has been left unfinished. It is likewise uncertain whether the king's life was cut short or whether they lost hope in the success of the project. You must bear with my eagerness to promote your glory, but what inspires and fires me in this is my desire that you complete what kings had merely begun.

#### 42 *Trajan to Pliny*

January III (?110)

The lake you mention can inspire us to join it to the sea, but obviously a careful study must be made at least of the volume of water, and the sources from which it comes, in case when it is released into the sea the lake drains away completely. You will be able to ask Calpurnius Macer\* for a surveyor, and I shall send out from here to you some expert\* in operations of this kind.

#### 43 *Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan*

January III (?110)

1 As I was reviewing, my lord, the very considerable expenditure of the state of Byzantium,\* it was pointed out to me that a delegate is sent every year with a decree to greet you, and he is given 12,000 sesterces. So, being mindful of your policy, I considered that the delegate could be withdrawn but that the decree could be forwarded. Thus the cost would be relieved, and the duty of the state fulfilled. 2 This state has also been charged 3,000 sesterces, which under the heading of travelling-expenses were given annually to the delegate who goes to pronounce the state's greeting to the governor of Moesia.\* My view was that this payment should be abolished in future. I ask, my lord, that you communicate your views, and deign 4 either to approve my plan or to correct my error.

#### 44 *Trajan to Pliny*

early III (?110)

My fondest Secundus, you were perfectly correct in relieving the Byzantines of the 12,000 sesterces spent on the delegate to greet me. They will perform this role even if the decree alone is sent through you. The governor of Moesia will likewise excuse them if they honour him less expensively.

#### 45 *Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan*

January III (?110)

Please write, my lord, and remove my doubts about whether you wish travel passes,\* the date of which has expired, to be honoured in any way, and for how long. My fear is that through ignorance I may slip up one way or the other, and either approve what is unlawful or hinder what is essential.

#### 46 *Trajan to Pliny*

January III (?110)

Travel passes which are out of date ought not to be used. Hence one of the first rules I impose upon myself is to send new passes throughout all the provinces before they can possibly be needed.

#### 47 *Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan*

January III (?110)

My lord, when I sought to investigate at Apamea\* the state debtors, 1 the revenue, and the expenditures, I was given the reply that the whole citizen body was eager for me to scrutinize the accounts of the colony, but that they had never been scrutinized by any of the pro-consuls, for they had the privilege and long-standing custom of administering the state at their own discretion. I demanded that the 2 claims and the decrees they quoted be embraced in a memorandum which I have forwarded to you in the form in which I received it, though I realized that several items in it did not relate to the matter 3 under investigation. So I am asking you to deign to guide me about the procedure which you think I should follow, for my fear is that I may seem to have either gone beyond the role of my office, or not to have fulfilled it.

48 *Trajan to Pliny*

January III (?110)

<sup>1</sup> The memorandum of the Apameans which you appended to your letter has freed me from the need to weigh the motives on account of which they wish it to appear that those who governed the province refrained from investigation of their accounts, whereas they did not refuse to allow you to inspect them. Their worthy attitude is therefore to be rewarded by now informing them that the investigation you are about to make you will carry out in accordance with my wish, and without prejudice to the privileges which they possess.

49 *Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan*

January III (?110)

<sup>1</sup> Before I came here, my lord, the citizens of Nicomedia began to add a new forum to the earlier one, in the corner of which is a shrine of great antiquity dedicated to the Great Mother.\* It must either be restored or moved to another site, especially as it stands at a much lower level than the building which is rising at this very moment.

<sup>2</sup> When I enquired whether any charter had been laid down for the temple, I discovered that the local form of dedication is different from ours. So, my lord, decide whether you think that a shrine for which no charter has been established can be moved to another site, for otherwise this solution is the most practicable if there is no religious impediment.

50 *Trajan to Pliny*

January III (?110)

Secundus my dearest friend, you can transfer the temple of the Mother of the Gods to a more appropriate site without any religious scruple, if the situation of the present site seems to demand this. The fact that no charter of dedication is found should not give you pause, since a site in a foreign city does not qualify for the dedication which takes place under our religious law.

51 *Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan*

early III (?110)

<sup>1</sup> My lord, I find it hard to express my great happiness at your arranging for my mother-in-law\* and myself the transfer of her relative Caelius Clemens\* to this province. This gesture gives me a

further deep awareness of such abundant kindness. I do not even presume to offer you like gratitude in return, however able I could be to do so, so I take refuge in prayers, begging the gods that I may be thought not unworthy of the gifts you so regularly bestow on me.

52 *Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan*

early III (?110)

My lord we have celebrated with the joy you merit the day on which you have preserved the empire by shouldering it. We have begged the gods to keep you safe and well for the benefit of the human race, whose protection and security have rested on your safety. We have led our fellow soldiers too in the declaration of the oath\* in the formal manner, and the provincials vied with them in swearing with the same devotion.

53 *Trajan to Pliny*

February III (?110)

My dearest friend Secundus, it was with pleasure that I learnt from your letter of the abundant devotion and happiness with which our fellow soldiers and the provincials followed you in celebrating the first day of my rule.

