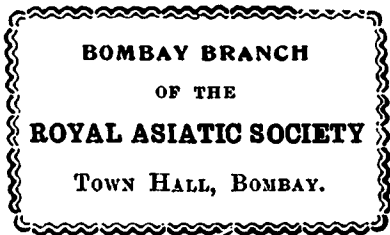




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THE
HISTORY
OF THE
ROMAN EMPERORS,
FROM
AUGUSTUS TO CONSTANTINE.

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BY JOHN BAPTIST LEWIS CREVIER,
PROFESSOR OF RHETORIC, IN THE COLLEGE OF BEAUVAIS.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH,

BY JOHN MILL, ESQ.

IN TEN VOLUMES.

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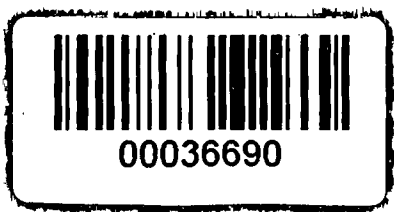
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A LIST

Of the Consuls Names, and of the Years comprehended in this Volume.



NERO, EMPEROR.

M. ASINIUS Marcellus.	A. R. 805.
M. Acilius Aviola.	aft. C. 54.
Nero Claudius Cæsar Augustus.	A. R. 806.
L. Antistius Vetus.	aft. C. 55.
Q. Volusius Saturninus.	A. R. 807.
P. Cornelius Scipio.	aft. C. 56.
Nero Claudius Cæsar Augustus II.	A. R. 808.
L. Calpurnius Piso.	aft. C. 57.
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Valerius Messala.	aft. C. 58.
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C. Fonteius Capito.	aft. C. 59.
Nero Claudius Cæsar Augustus IV.	A. R. 811.
Cossus Cornelius Lentulus.	aft. C. 60.
C. Cæsonius Pætus.	A. R. 812.
P. Petronius Turpilianus.	aft. C. 61.
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L. Asinius Gallus.	aft. C. 62.
C. Memmius Regulus.	A. R. 814.
L. Virginus Rufus.	aft. C. 63.
Vol. IV.	a
	C. Lecanius

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M. Licinius Crassus Frugi.	aft. C. 64.
P. Silius Nerva.	A. R. 816.
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OF THE

ROMAN EMPERORS,

FROM AUGUSTUS TO CONSTANTINE.

BOOK X.

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in love with a free-woman. Agrippina's anger Disgrace of Pallas. Agrippina grows furious again. Sally of Britannicus. Nero has him poisoned. Nero endeavours to hide the enormity of his crime. Burrhus and Seneca blamed for having under those circumstances accepted of the Prince's liberalities. Agrippina's disgrace. She is accused of crimes against the state. Nero is just ready to have her killed that instant. She justifies herself with haughtiness. She obtains the punishment of her accusers, and rewards for her friends. Pallas and Burrhus accused of crimes against the state. Pallas's arrogance. The accuser is punished. Nero's indecent diversions. Dispute in the Senate relating to free-men. Their rights are preserved. Regulations of the Senate relating to Tribunes and Ediles. The custody of the public treasure taken from the Questors and restored to the Pretors. Death of Caninius Rebilus and Volusius. A wooden amphitheatre built by Nero. The games he gave there cost the lives of none. Sundry instances of a good administration. Affair of Pomponia Græcina. Three persons of consequence accused, and with different success. Nero grants pensions to some of the poor Nobility. Suilius accused and condemned, not without some flaw in Seneca's reputation. A Tribune of the people stabs a woman he was in love with, and is banished. Sylla banished to Marseilles on a bare-faced calumny. Tumult in Pozzuolo appeased by the authority of the Roman Senate. Particularity relating to Thræsea. Complaints against the farmers of the revenues. Nero's ordinances very equitable. Two old Proconsuls of Africa accused and acquitted. Ruminial fig-tree.

M. ASINIUS MARCELLUS.

A.R. 805.

M. ACILIUS AVIOLA.

aft. C. 54.

CLAUDIUS's death was concealed at least several hours by Agrippina, that she might have time to take all possible measures to secure the Empire for her son, before that event was made public. Claudius was already dead, whilst the Consuls, Priests, and Senate assembled, were offering up prayers for his recovery. Agrippina, who had taken care to set guards over all the avenues of the palace, pretending excess of grief, and want of comfort, held Britannicus closely embraced, kissing him with great tenderness, and calling him the picture of his father. Her view was to prevent his going out of the palace, and the same precautions were taken not to let his sisters, Antonia and Octavia, appear. In the mean time, a report was spread abroad that the Prince was somewhat better, still to keep the people in suspense. Every thing proper for a sick man was carried into Claudius's chamber, and to his bedside, as usual in such cases: even comedians were introduced, as if he had desired that diversion. At last, all being ready, and the critical minutes the Astrologers had foretold would be happy, came; about noon the palace gates were thrown open, and Nero went out accompanied by Burrhus.

Claudius's death concealed several hours. *Tac. Ann. xii. 68.* *Suet. Claud. 45.*

The Pretorian Cohort on guard received the new Prince, presented by Burrhus, with acclamations of joy. Some of the soldiers seemed, however, to look for Britannicus, and asked where he was; but no-body answering, nor join-

Nero is acknowledged Emperor. *Tac. & Suet. Ner. c. viii.*

A.R. 805. ing them, they followed the torrent. From
 aft. C. 54. thence Nero was conducted to the Pretorian
 camp, where he made a short speech suitable to
 the occasion, and promised the soldiers a grati-
 fication equal to that they had received from his
 father, which was * five thousand sesterces a
 man. The Pretorians having proclaimed him
 Emperor, he repaired to the Senate, who con-
 ferred on him all the titles of supreme power ;
 and he received them all, except that of Father
 of the country, which did not suit his age.
 The provinces soon followed the example set
 them by the capital, and Nero was universally
 and quietly acknowledged Emperor.

His first care was to honour the memory of
 his predecessor and adoptive father. On his
 proposing it, the Senate decreed divine honours
 to Claudius, and placed among the gods a
 Prince, who hardly deserved the name of man.
 The ceremony of his funeral was regulated by
 what had been done for Augustus, Agrippina
 piquing herself on imitating her great grand-
 mother Livia's magnificence. Claudius's will,
 however, was not read, because the preference
 he gave his wife's son before his own might
 have displeased many, and occasioned murmurs
 and complaints.

Nero pronounced the funeral oration, and
 was himself serious as well as his auditors, so
 long as he dwelt upon the Nobility of the de-
 ceased Prince's ancestors, his Consulships and
 triumphs, which it was customary to set forth.
 He was heard too with pleasure, praise Claudius's
 application to the polite arts, the encouragement
 he gave them, and the tranquillity the state had
 enjoyed under his reign, not afflicted or disturb-
 ed

Claudius
 placed a-
 mong the
 gods. His
 funeral.
 Nero pro-
 nounces his
 funeral ora-
 tion.
Tac. xii. 69.
 & xlii. 3.
Suet. Claud.
 xlv. &
Ner. lx.

ed by any public calamity. But when he came to speak of his prudence and wisdom, none could refrain from laughter. The discourse was, however, very well composed; it was the work of Seneca, the brightest genius of the age, whose style of eloquence was the delight of all his cotemporaries. But the subject was too palpably bad for the orator to descant upon. He certainly was more in earnest, and felt more what he wrote, when he composed the satyr in which he ridicules the apotheosis of Claudius, and * transforms him into a pumpkin.

A.R. 805.
aft. C. 54.

*That is the sense of the word *Ανωκόλουσις*

Old men, who, says Tacitus, are fond of comparing what they see with what they have seen, observed that Nero was the first Emperor who had wanted the assistance of another to compose his speeches. They did not at all like it; for the art of speaking well was always held in great esteem both in Rome and Greece, where the two essential points in the education of Princes and all great men, were, to teach them to speak † and to act well. These accurate observers called to mind all that had enjoyed the supreme authority in Rome, and said, the Dictator Cæsar was able for eloquence, to dispute it with the greatest orators; that Augustus had always spoken well, easily, and with dignity; that Tiberius would weigh his words, and give his style a proper force and energy, and that his obscurity was what he purposely affected, but well knew how to avoid if he had pleased. Neither Caligula's phrenzy, nor Claudius's imbecility, had prevented them from being, the one strong and vehement, and the other mild and elegant, in what speeches they had

† *Μυθῶν τε ρητῆρ ἕκασται, περικλήρὰ τε ἔργων.* Hom. Il. l'.
443.

A.R. 805. had had occasion to make. Nero, who was full
 aft. C. 54. of wit and vivacity, took a different turn. Chasing, painting, singing, and managing horses, were his delight; and if at any time he shewed a taste or relish for literature, poetry was the only branch that pleased him.

Nero's deference for Agrippina.
Tac. xiii. 2.

Nero being indebted to Agrippina for the Empire, at first shewed her great respect and deference. The word he gave the first day to the Pretorian officer, who came to take it, was, *To the best of mothers.* Agrippina likewise received from the Senate, the privilege of being preceded by two Lictors, and the dignity of Priestess of Claudius, whom she had poisoned.

She causes M. Silanus to be poisoned.
Tac. xiii. 1.

The power she herself assumed was much greater than all the honours that were conferred upon her. Claudius was no sooner dead than she presumed, even without informing Nero, to take away the life of a man of great distinction, who, at that very time, held a high post. M. Silanus, Proconsul of Africa, was much more remarkable for his mildness, than for his genius or talents; so that other Emperors had never thought of fearing him, and even Caligula used to call him *the Golden Lamb.* But Agrippina, who had caused the disgrace and death of his brother L. Silanus, contracted to Octavia, apprehended his resentment; besides that, she knew it had been said by many, that a ripe experienced man, like M. Silanus, whose character was irreproachable, and in whose veins the blood * of Augustus ran, was much fitter to be Emperor than Nero, not yet seven-

* We have already observed, that *L. Silanus* and his brothers were grandsons to *Julia*, who was grand-daughter to *Augustus*.

seventeen, and for whom a complication of A.R. 805. crimes and wickedness had opened the way to aft. C. 54. the throne. These speeches, in which M. Silanus, whom they more immediately concerned, had no part, yet proved fatal to him. Agrippina ordered P. Celer, a Roman Knight, and Helius, the Emperor's freeman, who had the management of the Prince's revenues in Asia, to poison him. They did it so publicly that no one was deceived; the cause of Silanus's death was as well known as his death.

Nor was Agrippina in a less hurry to get rid of Narcissus, whom she had so many reasons to hate mortally. That, indeed, was against Nero's will, for he found in that freeman, a confident quite proper for his, as yet concealed, vices. But Agrippina prevailed, and forced Narcissus to kill himself, in the place he had chosen for his retreat. He did, however, one laudable action before his death. He had been Secretary to Claudius, and as such had in his custody several papers of importance; he took care to burn all such of them as Agrippina could make any ill use of, to satiate her animosity, or love of revenge.

She forces Narcissus to kill himself.

Dio. l. ix.

According to Dion Cassius, Narcissus died possessed of four hundred * millions of sesterces; nor was that prodigious fortune amassed by frugality or parsimony, for he was as prodigal as he was desirous of being rich. Insolent and ostentatious to the highest degree, loaded with crimes and infamy, he richly deserved the fate he met; tho' it cannot but be allowed, that on some occasions he shewed a capacity, fortitude, and resolution above his station of life.

This

* About three millions two hundred thousand pounds of our money.

A.R. 805.
aft. C. 54.
Burrhus
and Seneca
oppose A-
grippina.
Their power
and union.
Tac. xiii. 2.

This bloody commencement of the new government would have been followed by other executions, had not Seneca and Burrhus prevented it. Tho' both Agrippina's creatures, yet both were forced to oppose her, because they thought themselves more obliged to serve their Emperor and the state, than to yield implicit obedience to the will of a Princess, in whom every vice of tyranny was united. At* that time they possessed Nero's confidence, of which each had acquired an equal share, by different means, and different kinds of merit. Burrhus understood war, and was respected for his strict austerity. Seneca gave the Prince a relish for learning, and studied to ally an agreeableness of manners with the solidity of virtue. They used in concert the ascendant each in particular had over their master; a very uncommon example among Ministers of state; and mutually assisted each other in endeavouring to moderate the impetuosity of his youth, and violence of his passions. If they could not bring him over to virtue, they strove, at least, to keep him from great vices, and by indulging him in lesser things, endeavoured to prevent his running into extremes.

That did not suit with Agrippina's plan: her design had always been to reign, in fact, under her son's name. She was backed by Pallas; but that freeman's credit was on the decline. Nero could not think of obeying slaves: and
Pallas

* *Hi rotores Imperatoris juventæ, et (rarum in societate potentis) concordis, diversâ arte ex æquo pollebant. Burrhus militaribus curis, et severitate morum: Seneca præceptis eloquentiæ, et comitate honestâ: juvantes invicem, quò facilius lubricam Principis ætatem, si virtutem aspernaretur, voluptatibus concessis retinerent. Tac.*

Pallas had made himself insufferable by his supercilious, gloomy arrogance. Such was the situation of the court, divided into factions, by which a foundation was already laid for those dreadful catastrophes and horrid events we shall hereafter meet with : but the public as yet knew nothing of it.

Claudius's funeral being over, and Nero quit of that ceremonious duty, entered on business by a speech to the Senate, setting forth the maxims he proposed to follow in his government of the state. He spoke first, of the manner in which he had been raised to the Empire, by the authority of the Senate, and the unanimous desire of the army : said, what examples he had before his eyes, and what good counsellors he had the assistance of, to learn to govern well. His youth, he observed, had not received any of those melancholy impressions that result from civil war, or domestic discord, and that he brought to the throne, neither resentment nor injuries to revenge against any one. Tracing out his plan of government, he took particular care to remove every abuse that had been complained of under his predecessor. He declared, " he would never set up for judge in " all causes, and that criminal matters should " not be decided in a private domestic tribunal, by which the lives and honours of the " citizens of Rome had been subjected to the " caprices of a few great and powerful men. " That neither money nor favour should procure an employment that ought to be the " reward of merit. That the state and his " household should not be confounded together. " That he would have the Senate enjoy its antient

Nero's first speech to the Senate. Tac. x l. 4.

A. R. 805 aft. C. 54.

A.R. 805. "tient rights and prerogatives; the affairs of
aft. C. 51. "Italy, and the people's provinces, be laid
"before the Consuls; and that those magis-
"trates should present to an audience of the
"Senate, all such as, for whatever reason it
"might be, should desire to have recourse thi-
"ther; that as to him, his business should
"be to manage the army entrusted to his
"care."

This speech, composed by Seneca, and pronounced by Nero, was received with great applause. Every one was charmed to find Augustus's system revived in it; and in order to tie † Nero down by the engagements himself had voluntarily entered into, what he had said was ordered to be engraved on plates of silver, and read over on the first of January every year.

*Suet. Ner. x.
Dio *.*

Regulations
made freely
by the Se-
nate.
Tac. xiii. 5.

He kept his word at first, and let the Senate make several regulations as they pleased, such as, that whereby advocates were forbid receiving either fee or presents from their clients, and that too, by which Questors elect were dispensed from the necessity of giving fights of gladiators. These regulations were contrary to what had been enacted under Claudius, and Agrippina opposed them, but in vain, Seneca backing the Senate against her.

Instances of
Agrippina's
inordinate
ambition.

So strong was that Princess's desire to govern, that, as she could not sit in the Senate, she resolved at least to know what was doing there, without

* I quote under *Dion Cassius's* name *Xiphilinus's* abridgment of him, in which he preserves the very words of his original.

† The Senate had before taken the same precautions with regard to *Caligula*, and to as little purpose. See Vol. III. of this work.

without trusting to report. To satisfy her, their assemblies were held in one of the great rooms of the palace; where was a private door, behind which Agrippina placed herself. There, tho' she neither saw, nor was seen, she could hear all as she stood. Yet more, at an audience Nero gave the Ambassadors of Armenia, Agrippina stepped forward, as if to ascend the throne with him. Every one present was quite disconcerted; Seneca only had presence of mind enough to desire the Emperor to rise and meet his mother; by that appearance of respect *, preventing an indecency the whole Empire must have blushed for. These Ambassadors were come to Rome on account of some new troubles that had broke out in their country, of which we shall speak elsewhere.

Nero was studious to gain the esteem of the public, and to that end did several laudable things. He shewed his filial piety towards his father Domitius, by desiring a decree of the Senate to set up his statue. He likewise caused the Consular ornaments to be given Asconius Labeo, who had been his tutor; and at the same time expressing great modesty in what concerned himself personally. He refused the statues of massy gold and silver that were offered to be erected to him. The Senate had decreed the years should begin from the month of December, in which Nero was born; but he would not suffer the order of the Calendar to be inverted, that being in some measure consecrated and sanctified by religion. Nor would he let the name of Carrinas Celer, a Senator, accused by a slave, be inscribed in the register of

Laudable
speeches
and actions
of Nero.
Tac. xiii.10.

* Ita specie pietatis obviam itum dedecori. *Tac.*

A.R. 805. of accused persons; nor that of Julius Drusus, aft. C. 54. a Roman Knight, whose attachment to Britannicus was his only crime.

Nero's outward appearance was all liberality, clemency, popularity, and every thing that *Suet. Ner. x.* could render a Prince amiable. He gave considerable pensions to poor Senators, who had not wherewithal to support their rank and dignity. One day that a sentence of death was brought him to sign, " * I could wish, said he, I did not know how to write." The Senate, on some occasion, assuring him of their great gratitude, " I shall depend on it, answered he, when I deserve it." He promised the people to be present at their exercises. He would often declaim in public; and read verses of his own composing to an audience assembled in his palace. Suetonius gives us these particularities without date, as is his custom; but they certainly appertain to the first years of Nero's reign, and we shall find some of them ranked in their proper places by Tacitus.

He took the Consulship on the first of January next following his accession to the Empire, and chose Antistius for his colleague.

A.R. 806.
aft. C. 55.

NERO CLAUDIUS CAESAR.
L. ANTISTIUS VETUS.

Tac. xiii. 11.

When the magistrates took the usual oaths to observe the institutions of the Emperors, Nero would not suffer his colleague to swear to the observation of his. That modesty† gained him great applause

* *Vellem nescire literas. Sen. de Clem. ii. 1.*

† *Magnis Patrum laudibus, ut juvenilis animus levium quoque rerum gloria sublatus majores continuaret. Tac.*

applause from the Senate, which was glad to give the young Prince every opportunity of tasting and enjoying the pleasure of doing good, even in little things, to excite and encourage him to deserve the same glory in greater. A.R. 806.
aft. C. 55.

His indulgence to Plautius Lateranus was likewise approved, in permitting him to return to the Senate, after he had been justly excluded for his debauches with Messalina. In * almost all the speeches he made to the Senate, he spoke of nothing but clemency, solemnly promising and engaging to practise that virtue. Tacitus supposes Seneca, who composed those speeches for him, was glad to have the good lessons he gave his august pupil recorded; nor was he displeased at those opportunities of displaying his own parts. Why may we not, with full as much probability, suppose that Seneca, perceiving Nero's bent to cruelty, strove to give him another turn by the very maxims he put in his mouth? It was certainly with that view, that he wrote and inscribed to Nero, a treatise on Clemency, which we still have.

Nor shall we be mistaken, if we impute to his, and Burrhus's counsels, all the good that was done under Nero's authority in the beginning of his reign. The young Prince thought of nothing but his diversions; he did not like business, idleness and licentiousness were all his delight. Forced for a long time to obey an imperious mother, and awed by the respect the virtues and talents of the masters who had educated him in his infancy could not but strike him with,

All the good Nero did must be imputed to Seneca's and Burrhus's counsels. Dio. ap. V. a. l. et.

* *Clementiam suam obstringens crebris orationibus, quas Seneca, testificando quàm honesta præciperet, vel jactandi ingenii, voce Principis vulgabat. Tac.*

A.R. 806. with, he gave an entire loose to the pleasure he
 aft. C. 55. felt in being master of his own person and ac-
 tions. He therefore made no difficulty to let
 Agrippina on one side, and Seneca and Burrhus
 on the other, assume the authority of govern-
 ment, or contend which should have it. As
 the two Ministers soon got the better of the mo-
 ther, and were men of uncommon merit and
 wisdom, the state was well administred, though
 Nero did not, or rather because he did not, in-
 terfere; and so long as they had any influence,
 the government was, in general, well managed.

What Tra-
 jan said of
 the begin-
 ning of Ne-
 ro's reign,
 explained.
Aur. Vict.
Ner.

On that was founded the esteem Trajan ex-
 pressed for the beginning of Nero's reign. He
 said, few * Princes could boast of equalling the
 five first years of that odious and detested Em-
 peror. Yet it was in the course of these five
 years that Nero poisoned his brother and killed
 his mother. But Trajan made a distinction be-
 tween the general management of affairs, and
 the Prince's personal actions. Nero was, even
 then, a monster of vice and cruelty; but he
 let his Ministers act, and they were wise and
 prudent. The natural ferocity of his mind
 shewed itself plainly in the tragical death of
 Britannicus, which I am now to relate.

Cause of
 Britanni-
 cus's death.

His death (who would think it!) was occa-
 sioned by the fall of Agrippina's credit. She,
 who had been Britannicus's most bitter enemy,
 finding the circumstances of things altered, now
 wanted to make him her support and resource
 against her own son. Herself brought on her
 own disgrace by her passionate, violent temper,
 which

* *Procul differre cunctos Principes Neronis quinquennio.*

which first broke out on account of an intrigue Nero had with one Acte, a free-woman, A.R. 806.
aft. C. 55.

Octavia, Nero's wife, was young and virtuous; but *, whether fate had so decreed, says Tacitus, or whether it were owing to the superior charms men are apt to find in whatever is forbidden, Nero had an aversion to Octavia, and fell in love with Acte, encouraged and led into vice by two young debauchees, Otho and Senecion, who being of his parties of pleasure, and confidants of such secrets as he did not chuse to let his mother know, gained an entire ascendant over him, first before Agrippina was apprised of it, and afterwards in spite of all her endeavours to part them, when she knew what they were about. Nero in love
with a free-
woman.
Tac. xiii. 12.

It is very singular, that neither Burrhus nor Seneca attempted to oppose the Prince's inclination. Fearing contradiction might only irritate, and perhaps urge him on to attempt the honour of the first ladies of Rome, they seemed not displeas'd at his amusing himself with a free-woman. Seneca went farther, suffering one of his friends, Annæus Serenus, to let his name be made use of to cloak Nero's amours with Acte. So defective is the virtue of all these Pagans; so intermixed with spots and blemishes. Burrhus and Seneca thought, by giving up a part, to save the more essential rest; but the passions are not to be governed in that manner; whatever is granted them is but an allurements to go farther; and accordingly, Nero availing himself on the, at least, tacit approbation of those, who ought to have kept him within

* Fato quædam, an quia prævalent illicita.

A.R. 806. within bounds, thought he might do any thing, aft. C. 55. and gave an entire loose to all his desires.

Agrippina's
anger.
Tac. xiii.13.

Agrippina did not, like Seneca and Burrhus, connive at what he was doing, but ran into the other extreme. Instead of waiting patiently till her son should see his error, or perhaps be cloyed and disgusted, she thundered out with fury, "What! shall a creature that was a slave, rival Octavia? Shall Acte be daughter-in-law to Agrippina?" In that manner would she rave, and utter the bitterest invectives, which, far from stifling, served only to increase the flame. The consequence was, that Nero, overcome by his passion, shook off the yoke of filial obedience, and put all his trust in Seneca. Suetonius adds, that he had even some thoughts of marrying Acte, and, in order to prepare matters for that marriage, he attempted to make her pass for a descendent of the antient Kings of Pergamus, and had got men of Consular dignity ready to perjure themselves, and to swear to the truth of her forged pedigree.

Suet. Ner.
xxvi.
Dio.

Tac.

Agrippina was then sensible how wrong a step she had taken, and endeavoured to atone* for it by an affected fondness, as ill judged as her rage had been. She told her son she was conscious her severity had been carried too far, and even offered him the use of her apartments for his interviews with Acte. Nero † was not the dupe of her pretended pacification, and his friends advised him to be on his guard against the

* Ut nimia super coercendo filio, ita rursum intemperanter demissa.

† Quæ mutatio neque Neronem ferfellit, et proximi amicorum metuebant, orabantque, caveret insidias mulieris semper atrocis, tum et falsæ.

the snares and treacheries of a woman, ever hot A. R. 806. and violent, though she dissembled just at that aft. C. 55. time.

And accordingly, she soon returned again to her real character, and took fire for a thing no one could possibly have suspected she would be offended at. Nero, looking over the diamonds, jewels, and other valuable ornaments, that had belonged to former Empresses, picked out the finest to send his mother. Agrippina received the present as an affront. "His design, said she, is not to adorn, but to strip me. All is mine, and my son sends me but a part." Her expressions were told again, and, as usual, aggravated; and Nero, incensed against those that encouraged and fed his mother's pride, turned Pallas out of his employment of keeper of the imperial treasure, and administrator of the finances, which he had held under Claudius, and had kept ever since his death.

Agrippina, after that blow, kept no measures; then it was that she imprudently talked of Britannicus in her heat and fury. She ventured to tell Nero to his face, that Britannicus was growing up, and would soon be able to fill his father's place, and succeed him in a power he

Disgrace of Pallas. Agrippina grows furious again.

* Agrippina ruere in terrorem et minas, neque Principis auribus abstinere, quominus testaretur "adultum jam esse Britannicum, veram dignamque stirpem suscipiendo patris Imperio, quod insitus et adoptivus per injurias malas exerceret. Non abnuere se quin cuncta infelicis domus patierent, sive imprimis nuptiæ, suum beneficium. Id solum diis et sibi provisum, quod viveret privignus. Ituram cum illo in castra. Audiretur hinc Germanici filia, inde debilis rursus Burrhus et exul Seneca, truncâ scilicet manu, et professoriâ linguâ, generis humani expostulantes." Simul intendere manus, aggerere probra; consecratum Claudium, infernos Silanorum manes invocare, et tot inrita facinora.

A.R. 806. he alone was worthy of, and right heir to, and
 aft. C. 55. of which a stranger, brought into the Imperial family by a fraudulent adoption, made no other use than to injure and affront his mother.

“ Yes, added she, I will confess all the wrongs
 “ I have done that unhappy family, my incestuous marriage, and the poison by which I
 “ shortened Claudius’s days. How happy
 “ am I, what thanks ought I not to return
 “ the gods, that his son is still alive! I will
 “ go to the camp with him, and let the Pretorians see and hear, on one side the daughter of
 “ Germanicus, and on the other, a lame old
 “ soldier, and a banished philosopher, who, on
 “ the strength of those fine titles, pretend to
 “ govern the universe.” Her hand and action threatened her son all the time she was talking at this rate. She called him all the opprobrious names she could think of, invoked the avenging manes of Claudius and Silanus, and upbraided him with all the crimes she had committed for his sake, and for which she was so ill rewarded.

All Agrippina’s rage and fury availed her nothing, but was the ruin of Britannicus. Nero was of himself but too much inclined to look upon his brother as a dangerous rival; and a late event added to his fears, by making him sensible Britannicus began to feel himself. During the Saturnalian feasts, among other amusements, the young Emperor, and others of his age, were diverting themselves with, they played at who should be King, and it fell to Nero’s lot. He issued his orders, which were neither disagreeable nor mortifying to any; but when it came to Britannicus’s turn, he was commanded

Sally of
 Britannicus.

to

to stand up in the middle of the company, A.R. 806. and sing a song. Nero expected the infant aft. C. 55. Prince, who had never been at any entertainment, and far from having any notion of parties of pleasure and debauchery, was naturally grave and serious, would be put out of countenance, and make them laugh. Britannicus, not at all disconcerted, sung a couplet, the sense of which was, that he had been robbed of the supreme rank which his father had held, and belonged to him by right of inheritance. Every one present was moved with compassion, and shewed it the more freely, as night and the merriment of their play banished all dissimulation. It was soon talked of publicly, and this well-timed sally of Britannicus, awakened, in the hearts of many, sentiments favourable to him. Nero was strongly alarmed, and his hatred increased; wearied out too with his mother's menaces, and concluding the danger must increase with Britannicus's years, into the fourteenth * of which he was then just entering, he resolved to defer no longer a crime on which he thought his own safety depended.

But there was no possibility of trumping up any specious accusation against Britannicus, and Nero dared not use open violence against his brother. He determined therefore to employ poison; and to that end, applied to Julius Pollio, Tribune of a Pretorian cohort, who had in his custody the famous Locusta, whom Agrippina had so effectually made use of to kill Claudius.

Nero has
him poison-
ed.
Tac. xiii. 16.
Suet. Ner.
xxxiii.

* Tacitus says he was just completing it; but I have before taken notice of the doubts and difficulties concerning the exact time of *Britannicus's* birth. I follow the opinion I have once adopted.

A.R. 806. dius. There was no difficulty in getting the poi-
 aft. C. 55. son given to the young Prince, for care had long
 been taken not to let an honest man be near him.

Nay, those that poisoned him the first time, were the very people who were to take care of his education. But whether it was that nature spontaneously eased herself by an immediate evacuation, or that the poison was purposely prepared so, as not to shew it's malignity at once, Britannicus seemed to have escaped with only a slight indisposition.

Nero, who could brook no delay, flew into a violent passion against the Tribune and Locusta. He threatened the one terribly, struck the other with his hand, and was very near sending her to be executed. But on her representing her design had been, by giving a weaker dose, to avoid noise, and conceal the deed, "It is true, answered he, to be sure I fear the penalty of the law. It well becomes you to keep folks from talking; and that you may have something to say in your own defence, to proceed thus slowly, when your Prince's peace and quiet is at stake." They appeased him, by promising Britannicus should die as suddenly as if struck by a thunderbolt. This new poison, composed of the most violent ingredients, was prepared near the Emperor's chamber. He made the first trial of it on a goat; but the creature surviving it five hours, he ordered the poison to be put on the fire again to encrease it's activity; nor was satisfied, till trying it again on a pig, it died the very instant. Finally, he resolved to see himself how his orders were executed, and to that end, fixed on his own supper for the scene of that tragic action.

It

It was customary for the children of Empe- A.R. 806.
rors to eat sitting, with other young Noblemen aft. C. 55.
of their age, under their parents' eyes, at a se-
parate table, more frugally spread than the great
one. Britannicus, therefore, had his little ta-
ble, for he still wore the infant dress. His cup-
bearer was in the secret, and was to do the deed.
The ceremonial of tasting, which was observed
for the young Prince, was a difficulty; but it
was got over in this manner: drink was given
him after being tasted as usual, but so hot that
he could not drink it, and the poison was put
in the cold water that was added to it. The
effect was so sudden, that Britannicus instantly
lost his speech, and dropt down senseless. The
whole company was alarmed; some were im-
prudent enough to run away; but those who
penetrated farther, examined Nero's looks,
who, without altering his attitude, but leaning
indolently on his couch, and pretending not to
know what was the matter, said, It was a com-
mon thing with Britannicus; that he had been
subject to epileptic fits from his infancy, and
would recover his senses by degrees.

Nero was not then eighteen years old, yet his
looks were as steady and unconcerned as those
of the most hardened tyrant. But Agrippina was
so astonished, horror and dismay were so visible
in her, notwithstanding all her efforts to compose
herself, that every one was convinced she was
as innocent, as Octavia. And indeed she had
the greatest room to fear, she lost her last hope,
and readily conceived, the poisoning of a bro-
ther was but a prelude to the murder of a mo-
ther. She recollected herself, however, after
her first surprise. Octavia, tho' young, had

A. R. 806. likewise learnt to dissemble her grief, tenderness, aft. C. 55; and every sentiment of nature ; and Britannicus being taken away, supper was continued with the same ease and seeming gaiety as before.

The same night was witness to Britannicus's death and funeral. Every thing had already been prepared for the pile, and the Prince's body was burnt and buried in the Campus Martius with very little ceremony. Dion Cassius says, they had covered him from head to foot with plaster, to hide the marks of poison that already appeared outwardly, but that a violent shower of rain falling, washed it off, and rendered fruitless the precaution his murderers had taken. Tacitus speaks only of * the rain, which was interpreted as a sign of the wrath of the gods for this dreadful crime. All that is of little moment. But what shews how apt men are to form wrong and perverse judgments, is, that several did not think what had happened at all strange, alledging, to justify it, former examples of enmities between brothers, and the very nature of sovereign power, incompatible with a rival.

With Britannicus ended the Claudian family, which, after shining eminently in the republic, had given Rome three Emperors. *Suet.* Læcusta had a considerable estate in land given her as a reward for her crime ; and, that the fatal art in which she excelled might not be lost, Nero took care to give her pupils to instruct.

Nero endeavours to hide the enormity of his crime. Tac. xiii. 17.

He would, however, if he could, have blinded

* Adeo turbidis imbribus, ut vulgus iram deum portendi crediderit adversus facinus, cui plerique etiam hominum ignoscebant, antiquas fatrum discordias et insociabile regnum existimantes.

ed the eyes of the public. An edict was posted up, saying, to excuse the precipitate haste with which the last duties had been paid to Britannicus, the old custom of shortening the ceremony, and not making a shew of the funeral of such as were carried off in the prime of their youth, had been followed on this occasion. Nero added, that now he had lost his brother, all his hopes centered in the republic; and that the Senate and People ought, on their side, to be doubly attached to their Prince, who alone remained of a family born to command.

His next step was to be very liberal to the great men of his court; among whom Burrhus and Seneca were not forgot. People * were, with reason, surprised to see men, who pretended to such strict virtue, share, as it were, the spoils of the deceased Prince, and enrich themselves with his town and country-houses. Their only excuse, if in such a case any thing could be an excuse, was, the Prince's express command, who, conscious of his guilt, was willing to purchase pardon by his liberalities. Nor were they quite easy as to their own fates, when they found Nero break loose from them with a crime of that magnitude. They did not, indeed, give up the Ministry, but resolved to continue doing all the good they could, since it was no longer in their power to do so much as they would.

But Agrippina was implacable; neither presents nor caresses could move her. Her anger had certainly but too just ground, had she known how to keep it within due bounds, and

Burrhus and Seneca blamed for having under those circumstances accepted of the Prince's liberalities.

Dio. ap. Val.

Agrippina's disgrace.

* Nec defuerunt qui arguerent viros gravitatem asseverantes, quòd domos villasque id temporis, quasi prædas divisissent. Tac.

A.R. 806. to distinguish between a becoming severity, and aft. C. 55. rage and audaciousness. She embraced Octavia, had often private conferences with her friends; and tho' she had always been fond of money, yet she exerted herself now more than ever to scrape it together from all quarters, as if preparing a fund for some great enterprize; she received the officers and people of the army graciously; and expressed great regard and esteem for the names and virtues of the Nobility that still remained of the old Roman families; in short, every step she took seemed to indicate a design to form a party against her son, and a desire to find a man fit to head them.

Nero was informed of it, and took away her guard. To keep the courtiers from her, she was removed out of his palace to that in which Antonia, Claudius's mother, had lived. There he sometimes went, and paid her a visit, but always surrounded by a troop of Centurions, and after saluting her coldly, and saying a few indifferent things, took his leave.

Nothing* is more frail, says Tacitus, nor subject to more sudden changes, than a borrowed power that has no roots of it's own. Agrippina's house was from that hour a perfect solitude; no-body took the trouble of comforting her, none came to pay their respects, unless it were a few women: and most of them did it more out of hatred than friendship.

Such was the motive that carried thither Junia Silana, a Lady of great birth, but more beau-

She is accused of crimes against the state.

* Nihil rerum mortalium tam instabile ac fluxum est, quam fama potentiae non suae vixit. Statim relictum Agrippinae limen. Nemo solari, nemo adire, praeter paucas feminas, amore an odio incertum. *Tac. xiii. 19.*

beautiful than virtuous, formerly married to A.R. 806. Silius, who repudiated her, as I have before ^{aft. C. 55.} said, at Messalina's request. She had been intimately united with Agrippina, but that union was turned into a secret enmity, ever since the latter had dissuaded Sextius Africanus, a young man of an illustrious family, from marrying Silana, by telling him her conduct was bad, and her age past its prime. Agrippina did this out of mere malice. For her design was not to keep Africanus for herself, but to prevent his marrying richly, and so much the more advantageously, as the lady he thought of had no children. Silana was greatly nettled at it; and offences of that kind are never to be forgiven by women. Agrippina's disgrace offered her an opportunity of revenge, of which she resolved to make the utmost to ruin her. She undertook, therefore, not to revive old accusations against her, which had already taken effect, nor to blame her regretting Britannicus's death, nor indiscreetly pitying and bemoaning the injuries Octavia suffered from an ungrateful husband; but at once taxed her with a design to raise Rubellius Plautus to the Empire; he, by Julia his mother, daughter of Drusus, son of Tiberius, reckoning, as well as Nero, Augustus for great-great-grandfather, and by marrying him to ascend the throne with him. Silana settled her plan with two of her dependents, Iturius and Calvisius, who communicated it to Atemetus, freeman to Domitia*, Nero's aunt by his father's side. Domitia and Agrippina were

* We have already met with a *Domitia*, aunt to *Nero*, put to death under *Claudius*. She we are now speaking of must have been her sister.

A.R. 806. were jealous of each other, and at variance.
 aft. C. 55. Atimetus was glad of an opportunity to hurt his mistress's enemy; and in order to come at the Emperor, and have the accusation laid before him, he applied to Paris the Pantomime, like him, a freeman of Domitia's, and who, as he amused the Prince with his tricks, had free entrance into the palace. Paris, without losing a moment, set out directly.

Nero is just ready to have her killed that instant.

The night was pretty far spent, and Nero was still at table, drinking. Paris entered the room with a doleful countenance, and related every circumstance of what he had been told. Nero was so affrighted, that the first thought that occurred to him was to put both his mother and Plautus to death instantly; and, according to Fabius Rusticus, a contemporary writer referred to by Tacitus, to break Burrhus, as being a creature of Agrippina's, and in concert with her out of gratitude. Fabius added, that the commission of Pretorian Prefect was actually made out in favour of Cecina Tuscus, Nero's nurse's son; and that Seneca's credit was what saved Burrhus on that occasion. Whether that were fact or not, which Tacitus does not say, at least it is certain, Nero could not be dissuaded from ordering his mother to be killed directly, but on Burrhus's promising to do it himself, in case she was convicted. But that wise Minister represented to him, "That every person accused, and much more a mother, had a right to be heard in her own defence. That her accusers did not appear. That hitherto Agrippina was charged only by a vague report spread by her enemy's servants; and that the thing was of sufficient import-

Suet. Ner.
 35.
 Tac.

“ importance to deserve being examined into A.R. 806.
 “ with more care and coolness, than the re- ast. C. 55.
 “ mains of a night already far spent in feasting
 “ and pleasure could admit of.”

The Prince's fear being a little calmed, early the next morning Burrhus and Seneca, with some of the freemen, went to Agrippina to inform her of the accusations she was charged with, and warn her to prepare to answer them, and clear her innocence, or else expect the punishment justly due to such a crime. Burrhus spoke, and in an angry threatening tone, so little suiting the respect due to the Emperor's mother, that it seems a confirmation of what Fabius Rusticus said of the danger Burrhus himself was then in, which made him fear even the least suspicion of being concerned with her. The presence of the freemen too, might be a reason for him to be on his guard, for fear of giving those low-minded creatures room to make any bad report.

Agrippina's haughtiness was equal to the at-tempt made to humble her. “ I do* not won-der, She justifies herself with haughtiness.

* Non miror Si:anam, nunquam edito partu, matrum affectus ignotos habere. Neque enim perinde à parentibus liberi, quàm ab impudicâ adulteri mutantur. Nec si Iturius et Calvisius, adesis omnibus fortunis, novissimam suscipiendæ accusationis operam anui rependunt, ideo aut mihi infamia parricidii, aut Cæsari conscientia subeunda est. Nam Domitiæ inimicitii gratias agerem, si benevolentia necum in Neronem meum certaret. Nunc per concubinum Atimetum et histrionem Paridem, quasi scenæ fabulas componet. Baiarum suarum piscinas excolēbat, quum meis consiliis adoptio, et proconsulare jus, et designatio Consulatus, et cetera adipiscendo Imperio præparentur. Aut existat qui cohortes in urbe tentatas, qui provinciarum fidem labefactatam, denique servos vel liberos ad scelus corruptos arguat. Vivere ego Britannico potiente rerum poteram.

A.R. 806. " der, said she, that Silana, who never had a
aft. C. 55. " child, should be ignorant of the sentiments
" nature gives a mother. For a mother cannot
" change her children as a lascivious woman
" does her gallants. I see the motive that
" makes Iturius and Calvisius act; ruined
" by their debaucheries, their last resource
" is to curry favour with an old woman, by
" serving her rage against me; but surely
" their mercenary accusation cannot have
" weight either to impute a parricide to me,
" or to make the Emperor commit one. As
" to Domitia, I should think myself obliged to
" her for hating me, if that hatred proceeded
" from her emulation to outdo me in good of-
" fices and tenderness towards my son, instead of
" trumping up this tale, as absurd in itself as
" it is injurious and despicable for the share
" her favourite Atimetus, and that Pantomime
" Paris, have in it. She was busied in embel-
" lishing and stocking her fish-ponds on the
" coast of Baiæ, whilst I was labouring to have
" my son adopted by Claudius, to get him
" the Proconsular power, and have him ap-
" pointed Consul, with all the other prero-
" gatives, steps by which he has attained Em-
" pire. If I must be guilty whether I am or
" not, at least let some witness be produced
" to prove my having attempted to corrupt ei-
" ther the Pretorian cohorts within the city,
" or the legions quartered in the provinces, or
" that

terum. At si Plautus aut quis alius rempublicam judica-
turus obtinuerit, desunt scilicet mihi accusatores, qui non
verba impatientiâ caritatis aliquando incauta, sed ea cri-
mina objiciant, quibus nisi à filio mater absolvi non possum.
Tac. xiii. 21.

“ that I have plotted with any person whatever, A.R. 806.
 “ either slave or freeman, any bad design. I aft. C. 55.
 “ might have hoped to live under Britannicus,
 “ had he been Emperor. But if Plautus, or
 “ any other, held the reins of Empire, could
 “ there be accusers wanting who might justly
 “ tax me, not with a few indiscreet words, the
 “ effect of my too impatient fondness, but
 “ even with crimes such as a son only can for-
 “ give a mother.”

So warm and earnest a speech made a strong She obtains the punishment of her accusers, & rewards for her friends. impression on all that heard it ; and, instead of insisting any further on the accusation, they endeavoured to appease Agrippina. She desired an interview with her son, which being granted, she did not set about to justify herself, as if her innocence could have been suspected ; nor did she speak of what she had done for him, nor to seem to reproach it, but desired and obtained the punishment of her accusers, and rewards for her friends. Fænius Rufus was made Intendant of the provisions ; Arruntius Stella had the management of the games the Emperor was then making preparations for ; C. Balbillus was made Prefect of Egypt ; and the government of Syria promised Anteiis ; but the execution of that promise was deferred under various pretences, and Anteiis remained in Rome. Silana, Iturius, and Calvisius were banished, and Atimetus put to death. Paris was too necessary to the Prince's pleasures, not to be spared ; and the very next year Nero had him declared, by Tac. xiii. 27. sentence of the judge, free by birth, not minding how much he affronted his aunt to favour a comedian that diverted him, nor divesting her of her right of patronage over a man who had been

A.R. 806. been her slave. As to Plautus, no farther notice was taken of him at that time.

Tac. xiii. 22.

Pallas and Burrhus accused of crimes against the state.

Pallas's arrogance. The accuser punished.

The bad success Agrippina's accusers met with, did not, however, prevent one Pætus, from accusing Pallas and Burrhus of crimes against the state. He taxed them with having entered in a confederacy to give the Empire to Cornelius Sylla, to the splendor of whose name was joined the quality of son-in-law to Claudius, whose daughter Antonia he had married. The accusation was destitute of all proof, nor was the accuser a person proper to give it any degree of credit. He was a man of bad character, who used to buy up forfeited estates sold by auction, and by that means enriched himself at the expence of the unfortunate.

Pallas's innocence was not in the least doubted, but his arrogance was very shocking; some of his freemen being named as accomplices with him, he answered, that in his house he signified his will and pleasure no otherwise than by a nod, or motion of his hand; and that where any farther instruction was necessary, he gave it in writing, to avoid all talk with his servants. Burrhus, tho' accused, sat and voted with the judges. The accuser was condemned to be banished, and the registers burnt which he made use of to vex and harrass the citizens under pretence of seeing justice done to the public treasury.

Towards the end of the year, Tacitus observes, the Emperor, purified the city by a religious ceremony called *Lustration*, because the thunder had fallen on the temples of Jupiter and Minerva.

Nero named Q. Volusius and P. Scipio Consuls for the next year.

Q. VOLUSIUS SATURNINUS.

P. CORNELIUS SCIPIO.

A. R. 807.

aft. C. 56.

Under these Consuls he thought of a diversion unworthy the majesty of his rank, that was to turn street-robber. So soon as the night came on, he sallied out disguised, sometimes in one manner and sometimes another, with other young people mad as himself. In that manner he would ramble thro' the whole city, attack those he met, beat and wound such as resisted, and even throw them sometimes into the sewers. He would force open public houses and places of debauch, plunder and carry off all he found; and what was thus stolen in the night, was next day publicly sold by auction in his palace to the highest bidder, and the money divided among his companions. He was not known at first, and as he insulted people of all kinds, men and women, often got a hearty beating, and in particular one, the marks of which he always bore in his face. Montanus, a Senator, used him so roughly, that Nero was obliged to keep his room. However, looking on the whole as a joke, he never thought of taking revenge. But Montanus, finding who it was he had beat, was imprudent enough to write the Emperor a letter, begging pardon for what had past; to which he received this thundering answer; "How! is the man who beat Nero still alive?" and was forced to kill himself. Nero became not better, but more wary from that time; and in his nocturnal expeditions was followed by some of his Tribunes and soldiers, who were ordered

Nero's indecent diversions.
Tac. xiii. 25.
Suet. Ner. 26.
Dio.

A.R. 807. ordered not to stir unless the quarrel came to
 ft. C. 56. some height, but then to assist him with their
 arms.

Suet. Oth. 2 The worst of all was, that his bad exam-
 ple was followed by others. Otho had his
Tac. band; and his diversion was to catch such as
 thro' age or drunkenness could make no resist-
 ance, and toss them in a blanket. Several
 more, making use of Nero's name, committed
 the same, and even greater disorders; so that
 people did not dare to stir out at night. Nero
 was so pleased with this unbecoming diversion,
 that he resolved to enjoy it in the theatre at
 noon day.

The year before, he had taken off the guard
 that was to keep peace and order at that place,
 with a view both to prevent any relaxation in
 the military discipline by the performances ex-
 hibited there, and likewise to give the people a
 greater air of freedom and liberty. But that
 liberty soon degenerated into licentiousness.
 The actors, jealous of each other, had their
 factions, and the spectators, as silly as they, took
 their parts. Thence arose wrangles and frays,
 which Nero took a pleasure in stirring up, some-
 times mixing with the crowd, and at other
 times heading and spurring them on; and when
 the quarrel was got to a height, and they fell to
 tearing up benches and throwing them about,
 he too would engage, and throw whatever was
 next his hand at the people; on one of which
 occasions he broke a Pretor's head. But as these
 theatrical factions enflamed the whole city, and
 might become of consequence to the govern-
 ment, more prudent men prevailed on him to
 put a stop to them. The Pantomimes were or-
 dered

dered to leave Italy, and a guard was again set over all the avenues of the theatre. A.R. 807.
aft. C. 56.

This year affords few public events. The most remarkable is a dispute that arose in the Senate relating to freemen, whose insolence towards their patrons required being checked. Several were of opinion, the only way to remedy it effectually, was to empower their patrons to reduce them again to servitude, whenever they proved ungrateful. "The greatest punishment, said they, a freeman can now fear from his patron, is to be sent twenty * miles from Rome, there to spend his time delightfully on the coasts of Campania, that is not sufficient to keep those people within due bounds." Dispute in the Senate relating to freemen. Their rights are preserved. Tac. xiii. 26.

The Consuls thought this affair too important for them to determine without knowing the Prince's pleasure, and accordingly would not deliberate on it till they had received his orders. And indeed the body of freemen was very numerous and powerful; they performed all the lower offices of civil society; and even the greater part of Knights and Senators could not boast of a better origin. That is what those who were for the freemen observe in Tacitus, adding, "that there were two ways of giving a slave his freedom, the one less solemn, where the master might revoke what he had done; and the other authorised by the intervention of a magistrate, which could not be set aside: that therefore masters were to consider well before they granted a favour not to be recalled."

This

* Several of the most learned interpreters are of opinion there is a fault here in the text of Tacitus, and that we should read *centesimum lapidem*, a hundred miles.

A.R. 807. This opinion prevailed. Nero wrote the Senate
aft. C. 56. word, that when a patron thought he had great and good causes of complaint against his freeman, he was to be heard, and such judgment given as the case required ; but that it was not proper to make any general law derogatory to a right possessed time immemorial. That was what Claudius did: he, as we have said, gave very severe sentences against ungrateful freemen, but yet without attacking the privileges of the whole body. At the same time that Nero protected the freemen against the new rigor of the proposed law, he took care to keep them within the bounds of their station. For a long time he would admit no freeman's son into the Senate, and those whom his predecessors had suffered to creep in, were excluded the honours.

Vol. iii.
Book viii.

Suet. Ner.
15.

Regulations
of the Senate relating to Tribunes and Ediles.
Tac. xii. 28.

The Senate had still the free exercise of their power, at least in matters wherein the Prince did not think it worth his while to interfere. Vibullius, a Pretor, having ordered some of the ringleaders of the quarrels between the Pantomimes to be carried to prison, the Tribune Antistius released them. Vibullius complained to the Senate, who disapproved of what the Tribune had done, and forbid his colleagues ever to encroach upon the rights of Pretors and Consuls ; and a regulation was drawn up, consisting of several articles, to limit the power of Tribunes, which had so often made the Senate tremble under the republican government. The power of Ediles, both Curule and Plebeian, was likewise restricted ; a sum was fixed, beyond which they could not fine any body, so were the punishments they were allowed to inflict.

Helvidius

Helvidius Priscus, Tribune of the people, A.R. 807. had at the same time a dispute with Obultronus Sabinus, one of the Questors, keeper of the public treasury; and it was perhaps on that occasion that the administration of the treasure was again taken from the Questors, and given, according to Augustus's institution, to ancient Pretors, whose riper years seemed to make them better qualified for so important a trust. We have mentioned in their proper places all the variations that happened in those matters. The order Nero established was that which lasted longest.

Tacitus closes his account of the events of this year with the death of two persons of great rank and birth. The one is Caninius Rebilus, of Consular dignity, one of the heads of the Senate; for his great knowledge of the laws, and vast riches. Growing old and infirm, he delivered himself, by opening his veins, from a life he was weary of, and the pains and sufferings his debauched youth had entailed upon him. He seems to have been the same Caninius Rebilus whose presents Julius Græcinus refused, as we have said, on account of the depravity of his morals. L. Volusius, who died about the same time, deserves more esteem. By laudable means and good economy he had acquired immense riches, and always behaved with such prudence and moderation, that tho' he lived under the worst and most cruel of Emperors, he attained his ninety-third year.

Nero took a second Consulship, in which L. Piso was his colleague.

A.R. 808.
aft. C. 57.

NERO CLAUDIUS CAESAR AUGUSTUS, II.
L. CALPURNIUS PISO.

A wooden
amphitheatre built by
Nero.

The year of Nero's second Consulship affords again few events worthy to be recorded; unless*, says Tacitus, a writer chuses to amuse himself with describing and praising the foundations and beams of a wooden theatre Nero built in the Campus Martius. But, continues that grave historian, those are trifles fit only for daily essays, history requires more elevated subjects.

Tac. Ann.
xiii. 31.
Suet. Ner.
12.

The games
he gave
there cost
the lives of
none.

As every act of mildness and humanity, every thing that tends to promote good morals, may be thought great, we shall here observe, after Suetonius, that Nero did not stain his amphitheatre with blood; or, if in the games he gave, some blood was shed from wounds, at least neither any gladiator nor criminal, that fought against wild beasts, lost his life. Seneca was, doubtless, the person who inspired him with the tenderness and regard he shewed on this occasion for the lives of men, for Nero himself is not to be known again in it. But it was a lesson thrown away, neither the Emperor nor the nation being able to profit by it.

Sundry instances of a
good administration.

The facts Tacitus gives us this year, in general do honour to the government of Seneca and Burrhus; the colonies of Capua and Nocera, almost extinct, were revived and strengthened by a number of old soldiers sent thither with
the

* Nisi cui libeat, laudandis fundamentis et trabibus, quis molem amphitheatrici apud Campum Martium, Caesar extruxerat, volumina implere: quam ex diis atque te populi Romani repertum sit, res illustres Annalibus, talia diurnis actis mandare. *Tac.*

the same prerogatives as the antient inhabitants; A.R. 808.
 a grauity was given the people of * four hun- aft. C. 57.
 dred sesterces a man; the Emperor's exchequer Tac.
 lent the public treasury, almost exhausted, and > £.3. 12s.
 no longer able to maintain its credit, † forty † £.320,000
 millions of sesterces. All Magistrates and Em-
 peror's Intendants of provinces were strictly for-
 bid to give any feasts or shews, that they might
 not, by the allurements of those public diversi-
 ons, prevail on such as were injured and oppres-
 sed to complain, and by that means escape
 with impunity. Nor is there any reason why
 we should not rank among those good deeds,
 the lenity shewn Lucius Varus, a man of Con-
 sular rank, formerly condemned for misappli-
 cation of some public money, and now rein-
 stated in his dignity of Senator.

I know not what the reader may think of a Spirit of the
 pretended favour done the public, with a little Laws,
 art and cunning, less applauded by Tacitus B. xiii. c. 7.
 than by a modern writer. The five and twenti-
 eth part of the price every slave was sold for
 was a tax paid by the buyer. By this new re-
 gulation, it was said, that tax should be paid by
 the seller. This was a palpable illusion; for it
 was the same thing in either case, since the seller
 would not fail to add to the price of his slave
 the tax he was to pay out of it. But could
 that illusion be of any real advantage? I shall
 not take upon me to say.

The affair of Pomponja Græcina deserves Affair of
 our particular attention. That lady, married Pomponia
 to 'A. Plautius, to whom the lesser triumph had Græcina.
 been decreed for his victories in Britain, was
 accused, says Tacitus, of practising foreign su-
 perstitions; by which most interpreters, not

A.R. 808. without reason, understand Christianity, at that
 aft. C. 57. time preached in Rome by St Peter or his disciples. She was referred to her husband's judgment, who, in presence of a meeting of relations, according to antient custom, examined into the allegations against her, and with their approbation pronounced his wife innocent.

The account Tacitus gives of Pomponia's conduct and character, would reflect no dishonour on Christianity. She had formerly been attached to Julia, daughter of Drusus, and when that Princess perished in Messalina's snares, Pomponia put on mourning, and wore it constantly during forty years that she survived her, all which time her countenance spoke the grief her heart felt. Such constancy of friendship did her no hurt whilst Claudius lived, but much honour under succeeding Emperors.

Three persons of consequence accused, but with different success.

Several persons of distinction, who had held considerable posts in the Provinces, were accused for the rapine and injustice they had committed there. One only was condemned. Cosutius Capito, a man whose reputation was blasted, after having done the most shameful things in Rome, and cruelly exercised there the trade of informer, thought he might tyrannize as he pleased over Cilicia, the government whereof had fallen to his lot. The Cilicians prosecuted him with such vigor and resolution, that, spite of all his parts and impudence, he declined his own defence, and was found guilty of extortion and oppression.

Eprius Marcellus, another instrument of tyranny, was more fortunate tho' not less criminal. He was accused by the Lycians, whom he had vexed intolerably; but formed so strong a cabal,

cabal, that not he only was acquitted, but several of his accusers were banished. A.R. 808.
aft. C. 57.

As to Celer, a Roman Knight, and formerly the Emperor's Intendant in Asia, Nero saved him. Celer was the instrument Agrippina had made use of to poison M. Silanus. So great a crime secured his impunity, whatever wrongs he might have done the Asiatics. His judges would not, however, venture to acquit him, but, as he was old, spun the cause out so long that he died before it was determined.

Nero was Consul again the following year; and had for colleague Haterius Messala, whose great-grandfather, the famous orator Messala, had been Consul eighty-nine years before with Augustus Nero's great-great-grandfather.

NERO CLAUDIUS CÆSAR AUGUSTUS, III.

A.R. 809.

VALERIUS MESSALA.

aft. C. 58.

The Emperor was very properly and timely liberal to his colleague Messala, whose virtuous poverty stood in need of some assistance. He assigned him a yearly income of five hundred thousand * sesterces, to help to keep up the splendour of his name and family. He likewise granted pensions to Aurelius Cotta and Haterius Antoninus, tho' their case was very different from Messala's, for they had spent in luxury and rioting great wealth that had been left them by their fathers. Such are the particular instances Tacitus gives us of Nero's disposition to do good, which we before mentioned in general after Suetonius.

Nero grants pensions to some of the poor Nobility.

* £.4000

The public was extremely attentive to, and took great interest in, the accusation of a very famous person, who, tho' deservedly hated and de-

Sullius accused and condemned, not without some flaw in Seneca's reputation.

Tac. xiii. 42.

A. R. 809. detested by a great number of citizens of the
 aft. C. 58. first rank, yet his condemnation could not be
 compassed without a flaw in Seneca's reputation.
 We have often had occasion to mention Suilius,
 whose life had been a scene of various adventures,
 Questor to Germanicus, banished by Tiberius,
 recalled by Caligula, enjoying the highest power
 and credit under Claudius by his venal eloquence
 and great influence, his enemies did not think
 him sufficiently humbled under Nero *, and he chose
 rather to appear guilty than to bend. Several were
 of opinion it was with a design to crush him that
 the law *Cincia* had been revived the beginning
 of this reign, with the penalties thereby decreed
 against all advocates who should receive money
 from their clients; and Suilius † himself complained
 loudly of it. He imputed it to Seneca, and being
 naturally proud, and emboldened by his great age,
 uttered the bitterest invectives against him, which
 I shall take from Tacitus as the language of an
 enemy, who blackens and exaggerates matters,
 and lays down malicious reports for facts; but
 in

* Non quantum inimici cuperent demissus, quique se nocentem videri quàm supplicem mallet.

† Nec Suilius questu abstinebat, præter ferociam animi, extremâ senectâ liber, et Senecam increpans " infensum
 " amicis Claudii, sub quo justissimum exilium pertulisset,
 " simul studiis inertibus et juvenum imperitiæ suetum, vivere
 " iis qui vividam et incomptam eloquentiam tuendis civibus
 " exercerent. Se Quæstorem Germanici, illum domus ejus
 " adulterum fuisse. An gravius existimandum sponte litigato-
 " gatoris præmium honestæ operæ assequi, quàm corrumpere
 " cubacula Principum fœminarum? Quâ sapentiâ,
 " quibus philosophorum præceptis, intra quadriennium regiæ
 " amicitia, ter millies sestertium paravisset? Romæ testam-
 " menta, et orbos velut indagine ejus capi. Italiam et
 " provincias immenso fœnore hauriri. At sibi labore quaesitam
 " et modicam pecuniam esse. Crimen, periculum,
 " omnia potiùs toleraturum, quàm veterem ac diù partaui
 " dignationem subitæ felicitati submitteret. Tac.

in whose railings there may, however, be some colour of truth. A.R. 809.
aft. C. 58.

He accused then Seneca of being the persecutor of Claudius's friends, under whom he had suffered a banishment most justly deserved; adding, that that professor, used to an indolent kind of study, and knowing nothing more than just how to give a scholar his lesson, looked with envy on all whose nervous and manly eloquence was exerted in defence of their fellow-citizens. "I, said he, have been Questor to Germanicus; and Seneca, the corrupter of his family. Which of the two is most criminal, to receive the reward a client voluntarily offers for an honourable service, or to carry on an adulterous commerce with Princesses? Oh the wisdom! Oh the excellent philosophy! that teaches a man to get in four years of favour, three* hundred millions of sesterces. He spreads his nets in Rome, where they catch all the richest inheritances, and he is universal heir to all who have none of their own. His exorbitant usury ruins Italy and the provinces. For my part, I have but a moderate fortune, and that I have acquired by dint of labour. Yes, I will answer the accusation, I will meet all dangers, rather than stoop from the rank and esteem in which I have lived so long, to pay homage to an upstart fortune, not yet four years old."

*Two millions four hundred thousand pounds.

Suilius, we see, revives the old imputation of Seneca's pretended adultery with Germanicus's daughter Julia. Perhaps he meant to insinuate too, that his enemy had at that very time connexions of the same kind with Agrippina. For that was said, tho' without any shadow of truth; Dia.
nor

A.R. 809. nor does Tacitus give the least hint of any such
 aft. C. 58. thing. It is with much more reason that Sui-
 lius upbraids Seneca with his immense riches.
 We shall have occasion to speak of that else-
 where, and shall endeavour to weigh impartially
 the reasons that opulent philosopher himself as-
 signs in his own apology on that subject.

Suilius's speeches were all carried to Seneca
 word for word, or, if they differed in any thing,
 it was in their being made still more odious and
 virulent. Revenge soon followed, and Suilius
 was accused of vexations exercised against the
 subjects of the Empire, and of embezzling the
 public money during his government of Asia.
 But in order to prosecute this accusation, it was
 necessary to bring witnesses from Asia, by which
 Suilius gained a year's time. His enemies
 thought that delay too long, and therefore de-
 termined to attack him for crimes committed
 in Rome, to prove which they had their wit-
 nesses at hand.

They accused him therefore of having caused
 the death of Julia, daughter of Drusus, of Pop-
 pæa, Valerius Asiaticus, and several other per-
 sons of high distinction; of having procured the
 condemnation of numbers of Roman Knights;
 in a word, all the cruelties of Claudius's reign
 were laid to his charge. Suilius alledged in his
 defence Claudius's positive orders, which he
 could not but obey. But Nero deprived him
 of the benefit of that plea, by declaring it
 plainly appeared by his father's registers that no
 one had ever been forced to become informer
 or accuser during his reign. Suilius, at a loss
 what to say, laid the fault then on Messalina;
 but that was thought a very bad defence, and
 he

he was asked, "For what reason he, rather than
 "any other, was chosen to be the instrument
 "of a lascivious woman's cruelties? We must
 "punish, added his judges, the ministers of
 "tyranny, who, after having reaped the fruit
 "of their crimes, endeavour to lay those very
 "crimes on another."

