

# The Lives Of The Twelve Caesars, Volume 14. [LIVES OF THE PO]

C. Suetonius Tranquillus



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# **The Lives Of The Twelve Caesars, Volume 14. [LIVES OF THE POETS]**

## C. Suetonius Tranquillus

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- THE LIFE OF JUVENAL.
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- THE LIFE OF PLINY. [984]
- FOOTNOTES:

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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.

The Translation of  
Alexander Thomson, M.D.  
revised and corrected by  
T.Forester, Esq., A.M.

(531)

LIVES OF THE POETS.

## THE LIFE OF TERENCE.

Publius Terentius Afer, a native of Carthage, was a slave, at Rome, of the senator Terentius Lucanus, who, struck by his abilities and handsome person, gave him not only a liberal education in his youth, but his freedom when he arrived at years of maturity. Some say that he was a captive taken in war, but this, as Fenestella [925] informs us, could by no means have been the case, since both his birth and death took place in the interval between the termination of the second Punic war and the commencement of the third [926]; nor, even supposing that he had been taken prisoner by the Numidian or Getulian tribes, could he have fallen into the hands of a Roman general, as there was no commercial intercourse between the Italians and Africans until after the fall of Carthage [927]. Terence lived in great familiarity with many persons of high station, and especially with Scipio Africanus, and Caius Delius, whose favour he is even supposed to have purchased by the foulest means. But Fenestella reverses the charge, contending that Terence was older than either of them. Cornelius Nepos, however, (532) informs us that they were all of nearly equal age; and Porcias intimates a suspicion of this criminal commerce in the following passage:—

“While Terence plays the wanton with the great, and recommends himself to them by the meretricious ornaments of his person; while, with greedy ears, he drinks in the divine melody of Africanus's voice; while he thinks of being a constant guest at the table of Furius, and the handsome Laelius; while he thinks that he is fondly loved by them, and often invited to Albanum for his youthful beauty, he finds himself stripped of his property, and reduced to the lowest state of indigence. Then, withdrawing from the world, he betook himself to Greece, where he met his end, dying at Strymphalos, a town in Arcadia. What availed him the friendship of Scipio, of Laelius, or of Furius, three of the most affluent nobles of that age? They did not even minister to his necessities so much as to provide him a hired house, to which his slave might return with the intelligence of his master's death.”

He wrote comedies, the earliest of which, *The Andria*, having to be performed at the public spectacles given by the aediles [928], he was commanded to read it first before Caecilius [929]. Having been introduced while Caecilius was at supper, and being meanly dressed, he is reported to have read the beginning of the play seated on a low stool near the great man's couch. But after reciting a few verses, he was invited to take his place at table, and, having supped with his host, went through the rest to his great delight. This play and five others were received by the public with similar applause, although Volcatius, in his enumeration of them, says that “*The Hecyra* [930] must not be reckoned among these.”

The Eunuch was even acted twice the same day [931], and earned more money than any comedy, whoever was the writer, had (533) ever done before, namely, eight thousand sesterces [932]; besides which, a certain sum accrued to the author for the title. But Varro prefers the opening of *The Adelphi* [933] to that of Menander. It is very commonly reported that Terence was assisted in his works by Laelius and Scipio [934], with whom he lived in such great intimacy. He gave some currency to this report himself, nor did he ever attempt to defend himself against it, except in a light way; as in the prologue to *The Adelphi*:

Nam quod isti dicunt malevoli, homines nohiles

Hunc adjutare, assidueque una scribere;

Quod illi maledictun vehemens existimant,

Eam laudem hic ducit maximam: cum illis placet,

Qui vobis universis et populo placent;

Quorum opera in bello, in otio, in negotio,

Suo quisque tempore usus est sine superbia.

—————For this,

Which malice tells that certain noble persons

Assist the bard, and write in concert with him,

That which they deem a heavy slander, he

Esteems his greatest praise: that he can please

Those who in war, in peace, as counsellors,

Have rendered you the dearest services,

And ever borne their faculties so meekly.

Colman.

He appears to have protested against this imputation with less earnestness, because the notion was far from being disagreeable to Laelius and Scipio. It therefore gained ground, and prevailed in after-times.