54 *Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan*

early-mid-III (?110)

Public moneys, my lord, through your foresight and my handling <sup>1</sup> have already been and are still being levied, but I am fearful that they lie unused,\* for there is no opportunity, or only a most occasional one, of purchasing estates, and none are found willing to become debtors to the state, especially at the rate of twelve per cent, the rate at which they borrow from private individuals. So, my lord, consider whether <sup>2</sup> you think that this rate of interest should be lowered, and suitable debtors enticed by this means, and if even so debtors are not found, whether money should be allotted among the city-councillors, specifying that they safeguard the welfare of the state. Even if they are unwilling and reluctant, this will be less burdensome if a lower rate of interest is established.

55 *Trajan to Pliny*

early-mid-III (?110)

I too visualize no remedy, my dearest Secundus, other than that the level of interest should be lowered, so that the public money can be more easily lent out. You must decide on the level, depending on the resources of those who will borrow. It is not in accord with the justice of our times to force men to borrow if they are unwilling, when perhaps the money will remain unused in their hands.

56 *Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan* early or mid-III (?110)

1 I thank you profusely, my lord, for when you are preoccupied with the greatest issues of state, you deign to guide me also on matters on which I have consulted you. I am asking you to do this now as well.

2 A certain individual has approached me with the information that enemies of his who had been banished by Servilius Calvus,\* a man of great renown, for three years, were still lingering in the province. They countered by maintaining that the same governor had restored them, and they read out his edict. This is why I thought it necessary

3 to refer the issue to you from the beginning. Your instructions specify that I am not to restore men who have been banished by another or by myself, but no provision is included for those who have been both banished and restored by another.

This is why, my lord, I had to consult you on the attitude which you wish me to maintain, and likewise indeed about those who have been banished for life and not restored, but are arrested in the province; for this type of case too has come to me for a decision, since one who had been banished for life by the proconsul Julius Bassus\* has been brought before me. I knew that the decisions of Bassus had been revoked, and that the Senate had granted the right of a fresh trial to all who had been subject to his decisions, provided that it took place within two years. I questioned the man whom Bassus had banished, and asked him whether he had approached and informed the proconsul. He said that he had not. This was what made me

5 consult you on whether he should be returned to continue his sentence, or a more severe one, and above all what penalty would in your view be prescribed against this man and any others whom we happen to encounter in the same situation. I have appended to this letter Calvus' decision and edict, and also the decision of Bassus.

57 *Trajan to Pliny*

early or mid-III (?110)

The decision to be reached in the case of those banished for three years by the proconsul Servilius Calvus, who were later restored by Calvus' edict and have remained in the province, I will very soon communicate to you once I have elicited from Calvus the reasons for his action. The man who was banished for life by Julius Bassus, and has had the opportunity for two years to appeal if he thinks he was banished unjustly, and has refrained from doing so, continuing to linger in the province, must be put in chains and sent to the prefects of my praetorian guard, for it is not enough to send him back to continue his sentence, since he has made a mockery of it by his insolence.

58 *Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan* early or mid-III (?110)

As I was about to convene the court and was naming the jurymen, Flavius Archippus\* began to plead exemption on the grounds of being a philosopher. Some persons claimed that he should not be relieved of the duty to serve on the jury, but struck off entirely from the roll of jurymen and restored to the punishment from which he had escaped by breaking his bonds. The sentence of the pro-consul Velius Paulus\* was read out, and established that Archippus had been convicted of forgery and condemned to the mines. He produced nothing to demonstrate that he had been restored, but in support of that restoration he presented a document which he had sent to Domitian, together with letters from Domitian attesting his distinction, and also a decree of the Prusans. He also submitted a letter sent to him by yourself, and an edict and letter from your father by which he gave proof of the benefits bestowed by Domitian. Therefore, though such serious charges were levelled against this person, I thought that no decision should be reached until I consulted you on this matter which I thought worthy of your decision. I have attached to this letter the documents read out on both sides.

*Letter of Domitian to Terentius Maximus*

The philosopher Flavius Archippus has obtained from me his request that I should command that an estate of value about 100,000 sesterces should

be bought for him in the vicinity of Prusa, his native city, so that the rental from it can support his family. I want this to be given to him. You must charge the entire cost to my generosity.

*Letter of Domitian to Lappius Maximus\**

6 My dear Maximus, please regard the philosopher Archippus, a sound man whose character is at one with his profession, as one recommended by me. Accord him full kindness in the matters which he will respectfully request of you.

*Edict of the deified Nerva*

7 Undoubtedly, citizens, the very happiness of this era legislates on some matters, and the proclamation of a good emperor is not to be awaited on those issues to which it is enough that he be understood; for the approval of my fellow citizens can guarantee even without prompting that I have put the general safety of all before my own peace of mind, so as to bestow fresh kindnesses and to preserve those granted before me. But, to ensure that the diffidence of those who have obtained favours, or the recollection of him who bestowed them, does not cause uncertainty amid the public rejoicing, I have believed it to be as essential as pleasurable to confront those doubters with my generosity. I do not wish anyone to imagine that what he obtained privately or publicly from another emperor is rescinded by me, so that at any rate he owes the favour to me instead. Those favours are to be ratified and secure, nor should anyone in gratitude require to renew his pleas if the imperial destiny has shown him a more benign face. They must allow me to have free scope for fresh favours, and they are to know that they need plead only for things which they do not possess.

*Letter of Nerva to Tullius Justus\**

10 Since the disposition of all things begun and completed in earlier days is to be respected, we must abide also by the letters of Domitian.

