of counting the numbers. When the majority was known, the matter was determined, and a *ſenatus consultum* was immediately written by the clerks of the houſe, at the feet of the chief magiſtrates, and it was ſigned by all the principal members of the houſe. When there was not a ſufficient number of members to make a ſenate, the deciſion was called *ſenatus auctoritas,* but it was of no force if it did not afterwards paſs into a *ſenatus conſultum.*

The *ſenatus conſulta* were at firſt left in the cuſtody of the kings, and afterward of the conſuls, who could ſuppreſs or preſerve them ; but about the year ot Rome 304, they were always depoſited in the temple of Ce­res, and afterwards in the treaſury, by the ediles of the people.

SENECA (Lucius Annaeus), a Stoic philoſopher, was born at Corduba in Spain, about the beginning of the Chriſtian era, of an Equeſtrian family, which had probably been tranſplanted thither in a colony from Rome. He was the ſecond ſon of Marcus An­naeus Seneca, commonly called the *rhetorician,* whole remains are printed under the title of *Suaſoriae* & *Controversiae, cum Declamationum Excerptis;* and his youngeſt brother Annaeus Mela (for there were three of them) bad the honour of being father to the poet Lucan. He was removed to Rome, together with his father and the reſt of his family, while he was yet in his infancy. There he was educated in the most liberal manner, and under the beſt maſters. He learned eloquence from his father ; but his genius rather leading him to philoſophy, he put himſelf under the ſtoics Attalus, Sotion, and Papirius Fabianus ; men famous in their way, and of whom he has made honourable mention in his writings. It is probable, too, that he travelled when he was young, ſince we find him, in ſeveral parts of his works, parti­cularly in his Qu*aestiοnes Naturales,* making very exact and curious observations upon Egypt and the Nile.— But this, though entirely agreeable to his own hu­mour, did not at all correſpond with that ſcheme or plan of life which his father had drawn out for him ; who therefore forced him to the bar, and put him upon ſoliciting for public employments ; ſo that he afterwards became quaeſtor, prætor, and, as Lipſius will have it, even conſul.

In the firſt year of the reign of Claudius, wſhen Ju­lia the daughter of Germanicus was accuſed of adul­tery by Meſſalina, and baniſhed, Seneca was baniſhed too, being charged as one of the adulterers. Corsica was the ſeat of his exile, where he lived eight years ; "happy in the midſt of thoſe things which uſually make other people miſerable ; *inter eas res beatus, qua solent miſeros facere:”* and where he wrote his books of consolation, addreſſed to his mother Helvia, and to his friend Polybius, and perhaps ſome of thoſe trage­dies which go under his name ; for he ſays, *modo se levioribus studiis ibi oblectasse.* Agrippina being mar­ried to Claudius, upon the death of Meſſalina, ſhe pre­vailed with the emperor to recal Seneca from baniſhment ; and afterwards procured him to be tutor to her ſon Nero, whom ſhe deſigned for the empire. Africanus Burrhus, a prætorian præfect, was joined with him in this important charge : and these two preceptors, who were entruſted with equal autho­rity, had each his reſpective department. By the bounty and generality of his royal pupil, Seneca ac­

quired that prodigious wealth which rendered him in a manner equal to kings. His houſes and walks were the moſt magnificent in Rome. His villas were innu­merable : and he had immenſe ſums of money placed out at intereſt in almoſt every part of the world. The hiſtorian Dio reports him to have had 250,000 l. Ster­ling at intereſt in Britain alone ; and reckons his call­ing it in all at a ſum, as one of the cauſes of a war with that nation.

All this wealth, however, together with the luxury and effeminacy of a court, does not appear to have had any ill effect upon the temper and dispoſition of Se­neca. He continued abſtemious, exact in his manners, and, above all, free from the vices ſo commonly prevalent in ſuch places, flattery and ambition. “ I had ra­ther (ſaid he to Nero) offend you by ſpeaking the truth, than pleaſe you by lying and flattery : *maluerim veris offendere, quam placere adulando.’’* How well he acquitted himſelf in quality of preceptor to his prince, may be known from the five firſt years of Nero’s reign, which have always been considered as a perfect pattern of good government ; and if that emperor had but been as observant of his maſter through the whole courſe of it, as he was at the beginning, he would have been the delight, and not, as he afterwards proved, the curſe and deteſtation of mankind. But when Poppæa and Ti­gellinus had got the command of his humour, and hur­ried him into the moſt extravagant and abominable vices, he ſoon grew weary of his maſter, whoſe life muſt indeed have been a constant rebuke to him. Seneca, percei­ving that his favour declined at court, and that he had many accuſers about the prince, who were perpetually whiſpering in his ear the great riches of Seneca, his magnificent houſes and fine gardens, and wſhat a favou­rite through means of theſe he was grown with the people, made an offer of them all to Nero. Nero refuſed to accept them : which, however, did not hinder Seneca from changing his way of life ; for, as Tacitus relates, he “ kept no more levees, declined the uſual civi­lities which had been paid to him, and, under a pretence of indiſpoſition, or ſome engagement or other, avoided as much as poſſible appearing in public.”

Nero, in the mean time, who, as it is ſuppoſed, had dispatched Burrhus by poison, could not be eaſy till he had rid himſelf of Seneca alſo : For Burrhus was the manager of his military concerns, and Seneca conducted his civil affairs. Accordingly, he attempt­ed, by means of Cleonicus, a freedman of Seneca, to take him off by poiſon ; but this not ſucceeding, he ordered him to be put to death, upon an information that he was privy to Piso’s conſpiracy againſt his perſon. Not that he had any real proof of Seneca’s be­ing at all concerned in this plot, but only that he was glad to lay hold of any pretence for deſtroying him.— He left Seneca, however, at liberty to cbooſe his man­ner of dying ; who cauſed his veins to be opened immedi­ately. His wife Paulina, who was very young in compariſon of himſelf, had yet the reſolution and affection to bear him company, and thereupon ordered her veins to be opened at the same time ; but as Nero was not willing to make his cruelty more odious and inſupportable than there ſeemed occaſion for, he gave orders to have her death prevented : upon which her wounds were bound up, and the blood ſtopped, in juſt time enough to ſave her ; tho’, as Tacitus ſays, ſhe looked ſo miſer-