Quintus Memmius, in his speech in his own defence, says "Publius Africanus, who borrowed from Terence a character which he had acted in private, brought it on the stage in his name." Nepos tells us he found in some book that C. Laelius, when he was on some occasion at Puteoli, on the calends [the first] of March, [935] being requested by his wife to rise early, (534) begged her not to suffer him to be disturbed, as he had gone to bed late, having been engaged in writing with more than usual success. On her asking him to tell her what he had been writing, he repeated the verses which are found in the *Heautontimoroumenos*:

Satis pol proterve me Syri promessa—Heauton. IV. iv. 1.

I'faith! the rogue Syrus's impudent pretences—

Santra [936] is of opinion that if Terence required any assistance in his compositions [937], he would not have had recourse to Scipio and Laelius, who were then very young men, but rather to Sulpicius Gallus [938], an accomplished scholar, who had been the first to introduce his plays at the games given by the consuls; or to Q. Fabius Labeo, or Marcus Popilius [939], both men of consular rank, as well as poets. It was for this reason that, in alluding to the assistance he had received, he did not speak of his coadjutors as very young men, but as persons of whose services the people had full experience in peace, in war, and in the administration of affairs.

After he had given his comedies to the world, at a time when he had not passed his thirty-fifth year, in order to avoid suspicion, as he found others publishing their works under his name, or else to make himself acquainted with the modes of life and habits of the Greeks, for the purpose of exhibiting them in his plays, he withdrew from home, to which he never returned. Volcatius gives this account of his death:

Sed ut Afer sei populo dedit comoedias,

Iter hic in Asiam fecit. Navem cum semel

Conscendit, visus nunquam est. Sic vita vacat.

(535) When Afer had produced six plays for the entertainment of the people,

He embarked for Asia; but from the time he went on board ship

He was never seen again. Thus he ended his life.

Q. Consentius reports that he perished at sea on his voyage back from Greece, and that one hundred and eight plays, of which he had made a version from Menander [940], were lost with him. Others say that he died at Stymphalos, in Arcadia, or in Leucadia, during the consulship of Cn. Cornelius Dolabella and Marcus Fulvius Nobilior [941], worn out with a severe illness, and with grief and regret for the loss of his baggage, which he had sent forward in a ship that was wrecked, and contained the last new plays he had written.

In person, Terence is reported to have been rather short and slender, with a dark complexion. He had an only daughter, who was afterwards married to a Roman knight; and he left also twenty acres of garden ground [942], on the Appian Way, at the Villa of Mars. I, therefore, wonder the more how Porcius could have written the verses,

—————nihil Publius

Scipio profuit, nihil et Laelius, nihil Furius,

Tres per idem tempus qui agitabant nobiles facillime.

Eorum ille opera ne domum quidem habuit conductitiam

Saltem ut esset, quo referret obitum domini servulus. [943]

Afranius places him at the head of all the comic writers, declaring, in his *Compitalia*,

Terentio non similem dices quempiam.

Terence's equal cannot soon be found.

On the other hand, Volcatius reckons him inferior not only (536) to Naevius, Plautus, and Caecilius, but also to Licinius. Cicero pays him this high compliment, in his *Limo*—

Tu quoque, qui solus lecto sermone, Terenti,

Conversum expressumque Latina voce Menandrum

In medio populi sedatis vocibus offers,

Quidquid come loquens, ac omnia dulcia dicens.

“You, only, Terence, translated into Latin, and clothed in choice language the plays of Menander, and brought them before the public, who, in crowded audiences, hung upon hushed applause—

Grace marked each line, and every period charmed.”

So also Caius Caesar:

Tu quoque tu in summis, O dimidiate Menander,  
Poneris, et merito, puri sermonis amator,  
Lenibus atque utinam scriptis adjuncta foret vis  
Comica, ut aequato virtus polleret honore  
Cum Graecis, neque in hoc despectus parte jaceres!  
Unum hoc maceror, et doleo tibi deesse, Terenti.