59 *Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan* early or mid-III  
(?110)

Flavius Archippus, invoking your health and eternal majesty, asks me to dispatch to you the letter which he entrusted to me. The manner of his request made me believe that I should accede to it, on condition that I informed the woman who was his accuser. I have received a memorandum from her as well, and have attached it to

these letters, so that having heard, so to say, from both sides you may consider what decision you think we should reach.

60 *Trajan to Pliny* early or mid-III (?110)

Domitian could indeed have been unaware\* of Archippus' situation when he wrote at such length about his distinction. But it is more in keeping with my nature to believe that his situation was aided by the emperor's intervention, especially as the honour of having statues raised to him was so often decreed by those who were well aware of the judgement pronounced against him by the proconsul Paulus. But, my fondest Secundus, these considerations do not lead to the conclusion that if any new charge is laid against him, you should consider that less notice should be paid to it. I have read the memoranda of his accuser Furia Prima and of Archippus himself which you attached to your second letter.

61 *Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan* autumn III (?110)

My lord, you most prudently express the fear that if the lake were joined to the river and thus to the sea, it would drain away. But here on the spot I seem to have found a solution to confront this danger. The lake can be linked to the river by a canal without its being discharged into the river; a bank, so to say, can be left to contain it and keep it separate. In this way we shall succeed in preventing the lake being drained by mingling with the river, yet the outcome will be as if it were mingled. For it will be easy to convey loads over that very narrow strip of earth lying between, by means of the canal, and in this way to transfer them to the river.

This will be the solution if we are driven to it, which I hope will not be the case. For the lake is fairly deep, and pours out into a river on the other side. If it is closed off on that side and diverted to where we want it, it will discharge the same amount of water as it now bears away without loss to the lake. Moreover, rivulets develop over that area through which the canal is to be dug; if these are carefully combined, they will increase the amount of water discharged by the lake. Indeed, if it is decided to prolong the canal, to drive it deeper, and thus to make it level with the sea, so that the water is discharged not into the river but into the sea itself, the counter-pressure of the

sea will preserve and repress the water from the lake. If the nature of the site does not allow us any of these plans, it would still be possible to control the water-flow by means of sluice-gates.\*

5 However, the surveyor whom you must obviously send out, my lord, as you promise, will research these and other problems much more knowledgeably, for this project is worthy of both your greatness and your interest. In the meantime I have written as you recommend to Calpurnius Macer,\* that man of great distinction, asking him to send the most suitable surveyor possible.

### 62 Trajan to Pliny

mid-III (?110)

My fondest Secundus, it is clear that you have lacked neither practical wisdom nor thoroughness in regard to that lake of yours, since you have so many projected plans to ensure that there is no danger of its being drained, and so that it may be more useful to us in future. So choose the plan which the situation itself especially recommends. I believe that Calpurnius Macer will ensure that he provides you with a surveyor, and these provinces of yours are not short of such craftsmen.

### 63 Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan

mid-III (?110)

Your freedman Lycormas, my lord, has written to say, if any delegation from the Bosporus arrives on its way to Rome, that it should be detained until his arrival. In fact, no embassy has come as yet, at least to the city where I am now, but a courier from king Sauromates\* has arrived. I have exploited this chance opportunity in the belief that I must send him with the courier who has preceded Lycormas on his journey, so that you could ascertain equally from Lycormas and from the king's letter anything which perhaps you ought to ascertain from both.

### 64 Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan

mid-III (?110)

King Sauromates has written to me that there are some matters which you ought to know as early as possible. For this reason I have accelerated the speed of the courier, whom I have dispatched to you with the letters, by affording him a travel pass.\*

### 65 Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan

mid-III (?110)

My lord, there is an important issue affecting the whole province<sup>1</sup> which concerns the status and rearing of those they call 'foster-children'.\* Having listened to pronouncements of emperors on<sup>2</sup> this subject and having found nothing specific or general referring to the Bithynians, I thought that I must consult you on what procedure you wish to have followed in this matter. I did not think that I could be satisfied with precedents in an issue which demanded your authority. There was in fact an edict read out before me which was<sup>3</sup> relevant to Achaia and was said to have been issued by the deified Augustus. Also read out were letters from the deified Vespasian to the Spartans, and from the deified Titus likewise to the Spartans and to the Achaians; and from Domitian to the proconsuls Avidius Nigrinus and Armenius Brocchus,\* and also to the Spartans. I have not sent these copies to you because they seemed to me both uncorrected and in some cases of dubious authority, and also because I believed that the true and corrected versions are in your archives.

### 66 Trajan to Pliny

mid-III (?110)

The issue which you raise relating to freeborn infants exposed and<sup>1</sup> then rescued by certain individuals, and brought up as slaves, has often been discussed, but in the diaries of emperors preceding me no entry has been found which was directed at all provinces. True,<sup>2</sup> there are letters from Domitian to Avidius Nigrinus and Armenius Brocchus, which ought to be applicable, but Bithynia is not in the provinces which his replies specified. Therefore my view is that applications are not to be rejected in the case of those who claim freedom on such grounds, and freedom should not have to be purchased by payment for their rearing.

### 67 Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan

mid-III (?110)

After the ambassador from king Sauromates\* had lodged for two<sup>1</sup> days at Nicaea, where he had found me, I did not think, my lord, that he need remain longer. My first reason was that it was still uncertain when your freedman Lycormas would arrive, and my second was

<sup>2</sup> that, as my duties demanded, I was on the point of setting out to a different region of the province. I thought that I would bring this to your notice, because I had only recently written to say that Lycormas had asked me to detain any embassy which might come from Bosphorus until his arrival. No persuasive reason for doing this any longer occurred to me, especially since the letters of Lycormas, which as I previously mentioned to you I did not wish to hold back, were likely to arrive from here some days before the ambassador.