Suilius was condemned to be banished; a part of his estate was forfeited, and part given to his son and grand-daughter. The Balearian islands were assigned him for his abode. But he, neither during his trial, nor after sentence passed, ever once abated any thing of his haughtiness; and the plenty he lived in during his exile, made it not disagreeable. The accusers were for attacking his son Nerulinus, as accomplice with his father in oppressing and extorting from the people; but Nero stopped them, saying, Public justice was satisfied.

At the same time a Tribune of the people, called Octavius Sagitta, was hurried on by the blind fury of a criminal passion, to the murder of the woman he loved, and consequently to his own ruin. Falling violently in love with Pontia, a married woman, he prevailed on her, first to grant him favours, and then to separate from her husband. Octavius's design was to marry Pontia, and she had agreed to it; but no sooner saw herself free, but in hopes of finding a better match, she retracted her promise. Her lover, quite desperate, taking his freeman with him, went to her, with a dagger concealed under his robe; and after some time spent in complaints, reproaches, and menaces, killed Pontia, and wounded her woman, who ran to her assistance.

A Tribune of the people stabs a woman he was in love with, and is banished. Tac. xiii. 44.

A.R. 809. The murder was evident ; but such was the
 aft. C. 58. freeman's generous attachment to his master,
 that tho' in a very criminal matter, he took all
 upon himself, and said, it was he that had killed
 Pontia, to revenge the affront offered to his pa-
 tron. The woman-slave's deposition cleared it
 up ; and Octavius, convicted, underwent the
 punishment ordained by the Dictator Sylla's
 law against assassins, which was banishment and
 forfeiture of goods and chattels; for such was
 the mildness, or rather the imperfection of the
 Roman laws, that they inflicted no heavier pu-
 nishment for the worst of crimes ; it was in vir-
 tue of their military power that the Emperors
 ordered so many bloody executions.

Sylla ba-
 nished to
 Marseilles
 a barefaced
 calumny.
Tac. xiii. 47.

We have already seen in what manner the
 name of Sylla, Claudius's son-in-law, was men-
 tioned in a pretended conspiracy imputed to
 Pallas and Burrhus. Nero had not forgot it,
 and Sylla's want of parts and genius, far from
 removing his suspicions, increased them, be-
 cause he imagined it only affected, the better to
 conceal his real cunning and deceit. Where the
 Prince suspects, accusers are always ready. A
 wretch of a freeman, called Graptus, who had
 grown old in the service of the Cesars' family
 ever since Tiberius, and who by long experience
 was versed in all the tricks of the court, entered
 into Nero's secret views, and telling a barefaced
 lie, accused Sylla of having attempted the
 Prince's life. The opportunity the calumniator
 took advantage of was as follows :

The bridge Milvius, now called the *Ponte
 Mole*, three miles from Rome, was at that time
 a place where the gay licentious youth used to
 meet on parties of pleasure, and would often
 stay

stay all night. Nero frequently went there to A.R. 809.
 play his wanton tricks with more freedom than aft. C. 58.
 he could in the city. He generally returned
 before day; and once, as he was coming back,
 turned out of the road to go to the gardens*
 that had formerly belonged to Sallust, Tibe-
 rius's Minister. His attendants, coming without
 him by the usual road, were attacked by a set
 of young people out of a frolic, and only to
 laugh at their fears.

On this adventure Graptus founded his plan of
 accusation against Sylla. What was meant only
 as a frolic, he said, was a concerted ambushade,
 which the Prince happily escaped by the special
 providence and protection of the gods; and
 tho' not one of Sylla's slaves or vassals had been
 seen there, and his own faintheartedness and stu-
 pidity were sufficient proofs of his innocence,
 yet Graptus insisted on his being author of the
 pretended plot; and in consequence of so
 groundless an accusation, Sylla was banished to
 Marseilles, where he remained till Nero, grow-
 ing bold enough to think he might do what-
 ever he pleased, made no scruple to shed the
 blood of all that gave him the least umbrage.

Pozzuolo was greatly distressed by intestine broils Tumult in-
 between the Senate and people, and the sedition Pozzuolo
 went so far as to throw stones and threaten to appeased by
 set fire to the houses; so that the city was in the autho-
 danger of perishing by the fury of its own in- riety of the
 habitants. Roman Se-
nate.

* They were called *Sallust's Gardens*. Perhaps they had
 been formerly purchased by the historian *Sallust*; but un-
 doubtedly were embellished by his grand nephew, *Tiberius's*
 minister, and, during the first years of his reign, his confi-
 dent. To me it seems most probable that they took their
 name from the latter.

A.R. 809. habitants. Deputies from both sides came to
aft. C. 58. the Roman Senate, who directed the famous ci-
vilian Cassius to examine into the grounds of
their quarrels, and think of a proper remedy.
But such was that magistrate's severity, that he
made himself equally insupportable to both
parties; and on his requesting that commission
might be given to some other person, the two
brothers Scribonius were appointed, with a
Pretorian cohort, to attend and make them be
respected. The sight of those troops struck a
damp on the mutineers, and the execution of a
few of the ring-leaders, soon restored peace
and tranquillity in Pozzuolo.

Particulari-
ty relating
to Thræsea.

The Senate deliberating on a request made
by the Syracusans to have leave to exceed the
number prescribed by law in their fights of gla-
diators, Thræsea Pætus opposed it, and main-
tained his opinion with warmth against that of
the major part of the house. He was thought
the most virtuous man of the age, and every
action of his life was taken notice of. Many
were surprised that he, who never opened his
mouth when the most important affairs of state,
peace, war, laws, and taxes, were agitated,
should condescend to speak on so trivial an oc-
casion as this: They wished he would chuse ei-
ther always to hold his tongue, or always to
speak. Thræsea was told what they said, and
made his friends who gave him the account,
(if I may be allowed to say it) a very frivolous
answer. It was, he said, for the honour of the
Senate, that he sometimes spoke in that manner
to things of little consequence, in order to
make people sensible how careful that august
body must be in things of moment, since such
strictness

strictness was observed even in trifles. I had rather he had answered, and perhaps it was what he meant, that he was willing to prevent a prescription; and that the Senate's deliberation might not degenerate into mere ceremonials, was desirous to preserve, even in those trivial discussions, a right to vote likewise in matters of state, whenever there should be occasion.

This same year the people complaining greatly of the intolerable tyranny of the farmers of the public revenues, Nero had once a mind to make mankind the magnificent present of an exemption from all duties. The thought was more brilliant than solid; and the Senators, at the same time that they bestowed the highest praises on the Prince's magnanimity, represented, however, "That such an exemption would be the ruin of the Empire, which could not subsist without revenues. That if the duties on merchandize were abolished, the next thing asked for would be, not to pay the tribute each was taxed at in proportion to what he was worth. That most of the companies for levying the public monies had been established by the Consuls and Tribunes, during the time that the Roman people enjoyed a democratic liberty; and that what had been added, since had been intended only to make the revenues equal to the expences of the state. But that it was proper to put a stop to the cupidity of the farmers, that they might not, by new rigours, render odious taxes that had been paid willingly and without any complaint for so many years."

Nero followed this advice, and published an ordinance, consisting of several articles, all tending to moderate the avidity of the farmers.

Complaints
against the
farmers of
the reve-
nues.

Nero's or-
dinances
very equi-
table,

The

A.R. 809. The first was, that the conditions of the leases aft. C. 58. made by the state to farmers for every kind of tax or duty should be posted up publicly, that every one might know whether they acted beyond their authority. By the second, they were forbid commencing any suits for monies alledged to be due to them upwards of a year. The Emperor likewise ordained, that in Rome the Pretors, and in the provinces the Propretors or Proconsuls, should hear whatever complaints were made to them against the managers of the revenues, and do justice directly. The people of the army were continued exempt from all contributions towards maintaining and repairing the roads, from all duties inward or outward, unless it was on goods that themselves trafficked in. He abolished the impost of two and two and a half per cent. which the farmers had laid, without any legal authority, on the importation and exportation of all merchandize. The provinces beyond sea that supplied Rome and Italy with corn, were eased of certain restrictions that clogged that trade. Ships belonging to merchants were not to be reckoned part of their estates, nor liable to any tax. These equitable regulations were received with great demonstrations of joy; but most of them lasted only a short time, and were eluded by the very frauds they were intended to prevent. Some, however, still subsisted when Tacitus wrote.

Two old Proconsuls of Africa accused and acquitted.

Two old Proconsuls of Africa, Sulpicius Camerinus and Pomponius Silvanus, both accused of mal-administration in their province, were acquitted by Nero. Only a few private men complained of the first, and there appeared more of rigour than avarice in their conduct.

Pomponius

Pomponius was attacked by a crowd of accusers, A.R. 809. who begged for time to collect their proofs and aft. C. 58. bring over their witnesses. The accused desired to be judged immediately, which was granted. He was old, rich, and had no child; by which means his credit and influence were great. He outlived those that saved him in hopes of inheriting his wealth.

Tacitus closes this year with an account of a Ruminal fig-tree. Tac. xiii. 58. most absurd miracle, the illusion of which he might easily have found out. He says, that in the *Comitium*, a part of the Roman *Forum*, the ruminal fig-tree under which Romulus and Remus were nursed eight hundred and thirty years before, withered away, and then sprouted out again. Every body must at once be sensible how contrary it is to the laws of nature for a tree to last eight hundred years. The truth is, as Pliny says, that the fig-tree in the Forum was Plin. xv. 18. planted there in remembrance of that, under which, tradition said, Romulus and Remus were suckled by a wolf. That tree was never cut or pruned, but suffered to die of age, after which the priests planted another in the same spot.

I was willing to give the reader a full view of Nero's government during the four first years of his reign. The same space of time likewise affords several considerable military events, especially towards the East, and in Parthia, of which I shall now give an account.

S E C T. II.

Tiridates restored by Vologeses to the throne of Armenia. What the Romans said of it. Corbulo is chosen to conduct the war against the Parthians. Vologeses withdraws his troops from Armenia. He gives hostages to the Romans. Two years of calm. Corbulo disciplines his troops. The war renewed, Rashness of a Roman officer. Corbulo inflicts military punishment on him. Tiridates's incursions checked by Corbulo. Tiridates's complaints. A conference proposed, but to no effect. Three strong castles taken by Corbulo in one day. Tiridates endeavours, but in vain, to molest Corbulo's march to Artaxata. That city surrenders, and is burnt and razed. Corbulo marches towards Tigranocerta. He becomes master of that city. Alliance between the Hyrcanians and Romans. Armenia totally subdued, and given to Tigranes by Nero. Germany is calm for several years. Mole to direct the course of the Rhine. Project of a canal to join the Saone and Moselle. The Frisons settle in the lands left uncultivated by the Romans. An instance of the German frankness with a dignity of sentiment. The Frisons are driven out. The Ansibari take their place, and are likewise driven out. War between two German nations on account of the Sala. Conflagration occasioned by fire out of the earth.

A.R. 805.

Tiridates
restored by
Vologeses
to the throne
of Armenia.
Tac. xiii.
Ann. 6.

I H A V E already said how Vologeses King of the Parthians wanted to reap the fruit of Rhadamistus's crimes, and force the crown
of

of Armenia from that wicked parricide, to bestow it on his brother Tiridates. I have likewise said, the success Tiridates and Rhadamistus had was alternately good and bad : but soon after Nero's accession to the Empire, it was known in Rome that the Parthians had got the better, and were masters of Armenia.

This news coming just at the beginning of a reign, gave people room to talk variously. Tacitus gives us so natural an account of what was said, that one can hardly help thinking one hears them. "How will it be possible, said some, for a Prince, hardly seventeen years old, to manage a war of this importance? What assistance can the Empire expect from a Chief, who is governed by a woman? (for at that time Agrippina was omnipotent.) His masters dictate his harangues, and guide his steps on this occasion. But what use will they be of to him in fighting battles, besieging towns, and performing all the other operations of war?" Others, again, maintained there was room to hope better from the present situation of things, than if the weight of such a war had fallen on Claudius, old and silly as he was, and governed by his slaves. That, after all, Burrhus and Seneca had given proofs of their abilities in several great affairs; "and the Emperor himself, continued they, is he then so far from having attained the vigour of his age? Pompey at eighteen, and Octavius Cæsar when but nineteen years old, conducted civil wars. Nor is the Emperor's personal presence always necessary. The orders he gives his Lieutenants, and their prudence in executing them, are often sufficient. We shall

What the
Romans
said of it.

“ * see what kind of counsellors our Prince has
 “ about him, by the choice he makes of a Ge-
 “ neral to manage this war ; whether it will be
 “ a man of merit, and one that deserves it, or
 “ some rich favourite that will have the com-
 “ mand.”

Corbulo is
 chosen to
 conduct the
 war against
 the Parthi-
 ans.

Every one had room to be satisfied with Ne-
 ro's choice. He pitched on Corbulo, the great-
 est General the republic then had, and that
 choice caused an universal joy. The Romans †
 concluded virtue and talents could not fail to be
 honoured and rewarded under the new govern-
 ment.

Vologeses
 withdraws
 his troops
 from Arme-
 nia.

Whilst Corbulo was preparing to set out, Nero
 sent orders to Numidius Quadratus, Governour of
 Syria, to recruit his legions in the neighbouring
 provinces, and lead them on towards Armenia.
 He likewise put in motion such Kings, depen-
 dents on the Empire, as were nearest at hand, to
 incommode the Parthians : of that number were

Joseph. An-
 tiq. xx. 3 &
 5.

Antiochus King of Commagena, and Agrippa
 the younger, whom Claudius had made, first
 King of Chalcida, in the room of his uncle He-
 rod, but afterwards removed from that to a
 more considerable state, composed of the Te-
 trarchy formerly possessed by Philip son of the

Tac. xiii. 7.

great Herod, and of Abilænum, governed by
 Lysanias with the title of Tetrarch. Nero di-
 rected Antiochus and Agrippa to, collect their
 troops, and enter the Parthian territories. The
 same orders were given to Aristobulus, son of
 Herod, King of Chalcida, and to Soenus ; both
 of

* Daturum planè documentum, honestis an secus amicis
 uteretur, si ducem amotâ invidiâ egregium, quàm si pecu-
 nio-um et gratiâ subnixum per ambitum deligeret. Tac.

+ Videbaturque locus virtutibus patefactus.

of whom he named Kings, one of the lesser Armenia, and the other of Sophena.

At the same time that the Romans and their allies were making these preparations, Vardanes, son of Vologeses, revolted against his father; which obliged the Parthian King to withdraw his troops from Armenia, tho' not to give over his designs.

This beginning of success was celebrated by the Roman Senate as if it had been a complete victory. Supplications, or solemn thanksgivings to the gods, were ordered, and during the time they lasted, the Emperor was to wear the triumphal garb; he was to make his entrance into Rome with the honours of Ovation; and to have a statue erected to him in the temple of Mars the Avenger, of the same size with that of the god. A decree so full of flattery plainly shews what kind of spirit prevailed over the Senate's deliberations at that time. There was, however, some sincerity in it; the Senators, highly pleased at Corbulo's nomination, were really glad to do honour to the Prince who had made choice of a man so universally esteemed.

Every one knew the war was not over; and Nero divided the Syrian army between Quadratus and Corbulo, so that each of them had two legions, and the same number of auxiliary troops. The cohorts and cavalry that had wintered in Cappadocia were added to Corbulo's army. The Kings in the Roman alliance were ordered to assist them both wherever there should be occasion, but they were by inclination attached to Corbulo.

That General, in order to make the best advantage of so favourable a disposition, the con-

sequence of which he was thoroughly sensible of, especially in the beginning of an enterprize; made all the haste he could to the East, where he found near the city of Eges, in Cilicia, Numidius Quadratus, who was come to meet him, not so much out of a principle of honour as of jealousy. We have already seen how indifferently that Governor of Syria behaved when Rhadamistus invaded Armenia. He seems to have been a man of no great parts, and was afraid if Corbulo entered Syria to take upon him the command of the troops destined for him, he should be too much humbled even in his own government by the comparison that could not fail to be made of him with that General, whose * size and strength of body were more than common, his elocution grand and florid, and to whose real merit was added an outward appearance most fit to strike the vulgar.

He gives hostages to the Romans.

The two Generals sent each of them Deputies to Vologeses, exhorting him to prefer peace to war, to give hostages, and to pay, as his predecessors had done, a proper respect and deference to the Roman people. Vologeses was prudent, and whether it be that he was willing to gain time to prepare better for war, or that he was glad of an opportunity to remove such as were suspicious to him, by giving them as hostages, he agreed to what the Romans proposed, and delivered up the heads of the illustrious family of the Arsacidæ, to the Centurion Insteius, who first presented himself to the Parthian King on Quadratus's behalf.

The

* Corpore ingens, verbis magnificus, et super experientiam sapientiamque, etiam specie inanium validus.

The moment Corbulo was informed of what had passed, he sent Arrius Varus, Præfect of a cohort, to demand the hostages in his name. The dispute was warm between the Præfect and Centurion: but that their quarrels might not be a subject of diversion to strangers, they agreed to leave it to the decision of the hostages themselves, and of the Parthian Ambassadors who were with them. Enemies as well as allies had the highest opinion of Corbulo, and he was preferred. Quadratus was greatly offended at it, and complained loudly of his being robbed of a glory that was the fruit of his advice. Corbulo, on the other hand, said, it was his name alone that had turned Vologeses's hopes into fears, and induced that Prince to give hostages. In order to reconcile them, Nero caused a decree of the Senate to be rendered in their joint names, setting forth, that in consequence of Quadratus and Corbulo's exploits, the Emperor's fasces should be crowned with laurel. This decree seems properly to belong to the year of Nero's first Consulship, and of Rome 806.

We find nothing in Tacitus relating to the Armenian war during the years 807 and 808. The Parthians, who had just given hostages, probably remained quiet; and Corbulo took advantage of that calm to discipline and form his troops, of which there was great need; for the legions drawn out of Syria, who had seen no war for a long time, were grown inactive, and unable to bear any fatigue. In that army were veterans who had never mounted guard, who looked at a ditch and rampart with surprise and wonder, as at things quite new to them. Many of them had neither helmet nor

Two years
of calm.
Corbulodisc-
ciplines his
troops.

armour ; peaceably quartered in towns and cities, all they had done was to get money and fine cloathes, and grow fat in idleness.

Such troops could by no means suit * Corbulo, who would often say, the enemy must be conquered by the hatchet, meaning military toil and labour. The first thing he did was to dismiss all those whom old age or infirmities rendered unfit for service ; and to replace them, he raised recruits in Galatia and Cappadocia. A legion was brought him from Germany, together with some bodies of auxiliary troops both horse and foot.

It was not sufficient to have men, without making soldiers of them. Severity of discipline seemed to Corbulo the most proper means to effect it. He kept his army in the field during so hard a winter, that the soldiers were forced to break and carry off the ice that covered the ground before they could pitch their tents. Several lost the use of their limbs by the violence of the cold, and some murmured as if ready to mutiny. A soldier who was carrying a faggot of wood had his hands so frozen, that breaking off at the wrist, they fell to the ground with his load. † Corbulo seemed invulnerable by the rigour of the season ; thinly clad, his head always bare, he was at the head of every thing, foremost in their marches, labours, and military exercises ; he praised the brave, encouraged the weak, and was himself an example to all. | So

* Domitius Corbulo dolabrâ, id est, operibus hostem vincendum esse dicebat. *Front. Strat. iv. 7.*

† Ipse cultu levi, capite intecto, in agmine, in laboribus, frequens adesse : laudem strenuis, solatium invalidis, exemplum omnibus ostendere. *Tac.*

So hard a service discouraged several of the soldiers, and they began to desert. Corbulo remedied that evil by an inflexible severity : for the case was not the same in his army as in others, where a first and second fault were pardoned. Every deserter was sure to lose his head directly : and * experience soon shewed what he did was right, not only in point of discipline, but likewise in saving his men's lives ; for there were much fewer deserters from Corbulo's camp, than from those where the commanding officers were less severe.

Troops so well prepared could not but be very formidable to whatever enemy should dare to cope with them ; and so the Parthians found them the moment they began to stir. Vologeses had only yielded to the necessity of the times. He thought his honour concerned to see the crown he had given his brother set on his head ; and could not think of Tiridates's being obliged to the Romans for it : for even then that medium was talked of which at last ended the quarrel. But many battles were fought before the Parthian King's pride would submit to it.

Vologeses therefore was bent on war, and Corbulo desired it of all things ; aspiring at the honour of recovering countries formerly conquered by Lucullus and Pompey. And accordingly the Romans and Parthians, who, till then, had seemed mutually to fear each other, entered into a war in earnest in the year of Rome 809.

Hosti-

* Idque usu salubre, et misericordiam melius apparuit. Quippe pauciores illa castra deseruere, quam ea in quibus ignoscebatur. Tac.

Hostilities began by degrees. Armenia was divided into two factions, the weakest of which sided with the Romans, and the other with the Parthians,*their nearer neighbours; more like themselves in manners, customs, and inclinations, and whose government was more agreeable to the genius of the Armenians. Corbulo entered the country to support openly the Roman party, and Tiridates privately sent succours to those who were in his interest.

Rashness of
a Roman
officer. Cor-
bulo inflicts
military pu-
nishment
on him.

Their first success was owing to the rashness of the Roman officer whom they defeated. Corbulo kept his legions in the camp where they had wintered, waiting for milder weather, which does not come till very late in Armenia; and had distributed the auxiliary troops in advanced posts, with strict orders not to fight unless they were attacked. All those different detachments were commanded by Pactius Orphitus, who had formerly been Captain of a legion. He wrote his General word, that the Barbarians were not on their guard, but offered him the finest opportunities to attack them. Corbulo persisted in his plan; and sent fresh orders not to fight till other troops arrived. But Pactius was too hot to obey so wise a command, and no sooner received a reinforcement of horse, but he fell on the enemy and was worsted. Those who should have assisted him, alarmed at his defeat, ran away. Corbulo was highly incensed at this disobedience, which in former times would have cost the delinquent his head. However severe as that General was, he only reprimanded Pactius, and condemned him, his officers and soldiers who had fled before the enemy, to encamp out of the entrenchments.

ments. That was a military punishment that implied ignominy ; and they were forced to undergo it till the prayers of the whole army obtained their pardon.

This success encouraging Tiridates, he threw off the mask, and joining his own vassals to the troops Vologeses gave him, made open war in Armenia, laying waste the lands of those he thought attached to the Romans, and, according to the custom of that nation, when troops were sent against him, retreating instantly to avoid coming to action, and flying from place to place, spreading the terror of his name even where his arms could not penetrate.

Corbulo long attempted to bring on an engagement, but not being able to force the enemy to it, he was of necessity obliged to imitate their manner of making war. He divided his army into different bodies, and ordered his Lieutenants and Præfects to attack several posts at once. At the same time the Kings and nations in alliance with the Empire began to act by his command. Antiochus of Commagena was directed to harrass the regions bordering on his territories. Pharasmanes, who had just put his son Rhadamistus to death, voluntarily resolved to signalize his fidelity to the Romans, and satiate the hatred he had long conceived against the Armenians. The Isiqui, or Insequi, a nation not much known, in concert with Corbulo, fell upon the districts the most out of the way, and least accessible to the Roman arms.

Tiridates knew not what to do, finding all his cunning turn against himself. He had recourse to remonstrances, the usual resource of the weak, and sent Deputies to Corbulo, complaining,

Tiridates's
incursions
checked by
Corbulo.

Tiridates's
complaints.

ing, that after having so lately given hostages, after a renewal of friendship from whence he had flattered himself to receive new favours, he was on the contrary molested in what he had long been in possession of, and in the enjoyment of his right to the crown of Armenia. He added, that if Vologeses did not stir as yet, it was out of pure moderation, and because he chose to triumph by the justice of his cause, rather than by force of arms. But that if they were absolutely bent on war, the Arsacidæ would easily find again the same valor and fortune the Romans had more than once so woefully experienced.

Corbulo was the less moved by these menaces, as he knew the revolt of the Hyrcanians kept Vologeses sufficiently employed. The only answer he gave Tiridates was, to advise him to apply to the Emperor, and try by entreaties to obtain from him the lasting possession of a crown, the acquisition of which by any other means would be, at least very doubtful, and at all events very bloody.

A conference proposed, but to no effect.

Several messages were brought and sent on both sides, but nothing could be agreed on. An interview was proposed, but with an evil design, by Tiridates, as appeared by the offer he made to bring with him only a thousand horse, and to let the Roman General have what troops he pleased both of horse and foot, on condition the soldiers should be dressed as in time of peace without helmets or cuirasses. A less able and experienced man than Corbulo would have seen thro' the intended treachery. It was very plain, a troop of horse so expert at managing the bow as the Parthians were, could easily

easily overcome any number whatever of naked and unarmed men. However, Corbulo did not shew any mistrust, but only answered, that where the common interests of the two Empires were concerned; the best way for them to see each other was at the head of their armies.

The day was fixed; and Corbulo took the same precautions as if a battle had been to be fought. Tiridates, who probably was informed of it, did not appear till very late, and then at such a distance that it was much easier to see than hear him. Consequently there was no conference. Corbulo ordered his troops to file off, and Tiridates retired with speed, either fearing himself to be surprised, or with a view to intercept the convoys the Romans shortly expected by the way of the Pontus Euxinus and Trebizond. But care was taken to have those convoys conducted by safe roads, over mountains well guarded, so that all Tiridates's schemes proved abortive.

Corbulo, pursuing and perfecting his plan of operations, set about forcing the strong holds of the Armenians, in order to reduce them to a necessity, either of appearing in the field, or of losing all their dearest and most valuable possessions. With that view he marched towards the strongest castle they had in the country where he then was; and coming before Volandum, (so the place was called) he first went round it, examining its weakest parts, and from the nature of the ground forming in his mind the disposition of his attack. Then drawing up his soldiers, he represented to them in few words, what kind of enemies they had to deal with, vagabonds, who could neither keep peace nor fight,

Three
strong castles taken
by Corbulo
in one day.

fight, and who, by continually flying from the engagement, in which their main resource consisted, owned themselves equally cowardly and perfidious. "Strip them, added he, of these their lurking holes, and you will be sure to gain honour and plunder at the same time. So saying, he gave orders for the attack, dividing his army into four bodies." A party, forming themselves into the military tortoise, set about sapping the foundations, whilst others applied their ladders to the walls; a third division set their military engines to work, darting lances and fire. The slingers and bow-men were posted on an eminence from whence they commanded the whole town, and poured down showers of stones and darts on such of the inhabitants as attempted to give assistance where they were too warmly attacked. The Romans behaved so well, that in less than eight hours all the walls were cleared, not an enemy dared shew himself, the works that defended the gates were destroyed, the ramparts scaled, and the place taken by storm. All that were of age to bear arms were put to the sword: the women, children, and old men, were sold, and the rest of the plunder given up to the soldiers. The conquerors did not lose a single man, and had but very few wounded.

The same day two other castles of less importance were forced in the neighbourhood of that, by detachments from the main army: and the taking of those three places, so suddenly forced, and so severely dealt by, was a warning to others, who were glad to avoid the like misfortune by a voluntary submission. Corbulo, finding nothing resisted him, thought himself strong

strong enough to attack Artaxata, the capital of Armenia. The river Araxes, which washed the walls of that city, was first to be passed. The Romans might have gone over a bridge ready built for them; but in that case they would have been too much exposed to the enemy's arrows, and therefore chose a ford at some distance.

Tiridates was greatly embarrassed. To let Artaxata be taken without attempting to save a place of such consequence, would quite discredit his arms. On the other hand, he was afraid to enter into a rugged, uneven country, where his cavalry could neither spread themselves nor have room to act. Fear of shame and loss of reputation at last got the better. He resolved to come up with Corbulo in his march, and, if he found a favourable opportunity, to attack and give him battle; otherwise to try, by a sham flight, to draw him into some snare, and to take advantage of any irregular motion the Roman army might make.

But he had to deal with an able, vigilant General, who foresaw all that could happen, and whom it was not possible to surprize. Corbulo disposed his army so that they could fight or march with equal advantage; and his left wing was so stretched out, that he could easily surround the enemy if they advanced imprudently. A thousand horse formed his rear-guard, and were ordered to stand firm if attacked, but not to pursue if the enemy fled. In vain did Tiridates keep dancing about the Roman army, without coming however within bow-shot; one hour feigning to attack, and the next running away as if afraid, to induce the Romans to break

Tiridates endeavours, but in vain, to molest Corbulo's march to Artaxata.

break their ranks, and give him an opportunity to attack them by separating them from each other. Not one stirred from his post, except a Captain of horse, who advancing too far, was instantly pierced with arrows, and by his death proved the wisdom and prudence of the General's orders, and was a warning to others. Night drawing on, Tiridates retired.

Corbulo pitched his tent on the very spot where he had been obliged to halt; and as he was not far from Artaxata, concluding Tiridates had retired thither, he was once minded to leave his baggage in the camp, and march on in the night with his best troops, and invest the city, in hopes of shutting the Prince up in it, and becoming master of his person. But his scouts brought him word, Tiridates had taken another road, and it was uncertain whether he would turn towards Media or Albania. Corbulo therefore resolved to wait the return of day.

That city
surrenders,
and is burnt
and razed.

The moment it began to dawn, he sent forward his light troops with orders to surround Artaxata and begin the attack. The inhabitants did wisely; they threw open their gates, and by that means saved their lives and liberties. But the city was burnt and razed. As it was very extensive, a considerable garrison must have been left, greater than the Roman army could spare. On the other hand, to abandon the place after having taken it, would have been to gain neither honour nor profit by the conquest.

By Corbulo's exploits Nero merited the title of *Imperator*, or victorious General. The Senate ordered public thanksgivings to the gods, and

and for the Prince, statues, triumphal arches, and Consulships for several years to come. Nor was that all; the day on which that * victory was gained, was to be ranked among their festivals, so was that too on which the news was brought to Rome, and that on which the Senate was informed of it, with other flatteries, so low and wretched, that C. Cassius could not keep his temper. He was of the opinion of all the rest in other things; but as to the new festivals he said, if thanks were to be returned † the gods in proportion to the favours received from Fortune, the whole year would not be sufficient for it: and that of course it was proper to distinguish between days consecrated to religious purposes, and those destined for business, that men might acquit themselves, both of their duty towards the gods, and of what they owed to themselves and to each other.

Corbulo having destroyed Artaxata, resolved to finish the conquest of Armenia by taking Tigranocerta. That city, founded by the great King Tigranes, ruined by Lucullus, and, without doubt, rebuilt and repopled by its founder, to whom Pompey left the kingdom of Armenia, lay pretty far south of Artaxata. Corbulo did not march from one city to the other in a hostile manner: his design was not to destroy

Corbulo
marches to-
wards Ti-
granocerta.

* That is the term *Tacitus* makes use of, and perhaps it was that of the *Senatus consultum* too. By this victory is undoubtedly meant the conquest of the city of *Artaxata*, which, however, was not taken, but surrendered without resistance. Flattery does not stick at such trifles.

† I have again stuck to *Tacitus's* language here, though it be inconsistent to render the gods thanks for what is the gift of fortune. The *Pagans* had very confused ideas of all that related to the Divinity.

stroy Tigranocerta, and he was willing to give the inhabitants room to hope he would treat them mildly. But during the whole march he was on his guard, and kept a strict look-out, well knowing what a fickle inconstant people he had to deal with, who having as little fidelity as courage, were afraid of danger, and would not fail to play him some perfidious trick if an opportunity offered.

The Barbarians on his road behaved differently, and met with as different treatment. Some came to implore his clemency, and those he received with bounty. Others left their towns and villages, and fled to places out of his way; they were pursued and brought back to their habitations. Some thought they did very wisely to go and hide themselves in caves, with all their most valuable effects. Corbulo had no mercy on them, but ordered the mouths of their caverns to be stopt with cuttings of vines and other small wood, and burnt them alive. The Mardi, a people that lived by theft and plunder, and thought their mountains a safe asylum, harrassed the skirts of his army as he passed by their frontiers. He ordered the Iberians to ravage their country, revenging the insults offered the Romans at the expence of foreign blood.

If Corbulo and his troops had but few battles to fight, and sustained no loss in them, in return they suffered greatly by hunger and fatigue. Want of bread and water, excessive heats and long marches, would have tired out the patience of any soldiers, had they not seen their General share all their hardships, and suffer

fer even more than the meanest among them did.

At last they came to a cultivated country; the Romans gathered in the harvest; and of two castles where the Armenians had taken shelter, one was carried by storm, and the other forced to surrender after a short siege.

From thence they entered the territories of the Tauranti, where Corbulo was exposed to a danger he did not at all suspect. One of the chief men of that country was found armed near the Roman General's tent: when seized and put to the rack, he confessed his design was to murder Corbulo: that he had formed the plot, and named his accomplices, who, like himself, concealed their treachery under a shew of friendship. They were all put to death.

Corbulo drew near Tigranocerta, when Deputies from thence came out to meet him, saying, the city threw open its gates to him, and was ready to do whatsoever he should order: at the same time, they presented him a crown of gold, as a token of hospitality. Corbulo received them honourably, and exempted the city from all acts of hostility, that the inhabitants, by suffering nothing, might be the more inclined to remain steadfast to the Romans.

The citadel did not follow the example of the city. It was held by a garrison of brave men, who made a vigorous sally, and being driven back, suffered an assault, and were taken by storm. If we credit Frontin, after having first resisted, they were induced to surrender, terrified at the shocking sight of an Armenian Nobleman's head Corbulo ordered to be thrown in among them by means of an engine, and

He becomes
master of
that city.

Frontin.
Stratag.ii.9.

which fell in the very middle of the place where they were holding a council on the present state of their affairs. Corbulo's action will seem less inhumane, if, with Lipsius, we suppose that head to have been the traitor's who wanted to assassinate him.

The conquest of Tigranocerta seems to belong to the year of Rome 810, though Tacitus does not mention it till the year after; but he seems to include two campaigns in one account.

Alliance between the Hyrcanians & Romans. *Tac. Ann.* xiv. 25.

Corbulo's success was greatly favoured by the diversion of the Hyrcanians, who still kept the Parthian forces employed. That nation even went so far as to send Ambassadors to the Roman Emperor, requesting his friendship, which, said they, they thought themselves intitled to, for the resolution with which they opposed Vologeses. When those Ambassadors returned from Rome, Corbulo gave them a guard to conduct them safely back to their own country.

Armenia totally subdued;

Tiridates attempted once more to penetrate into Armenia by the way of Media; but Corbulo, immediately dispatching his auxiliary troops under the conduct of one of his Licutenants, himself followed with his legions to meet that Prince, whom he forced to retire, and give over all hopes of succeeding at that time by force of arms. He carried fire and sword wherever he thought the people kept up any intelligence with Tiridates, and by that means put the Romans in full possession of Armenia.

and given to Tigranes by Nero.

Such was the situation of things when a shadow of a King arrived from Rome, for whom
Nero

Nero destined the crown of Armenia. His name was Tigranes: he was descended by the males from Herod the Great, and by his grandmother Glaphyra was great-grandson to Archelaus, formerly King of Cappadocia. Tacitus speaks of him with great contempt, and says, he lived long at Rome as an hostage, was fawning and cringing, and had very low inclinations. He was not acknowledged unanimously by the Armenians, some of whom could not forget the Arsacidæ; tho' the greater number, if we believe Tacitus, chose rather to receive a King from the Romans, than to suffer any longer the pride and despotic rule of the Parthians. A detachment of the Roman army, consisting of a thousand legionary soldiers and three cohorts of auxiliary troops, with six hundred horse, was given Tigranes, to support him on the throne on which the Romans placed him. On this occasion the Romans did not forget their old custom of weakening kingdoms by dividing them. Sundry cantons of Armenia were given to three Princes, for whom they lay convenient, and increased the little states of Rhascuporis, Aristobulus, and Antiochus of Commagena. In that manner were the affairs of Armenia settled in the year of Rome 811. But these regulations were but of short duration, because Corbulo, who alone could give his own work solidity, went to Syria, the government of which province, vacant by the death of Numidius Quadratus, Nero gave to him.

We have seen this same Corbulo at the head of the legions in lower Germany, under Claudius's Empire, stop short in the rapid progress

Germany is calm for several years. Tac. xiii. Ann. 51.

he was making, by the command of an idle indolent Prince. Those who succeeded him in the command on the Rhine, looked upon that as a lesson to them, and were the more readily induced to remain quiet, as they saw the ornaments of triumph, the only reward they could hope for, vilified and degraded by the multitude of those on whom they had been betowed without choice or distinction. They thought it more truly honourable, to maintain peace and order, than to enjoy them. L. Antistius Vetus, and Pompeius Paulinus, who had the command of the legions under Nero, one in upper, and the other in lower Germany, employed the leisure hours of their troops in two great works. Paulinus finished the mole Drusus had began sixty-three years before, to * prevent the Rhine, where it first divides, throwing too much water into the Vahal, by which the right arm of that river, which alone retains the name of Rhine, and communicates with the Issel through Drusus's canal, would itself have wanted sufficient depth of water.

Mole to divert the course of the Rhine.

Project of a canal to join the Saone and Moselle.

Vetus had formed a design still more grand and useful, which was, to join, by a canal, the Saone and Moselle, whose sources are pretty near each other in the mountains of Vosga. That junction would in fact have been a junction of the two seas, by going up the Rhone and Saone, and then passing thro' the canal into the Moselle, which empties itself into the Rhine. Envy prevented the execution of

* I follow *Pontanius's* interpretation, adopted by *Ryckius*. This mole will be spoken of again towards the end of the 2d section of the fifteenth book.

of so fine a scheme. Ælius Gracilis, who commanded in Belgic Gaul, represented to Vetus, that in order to carry on that work he would be obliged to take his legions beyond the limits of his province; that, besides, he would be thought to court the affection of the Gauls, which might render him suspected to the Emperor. Those considerations, so often fatal to great enterprizes, stopt Vetus. Lewis XIV. had, as every one knows, the glory of doing what the Romans failed in, joining the two seas. The canal of Languedoc, by which a communication is opened between the Mediterranean and the river Garone, is one of the wonders of that Prince's reign.

It was so long since a Roman army had been seen in the field, that the Germans began to conclude the Emperor had deprived his Lieutenants of the power of making war. Full of that thought, the whole nation of the Frisons came with their wives and children to settle on the lands near the Rhine, which the Romans had left uncultivated, reserving them for their soldiers. The only use they seem to have made of them, was to send their cattle thither to graze. The Frisons had already built up their huts, sowed the ground, and, in short, made the same use of those lands as if they had been their own, when Dubius Avitus, who succeeded Paulinus, sent them word the Romans would fall upon them if they did not return to their old places of abode, or obtain the Emperor's leave to settle there. The Frisons, who saw no difficulty in the thing, and could not conceive how any one could be jealous of the possession of a country of which no use was made, agreed

The Frisons settle in the lands left uncultivated by the Romans.

to apply to the Emperor. Verritus and Malorix, who *governed the nation, so far at least as the German liberty was capable of being governed, undertook the deputation, and went to Rome to endeavour to obtain from Nero a grant of what they had been the first authors and promoters of.

An instance of the German frankness, with dignity of sentiment.

Whilst they were waiting the Emperor's leisure for an audience, they were carried about to see the city, where every thing was new to them. In particular, they were shewn Pompey's theatre, and the games and diversions at that time exhibiting there. The plays did not amuse them, for they understood nothing of them; but they took particular notice of the form of the theatre, the seats distinguished from the rest, and the places assigned Knights and Senators. Perceiving some men in foreign dresses sitting among the Senators, they asked what was the reason of it, and being told that was a distinction granted the Ambassadors of nations remarkable for their valour and attachment to the Romans, they instantly cried out †, No people on earth were braver nor more faithful than the Germans; and immediately rising from their seats, went and placed themselves among the Senators. Their ‡ sally pleased, and was looked upon as an instance of the old frankness of heart, and a sign of a noble emulation.

The Frisons are driven out.

Nero made the two Princes burgesses of Rome; but rejected their nation's request. The

* Qui nationem eam regebant, in quantum Germani regnantur. Tac.

† Nullos mortalium armis aut fide ante Germanos esse.

‡ Quod comiter à visentibus exceptum, tanquam impetûs antique, et bonâ æmulatione.

The Frisons were ordered to leave the lands they had possessed themselves of without any legal title ; and on their refusing to obey, some bodies of foreign troops were sent, who compelled them by force. Such as persisted in their obstinacy were killed or made prisoners.

The Frisons were hardly gone when the Ansibari, another German nation, took their places. They were in themselves more powerful than the Frisons, and several neighbouring people assisted them out of pity, because, driven out of their own country by the Cauçi, and having no place of abode of their own, they seemed in a manner entitled to an asylum where they might live undisturbed. Their Chief and Advocate was an old and faithful ally of the Romans, called Boiocalus, who represented, that he had been put in irons by Arminius's faction in the rebellion of the Cherusci ; that after that he had borne arms under Tiberius and Germanicus ; and that to fifty years personal service he was willing to add a fresh proof of his attachment to the Romans, by submitting his nation to their Empire. He laid great stress on the little advantage the lands in dispute were to the Romans, but a small part of which was made use of to feed their cattle, whilst all the rest was absolutely of no service. " Men who
 " want bread, might surely, said he, be pre-
 " ferred to your cattle. But, setting aside your
 " pastures, why do you envy us of what is of
 " no use to you ? as * the heavens to the gods,
 " so the earth was given to man. All of it
 " that is unoccupied belongs in common to
 " who-

* Sicut cœlum diis, ita terras generi mortalium datas : quæque vacuæ, e is publicas esse.

“ whoever wants it.” The German spoke on this occasion with a kind of enthusiasm, turning up his eyes towards the sun, and invoking the stars, as if they could have heard him, asking them whether they were pleased with the sight of an uncultivated soil, and beseeching them rather to let in the waters of the sea upon a land made barren by the injustice of man.

. Avitus, unmoved by such pathetic remonstrances, answered churlishly, “ they must submit to the law of the strongest; that the will of those gods they implored was to have the Romans be supreme arbitrators of all things, and give or take away at their pleasure, without being accountable to any superior judge.” That was the answer given the Ansibari as a nation. But Avitus promised Boicalus to give him lands for himself as a reward for his unshaken fidelity to the Romans. The generous Barbarian rejected his offer with disdain, as a bribe offered to corrupt him; “ we * may want land to live on, said he, but “ we shall always find a place to die in.”

Arms were to decide it; and at first the Bructeri, Tencteri, and other nations still more remote, espoused the cause of an unhappy people, destitute of a place of abode. But when Avitus on one hand, and on the other Curtilius Mancina, who commanded the army on the upper Rhine, passed that river, and were preparing to lay waste the lands belonging to the allies of the Ansibari, self-love prevailed, and fear of their own danger stifled their pity for others.

* *Deesse nobis terra, in qua vivamus; ita qua moriamur non potest.*

others. The Ansibari were left to shift for themselves, and reduced to wander from place to place, suffering want every where, and every where treated as enemies, till they were totally extirpated. The young men fell in battle, the women and children were made slaves. But their name survived. We find the Ansibari again some ages after among the people who formed the league or nation of the Franks.

Tacitus speaks of a war between the Hermonduri and Catti, about the possession of a river they thought very valuable on account of the salt they imagined it furnished the country with. Lipsius is of opinion it was the Sala, and Cellarius makes no doubt of it. Not that the waters of that river are salt; but near it were salt pans, which still subsist, and which the Barbarians thought proceeded from that river. They made this salt in a very easy manner. Great piles of wood were set on fire, on which they threw several tons of salt water: the watery parts were exhale by the heat of the flames, and the salt remained chrystalized among the ashes. As it was the custom of idolatrous nations to deify whatever was of singular benefit to society, the Germans thought this river and the neighbouring woods particularly agreeable to the gods, and imagined their prayers could not reach heaven so easily, nor be so well received from any other place. Religion therefore being joined to interest, the Hermonduri and Catti fought with uncommon fury and animosity. The former were victorious, and having devoted their enemy's army to Mars and Mercury, they killed all that had life: neither men nor horses were spared.

War between two German nations on account of the Sala. Cellar. Geogr. Ant. l. ii. c. 5. Tac.

The

Conflagration occasioned by fire out of the earth.

The * Ubii, in whose country Cologne had been lately built, suffered an unheard-of calamity, the circumstances of which I do not pretend to vouch for. Tacitus says, that fires, coming out of the earth, consumed the farms, the corn that was standing, and was already very near the walls of the colony. The usual remedies had no manner of effect to stop the conflagration; neither the rains that fell, nor the waters of the river that were thrown plentifully upon it, could check the violence of the fire: at last some of the country people, out of rage and despair, threw stones at the flames, and observed it deadened them. They drew nearer, and with whips and sticks fell to beating the obstinate flames as if they had been living creatures. Then pulling off their cloathes threw them upon the fire, and the dirtier and greasier those cloathes were, the more they smothered and put it out.

Tacitus places all these events in Germany under the year of Rome 809, which brings us back to the order of time, beyond which we have gone a little in the Armenian war.

S E C T.

* The editors of *Tacitus* say *Juhonum civitas*. But the name of *Juhones* is quite unknown: and it appears plainly, from the text of *Tacitus* carefully examined, that he intended to speak of the *Ubii*. See the article *Juhones* in *la Martiniere's Dictionary*.

S E C T. III.

Family and character of Poppæa; her amours with Otho, and afterwards with Nero. She sets Nero against his mother. Nero resolves Agrippina's death. Invention to procure a shipwreck that would seem an accident. She escapes drowning. Nero has her murdered in her bed. Her funeral and tomb. It is said it was foretold her son would kill her. Nero's trouble and uneasiness. He writes to the Senate. Seneca is blamed for having composed the letter for him. The Senate's abject flattery. Thraser's courage. Pretended prodigies. Nero strives to gain the people's love. He comes to Rome and is received with all possible demonstrations of joy and respect. Private satires against him. Nero never able to stifle his remorse entirely. He gives a loose to his passions after Agrippina's death. He appears publicly in the character of a charioteer, and acts the musician. His taste for poetry, and manner of writing verses. He laughs at philosophers. He causes his aunt's death. Good administration. Death of Domitianus Afer, and M. Servilius. Remarks on each of them. Nero institutes games after the Greek fashion. People of stricter morals complain of it. The pantomime art carried to its highest perfection under Nero. Comet. Rubilius Plautus is removed. Nero bathes in the source of the water Marcia. Sundry particular events.

A.R. 810.
aft. C. 59.

C. VIPSTANUS APRONIANUS.
C. FONTEIUS CAPITO.

NERO was in the fifth year of his reign ; the heat and vivacity of his age, and the flatteries of the corrupt courtiers that surrounded him, added to the * habit he had been indulged in, of enjoying a power without controul, confirmed and increased his natural audaciousness. His love of a lewd woman joined to that disposition, hurried him on to the worst of crimes, parricide.

Family and character of Poppæa. Her amours with Otho, and afterwards with Nero. *Tac. Ann. xiii. 45.*

That woman, who brought down the greatest of evils on the Roman Empire, was the too famous Poppæa, daughter of T. Ollius, who perished with Sejanus, to whom he was attached, very young before he had attained any greater dignity than that of Quæstor. Ollius's daughter ought naturally to be called Ollia ; but she preferred her mother's name, as more illustrious, on account of her grandfather by the mother's side, Poppæus Sabinus, who had been Consul, and enjoyed the ornaments of triumph. Her mother seems to have been the same Poppæa who fell a victim to Messalina's jealousies in Claudius's reign.

The Poppæa † we are now speaking of had all

* *Vetustate imperii coalitâ audaciâ. Tac. xiv. Ann. 1.*

† *Huic mulieri cuncta alia fuere. præter honestum animum. Quippe mater ejus, ætatis s.æ feminas pulcritudines prætergressa, gloriam pariter et formam dederat. Opes claritudini generis sufficiebant, sermo comis, nec absurdum ingenium. Modestiam præferre, et lasciviâ uti. Rarus in publicum egressus, nec nisi velatâ parte oris, ne satiaret adspectum, vel quia sic decebat. Famæ nunquam pepercit, maritos et adulteros non distinguens ; neque affectui*

all the advantages possible, the only truly estimable one, virtue, excepted. She had inherited from her mother, the finest woman of her time, an extraordinary beauty and great renown. Her fortune was equal to her birth: her conversation engaging and sprightly, and an air of modesty gave a higher relish to her licentiousness. She seldom went abroad, and then her veil hung always half way over her face, either to excite more curiosity in these that beheld her, or because she thought it added to her graces. Her reputation was a thing she never valued, making no difference between her husbands and gallants. Nor was it her own passion nor that of others that swayed her; interest was her rule of action, and what determined her inclinations.

She was married to Rufius Crispinus a Roman Knight, and Prefect of the Pretorian cohorts under Claudius, and had had a son by him, when Otho, a young agreeable debauchee, by which character he had attained the highest favour with Nero, got acquainted with her, and soon prevailed on her to commit an adultery, shortly after which they were married, Otho, either thro' indiscretion, the natural concomitant of love, or that ambition had stifled in him every sentiment of honour, was continually praising Poppæa before Nero, and boasting his happiness in the most passionate terms. Nero * was soon on fire, and Poppæa acted her part

fectui suo aut alieno obnoxia, unde utilitas ostenderetur, illuc libidinem transferebat. *Tac. xiii. Ann. 45.*

* *Suetonius*, Oth. c. iii. and *Plutarch* in his life of *Galba*, tell the story somewhat differently. They say, that *Nero*, falling

A.R. 810. part like one consummated in the arts of co-
aft. C. 59. quetry. At first, she pretended to be in love
with the Prince, and deeply smitten with his
charms; then, when she found herself mistress
of his heart, became proud and haughty. She
told him, "she was married, and would not
"forfeit her rank and character; that Otho
"deserved all her affection by his magnificence
"and generosity of behaviour, not to be e-
"qualled; and by which he really deserved
"the highest distinction; whereas Nero, in
"love with a freewoman, could have learnt
"from so low an intercourse nothing but low
"sentiments."

I enter into this detail of her criminal arti-
fices, not to teach any one to practise them, but
as a warning to such as are not acquainted with
those tricks.

As to the magnificence Poppæa praised in
Otho, it was an ostentatious luxury she was
Plut. Galb. right in saying Nero did not come up to. Plu-
tarch tells us, that Nero making use one day of
a costly perfume, and thinking he had been
very extravagant in pouring some of it upon
Otho; the latter, giving the Emperor an en-
tertainment the next day, pipes of gold and
silver suddenly appeared, and spouting out that
same perfume like water, wet the guests and
floor all over.

Tac. Poppæa's speeches, just mentioned, kindled
jealousy

falling in love with *Poppæa*, married her to *Otho* to conceal
his intrigue. I prefer *Tacitus's* authority, without difficulty,
to theirs. It is true, even *Tacitus* agrees with them in the
first book of his *Histories*, n. 13. But his *Annals* were
wrote after his *Histories*, and I presume he had sufficient
reasons to alter his first account.

jealousy in Nero's breast. Otho lost the Prince's A. R. 810. familiarity, his credit, and access to the palace; aft. C. 59. he was even in danger of losing his life too, if *Plut. Galb.* Seneca, who protected him, had not prevailed on Nero to be content with sending him to Lusitania, with the title of Governor of that province. It is very remarkable, that he became *Tac.* there quite another man. He * behaved with an exemplary probity and integrity. Idleness had been his bane; employment gave him room to exert himself, it elevated his mind, and brought forth the hidden seeds of love of fame and glory. Otho set out for Lusitania in the year of Rome 809, and remained in that honourable exile till the revolution that set Galba on the Imperial throne.

Poppæa was as yet but Nero's mistress, and wanted to be his wife. But she could not hope to see Octavia repudiated whilst Agrippina lived; for which reason she studied to anger and indispose the son against his mother, aspersing her by false accusations, and often rallying the young Prince (for that she found the most effectual method :) She told him he was but a child, dependent on the will of others, and that so far from being Emperor, he was not even his own master. " For why, said she, should you " defer marrying me? Is my beauty or my " birth so mean? Have I not given a proof of " my fecundity? No, the true reason is, they " fear if once your wife, I shall tell you freely " under what restraint Agrippina keeps the Se- " nators, and how great her pride and avarice " are. If Agrippina cannot bear a daughter- " in-law

* Ubi non ex ptiore infamil, sed integrè sanctèque egit :
procax otii et potestatis temperantior. Tac.

A.R. 810. " in-law, who is not an enemy to her son, re-
 aft. C. 59. " store me to my Otho; I will follow him
 " to the world's end. I shall at least have the
 " comfort of not seeing how ill the Emper-
 " or is used; I shall only hear it by pub-
 " lic report, without sharing his dangers with
 " him."

These * speeches, intermixed with feigned tears, and envenomed with all the art a woman like Poppæa was capable of using, made a deep impression on the Prince: and none that were about Nero strove to prevent it, for all alike wished to see Agrippina humbled, and had no thoughts of guarding against a parricide, which to them would have seemed an impossibility.

Another crime, as improbable in itself, tho' of a very different nature, required all their attention; they were obliged to guard against incest; for it is asserted that Agrippina intended to have recourse to that abomination to preserve her power; and that Acte was obliged, by Seneca's order, to intervene, and represent to Nero, that the thing began to take wind, and the soldiers would refuse to obey a Prince incestuous in the very highest degree.

Nero re-
 solves A-
 grippina's
 death.

Suet. Ner.
 34.

In consequence of that remonstrance, Nero avoided all private interviews with his mother; and when she went to her country seats, at Tusculum or Antium, he commended her for preferring the ease and quiet of the country to the noise and tumult of the court. He thought of every

* Hæc atque talia lacrymis et arte adulteræ penetrantia nemo prohibebat, cupientibus cunctis infringi matris potentiam, et credente nullo, usque ad cædem ejus duratura filii odia. Tac. xiv. 1.

every means he could to mortify her. If she staid at Rome, he procured people to commence suits against her : when in the country, she was again disturbed there by satirical songs and bitter catches sung under her windows. At last, not content with slight revenge, and no longer able to bear her, he resolved to take away her life.

He first thought of poison, but found that attended with great difficulties : to give it her at table would have been repeating what had been practised upon Britannicus, and consequently discovering the whole. Besides, he did not think it safe to tamper with the fidelity of the officers of a Princess, who, herself long accustomed to crimes, knew all the cunning and finesses of them. It was well known, too, she guarded against that snare by using counter-poisons. That method therefore was rejected as impracticable. On the other hand, if sword or violence was made use of, how could it be concealed ? Could one depend on the willingness of those that might be applied to, to execute it ?

A complete villain helped Nero out of the difficulty he was in. Anicetus, a freeman, who had been with him in his infancy, and had since had the command of the fleet at Misenum given him, hated by Agrippina, and hating her, offered to build a ship in such a manner, that when at sea part of it falling in of itself should carry Agrippina with it into the water. " Nothing, added he, is more liable to accidents than the sea ; and who will be unjust enough to impute to crime what will be entirely owing to the winds and waves ? The Prince will get her a temple and altars de-

Invention to procure a shipwreck that would seem an accident.

A. R. 810. "creed after her death, and will pay her me-
aft. C. 59. "mory the most ostentatious respect."

Anicetus's scheme was approved, and the circumstances of things favoured it; for the Emperor was to go to Baii, on the coast of Campania, to spend there the feasts of Minerva, which were days of merriment and rejoicing. He wrote his mother word, that he was a kind of prisoner at Antium, and invited her to Baii, saying, he wanted to be reconciled to her. At the same time, he declared publicly at court, many things ought to be borne from a mother, and every thing done to appease her. His design was to have those speeches told again to Agrippina, not doubting but they would take effect, and make her think his desire of reconciliation sincere. For * women, says Tacitus, are very apt to believe whatever pleases them.

He was not deceived in his expectation. Agrippina received her son's invitation with joy, and came by sea from Antium to Bauli, a country-seat not far from Baii. There Nero stood ready on the shore to receive her: he handed her down from the ship, and embraced her with the utmost demonstrations of love and tenderness. After resting a little in the house, it was proposed to go to Baii, where the diversions were to be. A ship finer and more richly ornamented than the rest was destined to carry Agrippina: but at that very instant intelligence was given her of the intended treachery. Doubtful, and not knowing what to think of it, she took however the safest way, and was carried to Baii in a litter.

Nero took care to remove her fears by a thousand :

* Facili feminarum credulitate ad gaudia. *Tac.* xiv. 4.

sand endearments. At table, she was seated in A.R. 810. the place of honour above him. In his dis- act. C. 59. course directed to her, sometimes he acted the son, unbosoming himself, and pouring out all his gaiety before his mother; a moment after, putting on an air of majesty, he pretended to impart to her some of the most important secrets of the state. It was very late before supper was over, and when she left him to return to Bauli, where she was to lay, Nero again seemed excessive fond and loving. He * could not part from her, but followed her with his eyes, either to act more completely the perfidious part he was performing, or that, notwithstanding his ferocity, the idea of his mother's speedy death, and of that being the last time he was to see her, gave him some emotion. Agrippina went on board the fatal ship without suspicion.

The † moon shone very bright, and the sea was perfectly calm, as if the gods, says Tacitus, had intended to render the crime palpably manifest, and to remove even the possibility of its being imputed to accident. Agrippina was stretched on a bed, talking to Crepereius Gallus, who stood pretty near the helm, and Accerronia, leaning over the Empress's feet, was congratulating her on the return of her son's love, and her own power and credit; when, on a sudden, the signal being given, the deck fell in with a great crash, bearing with it huge weights of lead

* Prosequitur abeuntem, arctius oculis et pectori hærens, sive explendâ simulatione, seu perituræ matris supremus aspectus, quamvis ferum animum retinebat.

† Noctem sideribus illustrem, et placido mari quietam, quasi convincendum ad scelus, dii dederunt. *Tac.*

A.R. 810. lead it was loaded with : Crepereius was crash-
 aft. C. 59. ed to death, and expired instantly. Some of
 the beams jutting out supported the deck over
 Agrippina and Acerronia, who were not hurt ;
 nor did the ship burst asunder, because in the
 hurry and confusion every one was in, those
 who were not in the secret hindered the opera-
 tions of them that were. The rowers were or-
 dered all to one side to make the vessel lean,
 and the water come in. Even that was ma-
 naged so awkwardly, that Agrippina and Acer-
 ronia fell gently enough to swim.

She escapes
 drowning.

Acerronia crying she was Agrippina, and
 calling out to the men to assist the Emperor's
 mother, was soon dispatched : instead of help-
 ing, Anicetus's people knocked her on the
 head with their poles, oars, and whatever in-
 struments they could lay hands on. Agrip-
 pina was silent, and therefore less liable to be
 known ; all the hurt she received was a bruise
 on the shoulder. After swimming some time,
 she was taken up by a sloop belonging to the
 lake Lucrinus, and carried to her house at
 Bauli.

There she reflected on what had happened,
 recollecting all the circumstances, the kind in-
 vitation she had received from her son, and
 the extraordinary honours done her, only to
 entice her into this snare. She observed the
 ship had met with none of those accidents that
 generally occasion wrecks, that it perished with-
 out being beaten by the wind or striking on
 a rock, but solely by the fall of a deck, like a
 building badly put together ; adding to that
 Acerronia's death and her own wound, she was
 fully convinced of the treachery, but concluded
 the

the only chance she had for life was not to seem to know it. A.R. 810.
aft. C. 59.

Accordingly she sent one of her freemen called Agerinus to Nero, with orders to tell him, "that by the protection of the gods, and thro' an effect of the Emperor's good fortune, she had escaped a great danger. That she was sensible of the uneasiness it would give him, but begged he would defer a little coming to see her, because she wanted rest." At the same time affecting the utmost security and peace of mind, she had her wound dressed, took proper remedies, and did all that was fit after such an accident. The only thing she did really void of artifice, was to order Aceronia's will to be looked for, and in the mean time a seal to be set on all her effects.

Nero, who waited impatiently to learn the success of his horrid scheme, was greatly disturbed to hear Agrippina was alive, that she had received only a slight hurt, and had been in no greater danger than what was just sufficient to conyince her who was the author of it. Fear is inseparable from guilt. Nero was in the utmost consternation, and thought all lost beyond a possibility of retrieving. He expected every moment to see Agrippina, thirsting for revenge, arrive at the head of her slaves armed, or of such soldiers at she might interest in her cause: or else, that she would go and shew herself to the Senate and people, and ask justice from them for the shipwreck and wound she had suffered, and for the death of her friends. "How shall I defend myself? added he: you Burrhus and Seneca think of some means." For he had sent for them directly to advise with

Nero has
her murdered in her
bed.

A.R. 810. them : and Tacitus doubts whether they were aft. C. 59. not in the secret from the very first. Dion Cassius, who never misses an opportunity to say some ill-natured thing of every virtuous Roman, says positively Seneca was, and pretends he was the man who first inspired Nero with the design of killing his mother. He says too much to be believed. Even Tacitus's doubt seems sufficiently refuted by all the rest of Seneca's and Burrhus's behaviour ; tho' the rigid virtue of both may have been infected by the court air, yet were they incapable of being, where there was no necessity for it, the promoters and instigators of a parricide. We shall find them bad enough without making downright villains of them.

They remained silent for some time, probably because they thought it no longer possible to recede, and that after the steps that had been taken, either Nero or Agrippina must perish : they did not dare to dissuade him from a parricide now become a necessity, nor would they advise it. At last Seneca, more bold, without speaking a word, looked earnestly at Burrhus, as if to ask him whether the Pretorian soldiers might not be charged with the execution. Burrhus answered, " the Pretorians were entirely
 " devoted to the family of the Cæsars ; that
 " the memory of Germanicus lived in their
 " breasts, and they would never be induced
 " to commit any violence on his daughter ;
 " that Anicetus had begun, and he must end." Anicetus did not hesitate a moment to desire leave to put the finishing stroke to his work. At that word Nero cried out, from that moment only he should think himself Emperor,
 and

and indebted to him for that high favour. "Go, A.R. 810.
" said he, quickly, and take with thee the most aft. C. 59.
" resolute and determined to do whatever thou
" shalt bid them."