“You, too, who divide your honours with Menander, will take your place among poets of the highest order, and justly too, such is the purity of your style. Would only that to your graceful diction was added more comic force, that your works might equal in merit the Greek masterpieces, and your inferiority in this particular should not expose you to censure. This is my only regret; in this, Terence, I grieve to say you are wanting.”



## THE LIFE OF JUVENAL.

D. JUNIUS JUVENALIS, who was either the son [944] of a wealthy freedman, or brought up by him, it is not known which, declaimed till the middle of life [945], more from the bent of his inclination, than from any desire to prepare himself either for the schools or the forum. But having composed a short satire [946], which was clever enough, on Paris [947], the actor of pantomimes, (537) and also on the poet of Claudius Nero, who was puffed up by having held some inferior military rank for six months only; he afterwards devoted himself with much zeal to that style of writing. For a while indeed, he had not the courage to read them even to a small circle of auditors, but it was not long before he recited his satires to crowded audiences, and with entire success; and this he did twice or thrice, inserting new lines among those which he had originally composed.

Quod non dant proceres, dabit histrio, tu Camerinos,

Et Bareas, tu nobilium magna atria curas.

Praefectos Pelopea facit, Philomela tribunos.

Behold an actor's patronage affords

A surer means of rising than a lord's!

And wilt thou still the Camerino's [948] court,

Or to the halls of Bareas resort,

When tribunes Pelopea can create

And Philomela praefects, who shall rule the state? [949]

At that time the player was in high favour at court, and many of those who fawned upon him were daily raised to posts of honour. Juvenal therefore incurred the suspicion of having covertly satirized occurrences which were then passing, and, although eighty years old at that time [950], he was immediately removed from the city, being sent into honourable banishment as praefect of a cohort, which was under orders to proceed to a station at the extreme frontier of Egypt [951]. That (538) sort of punishment was selected, as it appeared severe enough for an offence which was venial, and a mere piece of drollery. However, he died very soon afterwards, worn down by grief, and weary of his life.

## THE LIFE OF PERSIUS.

AULUS PERSIUS FLACCUS was born the day before the Nones of December [4th Dec.] [952], in the consulship of Fabius Persicus and L. Vitellius. He died on the eighth of the calends of December [24th Nov.] [953] in the consulship of Rubrius Marius and Asinius Gallus. Though born at Volterra, in Etruria, he was a Roman knight, allied both by blood and marriage to persons of the highest rank [954]. He ended his days at an estate he had at the eighth milestone on the Appian Way. His father, Flaccus, who died when he was barely six years old, left him under the care of guardians, and his mother, Fulvia Silenna, who afterwards married Fusius, a Roman knight, buried him also in a very few years. Persius Flaccus pursued his studies at Volterra till he was twelve years old, and then continued them at Rome, under Remmius Palaemon, the grammarian, and Verginius Flaccus, the rhetorician. Arriving at the age of twenty-one, he formed a friendship with Annaeus Cornutus [955], which lasted through life; and from him he learned the rudiments of philosophy. Among his earliest friends were Caesius Bassus [956], and Calpurnius Statuta; the latter of whom died while Persius himself was yet in his youth. Servilius (539) Numanus [957], he revered as a father. Through Cornutus he was introduced to Annaeus, as well as to Lucan, who was of his own age, and also a disciple of Cornutus. At that time Cornutus was a tragic writer; he belonged to the sect of the Stoics, and left behind him some philosophical works. Lucan was so delighted with the writings of Persius Flaccus, that he could scarcely refrain from giving loud tokens of applause while the author was reciting them, and declared that they had the true spirit of poetry. It was late before Persius made the acquaintance of Seneca, and then he was not much struck with his natural endowments. At the house of Cornutus he enjoyed the society of two very learned and excellent men, who were then zealously devoting themselves to philosophical enquiries, namely, Claudius Agaturnus, a physician from Lacedaemon, and Petronius Aristocrates, of Magnesia, men whom he held in the highest esteem, and with whom he vied in their studies, as they were of his own age, being younger than Cornutus. During nearly the last ten years of his life he was much beloved by Thraseas, so that he sometimes travelled abroad in his company; and his cousin Arria was married to him.

