es Of The Twelve Caesars, Volume 13. GRAMMARIANS AND RHE

C. Suetonious Tranquillus

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The Lives Of The Twelve Caesars, Volume 13. GRAMMARIANS AND RHETORICIANS]

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THE LIVES
OF
THE TWELVE CAESARS
By
C. Suetonius Tranquillus;
To which are added,
HIS LIVES OF THE GRAMMARIANS, RHETORICIANS, AND POETS.

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(506)

LIVES OF EMINENT GRAMMARIANS

I. The science of grammar [842] was in ancient times far from being in vogue at Rome; indeed, it was of little use in a rude state of society, when the people were engaged in constant wars, and had not much time to bestow on the cultivation of the liberal arts [843]. At the outset, its pretensions were very slender, for the earliest men of learning, who were both poets and orators, may be considered as half−Greek: I speak of Livius [844] and Ennius [845], who are acknowledged to have taught both languages as well at Rome as in foreign parts [846]. But they (507) only translated from the Greek, and if they composed anything of their own in Latin, it was only from what they had before read. For although there are those who say that this Ennius published two books, one on “Letters and Syllables,” and the other on “Metres,” Lucius Cotta has satisfactorily proved that they are not the works of the poet Ennius, but of another writer of the same name, to whom also the treatise on the “Rules of Augury” is attributed.

II. Crates of Mallos [847], then, was, in our opinion, the first who introduced the study of grammar at Rome. He was cotemporary with Aristarchus [848], and having been sent by king Attalus as envoy to the senate in the interval between the second and third Punic wars [849], soon after the death of Ennius [850], he had the misfortune to fall into an open sewer in the Palatine quarter of the city, and broke his leg. After which, during the whole period of his embassy and convalescence, he gave frequent lectures, taking much pains to instruct his hearers, and he has left us an example well worthy of imitation. It was so far followed, that poems hitherto little known, the works either of deceased friends or other approved writers, were brought to light, and being read and commented on, were explained to others. Thus, Caius Octavius Lampadio edited the Punic War of Naevius [851], which having been written in one volume without any break in the manuscript, he divided into seven books. After that, Quintus Vargonteius undertook the Annals of Ennius, which he read on certain fixed days to crowded audiences. So Laelius Archelaus, and Vectius Philocomus, read and commented on the Satires of their friend

Lucilius [852], which Lenaeus Pompeius, a freedman, tells us he studied under Archelaus; and Valerius Cato, under Philocomus. Two others also taught and promoted (508) grammar in various branches, namely, Lucius Aelius Lanuvinus, the son−in−law of Quintus Aelius, and Servius Claudius, both of whom were Roman knights, and men who rendered great services both to learning and the republic.

III. Lucius Aelius had a double cognomen, for he was called Praeconius, because his father was a herald; Stilo, because he was in the habit of composing orations for most of the speakers of highest rank; indeed, he was so strong a partisan of the nobles, that he accompanied Quintus Metellus Numidicus [853] in his exile. Servius [854] having clandestinely obtained his father−in−law's book before it was published, was disowned for the fraud, which he took so much to heart, that, overwhelmed with shame and distress, he retired from Rome; and being seized with a fit of the gout, in his impatience, he applied a poisonous ointment to his feet, which half−killed him, so that his lower limbs mortified while he was still alive. After this, more attention was paid to the science of letters, and it grew in public estimation, insomuch, that men of the highest rank did not hesitate in undertaking to write something on the subject; and it is related that sometimes there were no less than twenty celebrated scholars in Rome. So high was the value, and so great were the rewards, of grammarians, that Lutatius Daphnides, jocularly called “Pan's herd” [855] by Lenaeus Melissus, was purchased by Quintus Catullus for two hundred thousand sesterces, and shortly afterwards made a freedman; and that Lucius Apuleius, who was taken into the pay of Epicius Calvinus, a wealthy Roman knight, at the annual salary of ten thousand crowns, had many scholars. Grammar also penetrated into the provinces, and some of the most eminent amongst the learned taught it in foreign parts, particularly in Gallia Togata. In the number of these, we may reckon Octavius (509) Teucer, Siscennius Jacchus, and Oppius Cares [856], who persisted in teaching to a most advanced period of his life, at a time when he was not only unable to walk, but his sight failed.

IV. The appellation of grammarian was borrowed from the Greeks; but at first, the Latins called such persons literati. Cornelius Nepos, also, in his book, where he draws a distinction between a literate and a philologist, says that in common phrase, those are properly called literati who are skilled in speaking or writing with care or accuracy, and those more especially deserve the name who translated the poets, and were called grammarians by the Greeks. It appears that they were named literators by Messala Corvinus, in one of his letters, when he says, “that it does not refer to Furius Bibaculus, nor even to Sigida, nor to Cato, the literator,” [857] meaning, doubtless, that Valerius Cato was both a poet and an eminent grammarian. Some there are who draw a distinction between a literati and a literator, as the Greeks do between a grammarian and a grammatist, applying the former term to men of real erudition, the latter to those whose pretensions to learning are moderate; and this opinion Orbilius supports by examples. For he says that in old times, when a company of slaves was offered for sale by any person, it was not customary, without good reason, to describe either of them in the catalogue as a literati, but only as a literator, meaning that he was not a proficient in letters, but had a smattering of knowledge.

The early grammarians taught rhetoric also, and we have many of their treatises which include both sciences; whence it arose, I think, that in later times, although the two professions had then become distinct, the old custom was retained, or the grammarians introduced into their teaching some of the elements required for public speaking, such as the problem, the periphrasis, the choice of words, description of character, and the like; in order that they might not transfer (510) their pupils to the rhetoricians no better than ill−taught boys. But I perceive that these lessons are now given up in some cases, on account of the want of application, or the tender years, of the scholar, for I do not believe that it arises from any dislike in the master. I recollect that when I was a boy it was the custom of one of these, whose name was Princeps, to take alternate days for declaiming and disputing; and sometimes he would lecture in the morning, and declaim in the afternoon, when he had his pulpit removed. I heard, also, that even within the memories of our own fathers, some of the pupils of the grammarians passed directly from the schools to the courts, and at once took a high place in the ranks of the most distinguished advocates. The professors at that time were, indeed, men of great eminence, of some of whom I may be able to give an account in the following chapters.

