



Suetonius Lives of the Caesars

A new translation by Catharine Edwards

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LIVES OF THE CAESARS

GAIUS SUETONIUS TRANQUILLUS is best known for his *Lives of the Caesars*, starting with the dictator Julius Caesar and ending with the emperor Domitian, which was published in the reign of the emperor Hadrian (117–38 CE). Suetonius was probably born around 70 CE either in north Africa or in Italy. His father, a Roman knight, fought in the civil war of 69 CE. Suetonius himself was educated at least partly in Rome and was a friend of the younger Pliny who obtained a number of favours on his behalf. A fragmentary inscription from north Africa makes clear that Suetonius held a succession of posts at court, working perhaps for Trajan and certainly for Hadrian. He thus had privileged access to the imperial archives as well as the emperor himself. A passage from the anonymous *Life of Hadrian* records that Suetonius was dismissed for lack of respect to Hadrian's wife Sabina.

Besides the *Lives of the Caesars*, his writings also include *On Illustrious Men* which survives in fragments (among them short biographies of Virgil, Horace, and Lucan) and numerous other scholarly works now almost entirely lost. Suetonius probably died some time after 130.

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SUETONIUS

Lives of the Caesars



Translated with an Introduction and Notes by

CATHARINE EDWARDS

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INTRODUCTION

SUETONIUS' *Lives of the Caesars*, starting with Julius Caesar and ending with the Emperor Domitian, has always had its place as a source of extraordinary tales of imperial vice—and at times of imperial virtue. Suetonius presents us with shocking accounts of Caligula's plan to make his horse consul (*Cal.* 55) and of Nero singing while Rome burns (*Nero* 38), as well as with edifying descriptions of Augustus' splendid redevelopment of the city of Rome (*Aug.* 28–30) and Titus' decision to put the state before his love for Berenice (a phrase from ch. 7 of Suetonius' *Life* is said to have inspired Racine's *Bérénice*). Centuries later rulers might aspire to being hailed as another Augustus or Titus—and dread being labelled another Caligula or Nero.

More recently, while some readers have continued to enjoy Suetonius as a fund of fascinating, indeed, sometimes outrageous anecdotes, many have chosen to treat him as a rather frustrating and untrustworthy source of 'facts' about Roman emperors, which the modern scholar needs to correct (as far as possible), supplement, and rearrange, if a coherent biographical narrative is to be produced. However, to read Suetonius in this way is perhaps to miss his significance. Suetonius himself certainly offers little in the way of chronological narrative and it would be rash to rely on the factual accuracy of the stories he tells about the Caesars. But what he has to say about the eccentricities and achievements of emperors, their virtues and vices, gives us valuable insights into ancient Roman debates about imperial power and how it should be exercised.

The kings of Rome had been driven out by the first Brutus, according to Roman myth, and, under the republic, Romans saw themselves as fiercely opposed to monarchy. Yet, while Julius Caesar met a bloody end for his autocratic pretensions, his heir Augustus was able to establish one-man rule and pass his position on to his heir. How was it possible for one man to control public affairs yet not be king? Even that master of public relations Augustus seems sometimes to have misjudged his subjects' expectations, as Suetonius' account reveals (see e.g. ch. 70). A century after Augustus' death (when Suetonius was writing), the question of how an emperor

should behave was still a vexed one. This issue is a central concern in Suetonius' *Lives*.

Suetonius' life

Gaius Suetonius Tranquillus, born around 70 CE, was of an equestrian family (see 'Roman knight' in Glossary), perhaps from Hippo Regius in North Africa, possibly from Italy itself. His father served as a military tribune in the Thirteenth Legion during the civil wars of 69 CE (*Otho* 10). Suetonius was educated partly in Rome, spending some time in the rhetorical schools, before embarking on a public career. He secured a posting to Britain as military tribune, around the year 110 or 111, through the patronage of the younger Pliny, but did not take it up (Pliny, *Letters* 3. 8). Pliny seems to have acted as his patron on a number of occasions, also securing for him the legal advantages of fatherhood—Suetonius and his wife were childless (*Letters* 10. 94; see *Aug.* 34 and note). It is known, from a fragmentary inscription found at Hippo, that Suetonius held a succession of posts at court, including a period in charge of the imperial libraries in Rome, as minister *a bibliothecis*, another as minister *a studiis*, probably in charge of the emperor's own archives, and another in charge of the emperor's correspondence, as minister *ab epistulis* (the last office under the emperor Hadrian, earlier ones probably under Trajan). These official posts should probably be seen as recognition of Suetonius' literary distinction (literary studies and a public career were very much intertwined for Suetonius as for many of his contemporaries). They were highly influential positions which gave him close access to the emperor.

Suetonius' *Lives of the Caesars* is known to have been dedicated to the praetorian prefect, Septicius Clarus, who was in post 119 to 122 CE. A passage from the anonymous *Life of Hadrian* (written in the late third or early fourth century) records that both Suetonius and Septicius were dismissed for lack of respect toward Hadrian's wife Sabina (11. 3). There are no further references to his career, though from a passage in *Titus* (ch. 10), it seems he was probably still writing after 130. Thus, although it is not clear exactly when Suetonius began writing or when various sections of the *Lives* may have been published, they can safely be dated to the reign of Hadrian (117–38 CE). Besides the *Lives of the Caesars*, which have survived almost

complete (only the opening chapters of *Julius Caesar* are missing), and his earlier biographical work *On Illustrious Men* (of which sections survive relating to the lives of literary figures), he was also the author of a number of works now lost (in Greek as well as Latin), including treatises on Roman games and festivals, on Greek games, on famous courtesans, on kings, on public offices, on Rome and its customs, on the Roman year, on Cicero's *Republic*, on Greek terms of abuse, on the correct terms for clothing, on critical marks in texts, and on bodily defects. This range of interests is often reflected in the *Lives of the Caesars* which offer a wealth of detail concerning, particularly, games given by emperors, as well as descriptions of their physical appearance, which may well owe something to Suetonius' work on bodily defects.¹ For a Roman author of the early second century, Suetonius was unusually learned in Greek.

The structure of the Lives

Most of the *Lives* begin with an account of the family and birth of the subject, sometimes with accompanying omens (these sections are missing from *Jul.*). Suetonius next gives an account of the subject's career up to his accession to supreme power (this section is lengthy in *Jul.*, considerably shorter in most later *Lives* where the subject comes to power when younger). In *Julius*, this material, together with an account of Caesar's victory games, takes up around half the *Life*. Suetonius then sets out his plan for the remainder (ch. 44): 'As he was contemplating and setting about these projects death cut him short. But before I give an account of that, it will not be inappropriate to set out in summary form the details of his appearance, comportment, dress, and conduct, as well as matters relating to his governmental and military undertakings.' Suetonius then proceeds to deal with these topics, taking little or no account of chronology, before describing Caesar's increasingly tyrannical manner as a prelude to the conspiracy against him, his death, the reading of his will, his funeral, and public reactions to it.

Chronological order is quite explicitly rejected in *Augustus*, where Suetonius briefly justifies his preference for arrangement by topic: 'Having stated the main themes, as it were, of his life, I shall set out

¹ For a useful discussion of Suetonius' scholarly interest in games, see Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, *Suetonius: The Scholar and his Caesars* (London, 1983), 46–8.

the individual details, not according to the order of events but by topic [*per species*] so that they may be more clearly perceived and assessed' (*Aug.* 9). Suetonius is aiming not to tell a story but to present his reader with a summation of the life of each ruler. Later readers have sometimes found this alienating. Writing in the seventeenth century Francis Bacon commented: 'For as when I read in Tacitus the actions of Nero or Claudius, with circumstances of times, inducements, and occasions, I find them not so strange: but when I read them in Suetonius Tranquillus gathered into titles and bundles, and not in order of time, they seem more monstrous and incredible; so it is of any philosophy reported entire and dismembered by articles.'² Other critics, too, have objected to the lack of chronological structure in a work of biography on the grounds that it fails to illustrate character development or to explain inconsistencies of character.³

The structure varies considerably between one *Life* and another. The headings Suetonius chooses are not necessarily treated in a fixed order. In *Caligula*, for instance, no account is given of his family (apart from a lengthy portrait of his father); this has already been set out at the beginning of *Tiberius*. The sections on personal appearance and habits are not always placed in the same position relative to other topics (sometimes they are given at the beginning of the character section, as in the case of *Jul.*, sometimes after the subject's death). However, while the arrangement may vary, it is not random.

Suetonius is often criticized for presenting his readers with a quantity of facts in no particular order. More recently a number of scholars have sought to revise this judgement and have offered persuasive arguments for seeing Suetonius as the author of a sophisticated work characterized by considerable subtlety.⁴ The order in which material is presented may sometimes have an ironic effect, for instance; Nero is praised for his filial devotion in an early chapter of the *Life* (*Nero* 9), yet this apparent virtue will require reassessment when the reader comes to the allegations of incest between Nero and his mother which Suetonius discusses later (*Nero* 28). Similarly, in the case of Domitian, Suetonius includes among his praiseworthy

² In 'The Advancement of Learning', pp. 204–5 in Francis Bacon, *A Critical Edition of the Major Works*, ed. Brian Vickers (Oxford, 1996).

³ Cf. Alan Wardman, *Plutarch's Lives* (London, 1974), 144 ff.

⁴ e.g. Croisille and Barton—see Select Bibliography.

deeds the punishment of a Roman knight for taking back the wife he had divorced on the grounds of adultery (*Dom.* 8). A few chapters earlier, Suetonius tells us that Domitian divorced his wife because of her affair with the actor Paris but then took her back, as he was unable to bear the separation (*Dom.* 3). Suetonius does not explicitly mention the emperor's hypocrisy but allows it to emerge from his portrait.

Perhaps not surprisingly, given his own role in the imperial administration, Suetonius devotes considerable space to each emperor's conduct of imperial business. He has shown, he writes of Augustus, 'how he governed the state throughout the entire world in war and in peace' (*Aug.* 61). Suetonius examines emperors' measures with regard to the city of Rome (including building and games), to Italy, and to the provinces. He looks at treatment of the senate, the Roman knights, and the people. He considers an emperor's activities regarding religion. Emperors in the Roman world were the ultimate point of appeal and were often characterized as founts of justice. The way in which individual emperors dispense justice is given particular attention in the *Lives* (see e.g. *Claud.* 14–15).⁵

Different categories of virtue and vice also play a central role in substantial sections of his *Lives of the Caesars* (an approach not found in the writings of other biographers). Suetonius moves through selected categories of moral behaviour, choosing various examples from his subject's life to illustrate, for instance, his clemency or his avarice. That of Tiberius, for example, moves from consideration of his luxury and lust (chs. 42–5), to his avarice (chs. 46–9), to his cruelty (50–62).⁶ In organizing his material in this way, Suetonius adopts a standard device of ancient rhetoric, division of the topic into themes. This can cause the reader some confusion as Suetonius quite often moves from one theme to another without making explicit the change of topic.⁷ In ch. 26 of *Nero*, for instance, Suetonius lists five vices and then gives examples of them but without making clear which anecdotes illustrate which particular vices.

⁵ For an analysis of these sections, see Wallace-Hadrill, *Suetonius*, ch. 6.