Persius was remarkable for gentle manners, for a modesty amounting to bashfulness, a handsome form, and an attachment to his mother, sister, and aunt, which was most exemplary. He was frugal and chaste. He left his mother and sister twenty thousand sesterces, requesting his mother, in a written codicil, to present to Cornutus, as some say, one hundred sesterces, or as others, twenty pounds of wrought silver [958], besides about seven hundred books, which, indeed, included his whole library. Cornutus, however, would only take the books, and gave up the legacy to the sisters, whom his brother had constituted his heirs.

He wrote [959] seldom, and not very fast; even the work we possess he left incomplete. Some verses are wanting at the end of the book [960], but Cornutus thoughtlessly recited it, as if (540) it was finished; and on Caesius Bassus requesting to be allowed to publish it, he delivered it to him for that purpose. In his younger days, Persius had written a play, as well as an Itinerary, with several copies of verses on Thraseas' father-in-law, and Arria's [961] mother, who had made away with herself before her husband. But Cornutus used his whole influence with the mother of Persius to prevail upon her to destroy these compositions. As soon as his book of Satires was published, all the world began to admire it, and were eager to buy it up. He died of a disease in the stomach, in the thirtieth year of his age [962]. But no sooner had he left school and his masters, than he set to work with great vehemence to compose satires, from having read the tenth book of Lucilius; and made the beginning of that book his model; presently launching his invectives all around with so little scruple, that he did not spare cotemporary poets and orators, and even lashed Nero himself, who was then the reigning prince. The verse ran as follows:

Auriculas asini Mida rex habet;

King Midas has an ass's ears;

but Cornutus altered it thus;

Auriculas asini quis non habet?

Who has not an ass's ears?

in order that it might not be supposed that it was meant to apply to Nero.



## THE LIFE OF HORACE.

HORATIUS FLACCUS was a native of Venusium [963], his father having been, by his own account [964], a freedman and collector of taxes, but, as it is generally believed, a dealer in salted (541) provisions; for some one with whom Horace had a quarrel, jeered him, by saying; “How often have I seen your father wiping his nose with his fist?” In the battle of Philippi, he served as a military tribune [965], which post he filled at the instance of Marcus Brutus [966], the general; and having obtained a pardon, on the overthrow of his party, he purchased the office of scribe to a quaestor. Afterwards insinuating himself first, into the good graces of Mecaenas, and then of Augustus, he secured no small share in the regard of both. And first, how much Mecaenas loved him may be seen by the epigram in which he says:

Ni te visceribus meis, Horati,  
Plus jam diligo, Titium sodalem,  
Ginno tu videas strigiosorem. [967]

But it was more strongly exhibited by Augustus, in a short sentence uttered in his last moments: “Be as mindful of Horatius Flaccus as you are of me!” Augustus offered to appoint him his secretary, signifying his wishes to Mecaenas in a letter to the following effect: “Hitherto I have been able to write my own epistles to friends; but now I am too much occupied, and in an infirm state of health. I wish, therefore, to deprive you of our Horace: let him leave, therefore, your luxurious table and come to the palace, and he shall assist me in writing my letters.” And upon his refusing to accept the office, he neither exhibited the smallest displeasure, nor ceased to heap upon him tokens of his regard. Letters of his are extant, from which I will make some short extracts to establish this: “Use your influence over me with the same freedom as you would do if we were living together as friends. In so doing you will be perfectly right, and guilty of no impropriety; for I could wish that our intercourse should be on that footing, if your health admitted of it.” And again: “How I hold you in memory you may learn (542) from our friend Septimius [968], for I happened to mention you when he was present. And if you are so proud as to scorn my friendship, that is no reason why I should lightly esteem yours, in return.” Besides this, among other drolleries, he often called him, “his most immaculate penis,” and “his charming little man,” and loaded him from time to time with proofs of his munificence. He admired his works so much, and was so convinced of their enduring fame, that he directed him to compose the Secular Poem, as well as that on the victory of his stepsons Tiberius and Drusus over the Vindelici [969]; and for this purpose urged him to add, after a long interval, a fourth book of Odes to the former three. After reading his “Sermones,” in which he found no mention of himself, he complained in these terms: “You must know that I am very angry with you, because in most of your works of this description you do not choose to address yourself to me. Are you afraid that, in times to come, your reputation will suffer; in case it should appear that you lived on terms of intimate friendship with me?” And he wrung from him the eulogy which begins with,

Cum tot sustineas, et tanta negotia solus:  
Res Italas armis tuteris, moribus ornes,  
Legibus emendes: in publica commoda peccem,  
Si longo sermone morer tua tempora, Caesar.—Epist. ii. i.