V. SAEVIUS [858] NICANOR first acquired fame and reputation by his teaching: and, besides, he made commentaries, the greater part of which, however, are said to have been borrowed. He also wrote a satire, in which he informs us that he was a freedman, and had a double cognomen, in the following verses;

Saevius Nicanor Marci libertus negabit,
Saevius Posthumius idem, sed Marcus, docebit.

What Saevius Nicanor, the freedman of Marcus, will deny,
The same Saevius, called also Posthumius Marcus, will assert.

It is reported, that in consequence of some infamy attached to his character, he retired to Sardinia, and there ended his days.

VI. AURELIUS OPILIUS [859], the freedman of some Epicurean, first taught philosophy, then rhetoric, and last of all, grammar. (511) Having closed his school, he followed Rutilius Rufus, when he was banished to Asia, and there the two friends grew old together. He also wrote several volumes on a variety of learned topics, nine books of which he distinguished by the number and names of the nine Muses; as he says, not without reason, they being the patrons of authors and poets. I observe that its title is given in several indexes by a single letter, but he uses two in the heading of a book called Pinax.

VII. MARCUS ANTONIUS GNIPHO [860], a free−born native of Gaul, was exposed in his infancy, and afterwards received his freedom from his foster−father; and, as some say, was educated at Alexandria, where Dionysius Scytobrachion [861] was his fellow pupil. This, however, I am not very ready to believe, as the times at which they flourished scarcely agree. He is said to have been a man of great genius, of singular memory, well read in Greek as well as Latin, and of a most obliging and agreeable temper, who never haggled about remuneration, but generally left it to the liberality of his scholars. He first taught in the house of Julius Caesar [862], when the latter was yet but a boy, and, afterwards, in his own private house. He gave instruction in rhetoric also, teaching the rules of eloquence every day, but declaiming only on festivals. It is said that some very celebrated men frequented his school,—and, among others, Marcus Cicero, during the time he held the praetorship [863]. He wrote a number of works, although he did not live beyond his fiftieth year; but Atteius, the philologist [864], says, that he left only two volumes, “De Latino Sermone;” and, that the other works ascribed to him, were composed by his disciples, and were not his, although his name is sometimes to be found in them.

VIII. M. POMPILIUS ANDRONICUS, a native of Syria, while he professed to be a grammarian, was considered an idle follower of the Epicurean sect, and little qualified to be a master (512) of a school. Finding, therefore, that, at Rome, not only Antonius Gnipho, but even other teachers of less note were preferred to him, he retired to Cumae, where he lived at his ease; and, though he wrote several books, he was so needy, and reduced to such straits, as to be compelled to sell that excellent little work of his, “The Index to the Annals,” for sixteen thousand sesterces. Orbilius has informed us, that he redeemed this work from the oblivion into which it had fallen, and took care to have it published with the author's name.

IX. ORBILIUS PUPILLUS, of Beneventum, being left an orphan, by the death of his parents, who both fell a sacrifice to the plots of their enemies on the same day, acted, at first, as apparitor to the magistrates. He then joined the troops in Macedonia, when he was first decorated with the plumed helmet [865], and, afterwards, promoted to serve on horseback. Having completed his military service, he resumed his studies, which he had pursued with no small diligence from his youth upwards; and, having been a professor for a long period in his own country, at last, during the consulship of Cicero, made his way to Rome, where he taught with more reputation than profit. For in one of his works he says, that “he was then very old, and lived in a garret.” He also published a book with the title of Perialogos; containing complaints of the injurious treatment to which professors submitted, without seeking redress at the hands of parents. His sour temper betrayed itself, not only in his disputes with the sophists opposed to him, whom he lashed on every occasion, but also towards his scholars, as Horace tells us, who calls him “a flogger;” [866] and Domitius Marsus [867], who says of him:

Si quos Orbilius ferula scuticaque cecidit.
If those Orbilius with rod or ferule thrashed.

(513) And not even men of rank escaped his sarcasms; for, before he became noticed, happening to be examined as a witness in a crowded court, Varro, the advocate on the other side, put the question to him, “What he did and by what profession he gained his livelihood?” He replied, “That he lived by removing hunchbacks from the sunshine into the shade,” alluding to Muraena's deformity. He lived till he was near a hundred years old; but he had long lost his memory, as the verse of Bibaculus informs us:

Orbilius ubinam est, literarum oblivio?
Where is Orbilius now, that wreck of learning lost?

His statue is shown in the Capitol at Beneventum. It stands on the left hand, and is sculptured in marble [868], representing him in a sitting posture, wearing the pallium, with two writing−cases in his hand. He left a son,

named also Orbilius, who, like his father, was a professor of grammar.

X. ATTEIUS, THE PHILOLOGIST, a freedman, was born at Athens. Of him, Capito Atteius [869], the well−known jurisconsult, says that he was a rhetorician among the grammarians, and a grammarian among the rhetoricians. Asinius Pollio [870], in the book in which he finds fault with the writings of Sallust for his great affectation of obsolete words, speaks thus: “In this work his chief assistant was a certain Atteius, a man of rank, a splendid Latin grammarian, the aider and preceptor of those who studied the practice of declamation; in short, one who claimed for himself the cognomen of Philologus.” Writing to Lucius Hermas, he says, “that he had made great proficiency in Greek literature, and some in Latin; that he had been a hearer of Antonius Gnipho, and his Hermas [871], and afterwards began to teach others. Moreover, that he had for pupils many illustrious youths, among whom were the two (514) brothers, Appius and Pulcher Claudius; and that he even accompanied them to their province.” He appears to have assumed the name of Philologus, because, like Eratosthenes [872], who first adopted that cognomen, he was in high repute for his rich and varied stores of learning; which, indeed, is evident from his commentaries, though but few of them are extant. Another letter, however, to the same Hermas, shews that they were very numerous: “Remember,” it says, “to recommend generally our Extracts, which we have collected, as you know, of all kinds, into eight hundred books.” He afterwards formed an intimate acquaintance with Caius Sallustius, and, on his death, with Asinius Pollio; and when they undertook to write a history, he supplied the one with short annals of all Roman affairs, from which he could select at pleasure; and the other, with rules on the art of composition. I am, therefore, surprised that Asinius Pollio should have supposed that he was in the habit of collecting old words and figures of speech for Sallust, when he must have known that his own advice was, that none but well known, and common and appropriate expressions should be made use of; and that, above all things, the obscurity of the style of Sallust, and his bold freedom in translations, should be avoided.