⁶ Suetonius' use of these categories is well analysed by Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, *Suetonius*, ch. 7.

⁷ As Townend notes; G. B. Townend, 'Suetonius and his Influence', in T. A. Dorey (ed.), *Latin Biography* (London, 1967), 85.

In some *Lives*, vices take centre stage. The *Lives* of *Caligula*, *Nero*, and *Domitian* are organized around apparently simple divisions: the acceptable deeds are listed first and then the crimes. Suetonius comments at *Caligula* 22: ‘The story so far has been of Caligula the emperor, the rest must be of Caligula the monster.’ Similarly in ch. 19 of *Nero* he observes: ‘These deeds, some of them meriting no reproach, others even deserving some praise, I have gathered together to separate them from the shameful deeds and crimes with which I shall henceforth be concerned.’ While of *Domitian*, he writes: ‘his disposition towards mercy and integrity did not continue, though his decline into cruelty was more rapid than his decline into greed’ (*Dom.* 10). These three *Lives*, in particular, proceed in terms of a pattern of disappointed expectation (a pattern which finds its mirror image in his account of the unexpectedly virtuous emperor *Titus*; see *Titus* 7).

Many of the virtues and vices Suetonius describes relate clearly to the emperor’s public role. But Suetonius is also notorious for the space he devotes to his subjects’ sex lives (sexual activity takes up two substantial chapters, 68 and 69, even in the case of that pillar of virtue *Augustus*). Though the Christian Jerome took the view that Suetonius’ freedom in writing of the emperors was equalled by the freedom with which they lived, many later critics have been much quicker to reprove Suetonius for the inclusion of salacious material. J. W. Duff, for instance, commented: ‘A great deal of it partakes of the nature of a *chronique scandaleuse* based upon tittle-tattle about the emperors and compiled by a literary man with the muck-rake, too keen upon petty and prurient detail to produce a scientific account of his subjects.⁸ Details of what we might describe as ‘private life’ often appear in the later sections of the *Lives*. After describing his military and political life, Suetonius notes of *Augustus* (ch. 61): ‘I shall now discuss his personal and domestic life, giving an account of his character and fortune at home and with his family, from his youth until his dying day.’ But although Suetonius does conceive of *Augustus’* personal life as in a sense separate from his public activities, he hardly characterizes it as ‘private’. Romans traditionally viewed the personal lives of public figures as a legitimate public concern. Cicero’s speeches are filled with detailed accounts of his opponents’

⁸ J. W. Duff, *Literary History of Rome in the Silver Age* (London, 1927), 508.

sexual and sumptuary vices which have seemed to many modern readers wholly irrelevant to the question at issue; for a Roman audience such details, as well as providing a source of entertainment, had a crucial role to play in determining the personal character of the individuals involved.⁹

The details of emperors' 'private' lives provided by Suetonius should not then be seen as 'simple facts', included to satisfy the idle curiosity of the reader. For Romans, a public figure revealed a huge amount about himself: by the way he chose to decorate his house—Augustus' simple residence makes clear he has no aspirations to tyranny (*Aug.* 72); his style of dress—Julius Caesar's ungirt tunic reflects his unbounded appetite for power (*Jul.* 45); and by his eating habits—Claudius' habit of eating at the wrong time is a telling symptom of a more general failure to grasp what was appropriate behaviour for a ruler (*Claud.* 33). However, while such matters were deemed material to judging leading public figures, they were not considered part of the proper subject matter of history writing. In telling us what Augustus liked to eat, what scenes decorated the walls of Tiberius' bedroom, Suetonius is offering us the kind of glimpses into his subjects' lives that have no equivalent in the work of historians. Here, too, there is an interesting contrast between Suetonius and his fellow biographer, the Greek author Plutarch, whose *Julius Caesar* offers no equivalent to Suetonius' thirty-odd chapters on Caesar's personal details (chs. 45–75).

Biography: Suetonius and Plutarch

Suetonius was some years younger than Plutarch (b. before 50 CE, d. after 120), the other great biographer whose works have survived from antiquity. Besides his *Parallel Lives* (which include a life of Julius Caesar), Plutarch had also written biographies of the Caesars (only those of Galba and Otho survive). Of earlier works of biography very little remains. Though Suetonius and Plutarch are sometimes included by modern scholars among the 'historians' of antiquity, they certainly did not consider themselves as such. Indeed, it is important to consider further the relationship between

⁹ See Edwards, *The Politics of Immorality in Ancient Rome* (Cambridge, 1993).

biography and history, for Suetonius' *Lives* are quite self-consciously 'not-history'.

Plutarch, in characterizing his own enterprise, offers the following articulation of the distinction between biography and history: 'It is not histories we are writing but Lives. And it is not always the most famous deeds which reveal a man's good or bad qualities: a clearer insight into a man's character is often given by a detail, a word, or a joke, than by conflicts where thousands die, or by the greatest of pitched battles, or by the siege of cities' (*Alexander the Great* 1. 1–2).¹⁰ This emphasis on details, on throwaway remarks, is an important one to which we shall return. A distinction of this kind had already been articulated centuries earlier by another Greek writer, the historian Polybius (b. c.200 BCE, d. after 118 BCE; *Histories* 10. 24). This distinction was a particular concern for biographers of prominent political rather than literary figures. No comparable statements survive from Suetonius but such issues may well have been raised in the opening chapters of the first *Life*, that of Julius Caesar, which are now lost.

Suetonius' work is much more emphatically 'not-history' than that of Plutarch. For Plutarch's mode of organization is essentially chronological in contrast to Suetonius' thematic approach; Plutarch, for instance, gives a fairly full narrative of the campaigns of Julius Caesar, while Suetonius covers ten years of campaigning in Gaul in just one paragraph, although he elsewhere uses numerous incidents from Caesar's campaigns to illustrate his personal characteristics. Suetonius' approach may be seen as more in the antiquarian tradition than that of Plutarch. Plutarch presents the purpose of his *Lives* as the moral education of the reader, that they may, by examples of virtue, become better men themselves (*Pericles* 1–2; *Aemilius Paulus* 1). In general, Plutarch is rather more inclined towards panegyric, although he also sees value in negative moral examples (*Demetrius* 1. 4–7). Plutarch's writing also reveals an interest in psychological analysis in terms which can be quite readily understood (or, at least, appropriated) by the modern reader. Nevertheless, individual character, was even for Plutarch, not so important as we might suppose. As Momigliano points out: 'it gives us some-

¹⁰ On Plutarch's approach to biography in general and to the *Lives* of Romans in particular, see C. B. R. Pelling's introduction to his edition of *Plutarch's Life of Antony* (Cambridge, 1988).

thing to think about that Hellenistic and Roman biographers often wrote series of biographies of men of the same type—generals, philosophers, demagogues—and therefore seem to have cared for the type rather than for the individual.¹¹

We could perhaps surmise that Suetonius chose to abandon chronology as an organizing principle of his work at least partly in response to Tacitus' *Histories* and *Annals* which, while positioning themselves as history, necessarily focused on the reigns of individual emperors (and covered the period from Tiberius to Domitian). One point we should bear in mind is that the biographer expects some existing knowledge of the historical framework on the part of his readers. Indeed, Suetonius, in recounting anecdotes, frequently leaves out the names of people who were very probably well known (a tendency more noticeable in the later *Lives*).¹² History's proper concerns were war and politics. Biography, as we have seen, could include a much wider range of material, including the relatively mundane.

Character and causation

Suetonius aims to give his readers insights into the characters of individual Caesars through a wide variety of means. Telling details about their personal tastes have an important part to play. Other areas which Suetonius emphasizes include, in some cases, an emperor's literary style. We should not underestimate the significance of literary culture in an emperor's self-presentation—particularly in relation to the senatorial and equestrian élite. A telling symptom of Caligula's madness is that he dislikes those almost universally acknowledged classic authors, Virgil and Livy (*Cal.* 34). Many emperors gave readings of their works to their friends and acquaintances and expected informed praise (see e.g. *Aug.* 85, *Claud.* 41, and *Dom.* 2). Moreover, literary style, as Suetonius himself makes clear, was thought to be an important index of character (see, e.g. *Aug.* 86, and *Dom.* 20). This connection is regularly made by other ancient authors, too. The younger Seneca, for instance, writing in the time of the emperor Nero, observes of Augustus' associate

¹¹ Arnaldo Momigliano, *The Development of Greek Biography* (Cambridge, Mass., 1971), 13.

¹² Cf. Townend, 'Suetonius and his Influence', 83–4, 87.

Maecenas that his style of speaking was as effeminate as the way he walked and that the perverse way he arranged his words declared their author to be equally ‘unusual, unsound, and eccentric’ (*Letters* 114. 4–6). It matters, then, that Augustus writes elegantly and without artifice (*Aug.* 86) or that Claudius’ literary style lacks good taste (*Claud.* 41).

Physical appearance was also thought to reveal character and Suetonius includes a brief description of each of his subjects. On the whole, the emperors favoured by Suetonius are physically attractive (e.g. *Aug.* 79), while those he criticizes are ugly (e.g. *Cal.* 50). The ancient science of physiognomics (with which Suetonius himself seems to have been familiar) offered a complex scheme for interpreting physical characteristics. As Tamsyn Barton has recently shown, Suetonius’ description of Nero highlights his mottled body, thereby implying resemblance to a panther, the epitome of evil and effeminate characteristics, while his weak eyes could be read as a sign of cowardice and his spindly legs of lustfulness.¹³

It is often suggested that a person’s character was viewed in antiquity as fixed from birth. Suetonius comments, in relation to several of his subjects, that even in their youth they showed signs of the vices they were to display more fully in later life (see in particular *Tib.* 57, *Cal.* 11, *Nero* 26, and *Dom.* 1). One exception is the emperor Otho. Suetonius first presents us with a man devoted to the pleasures of the flesh, an intimate friend of Nero who shares all his vices. Yet this same man dies probably the noblest death of all the twelve Caesars (the importance of the manner of death as a touchstone of an individual’s worth is discussed below).

All the same, it is highly significant that Suetonius almost never seems to be concerned with *why* emperors were the way they were (though he does suggest that poverty and fear exacerbated Domitian’s character defects, *Dom.* 3). This is one of the most striking ways in which Suetonius’ ‘biographies’ are quite unlike modern works of biography. Following the approach established by Lytton Strachey’s *Eminent Victorians* (1918), modern biographers have generally sought to *explain* their subjects’ characters. Childhood traumas, for instance, or relations with parents regularly play a crucial part. More often than not the subject’s sexuality is presented

¹³ Barton, ‘The *inventio* of Nero: Suetonius’, in J. Elsner and J. Masters (eds.), *Reflections of Nero* (London, 1994), 56–8.

as the key to his or her character. Sexual behaviour has an important part to play in Suetonius' *Lives*, of course, as we have seen. For many readers, Tiberius disporting himself in the swimming-pool with little children, or Caligula treating senators' wives as if they were slave-girls, are among the most memorable episodes. But these stories are not presented by Suetonius as having a key explanatory role. Rather, sexuality offers one more sphere in which emperors may be judged and compared.