While you alone sustain the important weight  
Of Rome's affairs, so various and so great;  
While you the public weal with arms defend,  
Adorn with morals, and with laws amend;  
Shall not the tedious letter prove a crime,  
That steals one moment of our Caesar's time.—Francis.

In person, Horace was short and fat, as he is described by himself in his Satires [970], and by Augustus in the following letter: “Dionysius has brought me your small volume, which, little as it is, not to blame you for that, I shall judge favourably. You seem to me, however, to be afraid lest your volumes should be bigger than yourself. But if you are short in stature, you are corpulent enough. You may, therefore, (543) if you will, write in a quart, when the size of your volume is as large round as your paunch.”

It is reported that he was immoderately addicted to venery. [For he is said to have had obscene pictures so disposed in a bedchamber lined with mirrors, that, whichever way he looked, lascivious images might present themselves to his view.] [971] He lived for the most part in the retirement of his farm [972], on the confines of the Sabine and Tiburtine territories, and his house is shewn in the neighbourhood of a little wood not far from Tibur. Some Elegies ascribed to him, and a prose Epistle apparently written to commend himself to Mecaenas, have been handed down to us; but I believe that neither of them are genuine works of his; for the Elegies are commonplace, and the Epistle is wanting in perspicuity, a fault which cannot be imputed to his style. He was born on the sixth of the ides of December [27th December], in the consulship of Lucius Cotta [973] and Lucius Torquatus; and died on the fifth of the calends of December [27th November], in the consulship of Caius Marcius Censorinus and Caius Asinius Gallus [974]; having completed his fifty-ninth year. He made a nuncupatory will, declaring Augustus his heir, not being able, from the violence of his disorder, to sign one in due form. He was interred and lies buried on the skirts of the Esquiline Hill, near the tomb of Mecaenas. [975]

(544) M. ANNAEUS LUCANUS, a native of Corduba [976], first tried the powers of his genius in an encomium on Nero, at the Quinquennial games. He afterwards recited his poem on the Civil War carried on between Pompey and Caesar. His vanity was so immense, and he gave such liberty to his tongue, that in some preface, comparing his age and his first efforts with those of Virgil, he had the assurance to say: "And what now remains for me is to deal with a gnat." In his early youth, after being long informed of the sort of life his father led in the country, in consequence of an unhappy marriage [977], he was recalled from Athens by Nero, who admitted him into the circle of his friends, and even gave him the honour of the quaestorship; but he did not long remain in favour. Smarting at this, and having publicly stated that Nero had withdrawn, all of a sudden, without communicating with the senate, and without any other motive than his own recreation, after this he did not cease to assail the emperor both with foul words and with acts which are still notorious. So that on one occasion, when easing his bowels in the common privy, there being a louder explosion than usual, he gave vent to the nemistych of Nero: "One would suppose it was thundering under ground," in the hearing of those who were sitting there for the same purpose, and who took to their heels in much consternation [978]. In a poem also, which was in every one's hands, he severely lashed both the emperor and his most powerful adherents.

At length, he became nearly the most active leader in Piso's conspiracy [979]; and while he dwelt without reserve in many quarters on the glory of those who dipped their hands in the (545) blood of tyrants, he launched out into open threats of violence, and carried them so far as to boast that he would cast the emperor's head at the feet of his neighbours. When, however, the plot was discovered, he did not exhibit any firmness of mind. A confession was wrung from him without much difficulty; and, humbling himself to the most abject entreaties, he even named his innocent mother as one of the conspirators [980]; hoping that his want of natural affection would give him favour in the eyes of a parricidal prince. Having obtained permission to choose his mode of death [981], he wrote notes to his father, containing corrections of some of his verses, and, having made a full meal, allowed a physician to open the veins in his arm [982]. I have also heard it said that his poems were offered for sale, and commented upon, not only with care and diligence, but also in a trifling way. [983]