At that instant word was brought Nero that Agerinus attended from his mother; on which he immediately formed a plot to give a kind of colour to the crime he had just ordered. Whilst Agerinus was speaking to him, he caused a naked sword to be dropt between that freeman's legs, and then commanded him to be put in irons, as if detected in the fact; that he might have a pretence to say his mother had attempted to have him murdered, but being discovered, had killed herself out of despair.

In the mean time Agrippina's house was surrounded by a multitude of people concerned for what had befallen her. At first, it was reported she had been shipwrecked by accident, on which every one ran to the shore: some got on the mole, others into fishing-boats, and several ran up to their middles in the sea, stretching out their arms as if to receive and help Agrippina. The whole coast resounded with lamentations, prayers, and confused questions and answers, without being able to come at the truth. The crowd encreased every moment; they ran about with lighted torches seeking Agrippina, and when it was known she was safe, the whole multitude gathered about her house, testifying their joy by loud shouts and cries. But that joy was soon changed into fear, by the arrival of a troop of armed men, who dispersed the crowd.

Anicetus posted soldiers all round the house, and forcing the door, secured every slave he met

A.R. 810. met till he came to Agrippina's chamber, which
 aft. C. 59. he found badly guarded, most of her people
 having fled at the first noise of his breaking in.
 The room was pretty dark, and Agrippina had
 with her only one of her women, to whom she
 was telling her fears and alarms, which in-
 creased every moment, because she neither saw
 Agerinus return, nor any one come from her
 son. She no longer heard those cries of joy
 that pleased and comforted her, and observed
 the mob had been silent, ever since a sudden con-
 fused noise that seemed to presage the greatest
 of misfortunes to her. Whilst she was talking
 thus the slave went away, and Agrippina saying
 to her, "What! do you forsake me too?" at
 the same time looking towards her chamber
 door, she perceived Anicetus followed by He-
 racleus, captain of a galley, and Oloaritus, cen-
 turion of a company of marines.

She still kept her presence of mind in that
 extremity, and addressing herself to Anicetus,
 said, "If thou art come to enquire after my
 health, say I am better; if thou comest with
 any bad design, I do not think my son ca-
 pable of it; he cannot have commanded a
 parricide." The murderers surrounded her
 bed, and Heracleus gave her the first blow with
 a stick over the head, but it did not kill her.
 The centurion drawing his sword at the same
 time, she presented her belly, saying, "strike
 this body that bore Nero." They gave her
 several stabs, and left her dead in bed. Several
 have said, but the fact is not certain, that Nero
 would see his mother's dead body, and that he
 insulted over her by raileries still more atroci-
 ous than his parricide.

Suet. Ner.
34. Dia.
Tac.

She

She was buried the same night without any ceremony; not even a funeral-bed was allowed her, but only a little truckle bed on which she was burnt. She had no tomb whilst Nero lived; but after his death, the servants that had been about her built an indifferent one near the high road to Misenum, and not far from a country-house formerly belonging to the Dictator Cæsar. Whilst her body was burning, one of her freemen called Mnester stabbed himself, and jumped into the flames, either out of affection to his mistress, or to avoid a death which could not well have been more cruel than that he gave himself.

A.R. 810.
aft. C. 59.
Her funeral
and tomb.

Such was the tragic end of Agrippina, granddaughter, sister, wife, and mother of an Emperor, as we have already said, but who dishonoured those august titles by all the vices and crimes a woman could be capable of. It is said, this fatal death was foretold her, and she defied the menace. For the soothsayers, whom she consulted about her son's future fate, having said he would reign, but that he would kill his mother; "Let him kill me, said she; provided he does but reign." Such an answer was well worthy Agrippina. The prediction however is a little too precise to be easily credited. She was a Princess of some learning, and wrote Memoirs of her life, referred to by Tacitus and the elder Pliny.

It is said it
was fore-
told her son
would kill
her.

Voss. de
Hist. Lat.

Nero * shut his eyes on the enormity of the crime whilst it was to be committed; but when done,

Nero's trouble and un-
casin...
Tac. xiv. 10.

* Sed à Cæsare perfecto demum scelere, magnitudo ejus intellecta est. Reliquo noctis, modò per silentium defixus, sæpius pavore exurgens, et mentis inops, lucem opprebatur, tanquam exitium allaturam.

A.R. 810. done, felt it. He spent the remainder of the
aft. C. 59. night in sullen silence, interrupted only by sudden starts of fear and terror that shook his whole frame, and made him jump out of bed, finding no rest there. In that situation he waited the return of day, not as a comfort, but as the signal of his ruin. Conscious how much he deserved to be detested by the whole universe, he thought the universe ready to rise against him.

Burrhus was the first that gave him ease, by procuring him the flatteries of the Tribunes and Centurions of the Pretorian cohorts, who, by their Commander's order, came to salute the Emperor, kiss his hand, and congratulate him on his escape from so unexpected a danger as the attempt his mother had made. The chief persons of his court repaired next to the temples to return thanks to the gods; and the towns and cities of Campania, following their example, expressed their joy by sacrifices and deputations.

Nero dissembled on his side: he affected an air of contrition, thinking; said he, his safety too dearly bought at such a price; and when his mother was named would shed tears. However, as the faces of places do not change so easily as the faces of men, the sight of those shores, witnesses to his crime, perpetually reminded him of it. There was a talk too of those frightful prodigies, spectres, and apparitions, superstition seldom fails to join to all tragical deaths. Trumpets, it was said, were heard sounding on the neighbouring hills, and doleful noises and melancholy complaints proceeding from the place where Agrippina's ashes
were

were laid. Nero therefore retired to Naples, A. R. 810.
 and from thence it was he wrote to the Senate. aft. C. 59.

The purport of his letter was, "That Age- He writes to the Senate.
 rinus, one of Agrippina's freemen, in whom
 she had the greatest confidence, had been
 detected armed with a sword to assassinate
 the Emperor, and that, conscious of her
 guilt, she had inflicted punishment on herself."
 Accusations of an older date were next set
 forth. "Nero taxed his mother with a de-
 sign to share the Empire with him, and said,
 she had entertained hopes the Pretorian co-
 horts would swear obedience to her, and the
 Senate and people join them in so base an
 act. That, disappointed in her expectations,
 and enraged against those that would not
 stoop to her pride, she had opposed the
 Prince's liberalities to the soldiers and peo-
 ple, and had projected the fall of several il-
 lustrious Senators. He took them to witness
 what difficulty himself had had to prevent
 her forcing the barriers of the Senate, and
 giving audience to the Ambassadors of fo-
 reign nations. He went back to Claudius's
 time, glancing at the defects of his govern-
 ment, all the shame and indignity of which
 he laid to Agrippina's charge; and con-
 cluded, that it was by an effect of that good
 fortune that had always attended the Roman
 people, that she had ceased to live; and in-
 stanced her shipwreck as a proof the gods
 were angry with her."

There was not a Senator, who in his soul
 did not despise this letter when read. Every
 one asked himself who could be stupid enough
 to believe this shipwreck in question had hap-
 pened

Seneca is blamed for having composed the letter for him.

A.R. 810. pened by mere accident, and that a woman;
 aft. C. 59. just escaped from the waves, should send a single man with his sword to attack the cohorts and fleets that surrounded and guarded the Emperor? Nero * was no longer accused; his barbarity exceeded all possible complaints. But Seneca was the man blamed for drawing up such an apology, which, properly speaking, was an acknowledgement of the crime. And, in fact, that is perhaps the most inexcusable part of his life.

The Senate's abject flattery.

Yet did all these worthy Senators, one only excepted, prove they had as little courage or honour as Seneca, whom they so justly and so severely blamed. Each strove to be foremost in decreeing solemn thanks to be returned the gods in all the most frequented temples of the city; annual games in the feasts of Minerva during which the plot had been discovered; a statue of gold to Minerva to be set up in the place where the Senate met, and the Prince's effigies next it. In short, the day Agrippina was born to be marked in the calendar as an inauspicious day.

Thrasea's courage.

Thrasea alone refused to partake in this shameful deliberation. So far as he thought the Senate's flatteries supportable, he either remained silent, or in two or three words voted with the rest; but the moment he heard Nero's letter read, he started from his seat and went out of the Senate. A bold and dangerous step for him to take, and of no service to the rest, not one of whom dared to follow him.

He

* Ergo non jam Nero, cujus immanitus omnium questus anteibat, sed adverso rumore Seneca erat, quod oratione tali confessionem scripsisset.

He was not ignorant of the danger ; but his A.R. 810.
 virtue, or, to speak more properly, his love of aft. C. 59.
 honour, sustained him. He said to his friends, *Dio.*
 “ Were I sure Nero would put to death none
 “ but me, I would readily forgive them who
 “ flatter him to excess. But if several of those
 “ vile sycophants have been, and will be vic-
 “ tims to his cruelty, why should I prefer a
 “ shameful fall to a brave and glorious end ?
 “ My name shall live to posterity, whilst those
 “ prudent men, who now take so much care of
 “ themselves, shall be known only by the pu-
 “ nishments they will suffer.” He would of-
 ten make use of this stoical expression, “ Nero
 “ may kill, but he cannot hurt me.”

This was no time for Nero to think of re-
 venge. Fearful and trembling, he sought only
 how to guard himself against the fears and ter-
 rors that continually tormented and alarmed
 him, and which were greatly encreased by re-
 ports of pretended prodigies. It was said a
 woman had been brought to bed of a snake :
 the sun was eclipsed the thirtieth of April,
 whilst the sacrifices the Senate had ordained on
 account of Agrippina’s death were celebrating :
 the thunder fell in each of the fourteen quarters
 of the city. Tacitus, who is never apt to be
 over religious, concludes * from the prosperity
 Nero enjoyed several years after, that the Di-
 vinity did not interfere much in those events :
 as if Providence was obliged to punish all wick-
 ed deeds directly, under pain of not being ac-
 knowledged by man.

*Pretended
 prodigies.
 Tac. xiv. 12.
 Tillam. Ner.
 11.*

Nero

* Quæ adco sine curâ defim eveniebant, ut multos post
 annos Nero imperium et scelera continuaverit.

A. R. 810. Nero undoubtedly reasoned like Tacitus, and aft. C. 59. impunity began to calm his apprehensions of the wrath of heaven. But still he greatly feared man; and in order to regain the public affection, and render his mother's memory quite odious, strove to prove, by deeds, his government more mild and indulgent since her death. With that view he recalled all those Agrippina had caused to be banished, both before and since Claudius's death; of which number were two ancient Pretors, Valerius Capito and Licinius Gabolus, of whom we know nothing farther; two ladies of distinction, Junia Calvina and Calpurnia, whose disgrace we have spoken of under Claudius's reign; and, lastly, Iturius and Calvisius, Agrippina's accusers; Silana, who was the promoter of that attack, would have enjoyed the same indulgence, but she died some time before at Tarentum, where she had been allowed to fix her abode. Even Lollia was not forgot, tho' she had been dead ten years. Her ashes were carried to the tomb of her ancestors, and Nero permitted a monument to be erected to her.

He comes to Rome, and is received with all possible demonstrations of joy and respect.

Notwithstanding all this ostentation of clemency, he remained in Campania, not daring to shew himself in Rome, being uncertain how he should find the people affected, and whether the Senate was disposed to obey him. His courtiers, than which never was a greater number of more corrupt men, calmed his fears. They told him "Agrippina's name was detested, " and the love of the nation towards him increased by her death; that he might with all " safety make a trial of it, and see with his " own eyes how much the public honoured and " revered

“revered him.” The most daring offered to go first. Nero believed them, and was not deceived; every outward shew of zeal and attachment was stronger yet than what had been promised. The Tribunes came out to meet him, and so did the Senate, all dressed as for a high festival. Choruses of women and children sung his praises. Scaffolds were built wherever he was to pass, as if it had been to see a triumph. Such * abject lowness, so publicly shewn by all, puffed him up, and looking on them with contempt, as on so many slaves, he ascended the capitol, and offered up sacrifices of thanksgivings.

People, however, made themselves amends in private for these marks of respect extorted by fear. A sack, the instrument of punishment for parricides, was found hung about the neck of Nero’s statue. A child was exposed in the streets, and a label tacked to it with these words, “I do not bring thee up, for fear thou mayst one day kill thy mother.” A Greek verse was posted up in several parts of the city, the purport of which was, “Nero †, Orestes, Alcmaeon, alike killed their mothers.” Suetonius mentions an Epigram, which, punning on a word peculiar to the Latin tongue, said, “None could ‡ deny Nero’s being truly descended from Eneas, for that the one carried off his father, and the other took off his mother.”

There

* *Hinc superbus, et publici servitii victor, Capitolium adiit, grates exsolvit.*

† *Νερον, Ὀρεστης, Ἀλκμαίων, μητρικτόροι.*

‡ *Quis neget Æneæ magna de stirpe Neronem?*

*Sustulit * hic matrem: sustulit ille patrem. Suet. Ner. 39.*

* The word *sustulit* signifies both to kill and to bear or carry off.

A.R. 810. There were, however, men bold and abandoned enough to attempt to prosecute the Prince's pretended defamers, who had dared to say he was the author of Agrippina's death. Nero acted more sensibly, suffering patiently all their satirical invectives, and rightly judging his appearing to be disturbed, would only give them more weight and credit. He followed that maxim on several occasions, either for the same reason, or from insensibility.

Nero never able to stifle his remorse entirely. *Suet. Ner. 34.*

But he never was able to stifle entirely the remorse of his guilty conscience. He often owned his mother's ghost tormented him, and he saw furies with whips and flaming torches pursuing him, and even applied to magicians to endeavour to appease the manes of Agrippina by their occult sacrifices; nor did he, when he went to Greece, dare presume to be present at the mysteries of Ceres Eleusina, from which a herald warned all wicked and impious people to depart. But these sentiments were of no duration with him, nor did they at all influence his conduct.

He gives a loose to his passions after Agrippina's death. *Tac. xiv. 13.*

Agrippina was a kind of check upon her son, and whilst she lived kept him within some bounds. A remainder of constrained respect, a dread he had not been able to shake off entirely, kept Nero a little in awe: but when by his * parricide he had once got the better of that restraint, he no longer knew any sense of shame, nor curb to his passions.

He appears publicly in the character of a charioteer, and as the musician. *Suet. Ner. 22. & Tac.*

He had always been excessively fond of horses; it was his passion from his infancy; nor had

* *Se in omnes libidines effudit, quas malè coercitas quædiscumque matris reverentia tardaverat.*

had all his masters been able to get the better of A.R. 810.
 it: with his school companions all his talk ran aft. C. 59.
 on the diversions of the Circus. When Em-
 peror, he had little chariots of ivory, with which
 he imitated the courses in the Circus on a chess-
 board. The Circus delighted him to that de-
 gree, that nothing could be done there, tho'
 ever so trivial, but he would be present, at first
 in private, but afterwards openly. At last, not
 satisfied with being barely a spectator, he ear-
 nestly wished to be an actor, and to drive cha-
 rriots himself.

Another passion not less violent, nor carried
 to a less indecent height, was his fondness of
 music. Being sensible the Romans had never
 prized that art, thinking it promoted sloth and
 effeminacy, he alledged in favour of it the ex-
 amples of the old Grecian Kings and Generals,
 who had studied it. "Poets, said he, have
 boasted its excellence; and it is used in the
 worship paid the gods. Apollo is the patron
 of music, and that god, one of the first of O-
 lympus, to whose share the knowledge of fu-
 turity fell, is represented not only by the
 Greek, but in the Roman temples too, playing
 on a lute." Nero had learnt the elements of Suet. Ner.
 music in his infancy; and from the moment he 20. &
 was made Emperor, spared no pains to get the Tac.
 most famous master of that art then known;
 he took lessons regularly, and did whatever was
 done by people who made it their profession,
 to preserve the voice or add to its extent: tho'
 his was weak and hollow, yet he thought he ex-
 celled; and, unwilling to bury his talents, form-
 ed the noble design of appearing on the stage,
 there to act the musician and comedian.

A.R. 810. All his desires were strong and violent ; Burrhus and Seneca, for whom he still shewed some regard, seeing him so passionately bent on chariots and music, thought it best to give him his way a little in one of them, that he might not by open force take to both. A large space in the valley of the Vatican was therefore enclosed for him, to manage his horses and drive his chariots in, without admitting any but chosen spectators. But very soon the whole people was invited without distinction, and Nero's head was still more turned by the applause of a giddy multitude *, ever fond of sights and diversions, and doubly charmed to see their Prince at the head of them. So that, far from being disgusted, as Seneca and Burrhus hoped he would have been, by the shame of having every creature in Rome for witness of his exercises, so unbecoming the dignity of Imperial majesty, the success he met with served only to encourage him to proceed still farther, and display on the stage the talents he fancied he had for singing and acting.

He did not, however, dare to take such a step at once, but prepared matters by degrees, and by procuring examples to authorize and keep him in countenance. By dint of money he prevailed on the descendants of some of the most antient Roman Nobility, whose indigence forced them to accept his offers, to appear on the stage. Tacitus, out of respect to the virtues of their ancestors, does * not mention their names ;

* Ut est vulgus cupiens voluptatum, et, si eó Princeps trahat, lætum. Tac.

† Quos ne nominatim tradam, majoribus eorum tribuendum

names; and very justly observes the shame of A.R. 810.
 what they did ought chiefly to reflect on him ast. C. 59.

who gave them money, not to keep them from
 doing a low thing, but to force them to it.
 Nero made use of the same bait to induce Ro-
 man Knights of distinction to fight as gladia-
 tors. And even there * too persusaion may be
 said to have had less share in it than constraint;
 a reward offered by him who can command,
 being in fact an order and a necessity.

Before he prostituted his voice on the public
 stage, Nero took another step, which was to
 institute games to which the multitude was not
 admitted, under the name of *Juvenile games*. Suet. Ner. 11 & 12.
 He took an opportunity of instituting them, Dio.
 when the ceremony was performed of cutting
 off his first beard, which he enclosed in a box
 of gold enriched with precious stones, and con-
 secrated it to Jupiter Capitolinus. On this oc- Tac.
 casion, as the Emperor himself was to perform a
 part, neither birth, honours, rank, age, nor sex,
 were reasons sufficient to dispense with any from
 being actors or actresses. Men of Consular dignity
 sung effeminate airs, and acted buffoonries un-
 worthy any one who has the least sentiment
 or feeling. A lady of fourscore, of a noble Dio.
 family, Ælia Catulla, appeared among the
 dancers.

This was not all. That every vice might be
 collected in these games, Nero set up in a little
 wood, not far from the Tiber, a kind of fair,
 public-houses, and shops, at which were sold all
 kinds

endum puto. Nam et ejus flagitium est, qui pecuniam ob
 delicta potius dedit, quam ne delinquerent.

* Nisi quod merces ab eo qui jubere potest, vim necessi-
 tatis affert. *Tac.*

A. R. 801. Kinds of trinkets and things appertaining to fa-
 ash. C. 59. shions and luxury ; and to enable such as enter-
 ed into his pleasures to become purchasers, he
 ordered money to be given them, which
 the honest, if any there were in such com-
 pany, spent out of necessity, as the voluptuous
 did their's out of ostentation. Thence * pro-
 ceeded infinite disorders. The Roman morals
 had long been depraved and corrupt ; but this
 licentious medley of people, of all stations and
 characters, completely ruined them. It is not
 easy to be strictly virtuous, says Tacitus, even
 when one is employed in laudable occupations ;
 much less could chastity, temperance, probity,
 and modesty, survive a time wherein vice was
 the only object of emulation.

In the midst of these mad frolics and tumultu-
 ous pleasures, Nero had at last the long-wished
 for pleasure of shewing himself on the stage : he
 appeared tuning his instrument with great care,
 and surrounded by his court. A cohort of
 Pretorians formed his guard, and round about
 him were Centurions, Tribunes and † Burrhus
 with praise ready to flow from his lips, but grief
 and vexation in his heart.

Then it was that Nero formed a company,
 whose sole business it was to praise him. At
 first none were received into it but the youngest
 and most vigorous of the Roman Knights, who
 strove to be admitted, some out of love of li-
 cen-

* Inde gliscere flagitia et infamia : nec ulla moribus
 corruptis olim plus libidinum circumdedit, quam illa col-
 luvies. Vix rebus honestis pudor retineatur : nedum inter
 certamina vitiorum, pudicitia, aut modestia, aut quidquam
 probi moris reseruetur. *Tac.*

† Et moerens Burrhus ac laudans.

10000

centiousness, and others in hopes of making their fortunes. They * did their duty perfectly well, spending whole days and nights in clapping their hands and making a great noise, and lavishing all the attributes of the Divinity on the Prince and his fine voice. Every favour due to virtue and merit was bestowed on these mean flatterers. This troop, which bore the honourable name of *Augustani*, was considerably increased afterwards, and at last consisted of upwards of five thousand men, taken indiscriminately from among the people; the only necessary qualification being strength of lungs and a loud voice. They were divided into choruses, and practised a kind of measure or time in their applauses, modulating their noise in different manners, for which they had different names. The chief of each chorus had a salary of forty thousand sesterces.

A.R. 810.

aft. C. 59.

Suet. Per.

21. & Dio.

£.360.

Poetry is, without doubt, a nobler study than the arts we have been speaking of; but would not much more become a Monarch who should make a business of it. Nero valued himself on being a poet; and, to acquire the reputation of it without much trouble, used to have meetings in his palace of men who had a turn for poetry, but were not yet well known to the public. In his presence they wrote in concert, tacked together the lines each of them brought ready made, or those they made off-hand, and finished the sketches Nero's sallies supplied them with. Tacitus had some of those

His taste for
poetry; and
manner of
writing
verses.

per-

* Hi dies ac noctes plausibus personare. Formam Principis vocemque Deum vocabulis appellantes, quasi per virtutem, clari honoratique agere. Tac.

A.R. 810. performances in his possession, and says *, one
aft. C. 59. might easily perceive in what manner they had
been composed; that they were only scraps
tacked together, no flowing vein, nor constant
fire animating them.

Not but that Nero did sometimes write
verses himself, and without help. Suetonius
says, he saw some original rough draughts
written with the Prince's own hand, with scratch-
ings, and interlinings; that shewed them to be
the work of an author. It is easy to reconcile
Suetonius with Tacitus, by supposing they
speak of different performances.

Suet. Ner.
50.

Nero seems to have been fond of sonorous
words, a gigantic style, and strong cadences,
at least if we are to suppose the lines ludicrously
quoted in Persius's first Satyr, to have been his;
as that poet's old scholiast assures us they were:
nor does it seem at all improbable. We learn
from Suetonius, and I have already said, that
Nero bore satyr patiently enough; and tho' he
might, perhaps, have been more displeas'd to
have his verses attacked than his morals, yet his
indulgence in the latter case might influence in
the former.

He laughs
at philoso-
phers.
Tac. xiv. 16.

A part of his time, after meals, was spent
in hearing philosophers; but with a view rather
to divert himself at their expence, than to learn
from them. To that end, he purposely chose
them of different sects, to laugh at the quarrels,
sometimes pretty warm ones, that were the
usual consequence of their disputes: † nor did all
the

* Quod species ipsa carminum docet, non impetu et in-
stinctu, nec ore uno fluens.

† Nec deerant qui voce vultuque tristi inter oblectamenta
regia spectari cuperent. Tac.

the pretended gravity of those philosophers, A. R. 810.
 their apparent severity, or their long beards, aft. C. 59.
 hinder their being glad to appear at court, and
 amuse the Prince.

Nero's diversions were no suspension of his
 cruelty : his aunt found it so a little after Agrip- He causes
 his aunt's
 death.
 Suet. Ner.
 31. & Dio.
 pina's death, and before his beard was shaved
 the first time. Domitia being indisposed, her
 nephew paid her a visit : the sick lady caressing
 him, put her hand to his chin, and touching
 his young beard, " I shall be content to die,
 " said she, when I have received this young
 " hair." Nero turning about to those that
 were with him, " If that be the case, said he,
 " I will have it cut off immediately : " and di-
 rected the physicians to give his aunt a strong
 purge, that would soon end her days. He did
 not even wait her death to take possession of
 what she had, and particularly of an estate near
 Baiæ and Ravenna, where he erected magnifi-
 cent trophies that still subsisted in Dion Cassius's
 time. He suppressed her will, that he might
 not be obliged to share her inheritance with any
 one. It is surprising Tacitus should make no
 mention of Domitia's death.

The administration of public affairs, in which Good admini-
 stration.
 Tac. xiv.
 Ann. 27.
 Nero's passions were not concerned, still bore a
 good face, by the wisdom of his ministers. A
 combat of gladiators, given at Pompeia in Cam-
 pania, by Livineius Regulus, who for several
 years past had been degraded from the rank of
 Senator, gave rise to a violent sedition, in which
 many lost their lives. A great number of the
 inhabitants of Nuceria, a neighbouring town,
 went to see the sight. The Pompeians and Nu-
 cerians began first to joke and rally one another,
 from

A.R. 810. from that they proceeded to invectives, and
 aft. C. 59. from thence to throwing stones, till at last
 swords were drawn on both sides: and the Nu-
 cernians, who were beat, applied to Rome for
 justice. Several of the maimed and wounded
 were carried thither, and many more bewailed
 the death of a son or father. Nero, remembering
 the promise he had made, not to take cogni-
 zance himself of all affairs, as his predecessor
 had done, referred the parties to the Senate,
 who forbid the Pompeians ever having any
 meeting of that kind for ten years. Livineius,
 and the other chief promoters of the sedition,
 were banished.

The Senate shewed a very proper severity to
 Pædius Blæsus, who, whilst governor of Cy-
 rene, had plundered the sacred treasures of Es-
 culapius's temple, and had been prevailed on,
 by money and interest, to commit many inju-
 ries in levying soldiers. On the Cyreneans'
 complaints he was expelled the Senate.

T. IX. The same Cyreneans complained too, that
 Acilius Strabo had wronged the exchequer. It
 has been said in the history of the Roman
 Republic, how Ptolemy Apion bequeathed his
 kingdom of Cyrene to the Roman people. The
 lands that were his demenes, and which in vir-
 tue of his will belonged to the Emperor, were
 by degrees usurped and taken possession of by
 people, for whom they lay convenient; and the
 unjust possessors pleaded prescription. Acilius
 was sent Commissary by Claudius, with the
 power of Prætor, to claim the lands so usurped.
 His decision, displeased the Cyreneans, and
 they accused him before the Senatè; who, after
 hearing both parties, declared, they should not
 take

take cognizance of the commission given by A. R. 810.
 Claudius to Acilius, but that the Cyreneans aft. C. 59.
 might appeal to the Emperor. Nero declared,
 Acilius had judged very properly; but that his
 intention being to favour the allies of the Em-
 pire in all things, he gave them up the lands of
 which they were in possession before the Com-
 missary's judgement.

The famous orator Domitius Afer died this
 year. I have had occasion to speak of him se-
 veral times; and have nothing to add to what
 has been already said, except what the younger
 Pliny relates of him after Quintilian.

Death of
 Domitius
 Afer, and
 M. Servi-
 lius. Re-
 marks on
 each of
 them. *Plin.*
Ep. li. 15.

In Afer's time, a custom, or rather shame-
 ful abuse, was creeping in, which afterwards
 became of consequence. Eloquence had its
 cabals; and advocates, more studious of vain-
 glory than of their client's interests, took care,
 when they pleaded, to have a great croud of
 auditors, ready to applaud and clap their hands,
 as at the theatres. Afer's merit was superior
 to such low tricks; he scorned and left them to
 men who wanted those resources: nor could he
 forbear expressing his indignation when he saw
 it grow into a custom. Quintilian gives his
 disciple Pliny the following account of it: "I
 " went with Domitius Afer, said Quintilian,
 " and heard him plead before the Centumviri *
 " slowly and with gravity, for that was his
 " manner. On a sudden his ears were struck
 " with an uncommon uproar, proceeding from
 " a neighbouring court, where causes were like-
 " wise

* A tribunal of Judges, concerning which the reader
 may consult *M. Rollin's* Dissertation on the functions of
 Pretors, at the end of his second Volume of the Roman
 History.

A.R. 810. "wise hearing. He stopt, and when the noise
aft. C. 59. "was over, continued his discourse. A second
"shout of joy interrupted Afer a second time :
"the noise being repeated a third time, he asked
"who it was that pleaded so loud. He was told it
"was Largus Licinius, the first author of the
"abuse we are speaking of. Afer dropping his
"cause for a moment, and addressing himself to
"the Judges, *Gentlemen*, said he, *our * profession is*
"*ruined.*" Pliny tells us, that in his time this
abuse was got to a great height. Troops of
applauders were kept in pay, who without hear-
ing a word, and often without so much as list-
ning, set up a horrid noise the moment the sig-
nal was given them ; so that, says he, 'tis the
easiest thing in the world, now-a-days, to know
the merit of an advocate ; only listen a moment
as you pass by any of the courts, and you † may
be sure, he that most noise is made for, is the
man that speaks the worst.

The same year, in which Domitius Afer died,
likewise robbed the learned world of M. Servi-
lius, whom Tacitus thinks equal to Afer for parts,
and far beyond him for probity. This Servi-
lius is doubtless the same who was Consul un-
der Tiberius, in the year of Rome 786. He
pleaded with great reputation for a long time,
and after that set about writing History, in
which he met with equal applause : but what
is beyond that, he was an honest man.
The uprightness of his conduct in those dark
times, is the highest praise that can be given
him.

Tacitus

* Centumviri, inquit, hoc artificium periit.

† Scito eum pessimè dicere, qui laudatur maximè.

• Tacitus says nothing more of that illustrious man. If he be the same, as there is great reason to think, with Servilius Nonianus, we find something concerning him in Pliny's Letters. One day when he was reciting part of his works to a numerous audience, Claudius, who was walking in the palace, hearing a loud noise, enquired what it was; and being told it was a company applauding what Servilius Nonianus was reciting, he went himself, without being expected or invited, and listened like the rest. Quintilian says, Nonianus had great parts and a fertile imagination, but thinks his style less concise than the gravity of History requires.

A.R.810.
aft. C. 59.

Plin. Ep. i,
23

Instit. Or.
x. 1.

As the greatest geniuses have often their foibles, so Nonianus had his; and that was a superstitious credulity for a pretended charm or amulet. He used to wear about his neck a bit of linen, in which was wrapped a paper, with the two Greek letters P and A inscribed on it, to preserve him from sore eyes.

Plin. Nat.
Hist. xxviii.
2.

The year following, Nero entered on his fourth Consulship with Cossus.

NERO CLAUDIUS CESAR AUGUSTUS IV.
COSSUS CORNELIUS LENTULUS.

A.R.811.
aft. C. 60.

He imagined he was Emperor only to multiply amusements and diversions. Several kinds of games were already used in Rome. Nero, in his fourth Consulship, instituted new ones, borrowed from the Greeks, to be celebrated every five years. These games, to which he gave his own name, calling them *Neronia*, were at the same time gymnastic, musical, and equestrian; that is to say, there was boxing and wrestling

Nero institutes Games after the Greek fashion. People of stricter morals complain of it. Tac. xiv. Ann. 20.

Str. t. Ner.
24.
111a.

A.R. 811. wrestling on one hand ; eloquence, poetry, and
 aft. C. 60. music, on the other, and chariot-races in the
 circus. The victor's reward was a crown of
 different form, according to the different object
 of contention.

Strict zealots for purity of manners were just-
Tac. ly alarmed at this new institution : they com-
 plained, " That after * the ancient discipline
 " had been so often violated, the design must
 " now be to ruin all, by introducing a foreign
 " licentiousness : that nothing the whole world
 " can produce capable of corrupting, or of
 " being corrupted, would now be wanting in
 " Rome : that young men would prove effe-
 " minate, and be enervated by the Greek ex-
 " ercises ; they would soon be used to idleness,
 " keep company with wrestlers, and learn and
 " practise the worst of debaucheries ; and all
 " this countenanced by, and under the autho-
 " rity of, the Prince and Senate. The first no-
 " bility of Rome, added they, under pretence
 " of disputing the prize of eloquence or poetry,
 " will

* Abolitos paulatim patrios mores funditus everti per ac-
 citam lasciviam, ut quod usquam corrumpi et corrumpere
 queat, in urbe visatur, degeneretque studiis externis juven-
 tus, gymnasia et otia, et turpes amores exercendo, Principe
 et Senatu auctoribus, proceres Romani specie orationum
 et carminum, scens polluantur. Quid superesse, nisi ut cor-
 pora quoque nudent, et castus assumant, easque pugnas
 pro militia et armis meditentur. An institutos † Augustano-
 rum, et decurias Equitum, egregium judicandi munus ex-
 pleturos, si fractos sonos et dulcedinem vocum peritè audis-
 sent? Noctes quoque dedecori adjectas, ne quod tempus
 pudori relinquatur ; sed coetu promiscuo, quod perditissimus
 quisque per diem concupiverit, per tenebras expleat. *Tac.*

† The Text of *Tacitus* is faulty in this place. I have
 followed an emendation that seems very probable.

“ will prostitute themselves on the stage. What
“ can they do more, unless they take up the
“ caestus, and contend naked, like Grecian
“ wrestlers, substituting these frivolous exer-
“ cises in the room of the manly ones, that more
“ immediately relate to war and arms? The
“ important office of Judge will be finely filled
“ by men, who shall have spent their lives in
“ learning a tune, or relishing the quavers of
“ an effeminate voice. To all the other dan-
“ gers of these seducing shews, the nights too
“ are added, that there may be no hour of
“ safety for modesty and chastity; but that li-
“ centiousness favoured by the dark, may
“ triumph secure, amidst a confused croud of
“ people, strangers to each other.”

We may readily conclude, pleasure did not want its advocates, who alledged a thousand reasons foreign to the purpose, because they dared not own the true. The only solid observation they made was, that the number of lights would prevent all indecency in the Theatre; and Tacitus says, that, in fact, nothing scandalous did happen there. But the general effeminacy of manners, and extinction of every sentiment of dignity among the nobility, and even of the regard they owed themselves, were evils not possibly to be avoided, and of which we shall soon find but too many proofs.

Nero disputed the prize of eloquence and Latin poetry against the first in Rome; but they were too good courtiers to strive to excel their Emperor. From adversaries, as they were at first, they became admirers, and all adjudged him the crown. The Herald proclaimed Nero conqueror.

A. R. 811. The Pantomimes were re-called, on account
 of the Neronian games, and carried their art
 to a surprising degree of perfection, under a
 Prince so fond of plays and all manner of di-
 versions. Lucian speaks of an actor in that
 way, who singly would represent, by his gestic-
 a scene of several personages, and in so expres-
 sive a manner, that Demetrius, a Cynic philo-
 sopher, who despised his performances, which he
 had never seen, being one day prevailed on to
 see him, was astonished, charmed, and cried
 out, "I not only see, but hear him; his hands
 speak."

A. R. 60.
 The Panto-
 mime art
 carried to
 its highest
 perfection
 under Nero.
 Lucian de
 Saltat.

A foreign Prince, a barbarian, from near
 Pontus, gave that Pantomime a character still
 higher than the Cynic had done. Something
 he had to request from Nero, had brought that
 Prince to Rome; and during his abode there,
 he saw that Pantomime act; not singly, but
 with several others, who sung, whilst he made
 his dumb shew. The Prince, who understood
 hardly a word of what they were singing, readily
 conceived the whole by his signs. When he
 took his leave of Nero, to return to his own
 dominions, the Emperor shewed him great
 kindness, and bad him ask whatever he had a-
 mind. "You cannot, said the Prince, make
 me a greater present than by giving me the
 Pantomime I saw act." "What use would he
 be of, answered Nero, in your country?"
 "Of very great use, replied the stranger: My
 neighbours are babarians, who speak differ-
 ent languages, and I am often at a loss for in-
 terpreters to negotiate with them. The Pan-
 tomime I ask for, would be an universal in-
 terpreter by his actions."

During

During the year of Nero's fourth Consulship a comet appeared, which the superstitious vulgarly looked upon as a prognostic of misfortunes to them, and that they were to change their Emperor. Many thought the Empire already as good as vacant, and were looking out for a proper person to fill the throne. Unfortunately for * Rubellius Plautus, he was pitched upon. He was, as I have before observed, related to the Julian family, his mother being granddaughter to Tiberius; but being sensible of the danger to which that honour exposed him, he endeavoured to shun it, by living quiet and retired, with all the simplicity of the ancients, more like a philosopher than a nobleman, and suffering no noise or riotings in his house. Notwithstanding all his precautions, the more he strove to be retired and forgot, the more he was talked of. The reports that were spread of him were strengthened by an arbitrary interpretation of a pretended prodigy. Whilst Nero was sitting at table, at some place in the territory of Tiber, the thunder fell on the table; from whence some were weak enough to conclude, the Gods destined Rubellius to be Emperor, because his ancestors came originally from that place. This † disposition of the mob was fomented and increased by some of those rash men, whose turbulent uneasy minds can never be at rest, and whose ambition, often fatal

A.R. 811.
aft. C. 60.
Comet.
Rubellius
Plautus is
removed.

* *Omnium ore Rubellius Plautus celebrabatur, cui nobilitas per matrem ex Julia familia. Ipse placita majorum colebat, habitu severus, castâ et secretâ domo, quantoque metu occultior, tanto plus famæ ad eptas.*

† *Fovebantque multi, quibus nova et ancipitia præcolere, avida et plerumque fallax ambitio est.*

A.R. 811. fatal to themselves, catches at the first glimmering of novelty, and makes them ready to head a party before any is so much as thought of.

Di. Rubellius was perfectly innocent of all the talk and schemes his name gave rise to: but with Nero it was a crime to be thought worthy to reign. He would certainly not have spared the life of the man who gave him unbrage, had he not been over-ruled by Seneca and Burrhus. It was probably on that occasion that Seneca said to Nero, "Though you kill ever so many, you cannot kill your successor." Rubellius, however, was obliged to remove. Nero wrote him a letter, exhorting him to take such measures as were safest for his own person and the peace of the city, and most proper to put a stop to reports that injured him: "You have, added he, lands in Asia: I would advise you to spend your youth there, remote from danger and suspicion." Rubellius obeyed: he retired to Asia, with his wife Antistia, and a few friends, and there gave himself up to the study of the Stoic philosophy, of which he was a great admirer.

Nerobathes in the source of the water Marcia. A whim took Nero, to do a thing that highly incensed the public, and brought a fit of sickness on himself. The water Marcia was one of the most celebrated of all those that were brought to Rome by aqueducts; and its source, according to the superstitious idea of paganism, thought sacred. Nero would bathe there: this action was greatly disliked, and a fever he got by it was imputed a judgment on him.

Sundry particular events will conclude what more we have to say under this year. The city of Laodocie, in Asia, suffered greatly by an earth-

earthquake, but was rich enough to repair it-
self without applying to the Prince or Republic
of Rome. In Italy, Nero added to the privi-
leges of the city of Pozzuola, and gave it the
title of * *August, or Imperial Colony*. The colo-
nies of Antium and Tarentum were almost des-
titute of inhabitants. To prevent their total
decay, Nero sent some old soldiers to live there,
but could not remedy the evil which proceeded
from two causes.

The first was, that, at that time, soldiers
were not at liberty to marry, nor were dismissed
till after twenty, and sometimes five and twenty
years service ; during which they grew habitual
libertines, so that few could afterwards think of
living in a family way with a wife and children.
Besides, a method quite different from what the
ancients had practised, had been of late intro-
duced in the manner of settling colonies. For-
merly a whole legion, soldiers and officers, used
to be sent to form a colony : these all knew one
another, and had been used to live together.
The Emperors thought that method impolitic :
they feared, if any disturbance happened, those
citizens would turn soldiers again, which in-
deed had often been the case. They therefore
composed their colonies of veterans, taken from
all the different armies of the Empire ; a con-
fused medley, incapable of forming such a
connected society as the founding a new town
requires. The new inhabitants, unacquainted
with each other, soon grew tired ; the conse-
quence of which was, that every one removed
from

* So Cellarius, *Geogr. Ant.* l. ii. c. 9. understands the words of Tacitus, which are not very clear.

A.R. 811. from it, chusing rather to live among his old
aft. C. 60. acquaintance in the province where he had
served.

The right of electing Prætors belonged to the Senate by Tiberius's institution. This year there were three candidates more than places to fill, and of course great caballing, which Nero put an end to, by giving the command of a legion to each of those that were not made Prætors.

He added to the splendor and dignity of the Senate, by ordering that all who appealed from the sentence of the first Judge to the Senate, should deposite the same forfeiture as those who appealed to the Emperor.

Vibius Secundus, a Roman Knight, who had been the Emperor's Intendant in Mauritania, was accused of extortion by the people of that Province. He was guilty; and all the credit of his brother Vibius Crispus, one of the most famous orators of his age, could hardly obtain a mitigation of punishment. He was only banished out of Italy, instead of undergoing the penalty of exile, properly called, by which all the rights and privileges of citizen were forfeited.

B O O K XI.

S E C T. I.

The Britons used tyrannically by the Romans, form a league to recover their liberty. They take advantage of Suetonius Paulinus's absence, who was gone to attack the isle of Mona, to take up arms. Three cities sacked by the rebels, and seventy thousand men killed. Suetonius gains a great victory. Suetonius is thwarted by the Intendant, in his endeavours to subdue the Britons entirely. Polycletes, the Emperor's freeman, is sent into Britain. Suetonius is recalled. The will of a rich man forged. Punishment of the guilty. Pedanius Secundus, Præfect of the city, assassinated by one of his slaves. Cassius's speech in support of the law, whereby all the slaves of a murdered master were condemned to die. His opinion prevails. Law Petronia. Tarquintius Priscus condemned for extortion. Quit-rent and Poll-tax levied in Gaul. Death and character of Memmius Regulus. Gymnasium dedicated by Nero. The Prætor Antistius accused of writing satirical verses against the Emperor. Law against high-treason put in force. Thrasea's noble boldness. The accused is quit for being confined to an island. Fabricius Veiento condemned for a satirical libel against the Senators and Priests. Death of Burrhus.

Fenius Rufus and Tigellinus made Pretorian Prefects. Seneca's credit declines. He desires leave to retire, and give all his riches to the Emperor. Nero's answer. Seneca retires from court. His retirement is the finest part of his life, and the best apology for his immense riches. Sylla and Rubellius Plautus killed by Nero's order. Nero ventures to repudiate Octavia and marry Poppæa. Octavia, after being cruelly and unjustly used, is at length put to death. Dorisporus and Pallas poisoned. Nero's care to make plenty reign in the city. Three men of Consular rank made Superintendants of the finances. Orders of the Senate to prevent fraudulent adoptions. Another order suppressing the praises the provinces used to bestow on their Governors. Death of Persius. His character. Earthquake in Campania. Nero becomes father of a girl, who does not live quite four months. Nero shews his dislike to Thræsea. Sundry things of less moment.

A.R. 812.
aft. C. 61.

C. CÆSONIUS PÆTUS.
P. PETRONIUS TURPILIANUS.

The Britons
were tyrannically by
the Romans
form a
league to
recover
their liber-
ty.
Tac. Ann.
xlv. 10. &
Agg. 14. &
Urb.

WE have not spoken of Britain since the last years of Claudius's life. Under the Consuls Cæsonius Pætus and Petronius Turpilianus, the Romans suffered there a bloody loss; which they brought on themselves by their injustice and violent tyranny with which they treated a people not yet thoroughly subdued. Tacitus himself puts the following complaints in the Britons' mouths.

“ All * we gain by our patience is to make
“ our

* Nihil patientiâ profici, nisi ut graviora, tanquam ex
facili

" our masters use us worse, as if we were ca- A.R. §12.
 " pable of bearing any thing. Formerly we aft. C. 61.
 " had but one King; now two are set over us,
 " the Emperor's Lieutenant and his Intendant,
 " who divide between them the task of cruel-
 " ty; the one exercises it on our lives, the other
 " on our fortunes. From one we suffer all
 " the outrages military licentiousness can com-
 " mit, and from the other insults and rapine.
 " Whether those two officers agree or disagree,
 " we are equally sufferers. Nothing we have
 " is secure from their lawless passions. In war
 " it must be a stronger man than ourselves that
 " strips and plunders us: but here we are
 " driven from our families and homes by cow-
 " ards, who vex and torment us with levies of
 " troops; as if our insensibility could endure
 " every thing, but dying for our country."

A notorious instance proves how justly those
 complaints were made. Prasutagus, King of
 the Icenians, dying, by will named the Emper-
 or his heir, jointly with his two daughters, hop-
 ing by that means to entail on his subjects and
 family a powerful protection, that would secure
 them from all harm. The very contrary hap-
 pened. His territories became a prey to the

Roman

*facili tolerantibus, imperentur. Singulos sibi olim reges
 fuisse, nunc binos imponi, è quibus legatus in sanguinem,
 procurator in bona sæviret. Æquè discordiam præpositorum,
 æquè concordiam subjectis exitiosam. Alterius * manus cen-
 turiones, alterius vim et contumelias miscere. Nihil jam
 cupiditati, nihil libidini exceptum. In bello fortiozem esse
 qui spoliæ: nunc ab ignavis plerumque et imbellibus eripi
 domos, abstrahi liberos, injungi delectus, tanquam mori
 tantum pro patriâ nescientibus. Tac. Agr. xv.*

* The text of *Tacitus* is very difficult here, and perhaps corrupted.
 The sense I take it in seems agreeable to the circumstance of things.

A.R. 812. Roman Centurions, and the Emperor's slaves
 aft. C. 61. possessed themselves of his house. He left a
 widow generally called Boadicea, by some Vo-
 adica, and Bonduica. She herself was used
 with great indignity, whipped, and her daugh-
 ters despoiled of their honour. The Romans
 construed Prasutagus's legacy to be a gift of his
 whole country, and pretended he had bequea-
 thed them not only his own lands, but those of
 his subjects too; and on that supposition the
 chief of the nation were robbed of their patri-
 monies, and the King's nearest relations treated
 as slaves.

Dion Cassius adds another kind of vexation
 exercised over the Britons by Seneca, who, after
 lending them * forty millions of sesterces at an
 usurious interest, at once demanded payment of
 that large sum, and thereby drove his debtors
 to despair.

* Three
 hundred and
 twenty thou-
 sand pounds.

I shall not pretend absolutely to deny the truth
 of this last fact, tho' Dion's inveterate hatred
 to Seneca might give room to doubt the truth
 of it. However that may have been, thus
 much at least is certain, that the Romans ty-
 rannized so cruelly over that brave and warlike
 people, that they, fearing still worse would en-
 sue, resolved to revolt. The Icenians privately
 engaged their neighbours the Trinobantes, and
 some other nations of the Roman province not
 yet accustomed to the yoke, to espouse the com-
 mon cause, join all their troops, and make a
 brave attempt to recover their liberties. It was
 not long before the Roman General offered
 them a favourable opportunity, by removing
 himself and his troops to the isle of Mona: they
 seized

seized it instantly, took up arms, and most bloodily revenged their wrongs.

A.R. 81
aft. C. 61.

The Roman Commander was Suetonius Paulinus, a great warrior, and, in the opinion of the people, who leave no man unparalleled, the rival of Corbulo. There had been an interval of a year between him and Didius, the last of the Emperor's Lieutenants in Britain, of whom I have made mention, and that space was filled up by Veranius, whose sudden death prevented his doing any great exploit. He had the highest character for prudence and probity whilst he lived, but at his death lost it by the flatteries he bestowed on Nero in his will, and by boasting as vainly as a young coxcomb could have done, that in two years more he would complete the conquest of the island. Suetonius, who succeeded him, really wished to emulate Corbulo, and gain in the British isles as much glory as the other had reaped in Armenia. But he did not imitate the prudence of that great General, who never went forward without first securing what he left behind; and after gaining several advantages, not dreaming of the plot that was carrying on in the heart of the country, he suffered his prudence to be lulled asleep, by the pleasing idea of conquering the isle of Mona, a strong place, and an asylum for all fugitives.

They take advantage of Suetonius Paulinus's absence, who was gone to attack the isle of Mona, to take up arms.

That isle, now called Anglesea, is separated from the main island only by a shallow and very narrow arm of the sea. Suetonius built flat-bottomed boats to carry over his infantry; the cavalry waded, or where it was too deep, the horses swam.

The inhabitants opposed his landing. The shore was covered with troops, whose very looks inspired

A.R. 812. inspired terror. Amidst the crowded ranks of
 aft. C. 61. armed men were seen women running up and
 down like furies; their dress dismal, their hair
 dishevelled, and lighted torches in their hands.
 Round about were the Druids, who, lifting up
 their hands to heaven, implored victory for
 their countrymen, and curses for their enemies.
 The Roman soldiers, astonished at the novelty
 of such a sight, remained some time motionless.
 But soon animated by their General's exhorta-
 tions, and encouraging one another not to fear
 a parcel of mad women and fanatical priests,
 they advanced, gained ground, and sword in
 hand beat down a great number of Barbarians,
 whom they burnt in their own fires. The rest
 dispersed and fled. Suetonius left a garrison in
 the isle, and cut down the woods consecrated
 to inhuman superstitions: for it was the custom
 of those people to sacrifice their prisoners at
 the foot of their altars, and to consult the will
 of the gods in the entrails of those unhappy
 victims.

Three cities
 sacked by
 the rebels,
 and seventy
 thousand
 men killed.

Suetonius was busied in securing his new
 conquest, when he learnt the revolt of the Bri-
 tons, whose first exploit was the ruin of Cama-
 lodunum, a colony lately founded by Ostorius
 Scapula. The veterans settled there had taken
 care to render themselves more odious than all
 the Romans, driving the natives of the country
 from their habitations, stripping them of their
 lands, and treating them like prisoners of war
 and slaves: and the soldiers, then in actual ser-
 vice, upheld the veterans in their insolence,
 having the same taste and principles, and hop-
 ing one day to enjoy the same liberty. What
 added to their grief was a temple built in Cama-
 lodunum

lodunum in honour of Claudius, which the Britons looked upon as a citadel intended to perpetuate the Roman tyranny over them ; and the priests chosen from amongst the natives to attend that temple, were forced to ruin themselves by the extraordinary expences the religious rites and maintenance of the building required. The ease with which their enterprize might be executed was another, and a strong motive. The colony was not at all fortified, the Roman Generals having been imprudent enough to take more care to adorn and make it convenient, than to render it strong.

The Roman veterans were not unacquainted with the motions of the Barbarians. They were alarmed too with appearances of prodigies, which Dion Cassius and even Tacitus have taken the pains to relate. Suetonius being at too great a distance to give them any assistance, they applied to the Intendant of the province, Catus Decianus, who sent them only two hundred men, badly armed ; themselves had been able to collect but a small number of soldiers : their chief hope was in a part of the temple, the walls of which were strong, and that they fortified in the best manner they could. But, prevented by traitors who secretly favoured the conspiracy, they never thought of making a ditch or rampart, nor of dismissing useless mouths, and keeping only such as were able to defend the place. They were as unconcerned, and as little on their guard, as if they had been in times of settled peace, when on a sudden they were surrounded by a cloud of Barbarians. The town could not hold out a moment, it was taken by storm, and burnt. The temple,

A.R. 812. temple, in which the soldiers had shut themselves up, resisted two days, but was forced.

Petilius Cerialis, who we shall see by and by turn out a great General, then, but young, made all the speed he could to relieve the colony with the ninth legion under his command. He met the Barbarians, who, elated by the victory they had just gained, put his legion to flight, and cut all the infantry to pieces. Cerialis with his horse got back to the camp, where he defended himself behind the retrenchments.

The Intendant Catus terrified at this second defeat, and knowing how much he was hated in the province on account of his avarice, which in fact had caused the revolt, prudently left them and went over to Gaul.

In the mean time Suetonius arrived, and, tho' but badly accompanied, boldly pushed on thro' the enemy's troops that overspread the country, and got to London, which, tho' it had neither the title nor privileges of a colony, was even then greatly frequented on account of its commerce. He was some time in doubt whether he should not make it his head quarters, during the war he had to carry on. But, considering how few troops he had, and the bad success Cerialis's rashness had met with, he resolved to sacrifice a city to save a province. The prayers and tears of the inhabitants could not move him; the signal was given to march, and all that chose to follow him were received in his troops. Such as the weakness of their sex or age hindered from removing, or who would not abandon their possessions, became a prey to the enemy.

A third

A third place suffered the same unhappy fate. A.R. 812. The Barbarians took and sacked * Verulamium, aft. C. 61. They did not attack strong castles in which were garrisons able to resist : the hopes of plunder and easy success made them prefer towns, in which was much to be got, and little hazard run.

Seventy thousand allies and citizens perished in these three cities : for the † fury of the Barbarians was too great for them to think of making prisoners, or selling or exchanging them. They put all to the sword without distinction : and such as escaped the first heat of their rage were only reserved for more cruel and ignominious deaths, gibbets, fire, and the cross. It seems as if the Britons had expected soon to pay themselves the penalty of their revolt, and were willing to revenge themselves before-hand.

Suetonius had no sooner got together ten thousand men, but he resolved to fight, tho' the Barbarians were almost innumerable ; Dion Cassius says two hundred and thirty thousand. To give his little army all the advantages the ground would admit of, he drew his men up in a pass backed by a forest. He knew he had no ambush to fear, and that all the enemies he had to fight were in front. The legions were in the center, the light troops on the right and left, and the cavalry formed the wings.

Suetonius
gains a great
victory.

The

* The ruins of that place are still called Verulam, near St. Albans.

† Neque enim capere aut venundare, aliudve quod belli commercium ; sed patibula, ignes, cruces, tanquam reddituri supplicium, et præceptâ interim ultione, festinabant Tac. xiv. Ann. 33.

A.R. 812. The Barbarians occupied an immense tract
aft. C. 61. of open country, which resounded with their
cries and shouts of joy, and where their batta-
lions and squadrons formed a thousand irregular
motions. They thought themselves so sure of
victory, that they had brought their wives to be
witnesses of it.

They were headed by a woman : for even
then the Britons made no distinction of sexes in
the right to command. Boadicea, seated on a
chariot of war with her two daughters, went
through their ranks, exhorting them to behave
well. She was tall, her look stern, and coun-
tenance martial ; her hair hung down to her
waist, and a military mantle was thrown over
her shoulders. The heroine, addressing herself
by turns to each of the nations her army was
composed of, told them, it was no new thing
for Britons to receive a woman's orders in bat-
tle ; but that she desired they would not con-
sider her as a Queen, descended from so many
illustrious ancestors, and who claimed the in-
heritance of her fore-fathers : " Were I, said
" she, a woman of no distinction, should I not
" have a right to seek revenge for the loss of
" liberty, for the insults I have suffered per-
" sonally, and for the dishonour of my daugh-
" ters ? The Romans have carried their violence
" to that degree, that they put us on a level
" with slaves, whom they subdue by blows ;
" they have respected neither the age of a
" Queen, nor the virtue of Princesses ; but at
" length the gods declare for us, and favour
" our just revenge. The legion that dared to
" fight was cut to pieces. The rest either
" hide themselves in their camp, or are con-
" sulting

“ sulung more easy means of flight. Far A.R. 812.
 “ from resisting our strength, they will not be aft. C. 61.
 “ able to bear the very shout of so many thou-
 “ sands. Think * how vastly superior our
 “ number is to their’s ; think of the motives
 “ that have induced you to undertake this war ;
 “ never was greater reason to hope for con-
 “ quest, nor ever so strong a necessity to con-
 “ quer or to die. Such is the example a wo-
 “ man is resolved to set you. Let men, if
 “ they like it better, live and be slaves.”

The Roman General thought proper likewise to encourage his troops at the approach of so great a danger. He exhorted them not to mind the empty noise and still more empty threats of the Barbarians, and to despise an army composed of more women than warriors, and in which even the soldiers had neither proper armour, nor courage and resolution, but would fly the moment their conquerors should draw near. To remove the impression the enormous difference of their numbers might make on the Romans, he had them consider by how few combatants victory was determined even in a numerous army, and how great an addition it would be to their glory to do with few men the work of several legions ; and, lastly, he told them how he would have them fight :
 “ Close your ranks, said he, and after darting
 “ your lances, rush on the enemy sword in hand,
 “ and beat them down with your shields. But
 “ above all, think of killing only, and not of
 “ plunder. The victory gained, all will be
 “ yours.”

* Si copias armatorum, si causas belli secum expenderent ; vincendum illi acie, vel cadendum esse. Id mulieri destinatum. Viverent viri, et servirent. Tac.

A.R. 812. "yours." The Romans shewed such ardour and spirits at that speech, that Suetonius, giving the signal, thought victory sure.

At first the Legionaries kept their post, the narrowness of which was a rampart to them, and let the enemy come on. Then discharging their lances, not one of which was thrown in vain, and seeing the Britons in disorder, they left their pass, and advancing upon them, backed by the light troops and horse, soon broke thro' the boldest and most resolute bodies of the Barbarian army; the rest fled. But their flight was obstructed by the circle of carts and waggon on which they had placed their wives all round. The victorious troops, quite furious, gave no quarter, not even to the women; even the beasts of burden were killed, and increased the heaps of slaughter.

This victory may be compared to the most famous the Romans ever gained even in their greatest glory. Eighty thousand Britons are said to have perished. The Romans lost but four hundred men, and had about the same number wounded. According to Tacitus, Boadicea kept her word, and poisoned herself. Dion Cassius says, she died of sickness soon after.

A Roman officer, who commanded the second legion, refused to join his General. Being informed of the victory gained without him, ashamed and confounded at having deprived his legion of the share it would have had in the honour of that day, and fearing being punished for his disobedience, he stabbed himself.

Suetonius is
thwarted by
the Inan-
dust in his
endeavours
to subdue
the Britons
entirely.

Suetonius, being master of the country, collected all his troops; and having received a reinforcement sent him by the Emperor's order from

from the army in Germany, he carried fire and sword every where, in order to get the better of the insuperable obstinacy of the Barbarians, most of whom still remained in arms. They began already to be greatly distressed by want, because naturally slothful and neglecting to till and sow their lands; and besides that, depending on making themselves masters of the Roman magazines and provisions after the victory, they had depopulated the country to form the numerous army just defeated. A.R. 812.
aft. C. 61.

So many ills combining would have forced them to submit to the victor's laws, if Julius Classicianus, who succeeded Catus as Intendant, had not encouraged their obstinacy, not minding how much he prejudiced the Roman interest, provided he did but satisfy his own pique against the General. He caused a report to be spread, that Suetonius would shortly be recalled, and they would find it more for their advantage to treat with a new General*, who, having never made war against them, would not look upon them as enemies, and would study less the pride of victory, than mildness and clemency in the conditions he should prescribe them. At the same time, in hopes of making his prediction prove true, he wrote to Rome that an end of the war was not to be expected whilst Suetonius commanded in Britain; and endeavouring to undervalue him at any rate, imputed all that had happened amiss to the badness of his conduct, and the success to the good fortune of the Republic. His

* Tacitus, in his life of *Agricola*, speaks in the same style, and taxes *Suetonius* with pride and rigour. In this, as well as on other occasions, I abide by his *Annals*, which were his latest work.

A.R. 812. His letters, however, determined Nero to send
 aft. C. 61. over a Commissary into Britain; and to that
 Polycletes the Empe- end he pitched on Polycletes, one of his free-
 ror's free- men, from whom he expected great matters,
 man is sent not only in reconciling the Commander and In-
 into Britain. tendant, but likewise in bringing about a last-
 ing peace with the Britons. The noisy ostenta-
 tion and magnificence of the freeman's train,
 spoke the importance of his commission; and
 when he had crossed the sea, his pomp and
 haughtiness made him formidable even to the
 Roman soldiers. But the Britons laughed at,
 and despised him. The liberty they enjoyed
 was such, that they could form no idea of the
 power of the freeman, nor sufficiently wonder
 how a General and an army, who had just
 put an end to so great a war, could stoop to
 a vile slave.

Suetonius is
 recalled.

Polycletes made a pretty favourable report of
 Suetonius, and it was resolved at court to con-
 tinue the General in his post. But some little
 time after, meeting with an accident at sea, in
 which he lost a few ships and their crews, it
 was imagined the war was not yet over, and
 Petronius Turpilianus, being just out of his
 Consulship, was appointed to succeed him. He
 * did not attempt to attack the enemy, who in
 return did not provoke him, but suffered him to
 conceal a lazy inaction under the honourable
 name of peace.

The will of
 a rich man
 forged. Pun-
 ishment of
 the guilty.
 Tac. lib. 40.

This year two crimes committed in Rome,
 one by Senators, and the other by slaves, made
 a great noise there. Domitius Balbus, an an-
 tient Pretor, was old, rich, and had no children,
 strong allurements to those that were fishing for
 inheri-

* Is non irritato hoste, neque laceratus, honestum pacis
 nomen segni otio imposuit.

inheritances. He had a relation named Vale- A.R. 812.
 rius Fabianus, who intended to set out in the aft. C. 61.
 road to honours, and thinking riches a necessary means of success, forged Balbus's will. The Roman law required the signature of seven witnesses to constitute the validity of a will. Fabianus therefore gained over Vincius Rufinus, and Terentius Lentinus, two Knights; and they prevailed on Antonius Primus and Asinius Marcellus, both Senators, to sign it. Primus was capable of doing any thing, and we shall see him behave with the same daring boldness in war, where it better became him. Marcellus was great-grandson to the celebrated Pollio, and was * not thought a dishonest man; but looking on poverty as the greatest of evils, he carried in his heart the seeds of every crime. The four I have named, and some others less known, set their hands and seals to the will Fabianus had forged.

The crime being detected and proved, Fabianus, Antonius Primus, Rufinus, and Terentius, suffered the punishment ordained by Sylla's law in cases of forgery, and accordingly were degraded from, and expelled their several orders, which their shameful conduct made them unworthy to be any longer members of. As to Marcellus, he escaped the punishment but not the infamy, in favour of the glory of his ancestors and the Emperor's intercession. Pompeius Ælianus, a young man, who had gone through the office of Questor, being likewise proved an accomplice, was banished Italy and Spain where he was born. The

* Neque morum spernendus habebatur, nisi quod paupertatem principium malorum credebat. *Tac.*

A. R. 812. The criminals attempted to make use of a
 aft. C. 61. subterfuge to avoid being condemned. They
 had prevailed on Valerius Ponticus to become
 their accuser, and lay the matter before the tri-
 bunal of the Pretor, appointed according to an-
 tient custom to judge all crimes of forgery.
 That tribunal was grown a mere shadow since
 the creation of the Prefect or Governor of the
 city, who was become, under the Emperors,
 judge in ordinary of all crimes committed in
 Rome. Ponticus's aim therefore was to elude
 the tribunal of the city Prefect, and then ma-
 nage the affair before the Pretor so that the
 accused might be acquitted. He was banished
 for his prevarication; and the Senate passed a
 law on that occasion, condemning prevaricating
 advocates, and such as bribed them to preva-
 ricate, to suffer the same punishment as false
 accusers. This degree has great affinity with
 the Turpilian law.