Deaths

Each Caesar's death and funeral, unsurprisingly, forms the conclusion to his *Life*. We should note, however, the emphasis Suetonius places on the manner in which each Caesar dies and the large amount of space he often devotes to a narrative of the death. In Suetonius, as often in Latin literature, we are presented with death as a moment of truth. The ancient Romans took great pleasure in reading about the deaths of famous men, to judge from a comment Cicero makes, writing in the mid-first century BCE, in a letter to his friend, the historian Luceceus: 'the critical and varied accidents of often excellent men inspire wonder, suspense, joy, disturbance, hope, fear; but if, indeed, they conclude with a memorable death, the mind of the reader is filled with the most delightful pleasure' (*Letters to his Friends* 5. 12.5). Such literature became even more popular under the principate, it seems, and particularly so in the early years of Suetonius' own life. Titinius Capito, minister *ab epistulis* under Domitian and later emperors, wrote deaths of famous men (according to Pliny, *Letters* 8. 12). Gaius Fannius wrote three books on the fate of those killed or sent into exile under Nero (Pliny, *Letters* 5. 5. 3).

Suetonius seems to have been much influenced by this tradition. Imperial deaths are the principal occasions on which Suetonius shifts into a narrative mode.¹⁴ Suetonius' narratives of the deaths of Julius Caesar (*Jul.* 81–2) and of Nero (*Nero* 40–9) are among the most gripping chapters in his writing. The first blows and Caesar's reaction to them are carefully set out. We are left with the final and vivid image of Caesar's corpse being carried away, 'one arm dangling' (ch. 82). Suetonius takes us on Nero's last terrifying journey,

¹⁴ Richard Lounsbury, *The Arts of Suetonius: An Introduction* (New York, 1987), ch. 4 has some perspicuous comments on these sections.

recounting each stage in his indecisive struggle to end his own life. His account of the murder of Caligula is also full of telling detail (*Cal.* 58). Though Suetonius' *Life of Domitian* is brief, three long chapters (15–17) are devoted to signs of his impending death and the narrative of the death itself, culminating in Domitian struggling frantically to wrest a dagger from the treacherous steward. The variant traditions on Galba's dying words as he is killed by Roman soldiers sum up the difficulty of judging that emperor (*Galba* 20). Even less eventful deaths are highly significant. Augustus, the model emperor, ends his life neatly, quoting the final lines of a comic play (*Aug.* 99). Is Suetonius (or Augustus?) inviting us to see the emperor's career as a piece of consummate play-acting?

Omens, portents, and dreams

Accounts of omens and portents make up a significant part of Suetonius' *Lives*, as do astrological predictions (though they have received negligible consideration in the work of modern scholars). They are usually associated with births, deaths, and accessions to power. Tiberius' rise to power is signalled by an eagle perching on the roof of his house on the island of Rhodes (*Tib.* 14). The future power of Vespasian is foreshadowed by the development of an abnormally large branch on a tree sacred to Mars (*Vesp.* 5). When a young boy's hair turns white during a sacrifice, this is seen as predicting that a young ruler, Nero, will be succeeded by an old one, Galba (*Galba* 8). When an imperial death is imminent statues or tombs are struck by lightning (e.g. *Aug.* 97; *Claud.* 46; *Dom.* 15) or trees wither (e.g. *Galba* 1; *Dom.* 15). Suetonius does not endorse all the alleged omens he refers to, ascribing, for instance, the story of Nero strangling snakes as a baby to gossip (*Nero* 6). But more often their predictive power is taken for granted, the foolishness of those who ignore them underlined.¹⁵

Dreams, too, have an important predictive role. Julius Caesar's wife Calpurnia dreams the night before he is assassinated that her husband is murdered in her arms (*Jul.* 81). Nero dreams that the statues of conquered peoples in Pompey's theatre come to life and crowd around him (*Nero* 46). The dream's warning is soon con-

¹⁵ See Paul Plass, *Wit and the Writing of History* (Madison, 1988), 77–8.

firmed when the Gauls revolt. Again, in contrast to modern (particularly Freudian) perceptions of the dynamics of personality, sex is not a key element in ancient dream analysis. Indeed, instead of seeing dreams about fast chariots as really about sex, ancient dream interpreters would see dreams about sex as being really about something else.¹⁶ When Julius Caesar dreams that he is having sex with his mother (*Jul.* 7), this is seen as a very good sign: ‘for dream-interpreters explained it as a portent that he would rule the world, because his mother, whom he had seen subjected to himself, was none other than the earth, which is held to be the mother of all.’ Here, too, then, sections of Suetonius’ *Lives* which are often ignored by modern scholars repay serious consideration.

Deciphering the imperial image?

Suetonius chose to write *Lives* of twelve men, not just of one. The *Lives of the Caesars* need to be read against one another if we are to appreciate their nuances. To a significant degree, the stories he tells us about one ruler can only be made sense of in comparison with representations of other rulers. Julius Caesar, assassinated for his tyrannous aspirations, was a problematic example. Augustus, it seems, set the standard for his successors and tends to serve as the point of reference in the *Lives of the Caesars*. Other emperors are, at least implicitly, approved of or criticized in so far as they resemble him—or fail to. This was very probably the case with the judgements of their contemporaries, too. Suetonius tells us how Nero, at the start of his reign, promised to rule according to the example of Augustus (*Nero* 10).

Other models underlie the portraits of emperors who deviate from the Augustan ideal. An influential figure here, with a long literary pedigree, is that of the eastern tyrant whose ruthless and untrammeled autocracy in the political sphere has its counterpart in the unbridled indulgence of licentious appetites in bed, at table, and elsewhere. Similar stories are often told about different rulers; ‘bad’ emperors seduce well-born women and boys and spend extraordinary sums on recherché pleasures, as well as murdering innocent senators. Accusations of tyranny are clearly part of what is at stake in

¹⁶ On this see S. R. F. Price, ‘The Future of Dreams: From Freud to Artemidorus’, *Past & Present*, 113 (1986), 3–37.

numerous stories told about Caligula, Nero, and Domitian, in particular. Caligula, for instance, in building his bridge of boats across the Bay of Naples, is explicitly likened to the Persian Xerxes, a paradigmatic tyrant (*Cal.* 19). Indeed, we might well expect such stories to be told even about an emperor who could be unpopular for quite other reasons. An emperor who failed to be sufficiently deferential to the Roman élite (and it is their views which survive) could well find himself represented as a monster of excessive lusts. In reading Suetonius' *Nero*, for instance, we must not forget that it was based on accounts produced under the Flavian emperors (Vespasian, Titus, and Domitian) who had a strong interest in discrediting the last of the Julio-Claudians. As we shall see later, too, imaginative invention was often characterized in antiquity as a desirable quality in a writer of invective (p. xxvii). Suetonius' ancient readers would expect his descriptions of imperial vices to be embroidered.

Scholarly commentators often pass over the more outrageous vices Suetonius attributes to his subjects. Suetonius relates at *Nero* 29 that a mock marriage was staged in which Nero's freedman Doryphorus played the groom and Nero the bride—on the wedding night 'he even imitated the shouts and cries of virgins being raped'. Modern commentators pause only to dispute the identity of the freedman. But whether the freedman was actually Doryphorus or Pythagoras, or, as is quite possible, the event never took place, the story serves an important function in Suetonius' account as an emblem of Nero's perversity. The man occupying the position of greatest power in the world submits himself to an ex-slave. Not only does he take on a feminine sexual role but he embellishes his part with horribly realistic sound-effects—another reminder of Nero's shameful career as an actor specializing in female leads (including Canace in labour with her incestuous offspring; *Nero* 21).

Both Otho and Vitellius mirror at least some of Nero's vices (*Otho* 2, and 7 where he is hailed as 'Nero'; *Vit.* 4). But then, they would, wouldn't they? The victorious Flavians no doubt encouraged those who painted their immediate predecessors as susceptible to the worst excesses of luxury and lust. It is striking that, according to Suetonius, when Titus was young, people expressed their anxieties about his future as their ruler by explicitly comparing him to Nero (*Titus* 7). Readers of Suetonius need to be alert to the ways in which a stereotype such as that of the tyrant may inform the way an emperor

is represented, or the ways in which representation of one emperor may be modelled on that of another.¹⁷

At first sight, Suetonius' approach can sometimes seem rather like that of imperial panegyric. The younger Pliny's speech in praise of the Emperor Trajan, the only example to have survived from the early principate (it was later taken as a model for such speeches), is articulated in terms of a series of contrasts between the virtues of Trajan and the vices of his predecessors. Yet this similarity is perhaps misleading. Pliny's *Panegyric* presents us with a clear and consistent picture of what an emperor should be like, a great military leader, a fount of justice, liberal but not too liberal in the provision of games, and so on. The picture which emerges from Suetonius is much less clear. How desirable was it, even, for the emperor to be a great general? Suetonius points out that Nero had no interest in expanding the empire (*Nero* 18). This might look like a criticism, but it comes in the first half of Suetonius' biography, that which treats those of Nero's deeds 'meriting no reproach' or even 'deserving some praise' (*Nero* 19). And we might note that Augustus, too, is presented by Suetonius as having no ambition to extend the empire further (*Aug.* 21).

While history in Rome was traditionally written by men who had been involved in public life for readers of similar background, the point of view—and the audience—of Suetonius' work is rather less obvious. That Suetonius should be seen as spokesman for an equestrian 'party' (representatives of a newly emerging bureaucratic élite, alienated from the traditional senatorial aristocracy) was the view put forward by Francesco della Corte and developed by Eugen Cizek.¹⁸ More recently scholars have doubted that 'senatorial' and 'equestrian' viewpoints can be so neatly separated. There is little a senator would object to in the *Lives* (though Suetonius' relative lack of interest in military glory might not be to the taste of some). Indeed, we find Suetonius implicitly disapproving of a plan to replace senators with equestrians and freedmen as commanders of the armies (*Nero* 37).

It has also been suggested that the *Lives of the Caesars* might be

¹⁷ Cf. Richard Saller, 'Anecdotes as Historical Evidence for the Principate', *Greece & Rome*, 27 (1980), 69–83.

¹⁸ F. della Corte, *Suetonio Eques Romanus* (2nd edn., Florence, 1967), and Eugen Cizek, *Structures et idéologie dans la 'Vie des douze Césars'* (Paris, 1977).

seen as a manifesto addressed to Hadrian. As Wallace-Hadrill emphasizes, while one may see Suetonius as sharing with his friend Pliny a view of how emperors ought to behave, unlike Pliny's *Panegyric* of the emperor Trajan, Suetonius' *Lives* do not offer explicit guidance. 'The ideal is not the conclusion, so much as the presupposition of the *Caesars*'.¹⁹ But here, too, we face the question: how far is a monolithic ideal even implicitly present?

Suetonius is eclectic in his use of sources (this is discussed further below) and his own accounts of the *Caesars* can often read in a disconcertingly fragmentary manner. Townend, for instance, criticizes Suetonius for his lack of 'conscious effort to build up a coherent character, such as one finds in Plutarch'.²⁰ Suetonius, he notes reproachfully, 'never makes up his mind about the true nature of his subject'.²¹ Sometimes Suetonius seems to present a kaleidoscope of different perspectives on an individual without feeling the need to reconcile them. Chapter 25 of the life of Claudius, for instance, recounts at great length a number of measures which are, it at first appears, initiated by the emperor himself and seem quite consistent with his interests as Suetonius describes them more generally (he exempts the people of Ilium from tribute, supporting his action with reference to an ancient document; he performs elaborate religious rituals of great antiquity to celebrate the concluding of treaties with foreign kings). Yet this chapter concludes with the assertion that 'these and his other acts . . . he conducted not so much according to his own judgement but rather according to that of his wives and freedmen'. Different accounts of the same event appear to co-exist in Suetonius' *Lives*; he relates anecdotes referring to two scarcely compatible versions of the death of Claudius. Agrippina is presented as solely responsible at *Claudius* 44, while at *Nero* 33 Nero is portrayed as complicit with her.