XI. VALERIUS CATO was, as some have informed us, the freedman of one Bursenus, a native of Gaul. He himself tells us, in his little work called “Indignatio,” that he was born free, and being left an orphan, was exposed to be easily stripped of his patrimony during the licence of Sylla's administrations. He had a great number of distinguished pupils, and was highly esteemed as a preceptor suited to those who had a poetical turn, as appears from these short lines:

Cato grammaticus, Latina Siren,
Qui solus legit ac facit poetas.

Cato, the Latin Siren, grammar taught and verse,
To form the poet skilled, and poetry rehearse.

Besides his Treatise on Grammar, he composed some poems, (515) of which, his Lydia and Diana are most admired. Ticida mentions his “Lydia.”

Lydia, doctorum maxima cura liber.

“Lydia,” a work to men of learning dear.

Cinna [873] thus notices the “Diana.”

Secula permaneat nostri Diana Catonis.

Immortal be our Cato's song of Dian.

He lived to extreme old age, but in the lowest state of penury, and almost in actual want; having retired to a small cottage when he gave up his Tusculan villa to his creditors; as Bibaculus tells us:

Si quis forte mei domum Catonis,
Depictas minio assulas, et illos
Custodis vidit hortulos Priapi,
Miratur, quibus ille disciplinis,
Tantam sit sapientiam assecutus,
Quam tres cauliculi et selibra farris;
Racemi duo, tegula sub una,
Ad summam prope nutriant senectam.

“If, perchance, any one has seen the house of my Cato, with marble slabs of the richest hues, and his gardens worthy of having Priapus [874] for their guardian, he may well wonder by what philosophy he has gained so much wisdom, that a daily allowance of three coleworts, half−a−pound of meal, and two bunches of grapes, under a narrow roof, should serve for his subsistence to extreme old age.”

And he says in another place:

Catonis modo, Galle, Tusculanum
Tota creditor urbe venditahat.
Mirati sumus unicum magistrum,
Summum grammaticum, optimum poetam,
Omnes solvere posse quaestiones,
Unum difficile expedire nomen.
En cor Zenodoti, en jecur Cratetis!

"We lately saw, my Gallus, Cato's Tusculan villa exposed to public sale by his creditors; and wondered that such an unrivalled master of (516) the schools, most eminent grammarian, and accomplished poet, could solve all propositions and yet found one question too difficult for him to settle,—how to pay his debts. We find in him the genius of Zenodotus [875], the wisdom of Crates." [876]

XII. CORNELIUS EPICADIUS, a freedman of Lucius Cornelius Sylla, the dictator, was his apparitor in the Augural priesthood, and much beloved by his son Faustus; so that he was proud to call himself the freedman of both. He completed the last book of Sylla's Commentaries, which his patron had left unfinished. [877]

XIII. LABERIUS HIERA was bought by his master out of a slave−dealer's cage, and obtained his freedom on account of his devotion to learning. It is reported that his disinterestedness was such, that he gave gratuitous instruction to the children of those who were proscribed in the time of Sylla.

XIV. CURTIUS NICIA was the intimate friend of Cneius Pompeius and Caius Memmius; but having carried notes from Memmius to Pompey's wife [878], when she was debauched by Memmius, Pompey was indignant, and forbad him his house. He was also on familiar terms with Marcus Cicero, who thus speaks of him in his epistle to Dolabella [879]: "I have more need of receiving letters from you, than you have of desiring them from me. For there is nothing going on at Rome in which I think you would take any interest, except, perhaps, that you may like to know that I am appointed umpire between our friends Nicias and Vidius. The one, it appears, alleges in two short verses that Nicias owes him (517) money; the other, like an Aristarchus, cavils at them. I, like an old critic, am to decide whether they are Nicias's or spurious."

Again, in a letter to Atticus [880], he says: "As to what you write about Nicias, nothing could give me greater pleasure than to have him with me, if I was in a position to enjoy his society; but my province is to me a place of retirement and solitude. Sicca easily reconciled himself to this state of things, and, therefore, I would prefer having him. Besides, you are well aware of the feebleness, and the nice and luxurious habits, of our friend Nicias. Why should I be the means of making him uncomfortable, when he can afford me no pleasure? At the same time, I value his goodwill."

XV. LENAEUS was a freedman of Pompey the Great, and attended him in most of his expeditions. On the death of his patron and his sons, he supported himself by teaching in a school which he opened near the temple of Tellus, in the Carium, in the quarter of the city where the house of the Pompeys stood [881]. Such was his regard for his patron's memory, that when Sallust described him as having a brazen face, and a shameless mind, he lashed the historian in a most bitter satire [882], as "a bull's−pizzle, a gormandizer, a braggart, and a tippler, a man whose life and writings were equally monstrous;" besides charging him with being "a most unskilful plagiarist, who borrowed the language of Cato and other old writers." It is related, that, in his youth, having escaped from slavery by the contrivance of some of his friends, he took refuge in his own country; and, that after he had applied himself to the liberal arts, he brought the price of his freedom to his former master, who, however, struck by his talents and learning, gave him manumission gratuitously.