### 68 *Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan* September III (?110)

Some persons have asked my permission, following the precedent of previous proconsuls, to transfer the remains of their kin\* to some other site because of the damage attributable to long years of river-flooding, or for particular reasons. I was aware that at Rome the college of pontiffs is usually approached on matters of this kind, so I thought that I should consult you, my lord, since you are the chief priest, for the procedure which you would like me to follow.

### 69 *Trajan to Pliny*

September III (?110)

To impose on provincials the requirement that they approach the pontiffs if they seek to remove the remains of their relatives from one site to another, for one or other appropriate reason, would be harsh. So instead you are to follow the precedents set by those who governed the province earlier, and to grant or reject each application according to its merits.

### 70 *Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan* September III (?110)

<sup>1</sup> My lord, in the course of examining where the baths at Prusa,\* which you kindly allowed to be built, should stand, a site recommended itself on which stood a house which my information tells me was once beautiful but is now an unsightly ruin. If we follow this course, we shall achieve the beautification of a most unsightly aspect of the city; moreover, we shall ensure that the city itself will be splendidly

improved without the destruction of any buildings, while those that are tumbledown with age will be developed for the better.

The situation concerning the house is this. Claudius Polyaeus<sup>2</sup> had bequeathed it to Claudius Caesar with the instruction that a shrine to him be erected in the peristyle, and the other parts of the house to be let. For some time the city obtained rent for it, but gradually thereafter, partly by looting and partly by neglect, the whole house including the peristyle fell down, so that now scarcely anything but the ground survives. If you, my lord, either present the site to the city, or order it to be sold, the city will regard it as a most generous gift since its position is so convenient.

I myself have it in mind, if you are agreeable, to locate the baths on an open area, and to enclose with a recess and porticoes the place where the buildings stood, and to dedicate them to you. Thus by your kindness a handsome building will rise which is worthy of your name. I have sent you a copy of the will (though it is defective) from which you will gather that Polyaeus bequeathed many objects to enhance the beauty of the house. Like the house itself, they have vanished, but I shall search them out as best I can.

### 71 *Trajan to Pliny*

mid-September III (?110)

We can exploit that open area at Prusa with the house that has fallen down, for you say that it is unoccupied, in order to build the baths. But you did not indicate clearly enough whether the shrine to Claudius had been raised in the peristyle, for if it had been completed, even if it has fallen down, its religious aura has taken possession of the ground.

### 72 *Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan*

mid-September III  
(?110)

Certain persons have asked that I adjudicate on the acknowledgment of children and the restoration of their freeborn status,\* in accordance with the letter of Domitian to Minicius Rufus and the precedents set by proconsuls. So I have examined the senatorial decree relevant to the same type of case. It discusses only those provinces which have proconsuls as governors. Accordingly, I have

deferred a decision on the whole matter until you issue instructions on the procedure which you want me to follow.

### 73 *Trajan to Pliny* mid-September III (?110)

If you send me the senatorial decree which has raised your doubts, I shall assess whether you should adjudicate on the acknowledgment of children and the restoration of their freeborn status.

### 74 *Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan* mid-September III (?110)

<sup>1</sup> Appuleius, my lord, is a soldier stationed at Nicomedia. He has written to me about a man called Callidromus.\* When he was being kept in close confinement by the bakers Maximus and Dionysius, to whom he had rented out his services, he took refuge with your statue, and when hailed before the magistrates he revealed that some time earlier he had been a slave to Laberius Maximus, that he was captured by Susagus in Moesia, and was sent by Decibalus as a gift to Pacorus, king of Parthia, but after serving him for many years he had then fled and had reached Nicomedia.

<sup>2</sup> When he was brought before me and he told me the same story, I thought that he should be sent to you. This I did after a little delay in which I searched for a jewel which he stated was inscribed with a portrait of Pacorus, together with his embellishments, and which had been taken from him. For I wished to send the jewel as well if it could be found, at the same time, together with a small lump of ore which he said he had brought from a Parthian mine. It has been stamped with my ring, the device on which is a four-horse chariot.

### 75 *Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan* mid-III (?110)

<sup>1</sup> A Julius Largus from Pontus, my lord, whom I have not yet seen, or even heard of previously, has entrusted to me (he was doubtless relying on your judgement of me), the handling and management of an act of devotion towards you. In his will he has asked that I acquaint myself with and take cognizance of his estate, and then, after excluding the first 50,000 sesterces, that I allocate all the rest to the cities of Heraclea and Tium,\* in such a way that it would be my

decision whether I consider that buildings dedicated to your honour should be erected, or quinquennial games established to be called Trajanic. I thought that I should bring this to your notice so that you could ponder which I ought to choose.

### 76 *Trajan to Pliny* mid-III (?110)

Julius Largus opted for your reliability as if he knew you well. So you yourself must consider what will best guarantee his enduring memory in accordance with the situation in each of the two places, and follow through the plan you think best.

### 77 *Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan* mid-III (?110)

It was with the greatest prudence, my lord, that you ordered that <sup>1</sup> most distinguished man Calpurnius Macer\* to dispatch a legionary centurion to Byzantium. Consider whether you think that the inter- <sup>2</sup> ests of the city of Juliopolis\* should likewise be consulted by a similar plan, for though the city is tiny, it shoulders the greatest burdens, and endures injuries the heavier because of its greater weakness. Whatever assistance you provide to the people of Juliopolis will <sup>3</sup> also benefit the whole province, since the city lies at the extremity of Bithynia, and provides a passage for very many journeying through it.