Pedanius
 Secundus,
 Prefect of
 the city, as-
 sassinated
 by one of
 his slaves.

The second crime I am to speak of is the
 murder of Pedanius Secundus, Prefect of the
 city, assassinated by one of his slaves. What
 induced the murderer to commit that crime,
 was, either that Pedanius refused to set him
 free, after having agreed to do it in considera-
 tion of a certain sum of money, or else an in-
 famous rivalship between the master and the
 slave.

Gravina, de
 Orig. Juris,
 l. iii. c. 109.
 Tac. Hist.
 Ann. 31.
 Tac. Hist.
 Ann. 42.

The punishment of this crime became itself
 a crime. For, according to an old custom, as
 far back as the times of the republic, confirmed
 and enforced by sundry laws under the Empe-
 rors, and particularly by an act of the Senate,
 passed in Nero's second Consulship, all slaves
 in the house at the time their master was as-
 sassinated,

assinated, were, without distinction of innocent or guilty, to suffer death. In this case there were four hundred of those unhappy wretches, and the people, compassionating their melancholy fate, gathered together to protect them, and even grew seditious. Several in the Senate, too, found fault with the too great rigour of the law; but the civilian Cassius spoke strongly in favour of it. I shall venture to transcribe his speech at full length, first, because the character of that illustrious man is drawn in it, but more especially to let the reader see what were the grounds and motives of so unjust and cruel a law.

“ I have often heard things proposed in this assembly contrary to the customs and institutions of our ancestors; and if I have not always opposed them, it has not been for want of being thoroughly satisfied that in all cases the old regulations are wiser and better than any late alterations; but I did not chuse to seem, by too warm a zeal for antiquity, to enhance and over-rate my esteem for it. Nor did I, if my opinion be of any weight, think it was proper to destroy that weight by too frequent contradictions; I chose rather to reserve it all for occasions in which it might be of some service to the public. Such is the case before you. I cannot now be silent when I see the death of a man of Consular dignity, murdered in his own house, by his own slaves, ready to go unpunished. Not one defended his master; not one informed him of the conspiracy. And yet they all knew their lives were at

Cassius's speech in support of the law whereby all the slaves of a murdered master were condemned to die.

A.R. 812. “ stake, and that a law, now in force, con-
aft. C. 61. “ demns them to die: a law which, once in-
“ fringed, none of you can ever after depend
“ on the fidelity of your slaves, whom even
“ the fear of death is not sufficient to keep
“ watchful over you. Will any one place his
“ safety in his rank and dignity? Pedanius
“ was not safe tho’ Prefect of Rome. Shall
“ the number of slaves be trusted to? Four
“ hundred were about him; and yet he was
“ assassinated in the midst of them all.

“ There ought to be no occasion for reason-
“ ing to give sanction to a law made by men
“ wiser than us. But were the point in ques-
“ tion to be determined now for the first
“ time, would you think it possible for a
“ slave to form the design of killing his master,
“ without suffering one menacing word or
“ look to escape, without committing any one
“ indiscretion that might betray him? I will
“ even allow him to have kept his design a
“ profound secret, and to have procured arms
“ without any one’s being privy to it. But
“ could he, without being perceived, pass
“ through the guards that watch in the outer
“ rooms of his master’s apartment, open his
“ chamber door, carry in a light, and, finally,
“ commit the murder? Slaves see afar off prog-
“ nostics of such a crime. If they are faith-
“ ful and give us a true account of them, we
“ may live single amidst a multitude, in safety
“ among the most turbulent: or, if we must
“ die, at least our death will be revenged on
“ the guilty. Our ancestors distrusted their
“ slaves, even when they had only such as
“ were

“ were born in their own houses, under their
 “ own eyes, and in their own country- A.R. 812. aft. C. 61.
 “ seats, where attachment to their masters was
 “ imprinted on them from the very hour of
 “ their birth. But since we have taken into
 “ our service slaves of all nations, since we
 “ have kept legions of slaves, whose manners
 “ and customs are all different, whose religions
 “ are foreign to ours, or who have none at
 “ all, fear only can keep within bounds such
 “ confused irregular crews.

“ It may be objected to me, that in this case
 “ some who are innocent may perish. But
 “ when an army that has fled is decimated,
 “ the boldest draw lots with the most abject
 “ cowards. Every rigorous * punishment, in-
 “ tended as an example, and to strike a terror,
 “ will always be attended with some injustice :
 “ but the public benefit that accrues from it,
 “ is a compensation for the hardships some in-
 “ dividuals may suffer.”

Humanity is shocked at the rigour of this His opinion prevails.
 decision : and I dare say, tho' few will be pleased
 with Cassius for adhering so strictly to the law,
 yet they will be less pleased with the law which
 forced Cassius to be cruel. Though the Se-
 nators were so greatly interested to follow this
 opinion, yet compassion for so many unhappy
 wretches excited a confused murmur of objec-
 tions and complaints. The age, the sex, the
 undoubted innocence of many, were very
 moving circumstances : but death was the sen-
 tence.

* Habet aliquid ex iniquo omne magnum exemplum,
 quod contra singulos utilitate publica rependitur.

A.R. 812. tence. It was not, however, possible to execute
aft. C. 61. it, so great was the fury and indignation of
the populace, ready to carry their violence to
the utmost extremes. The Emperor reprimanded
the people by an order posted up in the streets
of Rome, and all the way to the place of execution
was lined with troops. Cingonius Varro was for
banishing from Italy all the freeman that lived
under the same roof with their murdered patron.
Nero thought it sufficient that the letter of the
law had not been infringed by pity, and would
not suffer any new rigour to be added to it.

Law *Petronia*.
Grav. de Orig. Juris.
l. iii. art. 21.

There is reason to think the event I have
been speaking of was the occasion of the
law *Petronia*, so called from Petronius, Consul
this year, which contained several articles in
favour of slaves; as if it had been intended
to calm and pacify their minds, greatly
disturbed by the example of cruelty they
had just seen. One of the articles of that
law limited the power of masters over their
slaves, and forbade exposing them to beasts
without leave first obtained from the
magistrate, who was not to grant it but
for weighty reasons, and after undoubted
proof of the crime. If I mistake not, that
was the last law passed according to the
old form, by the authority of the Consuls,
and with the consent of the people; excepting,
however, the *Lex Regalis*, or *Royal Law*,
which was renewed at every change of an
Emperor, and was but a mere matter of
form.

After

After the punishment of Pedanius's slaves, Tacitus mentions the condemnation of A.R. 812. aft. C. 61. Tarquinius Priscus, whom we saw, towards the end of Tarquinius Priscus condemned for extortion. Claudius's reign, become the accuser of Statilius Taurus, his Proconsul, for which he was deservedly expelled the Senate. He was probably restored to his seat there, in consequence of the indulgence Nero affected in the beginning of his reign, and by Agrippina's protection. He was even made Proconsul of Bithynia: but being guilty of oppression and extortion in that post, was accused by the Bithynians, and, to the great satisfaction of the Senate, condemned.

An account was taken of the number of souls, and value of their possessions, in Gaul, by three Quit-rents and poll-tax levied in Gaul. Commissaries, appointed to levy the quit-rent and poll-tax; Q. Volusius, Sextus Africanus, and Trebellius Maximus. The two former, proud of their nobility, and despising their associate, by that very means raised him above them.

Memmius Regulus, who, formerly, whilst Death and character of Memmius Regulus. Consul, had been charged with the execution of Tiberius's orders against Sejanus, died this year, leaving behind him a great * character for honour and probity, after enjoying all the distinction the Emperor's special favour could confer on a private man. Nero esteemed him to that degree, that when ill, the flatterers that stood about his bed, saying, the Republic was undone if fate disposed of him; he answered, The Republic had still a resource. They begged he would explain himself, and tell them what that

* Auctoritate, constantiâ, famâ, in quantum preumbrante Imperatoris fastigio datur, clarus.

A.R. 812. that was. "I mean, answered the Emperor, aft. C. 61. Memmius Regulus." So * rare a token of esteem was, however, no ways hurtful to the person it immediately concerned; his love of ease and quiet was well known, and the modern date of his elevation, together with the smallness of his fortune, sheltered him from envy, and were a safeguard to his person.

Gymnasium dedicated by Nero.

Nero dedicated a Gymnasium, or building set apart for athletic exercises, after the manner of the Greeks; and made the Senators and Roman knights a present of oil, of which great quantities were used in those exercises. He meant it as an invitation to them to adopt those diversions, of which he was fond, tho' they had been always thought unbecoming the Roman gravity.

Marius and Asinius Gallus were Consuls the next year.

A.R. 913.
aft. C. 62.

P. MARIUS.
L. ASINIUS GALLUS.

The Pretor Antistius accused of writing satirical verses against the Emperor. *Tac. Ann.* xiv. 48.

The first event Tacitus takes notice of under this Consulship, is the accusation and condemnation of Antistius Sosianus, at that time Pretor, for composing satirical verses against the Emperor, and reciting them at an entertainment given by Ostorius Scapula. The reader may remember, in what manner Antistius, whilst Tribune, abused the authority that office gave him, to protect the seditious favourers of the Pantomimes; on which occasion, the Senate passed an act to limit the power of the Tribunes.

* *Vixit tamen post hæc Regulus, quiete defensus, et quia novæ generis claritudine, neque invidiosis opibus erat.*

Tribunes. The same petulance of temper made A.R. 813. aft. C. 62.
 him commit this much more dangerous crime.

He was accused by Cossutianus Capito, who some years before was condemned for extortion, but had crept into the Senate again with the help of his father-in-law, Tigellinus, of whom we shall soon have but too much occasion to speak. This was the first time of putting in force, under Nero, the law against high treason, so odious to the Romans; and it was thought the Emperor did not desire Antistius's death, but only to have him condemned by the Senate, and afterwards to reprove him in virtue of his power of Tribune; so to acquire the character of being mild and merciful, at the same time that he revived a law thought tyrannical. This plan was broke through by Thrasea.

Law
against
high trea-
son put in
force.

Every thing went at first as Nero wished. The prosecution was set on foot; and, tho' Ostorius denied having heard any thing, the fact was sufficiently proved by other witnesses. Junius Marcellus voting first, as Consul elect for a part of the year, condemned the criminal to be degraded from the rank of Pretor, and strangled in prison, which was assented to by those that spoke next, till it came to Thrasea's turn; who beginning with great encomiums on the Prince, and highly blaming the lawless audaciousness of Antistius, added, "that tho' the criminal de-
 " served the utmost rigour of the law, yet it
 " was not proper to put it in execution under
 " so good an Emperor, who suffered the Se-
 " nate to vote with an uncontrolled liberty.
 " That death and the executioner's infamous
 " hand had long been laid aside, where people
 " of that distinction were concerned; and that
 " proper

Thrasea's
noble bold-
ness.

A.R. 813. " proper punishments were provided by law,
 aft. C. 62. " without dishonouring the Prince's clemency,
 " or reflecting on the Judges an imputation of
 " cruelty. He concluded, by declaring it was,
 " in his opinion, best to confine Antistius to some
 " island, where by prolonging his life, he would
 " only prolong his misery, and at the same
 " time be a monument of the gentleness of the
 " government under which the Romans lived."

Thrasea's * generous boldness, like a signal, roused the rest from their slavish lethargy. His opinion was that of the whole Senate, a few flatterers excepted; among † whom stood foremost Vitellius, afterwards Emperor, who, like other low cowards, was for picking quarrels with men of good character, but held his tongue the moment they answered him. As things were circumstanced, the Consuls would not take upon them to determine finally, but wrote to the Emperor, telling him what was the almost unanimous opinion of the whole body.

The accused is quit for being confined to an island.

The Emperor was nettled, but ashamed to shew it. After making them wait some time for his answer, he wrote the Consuls word, " That Antistius, without any provocation, " had insulted him very grossly: that the Senate, who had been applied to for justice, " ought to have inflicted a punishment equal " to the heinousness of the offence. But that as " to him, having before-hand resolved to mitigate the severity of their sentence, had they " left him room to do it, he by no means
 " blamed

* *Libertas Thrasæe servitium aliorum rupit.*

† *In quibus adulatione promptissimus fuit A. Vitellius, optimum quemque jurgio lacessens, et respondentem reticens, ut pavida in genia solent.*

“blamed their indulgence. That they were at liberty to determine whatever they thought proper, and even to acquit him if such was their pleasure.” On reading this letter, all were sensible the Emperor was displeased. They persisted, however, in their system*, some for fear the odium of a more severe punishment might reflect on the prince, most of them, because they thought their great number protected them; but Thrasea, from his wonted constancy and firm resolution, from which nothing could make him deviate. The Senate, therefore, passed sentence, agreeable to Thrasea’s sentiments; Antistius was sent to an island we are not told the name of, and his estate forfeited.

Another affair of the same nature again required the attention of the Senate and Emperor. Fabricius Veiento, making an ill use of the liberty the Romans were very apt to take, of inserting in their wills whatever they thought proper against such as had displeased them, published a writing, under the name of a codicil, in which he defamed the Senators and all the colleges of priests. He was hot and caustic; and had before given proof, of that turn of mind, if he be the same, as Lipsius thinks he was, with a Fabricius, of whom Dion Cassius mentions a very singular transaction. This Fabricius, being Pretor, was to exhibit games; but observing how insolent the charioteers and grooms belonging to the Circus were grown, since Nero countenanced them so much, he had dogs trained up to draw chariots, and produced several sets of them at the games. This buffoonry caused a quarrel between the ordinary chariot-

Fabricius Veiento condemned for a satirical libel against the Senators and Priests.

Dio.

* Pars ne Principem objecisse invidia: videtur, plures numero tuti, Thrasea sueta fortitudine animi, et ne gloria intercederet.

A.R. 813. chariot-drivers. Two of the factious were for
aft. C. 62. doing their duty; but the other two obstinately
refused to enter the lists, till Nero promised
the prizes, and became security for them. It
was on that condition only that the games could
be executed in the usual manner.

Tac. xiv. 50. This piece of buffoonry seems to agree very
well with the satyrical turn for which Fabricius
Veiento was prosecuted. Tattius Geminus, his
accuser, taxed him likewise, with having sold
his interest with the Prince to such as hoped by
his means to obtain employments. This last
head of accusation, gave Nero an opportunity of
taking cognizance of the affair to himself. Ve-
iento was convicted and banished Italy, and his
writings condemned to be burnt. Tacitus says,
they * were in great request, and every body
wanted to read them, whilst they were prohi-
bited, and there was any danger in it: but that
they were neglected, and even forgot, the mo-
ment they were to be had easily.

Death of
Burrhus.

Suet. Ner.
35.
Dio. Tac.

Public † evils increased daily, and the re-
sources against them grew proportionably less.
Burrhus was taken with a quincy, and died.
Many were of opinion his death was not natu-
ral, and that, under pretence of giving him
ease, Nero had caused a poisonous liquor to be
poured down his throat. They added, that
Burrhus himself was sensible of it, and for that
reason, when the Prince came to visit him,
turned his head aside that he might not see him,
and

* *Conquisitos lectitatosque, donec cum periculo para-
bantur: mox licentia habendi oblivionem attulit.*

† *Sed, gravescentibus indies publicis malis, subsidia mi-
nuebantur.*

and would return no other answer to the questions Nero asked him concerning his health, but, A.R. 813. aft. C. 62.
 “I am very well.”

Burrhus* was doubly regretted, both for himself, and by the comparison of him with those that succeeded him in the post of Pretorian Prefect. One of them was indolently honest; the other actively vicious to the highest degree. For the command of the Pretorian cohorts, which Burrhus had enjoyed alone, was divided between Fænius Rufus and Soffinius Tigellinus; the first was chosen in consideration of the public esteem his integrity, during several years that he had been Intendant of the provisions, had gained him: The merit of Tigellinus, a man of obscure extraction, and formerly banished by Caligula for adultery with Agrippina, consisted in his excess of debauchery, and profound corruptness of heart, long inured to vice and guilt; strong recommendations to Nero, who put all his confidence in him; whilst the good reputation Fænius maintained with the soldiers and people, indisposed the Prince against him.

Fænius Rufus and Tigellinus made Pretorian Prefects.

Tac. Hist. i. 72.

Tac. xiv. Ann. 51.

The † death of Burrhus was a great blow to Seneca's credit. Good advice, destitute of one of its two supports, had no longer the same weight, and Nero's heart inclined him towards the promoters of vice. Those pests of courts were

Seneca's credit declines.

* Civitati grande desiderium ejus mansit per memoriam virtutis, et successorum alterius segnem innocentiam, alterius flagrantissima vitia et adulteria. *Tac.*

† Mors Burrhi infregit Senecæ potentiam, quia nec bonis artibus idem virum erat, altero velut duce amoto, et Nero ad deteriores inclinabat.

A.R. 813. were bent on Seneca's ruin. The immense
 att. C. 62. sums of money he was possessed of, far exceed-
 ing the fortune of a private man, and the care
 he took to add daily to those riches, were im-
 puted to him for crimes. He was accused of
 attracting the eyes of the citizens, and of al-
 most surpassing the Prince himself in the beauty
 of his gardens, and magnificence of his coun-
 try seats. His enemies said, he thought him-
 self sole judge and master of eloquence; and
 that he had taken to writing verses since Nero
 had shewn a turn to poetry. "As to the
 " Prince's diversions, added they, he declares
 " open war against them, He despises your
 " dexterity in driving a car, and laughs at
 " your voice every time you sing. When *
 " will a right or good thing be done in the go-
 " vernment, and the honour of it not given to
 " Seneca? You are surely past being a child,
 " you are now in the prime and vigour of
 " youth. It is time to shake off the yoke of a
 " master; your ancestors are the only ones it
 " becomes you to consult."

He desires
 leave to re-
 tire, and
 give all his
 riches to
 the Empe-
 ror.

Some, who still retained a regard for virtue,
 informed Seneca of the ill offices done him with
 the Prince; and finding Nero behaved from day
 to day more coldly towards him, he desired a pri-
 vate audience, in which he spoke in the following
 manner: "Caesar, this is the fourteenth year since
 " the care of your infancy was intrusted to me,
 " and the eighth since your accession to the
 " throne. In that time, you have heaped on
 " me

* *Quem ad finem nihil in Republica clarum fore, quod
 non ab illo reperiri credatur. Certè finitam Neronis pueri-
 tiam, et robur juventutis adesse. Excuteret magistrum, satis
 amplis doctoribus instructus majoribus suis.*

“ me such honours and riches, that the only A.R. 813.
 “ thing wanting to compleat my fortune, is to aft. C. 62.
 “ know how to moderate it. That is what I
 “ now intend to do; and to justify it, shall
 “ alledge instances of persons of superior rank
 “ to me, but which I could wish you would
 “ think worthy your imitation. Augustus,
 “ your great great grandfather was pleased to
 “ give Agrippa leave to retire to Mitylenum,
 “ and to permit Mæcenas to make himself a
 “ retreat in the midst of the city: and those
 “ two ministers, one of whom accompanied
 “ him in all his wars, whilst the other bore
 “ for him in Rome the weight of the most im-
 “ portant affairs, and most laborious cares,
 “ doubtless received from him great rewards;
 “ but they were the rewards of great services.
 “ What, on the other hand, could your great
 “ generosity find worthy being taken notice of
 “ in me, unless my studies, peaceably culti-
 “ vated in my own closet, the greatest glory of
 “ which is, that they were dedicated to the
 “ instruction of your younger years? That
 “ in itself is a most valuable reward: But
 “ what have you not done for me? You have
 “ given me great power and immense riches:
 “ so that I cannot help saying often to myself,
 “ * *What! I that was born but a simple knight,*
 “ *in a remote Province, now rank with the greatest*
 “ *in Rome! So modern a name as mine figures*
 “ *among Nobles who can boast a long race of an-*
 “ *cestors!*

* Egone equestri et provinciali loco ortus proceribus ci-
 vitatis annumeror! inter nobiles et longa decora prefe-
 rentes novitas mea enituit! Ubi est animus ille modici
 contentus! Tales hortos instruit et per hæc suburbana in-
 vedit, et tantis agrorum spatiis, tam lato fenore exuberet!

A.R. 813. " *cestors ! What is become of that moderation on*
 aft. C. 62. " *which I used to pride myself ? Is the philosopher to*
 " *be known again in these gardens so finely adorned,*
 " *in these magnificent country seats, in these wide*
 " *extended lands, and these prodigious revenues,*
 " *the produce of my money ? The only apology I*
 " *can make either to myself or others, is, that*
 " *I could not refuse your liberalities. But we*
 " *have both filled brim-ful the measure ; you,*
 " *in giving me all an Emperor can give the*
 " *man he honours with his friendship ; I, in*
 " *receiving every favour the Emperor's friend*
 " *can receive. It is * time to stop, and pre-*
 " *vent envy. You, I own, it cannot attack :*
 " *like all other wordly things it must fall be-*
 " *neath the majesty of your rank ; but on me it*
 " *lights, and crushes me : I want assistance, as*
 " *in the military service, or, after a long jour-*
 " *ney, fatigued and spent, I should desire help ;*
 " *so now, in this journey through life, the end*
 " *of which I have almost attained, old, infirm,*
 " *and no longer capable even of the smallest*
 " *cares, unable to bear the burden of my riches,*
 " *I implore your assistance. Order your In-*
 " *tendants to take care of them, let them be-*
 " *come a part of your demesnes. Not that I*
 " *mean to reduce myself to poverty and want,*
 " *but after putting into your hands what I*
 " *have*

* *Cetera invidiam augent : quæ quidem, ut omnia mortalium, infra tuam magnitudinem jacet, sed mihi incumbit, mihi subveniendum est. Quomodo in militia aut via fessus adminiculum orarem, ita in hoc itinere vitæ, senex ex levissimis quoque curis impar, quum opes meas ultrà sustinere non possum, præsidium peto. Jube eas per procuratores tuos administrari, in fortunam tuam recipere. Nec me in paupertatem ipse detrudam : sed traditis quorum fulgore perstringer, quæ temporis hortorum aut villarum curæ seponitur, in animum revocabo.*

“ have too much, I shall spend, in endeavour- A. B. 813.
 “ ing to make myself more perfect, the time the aft. C. 62.
 “ care of my gardens and revenues now takes
 “ up. You are in the prime of life, the expe-
 “ rience of many years has instructed and
 “ strengthened you. Old friends, like me, are
 “ able to return your goodness only by the tran-
 “ quillity of their lives : nay, it * will do you
 “ honour too, to have raised to the highest
 “ pitch of fortune a man capable of returning to
 “ a middling station.”

Nero, feigning not to understand the drift of Nero's answer.
 this discourse, answered Seneca : “ If † I am
 “ able to return an immediate answer to a speech
 “ you have prepared and studied, it is to you
 “ I am indebted for it ; to you, who have
 “ taught me not only to speak when I have
 “ time to prepare myself, but likewise to say at
 “ once what the circumstance of things require.

“ Augustus did allow Agrippa and Mæcenas
 “ to enjoy some repose after their great labours
 “ and fatigues ; but he was then of an age, the
 “ ripeness of which secured the rectitude of
 “ whatever resolutions he might take : but he
 “ stripped neither of them of the rewards he
 “ had given them. You say they deserved them
 “ by the perils they underwent at home and in
 “ war. That was because such were the occu-
 “ pations of Augustus's youth. Your arm
 “ would not have been more spared than
 “ theirs was, had I lived in the midst of arms.

What

* Hoc quoque in gloriam tuam cedet, eos ad summa
 vexisse qui et modica tolerarent.

† To speak well, was, as I have often observed, a talent
 infinitely and universally esteemed by the Romans. On
 that is founded Nero's reflection, not quite so conformable
 to our manners.

A.R. 813. " What my situation required, that you have
aft. C. 62. " done; you instructed my infancy, and your
" reflections and counsels have guided my
" youth. * The gifts I have received from
" you, are by their nature immortal, and will
" last whilst I live. Whereas, what you have
" received from me, gardens, incomes, and
" country-houses, are all liable to accidents;
" and great as your possessions may seem to be,
" many men of much less merit, greatly ex-
" ceed you in that respect. I am ashamed to
" mention even freemen richer than you are:
" and indeed I ought to blush when I think
" that you, who hold the first place in my es-
" teem and friendship, have not also a fortune
" superior to every other man. But I do intend
" to add to it: you are not yet past the en-
" joyment of life: your age is not yet so great,
" nor your strength so far decayed, but you
" may still manage riches and taste the sweets
" of them. I am but just entering on the ca-
" reer of Empire. Think you, you have attain-
" ed the height of elevation of a Vitellius
" thrice Consul? † or do you imagine the fa-
" vours I have done you superior to those
" Claudius heaped on that friend? Volusius's
" œconomy was worth more to him than my
" liberalities have been to you. I ‡ beg you
" will

* Et tua quidem in me munera, dum vita suppetet, æterna erunt; quæ à me habes, horti, et fœnus, et villæ, casibus obnoxia sunt; et licet multa videantur, plerique haudquam artibus tuis pares plura tenuerunt.

† I have made the most I could of the text of *Tacitus*, which is very obscure in this place.

‡ Quin, si quâ in parte lubricum adolescentiæ nostræ de-

“ will not leave me : at my age I may easily
 “ be induced to go astray ; your wise counsels
 “ will keep me in the right road ; and when
 “ my mind shall have imbibed the theory of
 “ your doctrines, you will aid and direct me
 “ how to practise them. If you give up your
 “ riches and remove from court, none will
 “ praise your moderation and love of retire-
 “ ment ; but I shall be accused of avarice and
 “ cruelty ; and were you even sure of having
 “ the greatest praises bestowed on your mo-
 “ deration, it does not become a wise man, like
 “ you, to desire applause at the expence of your
 “ friend’s reputation.”

To * such obliging expressions Nero added all possible demonstrations of regard and tenderness. He embraced Seneca, and kissed him affectionately, nature having taught, and art made him complete master of, the secret of concealing his hatred under feigned caresses. Seneca withdrew, returning thanks *, for that was the end of all conversations with the Sovereign. But he altered entirely the way of life his vast fortune had made him fall into ; and avoided every thing that savoured of the great man and Minister of state. His doors were shut to the crowd that came to pay their court, and none were suffered to accompany him by way of adding to his train ; he even appeared but seldom abroad, under pretence of bad
 L 3 health,

Seneca re-
tires from
court.

declinat, revocas, ornatumque robur subsidio impensius regis ?

* His adjecit complexum et oscula, factus naturâ, et consuetudine exercitus, velare odium fallacibus blanditiis.

† Qui finis omnium cum dominante sermonum.

A.R. 813. health, or that all his time was employed in
aft. C. 62. study.

His retire-
ment the
finest part
of his life:

Seneca's retirement seems to me the finest part of his life. It would be difficult to excuse his complaisance for Nero on several very nice occasions, whilst he was in the ministry. But the generous resolution he takes at the first notice, to return to a private station, the offer he makes to give up all his riches to the Prince, the fortitude of mind with which he bore his want of employ, without being tired or disgusted, finding in the study of wisdom something more pleasing, more satisfactory, than in all the splendor of fortune he had enjoyed, was a step truly laudable, and shewed the great man.

And the
best apology
for his
immense
riches.
*Suet. de Vita
beata, c. xvii.
& seq.*

It is likewise the best apology that can be made for the prodigious riches he has been so often reproached with. He values himself on having acquired them lawfully, without doing injustice or wrong to any one, and says, he could throw open his doors, call in all the citizens, and boldly bid "each of them take whatever belonged to him." But not to speak of usury, which he thought no illicit means of getting money, tho' no sound morals will ever allow it, the gifts he received from Nero after Britannicus's death, if not contrary to justice, are very repugnant to honour.

*Dio, ap. Val-
tes.*

He tells us he made a good use of his riches: But what good use could he make of so many slaves that himself did not know their number, of the jewels his wife was covered with, of five hundred tables of cedar supported by ivory feet, all alike and of the same size? Such luxury, which himself acknowledges, and of
which

Sen.

which I mention only some of the chief articles, is a proof that if he did give, as he boasts, to men of worth, or to those he hoped to render such, he might very easily have given much more. A.R. 813.
aft. C. 62.
c. xxiii.

He is obliged in several points to give up his own defence, and to own his speculation greater than his practice. “ I * do not pretend, “ says he, to equal myself with the most virtuous, but to be somewhat better than the “ bad. I endeavour to lessen my faults every “ day, and to shew my own weaknesses no “ favour.”

By what then shall we distinguish him from a corrupt man? By possessing his wealth without being attached to it. “ I † will despise alike, “ says he, riches, whether present or absent ; “ I will be neither more dejected when I see “ them in other hands, nor more elated when “ they shine around me. Fortune shall make “ no impression on my heart, neither when she “ smiles nor when she frowns. I will look on “ every man’s land as my own, and mine as “ the property of every man.”

One might suspect this language of much vain boasting, did not the offer he made to give up all he possessed to the Emperor, prove it’s sincerity. A Prince of Nero’s turn might have taken him at his word. He knew it; and yet

* *Exigo à me, non ut optimis par sim, sed ut malis melior. Hoc mihi satis est, quotidie aliquid de malis meis demere, et errores meos objurgare. c. xvii.* ●

† *Ego divitias et præsentés et absentes æquè contemnam : nec si aliubi jacebunt, tristior, nec si circa me fulgebunt, animosior. Ego fortunam nec venientem sentiam, nec recedentem. Ego terras omnes tanquam meas videbo, meas tanquam omnium, c. xx.*

A.R. 813. yet ran the risk. That step therefore proves
aft. C. 62. he was not a slave to his riches, and that he
was capable of sacrificing them without being
disturbed.

He had therefore a right to repel, as he did,
the venomous attacks of detractors from virtue.
“ * It is the interest of your vices, said he to
“ them, not to allow any man to be honest.
“ Another’s virtue is your condemnation.—
“ What rage, what disposition so at enmity
“ both with gods and men, can this induce
“ you to asperse virtue, and violate all that is
“ most sacred by the malignity of your speech-
“ es? Praise the good, if you can; if not,
“ let them be at peace. It is for your own
“ sakes that I exhort you to respect virtue.
“ Your judgments do not wound me: it is
“ not me, but yourselves they hurt. For he
“ that hates and attacks virtue, must for ever
“ renounce all thoughts of becoming an honest
“ man.”

Seneca, composed in his retirement, part of
those works we have of his. From this time
he had but a very small share in affairs of state,
and will hardly appear again, but to die.

Sylla and
Rubellius
Plautus kil-
led by Ne-
ro’s order.
Tac. xiv. 57.

Seneca’s removal left the field open for Ti-
gellinus. His colleague Fœnius Rufus was,
as I have said, of a temper little able to counter-
balance

* *Expedit vobis neminem videri bonum, quasi aliena
virtus exprobratio delictorum vestrorum sit.—Quis iste fu-
ror? quæ ista inimica diis hominibusque natura est? infamare
virtutem et malignis sermonibus sancta violare. Si
potestis, bonos laudate: si minus, transite.—Quanquam
ista me nihil lædant, vestrâ tamen vos moneo causâ, suspi-
cite virtutem.—Existimatio me vestra non meo nomine,
sed vestro movet. Odisse et larcessere virtutem, bonæ spei
ejuratio est. *cap. xix. 27. 26.**

balance him in Nero's judgment; and besides A.R. 813. ait. C. 62. that, had been protected by Agrippina, a very bad recommendation to her son. Tigellinus became more powerful every day, and, as * a wicked wretch like him, could not establish his favour more solidly than on guilt, he made it his study to find out what still gave Nero umbrage or uneasiness. He soon discovered that Sylla, and Plautus, who had been banished some time, the one to Marseilles, the other to Asia, were the chief objects of the Prince's disquiet, and exhorted him to rid himself of them. He exaggerated the danger of letting live rivals of their rank, and neighbours, one to the armies in Germany, the other to those in the East. "I do not, said he, like Burrhus, depend on a multiplicity of hopes and resources. Your safety is my only care. Conspiracies carrying on in the city, might perhaps be less dangerous, and would find an obstacle in your being present on the spot. But who can secure you against the enterprises of remote provinces? The Gauls tremble at a name that reminds them of a famous dictator; nor does the great-grandson of Tiberius make a less impression on the minds of the Asiatics. Sylla's poverty fits him for any undertaking: he wears the mask of indolence only till his ambition finds room to act. Plautus is possessed of great riches, and does not even affect a love of tranquillity. He imitates the manners of the old Romans, and to that joins the philosophic

* Et malas artes quibus solis pollebat, gratioris ratus, si Principem societate scelerum obstringeret, metus ejus rimatur. *Tac.*

A.R. 813. "Iosophic arrogance of a sect, that has ever aft. C. 62. "produced perverse and turbulent men."

All the malignity of calumny is evident in this discourse. One is to be killed because he is poor, and the other because he is rich. The stupidity of the former is hypocrisy: the merit of the latter is to be feared. Nero easily received these impressions, and immediately followed them. Orders were dispatched, and the murderers, crossing over from Asia to Marseilles in six days, killed Sylla as he was sitting down to table, before any intimation could be given him of the danger he was threatened with. His head was carried to Nero, who looked at it, and laughed at his being bald before he was old. In him ended the posterity of the Dictator Sylla.

A much greater number interested themselves for Plautus. Besides the distance he was at, and the extent of sea to be crossed to go to him, necessarily occasioned a delay; by which the secret of the court was known before it could be executed. It was already reported in Rome that he had thrown himself into Corbulo's arms, who commanded a great army, and who, if glory and a great name were crimes deserving death, was himself, more than any one, exposed to the like danger. It was added, that Asia, where Plautus was greatly beloved, had taken up arms to defend him; and that the very soldiers who were sent to kill him, not being strong enough to execute their orders, nor willing to do it, had taken party with his friends: idle reports that spread from mouth to mouth, and which the credulity of the vulgar did not fail to amplify.

So

So far is true, that Plautus had* intelli- A.R. 813.
 gence. One of his freemen, travelling faster aft. C. 62.
 than the Centurion who bore the Emperor's
 bloody order, delivered Plautus a letter from
 his father-in-law, L. Antistius, in which he ex-
 hortcd him, " to defend himself, and not be
 " accessory to his own death by a foolish pas-
 " siveness, from which he could expect only a
 " useless pity, when he should be no more.
 " Adding, that he ought to try every thing,
 " and refuse no assistance whatever. That all
 " he had to do, was to repel the first onset
 " of a company of sixty men, and that if he
 " succeeded in that, before the news could
 " reach Nero, and other soldiers be dispatched,
 " incidents might happen that might make a
 " civil war break out. In a word, that by
 " following this advice, either he would save
 " his life, or, at the worst, could but suffer
 " what was inevitable if he remained inac-
 " tive."

Plautus was not moved by these reimon-
 strances. Whether it be that he saw no re-
 source in a country where he was an exile, and
 without arms, or that tired of living in conti-
 nual fears, or very probably out of regard for
 his family, and in hopes they would be used
 more gently, if he did not irritate the Prince
 by resistance, he resolved quietly to wait for
 death, and was confirmed in that resolution by
 two philosophers who lived with him, Cœranus
 a Greek, and Musonius Rufus a Tuscan.

The murderers found him about noon, per-
 forming some bodily exercise, and for that
 reason naked. The Centurion killed him in
 that condition, in the presence of Pelagon an
 eunuch,

A.R.813. eunuch, whom Nero had sent with the Centu-
aft. C. 62. rion and soldiers, as one in whom he could
confide, to be witness to, and give him an
account of the execution of his orders.

Nero ven-
tures to re-
pudiate Oc-
tavia and
marry Pop-
pæa.

Plautus's head was carried to Rome: and
the Emperor, on seeing it, spoke these very
words: "What * should now hinder Nero,
" free from all fears, from celebrating his so
" long deferred marriage with Poppæa, and
" getting rid of his wife Octavia, whose con-
" duct indeed is modest and prudent, but who
" is a burden to him, on account of her fa-
" ther's name, and of the people's affection
" towards her?"

His next step was to write to the Senate
against Sylla and Plautus, without daring how-
ever to own, they had been killed by his or-
ders. He said they were restless turbulent
men, and protested the safety and tranquillity
of the Empire was the greatest of his cares.
The Senate, ever low and fawning, ordered
thanks to be returned the gods, and degraded
Sylla and Plautus from the rank of Senators:
a wretched farce †, which, however, became a
very serious evil to the republic; for such mean-
ness only encouraged Nero to be more wicked,
as soon appeared by his divorce from Octa-
via.

Suet. Ner.
35.

He hated her to that degree, that, if we be-
lieve Suetonius, he was several times tempted
to

* Quin Nero, deposito metu, nuptias Poppææ ob ejus-
modi terrores dilatas maturare parat, Octaviamque conju-
gem amoliri quamvis modeste agat, et nomine patris, et
studiis populi gravem. Tac.

† Gravioribus tamen ludibriis quam malis. *I have mo-
dified a little Tacitus's thought.*

to strangle her with his own hands. What A.R. 813. aft. C. 62. made him conceive that horrid thought, was, without doubt, the difficulties he met with in his desire to repudiate her. Burrhus could not help saying to him on that occasion, "If you put away Octavia, return her her fortune, return her the Empire she brought you." Nero, at length, delivered from all fears and remonstrances, turned her off, under pretence of her being barren, and twelve days after was married to Poppæa.

That ambitious and cruel woman, having Octavia, after being cruelly and unjustly used, is at length, put to death. now attained the height of her wishes, did not, however, think her fortune and grandeur sufficiently secure, whilst Octavia, whose place she had usurped, lived. Nero, whom she governed as she pleased, came readily into a design so agreeable to his own barbarous hatred: and both of them in concert suborned one of her officers to accuse her of adultery with a musician, a slave, called Eucerus, an Alexandrian by birth. In consequence of this accusation, Octavia's women were put to the rack, and some of them, not able to bear the torment, impeached their mistress; but the greater number, courageously persisted in maintaining her innocence. She was treated, however, as if the crime had been fully proved. The divorce, together with the motives of it, was pronounced in form; * Burrhus's house, and Plautus's lands were assigned her; fatal gifts, fore-runners of a fate still more melancholy than

* Domum Burrhi et prædia Plauti, infausta dona, accipit.

A.R. 813. than that she then suffered. Nero soon con-
 aft. C. 62. fined her to Campania, where she was closely
 guarded.

The public * was highly provoked at such unjust and odious proceedings. Men in place, and those whose rank and fortune made them conspicuous, murmured in private; the common people, who are more apt to follow the impressions of nature, and are less susceptible of fear because they have less to lose, complained so loudly, and with such freedom, that Nero was afraid, and determined to recall the Princess. The people were transported with joy the moment they heard the news; they ran to the Capitol to return the gods thanks: some pulled down Poppæa's statues, whilst others carried Octavia's in triumph, crowning them with flowers, and setting them in the most honourable places in the forum and temples. All united in praising the Prince, begging he would be pleased to shew himself, and receive the assurances of every citizen's veneration for him. In a moment the palace was filled with a multitude, who made it resound with their shouts and cries of joy: when the soldiers falling upon them, striking some, and pointing their drawn swords at others, soon dispersed the crowd: after which every thing was again put in order, and Poppæa's statues replaced.

This kind of sedition was the utter ruin of Octavia. Her rival, who feared as well as hated

* *Inde crebri questus, nec occulti per vulgum, cui minor sapientia, et ex mediocritate fortunæ pauciora pericula sunt.*

* hated her, apprehending either that the populace might grow quite furious, or that the desires of the people expressed in so strong a manner, might induce Nero to change his mind, resolved to make a bold push, and throwing herself at the Emperor's feet, " It is no longer, said she, my rank and station that I am to defend. The honour I enjoy of being your wife, dearer to me than life, is not the only thing in danger. My very life is attacked by Octavia's slaves and followers, who, assuming the people's name, have in times of peace, committed greater outrages than even war could authorise. Be not deceived; it is against yourself this vile crowd is armed. All they want is a head, and that is soon found when once they grow desperate. Let her return from Campania; let her appear again in Rome, she who, tho' absent, can in a moment raise seditions. But what crime have I committed? Who has any right to complain of me? Would it be better to bring the offspring of an Egyptian fidler into the Imperial family, than to let me bear the Cæsars' legitimate heirs? But † after all, if your interest requires it, stoop willingly to the yoke, rather than be forced to bend to it; or if you would avoid that,

" and

* Quæ semper odio, tum et metu atrox.

† Denique, si id rebus conducatur, libens quam coactus acciret dominam, aut consuleret securitati justâ ultione. Et modicis remediis primos motus consedissee: at si desperent, uxorem Neronis fore. Octaviam, illi maritum daturus. A levi post admissum scelus gratiâ, dein graviore odio: quia malorum facinorum ministri quasi exprobrantes adspiciuntur.

A.R. 313. " and secure your own safety, it must be by
 aft. C. 62. " speedy vengeance. Common remedies were
 " sufficient to quell the first disturbances; but
 " if the mutinous see no hopes of Octavia's be-
 " coming again the wife of Nero, they will
 " find a husband for Octavia.

This speech, intended to excite fear and anger in Nero, had its effect. Octavia's death was resolved: the only difficulty was what crime to lay to her charge; for the imputation of adultery with the slave Eucerus was visibly groundless, and refuted even by the answer of her women when put to the rack. Somebody must be found who would own the crime, and on whom a suspicion might be laid of concerting measures to bring about a revolution in favour of the Princess. None appeared more fit than the murderer of Agrippina, Anicetus, the Commander of the Misenum fleet, who, at first but badly rewarded, was now become odious; the usual fate of all perpetrators of great crimes, whose presence is a constant reproach to their employers.

Nero sent for Anicetus, and spoke to him in the following manner: " Thou hast already
 " done me one service in preventing the snares
 " my mother was laying for me: Another
 " must now be done, to deliver me from a
 " troublesome wife, an enemy to my repose.
 " To that end, neither thy arm nor any wea-
 " pon will be necessary: thou hast only to con-
 " fess thyself guilty of adultery with Octavia.
 " Not only no hurt shall befall thee, but thou
 " mayst depend on sure and ample, tho' pri-
 " vate rewards. If thou refusest to obey me
 " in this, thou hast not an hour to live." A-
 nicetus,

nicetus *, capable of every wickedness and inured to guilt, forged a story that even exceeded the orders he had received, and told it in presence of several of the Prince's friends met as it were to hold a council. After which he was sent to Sardinia, where he lived, banished indeed, but unmolested, and in great opulence, to the day of his death. Nero took advantage of Anicetus's infamous lye, and, by a declaration publicly posted up, accused Octavia of having attempted to prevail on the Commander of the Misenum fleet to back her with the forces under his command, and of having granted him criminal favours with that view. Forgetting too the barrenness with which he had lately reproached her, he taxed her with having made herself miscarry, in order to conceal her crime. He accordingly confined her to the island of Pandataria †.

A. R. 813.
aft. C. 62.

† A little desert island between the islands of Ponza and Ischia.

Never † did exile draw so many tears from Roman eyes. Many remembered seeing Agrippina, the widow of Germanicus, undergo the like treatment: nor could they be unmindful of

* Ille insità vecordiā, et facilitate, priorum flagitiorum; plura etiam, quam jussum erat, fingit.

† Non alia exsul visentium oculos majore misericordiā affectit. Meminerant adhuc quidam Agrippinæ à Tiberio, recentior Juliæ memoria obversabatur à Claudio pulsæ: Sed illiſ robur ætatis adfuerat; læta aliqua viderant, et præsentem sævitiam melioris olim fortunæ recordatione levabant. Huic primus nuptiarum dies loco funeris fuit, deductæ in domum, in quâ nihil nisi luctuosum haberet; erepto per venenum patre, et statim fratre.* Tum ancilla dominâ validior: et Poppæa non nisi in perniciem uxoris nupta: postremò crimen omni exilio gravius. Ac puellæ vicesimo ætatis anno, inter centuriones et milites, primægio malorum jam à vitâ exempta, nondum tamen mortæ adquiscebat.

A.R. 813. of Julia, daughter of the same Germanicus, aft. C. 62. banished, not long since, by Claudius. But those Princesses had strength of years to support them when they fell into disgrace: they had enjoyed some of the pleasures of life; and the remembrance of having seen happier days might be some alleviation of the ills they suffered. Octavia had felt nothing but misfortunes. Her woes might be dated from the very day of her marriage into a family which was soon to poison her father and her Brother. A vile slave had been basely preferred before her. Poppea, a much more dangerous rival, not content with robbing her of her husband, had likewise resolved her ruin; and, to compleat her miseries, she was cruelly aspersed by an accusation worse than death itself; and that young Princess, in the twentieth year of her age, was dragged to a dreadful exile, surrounded by centurions and soldiers. Every thing presaged a speedy and fatal end as the only term of her misfortunes.

Her sentence of death was signified to * her a few days after. She burst out into tears and complaints as fruitless as they were just; protesting she no longer desired to be called the Emperor's wife; that she would be only his sister. She invoked the names of their common ancestors, and the memory of Agrippina, in whose lifetime, tho' she had not been happy, yet her life was not in danger. But she was speaking

* Paucis dehinc interjectis diebus mori jubetur: quum jam viduam se et tantum soctorem testaretur, communesque Germanicorum, et postremo Agrippinae nomen cientes, qua in columi infelix quidem matrimonium, sed sine exitio pertulisset.

speaking to barbarians, void of feeling. Her arms and legs were tied together, and her veins cut open; the fear she was struck with preventing the blood from flowing freely, she was put into a bath so hot, that the steam suffocated her. Poppæa would not be satisfied, 'till she had seen her rival's head. It was cut off, and carried to her, that she might glut her eyes with that dismal sight.

A. R. 813.
aft. C. 62.

After so horrid an execution, joy was still to be expressed for it, and offerings were consecrated to that effect in the temples of the gods. Tacitus tells us *, that abominable custom became a law. I would have every one, says he, that reads the history of those unhappy times, know, that so often as Nero ordered the death or exile of any person of distinction, so often thanks were returned the gods; so that what ought by its nature to have been a proof and the effect of the prosperity of the Republic, was become an infallible token of its calamities.

Two of the Emperor's freemen, Doryphorus and Pallas, died of poison this year, given, as was supposed, by their patron's orders; to the one, because he had opposed Poppæa's marriage; and to the other, because he was likely to live too long, and frustrate the Prince's avidity of his immense riches.

Doryphorus and Pallas poisoned.

Nero was sensible how odious his crimes rendered him, and endeavoured to lessen the bad impression they made, at least with the people,

Nero's care to make plenty reign in the city.

M 2

by

* Quod ad eum finem memoravimus, ut quicumque casus temporum illorum nobis vel aliis auctoribus noscent, praesumptum habeant, quoties fugas et caedes jussit Princeps, toties grates Deis actas; quæque rerum secundarum olivum publicæ cladis insignia fuisse.

A.R. 813. by his care to have the city plentifully supplied
 aft. C. 62. with every thing needful. In fact, provisions
Tac. Ann. were so abundant, that, notwithstanding a great
 xv. 13. quantity of corn spoiled by age, that was thrown
 into the Tiber, and the loss of three hundred
 ships laden with corn, two hundred of which
 perished in the port, and a hundred that had
 come up the Tiber were burnt by accident, yet
 the price of bread was not increased in Rome.

Three men
 of consular
 rank made
 Superin-
 tendants of
 the finan-
 ces.

He was likewise desirous to gain the confi-
 dence of the public by a proper administration
 of the finances. He appointed three men of
 Consular rank, L. Piso, Ducennius Geminus,
 and Pompeius Paulinus, Inspectors and Super-
 intendants over whatever related to the levying
 of imposts: not without blaming the bad eco-
 nomy of his predecessors, whose expences had
 exceeded their revenues; whereas he made the
 Republic a present every year of * sixty mil-
 lions of sesterces.

Orders of
 the Senate
 to prevent
 fraudulent
 adoptions.

He permitted the Senate to exert its power
 in making orders and regulations to prevent and
 remedy abuses. A very great one then preva-
 lent was, that when the time for elections of
 magistrates drew near, or vacant governments
 of Provinces were to be filled up, people, who
 had no children of their own, made fictitious
 adoptions of others, in order to enjoy the pri-
 vileges granted by the law Papia Poppea to
 fathers of families: and after obtaining, by the
 help of that fraud, the posts or employments
 they wanted, would emancipate those very
 children. Real fathers made strong remon-
 strances to the Senate on that subject, setting
 forth how repugnant such feigned adoptions,
 and which lasted so short a time, were to the
 laws

* Four hundred and eighty thousand pounds.

laws of nature, and the pains and trouble A.R. 813.
the education of children gave their parents. aft. C. 62.

“ Ought not, said they, such as have no heirs
“ of their own to be satisfied with seeing about
“ them a numerous court that gives them great
“ distinction, with obtaining whatever they
“ wish for, with satisfying all their desires, and
“ enjoying ease undisturbed by care? whilst we*,
“ after waiting long for an opportunity of reap-
“ ing the benefit of the law, at once see our hopes
“ frustrated, by men who become fathers with-
“ out care or solicitude, and lose their children
“ without mourning or regret, sharing with us
“ the prerogatives of true and natural parents.”

In consequence of these remonstrances, the Senate passed a decree, ordaining that all fraudulent adoptions should not avail such as made them, neither to qualify them for honours, nor to receive the whole of any inheritance that might fall to them.

The affair of Claudius Timarchus, a Cre- At their or-
der suppress-
sing the
Provinces
used to be-
stow on
their Gov-
ernors.
tan, occasioned another regulation not less im-
portant. Timarchus, very rich and powerful
in the isle of Crete, was accused of oppressing
and tyrannizing over his countrymen. Besides
that, he had offended the dignity of the Senate,
by boasting insolently, that it was in his power
to make the Cretans grant or refuse the Precon-
sul of that island the thanks and honourable ap-
plause they generally solicited at the close of their
administration. Thræsea made that opportu-
nity subservient to the public good; and af-
ter giving his vote in what concerned Ti-
marchus personally, whom he condemned to be
banished

* Sibi promissa legum diu expectata in ludibrium verti,
quando quis sine solitudine parens, sine luctu orbis, longu
patrum vota repente adquiret. Tac. xv. 19.

A.R. 813. banished from the isle of Crete, he raised the
aft. C. 62. attention of the Senators to higher and more
important matters, addressing them in these
words :

“ Experience * shews us, that the wisest laws
“ and institutions, made by the best of men,
“ owe their rise to the vices of the wicked.
“ The licentious rapaciousness of advocates,
“ the cabals of those that aimed at posts and
“ employments, the oppressions and extortions
“ committed by magistrates in their several
“ departments, gave birth to the finest laws
“ we have ; for the ill must be before the re-
“ medy : men correct only what is defective.
“ The arrogant style in which the provinces be-
“ gin to talk to us, requires our putting such
“ a stop to their haughtiness, as, without
“ taking off from the protection we owe our
“ allies, may prevent our becoming dependent
“ on them, and shew the world we have no
“ other judges or arbitrators of our reputation
“ but our own fellow-citizens.

“ Formerly, not only Prætors and Consuls
“ were respected in the Provinces, but even
“ private men were sent thither to examine into
“ and give the Senate an account of the submis-
“ sion of the people : and whole nations trem-
“ bled at the scrutiny and censure of one Roman.
“ Now it is ourselves that flatter and pay our
“ court to subjects of the Empire ; and some one
“ amongst them more bold and powerful than
“ the rest, takes upon him to determine whether
“ our administration deserves to be praised or
“ impeached ; ever most ready to do the latter.

“ Let

* *Usu probatum est, P.C. leges egregias, exempla honesta, apud bonos ex delictis aliorum gigni—Nam culpa quam pœna tempore prior, emendari quam peccare pœsterius est.*

" Let us leave them the power of impeaching; A.R. 813.
 " but put a stop to all false and extorted praises, aft. C. 62.
 " as we would to cruelties and vexations:
 " What * we do in the government of pro-
 " vinces to please those whose duty it is to
 " obey us, is often more criminal than what
 " they hate us for. There are even virtues
 " that make us enemies, such as an inflexible
 " severity, an integrity not to be moved by
 " favour or solicitations. Thence it comes
 " that our magistrates always do their duty
 " best at first; they grow more remiss towards
 " the end, because, like candidates, they want
 " to please the people from whom they are to
 " have a character. If we put a stop to that
 " abuse, their conduct in the provinces will
 " be better and more consistent. For as the
 " law against extortions checked their unjust
 " avidity, so by forbidding all thanks and
 " praises to be given them, a stop will be put
 " to their undue complaisance."

Thrasea did but follow Augustus's idea, in
 consequence of which that Prince required an See vol. i.
 interval of sixty days between the expiration of b. iii.
 the Governor's Jurisdiction, and the praises
 given him by the people. That was rather
 pointing out the evil than remedying it. Thra-
 sea cut to the quick, and his opinion was re-
 ceived unanimously with great applause.---
 But the Senators could not pass it into a law,
 because the Consuls opposed, saying, the mat-

M 4

ter,

* Plura saepe peccamus dum demeremur, quam quum
 offendimus. Quaedam imo virtutes odio sunt, severitas
 obstinata, invictus adversum gratiam animus. Initia ma-
 gistratum nostrorum meliora sunt, et finis inclinatur, dum,
 in modum candidatorum suffragia conquirimus.

- A.R. 813. ter had not been properly deliberated on. aft. C. 62. The Prince was therefore to be consulted: he assented, and the decree was passed. The substance of it was, that it should not be lawful for any one, either to propose in the assemblies of the allies in the provinces, thanks to be returned in the Senate to Propretors or Proconsuls, or to undertake any deputation to that effect.

Death of
Persius.
His cha-
Pers. Vit.
ap. Suet.

Persius died towards the end of this year in the flower of his age, being not quite twenty-eight years old. It is great pity the obscurity of his style renders his satires, in which noble sentiments and a love of virtue shine, difficult to be understood. They are full of the maxims he had imbibed by a close application to the study of the Stoic philosophy, the austerity of which was his rule of action, tho' it did not affect the sweetness of his temper and conversation. The author of his life says, he was modest, frugal, chaste, and bashful as a maid. He was born at Volterra, in Tuscany, of an Equestrian family, and notwithstanding the difference of their ages, was intimately connected with the virtuous Thræsea; their friendship for each other was founded on a conformity of taste and inclination, more than on their being related. He lost his father when but a child; his filial piety towards his mother, and affection for his sisters, are greatly commended. We have in his fifth satire a monument of his gratitude towards his master Cornutus, who inculcated in him the precepts of philosophy, and formed him to virtue. Nothing can be stronger than his expressions of esteem and friendship, of which he gave him a last proof

proof in leaving him a sum of money and his books: so great was his confidence in his mother and sisters, that he only told them what his desire was in that respect, without tying them down by any of the usual formalities. Nor was he mistaken in his opinion of them; they offered Cornutus the legacy, but he generously refused the money, and would accept only the books.

The Consuls for the following year were Memmius Regulus, probably the son of him whose death has been lately mentioned, and Virginius, so famous for refusing the Empire after Nero's death.

C. MEMMIUS REGULUS.

L. VIRGINIUS RUFUS.

A.R. 814.
aft. C. 63.

On the fifth of February of this year a violent earthquake happened in Campania, which destroyed great part of the city of Pompeia at the foot of the mount of Vesuvius, and did considerable damage to Herculaneum. Nocera and Naples felt only some slight shocks. A flock of six hundred sheep was smothered; statues were split asunder: many people lost their senses, either through fear, or by the malignity of the vapours proceeding from the agitated earth. Those evils were but the fore-runners of much greater, though of the same kind, that country suffered some years after, under Titus's reign.

Earthquake
in Campania.
Sen. Nat. Quæst. vi. 1.

Poppæa was delivered of a daughter, and Nero's joy for that event knew no bounds. He gave the infant and its mother the surname of *Augusta*; and the Senate, who had made vows for Poppæa's happy delivery, performed

Nero becomes father of a girl, who does not live quite four months.
Tac. xv. Ann. 23.

A.R. 814. formed them with great magnificence; adding
aft. C. 63. all the flatteries that could be imagined, solemn
thanks to the gods, a temple to Fecundity,
and games like those celebrated at Antium*,
the place where the child was born, as well as
Nero himself. For the same reason, Fortune,
the tutelar goddess of Antium, had her share
in the honours; statues of gold were erected
to her, and placed on the throne of Jupiter
Capitolinus: and, lastly, annual courses in the
Circus at Antium were instituted in honour of
the Claudian and Domitian families, like those
celebrated at Bovillum for the Julian. The
death of the child, who did not live quite four
months, put a stop to all these fine prepara-
tions. New flatteries again on that account:
She was made a goddess of, with temple, priest,
and bed of state, like those of the first-rate
deities. Nero's grief was as excessive as his
joy had been.

Nero shews
his dislike to
Thrasea.

Whilst the Senate was crowding to Antium
to congratulate Nero on the birth of his daugh-
ter, Thrasea was ordered not to appear before
the Emperor. He received, without being
shocked, this signal mark of disgrace, which
seemed to portend a speedy death: tho' Nero
let him live some years longer, and even told
Seneca he was reconciled to Thrasea. The
glory of those two valuable men increased with
their dangers.

This year affords no other memorable events
except those that belong to the Parthian war, of
which I shall speak immediately.

Nero

* I adopt Muretus and Grotius's emendation, and read
Antiatia or Antiatum religionis, instead of Atticus.

Nero granted the inhabitants of the maritime Alps *the rights of Latium*, that is to say, the rights and privileges the Latins enjoyed when they were only allies, and not yet citizens of Rome. I am not certain whether it was at the same time that Nero reduced the Cottian Alps into a Roman province, after the death of King Cottius. The capital of the maritime Alps was Embrun, and that of the Cottian Alps, Suza.

A.R. 814.
aft. C. 63.
Sundry
things of
less mo-
ment.
Tac. xv. 32.
Suet. Ner.
18.

The Cottian Alps and the Polemonia Pontus are the two only countries Nero added to the direct demesnes of the Empire. He was not solicitous about enlarging his territories; but Cottius's death and Polemon's voluntary cession, gave him an opportunity of converting, without trouble or danger, into provinces subject to the Roman jurisdiction, two small kingdoms, till then governed by their own Princes, but under the protection of the republic.

In the mean time Nero, as fond as ever of all kinds of shews and diversions, set apart places of distinction in the Circus for the Roman Knights, who till then had enjoyed that prerogative only in the theatres. Lipsius gives several learned accounts of those honorary distinctions, concerning which the curious reader may, if he please, consult him. History aims at higher objects.

Some combats of gladiators celebrated this year were less remarkable for their magnificence, than for the utter extinction of all sense of shame and decency. Senators, and even women of quality, fought in public.

Their madness that way was carried to such a pitch, that, according to Suetonius, four hundred

A.R. 814. dred Senators and six hundred Roman Knights
aft. C. 63. took up the infamous and bloody profession of
gladiators, or fought against wild beasts. It
would seem incredible there could be so many,
did one not know how far fashion and example
will prevail. We may suppose too, that Suetonius speaks of all such of those two orders as
appeared in that manner during the whole of
Nero's reign.

I come now to the affairs of the East, in
which I must return back three years.

SECTION II.

Vologeses renews the war against the Romans. Measures taken by Corbulo to receive him properly. He desires a General for Armenia. The Parthians besiege Tigranocerta without success. Treaty, in consequence of which the Romans and Parthians evacuate Armenia. Carsemius Patus is charged with the affairs of Armenia. The Parthians take up arms again. Slight advantages gained by Patus. Corbulo fortifies the borders of the Euphrates, and throws a bridge over that river. The Parthians turn their whole force against Armenia. Patus defends himself badly, and is in great danger. Corbulo marches to his assistance. Patus concludes a shameful treaty with Vologeses. Corbulo's army meets Patus's: Agreement between Corbulo and Vologeses. Triumphal arches at Rome. Vologeses's embassy to Rome. The war renewed. Corbulo is charged with it. Nero rallies Patus. Corbulo's preparatives. He sets out. The Parthians desire peace. Interview of Corbulo and Tiridates. Tiridates deposes his crown at the

foot

foot of Nero's statue. Tiridates's journey to Rome. Nero goes to Naples to sing publicly on the stage. Vatinius treats him with a combat of gladiators at Beneventum. Torquatus Silanus is accused, and kills himself. Nero's levity and fickleness of mind. Attempt to discover the source of the Nile. His excessive debaucheries. Entertainment given by Tigellinus. Rome burnt. Proofs how far Nero was concerned in it. Golden palace. The city rebuilt on a new plan. Extraordinary and odd projects of Nero. Nero's vain attempts to remove the suspicion of his being author of the fire. The Christians persecuted. Nero's enormous profusions. His rapines and sacrileges. He joins superstition to impiety. Seneca wants to leave the court entirely. Slight insurrection occasioned by the gladiators at Præneste. Nero's too peremptory orders occasion a wreck. Comet.

IT was with great grief Vologeses saw his brother Tiridates dethroned and driven out of Armenia, a kingdom so conveniently situated for the Parthians, and to which they had long pretended a right, given by the Romans to Tigranes. He thought himself bound to repel the injury, and revenge the honour of the Arsacidæ. On the other hand, when he considered the strength and power of the Romans, the trouble the revolt of the Hyrcanians gave him, in which they obstinately persisted, and the efforts he would be obliged to make to reduce them to order, naturally slow, and more prudent than bold, he was in suspense what to do.

Vologeses
renews the
war against
the Romans
Tac. xv.
Ann. 1.

