



Selected Letters (Oxford World's Classics)

Elaine Fantham

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'You ask what is the proper measure of wealth? The best measure is to have what is necessary, and next best, to have enough. Keep well!'

The letters written by the Stoic philosopher and tragedian Seneca to his friend Lucilius are in effect moral essays, whose purpose is to reinforce Lucilius' struggle to achieve wisdom and serenity, uninfluenced by worldly emotions. Seneca advises his friend on how to do without what is superfluous, whether on the subject of happiness, riches, reputation, or the emotions. The letters include literary critical discussions, moral exhortation, exemplary heroes and episodes from Roman history, and a lurid picture of contemporary luxury. We learn about Seneca's household and estates and about life in the time of Nero; the topic of death is never far away.

This readable new translation is the largest selection of Seneca's letters currently available. Accompanied by an invaluable introduction and notes, it opens a window on to Seneca's world.

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