## THE LIFE OF PLINY. [984]

PLINIUS SECUNDUS, a native of New Como [985], having served in (546) the wars with strict attention to his duties, in the rank of a knight, distinguished himself, also, by the great integrity with which he administered the high functions of procurator for a long period in the several provinces intrusted to his charge. But still he devoted so much attention to literary pursuits, that it would not have been an easy matter for a person who enjoyed entire leisure to have written more than he did. He comprised, in twenty volumes, an account of all the various wars carried on in successive periods with the German tribes. Besides this, he wrote a Natural History, which extended to seven books. He fell a victim to the calamitous event which occurred in Campania. For, having the command of the fleet at Misenum, when Vesuvius was throwing up a fiery eruption, he put to sea with his gallies for the purpose of exploring the causes of the phenomenon close on the spot [986]. But being prevented by contrary winds from sailing back, he was suffocated in the dense cloud of dust and ashes. Some, however, think that he was killed by his slave, having implored him to put an end to his sufferings, when he was reduced to the last extremity by the fervent heat. [987]

## FOOTNOTES:

[925] Lucius Fenestella, an historical writer, is mentioned by Lactantius, Seneca, and Pliny, who says, that he died towards the close of the reign of Tiberius.

[926] The second Punic war ended A.U.C. 552, and the third began A.U.C. 605. Terence was probably born about 560.

[927] Carthage was laid in ruins A.U.C. 606 or 607, six hundred and sixty seven years after its foundation.

[928] These entertainments were given by the aediles M. Fulvius Nobilior and M. Acilius Glabrio, A.U.C. 587.

[929] St. Jerom also states that Terence read the "Andria" to Caecilius who was a comic poet at Rome; but it is clearly an anachronism, as he died two years before this period. It is proposed, therefore, to amend the text by substituting Acilius, the aedile; a correction recommended by all the circumstances, and approved by Pitiscus and Ernesti.

[930] The "Hecyra," The Mother-in-law, is one of Terence's plays.

[931] The "Eunuch" was not brought out till five years after the Andria, A.U.C. 592.

[932] About 80 pounds sterling; the price paid for the two performances. What further right of authorship is meant by the words following, is not very clear.

[933] The "Adelphi" was first acted A.U.C. 593.

[934] This report is mentioned by Cicero (Ad Attic, vii. 3), who applies it to the younger Laelius. The Scipio here mentioned is Scipio Africanus, who was at this time about twenty-one years of age.

[935] The calends of March was the festival of married women. See before, VESPASIAN, c. xix.

[936] Santra, who wrote biographies of celebrated characters, is mentioned as "a man of learning," by St. Jerom, in his preface to the book on the Ecclesiastical Writers.

[937] The idea seems to have prevailed that Terence, originally an African slave, could not have attained that purity of style in Latin composition which is found in his plays, without some assistance. The style of Phaedrus, however; who was a slave from Thrace, and lived in the reign of Tiberius, is equally pure, although no such suspicion attaches to his work.

[938] Cicero (de Clar. Orat. c. 207) gives Sulpicius Gallus a high character as a finished orator and elegant scholar. He was consul when the Andria was first produced.

[939] Labeo and Popilius are also spoken of by Cicero in high terms, Ib. cc. 21 and 24. Q. Fabius Labeo was consul with M. Claudius Marcellus, A.U.C. 570 and Popilius with L. Postumius Albinus, A.U.C. 580.

[940] The story of Terence's having converted into Latin plays this large number of Menander's Greek comedies, is beyond all probability, considering the age at which he died, and other circumstances. Indeed, Menander never wrote so many as are here stated.

[941] They were consuls A.U.C. 594. Terence was, therefore, thirty-four years old at the time of his death.

[942] Hortulorum, in the plural number. This term, often found in Roman authors, not inaptly describes the vast number of little inclosures, consisting of vineyards, orchards of fig-trees, peaches, etc., with patches of tillage, in which maize, legumes, melons, pumpkins, and other vegetables are cultivated for sale, still found on small properties, in the south of Europe, particularly in the neighbourhood of towns.