### 78 *Trajan to Pliny* mid-III (?110)

The situation of the city of Byzantium, into which a horde of travel- <sup>1</sup> lers pours from every side, is such that we considered that we should consult the interests of the magistrates, following the practice of previous periods, by providing the protection of a legionary centurion. If we decide that the citizens of Juliopolis should be aided in the <sup>2</sup> same way, we shall burden ourselves with a precedent, for the weaker the cities are, the greater the number which will seek the same privilege. I have such confidence in your careful administration that I believe you will employ every means to ensure that they are not <sup>3</sup> exposed to injuries. But if any persons act in contravention of my discipline, they are to be forcibly restrained at once. If their crimes have been too excessive to be punished on the spot, should they be

soldiers you must inform their commanders that you have arrested them, or if they are on their way back to Rome, you must inform me by letter.

### 79 *Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan* mid-111 (?110)

1 My lord, the Pompeian law\* addressed to the Bithynians excluded from tenure of a magistracy or from membership of the senate anyone under thirty years old. The same law included the stipulation that those who held a magistracy should be members of the senate. There next followed an edict of the deified Augustus which 2 allowed tenure of lesser magistracies from the age of twenty-two. So the question arises whether a person less than thirty years old who has held a magistracy can be enrolled by the censors into the senate, and, if that is possible, whether those who have not held a magistracy can also by the same interpretation be enrolled as senators from that age at which they were allowed to become magistrates. This has been the general practice up to now, and is said to be essential because it is a good deal better that sons of honourable men 3 be admitted to their senate than commoners. When I was asked by the censors-elect for my view, I considered that men under thirty who had held a magistracy could certainly be enrolled in the senate, both according to the edict of Augustus and according to the Pompeian law, for Augustus had allowed men less than thirty to hold magistracies, and the law allowed anyone who had held a magistracy 4 to be a senator. But as for those who had not held magistracies, though they were of the same age as those permitted to hold them, I was in doubt, and this is why the outcome was that I should consult you my lord, about the procedure which you wish to be followed. I have appended to my letter the chapters of the law and the edict of Augustus.

### 80 *Trajan to Pliny* mid-111 (?110)

I agree with your interpretation, my fondest Secundus, that the Pompeian law was amended by the edict of Augustus, to the extent that those of no less than twenty-two years could hold a magistracy, and that those who had held a magistracy could enter the senate of each city. But those of less than thirty who have not held a magistracy

cannot in my view be enrolled in the senate of each region merely because they are eligible to hold a magistracy.

### 81 *Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan* mid-111 (?110)

My lord, I was at Prusa near Olympus, and on the day I was to leave I was free to deal with public issues in my private lodging. The magistrate Asclepiades informed me that a Claudius Eumolpus had appealed to me. When Cocceianus Dio\* in council sought to have a holding in his charge assigned to the city, Eumolpus, acting on behalf of Flavius Archippus, said that the financial accounts of the building should be demanded from Dio before it could be consigned to the state, because Dio's administration had been improper. He further added that your statue had been placed in the same building together with the bodies of Dio's wife and son, which were buried there; and he demanded that I should judge the case before the tribunal. When I said that I would do this at once, postponing my departure, he asked me to allow him a longer period to prepare his case, and to adjudge the case in another city. I replied that I would hold the hearing at Nicaea.

When I had taken my seat to judge the case, the said Eumolpus began to request a postponement on the grounds that he was insufficiently prepared, but Dio on the other hand began to demand that the case be heard. Many statements were made on both sides, some of further relevance to the case. After deciding that a postponement should be granted, and that you should be consulted since the case raised a precedent, I instructed both parties to provide details of their allegations, for I wanted you to ascertain their submissions in their precise words. Dio said that he would comply; Eumolpus replied that he would include in his submission his demands on behalf of the state, but so far as the buried bodies were concerned he was not the plaintiff, but the advocate of Flavius Archippus, whose instructions he had fulfilled. Archippus, for whom Eumolpus was acting as advocate as at Prusa, agreed to provide a submission. But neither Eumolpus nor Archippus have as yet provided me with their submissions, though I have awaited them for innumerable days. Dio has provided his, and I have attached it to this letter. I have been there on the spot, and have also seen your statue in position in the library, and the place where the son and wife of Dio are said to have

8 been buried; it lies in an open area enclosed by colonnades. I am requesting you, my lord, to deign to guide me in this type of adjudication, for there is in general great anticipation concerning it, as is inevitable in a matter openly admitted and defended by precedents.

### 82 *Trajan to Pliny*

mid-III (?110)

<sup>1</sup> My fondest Secundus, you could have entertained no doubt on this issue on which you thought I should be consulted, since you were fully aware of my decision not to gain respect for my name through men's apprehension or terror, or through charges of treason. So the inquiry is to be abandoned, for I would not allow it even if it were supported by precedents. The financial accounts of the whole building which was managed under the administration of Cocceianus Dio must be scrutinized, since the welfare of the city demands it, and Dio does not and should not oppose it.