The biographer's focus is very much on the emperor; Suetonius gives short shrift even to the most important events which take place in the emperor's absence (Corbulo's eastern successes under Nero are only fleetingly mentioned, *Nero* 39). Some sections of the *Lives* are given almost from the emperor's point of view (this is particularly the case when Suetonius is narrating an emperor's death). At

¹⁹ Wallace-Hadrill, *Suetonius*, 24.

²⁰ Townend, 'Suetonius and his Influence', 83.

²¹ *Ibid.* 92.

other times, however, the viewpoint is much less clear. Are we to empathize with the soldiers Galba refuses to bribe (*Galba* 16)? Or with the commoners threatened by Caligula at his games (*Cal.* 30)? In some ways this is Suetonius' strength. Rather than seeing his *Lives* as a missed opportunity to divulge the 'real' Julius Caesar or the 'truth' about Nero, we should rather relish the contradictions, for these may be seen as reflecting not only the inevitably contradictory natures of a group of powerful individuals but also the diverse ways in which they were judged by their contemporaries and by later Romans, too. Suetonius' *Lives* offer us a rich instance of the imperial image as a site where multifarious and incompatible expectations repeatedly clash.

A major determinant of the tensions that can be traced in Suetonius' *Lives* is the different and contradictory models of rulership looked to both by emperors themselves and by those assessing their behaviour. Some later emperors looked back to Augustus, as we have seen—but Augustus' long career could itself be seen as offering contradictory guidance. Should one imitate the unforgiving triumvir (*Aug.* 15) or the lenient princeps (*Aug.* 51)? Suetonius' repeated focus on the quality of *civilitas* implies as an ideal the *civilis princeps*, the emperor who plays down anything that might set him apart from other citizens (see e.g. *Aug.* 52–6; *Tib.* 26–32; *Vesp.* 12).²² But not all Romans wanted an 'ordinary citizen' emperor in a homespun toga. Emperors who used the vast resources at their disposal to stage astonishingly lavish games could count on huge popularity with some of their subjects (while others might strongly disapprove—particularly if they felt they themselves might have to foot the bill through increased taxes). On the whole, Suetonius himself is very positive about lavish games and critical of emperors who skimp (see e.g. *Aug.* 43, *Tib.* 47).

Emperors in the Roman world were often treated as gods (many were formally deified after their death). For some of their subjects this was the most apt way of making sense of their power. Yet such honours sat very uneasily with notions of the emperor as 'first citizen'. Augustus and Vespasian, in particular, as they are presented by Suetonius, struggle to find ways of dealing with this. Augustus turns down the offer of a temple (*Aug.* 52). Vespasian doubts his own

²² Cf. Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, 'Civilis princeps: Between Citizen and King', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 72 (1982), 32–48.

capacity to work miracles yet heals the lame and the blind (*Vesp.* 7). Dying, he jokes about deification (*Vesp.* 23). Caligula, by contrast, loses no opportunity to stress his own godlike status in the most outrageous ways, having the heads of some of the most famous statues of the gods replaced with his own likeness, a temple constructed to his own godhead, and joining his own palace to the Capitol, the centre of Roman religion (*Cal.* 22). Suetonius' own perspective here may appear clearer—the moderation of Augustus and Vespasian is good, the excesses of Caligula are bad. But this is not to say that he is sceptical about the divinity of those emperors who have been officially deified.

Even where Suetonius' point of view seems straightforward, for instance with regard to imperial luxury, his accounts still permit the reader to glimpse an alternative perspective. Augustus, as he emerges from some of Suetonius' stories, can be seen as anxious to distance himself from any hint of eastern tyranny; we might note, for instance, the self-conscious simplicity of his personal living arrangements (*Aug.* 72). Suetonius seems to approve of this attitude. Some later emperors, however, apparently relished such comparisons. Caligula is said to have remarked that 'a man should either be frugal or be Caesar' (*Cal.* 37). For some imperial subjects, too, there may have been something rather impressive about the emperor Nero's declaration that only in his monstrous Golden House could he finally 'live like a human being' (*Nero* 31), even if Suetonius counts this among his crimes. Certainly Suetonius himself seems to revel in giving his readers the full details of Nero's folly.

Several emperors are criticized by Suetonius for their ill-treatment of the senate. However, when Caligula, for instance, humiliated senators in public (*Cal.* 26) his stock may well have risen with their social inferiors. Exploring strategies for expressing their power, such emperors may have looked, whether consciously or unconsciously, to the semi-mythical example of eastern tyrants such as Xerxes; as we saw earlier, according to Suetonius, some people thought Caligula was deliberately taking Xerxes as a model when he constructed a bridge over the Bay of Naples (*Cal.* 19). Perhaps he hoped to intimidate his subjects by laying claim to tyrant status. Part of the effectiveness of such a strategy would have lain in the high profile of such behaviour in the literary tradition on tyrants. Emperors themselves were not simply passive victims of stereo-

typing but played an active role in manipulating and developing the symbolic vocabulary through which their power was projected and made sense of.

The ‘worst’ of Suetonius’ Caesars are the ones who are most outspoken in characterizing their own power. The remarks attributed to Caligula and Nero may have been jokes, if chilling ones, but they had a point. Nero observes that ‘not one of his predecessors had known what he might do’ (*Nero* 37). Caligula comments to his own grandmother: ‘Remember, I can do anything I please and to anybody’ (*Cal.* 29).²³ As Paul Plass has emphasized, emperors’ jokes often serve to problematize the point of view of Suetonius’ account. ‘Fact on the one side, fiction on the other and frequently mediated by a miragelike, witty intermediate region that offers multiple, unresolved perception of political reality.’²⁴ When Caligula said (*Cal.* 55) that he wanted to make his horse consul (if he said that), did he mean it? Was it another symptom of mental derangement? Or was he perhaps poking fun at Roman senators who still valued the consulship even when it brought no real power? Does Suetonius allow for that possibility or does he think Caligula meant what he said? Certainly the inclusion of such excesses serves to make Suetonius’ *Lives* far more entertaining—not an insignificant factor.

Suetonius does not offer his reader a final verdict on any of the Caesars (though he perhaps comes close to this in observing of Vespasian that his only vice was his love of money, *Vesp.* 16). Instead, we are offered a variety of ways of seeing each of them. We might see this as an acknowledgement of the impossibility of knowing what any emperor was ‘really like’, either for us or even for that emperor’s contemporaries.

Suetonius’ style

Suetonius’ style has tended to receive little attention from modern scholars. Where his style is discussed, it is often in disparaging terms. He inevitably suffers by comparison with his contemporary Tacitus, that master of dazzling ironies. Some modern scholars have dismissed Suetonius as shifting between styles under the influence

²³ The significance of such comments is well explored in Plass, *Wit and the Writing of History*, 153.

²⁴ *Ibid.* 11.

of whatever source he was using at the time: Suetonius' style is to have no style.

Among ancient writers we can, however, find at least some admirers of his style.²⁵ The collection of biographies of later emperors known as the Augustan History describes Suetonius as 'a most correct and truthful author, whose characteristic it is to love brevity' (*Firmus, Saturninus, Proculus, and Bonosus* 1. 1–2). We might compare, too, the characteristics of the 'Plain style', principally clarity and brevity, which Quintilian praises in his treatise on the education of an orator (*Institutes of Oratory* 12.10.58 ff.). Suetonius was not, of course, attempting to write in the grand manner which was thought appropriate to history. Nevertheless, as we have already seen, his writing is hardly 'artless'—and even where it seems so, this may be deliberate.

Suetonius' writing offers no philosophical or moral generalization. He provides only the occasional explicit comment on the actions or traits he describes, disapproving, for instance, of Tiberius' harshness towards his exiled wife (*Tib.* 50) and Vitellius' brutal behaviour on visiting the battlefield at Betriacum (*Vit.* 10). For many scholars, this lack of comment has made Suetonius seem much more reliable as a source. He has no particular agenda, it is supposed. For Townend, the frustratingly fragmentary and inconsistent nature of the pictures of emperors given by Suetonius ultimately offers comfort: 'There is something solidly authentic about Suetonius' emperors, even if individual stories remain suspect. He allows us to construct our own figures from his materials, and we feel that the results are real.'²⁶ One could, though, make a case for arguing that this is deliberate strategy on Suetonius' part. He is himself, as his comments on Julius Caesar's prose style reveal (*Jul.* 56), a far from unsophisticated reader.

The profusion of detail in Suetonius' writing has already been noted. Plutarch, as we saw, stressed the importance of detail in revealing the nature of a biography's subject. But the wealth of detail in Suetonius could be seen as serving other functions, too. Ancient rhetoricians were very sensitive to the emotional impact and persuasive force of apparently casual details. Suetonius does not attempt to enter into the thoughts of his subjects but the inclusion of such

²⁵ As Lounsbury emphasises in his recent study, *Arts of Suetonius*. See esp. ch. 5.

²⁶ Townend, 'Suetonius and his Influence', 93.

details does serve to arouse an empathetic response on the part of the reader. We might think, for instance, of Otho, as he hurries to meet his fellow conspirators, being held up by his untied sandal (*Otho* 6), or Julius Caesar casually yet fatefully thrusting a note warning him of the conspiracy into a bundle of papers to read later (*Jul.* 81). Lounsbury characterizes this as a ‘sensational’ treatment—as opposed to the more ‘intuitive’ treatment offered in Tacitus’ work which focuses rather on the ‘psychological essence’ of a scene.²⁷ For many readers it is this level of detail which gives Suetonius’ writing its plausibility. Townend characterizes the *Lives of the Caesars* as ‘full of vital characters and utterly convincing detail’.²⁸ For ancient rhetoricians one function of ‘enargeia’ (‘vivid description’) was that it made a story come to life for the listeners. In particular, the inclusion of telling details could give persuasive force to a scene entirely invented by the orator. Such inventions were thought quite legitimate and served to parade an orator’s persuasive skills. Quintilian comments in his treatise on the education of an orator: ‘It reinforces the case greatly if one adds to the actual facts a credible picture of events, so that the listeners feel that they themselves witnessed the scene’ (4. 2. 123). For this reason, too, we should hesitate before assuming Suetonius is giving us the unvarnished truth.²⁹

Use of sources

There is not space here to give a detailed account of the range of sources both narrative and documentary, which Suetonius is thought to have used in compiling his *Lives*. A number of earlier historians are named, for instance the elder Pliny, though usually only when they provide first-hand evidence.³⁰ It is clear that he was often reliant on the same narrative sources as the historian Tacitus (e.g. the work of Cluvius Rufus). Suetonius seems to be quite familiar with the writings of the emperors themselves (Tiberius’ autobiography, *Tib.* 61, or Nero’s poems, *Nero* 52). Suetonius also makes extensive use of less obvious sources, such as the writings of grammarians.³¹

²⁷ Lounsbury, *Arts of Suetonius*, 76.