XVI. QUINTUS CAECILIUS, an Epirot by descent, but born at Tusculum, was a freedman of Atticus Satrius, a Roman (518) knight, to whom Cicero addressed his Epistles [883]. He became the tutor of his patron's daughter [884], who was contracted to Marcus Agrippa, but being suspected of an illicit intercourse with her, and sent away on that account, he betook himself to Cornelius Gallus, and lived with him on terms of the greatest intimacy, which, indeed, was imputed to Gallus as one of his heaviest offences, by Augustus. Then, after the condemnation and death of Gallus [885], he opened a school, but had few pupils, and those very young, nor any belonging to the higher orders, excepting the children of those he could not refuse to admit. He was the first, it is said, who held disputations in Latin, and who began to lecture on Virgil and the other modern poets; which the verse of Domitius Marcus [886] points out.

Epirota tenellorum nutricula vatum.
The Epirot who,
With tender care, our unfledged poets nursed.

XVII. VERRIUS FLACCUS [887], a freedman, distinguished himself by a new mode of teaching; for it was his practice to exercise the wits of his scholars, by encouraging emulation among them; not only proposing the subjects on which they were to write, but offering rewards for those who were successful in the contest. These consisted of some ancient, handsome, or rare book. Being, in consequence, selected by Augustus, as preceptor to his grandsons, he transferred his entire school to the Palatium, but with the understanding that he should admit no fresh scholars. The hall in Catiline's house, (519) which had then been added to the palace, was assigned him for his school, with a yearly allowance of one hundred thousand sesterces. He died of old age, in the reign of Tiberius. There is a statue of him at Praeneste, in the semi−circle at the lower side of the forum, where he had set up calendars arranged by himself, and inscribed on slabs of marble.

XVIII. LUCIUS CRASSITIUS, a native of Tarentum, and in rank a freedman, had the cognomen of Pasides, which he afterwards changed for Pansa. His first employment was connected with the stage, and his business was to assist the writers of farces. After that, he took to giving lessons in a gallery attached to a house, until his commentary on “The Smyrna” [888] so brought him into notice, that the following lines were written on him:

Uni Crassitio se credere Smyrna probavit.
Desinite indocti, conjugio hanc petere.
Soli Crassitio se dixit nubere velle:
Intima cui soli nota sua exstiterint.
Crassitius only counts on Smyrna's love,
Fruitless the wooings of the unlettered prove;
Crassitius she receives with loving arms,
For he alone unveiled her hidden charms.

However, after having taught many scholars, some of whom were of high rank, and amongst others, Julius Antonius, the triumvir's son, so that he might be even compared with Verrius Flaccus; he suddenly closed his school, and joined the sect of Quintus Septimius, the philosopher.

XIX. SCRIBONIUS APHRODISIUS, the slave and disciple of Orbilius, who was afterwards redeemed and presented with his freedom by Scribonia [889], the daughter of Libo who had been the wife of Augustus, taught in the time of Verrius; whose books on Orthography he also revised, not without some severe remarks on his pursuits and conduct.

XX. C. JULIUS HYGINUS, a freedman of Augustus, was a native of Spain, (although some say he was born at Alexandria,) (520) and that when that city was taken, Caesar brought him, then a boy, to Rome. He closely and carefully imitated Cornelius Alexander [890], a Greek grammarian, who, for his antiquarian knowledge, was called by many Polyhistor, and by some History. He had the charge of the Palatine library, but that did not prevent him from having many scholars; and he was one of the most intimate friends of the poet Ovid, and of Caius Licinius, the historian, a man of consular rank [891], who has related that Hyginus died very poor, and was supported by his liberality as long as he lived. Julius Modestus [892], who was a freedman of Hyginus, followed the footsteps of his patron in his studies and learning.

XXI. CAIUS MELISSUS [893], a native of Spoletum, was free−born, but having been exposed by his parents in consequence of quarrels between them, he received a good education from his foster−father, by whose care and industry he was brought up, and was made a present of to Mecaenas, as a grammarian. Finding himself valued and treated as a friend, he preferred to continue in his state of servitude, although he was claimed by his mother, choosing rather his present condition than that which his real origin entitled him to. In consequence, his freedom was speedily given him, and he even became a favourite with Augustus. By his appointment he was made curator of the library in the portico of Octavia [894]; and, as he himself informs us, undertook to compose, when he was a sexagenarian, his books of “Witticisms,” which are now called “The Book of Jests.” Of these he accomplished one hundred and fifty, to which he afterwards added several more. He (521) also composed a new kind of story about those who wore the toga, and called it “Trabeat.” [895]

XXII. MARCUS POMPONIUS MARCELLUS, a very severe critic of the Latin tongue, who sometimes pleaded causes, in a certain address on the plaintiff's behalf, persisted in charging his adversary with making a

solecism, until Cassius Severus appealed to the judges to grant an adjournment until his client should produce another grammarian, as he was not prepared to enter into a controversy respecting a solecism, instead of defending his client's rights. On another occasion, when he had found fault with some expression in a speech made by Tiberius, Atteius Capito [896] affirmed, “that if it was not Latin, at least it would be so in time to come;” “Capito is wrong,” cried Marcellus; “it is certainly in your power, Caesar, to confer the freedom of the city on whom you please, but you cannot make words for us.” Asinius Gallus [897] tells us that he was formerly a pugilist, in the following epigram.

Qui caput ad laevam deicit, glossemata nobis
Praecipit; os nullum, vel potius pugilis.

Who ducked his head, to shun another's fist,
Though he expound old saws,—yet, well I wist,
With pummelled nose and face, he's but a pugilist.