### 83 *Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan*

mid-III (?110)

My lord, since I was requested by the citizens of Nicaea speaking for the city, in the name of what is and ought to be most sacred to me, in other words your eternal glory and safety, to communicate to you their entreaties,<sup>\*</sup> I thought it impious to refuse, so I have appended to this letter the document which I have received from them.

### 84 *Trajan to Pliny*

mid-III (?110)

You will have to direct your attention to the citizens of Nicaea, who maintain that their claim on the property of their fellow citizens who have died intestate was granted by the deified Augustus. So you must assemble all individuals affected by this issue, and bring in Viridius Gemellinus<sup>\*</sup> and my freedman Epimachus the procurators, so that after taking into account the arguments against the proposal, you may together decide on what you regard as the best solution.

### 85 *Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan*

mid-III (?110)

My lord, I have found Maximus, your freedman and procurator, throughout the time we were together, to be honest, industrious, and

conscientious.\* He is as closely committed to the discipline you demand as he is utterly devoted to your interests. I gladly attend him as he goes with this testimonial to you, in the good faith which I owe to you.

### 86A *Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan*

mid-III (?110)

My lord, I have found Gavius Bassus, prefect of the Pontic shore, to be honourable, honest, hard-working, and most respectful to me in these traits. So I attend him as he goes with my best wishes and support, in the good faith which I owe to you.

### 86B *Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan*

mid-III (?110)

... than the things he is to hope for. He has been trained by his military service with you, and he owes to the discipline of that service the fact that he is worthy of your kindness. Both soldiers and civilians, by whom his justice and kindness have been thoroughly scrutinized, have vied in providing testimony before me both individually and collectively. I bring this to your notice in the good faith which I owe to you.

### 87 *Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan*

mid-III (?110)

When Nymphidius Lupus was a chief centurion, my lord, he was in<sup>1</sup> service with me. When I was a military tribune, he was a prefect. Then I began to feel the affection of a friend towards him. That fondness later grew with the long-standing nature of our shared friendship. So it was that I broke in on his retirement, and demanded<sup>2</sup> that he give me the benefit of his advice in Bithynia. This he has already done and will continue to do in the most friendly spirit, laying aside for the time being thoughts of leisure and old age. For<sup>3</sup> these reasons I count his relatives among my own, and especially his son Nymphidius Lupus,\* an honest, hard-working man, fully worthy of his outstanding father. He will measure up to your kindness, as you can ascertain from your first experience of him, since as prefect of a cohort he has won the most glowing commendation from those outstanding men Julius Ferox and Fuscus Salinator. You will enhance my joy and my gratitude, my lord, by thus honouring our son.

88 *Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan* September III (?110)  
I pray, my lord, that you may celebrate both this birthday\* and numerous others as days most blessed, and that you may enhance the glory of your virtue which flourishes with perennial fame. You will increase that glory in safety and strength with achievement after achievement.

89 *Trajan to Pliny* September III (?110)  
I acknowledge your prayers, my fondest Secundus, in which you pray that I may spend numerous most blessed birthdays in the prosperity of our state.

90 *Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan* late III (?110)  
1 The citizens of Sinope, my lord, are short of water.\* It seems possible to draw a good and abundant flow from the sixteenth milestone. But close to this source, a little more than a mile away, the ground is treacherous and soft, so I have ordered it to be investigated at modest expense to see if it can take and bear a structure. Money when collected at my instigation will not be lacking if you, my lord, kindly allow this kind of structure for the health and enjoyment of an extremely thirsty colony.

91 *Trajan to Pliny* late III (?110)  
My fondest Secundus, continue the careful investigation which you have begun to ascertain whether the ground about which you are uneasy can bear the structure of an aqueduct. I regard it as beyond question that water should be brought to the colony of Sinope, as long as the colony can also achieve this with its own resources, for this amenity will vastly contribute to the health and pleasure of the city.

92 *Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan* late III (?110)  
The free allied city of the citizens of Amisus\* enjoys its own laws through the kindness of your generosity. I have attached to this letter a document delivered to me concerning welfare-clubs,\* so that you,

my lord, can decide what proposal you think should be permitted or forbidden and to what extent.

93 *Trajan to Pliny* late III (?110)  
If the citizens of Amisus, whose document you had attached to your letter, are allowed to have a welfare-club by virtue of the laws of those who enjoy the benefit of a treaty, we cannot hinder their having one. This concession is granted the more readily if they use such funds not on gatherings or forbidden assemblies, but to relieve the poverty of those in greater need. In the other cities which are bound by our law projects of this kind are forbidden.

94 *Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan* late III (?110)  
For a long time now, my lord, I have admitted Suetonius Tranquil-<sup>1</sup>lus,\* that most worthy, honourable, and learned man, into my circle of friends, for I have long admired his character and his learning, and I have begun to love him all the more, the more I have now come to know him from close at hand. There are two reasons<sup>2</sup> which make it vital for him to possess the 'right of three children',\* for he deserves the good opinion of his friends, and his marriage has been unsuccessful. So through your agency we must obtain from your benevolence what the malice of fortune has refused to grant him. I know, my lord, the magnitude of the kindness that I<sup>3</sup> seek, but I seek it from one whose generosity I experience in all my needs. You can infer how great is my desire for this, because I would not be asking for it when at a distance, if I merely sought it half-heartedly.

95 *Trajan to Pliny* late III (?110)  
My fondest Secundus, you are intimately aware how sparingly I grant these favours, for even in the Senate I regularly declare that I have not exceeded the number which in the presence of that most august order I maintained would be sufficient for me. However, I have acceded to your request, and have ordered it to be inscribed in my records that I have awarded the 'right of three children' to Suetonius Tranquillus, subject to my usual conditions.