A new

A new affront was necessary to rouse his courage. Tigranes in a hostile manner entered Adiabenum, a country under the Parthian protection, and laid it waste, not flying from place to place, and endeavouring to avoid the enemy, but with all the deliberation of a conqueror, sure of his superiority. The Chiefs of the Parthian Nobility were highly incensed to find the Romans held them in too great contempt to vouchsafe to attack them themselves, but made one of their slaves insult them. Monobazes, King of Adiabenum, joined his complaints to their's, asking what resource was left, and whose assistance he could implore? "Armenia, said he, is quite forsaken; the countries bordering on it are invaded. If the Parthians will not defend us, at least we know the Roman servitude is milder for those who voluntarily submit to it, than for such as are conquered and forced." Tiridates said less, but his bare presence was a reproach to his brother; tho' he would sometimes drop very galling expressions without entering into particulars. Great Empires, he said, had never been supported by cowardice, nor did he think Princes ought to keep soldiers and arms to make no use of them. Full of those barbarous notions that make glory consist in violence; force, he said, was * what among Princes constituted right and justice: that is, it was the business of private families to preserve their possessions, but that Kings ought to aggrandize their's by conquest.

Vologeses

* Id in summâ fortunâ æquius quod validius; et sua retinere, privatæ domûs, de alienis certare regiam laudem esse. Tac. xv. Ann. 1.

Vologeses yielding at length to so many various motives, assembled a great council, and placing Tiridates next him, spoke as follows: "My brother, whom you see, having respected in me the right of first-born, by which I was intitled to the throne of our common father, I placed the crown of Armenia on his head, which among us is thought the third degree of honour and power; for Pacorus was in possession of that of the Medes; and I rejoiced in the prudent steps I had taken to establish union and concord in our family, and prevent the jealousies and enmities too common amongst brothers. The Romans oppose it; and tho' they never yet disturbed our peace without being made to repent it, they now again break with us to their misfortune. I own my first desires were to preserve by equity rather than bloodshed, by the justice of my cause rather than by arms, what our ancestors left us. If I have committed any fault in being over slow, my courage shall make amends for it. As to you, your forces are entire, your glory is unsullied, and you have added to it the virtue of moderation, a virtue not to be despised by the most powerful of mortals, and which the gods themselves are careful to reward."

So saying, he set the diadem on Tiridates's head, and gave him what cavalry he had with him, together with the succours furnished by the Adiabeniens. He gave the command of this army to Moneses, one of the most illustrious Noblemen of the nation, with orders to drive Tigranes out of Armenia, whilst himself, so soon

soon as he could make up his quarrel with the Hyrcanians, would collect all the forces of his kingdom, and fall upon the provinces of the Roman Empire.

Measures taken by Corbulo to receive him properly. He desires a General for Armenia.

Corbulo being informed of Vologeses's designs, and of his whole plan of operations, prepared to face him on all sides. He sent two legions under the command of Verulanus Severus and Vectius Bolanus, to assist Tigranes; whilst himself, remaining in Syria, encamped his own legions along the borders of the Euphrates; he raised forces in the province, built forts, and placed troops at every place by which the enemy could enter: and as the country is dry and wants water, he secured some springs for his own people, and stopt up the others with heaps of sand.

His design, however, was not to push this war, nor even to conduct it himself. He did not care to expose to new hazards the glory he had acquired in former campaigns; but wrote the Emperor word, that Armenia required being defended by a General who had only that one thing to do, for that Vologeses threatened to invade Syria. In consequence of that system, he strictly charged his two Lieutenants, whom he sent to Armenia, to take particular care to avoid all hazardous enterprizes, and be chiefly on the defensive.

The Parthians besiege Tigranocerta without success.

Moneses immediately set about executing Vologeses's orders, and began his march directly; but all his diligence could not overtake Tigranes, who, being informed of his approach, shut himself up in Tigranocerta, a strong city, provided with a good garrison and

and all manner of provisions and ammunitions. The river Nicephorius ran under its walls on one side, and a deep wide ditch defended the rest. Moneses gained at first a slight advantage, killing in an ambuscade some of the enemy's soldiers, who advancing too far in order to facilitate the entrance of a convoy, were suddenly surrounded. But when they set about attacking the city, the besieged laughed at the Parthians and their arrows: and the Adiabeniens, attempting to scale the walls and set to work the engines then used in war, were easily driven back: the garrison made a brisk sally, put them to flight, and killed a great number.

Though this beginning of the war was not favourable to the Parthians, and might give the Romans great hopes, yet Corbulo persisted in the plan he had first laid down, and wrote to Vologeses, complaining of the hostilities he had committed against the Romans, declaring, that if the Parthians did not raise the siege of Tigranocerta, he would enter their territories at the head of his army. Casperius, a Centurion, who carried this letter, found Vologeses near Nisiba, about thirty-seven miles from Tigranocerta, and delivered that and his orders with great haughtiness.

Vologeses did not like being engaged in a war with the Romans, and the success of his first attempt did not much encourage him. Besides, his cavalry, in which his whole strength consisted, could be of no service to him at that time, because there was no forage at all for the horses, every thing having

Treaty, in consequence of which the Romans & Parthians evacuate Armenia.

been devoured by swarms of locusts. Thinking it therefore most prudent to be mild and tractable, he answered, he would send Ambassadors to the Roman Emperor, to desire Armenia from him, and on that condition to conclude a firm and lasting peace. At the same time he ordered Mopanes to withdraw his troops from Tigranocerta, and himself retired towards the centre of his own dominions.

So much of this negotiation was made public. It was suspected, and with reason, that in consequence of a private article of the treaty, Tigranes was to leave Armenia. And indeed we find no farther mention made of him in history, nor is he taken the least notice of in the subsequent disputes between the Romans and Parthians. What is more, the Roman troops left Tigranocerta, and took up their winter quarters, though very inconvenient ones, in Cappadocia. So that there is no room to doubt, but that Corbulo consented the Parthians should have Armenia, on their requesting, for form's sake, the investiture of it from Nero. It is not easy to say, what motives could induce that General, in the height of his prosperity, to conclude a treaty so little to the honour of the Romans. The only one I find in Tacitus is that I have already mentioned, a prudent reserve, and the danger of hazarding his past glory in a new war. But that does not satisfy me entirely. However, it would be in vain for us to look at this distance of time for what Tacitus could not find out.

This

This treaty must have been concluded in the year of Rome 812.

I have mentioned Corbulo's writing to Rome to desire a General might be sent to take care of the affairs of Armenia in particular. Cæsennius Pætus was chosen, and arrived in Cappadocia, towards the beginning of the year 813. In consequence of his instructions, he divided with Corbulo the forces the Romans had in the East, and took to his share three legions, one of which had but lately been drawn out of Mæsia. Corbulo likewise kept three to defend Syria: the auxiliary troops were also divided between them; and they were to concert together all their military operations. But Corbulo could not brook an equal; and Pætus, thinking the second rank beneath him, despised and undervalued the exploits of that great warrior. "No enemy's blood, said he, has been shed, the Roman troops have gained no plunder: towns have been taken to no purpose. For my part, I will impose laws and tributes on the conquered; and instead of giving them a shadow of a King, will make the country directly and immediately subject to Rome, and reduce it to a province." The power of a Roman General should seem by this to have been then as extensive as in the times of the republic, and that they fixed as they pleased the fate of those they conquered. In the mean time, the Ambassadors Vologeses had sent to Rome returned without success, and the Parthians renewed the war. Pætus received the news with joy, expecting to surpass all Corbulo's exploits.

Cæsennius Pætus is charged with the affairs of Armenia. The Parthians take up arms again.

Slight advantages gained by Pætus.

He crossed the Euphrates, and entered Armenia without being disturbed at any of those events the Romans took for bad omens. The Parthians had possessed themselves of Tigranocerta. Pætus resolving, said he, to recover a place of that importance, and lay waste the country Corbulo had spared, set out on a sudden, and carried his army beyond mount Taurus, without fortifying a camp for his winter-quarters (which the Romans used always to do) or providing any magazines. He took some castles, and might have been said to have gained some honour and booty, had he known how to set a just value on that honour, or to make a proper use of the provisions he took from the enemy. But still going forward, and running over an extent of country he could not think of keeping, at last, he was at a loss how to subsist; and winter drawing near, which in Armenia comes on very early, he returned back. These were all his exploits; and yet he sent triumphant dispatches to Rome, as if he had put an end to the war.

Corbulo fortifies the borders of the Euphrates, and throws a bridge over that river.

But he soon found it was nothing less than ended. Corbulo, careful above all things to secure the borders of the Euphrates, had then been doubly vigilant in forming redoubts close to each other all along the river: he did more, undertaking to throw a bridge over it, in order to force the Parthians to be on the defensive, and guard against an irruption in their own country. The Parthians opposed it, and their squadrons flying about the plain on the other side the river, and annoying the Roman workmen

men with their arrows, Corbulo sent against them some large vessels, with machines and engines, that did execution farther than their bows could shoot. Keeping them by that means at a proper distance, he finished his bridge, and immediately ordered some of the auxiliary troops to take possession of the eminences beyond the river, himself following them with his legions. The Roman army made so formidable an appearance, that the Parthians, despairing of success on the Syrian side, bent their whole strength towards Armenia.

Pætus was so little on his guard, that one of his legions was in winter quarters at a great distance from him in Pontus; and he had weakened the others by indiscreetly granting his soldiers leave of absence, when, on a sudden, he heard Vologeses was ready to arrive at the head of a numerous army. He had only the fourth legion in the camp where he then was. He sent immediately for the twelfth, which was so far from being complete, that it rather betrayed his weakness than added to his strength. He might, however, have spun the war out with those few troops, and wearied the enemy, (who had sufficiently experienced from Corbulo what a small army with conduct could do) if he had had firmness and resolution enough to follow but one plan, free from that self-conceited vanity which discovers a weak Commander, and to act uniformly and consistently, either with his own opinions, or with those of others. But as vain as he was timid, he consulted old officers well acquainted with the art of war,

The Parthians turn their whole force against Armenia. Pætus defends himself badly, and is in great danger.

and then, for fear of seeming to have wanted the instructions of another, did the very contrary to what he had been advised : and every new circumstance making him take a new resolution, his whole conduct was a continued series of variations, which entirely ruined his affairs.

His first step was to leave his camp, proudly crying out, Victories were to be won by bravery and arms, and not within ditches and ramparts ; and led his legions on as if to give battle ; but losing a centurion and a few soldiers, whom he had sent to reconnoitre the Parthian army, he marched back quite terrified. Taking courage again, because Vologeses had not pursued him far, he posted three thousand chosen men at a pass of mount Taurus, to stop the king of Parthia's passage : with the same view he drew up his Pannonian cavalry, which was exceeding good, in the plain : He secured his wife and son in the citadel of Arsathosata, where he sent a cohort to garrison the place. By dividing his troops in that manner, he gave great advantages to an enemy, light, alert, capable of striking a bold stroke, and of carrying his quarters, but who could never have made a breach in any considerable body. It was with great difficulty that he was prevailed on to let Corbulo know his situation : and Corbulo, whose conduct is not quite so void of blemish, as his experience in war was great, was in no hurry, leaving the danger time to increase, that his honour might be the greater in removing it. He formed, however, a detachment of three thousand men, taking a thousand out of each of his three legions, eight hundred
horse,

horse, and the same number of auxiliary foot, and ordered them to be ready to march at the first signal.

Vologeses made greater dispatch than Corbulo. Tho' he knew the road by which he must go to Pætus was guarded on one side by three thousand of the Roman infantry, and on the other by the Pannonian horse, he advanced boldly, and by the great superiority of his numbers, dispersed the Pannonians, and crushed the Romans. Only one Centurion, called Tarquisius, Crescens, ventured to defend a tower where he was posted, and made several successful sallies. But the Barbarians set it on fire, and he perished in the flames.

The horse fled without fighting, and consequently without loss. As to the foot, such of them as were not wounded took shelter in the forests and narrow passes of the mountains. The wounded returned to the camp, where they spread the panic their disaster had filled them with. They exaggerated the valour of the king of Parthia, the prodigious number and ferocity of the nations that followed him, and found their auditors equally afraid, and ready to believe them. The General himself did not pretend to resist the decrees of fate; abashed and quite disconcerted, he had given up all the functions of his post. His only resource was in Corbulo, to whom he wrote again in the most pressing manner, begging he would come instantly to save the standards of the legions, the Roman Eagles, and the deplorable remains of an unfortunate army; adding, that as to himself, he would be faithful to the Emperor whilst he lived.

Corbulo
marches to
his assist-
ance.

This was what Corbulo waited for. He de-
layed no longer, but, leaving some of his troops
in Syria to defend the castles he had built on
the Euphrates, set out with the greater part of
his forces, taking his road thro' Commagena
and Cappadocia, for the better convenience of
subsistence. He carried with him a great
number of camels, loaded with corn, that Pæ-
tus's army might be doubly relieved, from the
enemy and from famine. He was met on the
road by several of the fugitives, soldiers, officers,
and even a first captain of a legion, who came
to seek safety under his protection. He * or-
dered them back to their colours, without
vouchsafing to hear their excuses. "Go, bid
"he to them, try to appease Pætus's just in-
"dignation. You will find no favour from
"me, till you have conquered the enemy."
At the same time going thro' the ranks of his
legions, he encouraged his men, reminding
them of their former glory, and telling them,
they might now acquire more. "A few Ar-
"menian towns, said he, will not be the re-
"ward of this your expedition; a Roman
"camp, and two legions, are to be preserved
"for the Republic. If the honour of saving
"the life of a single citizen in battle be so great,
"that it is rewarded by a brilliant crown; given
"by the General's own hand, what must ours
"be for saving a whole army?" Besides the
common danger that threatened all, many were
spurred on with the thoughts of that their rela-
tions,

* Quos diversas fugæ causas obtundentes, redire ad signa,
& clementiam Præti experiri monebat. Si nibi victoribus
immitem esse. Tac. xv. 12.

tions, brothers, and dearest friends were in. Those valiant troops, full of ardor, marched on day and night, without hardly resting themselves.

This was a sufficient reason for Vologeses to press still more closely the army he had laid siege to. Sometimes he attacked the Roman camp, and sometimes the fort, into which such as their sex or age rendered useless in battle, had retired. He even drew nearer than the Parthians usually do, to try, if by that means he could induce the enemy to come to an engagement. But * the Romans, not leaving their tents without difficulty and regret, were satisfied with defending their own retrenchments; such were their General's orders, to which many submitted readily out of cowardice, waiting for Corbulo's coming, and ready, if the danger became too great, to make the treaties of Caudium and Numantium their precedent. They made no scruple of saying it, nor of observing, that neither the Samnites nor the Numantines were such formidable enemies as the Parthians, those rivals of the Roman power: that they should be justified in their submission by the example of renowned antiquity, which, when fortune frowned, did not neglect its own safety.

Pætus, finding how much his troops were disheartened, resolved to treat with Vologeses. Accordingly he wrote to him, not yet as a suppliant, but as one who had room to complain that

* At illi vix contuberniis extracti, nec aliud quàm munimenta propugnabant; pars jussu ducis, et alii propria ignavia, aut metu Corbulonem opperientes, ac, si vis ingrederet, provisi exemplis Caudinte ac Numantinae cladis. *Luc. xv. 13.*

that the King of Parthia should, by force of arms, contest the right the Romans had over Armenia, which had long been subject to them, or to a King chosen by the Emperor. He represented to him, "that peace was equally " advantageous to both nations, and exhorted " him not to consider the present situation of " things only ; but likewise to reflect, that all " the forces of his kingdom were employed in " attacking two legions, whereas the Romans " had the whole Universe to back and support " them." Vologeses, in his answer to Pætus, avoided entering into any discussion of their mutual rights and pretensions : but in the style of a conqueror, declared he waited for his brothers Pacorus and Tiridates, to consult with them what would most become the Majesty of the Arsacidæ to do with Armenia, and what should be the fate of the Roman legions.

Pætus then desired a conference with the King, who did not think proper to come himself, but sent Vasaces, who commanded his horse. The Roman set forth the exploits of Lucullus, of Pompey, and the power the Cæsars had exercised over Armenia. Vasaces said, the Romans had never had but a shadow of power in Armenia, and that the reality had always resided in the Parthians themselves. After several altercations, the conclusion was deferred to the next day ; and Monobazes, the Adiabeanian, was present, as witness to the articles of their agreement, which were, That all hostilities should cease : that the Roman troops should evacuate Armenia : that the fortresses, with the provisions in them, should be delivered up to the Parthians, after which Vologeses was to send

send an embassy to Nero. The Parthians likewise required the Romans should build them a bridge over the river* *Arsametes* that watered their camp. Pætus obeyed, pretending, however, to conceal his shame, that he built that bridge for his own use. But the event betrayed him, for he took a quite different rout.

The treaty was in itself shameful enough to the Romans, but fame added to the ignominy, by publishing, that they had submitted to the yoke, and adding every circumstance of a total defeat. The Romans were, without doubt, greatly humbled. The Armenians entered their camp before they left it; and drawing their troops up along the roads by which the army filed off, they seized upon all the slaves and beasts of burden that had been theirs. They even stripped and disarmed the Romans; and the fearful soldiers suffered any thing, rather than be forced to fight.

Vologeses was willing to triumph too, but with more decency. He was satisfied with erecting a trophy of his victory, by laying in a heap the arms and dead bodies of those that had been killed: nor would he be witness to the flight of the Roman army. To me, there appears great moderation and dignity in this behaviour: I cannot, with Tacitus, think it an idle

* The text of *Tacitus* now calls it *Arsanias*, in consequence of a correction of *Lipsius's*, which I do not see sufficient reason for. I therefore restore the old reading. The *Arsametus* of *Tacitus* seems to be the *Arsanus* or *Arsamus* mentioned by *Pliny*, l. v. c. 24. from which the city of *Arsamosbta*, built on it, took its name. The *Arsanias* is too remote, and falls into the *Euphrates* much higher up. The reader may consult *M. D'Anville's* map of the *Parthian* empire, at the beginning of the second volume of this work.

idle * affectation of modesty in the King of Parthia, after his pride had been satiated.

A report was spread, that the bridge the Romans had thrown over the Arsametes was not solid, and that they perfidiously had built it on purpose, so that when loaded, it should give way and fall in. This suspicion made Vologeses cross the river on an elephant, and the chief of his court on horseback. Those, however, who dared to venture the bridge, had no reason to repent it: it was well built, and the Romans had done their business faithfully.

Every thing that can dishonour an army and a General, concurred to render the retreat of the Romans shameful. They had such store of every thing, that when they went away, they set fire to their magazines. On the contrary, Corbulo, according to the memorials Tacitus had in his hands, affirmed the Parthians were in the utmost distress, and ready to abandon the enterprize for want of forage for their horses. He added, that he was but three days march from them, so that, with a little more patience, Pætus would have received succours that would infallibly have relieved him. If any doubt be made of the truth of what Corbulo says, because the shame of Pætus would rebound to his glory, we cannot but allow the following circumstance, Tacitus lays down for fact, to have its weight. The Romans retired with such precipitation, that their army marched upwards of forty miles in one day, leaving behind them the sick and wounded that could not

* *Fama moderationis quærebatur, postquam superbiam expleverat. Tac.*

not follow; nor was the disorder of their retreat less ignominious than if, like cowards, they had fled from battle.

Corbulo*, with his troops, met this deplorable army near the borders of the Euphrates. He did not suffer his men to appear with a brilliancy that might have seemed to reproach the others with their misfortune. His soldiers, with melancholy looks, bemoaning the fate of their companions, could not refrain from tears: they flowed in such abundance, that they could hardly salute each other. Emulation and jealousy, sentiments that become none but the happy, were now quite laid aside: pity was the only passion they felt, and the subalterns were those who felt it most.

The conversation between the two Generals was short and dry. Corbulo complained of the trouble he had taken to no purpose, and of the opportunity he lost of putting an end to the war by the defeat and flight of the Parthians. Pætus answered, that things were still in the same situation; that they had but to return back, and with their joint forces attack Armenia, which Vologeses had left without defence. This proposal was a flagrant breach of faith in the mouth of Pætus, if it be true, as Corbulo asserted in his memoirs, that he swore on the

* Corbulo cum suis copiis apud ripam Euphratis obvius, non eam speciem insignium et armorum protulit, ut diversitatem exprobraret. Mæsti manipuli, ac vicem comilitonum miserantes, ne lacrymis quidem temperavero. Vix præ fletu usurpata consalutatio. Decefferat certamen virtutis, et ambitio gloriæ, felicium hominum affectus: sola misericordia valebat, et apud minores magis. Tac.

the Roman Eagles; and in presence of Vologeses's witnesses, that no Roman should set foot in Armenia till it was known whether Nero would ratify or set aside the treaty. However that may be, Corbulo flatly refused it, saying, "He had received no orders from the Emperor concerning Armenia. That the danger the legions were in, was the only reason he had left his province. But that now he was uncertain what the Parthians would do, and whether they would not attempt to break in upon Syria, he should hasten back thither; and think himself happy, if, with his infantry, harrassed and wearied out by a long and painful march, he could get the start of the enemies horse, who had nothing but plains to cross over." All Partus could do, was to end his winter quarters in Cappadocia, and Corbulo returned to Syria.

Agreement
between
Corbulo and
Vologeses.

There he, received news from Vologeses, who summoned him to demolish the forts he had built beyond the Euphrates; that that great river might again become, as it had always been, the boundary of the two Empires. Corbulo, on his side, insisted Vologeses should evacuate Armenia; to which, after some difficulties, the Parthian king agreed: and accordingly Corbulo razed his forts beyond the Euphrates, and Armenia, left to itself, was no longer disturbed by foreign troops.

Triumphal
arches at
Rome.

In the mean time, trophies were erecting at Rome as if the Parthians had been already conquered. Triumphal arches were built on the Capitolian

Capitolian mount. The * Senate, imprudently precipitating matters, had ordered these works whilst the war still subsisted, and was afterwards ashamed to leave them imperfect; chusing rather to disown a notorious truth, than to confess what every one was inwardly convinced of.

The events I have been speaking of belong to the year of Rome 813.

In the spring of the next year, Vologeses's Ambassadors arrived at Rome: their instructions were, "That the king of Parthia no longer alledged his rights to Armenia, so often remonstrated, that quarrel being now in fact decided, and the gods, the supreme arbitrators of the most powerful people, having rendered the Parthians masters of that country, not without some ignominy to the Romans. That Tigranes had suffered a siege in Tigranocerta. That Pætus and his troops must infallibly have perished, if Vologeses had not been pleased to spare their lives, and give them leave to retire. That having given sufficient proofs of his power and moderation, all that Prince now desired was a good and lasting peace. That Tiridates would not refuse going to Rome to receive the crown of Armenia, if he was not detained on the spot by the order of priesthood he had received; but that he would repair to the Roman camp, and there, before the Eagles and Images of the Emperor, and in presence of the legions, take possession of the kingdom."

Vologeses

* Decreta ab Senatu integro bello, neque tum omis-
dum adspectui consulitur, spreto conscientiâ. Tac.

The war re-
newed, Cor-
bulo char-
ged with it.

Vologeses's letters being read, and not at all agreeing with the dispatches received from Pætus, which contained no account of any alteration for the worse, the Centurion, who came with the Parthian ambassadors, was questioned concerning the state of affairs in Armenia. He answered, that not a single Roman was left there. They then found the Barbarians laughed at the Emperor and the Empire, when they desired the investiture of a kingdom they had already taken possession of by force of arms. Nero consulted the heads of the Republic, whether a difficult war, or a dishonourable peace was best. All were for war, and to avoid splitting on the same rock Pætus's want of capacity had wrecked him upon, they pitched on Corbulo, whose capacity and great experience made him the most fit of all men to remedy the evil, and blot out the shame from the Roman name. The Ambassadors were dismissed without any favourable answer, but with presents, and were given to understand, that if Tiridates came in person to solicit what he desired, he would not be refused.

At the same time that Nero's ministers gave the Parthians this opening for peace, they were not less vigilant in taking the most effectual measures for carrying on the war with vigour. The administration of Syria was given to Cestius, that Corbulo, eased of the care of that province,

* I adopt *Pighini's* emendation of the text of *Tacitus*, which says, *Cincius*, or *Cintius*, which is an error. The person spoken of here is the *Cestius* who began the war against the *Jews*, and who having laid siege to *Jerusalem* was repulsed with shame and loss.

province, might devote himself wholly to the war, and all the troops the Romans had in the East, together with a legion brought out of Pannonia by Marius Celsus, were put under that General's command. Letters were sent to the Kings, Tetrarchs, and all who had any post or command in the neighbouring provinces; and likewise to the Propretors who governed them, to receive and obey Corbulo's orders: so that the power given him was almost equal to that formerly granted to Pompey, in the war against Mithridates.

In the mean time Pactus arrived at Rome: Nero rallied. Pactus. and Tacitus says, Nero only rallied and joked him. "I * pardon you at once, said he to him, lest, fearful as you are, the least delay should throw you into a fit of sickness." Such a sneer would hurt one of our officers more than the greatest defeat. The Romans were not quite so nice about the point of honour.

Corbulo formed his plan with great prudence Corbulo's preparations. He sets out. and judgment: his preparations were formidable, and he would have been glad to get the better of the enemy by the sole terror of his name, and of the forces under his command. He sent back to Syria the legions that had suffered so much under Pactus; who, weakened by the loss of their bravest men, and not having yet got the better of the impression their late disgrace had made on them, were but unfit for battle. Instead of them, he

* Ignoscere se statim, ne tam promptus in pavore longiore solitudine egrescoret. Tac. xv. 25.

he took two legions that had long been trained up under him, and were inured to fatigue, and elated by success. To them he added the fifth legion, which, having been left by Pætus in Pontus, had met with no defeat, and the fifteenth, just come from Pannonia to join him, some detachments of the Illyrian and Egyptian legions, the auxiliary troops, both horse and foot, that generally went with the legions, and the succours he had lately received from the Kings and Princes of the East. With this formidable army he drew near Melitena, in order to pass the Euphrates. After reviewing his troops with all the religious ceremonies used on those occasions, he harangued them, setting forth in the most pompous terms the fortune attached to the happy auspices of the Roman Empire, and his own exploits, imputing the bad success to Pætus's want of experience. Eloquence was not his talent, but the * dignity of his sentiments, and the noble confidence he put in his own valour, made that warrior sufficient amends for his want of skill in the more florid arts of speech. After that, he marched on in the road Lucullus had before taken, opening again the passes that time and various causes had stopp'd up.

The Parthians desire peace.

The Parthians were terrified, and Corbulo soon had Ambassadors from Vologeses and Tiridates, who made overtures of peace. He received them without harshness or disdain; and when they returned, ordered some Roman Centu-

* Multâ auctoritate, quæ viro militari pro facundia erat. Tac.

Centurions to conduct them back, at the same time giving them pretty pacific instructions, in which he said, "The quarrel was not yet come to that height, but it might be ended without arms. That there had been on each side vicissitude of success; great advantages gained by the Romans, and some given to the Parthians: powerful lessons against pride, That Tiridates and Vologeses ought to take warning from them, and consider, the one, that it was his interest to avoid laying waste a kingdom that might be given to him; and the other, that the Roman alliance would be of more service to the Parthian nation than shedding each others blood. He added, that he was not ignorant of the seeds of discord ready to spring up in the Parthian Empire, nor how intractable several of the people Vologeses had to govern were. That, on the other hand, the Roman Emperor enjoyed every where a profound peace, and had but that single war to carry on." Corbulo backed his counsels by hostilities capable of intimidating, and on his first entrance into Armenia, severely chastised some of the great men of that country who had first abandoned the Romans, driving them from their estates, razing their fortresses, and spreading terror every where, and among people of all ranks.

The Parthians did not look on Corbulo as an implacable enemy; they had even a confidence in his generosity, and thought his advice good, Vologeses, therefore, whose temper was

likewise disposed to mildness, made a step towards peace, begging a truce in favour of some of his Satraps. Tiridates proposed an interview, to which Corbulo agreed. A day, near at hand, was fixed for it; and the Parthians having chosen the very spot where they had kept the Roman legions pent up the year before, in order to remind them of that event, Corbulo made no objection to it, being sensible the contrast of his fortune with that of Pictus could not but do him honour. In general, he was not all displeased at whatever tended to increase the shame of that unfortunate General; as appeared by the orders he gave Pictus's son, who served under him as Tribune, to take some companies of soldiers, and bury the bones of those that perished in that fatal expedition.

Interview of
Corbulo and
Tiridates.

Tacitus gives us an account of the whole ceremonial of the interview, and the kind of homage that was the result of it. On the day appointed, Corbulo sent two hostages to Tiridates's camp, to answer for the safety of the Prince's person. The hostages were Tiberius Alexander, and Vivianus Annus; the first Philo's nephew, an apostate Jew, as we have before said, who ranked among the most illustrious of the Roman Knights, and held a considerable post in Corbulo's army: the other was Corbulo's son-in-law, who, tho' too young to have a seat in the Senate, had the command of the fifth legion. Corbulo and Tiridates advanced toward the spot agreed on, each of them having with him only twenty horsemen. When the King was in sight of the Roman General, he alighted from his horse, and soon after Corbulo

bulo did the same. They shook hands in sign of friendship. Corbulo praised the young Prince for preferring a safe and wise resolution to more brilliant views attended with danger. Tiridates, after boasting his high birth, added, with modesty, that he would, however, go to Rome, and add to the Emperor's honour, by throwing at his feet a descendent of the Arsacidæ, and that too, at a time when the Parthian affairs were by no means in a bad situation. On the whole, it was agreed, that Tiridates should lay his crown at the foot of the Emperor's statue, and not resume it till received from his hand. A mutual kiss ended the interview.

A few days after, the ceremony, or, as I call it, homage, was performed with great pomp. The Parthian cavalry, with the standard used by that nation, was drawn up in squadrons on one side; on the other, the legions, ranked as if for battle, displayed their eagles and other emblems. Tacitus adds, the statues of their gods were so disposed as to form a kind of temple. In the middle a tribunal of turf was erected, on which a curule chair was placed, and in that chair the statue of Nero. Tiridates approached it with respect, and, after offering up victims, took the diadem from his own head, and laid it down at the foot of the statue. The spectators were greatly struck at this sight, especially when they called to mind the still recent disaster and humiliation of the Roman troops. "How different, said they, is this day from that! Tiridates is now going to take a long journey, to let all nations be witnesses to

Tiridates
deposes his
crown at
the foot of
Nero's sta-
tue.

“ his submission to the Roman Empire, and “ appear a supplicant and almost a captive.”

Corbulo, covered with glory, treated Tiridates with great politeness, and gave him a magnificent entertainment. The Prince, to whom the Roman customs were quite new, enquired into the reason of all he saw; why a Centurion came to acquaint the General with the beginning of each watch; why a trumpet was sounded when dinner was over; why a fire was kindled on an altar on the right hand of the General's tent: and Corbulo, at the same time that he satisfied his curiosity, took an opportunity of giving him a pompous idea of the Roman magnificence in all things.

The next day Tiridates desired time to take leave of his mother and brothers before he set out for so long a journey. He departed from the Roman camp, leaving his daughter an hostage, and a submissive letter for Nero. He saw Pacorus in Media, and Vologeses at Ec-batana. The latter had been uneasy about the reception his brother might meet with, and had wrote to Corbulo, desiring him to require nothing from Tiridates that might savour of servitude: that he might be allowed to wear his sword, and be admitted to the kiss by Governors of provinces; that he should not be made to wait in their anti-chambers; and that the same honours should be done him in Rome as were done to Consuls. On which Tacitus makes this reflection. “ * Vologeses, accustomed to

* Scilicet externæ superbix sueto non erat notitia nostrî apud quos jus imperii valet, inania transmittuntur. *Tac.* xv. 31.

to the superb manners of the Eastern Monarchs, was ignorant of the way of thinking of the Romans, who are jealous of the essential rights and prerogatives of Empire, but do not much mind a vain ceremonial."

Pliny tells us, that Tiridates, who was one of the Magi, wanted to travel to Rome by land, because his religion, in which water as well as fire was worshipped, did not allow him to spit in the sea, nor pollute that element with any filth; this shews, that the reason alledged some time before by Vologeses to excuse Tiridates's going to Rome, was not a mere pretence. However, he was obliged to cross the Hellespont; but the passage is very short. His march was troublesome and expensive to the provinces, on account of the great preparations made to receive him. He carried with him his wife and children, Vologeses's, Pacorus's, and Moneses's children, all his household, and three thousand Parthian horse. A large body of Roman cavalry, commanded by Annius Vivianus, Corbulo's son-in-law, likewise attended him; such a train, though their expences were defrayed by the Emperor, who to that end allowed Tiridates * eight hundred thousand sesterces a day, could not but greatly incommode the inhabitants of the countries where they passed. He was nine months on the road, always on horseback, his wife too rode all the way, with a helmet of gold on her head, that her face might not be seen.

Affairs of war were terminated, as we see, without Nero's interfering much in them.

The great power he gave Corbulo, and the almost independent liberty with which that General acted, may in a great measure be ascribed to his aversion to whatever required serious application and thought. Pleasure was Nero's sole occupation. Still music-mad, he did not think the juvenile games that were celebrated in his palace or gardens, afforded so fine a voice as his a sufficient scope. Nothing would content him but to have the public hear it. A rest of shame would not, however, suffer him to make his first public appearance in Rome, before the whole people assembled. Naples seemed to him a more proper place, that being a Greek city, and consequently more disposed to favour and encourage arts. His design was to go afterwards to Greece, there to gain, in the Olympian, Pythian, and other celebrated games of antiquity, resplendent crowns and honours, the lustre of which should attract the admiration of every citizen, and qualify him for the Roman stage. It was under the Consuls Lecanius and Crassus that he began the execution of this noble project.

A.R. 815.
aft. C. 64.

C. LECANIUS BASSUS.
M. LICINIUS CRASSUS FRUGI.

Suet. Ner.
20.

Tac.

We may easily judge how much the place was crowded when he appeared on the stage at Naples. Besides the people of his court, and his troops of guards, curiosity brought thither not only all the inhabitants of the city, but those of the neighbouring towns. Applause was certainly not wanting. An earthquake
that

that happened whilst he was singing, did not prevent his going on with his part; and the building chancing to fall in just as the games were over, and every body was happily got out, Nero observed, it was a signal instance of the pleasure the gods had taken, and composed music and verses to return them thanks.

From Naples Nero proceeded towards the Adriatic sea, in consequence of his design to embark at Brindium for Greece: he stopped at Beneventum to see a combat of gladiators; one Vatinius proposed treating him with. Vatinius * did not derogate from the shame and infamy that name had been branded with even in the republican times. Brought up in a shoemaker's shop, his body deformed, his jokes rude and clownish, he was first called to Nero's court to be the butt of it; but by inventing calumnies against the honestest men there, soon acquired such credit, weight, and riches, that none were able to hurt him, and even the worst acknowledged him their superior in wickedness. This wretch dared to declare himself an enemy to the Senate, and would often say to Nero, "I hate you, Cæsar, because you are a Senator:" that was his way of paying his court to the Emperor.

When I said pleasure was Nero's sole occupation, I meant that he did not trouble his head about

Vatinius treats him with a combat of gladiators at Beneventum.

Dio.

Torquatus Silvanus is accused, and kills himself.

Tac. xv. 36.

* Vatinius inter fœdissima ejus aulæ ostenta fuit, sutrina: tabernæ alumnus, corpore detorto, facetiis scurrilibus: primò in contumelias assumptus, deinde optimi cujusque criminatione eo usque valuit, ut gratiâ, pecuniâ, vi nocendi, etiam malis præmineret. Tac. xv. 34.

A. R. 815. about business, not that he had forgot his cruelty. Whilst Vatinius was amusing him at Beneventum, he was prosecuting Torquatus Junius Silanus in Rome for high-treason. Torquatus's real crime was, that he was descended from one of the noblest and most antient Roman families, and reckoned Augustus for his great-grandfather. But the ministerial emissaries and accusers taxed him with being prodigally expensive, saying, he was ruining himself, and could have no hopes of retrieving his fortune, but by overturning the state. They added, that his house was like the Emperor's, and that he gave his servants the same titles as the officers of the palace had. At the same time, the most faithful of his freemen were arrested and put in irons. Finding he was to be condemned, he had his veins opened: and Nero, in his usual style, wrote the Senate word, "That guilty as Torquatus was, and though he had reason to despair of being acquitted, yet his life would have been spared if he had trusted to the clemency of his Sovereign judge."

Nero's levity and fickleness of mind.

The project of a voyage to Greece was not put in execution. Nero was too flighty to be governed by any thing but caprice; there was no solidity in any of his thoughts. On a sudden he returned to Rome; some new whim had struck him, for no reason could be assigned for altering his mind. He then proposed travelling into the provinces of the East and Egypt, and accordingly published a declaration, promising not to be long absent, and that the peace and welfare of the republic should not suffer

suffer by it. But repairing to the Capitol, and from thence to the temple of Vesta, to implore the protection of the gods on his journey, as he was rising up, after having said his prayers, his robe caught hold of something, which was deemed a bad omen : at the same time, he was seized with a dizziness and trembling of the whole body, proceeding either from a sudden indisposition, or from an additional terror the recollection of his crimes in that holy place struck him with. These accidents made him alter his resolution again. He declared, " That the love of his country prevailed over every other consideration. That he had observed the melancholy looks of the citizens, and heard their secret moans. How would they be able to bear their grief at his taking so long a journey, if a few days absence could alarm them so much? if they could not even for that short time bear to be deprived of the sight of their Prince, their comfort and safeguard against all ills that might occur? He could not, added he, but yield to the desires of the Roman people, who wanted to keep him at home, and whose power over him was equal to that of nearest relations over their dearest kindred."

He remained therefore at Rome ; and I am inclined to think, it was at that time, that, to make himself some amends for not taking the journey, he sent people to try to find out the source of the Nile. Two Centurions went up that river by his order, and with that design, but were stopt by the cataracts and marshy grounds.

Attempt to discover the source of the Nile. *Suct. Nat. Quæst. vi. 8.*

Nero

A. R. 815. Nero was not quite mistaken in supposing
 aft. C. 64. the people were glad to have him reside in
 Tac. xv. 36. Rome. The plays and diversions occasioned
 by his presence, and especially the uneasiness
 they would have been in about their provisions
 if he was absent, were powerful motives with
 the multitude. The Senate * and chief men of
 the republic were in doubt whether his cruelty
 was most to be feared when near or at a dis-
 tance; but as in all great evils, so in this, the
 present was thought the worst.

His exces-
 sive debau-
 cheries. En-
 tertainment
 given by
 Tigellinus.
Suet. Ner.
 21.
Tac.

Nero strove to answer, but in a manner wor-
 thy himself, the affection the people shewed
 him; and to prove how much he delighted in
 Rome more than any other place, he made it
 the seat of his pleasures. His dissolute enter-
 tainments were prepared in the public build-
 ings, the open squares, the Campus Mar-
 tius, and the Circus; in short, the whole city
 was to him as his own house. Tacitus gives
 us, with some reluctance, an account of one
 of those entertainments in which the greatest
 excess of debauchery was joined to the ut-
 most profusion. He mentions it as an instance
 by which one may form an idea of others, and
 consequently save him the disagreeable task of
 repeating such shocking scenes.

This entertainment, accompanied with mu-
 sic and illuminations, was given Nero by Ti-
 gellinus, on a piece of water called Agrippa's
 pond. The table, covered with all the rari-
 ties

* *Senatus et primores in incerto erant, procul, an coram
 atrocior haberetur. Dehinc, que natura magnis timoribus,
 deterius credebant quod evenerat. Tac.*

ties the most remote parts of the earth and sea could afford, was placed in a boat drawn by other boats, all adorned with gold and ivory, and rowed by the handsomest young men that could be found, but all dishonoured by vice: their posts were regulated according to their several degrees of infamy. What shall be said of the mixture of women of the lowest class with ladies of the first nobility, all confounded together, and all equally debauched and impudent? Nero, the most corrupt of all this abominable troop, at a loss what wickedness to invent, married himself as wife to one Pythagoras. The whole ceremonial was punctually observed, a veil thrown over the Emperor's face, a dowry agreed on and deposited. To return no more to so disagreeable and immodest a subject, I shall add here, that some years after, Nero acted a part just the reverse, solemnly taking an eunuch called Sporus for his wife.

A.R. 815.
aft. C. 64.

Suet. Ner.
28.
Dio.

Suetonius says, he did not believe there was one chaste person in the world. The vicious are bad judges of virtue. Christianity, which then began to take root in Rome, could have produced several instances of the most perfect continence and virginity, whilst that mad Emperor did not think it possible for any one to be content with licit pleasures.

Suet. Ner.
23.

To become an incendiary was still wanting to complete Nero's crimes; and that he resolved to be with distinction, to burn his own country, the metropolis of the universe. I make no scruple to lay to his charge the fire that this year consumed upwards of two thirds of

Rome burnt.
Proofs how
far Nero
was con-
cerned in it.

A.R. 815. of Rome, though Tacitus doubts whether it
 aft. C. 64. was owing to accident or the wickedness of
 the Prince. Besides that Suetonius and Dion
Tac. xv.
Ann. 38.
Suet. Ner. Cassius both positively charge Nero with that
 36.
Dio. crime, Tacitus himself tells us such circum-
 stances as plainly prove, that even if the fire
 did at first break out by accident, yet it was
 kept up and spread for several days by Nero's
 orders, whereby Rome suffered as sorely as if
 the city had been taken by storm.

That historian relates, that nobody dared ven-
 ture to succour the buildings that were burning,
 for that men unknown drove back all that at-
 tempted to extinguish the fire, threatening and
 abusing them. Some even added to the flames,
 throwing in lighted torches and combustible
 matters, and saying, they were ordered so to
 do. Tacitus indeed suspects it was out of
 knavery that a gang of villains acted and spoke
 in that manner, to have an opportunity of rob-
 bing and plundering. But if they had not
 been supported and backed, the trick must soon
 have been discovered in a case where every one's
 interest was concerned. Nero was at Antium
 when the fire began, and staid there till the
 flames were ready to reach his palace. Then
 it was, and not before, that he returned to
 Rome; and at that very time it was reported
 that he, getting up to the top of a high tower,
 saw from thence with pleasure the whole city
 in flames, and, putting on his theatrical dress,
 performed a piece of music the subject of which
 was the sack of Troy; a near resemblance of
 the distressed condition Rome was then in.

I therefore see no room to doubt Nero's being
 concerned in burning Rome. Such a feat is
 quite

quite conformable with the rest of his inhuman, A.R. 815.
 barbarous disposition. He, as well as Tibe- aft. C. 64.
 rius; envied the fate of Priam, who saw his Dio.
 whole family destroyed, and his country laid
 in ashes; and some body one day quoting in
 his hearing the Greek proverb, that same Ti-
 berius was perpetually repeating, "When I Suet.
 am dead let the earth be devoured with flames;"
 "No, not when I am dead, cried Nero in-
 stantly, but whilst I live."

The scheme of burning Rome suited too his Tac. & Suet.
 idle vanity and madness for building. He
 disliked the bad taste of the old houses, the
 narrow, crooked, dark streets, in which there
 was no general plan, no symmetry, but the
 whole had been directed by the caprice and hur-
 ry of the people, who had rebuilt as fast as
 they could their dwellings burnt by the Gauls.
 Nero wanted to make a new Rome, and was
 even ambitious enough to give it his own
 name; calling it *Neropolis*, or *Nero's city*. He Suet. Ner
 purposed enlarging his own palace in particu- 55.
 lar, and as the walls of the public granaries, lb. 38.
 very strongly built, took up a space of ground
 he thought would be useful to him, battering
 rams and other engines of war were added to
 the flames to beat them down, as if they had
 been an enemy's fortress.

The fire began the nineteenth of July, the Tac.
 day on which the Gauls had set fire to the city
 four hundred and fifty years before, and raged
 with great violence six days and seven nights:
 nor did it abate at last but for want of fuel, af- Suet.
 ter having destroyed every thing, from the great Tac.
 Circus at the foot of mount Palatine, to the far-
 ther

A.R. 815. the end of the Esquilæ, where a prodigious
 aft. C. 64. number of buildings was thrown down to pre-
 vent its spreading farther. This was not all :
 the fire that was thought extinguished broke
 out again, and if fewer people lost their lives,
 it was because the parts where it raged the se-
 cond time were less inhabited and more open :
 it consumed, however, finer and more spacious
 buildings, such as temples of the gods, and por-
 ticoes built for the ornament of the city and
 convenience of its inhabitants. It was in Ti-
 gellinus's gardens that the fire began the se-
 cond time, and from thence spread all around ;
 a very suspicious circumstance, and thought by
 every one a plain indication from whence the
 public disaster proceeded. An old inscription,
 quoted by Lipsius, gives us room to think the
 second fire lasted upwards of two days.

Lipsius & Tac. The damage Rome suffered in these two fires
 is scarcely to be imagined. Of fourteen dis-
 tricts or quarters, into which the city was di-
 vided, three were laid even with the ground ;
 four were not injured ; the other seven retained
 only the sad remains of half-burnt buildings. Ta-
 citus does not pretend to give an exact account
 of the number of houses, temples, and other build-
 ings that were destroyed. He mentions only,
 besides the Emperor's palace, some buildings
 venerable for their antiquity, and most of them
 consecrated to the Roman worship, such as the
 great altar Evander is said to have erected and
 dedicated to Hercules whilst alive and present
 on the spot, the temple of Jupiter Stator built
 by Romulus, Numa's palace, and the temple
 of

of Vesta, in which the household gods of the Roman people were kept. To these buildings, and the loss of the spoils taken from all the people of the then known globe, the masterpieces of the greatest artists of Greece in painting and statuary, the writings of old authors, and the monuments of times past: all irreparable losses, for which the beauty of the city, rebuilt in a more modern taste, made but poor amends.

I have said nothing of the horrid tumult that reigned among so many unhappy people, some of whom lost their lives, whilst others were reduced to fly and wander about, not knowing where to take shelter or find relief, many of them in an instant stripped of all they had possessed in the world. Such a scene is more easily imagined than told. Nero made a great shew of desire to relieve the people in this calamity. He gathered together the fugitives in the Campus Martius and buildings Agrippa had erected there, and even threw open his own gardens to receive them. Little huts were built by his order for them to retire to. He ordered all sorts of necessary furniture and provisions to be brought from Ostia for their use, and lowered the price of corn to three as's * a bushel. But none were obliged to him for the relief he procured against an evil of which he was the cause.

Nero took advantage of the public calamity to enlarge the circumference of his own palace, which

Golden palace.
Tac. &
Suet. Ner. 31.

* About ½ penny. The Roman bushel was about three quarters of our's.

A. R. 815. which he extended as far as the Esquilix. That
 aft. C. 64. was his second time of rebuilding it; he called
 it the Golden Palace, because it was adorned
 all over with gold, mother of pearl, and preci-
 ous stones. The dining-rooms were wainscotted
 with ivory, which, turning on pins, formed
 moving pictures. Down that wainscot hung
 wreaths of flowers, through the hollow parts
 of which dropped the most costly perfumes.
 The finest of those rooms was round, and its
 perpetual motion imitated that of the celestial
 spheres. The baths were filled either with sea-
 water, or the warm sulphureous waters of Al-
 bula *, which ever was best liked.

The rich ornaments of this superb palace
 were not what was most admired in it. The
 Roman luxury was grown to such a height, that
 what might have surprised at another time was
 then common. The most extraordinary thing
 in the golden palace was its immense extent,
 in which were included plowed lands, vine-
 yards, meadows, fish-ponds, forests full of
 wild beasts, and prospects as far as the eye could
 reach. In the Vestibule was a colossus a hun-
 dred and twenty feet high, the work of Zeno-
 dorus the statuary, representing Nero. Around
 the building were porticos of prodigious length,
 supported by three rows of columns. An
 epigram, preserved by Suetonius, was made
 on the immoderate extent of this palace.
 "Rome † will be swallowed up by a single
 "house.

Plin. xxxiv.
7.

* Now the baths of *Tivoli*.

† *Roma domus fiet. Veios migrate, Quirites:*

Si non et Veios occupat ista domus. Suet. Ner. 39.

“house. Romans*, go your ways to Veii; A.R. 815.
 “but have a care that house does not take in aft. C. 64.
 “Veii too.”

Yet Nero spoke of it with a kind of contempt, *Suet. Ner.* and when it was finished, said, Now he should^{31.} begin to be lodged like a man. He was † in the right of it, says Pliny, ironically and with great indignation; that indeed was like the habitations of those old conquerors of nations, those founders of the Empire, those illustrious triumphers who were taken from their plough or little fire side to head our armies. All the riches of those great men often consisted in a field of less extent than one of Nero's rooms.

The new city was built with care and judgment. No man was suffered to follow his own fancy, but one general plan was laid for all. The streets were wide and straight as a line. A certain height was fixed for all the houses; within which court-yards were formed, and on the outsides a portico reigned from one end of each street to the other, with a flat roof for the convenience of assisting their neighbours in case of fire, Nero was at the expence of those porticos, as well as of clearing the ground on which the proprietors of houses

The city re-built on a new plan.
Tac. xiv. 43.
Suet. Ner.
 16.

P 2

were

* The author of the Epigram alludes to the design the people once had of settling at *Veii*. The reader may consult on that subject *M. Rollin's Roman History*, vol. ii. b. vi. sect. ii, iii, iv.

† *Nimirum sic habitaverunt illi qui hoc imperium fecere, tantas ad vincendum gentes, triumphosque referendos, ab aratro aut foco exeuntes, quorum agri quoque minorem modum obtinuerunt, quam sellariæ istorum. Plin. xxxvi. 15.*

A.R. 815.
 aft. C. 64.
Suet. Ner.
 38.

were to build. A generosity by no means void of interest, for he appropriated to himself whatever precious things were found in the rubbish, without suffering any one to come near to see or claim his own. That the work might be carried on with greater dispatch, he proposed different premiums, according to their different stations and fortunes, for such as should finish their buildings within a certain limited time. He ordered quantities of rough stones to be laid ready for the workmen, and in a certain part of each house would suffer no wood at all to be made use of, nor any thing but Sabine or Alba stone, that bearing fire better than any other. Particular care was taken to have the water properly distributed, some having attempted to intercept and turn it off for their own private use. The water was all made public, and that it might be ready for every one in case of unforeseen accidents, every owner of a house was obliged to have a cistern always full before his house. And, lastly, the houses were all built at some distance from each other; none were suffered to be quite contiguous.

These regulations, at the same time that they were a safety, were likewise a beauty and ornament to the city; though several pretended it was less healthy, because the narrowness of the old streets, and height of the houses, were a shelter from the violent heat of the sun; to which, by the new plan, the wide streets and open places left them greatly exposed.

Nero's

Nero's first design was to make Rome as large in proportion as his own palace, and to extend its walls as far as Ostia, where he purposed opening a canal to bring the sea into the heart of the city. Whatever was extraordinary and gigantic pleased him; and he was served to his mind by two bold * architects, Severus and Celer, who piqued themselves on forcing nature and attempting impossibilities. One of their projects was to form a navigable canal from the lake Avernum to the mouth of the Tiber: a ridiculous mad enterprize, for the whole space, being upwards of a hundred and sixty miles, is a dry parched soil, with several mountains of hard rock, and no water at all except that of the Pomptine marshes: and even if those difficulties had been surmounted by dint of labour, such a canal would have been of very little use. However Nero began to pierce the hills near the Avernum, and had that work, and the others I have spoken of, so much at heart, that he caused all the prisoners in the whole extent of the Empire to be brought to Italy, and would have even criminals be condemned to labour, instead of death. All his endeavours and expences were useless: the scheme of the canal, as well as, of enlarging Rome to that enormous size, vanished away: all it was productive of was, that by digging the earth of the Canton of Cecuta, the wine of that growth, which was reckoned one of the best in Italy, lost its quality.

A. R. 815.
aft. C. 64.
Extraordi-
nary & odd
projects of
Nero's
Suet. Ner.
16.
Tac. Ann.
xv. 44.

Suet. Ner.
31. & Tac.

Plin. xiv. 6.

P 3

Nero

* *Magistris et machinatoribus, Severo et Celere, quibus ingenium et audacia erat, etiam quæ natura denegavisset per artem tentaro, et viribus Principis illudere. Tac.*

A.R. 815. Nero could not bear being hated by the
aft. C. 64. public as author of the fire. He wished it
Nero's vain attempt. to remove the suspicion of
his being author of the fire.
The Christians persecuted.
Tac. xv. 44. possible to remove the suspicion that too-justly
fell on him : and, with that view it was, that, as
I before said, he was so lavish of all that could
procure the people any ease. He added the
ceremonies of religion, and, to make the cala-
mity pass for an effect of the wrath of the gods,
practised all the expiations and means of ap-
peasing them that the Pagan superstition could
invent. And, lastly, finding all his attempts
fruitless, he thought of a thing worthy him-
self, and undertook to throw all the odium of
the crime he was guilty of, on men not only
innocent of that, but whose whole attention was
taken up with a very different object. The num-
ber of Christians was greatly increased in Rome
by the apostolic labours of St Peter and St
Paul. As every novelty in religious matters
is suspected, they were hated by those who did
not know them. Nero, therefore, thought
them proper subjects on whom to lay the atro-
cious imputation he wanted to clear himself of.
Such was the origin of the first persecution the
church suffered from the Roman Emperors,
And it is an honour to her to have had for an
enemy a Prince who hated all virtues.

But what is very deplorable is, that men of
the greatest genius, the most celebrated writers,
were as blind as Nero in so essential a point,
and became in some measure his accomplices
by approving his cruelties against the Christians.
I do not here speak of Suetonius, tho' he
reckons the punishment that Prince inflicted on
them among his good deeds. 'Tis Tacitus I
am angry with, that sublime genius, that great
politician,

politician, that avowed enemy of vice, who A. R. 815. expresses himself on this occasion with such vi- aft. C. 64. rulence and brutality, as ought to warn us how thankful we ought to be to God, for that he has been pleased to deliver us from the darkness that blinded the eyes of a man so clear-sighted in other respects. He speaks as follows :

“ Nero *, willing to substitute in his own
 “ stead victims to the public indignation on
 “ account of the fire, inflicted the most cruel
 “ torments on a sect of men already detested
 “ for their crimes, vulgarly called Christians.
 “ The author of their sect was one Christ,
 “ who was put to death by Pontius Pilate,
 “ Intendant of Judea, in the reign of Tiberius.
 “ Their damnable superstition, which for
 “ some time had been kept under, began to
 “ break out again, and spread not only in
 “ Judea, where the evil first arose, but even
 P 4 “ in

* Abolendo rumori Nero subdidit reos, et quæ sitissimis pœnis affectit, quos, per flagitia invidiosos, vulgus Christianos appellabat. Auctor nominis ejus Christus, qui, Tiberio imperitante, per procuratorem Pontium Pilatum supplicio affectus erat. Repressaque in præsens exitiabilis superstitio rursus erumpebat, non modò per Judæam, originem ejus mali, sed per urbem etiam, quò cuncta undiquè atrocia aut pudenda confluunt, celebranturque. Igitur primo correpti qui fatebantur, deinde indicio eorum multitudo ingens, haud perinde in crimine incendii, quàm odio humani generis convicti sunt. Et pereuntibus addita ludibria, ut ferarum tergibus connecti laniatu canum interirent, aut crucibus affixi, aut flammandi, atque, ubi defecisset dies, in usum nocturni luminis urerentur. Hortos suos ei spectaculo Nero obtulerat, et Circense ludicrum edebat, habitu aurigæ permixtus plebi, vel curriculo insistens. Unde quamquam adversus sontes, et novissima exempla meritos, miseratio oriebatur, tanquam non utilitate publicâ, sed in sævitiam unius absumerentur. Tac.

A.R. 815. " in Rome, the sink into which is received"
 aft. C. 64. " every vice and infamy from what part soever"
 " it comes. Some of them were arrested, and
 " owned themselves Christians, and on their in-
 " formations a great number were taken, whom
 " it was less easy to convict of being incen-
 " diaries, than of obstinately hating all man-
 " kind. Their punishment was made a sport
 " of: some were covered with skins of beasts,
 " to make dogs devour them: others were
 " crucified; and others again, wrapped up in
 " cloths, covered with pitch and brimstone,
 " were burnt in the night by way of torches.
 " These punishments were inflicted in the
 " Emperor's gardens as a sight, whilst he di-
 " verted the people with chariot races, mixing
 " with the croud in a coachman's dress, or
 " seated on a car, and holding the reins.
 " Thence arose the pity that was felt for a set
 " of men, really guilty and deserving the worst
 " of punishments, but who on that occasion
 " were sacrificed to the inhuman pleasure of
 " one, and not to the good of the whole."

It is very remarkable, that Tacitus himself attests the innocence of the Christians at the same time that he loads them with reproaches. He only taxes them in general with being enemies to mankind, from whose corruption they separated themselves. We may likewise venture to affirm, he was quite mistaken when he says, they informed against one another. All ecclesiastical history witnesseth they were ever ready to confess openly the name of their heavenly Master, and to suffer with joy the greatest torments the cruelty of their judges and execution-

ers, could invent, rather than betray their brethren to persecution. A. R. 815. aft. C. 64.

The expences Nero was at for the different works I have mentioned, were a pretence to exercise the most odious rapine. Prodigality was one of his great vices. The only use he knew for riches was to be madly profuse. He thought it mean and sordid ever to account with one's self; and those who made the worst uses of their money and threw it away like dirt, were most entitled to his esteem and praise. He was perpetually commending his uncle Caligula, and proposed him for his model in every thing; but what he thought most of all worthy admiration in that monster, was, his having dissipated in so short time the immense treasures Tiberius had left him. Nero's enormous profusions. Suet. Ner. 30.

And accordingly every opportunity of spending or lavishing away money, delighted Nero: he knew no bounds in it: not to mention the prodigious luxury of his table, nor the immense expences of the circus and theatres; he was fond of surprizing by the singularity of his enterprizes, and would often unite in the same day, and same place, shews of different, and even contrary kinds: so that a vast bason of water, in which great sea fish were seen swimming, would, the moment after a sea fight had been performed on it, be instantly drained, and become a field of battle, for land troops or gladiators. Dion Cassius mentions an instance of the scene being changed in that manner four times in one day. Dio.

That was not all; when the games were over, Nero distributed among the people every thing that could be given them; uncommon birds of all Suet. Ner. 11. & Dio.

A.R. 815. all kinds, corn, stuffs, gold, silver, jewels, aft. C. 64. pictures, slaves, horses and mules, wild beasts tamed, and, in short, ships, houses, and lands. As most of these things could not be divided amongst a multitude, the Emperor threw little balls, on which was wrote the name of the prize it intituled the bearer to, which, whoever could catch one of them, went and received.

Suet. Ner.
30.

Suetonius says, Nero gave a musician and a gladiator the estates and houses of illustrious Senators decorated with the ornaments of triumph. He was as fond of a monkey as Caligula was of his horse; and accordingly gave the animal houses in town, and lands in the country, and when it died, buried it with royal pomp. He never wore the same cloaths twice. He gamed excessively high: he fished with a golden net, the cords of which were purple. Whenever he travelled, not less than a thousand carriages followed; the mules that drew them were all shod with silver, and the drivers dressed in the richest stuffs, with a multitude of blacks and running footmen, each with a rich scarf and bracelets.

Suet. Ner.
32.

If to these profusions we add the rage of building, still more ruinous than all the rest, we shall readily conceive how the revenues of the Roman Empire could not suffice Nero; nor shall we wonder at his being so distressed as not to have money to pay the troops and reward the veterans. As he was determined not to retrench, rapine and extortion was his only resource. No low chicanery could be thought of which he did not practise to squeeze money from private men as well as from the public. He never gave an employment without saying to the person he bestowed it on, "You know
" what

His rapines
and sacrileges.

“ what I must have ;” and exhorted them all A. R. 815.
 to plunder as much as they could : “ Let us ast. C. 64.
 “ contrive matters so, said he, that no-body
 “ may have any thing left.” The necessity of Tac. xv. 45.
 rebuilding Rome was a specious pretence to
 exact such immoderate contributions as ruined
 Italy, the Provinces, the allies, and all that
 belonged to the Empire. He made no scruple
 to commit sacrilege ; the very temples of the
 city were not spared ; he robbed them of
 all the gold the old Romans had consecrated
 there, either when they returned the gods
 thanks for their success, or when they implored
 their protection in times of need. In Greece
 and Asia, not only the gifts and offerings,
 but even the statues of the gods, became his
 prey. Acratus and Secundus Carinas were
 sent into the Provinces on that shameful
 expedition : one of them was a * freeman,
 ready to prove his servile obedience by any
 crime ; the other a man of letters, versed in
 the sciences of the Greeks, with which he had
 adorned his mind without bettering his heart. Pausan, l. v.
 Even the temples of Jupiter Olympias and of & x.
 Apollo at Delphos, were not spared : Nero’s
 emissaries took from the latter five hundred
 statues of bronze of men or gods.

Nero, as we see, openly professed impiety, He joins su-
 and yet at the same time, thro’ an oddity un- perstition to
 accountable, tho’ instances of that kind are not impiety.
 uncommon, was superstitious. He once had Suet. Ner.
 a singular veneration for the Syrian goddess, of 36.
 whom

* Ille libertus cuicumque flagitio promptus ; hic Græcâ
 doctrinâ ore tenus exercitus, animum bonis artibus non
 imbuerat. *Tac.*

A. R. 815. whom I have spoken elsewhere* ; but flying
 aft. C. 64. from one extreme to another, afterwards treated
 * *Rom. Hist.* her statue with the utmost indignity. A new
 vol. xiii. superstition succeeded that : some one of the
 lower class of people had made him a present
 of a little image of a young girl, telling him it
 would preserve him from all snares and treachery.
 The conspiracy, I am going to relate, happen-
 ing to be discovered soon after, Nero conceived
 the greatest veneration for that image ; it be-
 came his sovereign deity, and he constantly
 offered up sacrifices to it three times a day.

Seneca
 wants to
 leave the
 court en-
 tirely.
Tac.

Nero grew so habituated to vice, that Seneca
 resolved, if possible, to leave the court entirely,
 which hitherto he had not been able to obtain
 leave to do. He feared his presence might
 seem to authorize his pupil's odious conduct,
 and therefore desired leave to retire to a distant
 estate he had in the country. That being re-
 fused, he counterfeited sickness, and kept his
 room, under pretence of having the gout.
 Tacitus had in his possession authors who said,
 that one of Seneca's freemen; called Cleonicus,
 was ordered by Nero to poison him : but that
 the crime did not succeed ; either because the
 freeman told his patron of it, or that it was
 prevented by the precautions Seneca took, and
 the surprising abstemiousness with which he
 lived, fruits and water being his only food.