XXIII. REMMIUS PALAEMON [898], of Vicentia [899], the offspring of a bond−woman, acquired the rudiments of learning, first as the companion of a weaver's, and then of his master's, son, at school. Being afterwards made free, he taught at Rome, where he stood highest in the rank of the grammarians; but he was so infamous for every sort of vice, that Tiberius and his successor Claudius publicly denounced him as an improper person to have the education of boys and young men entrusted to him. Still, his powers of narrative and agreeable style of speaking made him very popular; besides which, he had the gift of making extempore verses. He also wrote a great many in (522) various and uncommon metres. His insolence was such, that he called Marcus Varro “a hog;” and bragged that “letters were born and would perish with him;" and that “his name was not introduced inadvertently in the Bucolics [900], as Virgil divined that a Palaemon would some day be the judge of all poets and poems.” He also boasted, that having once fallen into the hands of robbers, they spared him on account of the celebrity his name had acquired.

He was so luxurious, that he took the bath many times in a day; nor did his means suffice for his extravagance, although his school brought him in forty thousand sesterces yearly, and he received not much less from his private estate, which he managed with great care. He also kept a broker's shop for the sale of old clothes; and it is well known that a vine [901], he planted himself, yielded three hundred and fifty bottles of wine. But the greatest of all his vices was his unbridled licentiousness in his commerce with women, which he carried to the utmost pitch of foul indecency [902]. They tell a droll story of some one who met him in a crowd, and upon his offering to kiss him, could not escape the salute, “Master,” said he, “do you want to mouth every one you meet with in a hurry?”

XXIV. MARCUS VALERIUS PROBUS, of Berytus [903], after long aspiring to the rank of centurion, being at last tired of waiting, devoted himself to study. He had met with some old authors at a bookseller's shop in the provinces, where the memory of ancient times still lingers, and is not quite forgotten, as it is at Rome. Being anxious carefully to reperuse these, and afterwards to make acquaintance with other works of the same kind, he found himself an object of contempt, and was laughed (523) at for his lectures, instead of their gaining him fame or profit. Still, however, he persisted in his purpose, and employed himself in correcting, illustrating, and adding notes to many works which he had collected, his labours being confined to the province of a grammarian, and nothing more. He had, properly speaking, no scholars, but some few followers. For he never taught in such a way as to maintain the character of a master; but was in the habit of admitting one or two, perhaps at most three or four, disciples in the afternoon; and while he lay at ease and chatted freely on ordinary topics, he occasionally read some book to them, but that did not often happen. He published a few slight treatises on some subtle questions, besides which, he left a large collection of observations on the language of the ancients.

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LIVES OF EMINENT RHETORICIANS.

I. Rhetoric, also, as well as Grammar, was not introduced amongst us till a late period, and with still more difficulty, inasmuch as we find that, at times, the practice of it was even prohibited. In order to leave no doubt of this, I will subjoin an ancient decree of the senate, as well as an edict of the censors:—“In the consulship of Caius Fannius Strabo, and Marcus Palerius Messala [904]: the praetor Marcus Pomponius moved the senate, that an act be passed respecting Philosophers and Rhetoricians. In this matter, they have decreed as follows: 'It shall be lawful for M. Pomponius, the praetor, to take such measures, and make such provisions, as the good of the

Republic, and the duty of his office, require, that no Philosophers or Rhetoricians be suffered at Rome.'"

After some interval, the censor Cnaeus Domitius Aenobarbus and Lucius Licinius Crassus issued the following edict upon the same subject: "It is reported to us that certain persons have instituted a new kind of discipline; that our youth resort to their schools; that they have assumed the title of Latin Rhetoricians; and that young men waste their time there for whole days together. Our ancestors have ordained what instruction it is fitting their children should receive, and what schools they should attend. These novelties, contrary to the customs and instructions of our ancestors, we neither approve, nor do they appear to us good. Wherefore it appears to be our duty that we should notify our judgment both to those who keep such schools, and those who are in the practice of frequenting them, that they meet our disapprobation."

However, by slow degrees, rhetoric manifested itself to be a (525) useful and honourable study, and many persons devoted themselves to it, both as a means of defence and of acquiring reputation. Cicero declaimed in Greek until his praetorship, but afterwards, as he grew older, in Latin also; and even in the consulship of Hirtius and Pansa [905], whom he calls "his great and noble disciples." Some historians state that Cneius Pompey resumed the practice of declaiming even during the civil war, in order to be better prepared to argue against Caius Curio, a young man of great talents, to whom the defence of Caesar was entrusted. They say, likewise, that it was not forgotten by Mark Antony, nor by Augustus, even during the war of Modena. Nero also declaimed [906] even after he became emperor, in the first year of his reign, which he had done before in public but twice. Many speeches of orators were also published. In consequence, public favour was so much attracted to the study of rhetoric, that a vast number of professors and learned men devoted themselves to it; and it flourished to such a degree, that some of them raised themselves by it to the rank of senators and the highest offices.

But the same mode of teaching was not adopted by all, nor, indeed, did individuals always confine themselves to the same system, but each varied his plan of teaching according to circumstances. For they were accustomed, in stating their argument with the utmost clearness, to use figures and apologies, to put cases, as circumstances required, and to relate facts, sometimes briefly and succinctly, and, at other times, more at large and with greater feeling. Nor did they omit, on occasion, to resort to translations from the Greek, and to expatiate in the praise, or to launch their censures on the faults, of illustrious men. They also dealt with matters connected with every−day life, pointing out such as are useful and necessary, and such as are hurtful and needless. They had occasion often to support the authority of fabulous accounts, and to detract from that of historical narratives, which sort the Greeks call "Propositions," "Refutations" and "Corroboration," until by a gradual process they have exhausted these topics, and arrive at the gist of the argument.

Among the ancients, subjects of controversy were drawn either from history, as indeed some are even now, or from (526) actual facts, of recent occurrence. It was, therefore, the custom to state them precisely, with details of the names of places. We certainly so find them collected and published, and it may be well to give one or two of them literally, by way of example:

"A company of young men from the city, having made an excursion to Ostia in the summer season, and going down to the beach, fell in with some fishermen who were casting their nets in the sea. Having bargained with them for the haul, whatever it might turn out to be, for a certain sum, they paid down the money. They waited a long time while the nets were being drawn, and when at last they were dragged on shore, there was no fish in them, but some gold sewn up in a basket. The buyers claim the haul as theirs, the fishermen assert that it belongs to them."