- 98 Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan** late III (?110)
- 1 The city of the Amastrians,\* my lord, which is both smart and well appointed, has amongst its outstanding buildings a most beautiful and very extensive street. On its flank for its entire length runs a so-called river, but in reality it is the foulest of sewers. It is both unsightly in its most disgusting appearance and baneful in its most noisome smell. For these reasons it is in the interests of health as much as appearance that it should be covered over, and this will be carried out if you allow it, for we will see to it that money is not lacking for construction-work both massive and necessary.

- 99 Trajan to Pliny** late III (?110)
- My fondest Secundus, it is reasonable to have that water covered which flows through the city of the Amastrians, if by remaining uncovered it is a hindrance to health. I am certain that with your punctiliousness you will ensure that the money is not lacking for this work.

- 100 Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan** January 112 (?111)
- My lord, the vows which we uttered last year we have fulfilled with eagerness and joy, and we have in turn undertaken new ones.\* Our fellow soldiers and the provincials have vied in devotion. We have begged the gods to preserve you and the state flourishing and unharmed with that good will which you have earned by your notable piety, obedience, and honour towards the gods, in addition to your great and numerous virtues.

- 101 Trajan to Pliny** January 112 (?111)
- I have gladly learnt from your letter, my fondest Secundus, that our fellow soldiers and the provincials in most joyful harmony followed your lead in discharging their vows to the immortal gods for my safety, and renewed them for the future.

- 102 Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan** early 112 (?111)
- We have celebrated with due piety the day on which the guardianship of the human race was passed to you in most blessed succession.\* We commended to the gods, from whom you derive your rule, both our public vows and our joys.

- 103 Trajan to Pliny** early 112 (?111)
- I have gladly learnt from your letter that the day of my accession to rule was celebrated with due joy and piety by our fellow soldiers and provincials, following your example.

- 104 Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan** early 112 (?111)
- My lord, Valerius Paulinus\* has passed over Paulinus\* and committed to me his rights over his Latin freedmen. I ask you to confer the rights of full citizenship\* on three of them in the meantime, for I fear that it may be going too far to invoke your generosity on behalf of all of them. I must exploit that generosity all the more moderately as I experience it more fully. Those for whom I entreat it\* are C. Valerius Astraeus, C. Valerius Dionysius, and C. Valerius Asper.

- 105 Trajan to Pliny** early 112 (?111)
- Since you most honourably wish opportunely through me to promote the interests of those whom Valerius Paulinus has committed to your good faith, I have ordered a note to be made in my registers that I have granted the rights of Roman citizens in the meantime to those for whom you have now sought it. I intend to do the same in the case of the rest for whom you request it.

- 106 Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan** early 112 (?111)
- When I was asked, my lord, by P. Accius Aquila, a centurion in the sixth mounted cohort,\* to send to you a petition through which he begs your generosity on behalf of the status of his daughter, I thought it harsh to refuse, since I was aware how much forbearance and kindness you regularly show to the pleas of soldiers.

107 *Trajan to Pliny*

early 112 (?111)  
I have read the petition of P. Accius Aquila, a centurion of the sixth mounted cohort, which you passed to me. In response to his pleas, I have granted Roman citizenship to his daughter. I have sent to you the petition with the response below, to deliver to him.

108 *Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan* early 112 (?111)

1 I am asking you, my lord, to state in reply what rights you wish the cities of Bithynia and Pontus to have in demanding the moneys owed to them from rents or sales or other sources.\* I have found that several proconsuls allowed them the right of first claim, and that this had the force of law. My view, however, is that through your foresight some procedure should be established and ratified, by means of which their interests can be protected for ever. For the decisions made by the proconsuls, though wisely conceded, are temporary and precarious unless your authority is brought to bear on them.

109 *Trajan to Pliny*

early 112 (?111)  
The rights which the cities of Bithynia or Pontus should wield in the matter of the moneys which for one reason and another are owed to the public weal must be decided in accordance with the law of each. If they have the privilege by which they are ranked before all other creditors, it must be safeguarded; or if they have no such privilege, it will not be incumbent on me to grant it and to do injustice to private individuals.

110 *Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan* early 112 (?111)

1 The state prosecutor of the city of the Amiseni,\* my lord, was demanding before me from Julius Piso a sum of about 40,000 denarii, which the state awarded him twenty years previously with the joint approval of the council and the assembly, and he exploited your instructions, which forbid gifts of this kind. Piso responded by saying that he had bestowed numerous gifts on the state, and had expended virtually all his wealth. In addition, he cited the lapse of time, and he pleaded that he should not be compelled to repay what he had long ago received in return for many contributions, for this

would be the ruin of what remained of his high standing. For these reasons I thought that I should postpone the entire case to consult your advice, my lord, on what you think should next be done.

111 *Trajan to Pliny*

early 112 (?111)

It is true that our instructions forbid donations from the public purse, but to ensure that the financial position of many is not undermined, it is not advisable that regulations made some time ago should be reconsidered and rendered invalid. Let us therefore in this issue ignore any transaction of twenty years ago, for I wish the interests of individuals, whatever their position, to be consulted no less than those of the public finances.