Slight in-
 surrection
 occasioned
 by the gla-
 diators in
 Præneste.

Two events of less importance close this year.
 The one was an insurrection occasioned by some
 gladiators that were kept in the city of Præneste.
 The * people, who fear, and yet wish for
 tumults,

* Jam Spartacum et vetera mala rumoribus ferente po-
 pulo, ut est novarum rerum cupiens pavidusque. *Tac.*
 xv. 46.

tumults, expected a new war like that of Spar- A. R. 815.
 tacus, and ills equal to those that famous gla- aft. C. 64.
 diator made Italy suffer. The guard in Præ-
 neste was sufficient to put a stop to it.

Nero's too peremptory orders were the cause Nero's too
peremptory
orders occa-
sions a
wreck.
 of a wreck. He had commanded the fleet in
 the Tuscan sea to be off Campania on a day he
 positively fixed, without making any allowance
 for stress of weather or dangers of the sea. The
 fleet set sail accordingly from Formii in a very
 high wind, and attempting to double Cape Mi-
 senum, was drove with such violence on the
 Cumæan shore, that most of the great gallees,
 with many smaller vessels were lost.

I shall not speak of the prodigies Tacitus
 mentions towards the end of this year ; but shall
 only observe, that a comet appeared, which, Comet.
 according to the prejudices of those times, was
 thought a very bad omen. Nero took care to
 offer up the most illustrious blood of Rome to
 appease the angry gods.

BOOK XII.

SECT. I.

Conspiracy against Nero. Names of the chief conspirators. Character of Piso, whom they intended to make Emperor. Epicharis communicates the plot to a sea-officer. She is betrayed, and kept in prison. It is proposed to kill Nero at a country-seat of Piso, who opposes it. Last plan, on which the conspirators resolve. The conspiracy is discovered. Epicharis's courage. Her death. Piso is advised to venture to try the people and soldiers. He rejects that advice, and waits quietly for death. Death of Lateranus. Seneca's death. Paulina wants to die with Seneca. Nero prevents her. It is not certain that Seneca was innocent of the conspiracy. His presumptuous confidence in his own virtue. He has been too much praised. Fænius Rufus is at last detected. Subrius Flavius is likewise discovered. His heroic liberty and fortitude. Death of Sulpicius Asper. Death of the Consul Vestinus, who however had no share in the conspiracy. Lucan's death. End of the conspiracy. Nero's liberalities to the soldiers. Nero acquaints the Senate and people with the conspiracy. Flattering decree of the Senate.

P. SILIUS NERVA.
M. VESTINUS ATTICUS.

A.R. 816,
aft. C. 65.

NERO was in the eleventh year of his reign, and enjoyed the fruits of his crimes unmolested, when Silius Nerva and Vestinus Atticus were made Consuls. He * even gloried in them as so many exploits that added to his grandeur, and said, none of his predecessors had ever known the extent of the Imperial power. A powerful conspiracy, formed against him this year, made him sensible of the dangers to which a bloody-minded Prince could not but be exposed, at a time when shedding a tyrant's blood was thought the most glorious of deeds.

Conspiracy
against Ne-
ro.
Tac. Ann.
xv. 48.
Suet. Ner.
37.
Dia.

Such was the spirit that reigned in every part of this conspiracy, according to the account Tacitus has left us of it. Each word shews how much that historian himself approved the design. His expressions are so strong, that I must take the liberty to soften some of them, which carry that doctrine rather too far.

The plan of the conspiracy was formed the year before, and every one had shewn the greatest eagerness to be admitted into it. Senators, knights, warriors, and even women, prompted by their hatred to Nero, and love of Piso, whom they proposed raising to the Empire, were desirous to share an enterprize they thought equally noble and beneficial to their country.

Names of
the chief
conspirators
Character of
Piso, whom
they intend-
ed to make
Emperor.

Piso,

* *Flatus inflatusque tantis velut successibus negavit quemquam Principum scisse quid sibi liceret. Suet. Ner. 37.*

A.R.816. Piso*, whose name speaks his nobility, and aft. C.65. who was related to the greatest families in Rome, had gained the affection and esteem of the people by his virtues, or qualities that looked like virtues. His eloquence was displayed in defending the causes of the citizens; liberal towards his friends, polite and affable even to strangers; to those engaging qualifications was added a pleasing form of person, an advantageous shape and fine physiognomy. But neither gravity of manners, nor moderation in pleasure, was to be required from him; an indulgent mildness, magnificence, and even luxury, were what he delighted in. Most people liked him the better for it; such was the general habitude of vice, that severity would have been dreaded if allied to supreme power.

A man of Piso's character seems not very fit to form a conspiracy; nor was he author of that we are speaking of. It is uncertain who first broached it. Hatred to Nero was so universal a sentiment, that that alone was sufficient, without chief or other signal, to make multitudes form at once the design of killing him. Subrius Flavius, Tribune of a Pretorian cohort, and Sulpicius Asper, a Centurion, were

* Is, Calpurnio genere ortus, ac multas insignesque familias paternâ nobilitate complexus, claro apud vulgum rumore erat, per virtutem aut species virtutibus similes. Nam, ut facundiam tuendis civibus exercebat, largitionem adversus amicos, et ignotis quoque comi sermone et congressu. Aderant etiam fortuita, corpus procerum, decora facies: sed procul gravitas morum, aut voluptatum parsimonia. Lenitati ac magnificentiæ, et aliquando luxui indulgebat. Idque pluribus probabatur, qui in tantâ vitiorum dulcedine summum imperium non restrictum nec perseverum volunt. Tac.

were the most zealous, if we may judge by the A.R. 816.
intrepidity with which they suffered death after act. C. 65.
the enterprize was discovered and failed.

The poet Lucan, and Plautius Lateranus, Consul elect, likewise entered into the plot with great warmth and inveterate hatred. A personal motive animated Lucan. Highly jealous of the honour of his poetry, he was vexed to see the success of his works thwarted by Nero, who, as we have seen, likewise valued himself on writing verses. Among other things he was particularly nettled at the Emperor's having come one day as if to hear him recite one of his performances, and maliciously leaving him in the middle of it, under pretence of going to the Senate, but in reality with a view to disconcert him. Lucan's first revenge was that which poets always have at command: and after having fawningly flattered that cruel Prince in his *Pharsalia*, so far as to say, that " * if the horrors of civil wars were necessary to make way for Nero, even the crimes and disasters that were the consequences of them were benefactions when so rewarded;" he tore him to pieces in lampoons and satires. Not content with that, he resolved the sword should right him of the injuries he thought he had received, but, as we shall see, perished in the attempt. Lateranus had no private pique Tac. against Nero; love of his country, and the public good, was what alone warmed his breast.

Two

* Quod si non aliam venturo fata Neroni

Invenere viam — — —

Jam nihil, O superi querimur, scelera ipsa nefasque

Hæc mercede placent. *Luc. Pharsal. l. xxv.*

VOL. IV.

Q

A.R. 816. Two Senators, Flavius Scævinius and Afranius Quintianus, behaved on this occasion very differently from the general character they had of being slothfully effeminate, for they readily, and at the very first, espoused a cause that required the greatest intrepidity. Tacitus does not say what reasons Scævinius had. Anger was Quintianus's motive, Nero having defamed him in some verses, by so much the more bitter, as they contained nothing but truth.

Such were the chief promoters and heads of the conspiracy; and by hints properly dropt, and seasonable reflections on the Prince's crimes, the danger the Empire was in of being totally ruined, and the necessity of seeking a remedy for so great an evil: several Roman Knights were induced to enter into their views, the most remarkable of which were Tullius Senecion, and Antonius Natalis. Senecion was extremely familiar with Nero; his situation was consequently very delicate, to be forced to divide his time and connections between the Prince and those that conspired against his life. Natalis was Piso's intimate friend and confidant.

The conspirators were joined by some other officers of the Pretorian cohorts besides the two already mentioned; but the soul of their undertaking seemed to be the Prefect Fœnius Rufus, a man of unblemished conduct and character, and for that very reason hated by his colleague Tigellinus, whose credit was greater with Nero, because he was more vicious; and who endeavoured to ruin Fœnius, by accusing him of having been guilty of adultery with Agrippina, and consequently of regretting and thinking how to revenge her death. Fear, therefore,

therefore, was what determined Fænius to engage in a desperate act from which alone he could hope for safety; and as his post gave him a great power, and afforded several means to facilitate the success of so hazardous an enterprise; the moment he opened his mind to the conspirators, he gave them fresh courage, and they began to consider seriously of the properest time and place for the execution of their plot.

Much time need not have been spent in deliberating, if all had been as intrepid as Subrius Flavius. He proposed attacking Nero whilst he should be singing on the stage, or in his nocturnal rambles thro' the city. The chance * of meeting with him but slightly attended was what made Subrius think of the latter expedient; and in the other case, the multitude of spectators who would be witnesses to so glorious a deed, inflamed his great soul that thirsted after glory. Hope of impunity, the bane of all bold enterprises, made his proposal be rejected.

Whilst they were thus debating, sometimes hoping for a happy moment to crown their attempt with success, and then again withheld by fear, a woman called Epicharis, who till then had led no very honourable life, being informed, how is not known, of the conspiracy, spurred on by exhortations and reproaches those that were concerned in it. At last, tired with the slowness of their proceedings, she re-

Epicharis communicates the plot to an officer. She is betrayed, and kept in prison.

Q 2

solved

* Hic occasio solitudinis, ibi ipsa frequentia tanti decoris testis, pulcherrimum animum extimulaverant, nisi impunitatis cupido retinuisset, magnis conatibus semper advenia. Tac. xv. 50.

A.R. 816. solved to exert herself; and accordingly, being
aft. C. 65. in Campania, proposed sounding the chief officers of the Misenum fleet, to try to bring them over to her scheme. To that end she applied to the Tribune Volusius Proculus, who did not think the reward he had received equal to the crime he had committed in being one of Agrippina's murderers. That officer, talking with Epicharis, (whether he had known her long or not is uncertain) complained of Nero's ingratitude, and went so far as to express a desire to be revenged if a proper opportunity offered. Epicharis concluded she had found what she wanted, and made no doubt of securing him, and by his means many more; the conquest she had made appeared to her by no means contemptible. The fleet offered many opportunities of attacking Nero, who was fond of sailing about Misenum and Pozzuolo. She caught therefore at what Volusius said; enumerated all the Prince's cruelties, and added, "That the Senate could bear with him no longer, and that measures were taken by a great number of good citizens to make Nero atone for all the ills he caused mankind; that if Volusius would join so many brave men, and help them with some of his best soldiers, no reward could be greater than what he might expect." She said no more, and took care not to mention the names of the conspirators. Her discretion was very lucky; for Volusius no sooner left her but he went immediately to Nero, and told him what he had heard. Epicharis was sent for, and confronted with her accuser; but as there were no witnesses she easily refuted him. Nero, however,
would

would have her remain in prison, suspecting, A.R. 816. with reason, that what was not proved might aft. C. 65. however be true.

This accident alarmed the conspirators, who, fearing they should be discovered, resolved to make haste, and proposed executing their design at Piso's country-seat near Baii, where Nero went frequently, because he liked the place. There he used to bathe himself and dine and sup familiarly, laying aside his state * and dismissing even his guards. Piso would not agree to it, alledging the odious circumstances of violation of hospitality, of the religious ceremonies of the table polluted by the blood of a Prince, undoubtedly criminal, but whose death would in such a case be thought an impious perfidy. That idea, he said, terrified him, adding, that, after all, a design formed for the public good ought to be executed in a public place, or in that very palace that was built on the ruins of the city, and adorned with the spoils of the universe. That was but a pretence: the true cause of Piso's refusal was, that he feared a rival in L. Silanus, whose name, the honour he had of being descended from Augustus, and the most excellent and polite education he had received from his uncle C. Cassius, entitled him to aspire to the highest post; and if the murder of Nero should be taken ill by the republic, if the conspirators should give room to think they had violated the most sacred laws, Silanus might chance to reap the benefit of a deed in which he had no concern, and be raised to the Empire by those who had no share in the conspiracy. Many

It is proposed to kill Nero at a country-seat of Piso, who opposes it.

Q 3

were

* Omissis excubiis, et fortunæ suæ mole. Tac. xv. 52.

A.R. 816. were of opinion too, that Piso likewise feared
 aft. C. 65. the Consul Vestinus, who was not in the plot, and whose enterprizing genius might induce him either to be tempted by the charms of liberty, or to make choice of another Emperor, who should owe his elevation to him. Piso therefore was not willing to give Vestinus room to asperse him, nor to prejudice the Senate the moment the news of Nero's death should reach Rome, and put the whole city in combustion.

Last plan,
 on which
 the conspi-
 rators re-
 solve.

After deliberating a long time, the conspirators, at last, agreed to execute their design during the games in the Circus, which were celebrated the twelfth of April in honour of Ceres. They pitched on that day, because Nero, who seldom appeared in public, but generally kept within his palace and gardens, seldom missed the diversions of the Circus, where access to his person was most easy, on account of the joy and freedom that reigned on those occasions. Lateranus undertook the most dangerous part, the opening of the tragic scene. Under pretence of requesting money to settle his own affairs, he was to throw himself at Nero's feet, and as he was a tall, strong man, and full of courage, was to catch hold of his legs and pull him down. The Centurions and Tribunes of the guard, who were in the secret with the other conspirators, were then to rush upon and stab him, whilst Lateranus kept him down. Scævinius begged he might give the tyrant the first stab, and destined to that use a dagger he had taken out of a temple, and always wore about him, (without doubt under his garment) as consecrated to some great deed. Piso was to wait the event in the temple of
 Ceres,

Ceres, where the Prefect Fænius and the rest A. R. 816. of the conspirators were to take and carry him aft. C. 65. to the Pretorian camp. Pliny, who wrote a History of Nero, added, according to Tacitus, that Claudius's daughter Antonia was prevailed on to revive her pretensions to the throne by marrying Piso, and that she promised to be with him in that critical moment, to secure him the favour of the soldiers and people. Tacitus thinks it not at all probable, either that Antonia should expose herself to such certain danger for such uncertain hopes; or that Piso, who was excessively fond of his wife, and consequently could not be disposed to contract another marriage, should agree to any such thing: * unless it be said, that ambition and thirst after grandeur will prevail over every other sentiment.

It is surprising with what fidelity the secret The conspiracy is discovered. was kept a long time by so many persons of different ages, sexes, orders, and conditions. The first intelligence Nero had, came from Scævinius's family. The evening before the day fixed for the execution of the enterprize, Scævinius, after a long conference with Antonius Natalis, returning home, made his will. He drew the dagger in question, and finding fault with the bluntness of the point, bid Milichus, one of his freemen, sharpen it. He ordered a grand entertainment to be got ready with unusual care and expence; set free some of his favourite slaves, and gave money to others. Himself seemed lost in thought, and taken up with some very important consideration, tho' he affected to seem gay, and to talk of trivial matters. Lastly, he ordered the same Milichus to prepare bandages

Q 4

* *Nisi si cupido dominandi cunctis affectibus flagrantior est. Tac.*

A.R. 816. bandages for wounds, and whatever was necessary. C. 65. sary to stop blood.

Whether Milichus was before-hand apprised of the conspiracy, or, which is more probable, that the singularity of his patron's behaviour made him suspect something, thus much at least is certain, that the expectation of the great rewards he might hope for by revealing such a secret, soon tempted him. He consulted his wife, who did not hesitate a moment, but terrified him with the thoughts of any one's being before-hand with him. "You are not the only one, said she, that has seen all you tell me of. Other freemen and several slaves were witnesses to it as well as yourself. It will be to no purpose for you to keep the secret; but the reward will be for him that gives the first intelligence."

At break of day Milichus ran to the Servilian gardens, where Nero then was. At first he was refused admittance; but insisting he had somewhat to impart of the utmost consequence, he prevailed on the Ushers to carry him to Epaphroditus, the Emperor's freeman, whose business it was to receive the petitions of private persons. Epaphroditus introduced him to Nero, and Milichus declared a horrid conspiracy was carrying on, shewing the dagger designed to stab him, and offering to maintain what he said to his patron's face. Scævinius was immediately secured by a party of soldiers, and brought before Nero, where he defended himself extremely well at first. He said, "the dagger for which he was accused, had long been the object of his fore-fathers' veneration, and that his freeman had privately taken it away from his

“ his bed-chamber. That he had made his
“ will often, according as the situation of his al-^{A.R. 816.}
“ fairs required, and without any distinction of ^{aft. C. 65.}
“ days. That he had likewise, on many other oc-
“ casions, given money to his slaves, or set some
“ at liberty : and if he had then been more li-
“ beral than usual, it was because he feared the
“ bad situation of his affairs, and the proceed-
“ ings of his creditors might cause his will to
“ be set aside. That as to the entertainment
“ he had given, that was a most frivolous ob-
“ jection ; for he had always loved good living,
“ and to enjoy the pleasures of life, tho’ he was
“ sensible some rigid censors found fault with
“ him for it. In the last place, he flatly denied
“ the article of bandages and remedies, main-
“ taining that to be an invention of Milichus’s,
“ who, conscious how little stress could be laid
“ on the rest of his accusation, in which he was
“ both informer and witness, added that cir-
“ cumstance to give it some weight.” To these
answers, specious in themselves, he added an
intrepid look and tone of voice ; calling his
freeman an ungrateful wretch, with such an air
of conscious innocence, that Milichus was quite
confounded, if his wife had not reminded him
of Scævinius’s conference with Antonius Nata-
lis the evening before, and that both of them
were Piso’s intimate friends.

Natalis was sent for, and both he and Scævinius were examined separately, touching the subject of the conversation they had had together. Their answers not agreeing, the suspicions against them of course increased ; they were put in irons, and the rack prepared to lay them on. The sight of that terrified and made them confess the truth. Natalis yielded first, and named
Piso

A.R. 816. Piso, then Seneca, whether with reason or not
 aft. C. 65. is uncertain, as accomplices. Tacitus thinks
 Natalis accused the latter only with a view to
 please Nero, who had long hated Seneca to
 death, and tried every method to undo him.
 Scævinius, being told Natalis had confessed his
 crime, did the same, and thinking all was dis-
 covered, declared part of what he knew, and
 gave an additional list of accomplices. Lucan,
 Quintianus, and Senecion, denied the accusa-
 tion for some time; but at last, prevailed on
 by hopes of impunity which was promised
 them, they too confessed; and, to justify their
 having so long persisted in being silent, accused
 even those they had the greatest reasons to re-
 spect and spare. Lucan impeached his mother
 Atilia; and the two others intimate friends.

Epicharis's
 courage.
 Her death.

Nero recollecting Epicharis detained in prison
 in consequence of Volusius Proculus's charge,
 ordered her to undergo a severe torture. He
 made no doubt but that the violence of the pain
 would easily get the better of a woman. But
 he was mistaken. Epicharis's resolution was
 proof against any trials it could be put to. Nei-
 ther whips, nor fire, nor all the cruelties the ex-
 ecutioners could invent, could force a word.
 The next day she was to be laid on the rack a-
 gain, to which end she was carried to it in a
 chair (for all her limbs were so dislocated that
 she could not stand.) To avoid a repetition of
 that punishment, and not to deviate from the
 constancy she had shewn from the beginning,
 she tied the handkerchief that was about her
 neck in a slip-knot, fastened one end of it to the
 back of the chair she was in, and leaning for-
 ward with her weight, soon deprived herself
 of the little life she had left.

Tacitus

Tacitus extols this invincible generosity of A. R. 816. mind in a freewoman, who, under such cruel aft. C. 65. circumstances, resolutely persisted in protecting strangers, almost unknown to her; whilst men, who were born free, Knights and Senators of Rome, terrified, by the bare thought of pain, and even before they felt the least, gave up to death and torments all that the world contained most dear and valuable to them: for Lucan, Quintianus, and Senecion, proceeded in naming such numbers of accomplices, that Nero was terrified, tho' he had doubled his guard, and taken every precaution possible for his own safety. The whole city was filled with soldiers, and the gates, walls, river, and sea, were guarded. Nothing was to be seen in the streets, houses, country about Rome, and neighbouring towns and villages, but parties of soldiers and Pretorian horse, mixed with Germans, on whose fidelity Nero depended chiefly, because they were foreigners.

These detachments brought in from every part, persons accused, loaded with chains. They arrived in troops one after another, almost without interruption, and were kept crouded up against the gates of the garden where the Prince was, 'till they were admitted to be examined. Then the smallest sign of joy that had ever been shewn at the sight of any of the conspirators, the least conversation, an accidental meeting, or having chanced to be invited
to

* Clariore exemplo libertina mulier in tanta necessitate alienos et prope ignotos protegendo: quam ingenui et viri, et Equites Romani, Senatoresque, intacti tormentis, carissima suorum quisque pignorum proderent. Tac. xv. 67.

A.R. 816. to the same entertainment, were so many
aft. C. 65. crimes in whoever it had happened to. Besides,
Nero, who presided in person at those exami-
nations, assisted by his faithful Tigellinus, Fæ-
nius Rufus was very strenuous in pressing and
interrogating the accused, having himself as
yet been impeached by none, and affecting to
believe with cruelty towards his friends, the
better to conceal his intelligence with them.
Subrius Flavius, that brave Tribune, who was
one of the chief promoters of the conspiracy,
was seated next Fænius Rufus, and, like him,
employed in examining the criminals. He
whispered Fænius, desiring leave to draw his
sword, and instantly put the intended murder
in execution. The Prefect answered him by
a signal of disapprobation, and checked the
ardour of that officer, whose hand was already
on the hilt of his sword.

Piso is ad-
vised to ven-
ture to try
the people
and soldiers.

The conspiracy, we see, was not yet entirely
discovered, nor the danger Nero was threatened
with, removed. The very instant the first in-
telligence of it was given him, whilst Milichus
was yet under examination, and before Scævinius,
had made any confession, some of Piso's friends
advised him to go to the Praetorian camp, or
mount the Tribunal for harangues, and try how
the soldiers and people were affected *. " If,
" said

* Si conatibus ejus conscii aggregarentur, secuturos etiam
integros, magnamque motæ rei famam, quæ plurimum in
novis consiliis valeret. Nihil adversum hoc Neroni provi-
sum. Etiam fortes viros subitis terreri: nedum ille Sceni-
cus, Tigellino scilicet cum pellicibus suis comitante, armu
contra ciceret. Multa experiendo confieri, quæ signibus
ardua videantur. Frustra silentium et fidem in tot conscid-
rum animis et corporibus spectari. Cruciatu aut premio
cuncta pervia esse. Venturos, qui ipsam quoque vincerent
pos-

" said they, those who are in the secret join A.R. 816.
 " you, they will be followed by many others; act. C. 65.
 " the very boldness of such a step will bring
 " numbers over to your side. In such an en-
 " terprize, to begin well is doing all. Nero
 " is not prepared to resist such an attack; even
 " the bravest men are at a loss, when unfore-
 " seen dangers fall suddenly upon them: much
 " less will that comedian, backed by Tigel-
 " linus's scraglio, dare to have recourse to arms.
 " Things that seem dangerous to the fearful,
 " often succeed with the bold. It would be in
 " vain for you to hope, such numbers of ac-
 " complices will keep your secret: torture or
 " reward will extort it. You will soon see sol-
 " diers coming hither to load you with irons,
 " and bear you away to a most cruel and igno-
 " minious death. How much more glorious
 " will it be for you to fall whilst nobly striving
 " to save the Republic, and invoking the assist-
 " ance of all good citizens in defence of li-
 " berty? Even if the soldiers and people should
 " forsake you, 'till at least your death, worthy your
 " ancestors, will be applauded by posterity."

PISO was not moved by those strong exhor-
 tations, but, after shewing himself a little in
 public, shut himself up, waiting quietly for
 his doom. His house was soon invested by sol-
 diers, purposely chosen by Nero from amongst
 the latest recruits, for he was afraid the old
 troops might have been gained over. PISO
 caused

He rejects
 that advice,
 and waits
 quietly for
 death.

postremo indigni necesse essent. Quanto laudabilius peri-
 turum, dum amplectitur Republicam, dum auxilia liber-
 tati invocat, dum miles potius deesset et plebes deceroret,
 dum ipse majoribus, dum posteris, si vita praeberetur,
 mortem approbarot? Tac.

A.R. 816. caused his veins to be laid open, leaving a will, aft. C. 65. wherein he bestowed the most abject and shameful flatteries on Nero. They were dictated by his love for his wife, who little deserved the affection of an honest man; her conduct being as bad as her beauty was great. Arria Galla, for that was her name, was first married to Domitius Silius, a friend of Piso's, who took her from him. Domitius's weakness and Galla's lewdness covered Piso with eternal shame.

Death of
Lateranus.

Plautius Lateranus, Consul elect, was the second victim of Nero's revenge. He was treated with more rigour than Piso. Neither the choice of death, nor a short time to embrace his children, was allowed him. He was dragged to the place where criminals that were slaves were commonly executed, and there had * his head struck off by a Tribune, who himself was in the conspiracy. Lateranus generously forebore upbraiding him, for being at the same time his executioner and accomplice. The first blow not taking off his head, he presented it again with the same intrepidity as before.

Arrian.
Epict. l. i.

Seneca's
death.
Tac. xv. 60.

It was impossible Seneca should escape Nero's hatred. We have already seen how that ungrateful and barbarous Prince attempted, according to some, to have his preceptor poisoned. But even tho' that fact should be allowed to admit of some doubt, there can be none in thinking Nero glad of an opportunity of getting rid of a troublesome censor: that which the
conspi-

* *Manu Staii Tribuni trucidatur, plenus constantis silentii, nec Tribuno objiciens eamdem conscientiam. Tac. xv. 60.*

conspiracy offered was too fair a one to be missed. A.R. 816.
aft. C. 65.

Seneca was not, however, convicted of being concerned in it. None but Natalis accused him, nor did his accusation amount to much. He said he had been sent by Piso to Seneca, to complain that he had not seen him; and that Seneca had returned for answer, it was not for either of their interests to keep up a correspondence together, but that his safety depended on Piso's life. Granjus Silvanus, Tribune of a Pretorian cohort, was ordered to go and acquaint Seneca with Natalis's deposition, and to ask him whether there was any truth in it.

Seneca, either accidentally, or by design, was that day returned from Campania, and had stopt at a seat of his about four miles from Rome. The Tribune arrived there towards evening, and posted guards round the house. He found Seneca sitting at table, with his wife Paulina, and two friends, and acquainted him with the Emperor's commands. Seneca answered, "It was true, Natalis did come to him from Piso; but that, for his part, he had excused himself only on account of his bad state of health, and because he was fond of retirement and repose. That he had no reason to make his safety depend on the life of any private man; nor was he * naturally inclined to flatter. That none was more sensible of it than Nero, who had experienced from him many more marks of freedom than of servitude."

The

* *Nec sibi promptum in adulatione ingenium, idque nulli magis gnarum quam Neroni, qui saepius libertatem Senecæ, quam servitium, expertus esset. Tac.*

A.R. 816. The Tribune returned with this answer, which
 aft. C. 65. he delivered to Nero * in presence of Poppæa
 and Tigellinus, the Prince's Privy Counsellors
 in all his mad and furious fits. Nero asked
 Granius, whether Seneca was preparing for
 death? "He shewed no sign of fear, answer-
 ed the officer: I saw nothing melancholy
 either in his words or looks." "Go back,
 then, said the Emperor, and let him know
 he is to die." Granius returned by another
 road, in order to call on the Pretorian Pre-
 fect, Fænius Rufus, and to ask him whether
 he should obey his orders; which Fænius ad-
 vised him to do. So * great, says Tacitus, was
 the cowardice of them all: for Granius too was
 one of the conspirators, and yet added to the
 crimes he had engaged to take vengeance of.
 He would not, however, be himself the odious
 minister of such a message; but sent in a Cen-
 turion, who signified the Emperor's commands
 to Seneca.

Seneca, without being disturbed, asked for
 his will, to add some legacies for his friends
 then present; but the Centurion would not
 permit him. "Well †, said Seneca, turning
 towards his friends, since I am not allowed
 to shew my gratitude for the services you
 have

* Poppæa et Tigellino coram, quod erat suævienti Prin-
 cipi intimum consiliorum. *Tac.*

† Fatali omnium ignavia. Nam et Silvanus inter conju-
 ratos erat, augebatque scelera in quorum ultionem consen-
 serat. *Tac.*

‡ Conversus ad amicos, quando meritis eorum referre
 gratiam prohiberetur, quod unum jam tamen et pulcher-
 rimum habeat, imaginem vitæ suæ relinquere testatur; cu-
 jus si memores essent bonarum artium, famam tam constan-
 tis amicitiae laturos. *Tac.*

“ have done me, I leave you the only, and most A.R.816.
 “ valuable thing I can, the example of my aft. C. 65.
 “ life. Be mindful of it, and be true and con-
 “ stant friends.” Seeing tears trickle down
 their cheeks, he endeavoured; partly by ex-
 hortation, and partly by reproof, to inspire them
 with more resolution. “ Where are, said he,
 “ those maxims of wisdom that you have studi-
 “ ed? When will you practise the reflections
 “ with which you have laboured to set your
 “ minds against adversity? Could you be ig-
 “ norant of Nero’s cruelty? After killing his
 “ mother and his brother, what had he more to
 “ do, but to inflict a violent death on the man
 “ who instructed and took care of his in-
 “ fancy.”

Then embracing his wife, he could not but Paulina
 be moved at bidding her this last farewell. He wants to die
 was very fond of her; of which we have a proof with Seneca. Nero
 in one of his letters: “ For * my dear Paulina’s prevents
 “ sake, says he, I value my health. As I her.
 “ know her life depends on mine, I preserve
 “ myself, in order to preserve her: and whilst
 “ my years have strengthened me with regard
 “ to many things, I lose with her that benefit
 “ of age. For, old as I am, I remember I
 “ have a young wife, of whom I ought to
 “ take care; as I cannot prevail on her to love
 “ me with more fortitude, she induces me to
 “ love myself with more care and attention.”

It

* Hoc ego Paulinæ meæ dixi, quæ mihi valetudinem
 meam commendat. Nam quum sciam spiritum illius in
 meo verti, incipio, ut illi consulam, mihi consulere. Et
 quum me fortiorem senectus ad multa reddiderit, hoc be-
 neficium ætatis amitto. Venit enim mihi in mentem, in
 hoc sene et adolescentem esse cui parcitur. Itaque, quo-
 niam ego ab illa non impetro ut me fortius amet, impetrat
 illa à me, ut me diligentius amem. *Sen. Ep. 104.*

VOL. IV.

R

A. R. 816. It was natural for Seneca's tenderness to re-
 aft. C. 65. vive in these last moments: but at the same
 time, it was mixed with fortitude and constancy.
 He begged * and conjured Paulina to moderate
 her grief. "Do not, said he to her, spend
 " your days in continual affliction. Think of
 " the virtuous life I have always led. That is
 " a comfort worthy a noble mind, and will al-
 " leviate your grief for the loss of your hus-
 " band." Paulina answered, She was resolved
 to die with him, and desired the officer, who
 was present, to help her to execute that design.
 Seneca was quite an enthusiast for suicide; and
 besides that, feared to leave a person so dear to
 him, exposed to a thousand hardships after his
 death. He consented therefore to what Paulina
 desired. "I have shewn * you, said he, by
 " what means the bitterness of life may be sof-
 " tened. You prefer the glory of dying. I
 " will not envy you the honour of setting so
 " fair an example. We will die, perhaps with
 " equal constancy, but yours will be the great-
 " est and most resplendent glory." Both had
 the veins of their arms opened at the same time.

Seneca being old, and weakened by the au-
 stere and abstemious life he had lived, his blood
 ran but slowly and even with difficulty, which
 obliged him to have the veins of his legs and
 hams likewise cut. His pains were long and
 violent: and that his wife might not be witness
 to them, nor himself be disturbed by the sight of
 * what

* Rogat oratque temperaret dolor, ne æternum suscipere-
 ret, sed in contemplatione vitæ per virtutem actæ, desiderium
 mariti solatii honestis toleraret. Tac.

† Vitæ delineamenta monstraveram tibi: at tu mortis decus
 mavis: non invidebo exemplo. Sit hujus tam fortis
 exitus constantia penes utrosque par: claritudinis plus in
 tuo fine. Tac.

what she suffered, he advised her to retire to another room. His eloquence did not forsake him even in this cruel extremity : but ordering his secretaries to attend, he dictated to them things which we should be very glad to have : but Tacitus has suppressed them, because in his time they were in every body's hands, and by that reserve has deprived us of them.

Nero was informed of the resolution Paulina had taken : as he had no reason to hate her, and was moreover sensible how odious that lady's death would make his cruelty appear, he ordered her life to be saved, if it was not yet too late. Accordingly the soldiers exhorted Paulina's freemen and slaves to succour their mistress. Her arms were bound up, and the blood stopt, either with her consent, or whilst she was too weak to have the use of her senses † : for such is the malignity of men, that many were of opinion she affected the glory of dying with her husband only whilst she thought Nero's anger implacable ; but finding her mistake, was pretty easily prevailed upon to live. Thus much, however, is certain, that during the few years she survived, her behaviour was always agreeable to that heroic design. She † had always the highest veneration for the memory of her husband, bearing in the extreme paleness of her countenance an indisputable proof of her affection for him, and of the great quantity of blood she had lost.

Seneca, tormented by violent pains, which, however, did not end his life, and hurried by

R 2 . the

* Ut est vulgus ad deteriora promptum. Tac.

† Laudabili in maritum memoriâ, et ore ac membris in eum pallorem albescentibus, ut ostentui esset multum vitalis spiritus egestum. Tac.

A.R. 816. the soldiers, who wanted to be gone, asked his
 aft. C. 65. physician and friend, Statius Annæus, for the
 poison he had taken the precaution to provide
 long before. The poison was hemlock which
 Seneca took, but to no effect, his body being
 too much chilled, and the vessels so relaxed,
 that it could not act upon him. He then or-
 dered his people to put him into a bath of
 warm water, hoping that would either make
 the blood flow or the poison operate. On his
 entrance into it, he took up some of the water,
 with which he sprinkled the slaves that were
 about him; and, alluding to the custom of
 concluding their repasts by libations, in honour
 of Jupiter the saviour: "Let us, said he, per-
 form our libations to Jupiter the deliverer."
 At last he was carried into a hot bath, the steam
 of which suffocated him. He was buried in a pri-
 vate manner, as himself had ordered by a codicil
 to his will, made in the zenith of his prosperity.

It is not cer-
 tain that Se-
 neca was in-
 nocent of
 the conspi-
 racy.

It has been said, that Subrius Flavius, the
 Pretorian Tribune, who acts so great a part in
 this conspiracy, had, with Seneca's consent, pri-
 vately agreed with several Centurions, after
 making use of Piso's name to kill Nero, to kill
 Piso himself, and give the Empire to Seneca,
 as to a man void of blame, and who would owe
 his elevation to his virtue only. Subrius was
 reported to have said on that occasion with some
 warmth, " * What shall we gain by getting rid
 of a fiddler, if an actor is to succeed him?"
 For Piso too acted on the stage in tragedy.

Tacitus mentions this as a report, for the truth
 of which he does not pretend to vouch. But
 Seneca's returning to the neighbourhood of
 Rome

* Non referre dedecori, si citharædus amoveretur, et tra-
 gædus succederet. *Tac.*

Rome the very day the conspiracy was to have been executed, strengthens the suspicion against him. Consequently, tho' Seneca was not convicted of being concerned in the conspiracy, yet he is not entirely cleared of it; and his death, so boasted of and applauded, may possibly have been no more than a punishment he justly deserved.

Another slur on his death is, the presumptuous confidence with which he proposes his own life to his wife and friends, as an example for them to imitate; though many parts of it, as I have taken care to observe, stand in need of great indulgence, and others are absolutely inexcusable.

His presumptuous confidence in his own virtue.

It is therefore without any reason that Lipsius, and other admirers of the Stoics, have bestowed such unbounded praises on Seneca. Those who have supposed him a Christian, and having a literary correspondence with St Paul, were still more blind. What Christian could he be who * made his Sage greater than God, because the perfection of God results from his own nature and essence, and the Sage's from his own freewill and choice!

He has been too much praised.

Hitherto not one of the military officers engaged in the conspiracy had been detected. But at last the horrid proceedings of Fœnius Rufus, who was always most forward to torment his accomplices, was more than they could bear: and as he was interrogating and pressing Scævinius with menaces, the latter answered him with a sneer, "Nobody knows what you ask me better than yourself. Speak, and shew your gratitude to so good a Prince."

Fœnius Rufus is at last detected.

Tac. xv. 66.

R 3

"At

* Est aliquid quo sapiens antecedit Deum. Ille natura beneficio non timet: suo sapiens. Sen. *Epi*: liii,

A. R. 816. At * these words, Fænius was disconcerted,
aft. C. 65. turned pale, and could not speak, nor dared to hold his tongue. His faltering voice and inarticulate sounds, betrayed his fear; and Cervarius Proculus, a Roman Knight, with some other prisoners, attacking him, with a resolution to convict him, the Emperor commanded a very strong soldier, called Cassius, who was present, to seize the Prefect, and put him in irons.

The same persons next accused the Tribune Subrius Flavius, who at first flatly denied the accusation, alledging in his defence, the difference of his character and profession, and saying, a military officer like him ought not to be suspected of associating with cowards and effeminate people, men who had never known how to handle a sword. But when more closely pressed, he boldly owned the fact, and gloried in it: and when Nero asked him what could induce him to forget the military oath he had taken to be faithful to his Emperor, he answered, "Thou * hast forced me to hate thee. No officer, no soldier, could be more attached to thee, than I was so long as thou deservedst to be loved. My affection turned into hatred from the hour of thy becoming a paricide, killing thy mother and wife, a coachman, comedian, and incendiary." Nothing in the whole conspiracy stung Nero so much
as

* Non vox adversum eam Fænio, non silentium: sed verba sua præpediens, et pavoris manifestus. *Tac.*

† Oderam te: nec quisquam tibi fidelior fuit, dum amari meministi. Odisse cœpi postquam parricida matris et uxoris, aurigæ, histrio, et incendiarius exististi.—Nihil in illâ conjuratione gravius auribus Neronis accidisse constitit, qui ut faciendis sceleribus promptus, ita audiendi quæ faceret insolens erat. *Tac.* *

as those words: he was used to commit crimes, A.R. 816.
but not to be reproached with them. aft. C. 65.

Subrius suffered death with great intrepidity. Veianus Niger, a Tribune, who was charged with the execution, having ordered a grave to be dug for Subrius in a field hard by, the latter laughed at it, saying, It was neither wide nor deep enough; and, turning to the soldiers, What! do not you know your trade? said he to them. Niger begging he would hold his head steady, "I wish, replied Subrius, thou mayst have as steady a hand to strike." And in fact, Niger was so terrified, it was with difficulty he cut off his head in two blows; of which he made his boast to Nero, as of a refinement of cruelty; saying, he had killed Subrius in a blow and a half.

Sulpicius Asper, a Centurion, imitated the brave example Subrius had set him. When Nero asked him, why he had conspired against his Emperor's life, he answered, "I did it out of love to you; there was no other way to stop the progress of your crimes." That officer, and the others who were in the same case, met death with equal intrepidity. Not so Fœnius Rufus, whose lamentations reached even to his last will.

Nero expected impatiently, and waited for some body to accuse the Consul Vestinus, whom he looked upon as a man of a violent temper, and a personal enemy to him. He * had formerly been intimately connected with him, and

Death of Sulpicius Asper.

Death of the Consul Vestinus, who, however, had no share in the conspiracy.

R 4

from

* *Neronis odium adversus Vestinum ex intimâ sodalitate œperat, dum hic ignaviam Principis penitus cognitam despicit, ille ferociam amici metuit, sæpe asperis facetiis illulus, quæ ubi multum ex vero traxere, acrem sui memoriam relinquunt. Tac. xv. 68.*

A. R. 816. from thence sprung their hatred : for, Vestinus aft: C. 65. discovering the baseness of Nero's character, held him in great contempt, and Nero dreaded the pride of a friend who, had often attacked him with very keen sarcasms : an offence of an unpardonable nature when founded on truth. Besides, Vestinus had lately married Statilia Messalina, though he well knew the Prince was one of those who kept up a commerce with that lady. For these reasons, Nero wished for a fair opportunity of laying hold of Vestinus. But the conspirators had not let him into their secret ; some, because they had long been at variance with him, and the greater number, for that they mistrusted his untractable temper, which made it very difficult to keep well with him. As nothing was laid to his charge, nor any one attempted to accuse him, Nero could not proceed against him by form of law, but found out an expedient in virtue of his military power : calling the house Vestinus lived in a citadel, because it overlooked the Forum, and pretending to be afraid of his legions of slaves, all young, well made, and about the same age, he sent the Tribune Gerlanus at the head of a cohort, with orders to prevent the Consul's bad designs.

Vestinus had that day performed all the functions of his office ; and, either not fearing any thing, or, in order to conceal his fears, gave a great entertainment. On a sudden the soldiers arrived, and told him the Tribune wanted him. He immediately went out to him, and found every thing preparing for his death with great diligence ; the surgeon was ready, and he was shut up in a room, where his veins were opened, and, full of life, he was plunged into
a bath

a bath of warm water: all this was done with-
 out his uttering the least complaint. In the
 mean time, his guests, who were at table, were
 surrounded by the soldiers who guarded them,
 till Nero, guessing what terror they must be in,
 and laughing at it; at last sent word pretty
 late in the night, that they might go to their
 homes, saying, they * had paid dear enough for
 the honour of supping with the Consul.

Lucan's death followed that of Vestinus. Lucan's death.
 Having lost a great quantity of blood, and
 finding his feet and hands grow cold, and the
 extremities of his body almost dead, whilst
 the parts nearer the heart still retained their
 natural warmth, he recollected the descrip-
 tion he had given in his Pharsalia of a death
 much like his own, and repeated the lines,
 which Lipsius rightly judges were the follow-
 ing † :

Soon from the lower parts the spirits fled,
 And motionless th' exhausted limbs lay dead:
 Not so the nobler regions, where the heart,
 And heaving lungs their vital pow'rs exert;
 There ling'ring late, and long conflicting, life
 Rose against fate, and still maintain'd the
 strife:

Driv'n out at length, unwillingly and slow,
 She left her mortal house, and sought the
 shades below. Rowe's *Trans.*

Those

* Satis supplicii fuisse pro epulis consularibus. *Tac.*

† ————— Pars ultima trunci
 Tradidit in letum vacuos vitalibus artus.
 At tumidus quâ pulmo jacet, quâ viscera fervent,
 Hæserunt ibi fata diu: luctataque multum
 Hæc cum parte, viri vix omnia membra tulerunt.
Luc. Phars. iii. 638.

A. R. 816. Those were Lucan's last words; still intent,
 aīt. C. 65. on his poetry, as we see, to his latest moment. By a codicil to his will, he directed his father Annæus Mella, Seneca's brother, to correct some parts of his works. He was not thirty years old when he died. His *Pharsalia* is certainly the work of a great genius; but it is a history, not a poem: nor has his stile any other merit than strength and energy; it has not the graces of poetry. Quintilian * thinks Lucan should be ranked rather among the orators than poets: to which we may add, that he is an orator only by the strength and boldness of his thoughts and expressions; but that nature, sweetness, and simplicity, are not to be found in him.

The death of the other conspirators afforded Tacitus nothing worthy being recorded. He only observes, that Sævinius Quintianus and Senecion died with more resolution than could have been expected from the effeminate luxurious life they had lived. It was common for the Romans, in those times, to hold death in contempt, and the Tribune Granius Sylvanus, tho' pardoned, stabbed himself.

End of the
 conspiracy.

The † city was not more filled with funerals, than the Capitol with victims. The fathers, brothers, relations, and friends of those who perished, returned thanks to the gods, adorned their houses with garlands and branches of laurel, and ran to throw themselves at the Prince's feet,
 and

* *Lucanus magis oratoribus quam poetis annumerandus. Quintil. Inst. Orat. x. 1.*

† *Compleri interim urbs funeribus, Capitolium victimis, Alius filio, fratre alius, aut propinquo, aut amico, interfectis, agere gratias deis, ornare laureâ domum, genua ipsius advolvi, dextram osculis fatigare. Tac. xv. 71.*

and kiss his hand. Flattery had so blinded A. R. 816. Nero, that he thought those demonstrations of aft. C. 65. joy real, and proceeding from the heart; and by that induced to show some lenity, he granted a free pardon to Antonius Natalis, and Cervarius Proculus, in consideration of the readiness with which they had confessed their own guilt, and informed against their accomplices. Mili-chus, who first discovered the conspiracy, received great riches from the Prince, and took the surname of *Soter*, which in Greek signifies Saviour.

Such of the accused as were only suspected, but not convicted, and against whom Nero had no particular hatred, were not treated with rigour. Several Tribunes of the Pretorian cohorts were quit for losing their posts. Novius Priscus, a friend of Seneca's, was banished, and his wife Antonia Flaccilla followed him. Glicius Gallus, accused by Quitianus, had the same fate, and the same comfort. His wife Egnatia Maximilla followed him in his exile, and so long as she was suffered to enjoy her own personal estate, shared it with him. When that was taken from her, she shared her husband's misery. Cadicia, Scævinus's widow, and Cæsonius Maximus, one of Seneca's friends, knew nothing of their being accused, till sentence was pronounced against them. They were banished Italy. Cæsonius had shewn a generous attachment to Seneca when in disgrace, and probably during his exile in Corsica. In return, he found a faithful friend in Ovid, of whom we know nothing farther, but whom Martial greatly commends on that occasion. " Nero * con-
" demned

* Hunc Nero damnavit, sed tu damnare Neronem
Ausus es, et profugi, non tua fata, sequi.

A. R. 816. "demned your friend, says Martial to Ovid,
 aft. C. 65. "but you was not afraid to condemn Nero,
 "nor to follow the fate of a banished man.
 "You bore him company in his disgrace,
 "tho' you would not whilst he was Procon-
 "sul."

Rufius Crispinus was likewise banished under pretence of the conspiracy. He had formerly been married to Poppæa; that was enough to make Nero hate him.

Every one any way eminent was suspicious to him. Two men of distinguished learning, Virginius Flaccus, and Musonius Rufus, the one a Rhetorician, the other a Philosopher, were banished, to reward them for the care they took to form and instruct youth. Tacitus mentions some other exiles, of whom we know nothing more than the names. Atilla, Lucan's mother, without being either acquitted or condemned, was left in oblivion. Suetonius assures us, that the children of those who suffered death were expelled the city, and that several of them were imprisoned or starved.

Suet. Ner.
36.

Nero's liberalities to the soldiers.
Tac. xv. 71.

*About 161.

A final end being put to the conspiracy, Nero, careful to secure the affection of the Pretorians, made an harangue, without doubt, in praise of their fidelity, and gave them two thousand * sesterces a man. To that he added, a gratification to perpetuity, and would have them for the future receive their corn as a present

Æquora per Scylla magnus comes exulis isti,
 Qui modo nolueras Consulibus esse comes.

Mart. Epigr. vii. 44.

sent from the Emperor, whereas they used to provide it themselves, and pay the market price for it. A.R. 816
aft. C. 65.

He afterwards convened the Senate, as if he had wanted to impart some victory gained over the enemies of the republic. The first thing he did was to bestow the ornaments of triumph on Petronius Turpilianus, a man of Consular dignity, on Cocceius Nerva, Pretor elect, who, doubtless, is the same Nerva that reigned after Domitian, and on Tigellinus the Pretorian Prefect. The two latter were likewise honoured each of them with two statues, one erected in the Forum, the other in the Imperial palace. Nymphidius, of whom we shall soon have occasion to speak, and who seems to have been Tigellinus's colleague in the room of Fænius Rufus, received the ornaments of Consul.

Nero acquaints the Senate and people with the conspiracy.

Nero, after having congratulated himself in the Senate for the discovery of the conspiracy, addressed a declaration to the people on the same subject, and published the trials of the criminals. He thought that precaution necessary, to put a stop to the malice of popular reports, by which he was accused of having confounded the innocent with the guilty. The conspiracy itself is an indisputable fact. It was proved at that very time: and the confession of those who returned from exile after Nero's death, sets it beyond any possibility of doubt.

Whilst every one in the Senate exhausted all his flattery on Nero, and the most sorrowful endeavoured to appear most glad, Junius

A.R. 816. nius Gallio, brother to Seneca, and for that
 aft. C. 65. reason trembling for his own fate, was at-
 tacked by Salienus Clemens, who called him
 a public enemy and parricide. But the Se-
 nate all united to impose silence on that
 wretched persecutor, who wanted to make
 the public ill's subservient to his private re-
 venge, and open again a sore the Prince's cle-
 mency was said to have closed for ever.

Flattering
 decree of
 the Senate.

The Senate passed a decree, by which of-
 ferings and thanksgivings to the 'gods were
 ordered, and especially to the Sun, to which
 planet an ancient temple stood dedicated,
 near the Circus, where the crime was to
 have been committed: so that it was visible
 the protection of that deity was what had
 brought to light the dark mystery of the
 conspiracy. It was likewise ordered, that the
 number of chariot races should be increased
 on the day the games were celebrated in the
 Circus in honour of Ceres; that being the
 day the conspirators had pitched upon to
 execute their design. That the month of
 April, in which the conspiracy was discover-
 ed, should be called *Nero's Month*; that a
 temple should be erected to Safety, on the
 spot where Scævinius took his dagger. Nero
 himself consecrated that dagger in the Capitol,
 with this inscription, TO MARS THE AVEN-
 GER. Anicius Cerialis, COUNSUL elect, proposed
 building directly, at the public expence, a
 temple to the god Nero. The two last particu-
 larities were thought to presage Nero's fall.
 The former, because he who first made the
 Prince totter on his throne was called Julius
 Vindex.

Vindex. *Vindex* in Latin signifies *Avenger*. A.R. 816. Cerialis's proposal was interpreted in the same sense, because it was not usual to decree an Emperor divine honours till after his death. aft. C. 65.

SECT. II.

Nero grows more cruel and outrageous than ever.

Nero deceived by a story of a pretended treasure. Nero appears publicly on the stage. His puerilities that way. His tyrannical rigour with regard to the spectators. Poppæa's death. Cassius banished. Death of Silanus. Statue erected to Silanus under Trajan. Vetus, his mother-in-law, and daughter, put to death. Tempests and epidemical sickness. Lyons burnt. Nero's liberalities. Antistius Sosianus, an exile, accuses Anteius and Ostorius, who are forced to kill themselves. Reflection on so many bloody deaths. Other victims of Nero's cruelty. Rufius Crispinus father and son. Mella, brother to Seneca, and father of Lucan. Anicius Cerialis. C. Petronius, whom several have mistaken for the famous Petronius. Silia banished. Death of Numicius Thermus. Condemnation and death of Barea Soranus and Thrasea. Two Apothegms of Thrasea's. Fortitude of Paconius condemned to banishment. Exile of Cornutus. Tiridates arrives in Rome. Ceremony of his coronation by Nero. Great rejoicings on that occasion. Nero's fruitless attempts convince him of the folly of magic, for which he had a violent passion. Projects of war in Nero's brain. He sends Vespasian to make war against

against the Jews. He goes to Greece to gain theatrical crowns. Death of Antonia, daughter to Claudius. Nero marries Statilia Messalina. He visits all the games of Greece, and carries off 1800 crowns. His mean jealousy becomes cruelty. He declares Greece free, but ravages it by his cruelties and rapine. He visits neither Athens nor Lacedæmon. His anger against Apollo. The mouth of the oracle of Delphos closed. He attempts to pierce the Isthmus of Corinth. He gives up that enterprise, terrified by the news he receives from Rome. Cruelties exercised by Nero, or by his order, during his stay in Greece. Death of Corbulo, and several others. Nero's hatred to the Senate: The hatred of the Romans against him hid under a shew of attachment. Vini- cius's conspiracy discovered. Nero's triumphant entries into Naples, Antium, Alba, and Rome. His passion for games and shews is increased by the rewards he had gained in them.

A. R. 816.
aft. C. 65.
Nero grows
more cruel
and out-
rageous
than ever.

THE conspiracy made Nero grow still more suspicious, and the seas of blood he had already shed confirmed him in a habitude of cruelty. His passion for music and chariot races increased in proportion. Finding nothing resisted him, that whatever he did was applauded, and that each new crime he committed, each new indignity by which he debased himself, was attended with new praises, he resolved to make his public appearance on the stage: the celebrity of the most solemn games could alone satiate his desire of infamy. Such is the idea the reader is to form of all we have remaining to say of Nero's reign, to the time of the revolution that delivered mankind from him: the whole

whole a series of cruelty and excess of indecency. A. R. 816. Very few events occur of a different kind, and aft. C. 65. even those are stamped with some vice. So in the adventure I am going to relate, his inconsiderate levity, and love of money, made him the dupe of a visionary, and a laughing stock to the whole world.

Cæsellius Bassus, by birth a Carthaginian, and, according to Suetonius, a Roman knight, came to Rome in consequence of a dream he had; and giving the Prince's officers money to obtain an audience, he told Nero, "He had discovered, in a corner of his estate, a prodigious deep vault, in which was buried an immense quantity of gold, not coined, but in ingots. That the treasure, concealed there for many ages, was reserved to add to the happiness of his reign: and that there was no room to doubt but that it had been buried there by Dido, when she founded Carthage, in order, either to prevent her subjects from making an ill use of such great riches, or for fear the Numidian Kings, by whom she was hated, should be tempted to declare war against her on that account." Nero, without enquiring into the character of the man who told him this story, or considering how far it was probable, or sending people on whom he could depend to examine into it on the spot, was immediately blinded by the thoughts of so rich a booty; his own ideas and talk making it still much greater; and accordingly fitted out immediately a squadron of several galleys, manned with the best sailors and ablest rowers that could be got, and the command of it was given to Cæsellius.

Nero deceived by story of a pretended treasure. Tac. Ann. xvi. 1. Suet. Ner. 31.

A.R.816. Nothing was talk'd of in Rome but this
aft. C. 65. treasure. The vulgar believed it, but wiser
men seem'd to doubt. Orators and poets took
occasion from thence to be lavish of their flat-
teries. They said, “ * The earth, no longer con-
“ tent with producing fruits, or bearing in
“ its bowels mines, wherco the ore was mixed
“ with other matters, now enriched the world
“ by a new production, and that the gods gave
“ the Prince gold ready prepared and refined :”
with other such like expressions ; in which, says
Tacitus, they shew'd their wit, but much more
their servile adulation, laughing without shame
or fear at Nero's facility in being made a
dupe.

In the mean time Nero's prodigality increased
in proportion to the expected treasure. His
present riches were dissipated, as if sure of a
supply that would last numbers of years : Gifts
and gratuities were assigned, payable out of that
treasure ; by which means, the state was ut-
terly impoverish'd on the faith of chimerical
riches.

Caesellius, with the soldiers and a multitude
of country people, day-labourers, dug up the
whole field, and several others near it, with-
out finding any thing, and at last he own'd
his illusion. Astonish'd and confus'd, be-
cause

* *Non tantum solitas frugca, nec metallis confusum aurum
gigni : sed nova ubertate procreare terras et obvias opes de-
ferre Deus : quos per alia variâ facultatâ, nec minore adu-
latione barbares fingebant, securi de facilitate credentij.*

Gliscnt it i utrim luxuria spu inani : consume banturque
veteres opes, quasi oblati quas per multos annos prodigeret.
Quin et inde jam largiobatur : et divitiarum exspectatio
inter causas paupertatis publicæ erat. Tac.

cause his dreams, said he, had never deceived him, to avoid the shame of so mad an enterprise, and the punishment he had reason to expect, he killed himself. Others say, he was secured and put in irons, and that his liberty cost him all he had.

The time was now drawing near for celebrating a second time the games instituted by Nero five years before, and he was preparing at last to make his public appearance on the Roman stage, there to act the part of a singer and comedian. To prevent that shame, the Senate proposed decreeing him the reward for singing; and, sensible how unworthy an Emperor that crown was, would have added the premium of eloquence. Nero opposed it, saying, "He would have no favour shewn him, and that the Senate's orders were out of the question. That he would enter the lists on an equal footing with his competitors, and owe the crown to the equity of his judges only."

Nero appears publicly on the stage. His puerilities that way. His tyrannical rigour with regard to the spectators. Tac. xvi. 4.

He opened on the stage with a declamation of verses of his own composing. After which, the mob begging him earnestly * to display all his talents, (those were the words) he prepared to sing and play on the lute. Having given in his name to be inscribed on the list of musicians, he came forward on the stage in his turn, submitting to all the rules prescribed on those occasions as scrupulously, as he daringly violated every law of justice and humanity. He would not sit down, tho' ever so much tired. The sweat was not to be wiped off his face with a

Suet. Ner. 21. Tac.

* Ut omnia studia sua publicaret. Tac.

A.R. §16. handkerchief, but with his sleeve, or the skirts
 aft. C. 65. of his robe. He was neither to spit nor blow
 his nose: and, lastly, bending his knee, and
 saluting the audience with respect and veneration,
 he waited the decision of the judges with
 a fear and uneasiness that Tacitus calls a mere
 farce, but which Suetonius seems to think real
 and unfeigned; for Nero looked on those things
 as matters of very great importance. He
 watched his competitors as if they had been his
 equals, laid traps for them, and cried them
 down underhand: when he met them off the
 stage, either he would abuse them, or, if they
 excelled in their profession, would try to
 bribe them, to let him get the better. He
 would say to the judges before they gave their
 votes, "I have done my duty"; but the event
 "is in the hand of fortune. Wise men, like
 "you, gentlemen, are to set aside what de-
 "pends on the mere caprice of fate." If they
 bid him take courage, he was delighted. He
 suspected of prejudice and malice those who,
 blushing for him, held their tongues. He
 thought himself so far subject to all the laws of
 the stage, that one day as he was acting a part
 in a tragedy, his truncheon, or scepter, slipping
 out of his hand, he picked it up in a violent
 hurry, greatly afraid it had been taken notice
 of, and that he should be excluded for that
 fault; nor could he be easy till the actor that
 stood next him vowed and protested, every
 one was so intent on applauding, that none
 had seen it. Such is the account Suetonius
 gives of Nero's behaviour at all places where
 he entered the lists.

Tac. xvi.

This sight was quite a novelty in Rome, on
 the occasion Tacitus speaks of, and he ob-
 serves.

serves *, that the people of that city, accustomed to take the part of one or other player, applauded the Emperor by gestures and modulations of voice set to music. They seemed delighted, and perhaps were so in reality, not sensible of the dishonour it reflected on the Republic. But the spectators, who came from other parts of Italy, and still retained some sentiments of decency and the old Roman austerity, as well as those whom their own private affairs, or the deputations they were charged with, brought thither from remote Provinces, could not bear the sight of such base indignity. They were, however, forced to applaud like others: but did it so awkwardly, that they kept no time, for which they often got blows from the soldiers, who were posted from space to space, with orders to keep up one continued peal of applause, and not to suffer the least interval of cold silence, or feeble and unequal acclamations.

The croud was so great, that Roman Knights were squeezed to death in the narrow passages. Many who persisted in keeping their seats twenty four hours running, met with bad accidents and violent fits of illness: for Nero, so subservient himself to all the laws of the stage, was

S 3

. a per-

* Et plebs quætem urbis, histrionum quoque gestus juvare solita, personabat certis modis plausuque composito. Crederes lætari: ac fortasse lætabantur, per incuriam publici flagitii. Sed qui remotis è municipiis, severaque ad huc et antiqui moris retinente Italiâ; quique per longinquas provincias, lasciviæ in experti officio, legationum aut privatâ utilitatq; advenerant, neque ad spectum illum tolerare, neque labori inhonesto sufficere: quum manibus nesciis fatiscerent, turbarent gnaros, ac sæpe a militibus verberarentur, qui per cuneos stabant, ne quod temporis momentum impari clamore, aut silentio segni præteriret. Tac.

A.R. 816. a perfect tyrant to the audience. None were
 aft. C. 65. allowed to leave the house, nor even to step out
 on any account whatever. Public inspectors,
 and a much greater number of private spies;
 took notice of every one's looks, whether gay
 or melancholy, and an exact account was kept
 of them. On their informations, several of the
 common people were put to death; and men of
 the greatest distinction felt, sooner or later, the
 effects of the Prince's displeasure. Vespasian,
 at that time past the Consular chair, falling
 asleep, is said to have been severely reprimand-
 ed by one of Nero's freemen, called Phœbus; and
 had he not begged very hard, and with him
 several people of great consequence, who inter-
 ceded with the freeman, and prevailed on him
 not to take notice of it, he certainly would have
 perished. Suetonius says, that several of the
 spectators on those occasions, wearied out and
 unable to stay any longer, feigned being dead,
 in order to be carried away, and that women
 were delivered there.

Suet. Ncr.
23.

Poppæa's
death.
Tac. xvi. 6.

It were needless to say, that Nero always
 gained the prize. Poppæa, who was with child,
 died after the games, of a kick her husband
 gave her in one of his passions. Some writers
 said he poisoned her; but Tacitus thinks there
 could be no room for such an accusation, but
 in their hatred to Nero, who certainly loved
 his wife, and wanted to have heirs. Poppæa's
 body was not burnt according to the Roman
 custom. Nero had it embalmed after the man-
 ner of the Orientals, and deposited in the
 Julian tomb. The funeral ceremonies were
 observed in other respects, her obsequies
 were celebrated by all the orders of the state,
 the

the Emperor himself pronounced her funeral oration, in which he praised her * beauty, the honour she had had of being mother to a child numbered amongst the gods, and other gifts of fortune, which in her held the place of virtues. Nero, ever prodigal, consumed for that funeral more perfumes than Arabia produces in a year. A. R. 816.
aft. C. 65.
Plin. xii. 18.

Luxury and effeminacy were the least of Poppæa's vices; yet even those she carried to such a pitch, that the girths of the mules that drew her carriages were gilt with gold, and she bathed herself every day in the milk of five hundred asses, to make her skin smooth and white. It was said, that, not liking one day the appearance she made in her looking-glass, she wished to die before old age robbed her of her charms. Her wish was fulfilled, undoubtedly beyond her desires.