Again: "Some dealers having to land from a ship at Brundusium a cargo of slaves, among which there was a handsome boy of great value, they, in order to deceive the collectors of the customs, smuggled him ashore in the dress of a freeborn youth, with the bullum [907] hung about his neck. The fraud easily escaped detection. They proceed to Rome; the affair becomes the subject of judicial inquiry; it is alleged that the boy was entitled to his freedom, because his master had voluntarily treated him as free."

Formerly, they called these by a Greek term, syntaxeis, but of late "controversies;" but they may be either fictitious cases, or those which come under trial in the courts. Of the eminent professors of this science, of whom any memorials are extant, it would not be easy to find many others than those of whom I shall now proceed to give an account.

II. LUCIUS PLOTIUS GALLUS. Of him Marcus Tullius Cicero thus writes to Marcus Titinnius [908]: "I remember well that when we were boys, one Lucius Plotius first began to teach Latin; and as great numbers

flocked to his school, so that all who were most devoted to study were eager to take lessons from him, it was a great trouble to me that I too was not allowed to do so. I was prevented, however, by the decided opinion (527) of men of the greatest learning, who considered that it was best to cultivate the genius by the study of Greek." This same Gallus, for he lived to a great age, was pointed at by M. Caelius, in a speech which he was forced to make in his own cause, as having supplied his accuser, Atracinus [909], with materials for his charge. Suppressing his name, he says that such a rhetorician was like barley bread [910] compared to a wheaten loaf,—windy, chaffy, and coarse.

III. LUCIUS OCTACILIUS PILITUS is said to have been a slave, and, according to the old custom, chained to the door like a watch−dog [911]; until, having been presented with his freedom for his genius and devotion to learning, he drew up for his patron the act of accusation in a cause he was prosecuting. After that, becoming a professor of rhetoric, he gave instructions to Cneius Pompey the Great, and composed an account of his actions, as well as of those of his father, being the first freedman, according to the opinion of Cornelius Nepos [912], who ventured to write history, which before his time had not been done by any one who was not of the highest ranks in society.

IV. About this time, EPIDIUS [913] having fallen into disgrace for bringing a false accusation, opened a school of instruction, in which he taught, among others, Mark Antony and Augustus. On one occasion Caius Canutius jeered them for presuming to belong to the party of the consul Isauricus [914] in his administration of the republic; upon which he replied, that he would rather be the disciple of Isauricus, than of Epidius, the false accuser. This Epidius claimed to be descended from Epidius Nuncio, who, as (528) ancient traditions assert, fell into the fountain of the river Sarnus [915] when the streams were overflown, and not being afterwards found, was reckoned among the number of the gods.

V. SEXTUS CLODIUS, a native of Sicily, a professor both of Greek and Latin eloquence, had bad eyes and a facetious tongue. It was a saying of his, that he lost a pair of eyes from his intimacy with Mark Antony, the triumvir [916]. Of his wife, Fulvia, when there was a swelling in one of her cheeks, he said that "she tempted the point of his style;" [917] nor did Antony think any the worse of him for the joke, but quite enjoyed it; and soon afterwards, when Antony was consul [918], he even made him a large grant of land, which Cicero charges him with in his Philippics [919]. "You patronize," he said, "a master of the schools for the sake of his buffoonery, and make a rhetorician one of your pot−companions; allowing him to cut his jokes on any one he pleased; a witty man, no doubt, but it was an easy matter to say smart things of such as you and your companions. But listen, Conscript Fathers, while I tell you what reward was given to this rhetorician, and let the wounds of the republic be laid bare to view. You assigned two thousand acres of the Leontine territory [920] to Sextus Clodius, the rhetorician, and not content with that, exonerated the estate from all taxes. Hear this, and learn from the extravagance of the grant, how little wisdom is displayed in your acts."

VI. CAIUS ALBUTIUS SILUS, of Novara [921], while, in the execution (529) of the office of edile in his native place, he was sitting for the administration of justice, was dragged by the feet from the tribunal by some persons against whom he was pronouncing a decree. In great indignation at this usage, he made straight for the gate of the town, and proceeded to Rome. There he was admitted to fellowship, and lodged, with Plancus the orator [922], whose practice it was, before he made a speech in public, to set up some one to take the contrary side in the argument. The office was undertaken by Albutius with such success, that he silenced Plancus, who did not venture to put himself in competition with him. This bringing him into notice, he collected an audience of his own, and it was his custom to open the question proposed for debate, sitting; but as he warmed with the subject, he stood up, and made his peroration in that posture. His declamations were of different kinds; sometimes brilliant and polished, at others, that they might not be thought to savour too much of the schools, he curtailed them of all ornament, and used only familiar phrases. He also pleaded causes, but rarely, being employed in such as were of the highest importance, and in every case undertaking the peroration only.

In the end, he gave up practising in the forum, partly from shame, partly from fear. For, in a certain trial before the court of the One Hundred [923], having lashed the defendant as a man void of natural affection for his parents, he called upon him by a bold figure of speech, "to swear by the ashes of his father and mother which lay unburied;" his adversary taking him up for the suggestion, and the judges frowning upon it, he lost his cause, and was much blamed. At another time, on a trial for murder at Milan, before Lucius Piso, the proconsul, having to defend the culprit, he worked himself up to such a pitch of vehemence, that in a crowded court, who loudly

applauded him, notwithstanding all the efforts of the lictor to maintain order, he broke out into a lamentation on the miserable state of Italy [924], then in danger of being again reduced, he said, into (530) the form of a province, and turning to the statue of Marcus Brutus, which stood in the Forum, he invoked him as “the founder and vindicator of the liberties of the people.” For this he narrowly escaped a prosecution. Suffering, at an advanced period of life, from an ulcerated tumour, he returned to Novara, and calling the people together in a public assembly, addressed them in a set speech, of considerable length, explaining the reasons which induced him to put an end to existence: and this he did by abstaining from food.