²⁸ Townend, ‘Suetonius and his Influence’, 93.

²⁹ See Barton, ‘The *inventio* of Nero’.

³⁰ Cf. Wallace-Hadrill, *Suetonius*, 64.

³¹ As Wallace-Hadrill makes clear; *Suetonius*, ch. 3.

Unlike historians, Suetonius did not need to aim for seamless grandeur. Suetonius has no stylistic anxieties about quoting in Greek or using technical vocabulary. He could include verbatim quotations from emperors—and others; Suetonius offers his readers scraps of graffiti and obscene verses chanted at triumphs. While a historian such as Tacitus would compose an idealized speech, designed to suggest the character of the speaker, Suetonius quotes the actual words of his subjects, cataloguing, for instance, the idiosyncrasies of Augustus' Latin. Here, too, he is much closer to Roman traditions of antiquarian and technical literature than to history writing (there are reasons for supposing he was the first reputable author of formal prose to do this). In particular, he makes extensive use of the letters of the emperor Augustus to which he must have had access while working at the palace. It is, however, striking that he makes no direct quotations from the letters of any later emperor (apart from at *Nero* 23, where he does not claim to have seen an original). The only later private document he refers to is the text of Nero's poems (*Nero* 52). Scholars have generally taken this to suggest that he was dismissed from office when only the first two of his *Lives* were completed.

On two occasions when Suetonius makes use of documentary sources to refute earlier writers he seems to be addressing errors in Tacitus' account of the Julio-Claudians: at *Tiberius* 21 where he discusses Augustus' attitude to Tiberius and at *Caligula* 8, where he quotes the public records in support of the view, disputed by Tacitus, that Caligula was born at Antium.³²

Suetonius' influence

Suetonius had some influence on the authors of the later Augustan History (as well as on Marius Maximus whose work, now lost, aimed to continue Suetonius' series of Caesars). Their *Lives* are generally organized chronologically but express explicit approval of Suetonius' writing, as we have seen.³³ In the ninth century the *Lives of the Caesars* was followed more closely as a model by Einhard for his life of Charlemagne, which is organized by topic.³⁴ In the fourteenth

³² Townend, 'Suetonius and his Influence', 88–9.

³³ *Ibid.* 96–7.

³⁴ *Ibid.* 97–106.

century Petrarch made extensive use of Suetonius as a source in composing his *Lives of the Illustrious Romans*, though his mode of organization is his own.

More than two hundred editions of Suetonius were published between 1470 and 1829.³⁵ He appears to have enjoyed consistent popularity at least until the nineteenth century. Before 1700 editions of Suetonius were as numerous as those of Tacitus and more so than those of Plutarch (Latin was, of course, more widely read than Greek but vernacular translations of Plutarch do not seem to have outnumbered those of Suetonius).³⁶ The salacious nature of some of Suetonius' material meant, however, that he was rarely recommended reading in schools.

Suetonius' style was much admired in his numerous influential treatises by the Spanish Humanist scholar Juan Luis Vives (1492–1540), a friend of Erasmus. Erasmus himself chose to produce an edition of Suetonius, with the purpose, he states in his preface, of encouraging princes 'to order their lives and habits as if in a mirror' (1517)—while in a number of other works he draws on Suetonius constantly for examples of how rulers ought and ought not to behave. Politian, another prominent Humanist, who was professor of Greek and Latin at the Florentine Academy, delivered a course of lectures on historiography which presented Suetonius as its foremost exemplar (Politian was not unusual at this time in seeing no sharp distinction between biography and history). The scholar Isaac Casaubon (1559–1614) published an edition of Suetonius (1595, revised 1610) with full commentary (in print until 1736), praising him for his accuracy of both manner and matter. Suetonius was generally popular in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, as a fund of evocative details as well as an important source of information about Roman emperors. Among British authors, Ben Jonson based much of his *Sejanus* (performed 1603) on material in Suetonius, while Philemon Holland's 1606 translation was used extensively by Philip Massinger for his play based on events under the emperor Domitian, *The Roman Actor*, first performed in 1626. The royalist writer Sir Robert Filmer, whose *Patriarcha, or the natural powers of kings* was written around 1639, exploited Suetonius' work in defending the position of Charles I against

³⁵ Lounsbury, *Arts of Suetonius*, 26.

³⁶ Ibid. 32–3, 146 n. 5.

parliamentarian critics (their preferred classical author, by contrast, was that defender of the republic, Cicero).

By the later nineteenth century Suetonius had fallen out of favour as a 'literary' author.³⁷ His works were dismissed in one footnote by the influential critic Eduard Norden in *Die antike Kunstprosa* ('Ancient literary prose') of 1898,³⁸ while J. W. Mackail, in his 1895 *Latin Literature*, another highly influential work, describes Suetonius' style as 'the beginning of barbarism; and Suetonius measures more than half the distance from the fine, familiar prose of the Golden Age to the base jargon of the authors of the Augustan History'.³⁹ Latin prose authors are no longer selected for study purely on the basis of their suitability as models for Latin prose composition and Suetonius will continue to be read as a source of information about imperial Rome. In recent years he could be said to have entertained millions through the medium of the television drama series *I, Claudius* based on Robert Graves's historical novels, which drew very extensively on Suetonius' *Lives of the Caesars*. Robert Graves's own translation of the *Lives* is itself a classic, whose literary elegance reflects little of Suetonius' own style—and whose substance often departs considerably from Suetonius' Latin. Suetonius' greatest value lies in the perspective he offers on how emperors were seen and judged by their fellow Romans.

³⁷ As Richard Lounsbury emphasizes, in his survey of responses to Suetonius through the centuries, *Arts of Suetonius*, ch. 2.

³⁸ i. 387 n. 1.

³⁹ p. 231.

NOTE ON THE TEXT AND TRANSLATION

IN translating Suetonius, I have attempted to keep as close to the Latin as is consistent with readable English, while also capturing something of the flavour of Suetonius' varied style. I have largely followed Ihm's magisterial Teubner text of 1908.

It is not possible in a volume of this scale to offer more than the briefest of notes (the Glossary explains some Roman technical terms). For this reason I have made no attempt to be comprehensive in indicating, for instance, where Suetonius' account is at variance with those available in other sources, or where modern scholars generally believe Suetonius to be mistaken. Instead, I have made it a priority to contextualize comments which would otherwise be puzzling, point up connections and parallels within and between Suetonius' *Lives*, and in general make it easier for readers to grasp the nature of Suetonius' enterprise. Those who seek guidance as to how far they should trust the accuracy of particular pieces of information offered by Suetonius will often be better served by consulting modern biographies of Roman emperors, or, in the case of the year of the four emperors, Kenneth Wellesley's useful study *The Long Year 69 AD* (London, 1975)—though these works are sometimes over-optimistic in their faith in his veracity. As a general rule, one should avoid relying on any of Suetonius' statements relating to numbers (e.g. dates, ages, prices).

Ancient Roman place-names have generally been retained, with a few exceptions.

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- *The Gallic War*, trans. and ed. Carolyn Hammond.
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- Plutarch, *Greek Lives: A Selection of Nine Lives*, trans. Robin Waterfield, ed. Philip A. Stadter.
- *Roman Lives: A Selection of Eight Lives*, trans. Robin Waterfield, ed. Philip A. Stadter.
- Tacitus, *Agricola and Germany*, trans. and ed. Anthony R. Birley.
- *The Histories*, ed. David Levene; revision of the translation of W. H. Fyfe.
- Virgil, *The Aeneid*, trans. C. Day Lewis, ed. Jasper Griffin.

CHRONOLOGY

BCE:

- 100 Birth of Julius Caesar (?).
- 82–80 Sulla dictator. Proscriptions.
- 63 Consulship of Cicero. Catiline's rebellion quashed. (23 Sept.) Birth of Octavian/Augustus. Julius Caesar made Pontifex Maximus.
- 61 Trial of Clodius for sacrilege.
- 61–60 Caesar's campaigns in Spain.
- 60 So-called 'first triumvirate' of Pompey, Caesar, and Crassus.
- 59 Consulship of Caesar and Marcus Calpurnius Bibulus. Caesar given Gallic command.
- 55 Caesar's command extended; campaigns in Britain.
- 54 Caesar in Britain and Germany.
- 53 Defeat and death of Crassus fighting the Parthians at Carrhae.
- 51 Debate about supersession of Caesar.
- 49 Outbreak of civil war between Julius Caesar and Pompey. Caesar briefly dictator.
- 48 Caesar defeats Pompey at Pharsalus. Escape and death of Pompey. Caesar dictator.
- 46 Caesar, back in Rome, embarks on extensive reforms. Triumphs for Gaul, Egypt, Pontus, and Africa.
- 45 Defeat of Pompey's sons at Munda. Caesar has triumph for Spain.
- 44 (15 March) Assassination of Caesar. Octavian (Augustus) returns to Italy and opposes Mark Antony. Antony given five years' command in Cisalpine and Transalpine Gaul.
- 43 Consuls Hirtius and Pansa killed at Mutina. Octavian declared consul. Triumvirate of Antony, Octavian, and Lepidus.
- 42 Julius Caesar officially deified. Battle of Philippi. Defeated, Cassius and M. Brutus commit suicide. Birth of Tiberius.
- 41 Antony in the east, meets Cleopatra. Civil war in Italy between Octavian and Lucius Antonius.
- 41–40 Parthians invade Syria and Asia Minor.
- 40 Lucius Antonius surrenders Perusia to Octavian. Pact of Brundisium between Antony and Augustus.