Great grief was pretended in public for Poppæa's death: though, in truth, every one was glad to see the state delivered from a lewd and cruel woman. Nero, as if he had intended to give the Romans some just cause of grief, at that very time gave C. Cassius, that learned and virtuous Civilian, warning of his impending fate, by forbidding him to be present at the Empress's funeral. L. Silanus, his pupil, and his wife's * nephew, was the companion, and perhaps the primary cause of his disgrace: for

Cassius ban-
ished.
Death of
Silanus.

S 4 that

* *Laudavitque ipse apud rostra formam ejus, et quod divinæ infantis parens fuisset, aliaque fortunæ munera pro virtutibus. Tac.*

† In conformity to our customs, I have elsewhere called Cassius Silanus's uncle.

A.R. 816. that was the Silanus on whom many had fixed
aft. C. 65. their eyes, as has been observed in the account
of the conspiracy, as worthy to be Emperor.
Nero was not ignorant of it, nor was any
stronger motive wanting to induce him to de-
stroy two illustrious Senators, unless it be, that
one of them was possessed of very great here-
ditary riches, and was highly respected and
esteemed for the purity of his morals; and the
other, a youth, joined the strictest virtue and
modesty to a noble birth.

The Emperor sent the Senate a memorial
against Cassius and Silanus, wherein he taxed
Cassius with keeping, with great respect and ve-
neration among the images of his ancestors,
that of C. Cassius, Cæsar's murderer, with a se-
ditious * inscription annexed to it. "Those,
" added the memorial, are the seeds of civil
" wars, and a commencement of rebellion
" against the family of the Cæsars. And at
" the same time, that he renews the dangerous
" remembrance of an enemy's name; he asso-
" ciates with L. Silanus, a young man of high
" birth, but haughty, turbulent disposition,
" who would fain act the Emperor already;
" and like his uncle Torquatus, gives his
" freemen posts and titles like those of the of-
" ficers belonging to the Imperial family."

What

* Tacitus mentions the inscription, DUCI PARTIUM: *To the head of parties*: but *head of a party*, in our language, conveys an odious idea; whereas the Latin *Dux partium* implies something great and noble, otherwise Nero could not have made a crime of it. The sense in which Nero took it, and which is meant by it, is, *To the defender of liberty*. So I might have rendered it, *Were it not rather to remote from the literal expression.*

What he taxed Silanus with was as false, as A.R. 816. it was frivolous : for that young Senator, warn- aft. C. 65. ed by Torquatus's unhappy fate, behaved with great circumspection, and took particular care to avoid whatever had been made a pretence of to destroy his uncle. Their trial, however, was proceeded on in form, and, to the shame of philosophy be it spoken, among the witnesses appeared Heliodorus the stoic philosopher, who was wretch enough to depose against his innocent disciple. Other informers accused him of incest with his aunt Lepida, Cassius's wife, and of occult and magical sacrifices. Vulcatius Tertullinus, and Cornelius Marcellus, Senators, were said to be his accomplices, together with Calpurnius Fabatus, a Roman Knight, whose grand-daughter was afterwards married to the younger Pliny.

Juv. Sat. i. l. v. 33. & ib. vet. Schol. Tac.

The three last escaped the Senate's condemnation by appealing to the Emperor : and Nero's thoughts being taken up with crimes of a higher nature, forgot them. Cassius and Silanus were sentenced by the Senate to be banished : the judgment of Lepida was referred to the Emperor ; but we are not told what became of her. Cassius was transported to Sardinia, to which place exiles were frequently sent on account of the badness of the air of that island, nor could he from his great age be expected to live long. However, he survived Nero, and was recalled by Vespasian, or rather Galba.

Pompon. de Orig. Juris.

As to Silanus, under pretence of sending him to the island of Naxos, he was carried to Ostia; and afterwards the town of Bari was allowed him for his prison. There he supported his

Tac.

A.R. 816. his hard fate with resolution, when a Centurion
aft. C. 65. arrived with orders to kill him. The officer
advising him to have his veins opened, Silanus
answered, he was resolved to die, but that he
would not let him have the honour of seeming
to render service to the man he came to murder.
The Centurion, finding him full of vigour, and rather irritated than daunted, was afraid to attack him, though quite unarmed, and therefore ordered his soldiers to fall upon him. Silanus defended himself, as well as he could with his hands and arms, without any weapon, warding off some blows, and giving others, till at last he dropt down dead of the wounds he received, all in the fore-part of his body, as if in battle.

Statue
erected to
Silanus un-
der Trajan.
Plin. Ep. l.
7.

Lipsius thinks, with great probability, that this last of the Silanus's is the same to whom Titinius Capito, a faithful friend, long after erected a statue in the Forum, with Trajan's permission. The younger Pliny, to whom we are indebted for the knowledge of that fact, accompanies it with reflexions which well deserve a place here. "It is *, says he, a noble and very commendable deed, to make use of one's credit with the Prince to do honour
" to

* Pulcrum et magnâ laude dignum, amicitia Principis in hoc uti, quantumque gratiâ valeas, aliorum honoribus experiri. Est omnino Capitoni in usu claros viros colere. Mirum est quâ religione, quo studio imagines Brutorum, Cassiorum, Catonum, domi, ubi potest, habeat. Idem clarissimi cujusque vitam egregiis carminibus exornat. Scias ipsum plurimis virtutibus abundare, qui alienas sic amat. Redditus est L. Silano debitus honor, cujus immortalitati Capito prospexit pariter et suæ. Neque enim magis decorum et insigne est statuam in Foro populi Romani habere, quàm ponere. *Plin.*

“ to the memory of a deceased friend, and
 “ add to the lustre of another’s name, rather
 “ than one’s own. Such is Capito’s invariable
 “ maxim. He thinks it a duty incumbent on
 “ him to respect illustrious men; nor is it to
 “ be imagined with what veneration, what
 “ zeal and ardour he honours in his own
 “ house (where only he can) the images of a
 “ Brutus, a Cassius, and a Cato. He records
 “ too, in very fine lines, the glorious actions
 “ of great men of all ages. He who so cor-
 “ dially cherishes virtue in others, must cer-
 “ tainly be virtuous himself to a degree of
 “ eminence. Silanus deserved the honour he
 “ received, and Capito has immortalized him-
 “ self with him. For it is not more glori-
 “ ous to have one’s statue set up in the Roman
 “ Forum, than it is to erect a statue there
 “ to one’s friend.”

The massacre of a whole noble family im-
 mediately follows Silanus’s death in Tacitus.
 L. Antistius Vetus, his mother-in-law Sextia,
 and his daughter Antistia, all suffered death at
 the same time, to satisfy Nero’s unjust hatred,
 their lives reproaching him with the murder
 of Vetus’s son-in-law, Rubellius Plautus. The
 accusers were two infamous wretches, one of
 them a freeman belonging to Vetus, who hav-
 ing robbed his patron, sought to escape punish-
 ment by accusing him. The other was one
 Claudius Demianus, whom Vetus, whilst Pro-
 consul of Africa, had imprisoned for his crimes,
 and whom Nero set at liberty to reward him
 for accusing his judge.

Vetus, his
 mother-in-
 law, and
 daughter,
 put to death.
Tac. xvi.
Ann. 10.

Nero hated Vetus, being perhaps not igno-
 rant of the advice he had secretly sent his son-
 in-law

A.R. 816. in-law to defend his life to the last, and endeavoured, if possible, to stir up a civil war. The accusation therefore was received; and Vetius, finding he was put on a level with his freeman, retired to an estate he had near Formii, where he was soon beset by soldiers, who privately surrounded his house. With * him was his daughter, in whom the present danger increased the grief of heart she had ever felt since the fatal hour her husband Plautus was butchered before her eyes. After embracing him all bloody, she carefully preserved the linen and cloaths stained with his gore, giving herself up to grief, and taking only what nourishment was barely sufficient to keep her alive. At this time she went, by her father's directions, to Naples, where Nero then was; and, not being able to obtain an audience, waited in the passage till he came out, and then begged he would please to hear the defence of an innocent man, and not give up to a vile freeman one who had enjoyed the honour of being his colleague in the Consulship. She repeated that just request several times, one while in an humble and submissive manner, and then again with a boldness above her sex. Nero was inexorable: neither prayers, nor the fear of making himself odious, could move him. Antistia, therefore, returned back to her father with the melancholy news that no hopes were left; at the same time Vetius was informed the Senate was proceeding

* Aderat filia super ingruens periculum longo dolore atrox, ex quo percussores Plauti mariti sui viderat: cruentamque cervicem ejus amplexa, servabat sanguinem, et vestes respersas, vidua implexa luctu continuo, nec ullis alimentis, nisi quæ mortem arcerent. Tac.

ceeding against him, and that a rigorous con- A.R. 816.
demnation was all he had to expect. Some, aft. C. 65.
who valued themselves on their prudence, advised him to make a will, and leave Nero a great part of what he was worth, in order to secure the rest to his grand-children : but he refused to dishonour, by such a meanness, a life spent in the cause of honour and liberty. He divided what ready money he had among his slaves, and likewise gave them the furniture of his house, which he advised them to carry off, reserving only three beds, one for himself, another for his mother-in-law, and the third for his daughter.

* They all prepared to die together, and had their veins opened in the same room ; after which they were immediately put in a bath, with such precautions as modesty requires, and there * looking wishfully at each other, and expressing the most tender concern, each of them called on death to take a fleeting life, and let the dearest of friends survive, though but for a few moments. They died according to their ages ; Sextia first, next Vetius, and last of all his daughter. Notwithstanding this, the Senate proceeded in their trials, and condemned them to be executed. Nero, adding insult to cruelty, set aside that sentence, and gave them leave to chuse their deaths.

P. Gallus, a Roman Knight, who had been an intimate friend of Fanius Rufus's, and acquainted with Vetius, was banished. Vetius's
two

* *Pater filiam, avia neptem, illa utrosque intuens, et certatim precantes labenti animæ celerem exitum, ut reliquerent suos superstites et merituros. Tac.*

A.R. 816. two accusers received, as a reward for their
aft. C. 65. services, a place of distinction in the theatre.

Nero's name had already been given to the month of April; and the two following months were to be called, one after Claudius, and the other after Germanicus. Cornelius Orsitus, who first made that motion, insisted particularly on the necessity of abolishing the name of *June*, as odious and execrable, on account of the crimes of the two *Junius's*, (Torquatus and Silanus) both of them lately put to death.

Tempests
and epidemical
sickness.

This year *, already fatal by so many acts of cruelty, became still more so, says Tacitus, by the wrath of the gods, who visited Italy with storms and epidemical sickness. Campania was laid waste by a hurricane, which blew down houses, tore up trees by the roots, destroyed the corn, and was felt in the neighbourhood of Rome. The plague raged in the city, and no one could account how that dreadful scourge had been brought thither. The effects of it were terrible; the houses were filled with dead bodies, and the roads covered with funerals. No age nor sex was spared. Slaves and citizens of the lower class expired in a very short time, amidst the cries and shrieks of their wives and children, who, by tending them, often caught the distemper, and were burnt on the same pile. Though numbers of Senators and Knights died, they were less pitied; they were even thought happy, in preventing the Prince's cruelty by paying the debt of nature.

This

* Tot facinoribus foedum annum etiam dii tempestatibus et morbis insignivere. *Tac.*

This same year too, recruits were raised in A.R. 816. Narbonnese Gaul, Asia, and Africa, to complete the Illyrian legions, from which such as age or infirmity rendered unfit for service were discharged. aft. C. 65.

Among so many cruelties committed by Nero; we have, however, one good deed of his to mention. The city of Lyons, one of the most flourishing of the Roman colonies, though it had not been founded much above a hundred years, had lately been almost entirely consumed in one night by a dreadful fire. Nero made the inhabitants of that unfortunate city a present of four millions of sesterces (about thirty-two thousand pounds) towards repairing their loss. They were so much the more deserving of that liberality, as they had offered the same sum to serve the Republic on some urgent occasion, but what Tacitus does not say. Lyons burnt. Nero's liberality. Sen. Ep. xci. Tac. xvi. 31.

The next year had for Consuls C. Suetonius, probably son of Suetonius Paulinus, whose exploits in Britain we have spoken of; and Telesinus, who, Philostratus says, was a disciple of Apollonius Tyanaeus. Philostr. Apollon. l. iv. c. 40.

C. S U E T O N I U S P A U L I N U S.

A. R. 817.

C. T E L E S I N U S.

aft. C. 66.

Under these Consuls an exile merited Nero's favour, by procuring him an opportunity of getting rid of two men who were obnoxious to him. Antistius Sosianus was banished, as I have said, for writing satirical and defamatory verses against the Emperor. Seeing how much informers were in favour, and how easily Nero was induced to shed blood; being likewise Antistius Sosianus, an exile, accuses Antellus and Ostorius, who are forced to kill themselves. Tac. xvi. 14.

A.R. 817. likewise himself of an intriguing, restless disposition, he found means to insinuate himself into the confidence of one Pammenes, like him an exile, and confined to the same island. Pammenes was a great Astrologer, and, in consequence of his art, had secret connexions and correspondence with several people of distinction: he often received letters and messages, which made Sosianus, who closely watched his motions, suspect something more than common was carrying on. It was not long before that traitor discovered that P. Anteius allowed the Astrologer a yearly pension. Anteius had formerly been protected by Agrippina, and from thence was odious to Nero: besides that, he was immensely rich, a strong temptation to the Prince's avarice. Sosianus, informed of all those circumstances, intercepted Anteius's letters, and privately stole from Pammenes some papers relating to Anteius and Ostorius Scapula, containing the theme of their nativity, and predictions of what was to happen to each of them. Ostorius had a right to expect some gratitude, from Sosianus in return for having kept his secret. But such a motive has little power over a wretch like Sosianus, who, being possessed of the letters and papers just mentioned, wrote to court, desiring leave to return to Rome, for that he had secrets to reveal which concerned the Emperor's life and safety. Some light vessels were immediately dispatched, to bring him with all speed.

The public was no sooner informed how matters stood, but Anteius and Ostorius were both given up as dead men; so much that none would sign as witnesses to Antefus's will, till Tigellinus removed that difficulty, advising

ing the testator, however, at the same time to A.R. 817. be quick. His advice was followed: Anteiust. C. 66. settled his affairs as fast as he could, took a dose of poison, and, to make still greater dispatch, had his veins cut open. He well knew Nero would admit of no delay in such cases; and that if those whose death he had ordered did not immediately dispatch themselves, he was sure to send surgeons to *treat them*, as he called it.

Suet. Ner.
37.

Tac.

Ostorius was then on the confines of Liguria, where a Centurion was sent with soldiers to kill him. Nero feared him as a warrior, who had acquired a great character for arms, having merited the honour of a civic crown under his father, who commanded the Roman army in Britain: besides which, he was strong and robust, so that Nero, whose crimes, and the conspiracy lately discovered, rendered timid, apprehended he might endeavour to raise some disturbance. Ostorius had not time to attempt any such thing, had he been ever so much disposed to do it: he was surprized by the Centurion, who, posting guards at all the avenues of his house, went in and notified the Emperor's commands. Ostorius turned against himself the courage he had so often signalized against the enemy; and the blood running but slowly through the openings of his veins, he ordered a slave to hold a dagger firm to his throat, then taking hold of his hand, ran upon it, and killed himself.

So many bloody deaths, the circumstances of which are much alike, are a very disagreeable and melancholy subject to treat of. I will not, however, say, with Tacitus, that * the servile

Reflection
on so many
bloody
deaths.

vile

* *Patentia servilis—tam segniter pereuntes.*

A.R. 817. vile baseness of those who suffered themselves
 aft. C. 66. to be butchered in that cowardly manner, is what must disgust the reader most of all. We are governed by other principles, which, without excusing Nero's horrid cruelties, would render the patience of those victims laudable, had the motive of it been submission to the will of Providence. Such perfection is not to be found in Pagans: they had not even an idea of it: a spirit of revolt, had it been practicable, animated them all. Nero himself at last brought it about, but many illustrious heads were first lopt off.

Other vic-
 tims of Ne-
 ro's cruelty.
 Rufius Cris-
 pinus, fa-
 ther and
 son.

Four men, of distinction lost their lives one after another in the space of a few days, Rufius Crispinus, Annæus Mella, Anicius Cærialis, and C. Petronius. Crispinus had been, as I have said, married to Poppæa, and was Pretorian Prefect under Claudius. He was banished to Sardinia under pretence of being concerned in the conspiracy, and there received sentence of death, in consequence whereof he killed himself. It was probably at that time that Nero ordered the son of Crispinus and Poppæa to be drowned, a young child, who incurred his displeasure only for playing with other children of his age at making Captains and Generals of armies.

Mella, bro-
 ther to Se-
 neca, and
 father of
 Lucan.

Tac.

Annæus Mella was brother to Seneca, and out of a refinement of ambition, would not ask for any post, in order to rival those of Consular rank in weight and influence, without being more than a Roman Knight: besides, he looked upon an employment in the finances, from which the dignity of Senator was an exclusion, as the surest way to grow rich.

His

His son Lucan added greatly to the honour of A. R. 817. his name, and was the cause of his death. For, aft. C. 66. the covetous father, unwilling to lose the least part of his son's inheritance, and making the strictest perquisitions after whatever might be owing to him, found an accuser in one who had been an intimate friend of Lucan's, and might perhaps be in his debt. His name was Fabius Romanus: being dunned by Mella, he taxed him with having been concerned in the conspiracy, and, to prove his assertion, produced pretended letters from Lucan, whose handwriting he had forged. Nero, who longed to possess Mella's immense riches, sent him those letters. Mella understood the meaning of the Prince's message, and accordingly had his veins opened, after making a codicil to his will, by which, in hopes of securing his estate to his heirs, he left considerable legacies to Tigellinus and his son-in-law Cossutianus Capito.

A most abominable use was made of this codicil. Two lines were added to it, in which the testator was made to complain of his hard fate, and say he died innocent, whilst Rufius Crispinus and Anicius Cærialis survived, tho' enemies to the Prince. That malice could not hurt Crispinus, he being dead, but it was fatal to Cærialis, who was forced to kill himself. He was the less pitied, says Tacitus, because it was he that revealed Lepidus's conspiracy to Caligula.

C. Petronius was singular both in his life and death. He was a professed Epicurean, but with wit and delicacy could give vice a most seducing gloss, and make it pleasing to men of taste, without piquing himself on any scrupulous

Anicius
Cærialis.

C. Petro-
nius, whom
several have
mistaken
for the fa-
mous Petro-
nius.

A.R. 817. lous respect to virtue. He * destined the day
aft. C. 66. to sleep, and the night to business and pleasure.

Others advance themselves by labour and activity: he gained a reputation by indolence and effeminacy: and the careless air with which he did or said a thing, gave it all the graces of seeming nature. He gave proofs, however, both of his vigour and capacity for business, when Governor of Bithynia, and when Consul. After which, returning to his former pleasures, either from inclination, or out of policy, he was of all Nero's parties, and became his master and tutor in the art of refined luxury, the Emperor thinking nothing agreeable or elegant but what pleased the exquisite taste of Petronius. Tigellinus grew jealous of him, and began to fear a rival, who surpassed him in the science of voluptuousness, and, in order to remove him, set to work the Prince's favourite passion, cruelty, making Nero suspect Petronius, as having been a friend to Scævinius. A slave was suborned to broach the information: the accused was not allowed to defend himself, and most of his servants were arrested and thrown into prison. Petronius himself, closely guarded, unable to bear the uncertain alternative of hope and fear, resolved death should end it: but the manner in which he executed that design, is, I think,
not

* Illi dies per somnum, nox officiis et oblectamentis vitæ transigebatur: utque alios industria, ita hunc ignavia ad famam protulerat: habebaturque non ganeo et profligator, ut plerique sua haurientium, sed erudito luxu. Ac dicta factaque ejus quanto solutiora, et quamdam sui negligentiam indulgentia, tanto gratius in speciem simplicitatis accipiebantur. Proconsul tamen Bithyniæ, mox Consul, vigentem se et parem negotiis ostendit: mox revolutus ad
vitia,

not to be paralleled. He did nothing hastily; A. R. 817. for causing his veins to be opened, after bleed- ait. C. 66. ing some time, he had them tied up, then bled, and stopt the blood again, repeating that operation several times with as much ease and tranquillity as if it had been only a common bleeding for his health. He talked and conversed with his friends all the time, not on serious or philosophical subjects, but about pretty verses, and the more gay kind of poetry, such as is most apt to please and amuse. To some of his slaves he gave money; ordered others to be chastised, walked about, and went to bed to sleep: so that his death, tho' violent, had all the appearance of a natural one. In his will he did not imitate the fawning tricks of those who, in his situation, flattered Nero, Tigellinus, and all the busy bodies of the court, by loading them with praises, or leaving them legacies. On the contrary, he wrote a satire, wherein he described, under fictitious names, all the debaucheries of the Prince and his courtiers, and sent it sealed up to Nero, after breaking the ring he had sealed it with, for fear some ill use might be made of it to hurt the innocent.

Many are of opinion that this was the piece of which we have some fragments under the title of *T. Petronii Arbitri Satyricon*. That is not clear, nor is it worth examining into. It caused,

T 3

however,

vitia, seu vitiorum ostentationem, inter paucos familiarium Neroni assumptus est, elegantiae arbiter, dum nihil amœnum ac molle affluentiam putat, nisi quod ei Petronius approbasset. Unde invidia Tigellini, quasi adversus æmulum, et scientiam voluptatum potiorem. Tac.

A. 68. 17. however, the disgrace of a lady with whom he
 ann. C. 65. was very intimate. Silia, a Senator's wife, who
 Silia banish- frequently was of Nero's parties of pleasure,
 ed. was suspected of having revealed to Petronius
 several particularities mentioned in his satire,
 and was banished.

Death of
 Numicius
 Thermus.

Numicius Thermus, an ancient Prætor, one
 of whose freemen had dared to attack Tigellinus,
 and accuse him, we are not told of what,
 was delivered up to that favourite's revenge.
 The freeman paid for his boldness by under-
 going a severe torture, and his innocent patron
 was put to death.

Condemna-
 tion and
 death of Ba-
 rea Soranus
 and Thrasea.
Tac. Ann.
xvi. 31.
Plut. Poll.

Tacitus, when going to give an account of
 the death of Barea Soranus and Pætus Thrasea*,
 does not scruple saying, Nero wanted to ex-
 tinguish virtue itself, when he took away their
 lives. He had long hated, tho' he could not
 help esteeming them, of which he had but late-
 ly given a proof with regard to Thrasea: for,
 hearing him accused of injustice by a man who
 lost his suit depending before him: "I wish,"
 said the Emperor, Thrasea had as much af-
 fection for me as he has equity in his judg-
 ments."

Tac.

Nero was convinced Thrasea hated him, be-
 cause he well knew no honest man could love
 him: he had several other causes of complaint
 against him, all of which do honour to Thrasea,
 tho' he fell a sacrifice to them. Thrasea, as
 the reader may remember, left the Senate im-
 mediately after the reading of Nero's apologetic
 letter

* Trucidatis tot in ignibus viris, ad extremum Nero vir-
 tutem ipsam ex-cindere concupivit, interfectis Barea Sorano
 et Thrasea Pæto. *Tac.*

letter against the memory of Agrippina. He A.R. 817.
 was but a cold admirer of the juvenile games : aft. C. 66.
 which Nero was the more offended at, as the same
 Thræsea had himself appeared on the stage as
 actor in a tragedy performed at the games cele-
 brated at Padua, where he was born, and which
 were said to have been instituted by Antenor, the
 founder of that city. Besides that, when An-
 tistius Sosianus was tried for writing satirical
 verses against the Emperor, Thræsea opposed
 those who were for putting him to death, and
 proposed a milder punishment, which was a-
 greed to. And, lastly, he did not come to the
 Senate-house the day divine honours were de-
 creed Poppæa, nor was he even present at her
 funeral.

Nero remembered full well all these grie-
 vances ; and even if he had been capable of for-
 getting them, his memory would soon have
 been refreshed by Cossutianus Capito, that de-
 clared enemy to virtue, who likewise had a pri-
 vate pique against Thræsea for having backed
 the Cicilian deputies, at whose suit he was con-
 demned for extortion. That calumniator add-
 ed, fresh heads of accusation, all founded on
 the resolution Thræsea had long since taken not
 to go any more to the Senate. He put the
 worst of constructions on his conduct, making
 Nero observe, “ That every first day of the year
 “ Thræsea eluded taking the solemn oath, by
 “ which all the Senators bound themselves to
 “ observe the ordinances of the Cæsars. That
 “ he did not participate in the vows made every
 “ third of January for the Prince’s prosperity,
 “ tho’ he had received the order of priesthood,
 “ in virtue of which his ministry was required in

A.R. 817. " that ceremony. That he never had offered
aft. C. 66. " up a sacrifice either for the Emperor's pre-
" servation or for his divine voice. That former-
" ly he was indefatigably assiduous in attend-
" ing on the Senate, and used to speak with
" warmth even in the most trifling affairs; but
" that for three years past he had not once set
" his foot there; and that but very lately, at a
" time when every member of that company
" thought himself indispensably obliged to shew
" his zeal for the Prince, by helping to check
" the wicked attempts of Silanus and Vetus,
" Thrasea chose rather to busy himself with the
" private affairs of his clients. That, added
" Capito, is plainly declaring himself head of a
" party: it is enough to breed a civil war; all
" he wants is a sufficient number of partizans.
" As in former times this city, ever fond of
" discord, was divided between Cæsar and
" Cato, so now the eyes of all are fixed on
" Nero and Thrasea. He has his followers,
" or rather satellites, who indeed do not yet
" imitate his untractable republican way of de-
" liberating in the Senate, but who copy his
" manners and looks, affecting a rigid exterior
" to reproach you with your love of pleasure.
" He alone has no feeling for either the preser-
" vation of your sacred person, or your suc-
" cess in the more polite arts. If he looks on
" your prosperity with so indifferent an eye,
" at least his hatred ought to be satisfied by the
" grievous losses you have sustained in your
" family. How should he honour Poppæa as
" a goddess, who seems to doubt the divinity
" of the founders of this monarchy, who fears
" to

“ to swear to the observation of what has been A.R. 817.
 “ ordained by Cæsar and Augustus? He con- aft. C. 66.
 “ temns the religion of the state, and despises
 “ its laws. The Provinces and armies are fond
 “ of reading the journals of what passes in Rome,
 “ to know what Thræsea has done. Either let
 “ us side with them, if they are right : or, let
 “ us not suffer a giddy people, fond of novelty,
 “ to have a chief ready to collect them under
 “ his banners. That sect it was that produced
 “ the Tuberoes and Favoniuses ; suspicious
 “ names, odious even to the old Republic. Do
 “ they want to destroy monarchy ? The cause
 “ of liberty is their pretenice. That done, they
 “ attack liberty itself. In vain have you re-
 “ moved Cassius, if you suffer an emulator of
 “ Brutus. After all, I do not desire you to
 “ write to the Senate against Thræsea, I will
 “ lay that affair myself before the assembly, you
 “ have only to leave it to their decision.”

Capito had worked himself up, as we see, to a pretty high pitch. Nero's exhortations heated him still more, and a worthy coadjutor was given him in the person of Eprius Marcellus.

An accusation was already lodged against Barea Soranus. On his return from the Proconsulship of Asia, a Roman knight, called Ostorius Sabinus, taxed him with having been a friend to Plautus, and with having behaved purposely so, as to gain the affection of the people under his government, with views justly suspected of ambition. This pretended criminal behaviour consisted, however, in nothing more than, that he had discharged all the duties of his function with care and integrity,
 doing

A.R. 817. doing equal justice to all, and being ever ready
 aft. C. 66. to grant the people their lawful requests. He
 had opened the port of Ephesus, and left the
 inhabitants of Pergamus unpunished, for resist-
 ing the outrages committed by the freeman A-
 cratus, sent by Nero into Asia, to take away
 all their paintings and statues. Those were
 crimes great enough with Nero. He chose to
 set on foot this odious persecution against two
 men, who were the glory and ornament of the
 Roman Senate, the very time, when Tiridates
 was drawing near to Rome, in order to receive,
 in the most solemn manner, the crown of Ar-
 menia : intending either to make one impression
 efface another, and to smother the indignation
 his cruelty must excite in every breast, under
 the rejoicings and feasts with which the King of
 Parthia's brother was to be received : or, out
 of a barbarous vanity, was willing to make a
 show of his grandeur, by sacrificing, in the pre-
 sence of a foreign Prince, victims of that im-
 portance. Tiridates joined Nero at Naples,
 from whence they proceeded together to Rome.
 Whilst duty on one side, and curiosity on the
 other, brought the whole city out to meet them,
 Thræsea received orders not to appear before the
 Prince.

Without being at all disconcerted, he wrote
 to the Emperor, desiring to know what were
 the crimes laid to his charge, and assuring him,
 he would justify himself fully, if he would
 please to hear his defence. Nero * opened the
 letter

* Eos codicillos Nero properanter accepit, spe exterritum
 Thræseam scripsisse per quæ claritudinem Principis extol-
 leret,

letter eagerly, imagining Thrasea, at least in- A.R. 817.
timidated, had altered his style. He would att. C. 66.
have triumphed, could he have forced that
great man to dishonour himself by any mean-
ness.

Reading the letter, he found his mistake :
nay, himself was intimidated by Thrasea's firm-
ness, and dreaded still more an audience, in
which that illustrious man would have spoken
with all the boldness innocence and virtue could
inspire. Not daring therefore to run that ha-
zard, he laid the affair before the Senate, con-
vened for that purpose.

Thrasea consulted with his friends, whether
he should appear to defend himself, or think so
vain and fruitless an attempt beneath him. Opi-
nions were divided. Those who advised him
to go to the Senate, said, " They did not in
" the least doubt his bearing the shock with
" a becoming fortitude : That they were satis-
" fied not a word would escape him, which
" should not add to his glory : That cowards
" only ought to bury their last moments in
" obscurity. * Shew the people, added they,
" an intrepid sage advancing to meet death :
" let the Senate hear you speak a more than
" mortal

leret, suumque famam dehonorearet. Quod ubi contra
evenit, vultumque et spiritus et libertatem insontis ultro
extimuit, vocari Patres jussit. Tac.

* Adspiceret populus virum morti obvium : audiret
Senatus voces quasi ex aliquo numine supra humanas.
Posse ipso miraculo etiam Neronem permoveri. Sin cru-
delitati insisteret, distingui certè apud posteros memo-
riam honesti exitus ab ignavia per silentium pereuntium.
Tac. xvi. 25.

A.R. 817. " mortal language, sentences worthy an orator.
 aft. C. 66. " Nero himself may be shaken by such a wonder. If he persists in his cruelty, at least
 " posterity will know how to distinguish between a noble and a generous death, and the
 " low cowardice with which others perish and
 " are forgot."

These arguments did not seem conclusive to many, who, without doubting Thræsea's unshaken fortitude and resolution, were, however, unwilling he should expose himself to the insults, affronts, and perhaps rougher means and blows his enemies might make use of. " When
 " * the bad, said they, begin out of insolence,
 " the good sometimes follow out of fear. Save
 " the Senate, of which you have been so great
 " an honour, the shame of so vile a deed.
 " Let it remain in doubt, what resolution the
 " Senate might have taken had they seen the
 " accused Thræsea. To think Nero's barbarity can ever be moved, is a mere illusion.

" There is much more room to fear your generous proceeding may wound him to the
 " very soul, and he may reckon his vengeance on
 " your wife, your family, and all that are dear
 " to you. Preserve your reputation unsullied,
 " and let the sages, whose maxims and examples you have followed living, find their
 " glorious deaths equalled in yours."

At this little council was present Arulæus Rusticus, a young man full of fire and vivacity, and greatly desirous to signalize himself.

* Etiam bonos metu sequi. Detraheret Senatui, quem prænormissset, infamiam tanti flagitii: et relinqueret incertum quid viso Thræsea reo decreturi Patres fuerint. Tac.

self. As he was at that time Tribune of the people, he offered to oppose the Senate's jurisdiction in virtue of his post. Thræsea checked his ardor. "Do not, said he, attempt a vain resource that would be of no service to me, and must prove fatal to yourself. My days are ended, and I cannot now deviate from the principles I have followed so many years. As to you, you are just entering on the career of magistracy, and may still choose what road you like best to pursue. Consider well within yourself before you fix on any plan of political conduct in these unhappy times." Rusticus yielded to this remonstrance, so far as related to his design of opposing the Senate. With regard to his own personal interests, the sequel of this history will shew how little he dreaded consequences: we shall see him treading in Thræsea's footsteps, and, like him, meet death with intrepidity under the reign of another Nero, I mean, Domitian. Thræsea, finding his friends were of different opinions in the point on which he consulted them, said, he would determine for himself: the resolution he took was not to go to the Senate.

The next day two Pretorian cohorts took possession of the temple of Venus, built by Cæsar. The entrance to the Senate was occupied by a body of the guards, in their habit of peace, but they did not much endeavour to conceal the swords they had under their garments. Troops were posted at every avenue. The Senators passed through the midst of this terrifying sight to the hall destined for their assemblies. The Prince's Questor, whose functions

A. R. 817. functions may be compared to those of our Secretaries of state, read a memorial, whereby the Emperor, without naming any one, complained in general, that the Senators were not assiduous enough in the public service, and that they set the Roman Knights a bad example of remissness, which became contagious. And, to point out Thræsea more particularly, he added, the abuse was so great, that Senators, who had been promoted to the Consulship, and were priests, preferred embellishing their gardens to the duties of their offices.

That was a handle given to those, who, in concert with him, were to be the accusers. They laid hold of it, and Cossutianus beginning, Eprius Marcellus seconded him with great vehemence, adding to Thræsea, Helvidius Priscus his own son-in-law, Paconius Agrippinus, son of Paconius, put to death by Tiberius, and Curtius Montanus, a young nobleman of distinguished merit and abilities. Marcellus raising his voice, cried out furiously, "That the public welfare was at stake: That the rebel pride of inferiors did violence to the natural mildness of the Prince. Yes, said he, the Senate is too indulgent in suffering Thræsea to brave it with impunity; to let him form a party, in which he associated Helvidius Priscus the companion of his father-in-law's furies, Paconius Agrippinus, who has inherited his father's hatred to the Emperors, and Curtius Montanus, author of most detestable poems."

Marcellus only just named the three last; but vented all his rage on Thræsea. "What *
" can

* *Require se in Senatu consularem, in votis sacerdotem,*

" can be thought, said he, of a man of Con- A.R.817.
 " sular rank, who absents himself from the aft. C.66.
 " Senate; of a Priest, who does not appear
 " when all are offering up their vows; of a ci-
 " tizen, who eludes taking the oath of fide-
 " lity? Does not Thræsea, by that behaviour,
 " violating all the civil and religious customs
 " of our ancestors, openly declare himself a
 " traitor and an enemy to the state? Let him
 " resume his old ways: let him come and tell
 " us, what it is he would alter or reform. We
 " will bear a particular censure on each article,
 " much rather than a silence which condemns
 " all without distinction. What is there in
 " the present situation of things that displeases
 " him? Is it the peace that reigns throughout
 " the whole universe? Is it the victories we
 " gain without any loss sustained by our ar-
 " mies? The happiness of the state is what
 " he repines at: the public places, theatres,
 " and temples, strike him with horror, as if
 " they were frightful solitudes: he threatens
 " us that he will banish himself. And shall
 " we satisfy his strange and obstinate ambi-
 " tion? Since he will no longer acknowledge
 " either Senate, magistrates, or republic, death
 " must snatch him from a city from which he
 " has long since separated himself by his ha-
 " tred to it, and of which he cannot now bear
 " even the sight!"

The

*in jurejurando civem: nisi contra instituta et cærimonias
 majorum, proditorem palam et hostem Thræsea induisset.
 Donique agere Senatorem, et Principis obtretractores pro-
 tegere solitus, veniret, censeret quid corrigi aut mutari
 vellet. Facilius perlaturus singula increpantem, quàm
 nunc silentium perferrent omnia damnantis. Tac.*

A. R. 817. The Senate was thunder-struck at this horrid aft. C. 66. * speech, which Marcellus animated with menacing gestures, a vehement tone of voice, and anger flaming in his eyes. It was no longer that heavy melancholy only, which, from repeated accusations, was become habitual to that body, but a violent terror too that then seized on every Senator, at the sight of the armed soldiers, by whom they were surrounded: and the respect they could not but have for Thrasea's virtue, the venerable image of which, then shining in its full lustre, carried their grief to the greatest height. They could not help compassionating likewise those whom malignity made the companions of his misfortune; Helvidius Priscus, on the point of falling a victim to an innocent alliance; Paconius, whose only crime was the misfortune of a father, as innocent as himself, and unjustly condemned to death by Tiberius; and Curtius Montanus, whose virtuous youth had never been noticed, but for his innocent turn to poetry.

To complete their woes, Ostorius Sabinus, the accuser of Soranus, next presented himself. The crimes laid to his charge were, as I have said, his attachment to Rubellius Plautus; a suspicious conduct during his government of the province of Asia, in being too complaisant to the people, and more careful of his own glory than the public welfare. To these old accusations was joined a new one quite recent,

* Quum per hæc atque talia Marcellus, ut erat torvus et minax, voce, vultu, oculis ardesceret, non illa nota, et celebritate periculorum sueta jam Senatûs mœstitia, sed novus et altior pavor, manus et tela militum cernentibus: simul ipsius Thrasææ venerabilis species observabatur. Tac.

cent, by which his daughter was involved in A.R. 817. the same danger with her father. He accused aft. C. 66. Servilia (that was the young lady's name) of having given money to magicians; and that indeed was true. Servilia, alarmed at the danger her father was in, and consulting her tenderness for him more than a prudence that could not be expected from her age, did consult magicians, but only to know what would be the fate of her family, whether Nero would relënt, and whether Soranus's trial, that was carrying on before the Senate, would be attended with any bad consequences.

Servilia * was ordered to attend the Senatè. On one side appeared before the tribunal of the Consuls, a father stricken in years, and on the other his daughter, not yet twenty, who had just

* *Accita est in Senatam: steteruntque diversi ante tribunal Consulum grandis ævo parens, contra filia infra vicissimum ætatis annum, nuper marito Antonio Follione in exilium pulso vidua desolataque, ac ne patrem quidem intuens, cujus onerasse pericula videbatur. Tum interrogante accusatore, an cultus dotales, an detractum cervici monile venum dedisset, quo pecuniam faciendis magicis sacris contraheret, primùm strata humi, longoque fletu et silentio, post, altaria et aram complexa, "Nullos, inquit, impios deos, nullas devotiones, nec aliud infelicibus precibus invocavi, quàm ut hunc optimum patrem, tu, Cæsar, et vos, Patres, servaretis incolumem. Sic gemmas, et vestes, et dignitatis insignia dedi, quo modo si sanguinem et vitam poposcissent. Viderint isti antehac mihi ignoti, quo nomine sint, quas artes exerceant. Mihi nulla Principis mentio, nisi inter numina, fuit. Nescit tamen miserrimus pater: et si crimen est, soia deliqui."*

Loquentis adhuc verba excipit Soranus, proclamatque, "Non illam in provinciam secum profectam, non Plauto per ætatem nosci potuisse, non criminibus mariti connexam. Nimia tantum pietatis ream separarent: atque ipse quicumque sortem subiret." Simul in amplexus occurrentis filix ruebat, nisi interjecti fictores utrisque obstitissent. *Tac.*

A.R. 817. just suffered a most severe affliction by the exile
 aft. C. 66. of her husband Annius Pollio, suspected of
 being concerned in the conspiracy. Reduced
 in a manner to a state of widowhood, and al-
 ready a prey to grief for the absence of her hus-
 band, she dared not lift up her eyes towards
 her father, to whose danger she seemed to have
 added. The accuser asking her whether she
 had not sold her wedding ornaments and pearl-
 necklace to make up a sum of money necessary
 for the magic sacrifices? She prostrated herself
 on the earth, and remained there a long time
 drowned in tears, without being able to speak.
 At length raising herself up, and embracing
 eagerly the altars of the divinities worshipped,
 in the place where the Senate assembled,
 "I have, said she, invoked no god whose
 "worship is impious, nor practised any cere-
 "mony tending to a criminal end; nor have I,
 "in the unhappy prayers I am now reproached
 "with, desired any other thing, than that you,
 "Cæsar, and you, illustrious Senators, might
 "preserve the life of a father, worthy of all
 "my tenderness." I gave my jewels and all
 "my other ornaments; as I would have given
 "my blood and my life, had they been requi-
 "red from me. I did not know those people;
 "let them answer for the name they bear, and
 "the art they profess. For my part, I never
 "made use of the Prince's name, but as I
 "would that of a divinity. After all, my
 "unhappy father knows nothing of what I
 "have done, and if it be a crime, I alone am
 "guilty."

She had not ceased speaking, when Soranus
 raising his voice observed, "That his daughter
 was

“ was not with him in the province of Asia ; A.R. 817.
 “ that she was too young to have been acquainted aft. C. 66.
 “ with Plautus : that she was no ways con-
 “ cerned in the suspicions thrown on her hus-
 “ band, and that her only crime was an excess
 “ of filial piety. Separate her cause from
 “ mine, said he, and dispose of me as you
 “ may think proper.” At the same time, he
 ran to embrace his daughter, who advanced
 towards him. The Lictors stept between, and
 parted them.

The depositions of the witnesses were next
 proceeded on : among them Egnatius Celer
 raised the indignation of every one. He was*
 a pretended philosopher, a client of Soranus's,
 but, bribed by money, maintained with a sto-
 ic gravity the false evidence he gave against his
 patron : a complete hypocrite, who, under the
 specious appearance of virtue, of which he had
 studied to wear the mask, hid a perfidious
 heart, devoured by ambition and love of mo-
 ney. The baseness of his behaviour on this
 occasion unmasked him, and was a lesson to
 men, says Tacitus, not only not to trust declared
 villains who profess fraud, and are ready to
 commit every shameful action, but likewise
 those, who, under such fair appearance, deceive
 so much the more certainly, as one is not
 guarded against them. Juvenal's scholiast

U 2

makes

* Cliens hic Sorani, et tunc emptus ad opprimendum
 amicum, auctoritatem Stoicæ sectæ præferebat, habitu, et
 ore ad exprimendam imaginem honesti exercitus, ceterum
 animo perfidiosus et subdolos, avaritiam et libidinem oc-
 cultans. Quæ postquam pecuniâ reclusa sunt, dedit exem-
 plum precavendi, quomodo fraudibus involutos, aut fugi-
 tiis commaculatos, sic specie bonarum artium falsos et ami-
 citiæ fallaces. Tac.

A.R. 817. makes Egnatius guilty of a still blacker per-
 aft. C. 66. fidy ; saying, it was he that directed Servilia to
 the Magicians, and then became the infamous
 informer against a crime he himself had ad-
 vided.

Another witness in the same affair acted a
 very different part. Cassius Asclepiodorus, a
 man of the first distinction in Bithynia for his
 rank and riches, shewed Soranus when accused,
 the same regard and friendship he had professed
 for him in his prosperity, at which the Prince
 being displeased, he was banished : so * indif-
 ferent, says Tacitus, are the gods, about good
 or bad examples, vice or virtue. This Epicu-
 rean reflexion is the more displaced here, as in
 the case we are speaking of, Providence took
 care to justify itself to the eyes of all mankind.

Dio, Ner.
Tac. Hist.
 iv. x. & xl.

Dion Cassius assures us Asclepiodorus was re-
 called from exile under Galba : and we shall
 relate, after Tacitus himself, the condemnation
 and punishment of Egnatius.

Tac. xvi.
Ann. 35.

Thrasea, Soranus, and Servilia were con-
 demned to die, with liberty to choose their
 kind of death. Helvidius and Paconius were
 banished Italy. The Emperor pardoned Mon-
 tanus, at his father's request, on condition he
 should be excluded from all public employ-
 ments. The accusers served Nero too well,
 not to be rewarded. Cossutianus and Marcel-
 * £40,000. lus received each of them five * millions of
 sesterces : twelve hundred thousand were given
 to Ostorius, with the ornaments of Questor.

Thrasea had spent the day in his gardens
 with a numerous company of persons of dis-
 tinction,

* Æquitate deum erga bonâ malaque documenta. Tac.

inction, of both sexes; conversing chiefly with A.R. 817.
 Demetrius the cynic philosopher, of whose aft. C. 66.
 praises Seneca is full. Their conversation turned, as far as could be judged by their serious looks, and some words that were over-heard, on the nature of the soul, and its separation from the body: when Domitius Cæcilianus, one of Thræsea's intimate friends, arrived, and brought the news of what the Senate had ordained. Every one present burst into tears and bitter complaints. Thræsea begged they would retire with speed, and not endanger their fortunes with that of a condemned man. His wife wanted to imitate the example of the famous Arria, whose daughter she was, and die with him. He prevailed on her to relinquish that design, to preserve herself for their daughter, and not deprive her of the only resource she had left, when robbed of her father by death, and of her husband by exile.

After settling his affairs, he left the garden, and went towards a gallery where he saw the Consul's Questor coming to signify his sentence, and be witness to the execution of it. Thræsea accosted him with an air that spoke joy, because he knew his son-in-law Helvidius was only banished: and receiving the copy of the Senate's decree, stept directly into a room with the Questor, his son-in-law, and the philosopher Demetrius. There the veins of both his arms were opened; and, like Seneca, he sprinkled the floor with his blood, saying, "Let us offer up our libations to Jupiter the Deliverer." Then, addressing himself to the Questor, whom he had desired to draw near, "Mark me well *,"

U 3

" young

* Specta, juvenis: et omen quidem dii prohibeant. Ceterum

A.R. 817. "young man, said he to him; May the gods avert this bad omen from you! But you live in a time, wherein it is necessary to steel your soul by examples of fortitude." Death did not make him wait long, but his pains were violent. That is all we know of Thræsea's last moments, for here Tacitus fails us. We have lost the end of the sixteenth book of his Annals, which contained the rest of Nero's reign.

For the same reason we can give no circumstantial account of the deaths of Barca Sornus, and his daughter, which Tacitus undoubtedly took care to relate at large.

Two apophthegms of Thræsea's.

Instead of those accounts, more curious perhaps than useful, I shall insert here two apophthegms of Thræsea's, recorded by the younger Pliny, which may be considered as important lessons. That *great man was full of mildness, the characteristic of a noble mind, and would often say, "He that hates vice, hates all mankind:" a maxim very proper to be remembered by all good people, to prevent their giving way to an ill-judged zeal, which too often induces them to attack persons instead of things. Thræsea's other saying, relates to advocates, and the different kinds of causes, which, according to him, it was fit for them to undertake. Those † he would have be, the causes of their friends, of people in distress, and

terum in ea tempora natus es, quibus firmare animum expedit constantibus exemplis.

* Mandamus memoriæ quod vir mitissimus, et ob hoc quoque maximus, Thræsea crebro dicere solebat: qui vitia odit homines odit. *Plin. Ep. viii. 22.*

† Suscipiendas esse causas aut amicorum, aut destitutas, aut ad exemplum pertinentes. *Plin. Ep. vi. 29.*

and such as might tend to set good examples, A.R. 817.
 and purify the morals. * Without doubt, he aft. C. 66.
 supposed them founded on right and justice.
 The profession of an advocate was exercised with
 great nobleness among the Romans; it was
 not a means of growing rich, at least to those
 who piqued themselves on being strictly ho-
 nest.

Paconius Agrippinus was, as I have said, Fortitude of Paconius, condemned to banishment. Arr. Epict.
 condemned with Thræsea, but only to be ba-
 nished. We learn from Arrian, with what
 extraordinary coolness and fortitude he behaved
 on that occasion. Whilst the Senate was pro-
 ceeding on his trial, some body coming to ac-
 quaint him with it, " Be it so, said he, but this
 " is my time of bathing and taking my usual
 " exercises; I do not see why that should inter-
 " fere with them." Another coming soon af-
 ter, and telling him he was condemned,
 " To what? answered he, Banishment, or
 " death? To banishment, replied the other.
 " And my estate, Is it forfeited? No. Why
 " then let us go dine at Arricia." There is
 no need to observe, that a mind so tempered was
 formed in the Stoic school.

Another Stoic philosopher, Cornutus, Exile of Cornutus. Dio.
 master to Persius and Lucan, was likewise banish-
 ed, but for a different cause. Nero had taken
 it into his head to write the whole Roman His-
 tory in verse; but before he begun, was consi-
 dering how many books he should make his
 poem consist of. He consulted on that occa-
 sion such as were thought men of learning and
 taste, among whom was Cornutus. One of
 them advised making four hundred books of
 it. " That is a great many, said Cornutus, no

A.R. 817. "body will read them." He was answered, aft. C. 66. that Chrysippus, his favourite author, had written a great many more. "The difference is very great, replied Cornutus. The works of Chrysippus are useful to mankind, and proper to form their morals." Nero was so irritated at this frankness, that he was very near ordering Cornutus to be put to death. However, he only banished him.

Tiridates arrives in Rome. Ceremony of his coronation by Nero. Great rejoicings on that occasion.

Such were the preludes to the magnificent feasts, and splendid pomp, Nero made for the reception of Tiridates. The Parthian Prince waited on him at Naples, as I have said. When he first came into his presence, he kneeled down, crossed his arms, called him his Lord and Master, and, in fine, adored him. But he could not be prevailed on to lay aside his sword; on the contrary, he had nailed it into the scabbard; and Nero esteemed him the more for it. On their way to Rome, the Emperor entertained him with a combat of gladiators at Pozzuolo; Patrobius, one of the Emperor's freemen, being at the expence of it. When they entered Rome, the whole city was illuminated, and the houses adorned with wreaths and garlands. But, above all, nothing was spared to add to the lustre of the day on which Tiridates received the crown of Armenia from Nero's hand.

Dio. & Suet. Ner. c. 13.

The ceremony was performed in the Forum, the middle of which was filled with an innumerable multitude of people, ranked according to their several tribes, in white robes, and crowns of laurel on their heads. The Pretorian cohorts, with their burnished arms, and colours flying, were drawn up all round in great

great order. The roofs of the houses were covered with spectators. All were placed in that order in the night, and early in the morning Nero arrived, clothed in a triumphal dress, and attended by the Senate and his guards. Ascending the tribunal for harangues, he seated himself in his curule chair. After him came Tiridates with all his train, and passing thro' a double rank of soldiers, approached Nero, and kneeled before him; at which the multitude gave such a shout, that Tiridates, who did not expect it, was so terrified he remained speechless. But silence being made, Nero raised him up and kissed him: the Parthian Prince recovering himself, made a short speech, far from savouring of the pride of the Arsacidæ. "Though I am the descendent of Arsaces, said he, and brother to the Kings Vologeses and Pacorus, I own myself your slave. You are my god, and I am come to adore you, as I adore the Sun. My destiny is to be determined by your supreme and omnipotent will; for I depend on you, as on fate and fortune." An ancient Prætor interpreted this speech to the people.

Nothing can equal the lowness of it, unless it be the arrogance of Nero's answer. "You have done well, said he to Tiridates, to come hither to receive in person my favours. What your father could not leave you, nor your brothers, after giving you, preserve, that my liberality now grants: I make you King of Armenia, that the whole universe may know it belongs to me to give, or take away, crowns." Nero having so said, Tiridates was seated on a stool at his feet, and the

A.R. 817. the Emperor set the diadem on his head, the
aft. C. 66. air resounding with repeated acclamations of
the spectators.

The ceremony was closed with games incredibly magnificent. The stage on which they were performed, and all the inside of the vast building that contained the spectators, were lined with gold. Gold glittered on the decorations, and every thing that was made use of on that occasion; for which reason that day was called *The golden day*. Over the stage was spread, to keep off the heat of the sun, a covering of purple, on which was embroidered a representation of Nero driving a carr, the ground-work stars of gold. Those diversions being over, Nero gave Tiridates a sumptuous entertainment: and, that the foreign Prince might not be ignorant of any of his merits, he performed some of his music on the stage, and a race in the Circus, dressed in his green cassac and postilion's cap.

He received the reward he was justly entitled to, for such ostentation mixed with so much meanness, the contempt of Tiridates; who, comparing such a Prince with Corbulo, could not sufficiently wonder, how so great a General could condescend to receive orders from so unworthy a sovereign. He could not conceal his surprize even from Nero, nor help telling him one day, "He had an excellent slave in Corbulo." But Nero, either did not, or would not understand his meaning: for we shall soon see he was but too sensible how much Corbulo was to be feared.

Tiridates, however, made his court very dextrously to Nero, and took care to make himself

self agreeable by flatteries, for which he was well rewarded. The gifts he received from him, amounted to the value of two * hundred millions of sesterces. He likewise obtained leave to rebuild Artaxata; and in order to have that great work done in taste, and properly executed, he took with him from Rome a great number of workmen, some of whom Nero gave him, and others were induced to go by his invitations, and the presents he made them. But Corbulo would suffer none but such as had the Emperor's leave to stir out of the Empire: a wise precaution, and a proof that Corbulo was as good a politician as he was an able General, nor could Tiridates but esteem him the more for it.

Tiridates learnt at Rome to get the better of his scruples. He had surmounted his superstitious respect for the sea, and made no difficulty of embarking at Brindium to go to Greece. On his return to Armenia, he rebuilt Artaxata, and changed its name to *Neronia*.

Nero made as great a trophy of the homage paid him by Tiridates, as if he had gained a great victory. He was saluted *Imperator* on that occasion, carried a branch of laurel in great pomp to the Capitol, and assuming the honour of having pacified the universe, closed the temple of Janus.

He had a great desire to learn magic from Tiridates. One of his greatest passions was to be a learned magician; he was as fond of that detestable art, as of music and chariot races. Every thing submitted to his will, and consci-

ence

Nero's fruitless attempts convince him of the folly of Magic, for which he had a violent passion. *Plin. xxx. 2.*

* About one million six hundred thousand pounds of our money.

A.R. 817. once was a thing that never troubled him, so
 aft. C. 66. that he had spared neither expence nor crimes
 to attain his end ; but all his endeavours had
 been fruitless. Nero concluded he had at last
 found what he had so long sought for when
 Tiridates arrived, bringing with him several of
 the Magi from his country, himself being also
 one. The Parthian Magi exhausted all their
 skill to satisfy him ; but all he gained by it
 was, a thorough conviction of the emptiness
 of their art. Pliny, who gives us this account,
 concludes * from so remarkable an instance, that
 magic is as vain and idle as it is criminal ; and
 that if those who pretend to be Magicians, do
 sometimes perform extraordinary things, it
 must be owing to the natural effect of some un-
 known drugs, and not to the deceitful art they
 profess.

Projects of
 war in Ne-
 ro's brain.
Dia.
Suet. Ner.
 19.

Nero was so pleased with receiving the re-
 spects and homage of Tiridates, that he want-
 ed to repeat something of the same kind with
 Vologesès. Accordingly he often pressed the
 King of Parthia to come to Rome, till the
 latter, tired with his importunities, wrote him
 word, " You can cross the sea with much
 " more ease than I can. Do you come over
 " to Asia, and then we will settle matters for
 " an interview." Nero, incensed at this an-
 swer, thought of declaring war against the Par-
 thians. His head was full of other chimæras :
 he sent people to reconnoitre, on one hand, the
 Ethiopians, and on the other, the nations bor-
 dering on the Caspian sea, as if he had intended
 to

* Proinde ita persuasum fit, intestabilem, irritam, ina-
 nem esse, habentem tamen quasdam veritatis umbras: sed
 in his veneficas artes pollere, non magicas. *Plin.*

to make conquests in those remote countries. A.R.817.
 He draughted several detachments out of the
 German, British, and Illyrian armies, and or-
 dered them to march towards the East: and
 raised a new legion in Italy, composed of fine
 men, all six foot high; he called this body A-
 lexander the Great's Phalanx.

aft. C. 66.
Tac. Hist.
 i. 6.

Suet.

Had he not been as cowardly as he was vain, a fine opportunity offered to signalize himself in arms. This very year the revolt of the Jews broke out. But instead of going in person to reduce them to obedience, and seek to deserve a glorious triumph, he charged Vespasian with the conduct of a war, too difficult and dangerous for him to think of. I shall give elsewhere a proper account of that great event; the ruin of the Jews, and the siege and sack of Jerusalem. Not to interrupt here the order of facts; I return to Nero, whose great projects end in a voyage to Greece to gain theatrical crowns.

He sends
 Vespasian
 to make war
 against the
 Jews.
Jos. de Bel.
Jud. ii. 25.
 & iii. 4.

Suetonius gives the following account of what induced him to take that voyage. The Grecian cities, in which the musical games and theatrical entertainments were celebrated, had laid it down as a rule to send him all the musical crowns. He received them with infinite satisfaction, and the Deputies that brought them were sure of being the first that obtained audience; he would make them sit down to table with him in a familiar manner. On one of those occasions some of the Deputies desired he would be pleased to sing; and of course praised his performance mightily: On which he cried out, the Greeks were the only judges of music, and the only people worthy to hear him.

He goes to
 Greece, to
 gain thea-
 trical
 crowns.
Suet. Ner.
 22.

A.R. 817. him. He set out therefore for Greece towards aft. C. 66. the end of this year, and remained there almost all the next, in which Cápito and Rufus were Consuls.

Death of Antonia, daughter to Claudius. *Suet. Ner. 35.*

I think the death of Antonia, daughter of Claudius, of which no mention is made in what we have remaining of Tacitus, must have happened before that voyage. Nero wanted to marry that Princess; but, on her refusal, suspecting she concealed some ambitious design, had her killed.

Nero marries Statilia Messalina. *Suet. Ibid.*

It was probably at that time that he married Statilia Messalina, with whom he had long lived in adultery, and whose husband Vestinus Atticus he had put to death.

A.R. 818. aft. C. 67.

L. FONTEIUS CAPITO:
C. JULIUS RUFUS.

He visits all the games of Greece, and carries off 1800 crowns. *Dio. Suet. Ner. 23. 24.*

Nero took with him in his expedition to Greece, a retinue, numerous enough to have conquered Parthia and the East, had it been composed of military people. His attendants, were indeed soldiers, worthy such a General as him, and their arms, instruments of music, masks, and dresses for the stage.

He landed at Cassiopæa in the isle of Corcyra, where the first thing he did was to sing before the altar of Jupiter Cassius. From thence he ran to all the games of Greece, having ordered them to be celebrated in the same year, without any regard to the difference of time that had always been observed for those solemnities. So the Olympian games, which were to have been celebrated in the month of June of the year of Rome 816, were by his command

Pittistr. Apol. v. 7.

command postponed till his arrival : and, contrary to all order, he added music to them, tho' there was not even a stage at Olympia, nor any thing but a place for chariot-races and wrestling : he was desirous to increase the number of crowns, and do honour to his favourite passion, music. Always fond of any thing extraordinary, he undertook to drive a carr drawn by six horses round the Stadium ; though in one of his pieces of poetry he had accused Mithridates of rashness for such an attempt. He succeeded very badly : he fell from the carr ; and being again seated in it, was unable to bear the violence of the motion, but was forced to get down before his race was ended. He was, however, declared conqueror, and crowned accordingly. He disputed likewise the prizes at the Isthmian, Pythian, Nemæan, and all the other games of Greece, and gained on these occasions eighteen hundred various sorts of crowns.

Himself always solemnly proclaimed his own victories : that was properly the function of the heralds, and always used to be done by those of that profession. Nero, whose noble emulation extended to every thing that had any connexion with shews and games, stood candidate with the heralds also to perform that ceremony, and we may readily judge, could not fail being preferred. Dion Cassius gives us the form of those proclamations, for the intelligence of which, it is necessary to observe, that in those so renowned games, the victor's honour reflected on his country, and the crown was deemed adjudged to the place of which he was a citizen. The form of proclamation

A. R. 818. on this occasion was as follows: NERO * CAESAR
 aft. C. 67. IS VICTOR IN SUCH A COMBAT (naming it)
 AND HAS GAINED THE CROWN FOR THE RO-
 MAN PEOPLE, AND THE UNIVERSE, OF WHICH
 HE IS MASTER:

His mean
 jealousy be-
 comes cru-
 elty.

His love of pre-eminence, on all occasions, degenerated into low jealousy. Unwilling to share with any one the honour of those victories, of which he was so proud, he ordered to be pulled down, destroyed, and thrown into ditches, all the statues of those who had formerly been victorious in the four great games, called sacred, of which I have given a particular account; and forced one Pammences, who had distinguished himself under Caius, but was then old and had retired, to make his appearance again, and enter the lists with him, that, by vanquishing a worn-out adversary, he might have a kind of right to treat his statues with ignominy.

Lucian Ner.

I have said elsewhere, how strictly he observed all the rules and orders prescribed on these occasions, and the respect and deference he shewed his judges. But his rivals always found him Nero. A Greek, an excellent singer, but bad politician, entering the lists against him, and imprudently displaying all his talents, and obstinately disputing the prize, woefully experienced it. Whilst he was singing, the whole assembly being delighted with his voice, Nero called in the Lictors, who attended him in the execution of the performance. They seized the imprudent Musician, and clapping his back against

* Νέρων Καῖσαρ νικᾷ τότῳδ τὸν ἀγῶνα, καὶ σιφρανοῖ τόν τι-
 τνῶ φραμαίων δῆμον, καὶ τῆν ἴδιαν οἰκουμένην.

against a pillar, stabbed him in the throat with a little poignards they had concealed in their pocket-books. A.R. 818. aft. C. 67.

To make Greece amend for the harvest and crowns he had reaped there, Nero declared the country free; himself proclaimed it such at the Isthmian games, pretending to revive the example of Quintus Flaminius, the conqueror of Philip of Macedon. But if the favour Flaminius formerly granted the Greeks consisted more in the name of liberty than in the real enjoyment of it, as, in the History of the republic we have seen it did, that gift from Nero had still less reality in it. Dion Cassius assures us, some few private persons only received gifts from him, and they were soon after taken back by Galba. All that Greece gained by Nero's preference was to have its nobility murdered, the estates of its rich men forfeited, and its temples plundered. He declares Greece free, but ravages it by his cruelties & rapine. Dio.

It must, however, be acknowledged no small advantage to the Greeks to be governed by their own laws and magistrates, and exempted from paying any tribute. Plutarch and Pausanias mention it as such, and are far from despising the favour Nero did to Greece. But it was not long enjoyed. Vespasian soon put things again on their old footing. Plut. Flavia. Pausan. Ach.