FOOTNOTES:

[842] It will be understood that the terms Grammar and Grammarian have here a more extended sense than that which they convey in modern use. See the beginning of c. iv.

[843] Suetonius's account of the rude and unlettered state of society in the early times of Rome, is consistent with what we might infer, and with the accounts which have come down to us, of a community composed of the most daring and adventurous spirits thrown off by the neighbouring tribes, and whose sole occupations were rapine and war. But Cicero discovers the germs of mental cultivation among the Romans long before the period assigned to it by Suetonius, tracing them to the teaching of Pythagoras, who visited the Greek cities on the coast of Italy in the reign of Tarquinius Superbus.—Tusc. Quaest. iv. 1.

[844] Livius, whose cognomen Andronicus, intimates his extraction, was born of Greek parents. He began to teach at Rome in the consulship of Claudius Cento, the son of Appius Caecus, and Sempronius Tuditanus, A.U.C. 514. He must not be confounded with Titus Livius, the historian, who flourished in the Augustan age.

[845] Ennius was a native of Calabria. He was born the year after the consulship mentioned in the preceding note, and lived to see at least his seventy−sixth year, for Gellius informs us that at that age he wrote the twelfth book of his Annals.

[846] Porcius Cato found Ennius in Sardinia, when he conquered that island during his praetorship. He learnt Greek from Ennius there, and brought him to Rome on his return. Ennius taught Greek at Rome for a long course of years, having M. Cato among his pupils.

[847] Mallos was near Tarsus, in Cilicia. Crates was the son of Timocrates, a Stoic philosopher, who for his critical skill had the surname of Homericus.

[848] Aristarchus flourished at Alexandria, in the reign of Ptolemy Philometer, whose son he educated.

[849] A.U.C. 535−602 or 605.

[850] Cicero [De Clar. Orat. c. xx., De Senect. c. v. 1] places the death of Ennius A.U.C. 584, for which there are other authorities; but this differs from the account given in a former note.

[851] The History of the first Punic War by Naevius is mentioned by Cicero, De Senect, c. 14.

[852] Lucilius, the poet, was born about A.U.C. 605.

[853] Q. Metellus obtained the surname of Numidicus, on his triumph over Jugurtha, A.U.C. 644. Aelius, who was Varro's tutor, accompanied him to Rhodes or Smyrna, when he was unjustly banished, A.U.C. 653.

[854] Servius Claudius (also called Clodius) is commended by Cicero, Fam. Epist. ix. 16, and his singular death mentioned by Pliny, xxv. 4.

[855] Daphnis, a shepherd, the son of Mercury, was said to have been brought up by Pan. The humorous turn given by Lenaeus to Lutatius's cognomen is not very clear. Daphnides is the plural of Daphnis; therefore the herd or company, agaema; and Pan was the god of rustics, and the inventor of the rude music of the reed.

[856] Oppius Cares is said by Macrobius to have written a book on Forest Trees.

[857] Quintilian enumerates Bibaculus among the Roman poets in the same line with Catullus and Horace, Institut. x. 1. Of Sigida we know nothing; even the name is supposed to be incorrectly given. Apuleius mentions a Ticida, who is also noticed by Suetonius hereafter in c. xi., where likewise he gives an account of Valerius Cato.

[858] Probably Suevius, of whom Macrobius informs us that he was the learned author of an Idyll, which had the title of the Mulberry Grove; observing, that “the peach which Suevius reckons as a species of the nuts, rather belongs to the tribe of apples.”

[859] Aurelius Opilius is mentioned by Symmachus and Gellius. His cotemporary and friend, Rutilius Rufus, having been a military tribune under Scipio in the Numantine war, wrote a history of it. He was consul A.U.C. 648, and unjustly banished, to the general grief of the people, A.U.C. 659.

[860] Quintilian mentions Gnipho, Instit. i. 6. We find that Cicero was among his pupils. The date of his

praetorship, given below, fixes the time when Gnipho flourished.

[861] This strange cognomen is supposed to have been derived from a cork arm, which supplied the place of one Dionysius had lost. He was a poet of Mitylene.

[862] See before, JULIUS, c. xlvi.

[863] A.U.C. 687.

[864] Suetonius gives his life in c. x.

[865] A grade of inferior officers in the Roman armies, of which we have no very exact idea.

[866] Horace speaks feelingly on the subject:

Memini quae plagosum mihi parvo
Orbilium tractare. Epist. xi. i. 70.

I remember well when I was young,
How old Orbilius thwacked me at my tasks.

[867] Domitius Marsus wrote epigrams. He is mentioned by Ovid and Martial.

[868] This is not the only instance mentioned by Suetonius of statues erected to learned men in the place of their birth or celebrity. Orbilius, as a schoolmaster, was represented in a sitting posture, and with the gown of the Greek philosophers.

[869] Tacitus [Annal. cxi. 75] gives the character of Atteius Capito. He was consul A.U.C. 758.

[870] Asinius Pollio; see JULIUS, c. xxx.

[871] Whether Hermas was the son or scholar of Gnipho, does not appear,

[872] Eratosthenes, an Athenian philosopher, flourished in Egypt, under three of the Ptolemies successively. Strabo often mentions him. See xvii. p. 576.

[873] Cornelius Helvius Cinna was an epigrammatic poet, of the same age as Catullus. Ovid mentions him, Tristia, xi. 435.

[874] Priapus was worshipped as the protector of gardens.

[875] Zenodotus, the grammarian, was librarian to the first Ptolemy at Alexandria, and tutor to his sons.

[876] For Crates, see before, p. 507.

[877] We find from Plutarch that Sylla was employed two days before his death, in completing the twenty−second book of his Commentaries; and, foreseeing his fate, entrusted them to the care of Lucullus, who, with the assistance of Epicadius, corrected and arranged them. Epicadius also wrote on Heroic verse, and Cognomina.