112 *Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan* early 112 (?111)

The Pompeian law,\* my lord, which is observed by the citizens of Bithynia and Pontus, does not prescribe that those selected by the censors for the council should pay a sum of money. However, those whom your generosity has permitted certain cities to add to their lawful number, have contributed 1,000 or 2,000 denarii each. Subsequently Anicius Maximus,\* the proconsul, ordered those chosen by the censors as well to contribute various sums in a very few cities. So it remains for you to decide whether in all cities all who will from now on be chosen as councillors should pay a certain sum to be admitted. For it is fitting that you should decide what will remain as a permanent arrangement, since undying fame is the necessary outcome of your deeds and words.

113 *Trajan to Pliny*

early 112 (?111)

I cannot prescribe a general rule that all who become councillors in every Bithynian city should or should not pay a fee for obtaining that office, so I believe that the law of each city is to be followed, for this is the safest procedure. But with greater certainty I imagine that those who become councillors by invitation will so act as to excel the others in their contributions.

- 114 *Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan* early 112 (?111)
- 1 The Pompeian law,\* my lord, allowed Bithynian cities to enrol as honorary citizens any persons they wished, provided that they were not natives of cities in Bithynia. The same law prescribes the reasons for which censors can exclude members from their senate. Hence
- 2 some censors have thought that they should consult me on whether they ought to exclude a man from another city, since the law forbade an outsider to be enrolled as a citizen, but did not order him to be excluded from their senate on these grounds. Moreover, I was assured that in every city there were numerous councillors from other cities, and the result would be that many individuals and many cities would be deeply embarrassed by that part of the law which had for long become obsolete by a sort of tacit agreement. I thought it necessary to consult you for your views on what procedure to follow. I have attached the chapters of the law to this letter.

115 *Trajan to Pliny*

early 112 (?111)

You were right to have doubts, my fondest Secundus, about what your response to the censors should be when they consulted you on whether citizens from other cities in the same province ought to remain senators. For the authority of the law, and long-standing custom opposed to the law, could have pulled you two ways. I have decided on this compromise: we should make no change to previous practice and men though enrolled illegally from other cities should remain as citizens, but in future the Pompeian law should be observed. If we sought to maintain the force of that law retrospectively, there would inevitably be a great deal of confusion.

116 *Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan*

early 112 (?111)

- 1 Those who don the toga of manhood, or celebrate a wedding, or enter upon a magistracy, or dedicate a public building, usually invite the whole council and a fair number of common folk, and distribute one or two denarii to each\* of them. I am asking you to write detailing your thinking on whether there should be such celebrations and to what extent. My own feeling is that this right of invitation should be allowed, especially if the occasion is a formal one, but at the same

time I am afraid that those who invite a thousand and sometimes more may appear to be going too far, and succumbing to a form of bribery.

117 *Trajan to Pliny*

early 112 (?111)

You are right to fear that an invitation may become a form of bribery when the numbers become unlimited and people assemble in blocs, and not as individual acquaintances, to receive the usual handouts. But I chose you for your practical wisdom so that you would preside over the moulding of the behaviour of your province, and establish the norms which would be good for the enduring peacefulness of the province.

118 *Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan*

112 (?111)

The athletes, my lord, think that the prizes which you appointed for the triumphal contests\* are due to them from the day they were crowned, for they say what counts is not when they ceremonially ride into their native city, but when they have prevailed in the contest which enabled them to make their entry in triumph. But I by contrast would have strong doubts whether we ought not to consider apposite the time when they have made their ceremonial entry.

The athletes are also seeking allowances for the contest which you declared 'triumphal', although their victories occurred before your declaration. They maintain it is appropriate that since they did not receive allowances for the contests which ceased to be triumphal after their victories, they should accordingly be given them for those contests which began to be triumphal later. On this issue too I am in considerable uncertainty whether account should be taken of anyone retrospectively, and whether they should be paid allowances not owed to them when they gained their victories. So I am asking that you deign to direct my uncertainty, in other words, to specify how your benefactions are to be applied.

119 *Trajan to Pliny*

112 (?111)

I think that the triumphal reward first begins to be due when the competitor has made his triumphal entry into his city. Allowances for

those contests which I have specified as triumphal are not owed retrospectively if they were not triumphal earlier. The fact that the athletes have ceased to receive allowances for those contests which I laid down as non-triumphal after their victories cannot be advantageous for their claim, for though the status of the contests has changed, the allowances earlier obtained are not being brought back.

120 *Gaius Pliny to the emperor Trajan* 112 (?111)

<sup>1</sup> Up to this time, my lord, I have not issued travel passes\* for anyone, nor have I dispatched anyone on business other than yours. My invariable restraint in this has been dislocated by what amounts to necessity. When my wife heard of the death of her grandfather,\* she wished to hasten to be with her aunt. I thought it unfeeling to refuse her a travel pass, for speed is of the essence in performing such a favour of devotion, and I knew that you would approve the reason for the journey, for it is prompted by family feeling. I have written to you about this, because it seemed that I would be less grateful than I should be if I hid the fact that among other kindnesses I owe this one as well to your generosity. The trust that I repose in that generosity caused me to act without hesitation as if I had consulted you, for if I had consulted you, my action would have come too late.

121 *Trajan to Pliny* 112 (?111)

You were right, my fondest Secundus, to have confidence in my attitude. No hesitation should have been felt on whether you should have waited until you consulted me about whether your wife's journey should have been eased by the travel passes which I issued for your official duties. For in the eyes of her aunt, your wife's duty was to enhance the favour of her arrival with the speed of her coming.