It may not be improper to observe, that as Achaia was one of the people's provinces, Nero thought himself obliged to make them amend, by giving them Sardinia in exchange.

He visited neither Athens nor Lacedæmon: which was imputed to his remorse of conscience, that made him dread in Athens the temple erected to the Eumenidæ, and in Lacedæmon, He visits neither Athens nor Lacedæmon.

A.R. 818: Lycurgus, and his wise laws. I have already
aft. C. 67. said, how, for a like reason, he did not dare to
be present at the mysteries of Ceres Eleusina.

His anger
against A-
pollo. The
mouth of
the oracle
of Delphi
closed.
Suct. Ner.
40.

He went to Delphi, and consulted the ora-
cle of Apollo; by which, according to Suetoni-
nius, he was warned to beware of seventy-
three years. Nero took it, that he was to live
to that age, and as he was not then thirty, was
very well satisfied with the promise of so long
a life. But Apollo was laying a snare for him,
and meant Galba; who soon after succeeded
him, and was seventy-three years old. All
that seems very fabulous; and if the Pythian
did at first tell him some pretty things, she soon
altered her style, ranking him with Alcmeon
and Orestes, murderers of their mothers; which
so incensed him against the god, that he confis-
cated his territory Cirrha, which the temple of
Delphi had enjoyed for many ages: and, in
order to profane the mouth of the oracle, which
was a hole in the ground from whence vapours
exhaling inspired the priestess with a pretend-
ed prophetic fury; the blood of several men,
butchered on the very spot by his orders, was
poured down it; after which the opening was
closed:

Dio.
Lucian Nef.

He attempts
to pierce
the Isthmus
of Corinth.
Suct. Ner.
19.
*Dio. & Lu-
cian. Ner.*
Philostr.
Apol.

A thought that might have been useful struck
him whilst he was in Greece. He resolved to
pierce the Isthmus of Corinth, which is but five
miles over, to save navigators going round the
Peloponnesus, when they want to pass from the
Ionian to the Egean sea. The superstition of
the people opposed that design; they were afraid
of violating the laws of nature, by joining what
she had separated. Facts, either magnified,
or entirely the offspring of fear, were alledged
in

in support of that opinion. It was said, that, A. R. 818. at the first stroke struck into the earth, blood aft. C. 67. had gushed out; that groans had been heard as if from subterraneous caverns, and that phantoms had appeared to the inhabitants of those parts. The vulgar were not the only ones prejudiced. Pliny, who is far from being superstitious, speaks of the attempt * to pierce the Isthmus, as of a fatal rashness, and alledges the unhappy end of four Princes who set about it, Demetrius Poliocrates, Cesar, Caligula, and Nero. Plin. iv. 2.

The latter was not terrified by idle fears; and, to remove all scruples, after haranguing the Pretorian soldiers, and encouraging them to work, himself lent them a hand, but in such a manner as was quite of a piece with the rest of his character. Coming out of the tent that was pitched for him on the shore, he sung a hymn to Neptune and Amphitrite, and a short invitation to Leucothoe, and Melicerta, sea-gods of the second order. The Intendant of Achaia then presenting him a golden pick-ax, he struck it thrice into the earth, amidst the applauses and acclamations of an infinite multitude of spectators. Then putting a little dust into a basket, and clapping it on his shoulder, Lucian Ner. marched off, thinking, says an ancient author, he had outdone all the labours of Hercules.

The number of workmen was immense. Jos. de Bel. Jud. iii. c. ult. Nero had collected them from all parts, taking all the prisoners out of every jail in the Empire; and Vespasian, Josephus says, furnished

X 2

him

* Perforare alveo navigabili angustias eas tentare Demetrius Rex, Dictator Cæsar, Caius Princeps, Lucius Nero, infausto (ut omnium patuit exitu) incepto. *Plin.*

A.R. 818. him with six thousand Jews, all strong young
aft. C. 67. men, chosen out of a much greater number
he had made prisoners.

The work was divided amongst them, so that the earth and good soil fell to the soldiers share; the stony and difficult parts were allotted those that were compelled to labour as criminals or slaves.

Philostr.
Apollon. v.
19.

Of that number, if we may credit Philostrates, was the philosopher Musonius Rufus, a Roman Knight; banished from Rome, as I have said, on account of Piso's conspiracy, confined in the island of Gyara, and from thence brought to the Isthmus to work among the slaves, loaded with irons. Demetrius the Cynic, who had fled to Greece to avoid Nero's wrath, knew Musonius again in a situation so unworthy his rank and virtue, and seemed greatly moved at his melancholy fate. Musonius, continuing to dig on heartily, answered, "Thou art afflicted at seeing me help to pierce this Isthmus for the benefit of Greece! Wouldst thou rather have me sing and fiddle on a stage, like Nero?"

Id. ib. iv.

The work was begun on the side next the Ionian sea, at a place called *Lechæum*, a sea-port belonging to Corinth, and was carried on with great diligence for * seventy-five days, in which time was dug the length of four stadia, which was about a tenth part of the breadth of the Isthmus. On the seventy-fifth day, came a sudden order from Nero, who remained at Corinth, to give over the work.

Two

* I adopt *M. de Tillemont's* conjecture, who, in the text of *Lucian*, instead of *seventh* and *fifth*, reads the *seventy fifth*.

Two reasons were at that time given for this sudden change. It was said, that some Egyptian mathematicians, consulted by the Emperor, having taken the level of the two seas east and west of Peloponnesus, found the waters of the Ionian higher than those of the Egean sea: so that there was reason to apprehend, in case a communication should be opened by means of a canal cut across the Isthmus, the island of Ægina, and the low lands on the side of the Egean sea, would be overflowed and destroyed. But that allegation is refuted by all the laws of hydrostatics; for as those two seas do communicate south of Peloponnesus, it follows that their waters must be on a level. Besides, Nero was so little disposed to give way to any remonstrances, that Thales himself, and Archimedes, would have displayed all their mathematical rhetoric in vain, had they attempted to dissuade him from a resolution he had once taken: and that we are speaking of, delighted him infinitely, as being an extraordinary and most arduous undertaking, in vain attempted before by three powerful Princes. It is therefore much more probable, that fear of what might be the consequence of the disturbances the Prince's absence began to occasion in Italy, was what made Nero abandon his enterprize. The danger of an inundation was the pretence he made use of, to conceal his real motive. His freeman Helius, whom he had left in Rome with full power, had often written him word how necessary his presence was in that city. But Nero, whom none but frivolous objects could charm, and who valued premiums of music and races beyond every other thing,

A. R. 818.

aft. C. 67.

He gives up the enterprize, terrified by the news he receives from Rome.

*Lucian Ner.**Suet. Ner.*

23 & Dio.

A. R. 818. thing, had answered him in these words, "Tho' aft. C. 67. " * you advise and wish for my speedy return " to Italy, you ought rather to desire me, to " make my appearance there with a glory " worthy Nero." At last, Helius, greatly alarmed, went over to Greece himself, and informing Nero of a conspiracy that was plotting in Rome, terrified and prevailed on him to depart. But before we follow him to Italy, as I have hitherto spoken only of his amusements during his stay in Greece; it is proper likewise to give some account of his cruelties.

Cruelties exercised by Nero, or by his orders, during his stay in Greece.

I impute to him those which Helius exercised, and with reason, because that freeman acted only under his authority. Nero, as I have said, left him a full power. That power was so unlimited, that, according to Dion Cassius, the Romans had then two Emperors, Nero and Helius; and it was a matter of doubt which of the two was worst. Only there was more meanness in Nero's degrading himself so low as to act the musician, than there was in the freeman's acting the tyrant. Helius, without waiting for Nero's orders, confiscated the estates, and took away the lives, not only of the middling sort of people, but likewise of Knights and Senators. By that means perished Sulpicius, Camerinus, father and son, under the frivolous pretence of the surname of *Paticus*; which they bore, and which had for many ages been hereditary in their family. The pronunciation of that word sounding pretty much like *Pythicus*,

* *Quamvis nunc tuum consilium sit et votum celeriter reverti me; tamen suadere et optare potius debes, ut Nerone dignus revertar. Suet.*

Pythicus *, which may be interpreted *Victor in the Pythian games*, Helius pretended it was a sacrilegious usurpation in them to take a name that belonged to none but the Emperor.

Rapine and cruelty went hand in hand. Polycetes, another freeman, plundered Rome, whilst Helius drowned it in blood; and Nero too had taken a Harpy with him, Galvia Crispinilla, a Lady of quality, who did not blush to be Governante to the infamous Sporus, then married to Nero; and who divided the spoils of Greece with that vile eunuch.

What Nero executed in great, that she did in small. Immense sums of money were requisite for that mad Emperor's wild enterprizes, and boundless prodigality: and the umbrage he took at every great man in the Empire, joined to his covetousness, induced him, by means of his satellites, to kill, or force to kill themselves, the richest and most illustrious of those who till then had escaped his cruelty.

Corbulo had too much merit not to excite the jealous mistrusts of that cruel Prince. It is true, that, had he been capable of giving way to ambition, the Romans would have placed him on the throne. But, inviolably true to his trust, he had even taken care to send his son-in-law Annius Vivianus with Tiridates, there to remain as a kind of hostage of his fidelity to Nero. Death was the reward of a conduct so conspicuously void of blame. Nero sent for him by a letter, wherein he called him his benefactor and father, and expressed his regard

Death of
Corbulo,
and several
others.

X 4 in

* *The Romans pronounced the diphthong æ, and the letters u or y, nearly alike.*

A. R. 818. in the strongest terms. Corbulo obeyed ; but aft. C. 67. was hardly arrived at Cenchreæ, a Corinthian port of the Egean sea, when he received orders condemning him to die. Finding then with what black ingratitude his virtue was repaid, and unenlightened by that doctrine which sets men above all human events, " I deserve it," said he ; and drawing his sword, ran himself thro' the body.

Nero imagined his stay in Greece, and absence from the capital, afforded him a more favourable opportunity of displaying all his cruelty ; and with that view had taken with him, or afterwards sent for, several persons of great distinction, whom he hated and suspected. Of that number were two brothers, of the name of Scribonius, the one surnamed Rufus, the other Proculus, who had always lived in the strictest union. Their way of life was the same ; the same house and table served them both ; they had made no division of what their father left them, but enjoyed it in comion ; their steps, too, were equal in the road of honour, both were made Governors at the same time, the one of upper, and the other of lower Germany. Nero looked on this cordiality, so laudable between brothers, as a conspiracy against him. Their birth and riches made him think them formidable. He sent for them ; and when they arrived in Greece in consequence of his orders, harrassed and wearied them out by calumnious imputations. The accused desired leave to defend themselves, but could obtain neither audience nor other means of justification, and were forced to have their veins cut open.

I think

I think we may place here the death of Crassus, of which no mention is made either in Dion Cassius or in the Annals of Tacitus; but who, however, perished under Nero. He was descended from a family, as unfortunate as it was illustrious, and on which Crassus and Pompey, the authors of it, seemed to have entailed the misfortunes attached to their names. His father Crassus, his mother Scribonia, his brother Cn. Pompeius Magnus, had all been put to death by Claudius. Himself was accused by Aquilius Regulus a young man of a most mischievous disposition, and who knew no other use of the talents he possessed but to do ill. Crassus was condemned and died a violent death; leaving behind him two brothers, whose fate, as we shall hereafter see, was not less hard than his, Crassus Scribonianus and Piso, at that time in exile, but afterwards, unhappily for him, adopted by Galba. The accuser received as a reward, for his infamous ministry, the ornaments of Consul, a gratification of seven * millions of sesterces, and a priesthood, *£.56,000. of what kind we are not told.

Even those who contributed to Nero's pleasures were not screened from his cruelty. He put the Pantomime Paris to death, because he could not learn his art; or, which is much the same, because he found in him a better actor than himself.

Cæcina Tuscus, his nurse's son, whom he had made Prefect of Egypt, was treated with humanity, and without doubt, thought himself well off in being only condemned to banishment. His crime was, having made use of the

A. R. 818.

aft. C. 67.

Tac. Hist.

l. 14. & 48.

Tac. Hist. iv.

42. & Plin.

i. Ep. 5.

*£.56,000.

Suet. Ner. 5.

Suet. Ner.

35. & Dia.

A. R. 818 the baths built at Alexandria for Nero, when
aft. C. 67. he was expected there in his way to Egypt.

Nero's hatred to the Senate.
Suet. Ner. 57.

But above all, the Senate was the object of his implacable hatred. After having banished, or put to death, so many members of that illustrious body, he made no secret of his design to extirpate them all, and give the government of provinces and command of armies to the Roman Knights and his freemen. It was observed, that in the prayer, which he pronounced with a loud and audible voice, when the works for piercing the Isthmus of Corinth were first begun, he suppressed the name of the Senate, and only requested the gods to be favourable to him and the Roman people.

The hatred of the Romans against him, hid under a show of attachment.
Dio.

Nero took such pains to deserve to be every day more and more the object of the public detestation, that there was not a citizen who did not wish his death. When it was known that he was returning from Greece, the weather being very bad, every one hoped he would be lost in the passage. They were disappointed, for he landed safe in Italy, where great rejoicings were made, with very sorrowful hearts.

The Senate had taken care to have the most flattering decrees ready for him, ordering thanks to be returned the gods for his victories in the Grecian games, and so many festivals, that the whole year was not long enough to celebrate them.

Vinicius's conspiracy discovered.
Suet. Ner. 36.

Whilst he was intoxicated with those deceitful praises, Vinicius was forming a conspiracy against him; for I do not see where I can place more properly that event, which Suetonius only mentions, without relating any per-

particulars. It was probably a confused knowledge of that danger that had caused Helius's alarms. The plot was discovered at Beneventum, when Nero passed through that place in his way to Rome. It were needless to say, he shed seas of blood on that occasion. His cruelty did not want so legitimate a motive.

Being delivered from that uneasiness, all his thoughts were bent on the triumphs he thought he had merited in Greece. Naples was the first place, where he celebrated them with great pomp; because that city was the first in which he had made a public trial of his talents. A part of the walls was thrown down by his orders, according to the custom observed in honour of victors in the sacred games of Greece, and he made his entry through the breach in a carr drawn by white horses. He entered Antium, where he was born, and in the same manner Alba; but Rome was the place where he chiefly intended all his glory should shine. The crowns he had won, to the number of eighteen hundred, were borne before him, with inscriptions denoting the names of the games, and nature of the combat, in which each had been gained; the adversaries he had vanquished, and other such like circumstances: the same inscriptions added, that Nero Cesar was the first Roman who, since the world subsisted, had ever acquired those brilliant rewards paid to talents and merit. Then came the Emperor, seated on the same carr Augustus had made use of for his triumphs. He was clothed in a robe of purple, with a mantle covered with stars of gold. On his head he wore the Olympic crown, composed of wild olive, and in his right hand held the

Nero's triumphant entries into Naples, Antium, Alba, and Rome. *Suct. Ner. 25. & Dio.*

A.R. 818. the Pythian crown, made of a branch of laurel. . . .
 aft. C. 67. rel. . . . A musician called Diodorus sat by him.

The carr was followed by a legion of hired applauders, who sung the triumpher's praises, crying out they were the soldiers of his triumph. The Senate, Knights, and people, accompanied the shameful pomp, and rent the air with acclamations, which Dion Cassius gives us in their own words: LONG LIVE THE VICTOR OF THE OLYMPIC GAMES! LONG LIVE THE VICTOR OF THE PYTHIAN GAMES! LONG LIVE THE EMPEROR! NERO IS A SECOND HERCULES! NERO IS A SECOND APOLLO. HE ONLY HAS BEEN VICTORIOUS IN EVERY KIND OF COMBAT, AND OF GAME: HE ALONE, SINCE THE COMMENCEMENT OF TIME, HAS DESERVED THIS GLORY. CELESTIAL VOICE! HAPPY THOSE WHO HEAR YOU! The whole city was illuminated and adorned with wreaths and garlands: incense burned in every place. Wherever the triumpher passed, victims were offered up, the streets were strewed with powdered saffron, flowers were thrown over him, with strings of crowns; and, what to us must appear extremely odd, birds and pieces of pastry. A part of the great Circus was thrown down, through which the whole train passed, proceeding on to the Forum, and from thence to the temple of Apollo Palatine. Other triumphers carried their laurels to the Capitol. Nero chose to honour the god of arts with his.

The ceremony being over, in order to perpetuate the remembrance of his victories, he placed in his chamber the crowns gained at the sacred games: and indicating games in the Circus, carried thither those he had gained at others, and hung them up on the Egyptian

tian obelisk that was erected in the Hyppodrome. A.R. 818. aft. C. 67.

Plutarch somewhere says, that * * courage, when founded on a solid, serious character, is elated and encreased by honorary rewards, which, like a favourable gale, incessantly bear it forward towards that beauty of virtue whose charms are all laid open. With souls of such a stamp, the reward is not a salary received, but a pledge given by them. They are ashamed ever to fall short of that glory; and even not to go beyond it in a repetition of those actions by which it was first deserved. The reverse of this observation is verified in Nero. The more he heaped of infamy on himself, the fonder he grew of it: and the ample provision he made of it in his voyage to Greece, made him covetous of acquiring still more.

His passion for games and shews is increased by the rewards he had gained at them.

Suet. Ner. 23. & Dio.

Statues of him were made in bronze and marble, and his effigies were stampd on the coin, with the dress in which musicians appeared on the stage. He was so very careful of his voice, that he would no longer harangue the troops himself, but, though present, made another speak for him. Whether he was taken up with serious business, or only his amusements, he never was without a Moderator at his side, who warn'd him to take care of his lungs, and keep a handkerchief before his mouth. As he confounded himself absolutely wish musicians by profession, he was not affronted

* Τα μβριθή και βίβαια φροσήματα αυξουν αι τιμαι και λαμπρευουσιν, ωπερ υπο πνιμαίος ενεργήματα προς το φαινόμιον καλον. Ου γάρ ως μισθον απολαμβάνοντες, αλλ' ως ετήχουσι διδόντες, αισχυνονται την δόξαν καταλιπειν και μη τοις αυτοίς εργοις υπερβαλίσθαι. *Plut. Coriol.*

A. R. 818. fronted at one Larcus, who was to exhibit games, aft. C. 67. offering him a million of sesterces to sing. It is true, he did not take the money; but Tigellinus insisted on having it, and the Emperor performed his part on the stage. Though he had refused the salary, yet, out of an inconceivably odd turn of mind, he looked upon it as a resource, in time of need; and when his Astrologers, or perhaps those who foresaw what must be the inevitable consequence of his crimes, foretold him, he would one day be abandoned by all, his answer was, "A man * that has a good trade may live."

Suet. Ner.
40.

That every thing opprobrious might centre in his person, he took great pains to learn to wrestle, and a report was spread that he intended to enter the list of wrestlers at the next Olympic games. Rivaling Apollo by the melody of his voice, and the Sun by his dexterity at driving a carr, he wanted likewise to imitate the labours of Hercules: and we are assured, he had a lion brought up purposely with a view to fight him naked in the Circus before all the people; and then knock him down with a club, or smother him in his arms.

Mankind, tired at last with suffering such a monster, was delivered from him by a revolution, of which the revolt of Vindex was the signal, as I am going to relate.

S E C T.

* Τὸ τέχνητος πάντα γὰρ τρέφει. *

S E C T. III.

The Consuls both men of letters. Revolt of Vindex in Gaul. Vindex writes to Galba. Birth and employments of Galba. He defers declaring himself. Vindex raises great forces, and again solicits Galba. Galba consults his friends. He declares himself openly. Nero, who was but little concerned at the revolt of Vindex, is quite terrified at the news of that of Galba. He sets a price on Vindex's head, and causes Galba to be declared a public enemy. Horrid projects thought of by him. Nero prepares to march against the rebels. His puerilities. All who had any command in the Empire declare against Nero. Virginus, tho' he will not support Nero, marches however against Vindex, who is defeated, and kills himself. Virginus's army offers him the Empire, which he refuses. He likewise refuses to declare for Galba. His reasons for so doing. Galba greatly perplexed. Nero, universally detested for his crimes, is likewise despised for his cowardice. His various projects all dictated by fear. Nymphidius Sabinus persuades the Prætorians to abandon Nero, and proclaim Galba Emperor. Nero flies from Rome, and retires to a country house belonging to one of his freemen. The Senate declares him a public enemy, and condemns him to suffer death. Nero, after shuffling a long time, kills himself, for fear of suffering the punishment to which he was condemned. His funeral, age, and duration of his reign. In him the family of Augustus is extinct. The memory of Nero was honoured by many. Some Christians have thought him the Antichrist.

A. R. 819.
aft. C. 68.

C. SILIUS ITALICUS.
M. GALERIUS TRACHALUS.

The Consuls
both men of
letters.

*Plin. l. iii.
Ep. 7.*

*Quintil.
Institut. Or.
l. 1. & xii.
5.*

*Tac. Hist.
l. 90.*

SILIUS Italicus and Galerius Trachalus, the two Consuls for the last year of Nero's reign, were both remarkable for their learning. Silius is still well known by his poem on the wars of Hannibal: It is a history in verse. Poetry was only the amusement of his old age: the law was his first study, in which he acquired some reputation as an orator: but under Nero, gave men room to form a disadvantageous idea of his probity, by accusing several persons, without having even the bad excuse of compulsion to alledge in his justification. He afterwards wiped off that stain by a conduct void of reproach.

Trachalus was an orator too, but his chief eloquence depended on his person, so * that he lost greatly' by being read. He possessed all outward advantages to a high degree. He was tall and well-made, his eyes full of fire, his countenance majestic and imposing, his action expressive, and his voice the finest, fullest, and most sonorous, one would wish to hear. Quintilian relates as a fact, of which he had often been witness, that when Trachalus pleaded in the Julian Basilic, where four courts of justice sat at the same time, he was listened to, followed, and, which must have been very mortifying to his brother advocates, applauded from each of the four courts at the same time. His style † answered the emphasis with which he opened

* *Auditus tamen major.*

† *Genus orandi, ad implendas populi aures latum et sonans. Tac.*

opened his discourse. He was fond of pompous expressions, sonorous words and phrases that filled the mouth. We shall have occasion to say more of him hereafter.

Nero, intent on nothing but the indecent pleasures by which he degraded himself, was returned to Naples to act a play, when he learnt the revolt of Vindex in Gaul. What authors we have remaining, assign no other cause for that rebellion, the consequences of which were so terrible, than the horror the Prince's crimes and tyranny inspired every one with. C. Julius Vindex, by birth a Gaul, of the province of Aquitania, descended from the ancient Kings of that country, but whose father becoming a Roman Senator, by a grant from Claudius, had left him expectations and a title to the same dignity, possessed every qualification that could make him formidable to a tyrant. He was active, intelligent, experienced in war, bold, and enterprising, and to those advantages joined a fine person and heroic look. Nero's excesses of all kinds filled him with indignation; and he knew his countrymen, the Gauls, bore but impatiently the heavy taxes they were loaded with. As he had a command in Gaul, he convened an assembly of the chief people of that country, wherein he exclaimed bitterly against Nero, painting him in all the odious colours such a monster deserved; but insisted chiefly on his vilifying the Imperial Majesty, so far as to personate the shameful character of musician and comedian. "I have heard him, said he, sing and play on the stage: I have seen him act all sorts of parts in the plays that are performed there. Let us no longer call him

Revolt of Vindex in Gaul.
Suet. Ner. 40.
Plut. Galb. Dia.

A. R. 819.
aft. C. 68.

A.R. 819. "Cæsar, Emperor, or Augustus, nor profane
aft. C. 68. "those sacred names. He himself chuses to
"be called Thyestes, Oedipus, Alcæon, O-
"restes; and those are the names that best be-
"come him. Shake off this shameful yoke:
"Revenge yourselves; revenge the Romans;
"restore the world to liberty."

Vindex
writes to
Galba.
Suet. Galb.
2—9.

Vindex was sensible he stood in need of help, and to that end secretly applied to Galba, then Governor of the province of Tarragon in Spain, whose high birth and great reputation entitled him to aspire to the highest post if vacant.

Birth and
employ-
ments of
Galba.

Galba, whom we have already had occasion to mention more than once, but whom it is now proper to make the reader more particularly acquainted with, was descended from the Sulpicii, a family as ancient as Rome, and greatly distinguished from the first establishment of the Republican government, immediately after the expulsion of the Kings. His mother, Mummia Achæica, was by her father's side descended from Mummius the conqueror of Corinth; and her grandfather, by her mother's side, was Q. Lutatius Catulus, one of the greatest ornaments of the Roman Republic; and who was less powerful than his contemporaries, Pompey and Cæsar, because he was more virtuous. Galba esteemed it a singular honour, that he could reckon that great man amongst his ancestors; and in his titles never omitted that of **GREAT GRANDSON OF Q. CATULUS CAPITOLINUS.**

He was born the twenty-fourth of December, in the year of Rome 747, eighteen months before the death of Augustus. Being protected
by

by Livia, to whom he was * related, honours A.R. 819.
 were conferred on him before the age prescribed ait. C. 68.
 by law. He was Consul under Tiberius in the
 year of Rome 784, and it was observed, that he
 succeeded in that post Cn. Domitius, father of
 Nero, his predecessor in the Empire; and was
 himself succeeded in the Consulship by the father
 of Otho, who reigned after him.

Caligula gave him the command of the le-
 gions in Upper Germany, and we have seen
 with what great skill in the art of war, and
 what severity of discipline he acquitted himself
 of that trust; and how wisely he rejected the
 solicitations of those who, after Caius's death,
 urged him to think of the Empire.

Claudius, who was pleased at that example
 of moderation in him, gave him, without ob-
 liging him to draw lots, as was the custom, the
 Proconsulship of Africa, that peace and tran-
 quillity might by his good conduct be again re-
 stored to that province, then torn by intestine
 broils, and harrassed by the incursions of Bar-
 barians. His government, which lasted two
 years, procured the people all the advantages,
 and the Prince all the satisfaction, that could be
 desired. He shewed the strictest adherence to
 justice and love of order. His care extended
 even to minute objects; of which, perhaps,
 he was more capable than of greater views.
 Suetonius mentions two instances of it, the one
 a laudable severity, the other a happy turn of
 thought.

Y. 2

Provisions

* *Livia Ocillina*, Galba's father's second wife, adopted his
 son-in-law, who consequently in his youth was called *Livius*
Ocella.

A.R. 819. Provisions falling short in some expedition
 aft. C. 68. they were upon, and being very dear, a soldier,
 who had saved a bushel of corn out of his allow-
 About £.30. ance, sold it for a hundred denarii. Galba,
 justly incensed at his inhuman avarice, ordered
 no corn to be sold to that soldier whenever he
 should want; by which means he was starved.
 The other affair is of less moment. The pro-
 perty of a beast of burden was contested by two
 men. Neither party being able to prove his
 right, Galba ordered the beast to be led blind-
 folded to his usual watering place, the covering
 to be then taken off his eyes, and he left at li-
 berty; by which means he found it belonged
 to the man whom the beast ran up to on coming
 out of the water.

He likewise maintained his military glory in
 Africa; and some advantages gained over the
 Barbarians, who molested that Province, re-
 vivifying the remembrance of his former exploits
 in Germany, he obtained the ornaments of
 Triumph; and, on his return to Rome, was
 honoured with three of those Priesthoods, which
 none but the first citizens could hold. After
 that, he spent several years in private life,
 taking care of his family, managing his ex-
 pences with economy, and piquing himself
 on imitating the ancient Roman frugality, for
 which, whilst a private man, he was commend-
 ed, but after his elevation to the throne, it was
 thought avarice and narrowness of soul.

Galba's taste for simplicity, his love of quiet
 and retirement, screened him from many
 dangers. That was, without doubt, what pro-
 tected him against the fury of Messalina, by
 whom

whom so many illustrious personages were A.R. 819.
 destroyed; and from the vengeance of Agrippina, aft. C. 68.
 who thought herself personally offended
 by him. For, when she was widow of Domi-
 tius, Galba being very rich, she had projected
 marrying him, tho' he, at that very time, was
 married. She made great advances towards
 him, and solicited him with such impudence,
 that Galba's mother-in-law publicly reproach-
 ed that Princess with it, in a numerous com-
 pany of ladies, and even struck her. Agrip-
 pina had it in her power to revenge that affront,
 when married to Claudius; but she was taken
 up with other thoughts, and the life Galba led
 made him almost quite forgot.

He did not, however, think himself free from
 danger, as appears by the precaution he took
 whenever he went out, either to go to a jour-
 ney, or to take the air, to carry with him a
 million of sesterces in gold, as a useful and ne- £.8000.
 cessary resource, in case he should be suddenly
 obliged either to fly, or to bribe those that might
 be sent to kill him.

He likewise chose to live in obscurity when
 Nero gave him the government of Tarragon,
 in the year of Rome 812. Burrhus and Seneca
 had still some influence at that time, and they
 made use of it to provide for merit.

Galba governed that province at first with
 his usual activity, and rigid severity. He or-
 dered the hands of a fraudulent banker to be
 cut off; and, to make the example more noto-
 rious, had them nailed to the delinquent's
 counter. He condemned a guardian who poi-
 soned his ward, whose heir he was, to be cruci-

A.R. 819. fled : and when the criminal, who was a Roman
aft. C. 68. citizen, appealed to the laws to obtain at least
a less cruel and ignominious death ; Galba,
pretending to shew some regard to his remon-
strances, ordered, by way of distinction, a
cross higher than ordinary, and painted white,
to be made for him. He performed all the
other functions of his office with the like
rigor.

But finding Nero, by giving way to bad
counsels, and his own wicked inclinations, be-
came every day more and more an enemy to
all virtue, Galba began to fear that cruel
Prince might suspect him, if he did his duty
too well. He therefore grew purposely ne-
gigent, and avoided whatever could make
him remarkable. He said there was no law to
compel a man not to be inactive. Instead of
suppressing the injustice of the collectors of the
revenues, who harrassed the Province by their
rapine and extortions, he was content with say-
ing how much he pitied the people ; who on
their side thought themselves obliged to him
for his complaisant mildness, being sensible
that was all he could do. Nor were they less
pleased at the liberty he left them to write,
publish, and sing satirical lines, of which Ne-
ro's tyranny was the subject.

He deserts,
declaring
himself.
*Suet. Flut.
& Dio.*

Galba's fidelity could not be very strong,
nor could Vindex meet with any extraordinary
difficulty to make him break it. However,
out of prudence, reserve, and a natural timi-
dity, increased by age, Galba returned no
answer to the first letters he received from the
head of a rebellion, so strongly disposed to fa-
vour

vour him. Only he kept the secret, and did not behave like some other commanders of Legions and Provinces, who, when solicited by Vindex, betrayed him, and the cause they themselves afterwards favoured and supported.

Vindex understood Galba's silence perfectly well, and, depending on him, prosecuted his design with the utmost vigour; He raised a great number of the people of Gaul, among whom are particularly named, the Eduans, Sequani, and Avernians. Those of Lyons remained faithful to their benefactor Nero; and for that very reason the people of Vienne, their eternal rivals, espoused with greater warmth the cause of Vindex, who soon saw himself at the head of a hundred thousand Gauls. He made no doubt but such a force must remove all Galba's scruples; and again wrote to him, pressing him to come to succour the Empire, and take upon him the command of a powerful league, that waited only for the sanction of his name. At the same time Galba received a letter from the Emperor's Intendant in Aquitania, desiring he would join him against Vindex.

Vindex raises great forces, and again solicites Galba. *Tillem. Ner.* 28.

Suet. Galb. ix. 10. *Plut. Galb.*

He was then at Carthageña, where his high days were kept. He called a council of his most trusty friends, and desired their advice in this important affair. Some hesitated, and advised staying till he heard what effect the insurrection of the Gauls would have in Rome. T. Vinius, who commanded, under him, the only legion that was in the Province, decided the question beyond all reply. "To deliberate at whether we shall remain faithful to Nero, is, said he, an actual breach of faith.

Galba consults his friends.

A.R. 819. " We must therefore, from this moment, look
 31t. C. 68. " upon him as our enemy, and consequently
 " embrace Vindex's friendship: unless we
 " rather chuse to become his accusers, and
 " make war against him, for no other reason
 " than because he would have the Roman
 " people have Galba for their Emperor, rather
 " than Nero for their tyrant." This speech,
 so decisive in itself, was strengthened by the
 intelligence Galba received, that private orders
 were sent to the Intendants to kill him. Being
 therefore reduced to the necessity of chusing
 either Empire or death, he soon determined to
 revolt against Nero.

He declares
 himself
 openly.

That he might have an opportunity of shewing his resolution, he indicated a day on which he would give audience to all masters who chose to set their slaves free; and at the same time privately caused a report to be spread of his real design, which brought about his tribunal a concourse of people of all ranks, whose prayers and wishes were for a revolution.

Taking his seat, he declared his sentiments by a remarkable action. The effigies of a great number of those Nero had condemned and put to death, were carried before him; and at his side stood a young exile, of a noble family, whom he had purposely sent for from one of the Balearic Islands. Observing joy and serenity in every countenance, he seconded that action by a speech, wherein, throwing aside the mask, he enumerated Nero's crimes, deploring the unhappy fate of the republic, and of so many illustrious personages, who had fallen victims
 to

to that tyrant's cruelty. All applauded, and with one voice proclaimed Galba Emperor. But he would not of his own private authority assume that title of supreme power, but contented himself with the more modest one of Lieutenant to the Senate and Roman people. It appears from Dion Cassius*, that Galba made this declaration on the third of April.

His next care was to proceed in such a manner as suited the step he had taken. He raised troops in the province: and formed a Senate composed of the most respectable persons about him, for their rank, prudence, and age: and likewise a guard of young Roman Knights.

Nero was thunder-struck when he heard of Galba's revolt: That of Vindex had given him no great concern; he received the news of it at Naples, with such indifference and composure of mind, that it was even thought he was glad of it, as an opportunity, by which he would have a pretence to plunder in right of war the rich provinces of the Gauls. He went as usual to the theatres and places of diversion, and was as intent, on seeing a wrestling match, as if he had had nothing else to think of. Other couriers arriving with news that the danger increased, he was not at all more concerned, and only threatened the rebels he would make

Nero, who was but little concerned at the revolt of Vindex, is quite terrified at the news of that of Galba. Suet. Ner. 40. Hist. Gall. Dio.

* *Dion Cassius* makes him reign nine months and thirteen days. *Galba* was killed the fifteenth of *January* of the year following, whence it follows, that the declaration I am speaking of was made on the third of *April*, which is what *M. de Tillemont* likewise thinks.

A. R. 819. make them repent it. In a word, eight whole
aft. C. 68. days passed, before he would return any answer,
give any orders, or take the least precautions; nor did he, during that time, mention a syllable of what was doing.

Rouzed at last from his indolence, by the bitter libels Vindex posted up in every city of Gaul, and of which he sent copies to Rome, Nero wrote to the Senate, exhorting them to revenge the insults offered to their Emperor, and the Republic. But still he was so far from being seriously concerned at that event, that he did not cease his boyish tricks. Ever fond of his darling voice, he excused his not going to Rome, because, said he, he had got a cold that obliged him to take care of himself. What hurt him most in Vindex's atrocious invectives, was, being styled a bad musician, and called *Ahænobârbus*, instead of Nero; he declared positively he would resume his family name, with which he was reproached, and quit his adoptive name: and as to the first article, he said, it was palpably false, and therefore alone sufficient to refute all his enemy's other imputations: he could not conceive how it was possible for any one to tax him with being ignorant in an art he had studied with such care and application for so many years, and appealed to all that were about him for the truth of what he said, asking them, whether they knew a better musician than him.

Every day brought worse and worse news, and Nero, in great trouble and uneasiness, returned at last to Rome in a great hurry. An omen he met on the road, which Suetonius himself laughs at, comforted that Prince, as super-

superstitious as he was wicked and impious. A.R. 819. He observed on an old monument the representation of a Gaul conquered by a Roman soldier, who was dragging him by the hair of the head. At that sight he leaped for joy, and thanked heaven for sending him so favourable an auspice. Quite secure and satisfied with having such solid hopes to depend on, he neither convened the Senate, nor harangued the people, on his arrival in Rome; but only sent for some of the chief Senators, and, after talking a little with them, shewed them a curious organ which was to be played upon by water. The invention was not new, but had lately been improved: and Nero explained to those grave Senators every part of the instrument, its use and difficulties, adding, with a sneer, that if Vindex would give him leave, he would introduce that organ on the stage. alt. C. 68.

Galba's revolt put an end to those comic scenes. His reputation was such, that the moment Nero heard he had declared against him, he gave himself up for lost. He received the news whilst at table, and immediately kicking down what stood before him, broke two crystal vases of very great value. A kind of fainting fit succeeded that first start of passion. He dropt down, as if dead, without uttering a single word: and at last, when he recovered his senses, rent his garments, and beat his head, crying his fortune and life were at an end. His nurse undertook to comfort him, saying, Other Princes besides him had met with the like misfortunes. No, "said he, my misfortune exceeds all example: to me alone it was reserved
" ved

Plin. xxxlii.

Suet. Ner.

42.

A.R. 819. "ved to live to see my empire given to another." aft. C. 68. " ther."

He sets a price on Vindex's head; and causes Galba to be declared a public enemy. *Plut. Galb. Dio. Suet. Ner. 49.*

£80,000.

Horrid projects thought of by him. *Suet. Ner. 33.*

He was, however, sensible that all these lamentations could not guard him from danger; and, to shew some little kind of vigor, offered a reward to whoever should bring in Vindex's head, and made the Senate declare Galba a public enemy. In consequence of that decree, he confiscated, and put up to sale, all that Galba possessed in Rome and Italy; and imprisoned Icelus his favourite freeman, who in his absence took care of his affairs. None were intimidated by these acts of revenge. Galba made reprisals, and sold Nero's demesnes in Spain, for which a crowd of purchasers offered; and Vindex boldly said, "Nero promises ten * millions of sesterces, to whoever shall kill me; and I promise my own head to whoever brings me Nero's."

The Emperor's fury did not attack those only who were his declared enemies. If we are to credit the reports that prevailed at that time, and in which I see nothing inconsistent with his character and inclinations, the most horrid and bloody deeds that can be imagined were thought of by him. He was for killing all the Governors of provinces, and Generals of his armies, as joint conspirators against him; talked of sending orders to the islands to massacre all that were banished there; of exterminating every family in Rome of Gaulish extraction; of giving up all Gaul to be plundered by his soldiers; and, in short, of poisoning the whole Senate, and setting fire to the city, after turn-

turning loose numbers of wild beasts upon the people during the conflagration, to prevent their extinguishing of it. And it is added, that if he did not put these dreadful designs in execution, it was not repentance, but the difficulty of doing it, that prevented him.

At last, however, he fixed on the only resolution suitable to the circumstances of things, which was, to prepare to oppose the rebels in person. He formed a legion out of his marines, recalled the detachments of the German, British, and Illyrian armies, who were marching, by his order, for the intended war against the Albanians: he named his Generals, and amongst others Pétronius Turpilianus, whom he dispatched at the head of a body of troops, whilst himself remained in Rome, in order to collect a greater force. But first of all, he ordered the two Consuls to abdicate, and substituted himself in their room, as if the Gauls were not to have been conquered but by a single Consul.

He harraised the city excessively by levies of men and money. His first step was to enroll all the citizens, as had been practised in antient times, citing them to appear in the order of their respective tribes. Then, dissatisfied with those that came, he insisted on every master's furnishing him with a certain number of slaves for soldiers, taking none but the handsomest and best of them, and not excepting even those whose ministry is most necessary in a family, and most difficult to replace, such as stewards and secretaries. He laid a general tax on all the inhabitants of Rome, in proportion to the rank each of them held in the state; all tenants

A.R. 819.
aft. C. 68.

Nero prepares to march against the rebels.
Titim. Ner.
28.

Suet. Ner.
43—45.

A. R. 819. nants of houses were ordered to pay immediately into the exchequer one year's rent : and, as if those exactions had not been of themselves sufficiently burdensome, he was very difficult about the species of money he would receive in payment, taking none but the finest gold, and all new coined. This rigour occasioned great murmurings: numbers agreed to refuse payment, saying, it would be much more just to make informers refund what they had got at the expence of the lives of the citizens. A dearth, which then began to be felt, greatly added to the universal dissatisfaction of the people; and the more so, as, at that very time, a ship arrived from Alexandria, loaded, not with corn, of which there was great want, but with sand from the Nile for the use of the court-wrestlers.

His puerilities.

The use that was made of the money levied on the people was by no means fit to appease the public clamour; for the first thing Nero thought of, when preparing for his expedition, was, to chuse proper carriages for his instruments of music, and to prepare Amazonian dresses for the concubines he intended to take with him: he thought of nothing less serious than of war, and, still returning to his puerilities, told his friends, " That on his arrival in the
 " province, he would present himself before
 " the rebels unarmed, and cry heartily before
 " them; that, by that means, he would bring
 " them back to a sense of their duty, and the
 " next day, in the midst of the joyous united
 " armies, himself too, joyful, gay, and triumphant, would celebrate his victories by songs
 " and hymns, which he that instant set them
 " about

“ about helping him to compose.” And, A.R. 819. whereas it had been customary for the ancient Romans to vow sacrifices and temples to the gods, when in any imminent danger, he vowed, that if he preserved his fortune and empire, he would, on the stage, play on the flute, the hydraulic organ, and bagpipe; and conclude, by acting a part in a play, and likewise in a pantomime entertainment.

Whilst his frivolous mind was thus busied with childish fancies and chimæras, even in matters where the most serious attention would have been requisite, the danger increased every hour. Galba's declaration was a signal to the whole Empire; not one who had any command remained faithful to Nero. Otho, formerly the companion of his pleasures, and for ten years past confined to Lusitania with the title of Propretor, was the first that joined Galba, espousing his party with great warmth, but, as we shall hereafter see, not without interested views. He carried him all his gold and silver plate to make money of, and as Galba's slaves did not know how to wait on an Emperor, Otho gave him several of his, who were well acquainted with the manners and customs of the court.

Otho's example was followed by all the Governors of provinces, and Generals of armies, two excepted, who, though they shook off Nero's detested yoke, yet did not declare for Galba. Clodius Macer, in Africa, wanted to be himself head of a party. Virginius Rufus, who commanded the legions on the upper Rhine, had different views, but imperfectly explained by what Historians we have remaining.

As

All who had any command in the empire, declare against Nero.
Plut. Galb. Dio.

A. R. 819. As he acted a very great part in the revolution
 aft. C. 68. we are speaking of, it is necessary to collect
 with care, whatever relates to his person, and
 the singularity of his conduct.

Virginius,
 tho' he will
 not support
 Nero,
 marches,
 however, a-
 gainst Vin-
 dex, who is
 defeated, &
 kills him-
 self.
Tac. Hist. i.
52.
Plut. Galb.
Dio.

Virginius's birth was not extraordinary, his
 father being only a Roman Knight. But that
 did not prevent his becoming Consul in ordi-
 nary under Nero, and obtaining afterwards the
 important post of Commander of the legions
 in upper Germany. To his activity and ex-
 perience in war, he joined a great moderation,
 and strict adherence to the laws and sound max-
 ims of the state. In consequence of that way
 of thinking, without being disposed to favour
 Nero, whose monstrous tyranny made every
 man his enemy, he did not approve of Vindex's
 revolt; without doubt, thinking it a bad ex-
 ample to let the Gauls, subdued by Roman
 arms, undertake to give Rome an Emperor.
 He looked upon that step as an attempt against
 the majesty of the Republic, and resolved to re-
 venge it.

He marched therefore with all his forces, and
 laid siege to Besancon, which place had de-
 clared for Vindex. The latter advanced to suc-
 cour the besieged. But, as his anger was a-
 gainst Nero, and he made no doubt but Vir-
 ginius had the same sentiments with regard to
 that Prince, he was willing to try what could
 be done by negotiation, before he ventured a
 battle. The first overture seemed to promise
 success. After reciprocal messages, the two
 Generals met, and, so far as Nero was concerned,
 agreed. We know nothing farther; the rest of
 Tacitus in this place being lost; for which rea-
 son, without attempting to penetrate a mystery

we

we cannot discover, we shall keep to naked facts. Vindex, in concert with Virginius, was entering Besancon, when the Roman legions, ignorant of the agreement concluded between the two Generals, thought the Gauls were coming to attack them; and their old hatred again breaking out, they fell on them with fury. The Gauls were not prepared for such an onset. They bore it, however, bravely; and a battle ensued in spite of the Generals, who could not keep back their troops. Victory was long disputed, but at last, declared in favour of the legions. Twenty thousand Gauls lost their lives, and Vindex killed himself out of despair.

It was then in Virginius's own power to be Emperor. His victorious troops, after breaking to pieces, and trampling upon the statues of Nero, with repeated acclamations gave their General all the titles of sovereign power. On his refusing them, a soldier wrote on one of the standards, in large characters, VIRGINIUS CAESAR AUGUSTUS. The modest General ordered it to be effaced, and told the soldiers, with an air of firmness and resolution, that left them no hopes of prevailing on him, that it did not belong to them, but to the Senate and Roman people, to dispose of the Empire.

The army, highly displeas'd at being refused, was almost ready to turn back again to Nero, for the troops had no great liking, to Galba, nor did Virginius himself in the least try to make them love him. It was contrary to his principles to support an election made in a tumultuous manner, and to which the authority of the Senate and people had given no sanction. And accordingly, though solicited

A.R.819.
aft. C.68.Virginius's
army offers
him the Em-
pire, which
he refuses.He likewise
refuses to
declare for
Galba.

A.R. 819. by Galba, who had wrote to him since the aft. C. 68. death of Vindex; inviting him to join him, and act in concert, he would take no step in his favour; but declaring against Nero, and indifferent for Galba, shewed no attachment to any thing but the Republic.

His reasons for so doing. This haughty conduct was, without doubt, founded on Virginius's thorough conviction that the greatest misfortune that could possibly befall the Empire, was to accustom the army to dispose of it as they thought proper. Let us not tarnish an example of moderation not to be matched in history, by suspecting self-interest to have been the motive. Tacitus says, it was doubtful, whether Virginius himself did not aim at being Emperor. It is true, he would not have deviated from his maxims, if he had accepted the Empire from the Senate and Roman people; but, on the other hand, it is plain from facts, that he might have been Emperor, had he been absolutely bent upon it, and not over nice about the means of attaining it. He always declared, and his whole conduct shewed it was his real sentiment, that the Senate and people had the sole right of making an Emperor. We cannot doubt, but that he thought it the soldier's duty to obey, and not to pretend to give a master to the state. He was sensible of the essential defect of the monarchy of the Cæsars, founded on force and not on law; first established by the soldiery, and afterwards propt up and supported by the Senate's decrees. He wanted to correct that fault, and to restore the civil power to the superiority it ought to have over the military. The whole chain of events will but too much evince the rectitude of his views.

Tac. Hist.
1. 8.

To

To these reflexions we may add, that per- A.R. 819.
haps Virginius, who had penetrating eyes, saw aft. C. 68.
into Galba's incapacity, of which his weak and Galb great-
and unhappy government soon after gave convi- ly perplex-
cing proofs. It is at least certain, that he did ed.
not declare for him; and Galba, having lost
Vindex, who was his chief support, and finding
no other to back him, was extremely perplexed.
Half his cavalry had already shewn a readiness
to leave him, and had been prevailed on to stay,
with great difficulty. He had likewise narrowly
escaped being assassinated by some slaves, intro-
duced into his house by a freeman of Nero's.
Alarmed at so many dangers that surrounded
him, he retired with some friends to * Clunia,
where he was more taken up with regretting
his past tranquillity, imprudently sacrificed to
an idle hope, than with providing properly for
the success of his enterprize; nay, if we credit
Suetonius, he was very near renouncing life.

If Nero had been less universally detested, he could not have had a more favourable opportunity to retrieve his affairs. But tho' his rival was not in a situation to be feared, himself was in a much worse. His vices were his most formidable enemies, and they alone were enough to ruin him. None of the armies remained faithful to him, the Roman people strongly declared the hatred they had long been obliged to conceal; and Nero completed his own ruin, by forcing them likewise to despise him for his cowardice.

Nero, uni-
versally de-
tested for his
crimes, is
likewise de-
spised for his
cowardice.
Suet. Ner.
47.

Leaving his palace, and taking with him, in
Z 2 a gold

His various
projects, all
dictated by
fear.

* Formerly a considerable town, but now only a village, called *Crusia*, or *Corusia del Conde*, between *Aranda di Duero* and *Osma*.

A.R. 819. a gold box, a poison prepared by Locusta, he
 aft. C. 68. retired to the Servilian gardens, already men-
 tioned. There, thinking of nothing but flying
 to Egypt, he sent some of his most trusty free-
 men to Ostia, with orders to have a fleet fitted
 out instantly; whilst himself undertook to sound
 several Centurions and Tribunes of the Pretorian
 cohorts, whether they were disposed to bear
 him company; but all excused themselves under
 various pretences; and one of them answered
 him with this line of Virgil, *Usque adeone mori*
miserum est? "Is it then so terrible a thing to
 "die?"

That resource failing, a thousand other pro-
 jects, the fruits of his fears, succeeded one an-
 other. He thought of throwing himself into
 the arms of the Parthians, or even of Galba
 himself. An idea, on which he dwelt longer,
 was to mount the Tribunal for harangues, and
 there ask pardon for what was past; and, if he
 could not obtain entire forgiveness, to beg they
 would, at least, make him Prefect of Egypt.
 A draught of a speech to that purpose was found
 in his pocket after his death. But he did not
 dare venture to put it in execution, for fear of
 being torn to pieces by the mob before he could
 reach the Forum.

Nymphidi-
 us Sabinus
 persuades
 the Preto-
 rians to ab-
 andon Ne-
 ro, and pro-
 claim Galba
 Emperor.

The Pretorian cohorts, firmly attached to the
 family of the Cæsars since their first institution,
 and confirmed in that attachment by Nero's
 liberalities, in which none of the troops had had
 so great a share, till then remained faithful,
 and continued their functions about the Prince's
 person. He was deprived of that last support
 by Nymphidius Sabinus, one of the Pretorian
 Prefects, as great a villain as him that he be-
 trayed,

trayed, and well worthy to give Nero the fatal A. R. 819.
blow. aft. C. 68.

This man, whose mad ambition dared to aspire to touch the pinnacle of supreme power, was of very low extraction, being the son of a free-woman, whose conduct was such, that it never was clear who was his real father. *Tac. Ann. xv. 72. & Plut. Gall.* He pretended to be Caligula's son, saying, that Prince had sometimes not disdained to take up with a courtesan; and in fact he had the same gigantic stature and wild look: but the time of his birth, according to Plutarch, refuted that claim; and he was more generally thought the son of a gladiator called Marcianus, all whose features he had strongly. We know not by what steps so unworthy a man obtained the post of Pretorian Prefect, in which, as already said, he succeeded Fænius Rufus. So long as Nero's favour was necessary, he endeavoured to secure it, by imitating all his vices; but when he saw him forsaken by all, and abandoning even himself, he too resolved to hurry him down the precipice, in hopes of raising himself on his ruin. Being, however, sensible how much the vast disproportion between his obscure birth and Empire must shock every one, if his designs were known, he concealed them, under the specious pretence of serving Galba.

Great address was requisite to detach the Pretorians from Nero: so great was their veneration for the name of Cæsar. He took advantage of the scheme that Prince had formed of flying into Egypt, of which those troops were not ignorant; and as Nero's fears prevented his shewing himself, Nymphidius persuaded them, *Tac. Hist. i. 5. & Plut. Gall.*

A.R. 819. he was already fled : At the same time promising them immense sums in Galba's name. By that means he corrupted their fidelity : and by the * baseness of the motive, says Plutarch, tarnished an action, which in itself would have been laudable, and made a treason of that which might have been service done to all mankind. Tigellinus, too, acted like himself on this occasion ; as cowardly as he was mischievous, after forming Nero to tyranny, he abandoned his disciple in his disgrace : and, more guilty than the Prince himself, left him to suffer singly for the crimes he had made him commit.

£.240. The reward Nymphidius promised was enormous : no less than thirty thousand sesterces for each Pretorian, and five thousand for every legionary soldier, throughout all the armies of the Empire. Plutarch observes, that to have fulfilled this monstrous promise, the Empire must have suffered a thousand times greater ills than ever Nero caused. Accordingly, it never was fulfilled : but that was the very thing that ruined Galba after Nero, and which brought on most dreadful and rapid revolutions, which, like violent convulsions, were very near destroying the Republic totally, and for which Nymphidius, the first author of the evil, was likewise the first that suffered.

Nero flies from Rome, and retires to a country house belonging to one of his freedmen.
Suet. Ner. 47 & Dio.

The Pretorians being prevailed upon to abandon Nero, retired to their camp, where they proclaimed Galba Emperor. Nero, awaking about midnight, was greatly surprized to find he had no guards. He jumped out of bed, and sent

* Καλλιστον ἔργον διαβαλῶν τῷ μίθῳ τὴν ἀπὸ Νέρωνος ἀποσασίαν προδίδαι γενομένην. *Plut.*

sent to all his friends, begging they would come A. R. 819.
to advise him; and receiving no answer, he aft. C. 68.
went himself, with a few of his freemen or slaves,
from house to house to call them. Every door
was shut, no body would answer him, and
whilst he was out, the officers belonging to his
bed-chamber went away, after plundering his
bed and furniture, and carrying off the box of
poison. On his return, driven to despair, he de-
sired somebody would fetch his favourite gla-
diator, or any other, to kill him. But finding
none ready to do him that fatal service, "What,
" said he, have I then neither friend nor ene-
" my?" His next thought was to throw him-
self headlong into the Tiber: but love of life
still prevented him, and he wished for some
obscure retreat, where he might remain con-
cealed, and have time to recollect himself.
Phaon, one of his freemen, offered him a little
house of his, about four miles from Rome.
Nero accepted it, and just as he was, without
shoes or stockings, having only his tunic on,
he wrapt himself up in a brown-coloured cloak,
covered his head, clapped a handkerchief before
his face, and rode away with only four attend-
ants, one of whom was the wretch Sporus.

Tho' he had but a little way to go, he met
with several adventures. He was terrified by
an earthquake, and a flash of lightning full in
his eyes. He heard the noise and tumult of
the Pretorian camp, and the cries of the sol-
diers, cursing him and praying for Galba. Some-
body meeting him on the road, with his little
troop, said, "These people are searching for
Nero." Another asked him what news there
was of Nero in the city? His horse starting
at the smell of a dead body that lay on the

A. R. 819. road, the handkerchief fell from before his face, and an old Pretorian soldier knew him, and saluted him.

At last he drew near to Phaon's house, but would not go in at the gate for fear of being seen: alighting therefore from his horse, he took a by-path, across a field full of reeds, and which in several places was so full of thistles and briars, that he was often obliged to lay his mantle on the ground for fear of tearing his feet. At last, coming to the foot of the wall, where a hole was to be made for him to creep thro', Phaon advised him to hide himself in a gravel-pit till that was done: but Nero declared he would not bury himself alive, and chose rather to conceal himself among the reeds. Happening just then to be very thirsty, and taking up in his hand some water out of a puddle, " * This," said he, " must now be Nero's drink." In the mean time, the hole being made in the wall, he crept through on his hands and knees, and laid down to rest himself in a little room belonging to one of the slaves, on a bed composed of an old mattress and a ragged quilt. There, being hungry and thirsty, he desired something to eat and drink. Brown bread was brought him, which he refused, and only drank a little warm water.

The Senate declares him a public enemy, and condemns him to suffer death.

So soon as it was known in Rome that the Pretorians had declared for Galba, and that Nero had fled, the Senate assembled, and resuming

* *Hæc est Neronis decocta.* This expression signifies, water that has been boiled and afterwards cooled in snow. Nero himself, as *Pliny* says, xxxi. 3. was the first inventor of that nice way of drinking water, at the same time cold and wholesome.

suming the * exercise of the supreme power, of A.R. 819. which the last depository had rendered himself unworthy, declared him a public enemy, and ordered him to be punished to the utmost † severity of the ancient laws. At the same time, Galba was acknowledged Emperor by the Senate, and all the titles and powers which, united, constituted that supreme dignity, were decreed him with the approbation and applause of the whole people. The city resounded with shouts of joy, the temples smoked with incense, and several wore hats, as a symbol of liberty regained.

Those who followed Nero in his retreat, foreseeing what must happen, did not cease exhorting him to prevent, by a voluntary death, the insults and indignities with which he was threatened. Nero could not resolve upon it, tho' he saw it was absolutely necessary. His conscience then upbraided him with all his crimes; and with a melancholy look and voice, he repeated a line he had often before declaimed on the stage, when acting the part of Oedipus, “ ‡ My wife, my mother, and my father, condemn me to die.” But incapable of taking a vigorous resolution, he sought every pretence to gain time. He ordered a grave to be dug in his presence of the size of his body; some bits of marble to be picked up to make his tomb, and wood and water to be brought, with all other things necessary for his funeral: and at each order he gave of that kind,

Nero, after shuffling a long time, kills himself for fear of suffering the punishment to which he was condemned.

* See what has been said of the nature of the Government established by *Augustus*. Vol. i. B. i. &c.

† More majorum.

‡ Θάψαι μ' ἄνευ συγγαμοῦ, μήτρης, πατρὸς. *Suet.* 46.

A.R. 819. kind, wept plentifully, crying out, with a grief
aft. C. 68. one cannot help smiling at, "How * hard a
" fate for so fine a musician!"

Whilst all these tedious preparations were making, one of Phaon's servants brought the Senate's sentence. Nero took it from the slave, and having read it, asked what it was to be punished to the utmost rigor of the ancient laws? The kind of punishment implied by that expression, was explained to him. He was told, that the person condemned was to be stript naked, that his head was to be fastened between a forked piece of wood, where he was to be whipt to death. Nero terrified, caught up two daggers he had brought with him, and after trying both their points, put them up again in their scabbards, saying, The fatal moment was not yet come. Now exhorting Sporus to begin the funeral lamentations it was customary to make over the dead; now again, begging somebody would be so kind to encourage him to die, by setting him an example: and then again, reproaching himself with his own cowardice, "† I live, said he, but to my " shame. It does not become Nero to behave " thus: no, it does not at all become him. " This is no time to trifle; come, take cou- " rage."

It was time he should: for the soldiers sent to take him were at hand. Nero heard them coming. " † The noise of the feet of horses, said

* Qualis artifex pereo. *Suet. Ner. 49.*

† Vivo deformiter ac turpiter. Ου πρέπει Νέρωνι, κ
πρέπει ἰφθίμῳ διὰ ἐν τοῖς τοιαύτοις, κτλ ἄγειρε σταυρόν. *Suet. 49.*

‡ "Ἰππων μὲν ἀκυπόδων ἀμφὶ κλυποσὶ κἄτα βαλλοῖ.

Iliad. x. 535

said he, reciting a line of Homer, "strikes A.R. 819, " my ears." Then taking up a dagger, he aft. C. 68. struck it into his throat, but so gently, that his freeman and Secretary Epaphroditus, helped him to strike it in deeper. Nero was still alive, when the Centurion came to arrest and carry him to Rome. That officer, clapping the skirts of his garment to the wound to stop the blood, and pretending he was come to assist him, " You are come in fine time, indeed, answered " Nero. Is this *ergo* fidelity you owed me?" so saying, he expired.

Before his death, he begged earnestly that His funeral. his head might not be delivered to his enemies, but his body burnt entire. To that end, application was made to Icelus, Galba's freeman, who, after being thrown into prison at the beginning of the disturbances, now began to enjoy a power that afterwards was greatly increased. He granted what was desired; and Nero's funeral was celebrated without pomp, but with decency. His two nurses, and his concubine Acte, gathered up his ashes, and carried them to the tomb of his paternal ancestors, the Domitii.

Nero died in the thirty-first year of his age. Eusebius says, he reigned thirteen years, seven months, and twenty-eight days: which, reckoning from the thirteenth of October, the day on which he began to reign, fixes the eleventh of June for the day of his death. It has been observed, that it was on that very day, six years before, that he put to death his wife Octavia. In him ended the family of Augustus, a wise Prince, whose misfortune it was to labour for a posterity very unworthy of him, and
to

Age, and duration of his reign. In him the family of Augustus is extinct. Euseb. Chron. Suet. Ner. 57.

A. R. 819. to give, in all the successors of his blood, aft. C. 68. nought but scourges to the world, and objects of horror or contempt.

I have omitted all the pretended prodigies, which, according to Historians, were the fore-runners of Nero's catastrophe. As to the prediction of the extinction of the family of the Cæsars; the reader may consult what I have said on that head, in the fifteenth volume of the History of the Roman Republic, towards the end of the fiftieth book.

The memo-
ry of Nero
was honour-
ed by many.
Suet. Ner.
57. & ibi
Causabon.

I have but one thing more to observe of Nero, which is, that though so justly detested during his life, and at the time of his death, yet, when gone, he had his partisans, zealous to honour his memory. Some of them for several years decked his tomb with flowers: others, still more daring, placed his statues in the robe Prætexta on the tribunal for harangues, and published edicts in his name, as if he had been living, and was soon to appear again to revenge himself on his enemies. His name was respected by many of the people and soldiërs: several impostors assumed it, as a means of recommending themselves, and in some measure succeeded.

The general corruption of manners is the only cause that can be assigned, and perhaps no insufficient one, for so strange and depraved a way of thinking. Nero's liberalities and remissness in point of discipline, had gained him the soldiers' hearts: he had pleased and amused the people by the licentious entertainments in which he had so indecently taken part. Every vice was sure of finding a protector in him. There is no room therefore to be surprized, that,

that, in an age wherein the old maxims were forgot, and even ridiculed ; wherein virtue was thought misanthropy, and met with the greatest discouragement, and wherein pleasure was the supreme law ; the vicious, who ever form the greater number, should be fond of a Prince who favoured and encouraged their inclinations : especially, when his cruelties were no longer seen, and his misfortunes moved the compassion all men are naturally inclined to feel for the unhappy.

Christians, who set a more just value on virtue and vice, have never varied in their opinion of Nero. They have always expressed for his crimes the horror they deserve. This sentiment, in itself so just, has led some into an innocent error. It was a pretty generally received opinion in the first ages of the church, that Nero lived, and was reserved to be the Antichrist.

Some Christians have thought him the Antichrist.



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