[878] Plutarch, in his Life of Caesar, speaks of the loose conduct of Mucia, Pompey's wife, during her husband's absence.

[879] Fam. Epist. 9.

[880] Cicero ad Att. xii. 36.

[881] See before, AUGUSTUS, c. v.

[882] Lenaeus was not singular in his censure of Sallust. Lactantius, 11. 12, gives him an infamous character; and Horace says of him,

Libertinarum dico; Sallustius in quas
Non minus insanit; quam qui moechatur.—Sat. i. 2. 48.

[883] The name of the well known Roman knight, to whom Cicero addressed his Epistles, was Titus Pomponius Atticus. Although Satrius was the name of a family at Rome, no connection between it and Atticus can be found, so that the text is supposed to be corrupt. Quintus Caecilius was an uncle of Atticus, and adopted him. The freedman mentioned in this chapter probably assumed his name, he having been the property of Caecilius; as it was the custom for freedmen to adopt the names of their patrons.

[884] Suetonius, TIBERIUS, c. viii. Her name was Pomponia.

[885] See AUGUSTUS, c. lxvi.

[886] He is mentioned before, c. ix.

[887] Verrius Flaccus is mentioned by St. Jerome, in conjunction with Athenodorus of Tarsus, a Stoic philosopher, to have flourished A.M.C. 2024, which is A.U.C. 759; A.D. 9. He is also praised by Gellius, Macrobius, Pliny, and Priscian.

[888] Cinna wrote a poem, which he called “Smyrna,” and was nine years in composing, as Catullus informs

us, 93. 1.

[889] See AUGUSTUS, cc. lxii. lxix.

[890] Cornelius Alexander, who had also the name of Polyhistor, was born at Miletus, and being taken prisoner, and bought by Cornelius, was brought to Rome, and becoming his teacher, had his freedom given him, with the name of his patron. He flourished in the time of Sylla, and composed a great number of works; amongst which were five books on Rome. Suetonius has already told us [AUGUSTUS, xxix.] that he had the care of the Palatine Library.

[891] No such consul as Caius Licinius appears in the Fasti; and it is supposed to be a mistake for C. Atinius, who was the colleague of Cn. Domitius Calvinus, A.U.C. 713, and wrote a book on the Civil War.

[892] Julius Modestus, in whom the name of the Julian family was still preserved, is mentioned with approbation by Gellius, Martial, Quintilian, and others.

[893] Melissus is mentioned by Ovid, De Pontif. iv 16−30.

[894] See AUGUSTUS, c. xxix. p. 93, and note.

[895] The trabea was a white robe, with a purple border, of a different fashion from the toga.

[896] See before, c. x.

[897] See CLAUDIUS, c. x1i. and note.

[898] Remmius Palaemon appears to have been cotemporary with Pliny and Quintilian, who speak highly of him.

[899] Now Vicenza.

[900] “Audiat haec tantum vel qui venit, ecce, Palaemon.”—Eccl. iii. 50.

[901] All the editions have the word vitem; but we might conjecture, from the large produce, that it is a mistake for vineam, a vineyard: in which case the word vasa might be rendered, not bottles, but casks. The amphora held about nine gallons. Pliny mentions that Remmius bought a farm near the turning on the Nomentan road, at the tenth mile−stone from Rome.

[902] “Usque ad infamiam oris.”—See TIBERIUS, p. 220, and the notes.

[903] Now Beyrout, on the coast of Syria. It was one of the colonies founded by Julius Caesar when he transported 80,000 Roman citizens to foreign parts.—JULIUS, xlii.

[904] This senatus consultum was made A.U.C. 592.

[905] Hirtius and Pansa were consuls A.U.C. 710.

[906] See NERO, c. x.

[907] As to the Bullum, see before, JULIUS, c. lxxxiv.

[908] This extract given by Suetonius is all we know of any epistle addressed by Cicero to Marcus Titinnius.

[909] See Cicero's Oration, pro Caelio, where Atracinus is frequently mentioned, especially cc. i. and iii.

[910] “Hordearium rhetorem.”

[911] From the manner in which Suetonius speaks of the old custom of chaining one of the lowest slaves to the outer gate, to supply the place of a watch−dog, it would appear to have been disused in his time.

[912] The work in which Cornelius Nepos made this statement is lost.

[913] Pliny mentions with approbation C. Epidius, who wrote some treatises in which trees are represented as speaking; and the period in which he flourished, agrees with that assigned to the rhetorician here named by Suetonius. Plin. xvii. 25.

[914] Isauricus was consul with Julius Caesar II., A.U.C. 705, and again with L. Antony, A.U.C. 712.

[915] A river in the ancient Campania, now called the Sarno, which discharges itself into the bay of Naples.

[916] Epidius attributes the injury received by his eyes to the corrupt habits he contracted in the society of M. Antony.

[917] The direct allusion is to the “style” or probe used by surgeons in opening tumours.

[918] Mark Antony was consul with Julius Caesar, A.U.C. 709. See before, JULIUS, c. lxxix.

[919] Philipp. xi. 17.

[920] Leontium, now called Lentini, was a town in Sicily, the foundation of which is related by Thucydides, vi. p. 412. Polybius describes the Leontine fields as the most fertile part of Sicily. Polyb. vii. 1. And see Cicero, contra Verrem, iii. 46, 47.

[921] Novara, a town of the Milanese.

[922] St. Jerom in Chron. Euseb. describes Lucius Munatius Plancus as the disciple of Cicero, and a celebrated orator. He founded Lyons during the time he governed that part of the Roman provinces in Gaul.

[923] See AUGUSTUS, c. xxxvi.

[924] He meant to speak of Cisalpine Gaul, which, though geographically a part of Italy, did not till a late period enjoy the privileges of the other territories united to Rome, and was administered by a praetor under the forms of a dependent province. It was admitted to equal rights by the triumvirs, after the death of Julius Caesar. Albutius intimated that those rights were now in danger.