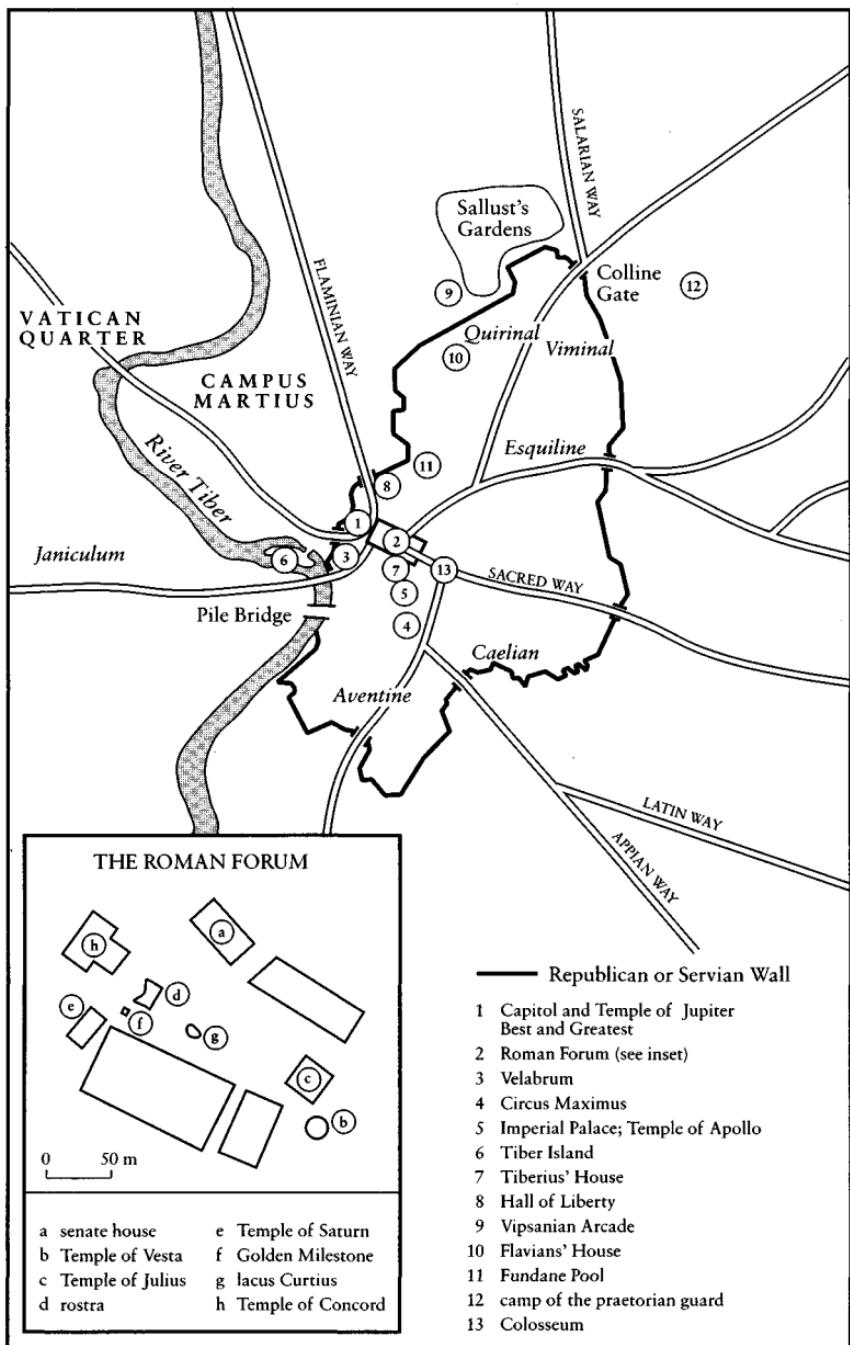
- 39 Pact of Misenum between triumvirs and Sextus Pompeius. Octavian divorces Scribonia.
- 38 Octavian marries Livia and comes into conflict with Sextus Pompeius.
- 37 Triumvirate renewed at Tarentum. Antony joins Cleopatra.
- 36 Octavian and Agrippa defeat Sextus Pompeius at Naulochus. Lepidus sidelined.
- 35–34 Octavian's successful campaigns in Illyria.
- 32 Consuls and many senators join Antony. Preparation for war.
- 31 Battle of Actium. Antony and Cleopatra defeated.
- 30 Fall of Alexandria. Antony and Cleopatra commit suicide.
- 29 Octavian returns to Italy and celebrates triple triumph.
- 28 Constitutional reorganization. Census. Purge of senate.
- 27 Octavian receives governorship of Spain, Gaul, Syria, Cyprus, and Egypt for ten years, while remaining consul. Given the title Augustus. On campaign in Spain and Gaul 27–24.
- 25 Marriage of Julia and Marcellus.
- 23 Augustus resigns the consulship but retains tribunician power and supreme military command. Death of Marcellus.
- 21 Marriage of Julia and Agrippa.
- 20 Parthians return captured Roman standards.
- 19 Augustus' imperium made valid in Rome.
- 18 Senate purged.
- 18–17 Legislation on marriage and adultery.
- 17 Secular Games. Augustus adopts his grandsons Gaius and Lucius.
- 12 Death of Agrippa. Tiberius in command in Pannonia. Augustus Pontifex Maximus.
- 11 Marriage of Julia and Tiberius.
- 10 Birth of Claudius.
- 7 Tiberius celebrates triumph after campaign on the Rhine. Augustus divides Rome into fourteen administrative regions.
- 6 Tiberius given tribunician power for five years. He retires to Rhodes.
- 5 Gaius Caesar introduced to public life and designated consul for 1 CE.
- 3 Birth of Galba.

- 2 Lucius Caesar introduced to public life and designated consul for 4 CE. Dedication of temple of Mars the Avenger and Forum of Augustus. Augustus receives title ‘Father of the Fatherland’. Julia banished for adultery.

CE:

- 2 Tiberius back in Italy. Death of Lucius Caesar.
- 3 Augustus’ powers of supreme military command renewed.
- 4 Death of Gaius Caesar. Augustus adopts Agrippa Postumus and Tiberius. Senate purged.
- 4–6 Tiberius campaigns in Germany.
- 7/8 Banishment of Agrippa Postumus and younger Julia.
- 9 Three legions under Quintilius Varus destroyed by Germans. Birth of Vespasian.
- 12 Tiberius’ second triumph. Birth of Caligula.
- 14 Death of Augustus; accession of Tiberius.
- 15 Birth of Vitellius.
- 15–16 Germanicus on campaign in Germany.
- 16 Trial and suicide of Libo Drusus.
- 19 Death of Germanicus at Antioch.
- 20 Trial and suicide of Gnaeus Piso.
- 23 Death of Drusus.
- 26 Tiberius leaves Rome for Capri.
- 29 Death of Livia. Exile of elder Agrippina.
- 31 Consulship and execution of Sejanus.
- 32 Birth of Otho.
- 33 Death of elder Agrippina.
- 37 Death of Tiberius; accession of Caligula. Suicide of Tiberius Gemellus. Birth of Nero.
- 38 Death and deification of Drusilla. Caligula marries Lollia Paulina.
- 39 Execution of Gaetulicus. Exile of younger Agrippina. Birth of Titus. Caligula divorces Lollia Paulina and marries Milonia Caesonia. Leaves Rome to visit Rhineland.
- 41 Assassination of Caligula; accession of Claudius. Birth of Britannicus.
- 43 Invasion of Britain.
- 44 Claudius’ triumph.

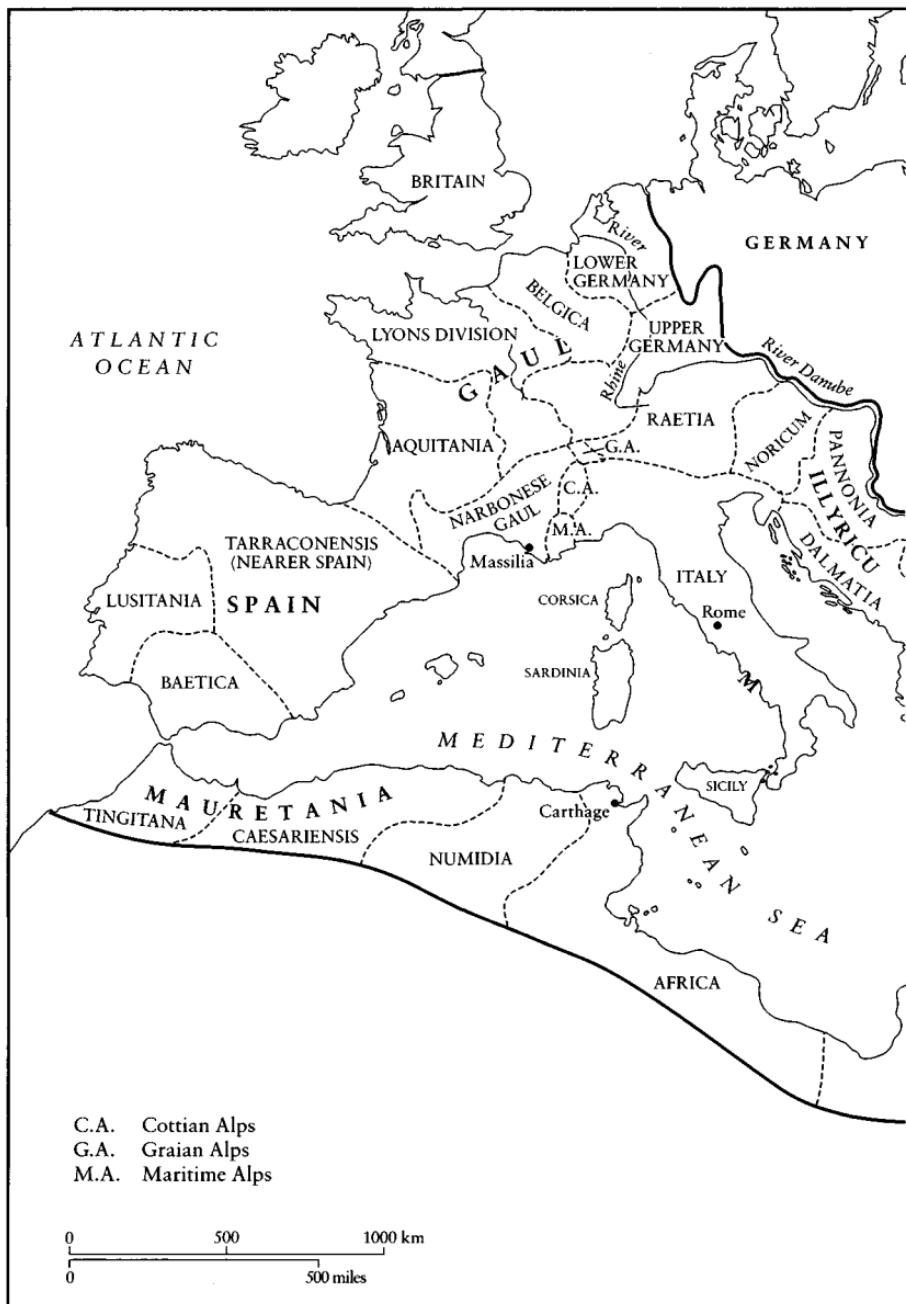
- 48 Claudius censor. Marriage and execution of Silius and Messalina.
- 49 Marriage of Claudius and younger Agrippina.
- 50 Nero adopted by Claudius.
- 51 Birth of Domitian.
- 53 Nero marries Octavia.
- 54 Death of Claudius (subsequently deified); accession of Nero. War in Armenia.
- 55 Murder of Britannicus.
- 59 Murder of younger Agrippina.
- 60 Armenia subjugated by Corbulo. Revolt of Boudicca in Britain.
- 62 Death of Burrus. Retirement of Seneca. Execution of Octavia. Nero marries Poppaea.
- 64 Fire of Rome.
- 65 Conspiracy of Piso. Death of Poppaea.
- 66 Nero marries Statilia Messalina. Visit of Tiridates to Rome. Nero's tour of Greece.
- 67 Vespasian given command of Judaea.
- 68 Revolt of Vindex and Galba. Suicide of Nero; accession of Galba.
- 69 Otho declared emperor; Galba murdered. First battle of Betriacum. Otho, defeated, commits suicide. Vitellius recognized as emperor. Vespasian proclaimed in the east. Second battle of Betriacum. Vitellian forces defeated. Vespasian's forces take Rome. Vitellius killed; accession of Vespasian.
- 70 Vespasian arrives in Rome. Titus captures Jerusalem.
- 71 Triumph of Vespasian and Titus. Titus receives tribunician power.
- 79 Death of Vespasian (subsequently deified); accession of Titus.
- 81 Death of Titus (subsequently deified); accession of Domitian.
- 82–3 Campaign against the Chatti. Domitian's first triumph.
- 89 Victory in Pannonia. Domitian's second triumph.
- 95 Execution of Flavius Clemens.
- 96 Assassination of Domitian; accession of Nerva.
- 98 Death of Nerva; accession of Trajan.
- 117 Death of Trajan; accession of Hadrian.
- 138 Death of Hadrian; accession of Antoninus Pius.