[943] Suetonius has quoted these lines in the earlier part of his Life of Terence. See before p. 532, where they are translated.

[944] Juvenal was born at Aquinum, a town of the Volscians, as appears by an ancient MS., and is intimated by himself. Sat. iii. 319.

[945] He must have been therefore nearly forty years old at this time, as he lived to be eighty.

[946] The seventh of Juvenal's Satires.

[947] This Paris does not appear to have been the favourite of Nero, who was put to death by that prince [see NERO, c. liv.], but another person of the same name, who was patronised by the emperor Domitian. The name of the poet joined with him is not known. Salmatius thinks it was Statius Pompilius, who sold to Paris, the actor, the

play of Agave;

Esurit, intactam Paridi nisi vendat Agaven.—Juv. Sat. vii. 87.

[948] Sulpicius Camerinus had been proconsul in Africa; Bareas Soranus in Asia. Tacit. Annal. xiii. 52; xvi. 23. Both of them are said to have been corrupt in their administration; and the satirist introduces their names as examples of the rich and noble, whose influence was less than that of favourite actors, or whose avarice prevented them from becoming the patrons of poets.

[949] The “*Pelopea*,” was a tragedy founded on the story of the daughter of Thyestes; the “*Philomela*,” a tragedy on the fate of Itys, whose remains were served to his father at a banquet by Philomela and her sister Progne.

[950] This was in the time of Adrian. Juvenal, who wrote first in the reigns of Domitian and Trajan, composed his last Satire but one in the third year of Adrian, A.U.C. 872.

[951] Syene is meant, the frontier station of the imperial troops in that quarter of the world.

[952] A.U.C. 786, A.D. 34.

[953] A.U.C. 814, A.D. 62.

[954] Persius was one of the few men of rank and affluence among the Romans, who acquired distinction as writers; the greater part of them having been freedmen, as appears not only from these lives of the poets, but from our author's notices of the grammarians and rhetoricians. A Caius Persius is mentioned with distinction by Livy in the second Punic war, Hist. xxvi. 39; and another of the same name by Cicero, de Orat. ii. 6, and by Pliny; but whether the poet was descended from either of them, we have no means of ascertaining.

[955] Persius addressed his fifth satire to Annaeus Cornutus. He was a native of Leptis, in Africa, and lived at Rome in the time of Nero, by whom he was banished.

[956] Caesius Bassus, a lyric poet, flourished during the reigns of Nero and Galba. Persius dedicated his sixth Satire to him.

[957] “*Numanus*.” It should be Servilius Nonianus, who is mentioned by Pliny, xxviii. 2, and xxxvii. 6.

[958] Commentators are not agreed about these sums, the text varying both in the manuscripts and editions.

[959] See Dr. Thomson's remarks on Persius, before, p. 398.

[960] There is no appearance of any want of finish in the sixth Satire of Persius, as it has come down to us; but it has been conjectured that it was followed by another, which was left imperfect.

[961] There were two Arrias, mother and daughter, Tacit. Annal. xvi. 34. 3.

[962] Persius died about nine days before he completed his twenty-ninth year.

[963] Venusium stood on the confines of the Apulian, Lucanian, and Samnite territories.

Sequor hunc, Lucanus an Appulus anceps;

Nam Venusinus arat finem sub utrumque colonus.

Hor Sat. xi. 1. 34. [964] Sat. i. 6. 45.

[965] Horace mentions his being in this battle, and does not scruple to admit that he made rather a precipitate retreat, “*relicta non bene parmula*.”—Ode xi. 7–9.

[966] See Ode xi. 7. 1.

[967] The editors of Suetonius give different versions of this epigram. It seems to allude to some passing occurrence, and in its present form the sense is to this effect: “If I love you not, Horace, to my very heart's core, may you see the priest of the college of Titus leaner than his mule.”

[968] Probably the Septimius to whom Horace addressed the ode beginning

Septimi, Gades aditure mecum.—Ode xl. b. i.

[969] See AUGUSTUS, c. xxi.; and Horace, Ode iv, 4.