MAP 1. Plan of Rome



MAP 2. Italy



MAP 3. The Roman Empire in 96 CE



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LIVES OF THE
CAESARS

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THE DEIFIED JULIUS CAESAR

[1] In the course of his sixteenth year, he lost his father.* In the following consulate, when he was Flamen Dialis elect, he divorced Cossutia,* whose family was of equestrian rank but very wealthy, and to whom he had been betrothed before assuming the toga of manhood. He then married Cornelia, whose father Cinna was four times consul. By her he soon had a daughter, Julia, and he could not be induced to divorce her despite all the efforts of the dictator Sulla. Thus, having been stripped of his priesthood, his wife's dowry, and his family estates, he was even treated as an adherent of the opposing faction, so that he was forced to withdraw from public life and to change his hiding-place each night, though suffering from an increasingly severe case of quartan fever, as well as having to buy off his pursuers, until finally he secured forgiveness, through the intervention of the Vestal Virgins and his relatives, Mamercus Aemilius and Aurelius Cotta. It is well known that Sulla, though he had long held out against the entreaties of his most distinguished close advisers, finally gave in to their persistence, declaring (divinely inspired or through shrewd foresight): 'Have your way—and have your man—but be aware that the man you so desired to save, believing him to be attached to the aristocratic cause for which you have fought alongside me, will be its downfall. For in Caesar there are many Mariuses.'*

[2] For his first military service he was stationed in Asia, among the companions of the governor Marcus Thermus. When Thermus sent him on a mission to Bithynia to summon the fleet he lingered at the court of Nicomedes—and there was a rumour that he had submitted himself to the king's pleasure, a rumour which strengthened when he returned to Bithynia a few days later to obtain money that was allegedly owed to a freedman, one of his clients. He fulfilled the rest of his service with better repute—Thermus awarded him a civic crown for his role in the capture of Mytilene. [3] He also served under Servilius Isauricus in Cilicia but only for a short time. For when news came of Sulla's death, he hurried back to Rome, hoping to take advantage of the unrest caused by Marcus Lepidus' measures.* Yet he declined to attach himself to Lepidus, though major

inducements were offered, distrusting both the man himself and the circumstances, which were less promising than he had hoped.

[4] However, once the civil unrest was quelled, he brought a charge of extortion against Cornelius Dolabella,* an ex-consul who had celebrated a triumph. When Dolabella was acquitted Caesar decided to withdraw to Rhodes, so that the ill-feeling against him might die down and that he might rest and have the leisure to study under Apollonius Molon, the leading teacher of oratory.* As he was crossing over to Rhodes, during the winter season, he was captured near the island of Pharmacussa by pirates, who held him captive for forty days in a state of extreme indignation, with just one doctor and two personal attendants for company; he had immediately dispatched his companions and his other slaves to raise money with which he might be ransomed. Once he was set ashore, having paid out fifty talents, he raised a fleet on the spot without delay and set off in pursuit of the departing pirates. Having got them in his power, he inflicted on them the punishment with which he had often jokingly threatened them.*

Mithridates was laying waste some neighbouring regions, so, lest he should seem to be idle when allies were in danger, he crossed over from Rhodes (which he had finally reached) to Asia. Having secured some auxiliaries and driven the king's prefect from the province, he confirmed alliances with those states which were wavering and undecided.

[5] When he was serving as military tribune, the first office to which he was elected on his return to Rome, he made great efforts to support those who sought to restore the powers of the tribunes of the plebs, which had been weakened by Sulla. Through legislation proposed by Plotius, he also brought about the recall of Lucius Cinna, his wife's brother, and those who, along with him, had supported Lepidus in the civil unrest and had fled to Sertorius, after the consul's death.* He himself gave a speech in favour of the measure.

[6] When he was quaestor, following the deaths of his aunt Julia* and his wife Cornelia, he delivered the customary eulogies of them from the rostra. In the course of the eulogy of his aunt, he made the following comments concerning the origins on both sides of his aunt's and father's family: 'On her mother's side, my aunt Julia was descended from kings, on her father's she was related to gods. For the Marcus Rex family—that was her mother's name—goes back to

Ancus Marcius,* while the Julii, to which our family belongs, go back to Venus. Her family is therefore distinguished by the sanctity of kings, who are mighty amongst men, and by the majesty of the gods, to whom kings themselves are subject.'

In place of Cornelia, he took as wife Pompeia, the daughter of Quintus Pompeius, and granddaughter of Lucius Sulla. Later on he divorced her, on the grounds that she had committed adultery with Publius Clodius, for the rumour that Clodius had approached her, disguised as a woman, in the course of a public religious festival was so persistent that the senate set up an inquiry into the profaning of rituals.*

[7] The province of Further Spain was allotted him as quaestor; making his rounds of the local courts, dispensing justice, in accordance with his praetor's mandate, he came to Gades and, noticing a statue of Alexander the Great at the temple of Hercules, he let out a groan, as though exasperated at his own lack of achievement, for he himself had done nothing memorable at the age when Alexander had already conquered the world.* He at once sought to be released from his duties, in order to seize as soon as possible the greater opportunities on offer in Rome. He was also troubled by a dream on the following night. For he dreamed that he was committing incest with his mother. Even this spurred him on to greater hopes, for dream-interpreters explained it as a portent that he would rule the world, because his mother, whom he had seen subjected to himself, was none other than the earth, which is held to be the mother of all.

[8] Thus having left his province early, he approached some Latin colonies which were agitating to secure full citizenship,* and he might have spurred them to dare action, if the consuls had not kept some legions, raised for Cilicia, there for a while to guard against this. [9] Not long afterwards, he was embarking on more ambitious projects in Rome. Indeed, just a few days before he took up the aedileship, he fell under suspicion of having conspired with the ex-consul Marcus Crassus, as well as Publius Sulla* and Lucius Autronius (who had been convicted of bribery after winning the consular elections*), their plan being to attack the senate on New Year's Day and, after the slaughter of their chosen victims, for Crassus to usurp the dictatorship, while Caesar would be made his Master of Horse; then, when they had organized the state according to their wishes, the consulship would be restored to Sulla and

Autronius. Tanusius Geminus mentions the plot in his history, as does Marcus Bibulus in his edicts and Gaius Curio the elder in his speeches. Cicero, too, seems to be referring to this in a letter to Axius in which he says that in his consulship Caesar brought about the tyranny he had contemplated when he was aedile. Tanusius adds that Crassus, either repenting or fearful, did not appear on the day fixed for the massacre and for this reason Caesar did not give the signal which it had been agreed he was to give. Curio says the arrangement was that he would let his toga slip from his shoulder. Curio is also the source, along with Marcus Actorius Naso, for the story that Caesar had also conspired with the youth Gnaeus Piso, who was given the province of Spain, though it was not his turn and he had not asked for it, because he was suspected of involvement in intrigue at Rome; also, that they had agreed that the two of them would stir up revolution, Piso abroad and Caesar in Rome, by means of the Ambrani and the Transpadanes* but that Piso's death brought their plans to nothing.

[10] When he was aedile, besides the Comitium, Forum, and basilicas, he also decorated the Capitol with arcades built for the occasion, in which part of the equipment for his shows was displayed in great profusion.* He provided wild beast fights and games, both in collaboration with his colleague and on his own account, with the result that what had been paid for jointly was also attributed to him alone. Thus, his colleague Marcus Bibulus did not conceal the fact that he had suffered the same fate as Pollux, for just as the temple in the Forum that was sacred to the twin brothers was simply known as the temple of Castor, so the munificence of himself and Caesar was spoken of simply as Caesar's. In addition to this, Caesar provided a set of gladiatorial games, though with fewer pairs of fighters than he had planned, for the great number of gladiators he had assembled struck such terror into his opponents that a bill was passed limiting the number of gladiators which any individual might keep in the city.

[11] Having won the favour of the people, he made an attempt, through the agency of the tribunes, to have Egypt awarded him as a province by plebiscite, seizing the opportunity to ask for this extraordinary post when the Alexandrians had expelled their king, who had been termed ally and friend by the senate,* and the expulsion was widely condemned. But he was not successful, due to the opposition of the aristocratic faction. Therefore he sought to diminish their authority by every means possible and to this end he restored the

trophies of Gaius Marius (commemorating his victories over Jugurtha and over the Cimbri and Teutones) which had been torn down by Sulla. And, in conducting prosecutions for murder,* he included among the murderers those who, through the proscriptions,* had received money from the treasury for the heads of Roman citizens, although such cases had been exempted by the Cornelian laws. [12] He also bribed someone to bring a charge of treason against Gaius Rabirius* who had been of particular service to the senate some years previously when it was seeking to bring under control the troublesome tribune, Lucius Saturninus. And when he had been selected by lot to pass sentence on the defendant, he condemned him with such eagerness that nothing helped Rabirius in his appeal to the people so much as the harshness of his judge.*

[13] Having put aside his hope of securing a province,* he sought appointment as Pontifex Maximus—not without a considerable amount of bribery. Contemplating the magnitude of his debts, he is said to have announced to his mother, when she kissed him as he was leaving for the assembly on the morning of the election, that he would not come home unless he was Pontifex. And he so decisively beat two formidable rival candidates, in age and rank far his superiors, that he won more votes in their own tribes than either of them secured overall.*

[14] When, after the conspiracy of Catiline had been discovered, the entire senate supported the death penalty for those involved in the crime, as praetor elect he was the only one to advocate separating them to be imprisoned in different towns and confiscating their property. Nevertheless, he inspired such fear in those proposing the harsher penalty, emphasizing how unpopular they would later be with the Roman people, that Decimus Silanus, the consul designate, was not ashamed to suggest a milder interpretation of his own proposal (it would have been a disgrace to change it), alleging that it had been understood as harsher than he had intended.* Thus, Caesar would have prevailed, having persuaded many, including Cicero (the brother of the consul),* to adopt his view, if Marcus Cato's speech had not confirmed the resolution of the wavering senate. Yet even then Caesar continued his attempts to impede the proceedings, until the armed troop of Roman knights, which was standing guard around the place, threatened to kill him as he carried on unabashed, even brandishing their drawn swords at him in such a way that those

closest to him moved away from where he was sitting and it was with difficulty that a few were able to shield him with their arms and their togas. At that point, quite terrified, he desisted and even kept away from the senate for the rest of the year.