[970] See Epist. i. iv. xv.

Me pinguem et nitidum bene curata cute vises.

[971] It is satisfactory to find that the best commentators consider the words between brackets as an interpolation in the work of Suetonius. Some, including Bentley, reject the preceding sentence also.

[972] The works of Horace abound with references to his Sabine farm which must be familiar to many readers. Some remains are still shewn, consisting of a ruined wall and a tessellated pavement in a vineyard, about eight miles from Tivoli, which are supposed, with reason, to mark its site. At least, the features of the neighbouring country, as often sketched by the poet—and they are very beautiful—cannot be mistaken.



[973] Aurelius Cotta and L. Manlius Torquatus were consuls A.U.C. 688. The genial Horace, in speaking of his old wine, agrees with Suetonius in fixing the date of his own birth:

O nata mecum consule Manlio

Testa.—Ode iii. 21. And again,

Tu vina, Torquato, move

Consule pressa meo.—Epod. xiii. 8.

[974] A.U.C. 745. So that Horace was in his fifty-seventh, not his fifty-ninth year, at the time of his death.

[975] It may be concluded that Horace died at Rome, under the hospitable roof of his patron Mecaenas, whose villa and gardens stood on the Esquiline hill; which had formerly been the burial ground of the lower classes; but, as he tells us,

Nunc licet Esquiliis habitare salubribus, atque

Aggere in aprico spatium.—Sat. i. 8.

[976] Cordova. Lucan was the son of Annaeus Mella, Seneca's brother.

[977] This sentence is very obscure, and Ernesti considers the text to be imperfect.

[978] They had good reason to know that, ridiculous as the tyrant made himself, it was not safe to incur even the suspicion of being parties to a jest upon him.

[979] See NERO, c. xxxvi.

[980] St. Jerom (Chron. Euseb.) places Lucan's death in the tenth year of Nero's reign, corresponding with A.U.C. 817. This opportunity is taken of correcting an error in the press, p. 342, respecting the date of Nero's accession. It should be A.U.C. 807, A.D. 55.

[981] These circumstances are not mentioned by some other writers. See Dr. Thomson's account of Lucan, before, p. 347, where it is said that he died with philosophical firmness.

[982] We find it stated *ib.* p. 396, that Lucan expired while pronouncing some verses from his own *Pharsalia*: for which we have the authority of Tacitus, *Annal.* xv. 20. 1. Lucan, it appears, employed his last hours in revising his poems; on the contrary, Virgil, we are told, when his death was imminent, renewed his directions that the *Aeneid* should be committed to the flames.

[983] The text of the concluding sentence of Lucan's life is corrupt, and neither of the modes proposed for correcting it make the sense intended very clear.

[984] Although this brief memoir of Pliny is inserted in all the editions of Suetonius, it was unquestionably not written by him. The author, whoever he was, has confounded the two Plinys, the uncle and nephew, into which error Suetonius could not have fallen, as he lived on intimate terms with the younger Pliny; nor can it be supposed that he would have composed the memoir of his illustrious friend in so cursory a manner. Scaliger and other learned men consider that the life of Pliny, attributed to Suetonius, was composed more than four centuries after that historian's death.

[985] See JULIUS, c. xxviii. Caius Plinius Caecilius Secundus (the younger Pliny) was born at Como, A.U.C. 814; A.D. 62. His father's name was Lucius Caecilius, also of Como, who married Plinia, the sister of Caius Plinius Secundus, supposed to have been a native of Verona, the author of the *Natural History*, and by this marriage the uncle of Pliny the Younger. It was the nephew who enjoyed the confidence of the emperors Nerva and Trajan, and was the author of the celebrated *Letters*.

[986] The first eruption of Mount Vesuvius occurred A.U.C. 831, A.D. 79. See TITUS, c. viii. The younger Pliny was with his uncle at Misenum at the time, and has left an account of his disastrous enterprise in one of his letters, *Epist.* vi. xvi.

[987] For further accounts of the elder Pliny, see the *Epistles* of his nephew, B. iii. 5; vi. 16. 20; and Dr. Thomson's remarks before, pp. 475–478.