[15] On the first day of his praetorship,* he summoned Quintus Catulus to a people's inquiry concerning the restoration of the Capitoline,* proposing a bill to transfer the responsibility to someone else.* But he was no match for the united actions of the aristocrats and abandoned the proposal when he perceived that they had at once left off their attendance on the new consuls and had hurried together in groups determined to offer resistance to his measures.* [16] However, he showed himself the most stalwart backer and defender of Caecilius Metellus, tribune of the plebs, who was attempting to introduce highly disruptive measures in spite of his colleagues' veto, until eventually both of them were suspended from the exercise of public office by a decree of the senate.* Nevertheless, Caesar had the audacity to continue to exercise his office and to dispense justice. Then, learning that there were those who were prepared to contain him through armed force, he sent away his lictors, threw aside his magistrate's toga, and hid himself away at home, planning to keep a low profile, given the current circumstances. And on the following day a rather unruly mob flocked to him spontaneously and of their own accord, offering him their help in reasserting his position; when he restrained them, quite contrary to expectations, the senate (which had been hastily summoned to deal with the same crowd) made him a vote of thanks through its leading men, and then, having summoned him to the senate house, praised him in the highest terms and restored him to his former position, cancelling the earlier decree.

[17] However, he encountered further trouble when he was named as one of the associates of Catiline, both by the informer Lucius Vettius, at a hearing conducted by the quaestor Novius Nigrus, and in the senate house by Quintus Curius, to whom a sum of money had been publicly voted, since he was the first to unveil the plans of the conspirators. Curius maintained he had his information from Catiline, while Vettius even promised a document in Caesar's handwriting that had been given to Catiline. Caesar, however, could in no way tolerate this and, having demonstrated, invoking Cicero as witness, that he himself had of his own accord reported information

about the conspiracy to Cicero, he ensured that Curius did not receive his reward. As for Vettius, his bond was declared forfeit, his goods were seized, and he was severely fined and almost torn apart in a public assembly before the rostra. Caesar then committed him to prison, inflicting the same treatment on the quaestor Novius, because he had allowed a magistrate with powers superior to his own to be summoned to his court.

[18] Having been allotted Further Spain as his province, following his praetorship, Caesar disposed of his creditors, who sought to prevent him leaving, by means of guarantees and set off before the provinces had been officially provided for—though this was contrary to precedent and to law. It is unclear whether he was afraid of a suit which was being prepared to be brought against him once he was out of office,* or whether he wanted to bring help to the allies who were begging for aid as soon as possible. Once his province was brought to order, not waiting for his successor, he left for Rome with equal rapidity, to procure both a triumph and the consulship. However, since the elections had already been announced and no account could be taken of his candidacy unless he entered the city as a private citizen, and since his intrigues to secure exemption from the laws were provoking widespread criticism, he was obliged to give up the triumph, to avoid being excluded from the consulship.* [19] Of the two rival candidates for the consulship, Lucius Lucceius and Marcus Bibulus, he allied himself with Lucceius, having made an agreement with him that, since Lucceius was less popular but had greater financial resources, he should promise the electors money from his own funds in both their names. When the aristocrats discovered this, they were seized with fear that Caesar as consul would stop at nothing, if he had a colleague who went along with him and shared his views, so they authorized Bibulus to promise the same amount, many of them contributing money. Even Cato could not deny that such gifts were for the good of the state.*

Thus it was with Bibulus that he was elected consul. And with the same motive, the aristocrats went to some trouble to ensure that the provinces stipulated for the consuls elect were those of the least moment, that is, woodland and pastures.* Severely goaded by this insult, he sought with all manner of services to attach himself to Gnaeus Pompey, who was in dispute with the senate because it had been slow to ratify the arrangements he had made after his victory

over King Mithridates. Caesar reconciled Pompey with Marcus Crassus, who had been his enemy since they had been constantly at odds with one another as consuls. Caesar entered into an agreement with each of them, that no action should be taken in public which was contrary to the wishes of any one of the three.

[20] His very first act once consul was to ensure that the proceedings, both of the senate and of the people, should be compiled and published on a daily basis. He even reinstated the ancient practice by which, in the months when he did not hold the fasces, he would be preceded by an orderly, while the lictors would follow behind him.* However, after the promulgation of the agrarian law, he had his colleague forcibly expelled from the Forum, when the latter announced adverse omens.* On the following day Bibulus complained in the senate, but no one could be found who dared to give an opinion or offer any censure in response to this piece of arrogance—though such decrees were frequent in much less serious cases. Bibulus was thus reduced to such despair that he hid himself away at home until his time as consul came to an end, and did nothing but issue proclamations announcing adverse omens.* From that time on Caesar alone administered all public business and dispensed all justice, so that some city-dwellers, putting their seals as witnesses to a document, jokingly put as the date, not the consulship of Caesar and Bibulus but the consulship of Julius and Caesar (thus referring twice to the same man, once with his name, once with his *cognomen*). Soon the following lines were in common circulation:

It happened when Caesar was consul—not Bibulus,
For nothing happened, as I recall, when Bibulus was consul.

The plain of Stellas, which had been consecrated by our ancestors, and the Campanian territory, which had been left as a source of revenue for the state, he divided up into plots for twenty thousand citizens, chosen without a ballot, each of whom had at least three children. In response to a request from the tax-collectors he agreed that they should be allowed to reduce their payment to the state by a third but gave them a public warning against making reckless bids for future tax-collecting contracts.* His other grants, however generous, no one dared oppose—or if they did, they were frightened off. When Marcus Cato tried to use his veto,* Caesar gave orders that he should be dragged out of the senate house by a lictor and taken off to

prison. When Lucius Lucullus stood up to him too openly, Caesar filled him with such fear lest false charges be brought against him that, of his own accord, Lucullus fell on his knees before him. And when Cicero, during the course of a court case, lamented the current state of affairs, Caesar at once arranged for Cicero's enemy, Publius Clodius, to be transferred at the ninth hour of the same day* from the patricians to the plebeians, something Clodius had long been striving for in vain. Finally, in a move to counter all his opponents at once, he bribed an informer to confess (according to an agreed plan) that he had been incited to murder Pompey by certain individuals and, when brought before the rostra, to name the culprits. However, after the informer named one or two to no effect and had aroused suspicions that he was a fraud, Caesar abandoned hope that this hastily arranged plan would come off, and is thought to have had the informer poisoned.

[21] At around the same time he took as his wife Calpurnia, daughter of Lucius Piso who was to succeed him as consul, while his own daughter Julia he gave away in marriage to Gnaeus Pompey, after she had broken her engagement to Servilius Caepio (even though Caepio had only recently been of great service to Caesar in his conflict with Bibulus). Once this new link was forged, he began always to ask Pompey his opinion first, although it had been his practice to begin with Crassus—and it was customary for the consul to observe throughout the year the same order which he had established on the first of January.

[22] Thus with the support of his father-in-law and of his son-in-law, he chose Gaul over all the other provinces, since it offered both profits and the potential for winning triumphs. Initially, indeed, he received only Cisalpine Gaul with the addition of Illyria, in accordance with the Vatinian law, but was soon granted 'long-haired' Gaul also,* as the senators feared that if they refused him this the people would give it to him. Elated by the pleasure of this success, he had no qualms, a few days later, in boasting to a packed meeting of the senate that he had got what he wanted in spite of the opposition and laments of his enemies, and that from that time forth, he would be mounting on their heads.* And when someone insultingly observed that such an action would be difficult for any woman, he replied, taking up the joke, that Semiramis had reigned in Assyria and the Amazons had controlled a large part of Asia.*

[23] When his consulship had come to an end and the praetors

Gaius Memmius and Lucius Domitius embarked on an inquiry into his actions during the preceding year, he referred the matter to the senate. And when they did not take it up and three days had been spent in fruitless argument, he left for his province. One of his quaestors was at once arraigned on a number of charges, as a preliminary to proceedings against Caesar himself. Soon, he, too, was summoned to court by Lucius Antistius, tribune of the plebs. However, by appealing to the college of tribunes as a whole, he managed to ensure that he did not stand trial, on the grounds that he was absent on state business. Thus, in order to guarantee his security for the future he took great pains always to put the annual magistrates in his debt, and he would not help any candidates or allow them to be elected unless they undertook to defend him when he was away. Against this purpose he had no hesitation in demanding oaths and even bonds from some people. [24] However, when Lucius Domitius, who was a candidate for the consulship,* openly threatened to do as consul what he had been unable to do as praetor and take control of Caesar's armies, Caesar obliged Crassus and Pompey to come to Luca, a town in his province, where he induced them to stand for the consulship again in order to keep Domitius out. He also contrived through their influence to have his own provincial command extended by five years. Emboldened by this he added to the legions which had been granted him by the state other legions paid for from his own resources. One of these was actually raised in Transalpine Gaul and had a Gallic name—it was known as the Alauda.* This he trained with Roman discipline and decked out with Roman equipment. Later on he gave the entire legion Roman citizenship. After that he did not pass up any opportunity for waging war, no matter how unjustified or how perilous, attacking without provocation allies, as well as enemies and barbarous peoples,* so that at one point the senate sent legates to report on the state of the Gallic provinces and several took the view that Caesar ought to be handed over to the enemy.* But when matters turned out well, he requested and received days of supplication* more frequently and in greater numbers than anyone had ever done before.

[25] His actions during the nine years* for which he held the command were essentially as follows. All of that part of Gaul which is bounded by the pastures of the Pyrenees, the Alps, and Mount Cebenna,* and by the rivers Rhine and Rhône, and whose circum-

ference is around three thousand two hundred miles, he made a province of the empire (with the exception of some allied states which had been of service), imposing on this territory a tribute of forty million sesterces per year. He was the first of the Romans to construct a bridge and attack the Germans who live beyond the Rhine, inflicting devastating defeats on them. He also attacked the Britons, a people previously unfamiliar, and after defeating them demanded tribute and hostages. Amongst all these successes, he experienced setbacks on only three occasions. During the British campaign, his fleet was virtually destroyed due to a violent storm. In Gaul, a legion was routed at Gergovia, and Titurius and Aurunculus, his legates, were killed in an ambush on the borders of Germany.

[26] During the same period he lost first his mother, then his daughter, and not much later his grandchild also. Also during this time, when the state was in chaos following the murder of Publius Clodius,* the senate had voted that there should be a single consul only, naming Gnaeus Pompey. Though the tribunes of the plebs wanted to make Caesar Pompey's colleague, he persuaded them rather to propose to the people that he should be permitted to stand for a second consulship when his provincial command was drawing to an end, while absent from Rome, so that he would not be obliged for that purpose to leave the province too soon, before the campaign was rounded off.* Once he had secured this, he developed more ambitious plans, and, full of expectation, let slip no opportunity to offer anyone any kind of largesse or assistance, publicly or privately. With his war spoils, he embarked on the construction of a forum, the land for which cost more than a hundred million sesterces.* He offered the people gladiatorial games and a public banquet in memory of his daughter—something which no one had ever done before.* In order to arouse people's expectations to the highest degree, he had some of the preparations for the banquet carried out in his own house—although he had given a contract to the markets, too. He gave orders that, whenever famous gladiators fought and were unpopular with the people, they should be forcibly removed and kept for him.* The new recruits he had trained not in the gladiatorial school or by professional trainers but by Roman knights in their own homes and even by senators experienced in warfare, exhorting them with entreaties, as is shown by his letters, to take the greatest care in the training of individuals and to direct their exercises in person. He doubled the

legions' pay in perpetuity.* Since corn was plentiful, he had it doled out without limit or measure and on occasion gave each man a slave from among the captives.

[27] In order to retain his connection with Pompey, however, and Pompey's good will, he offered him as wife Octavia, his sister's granddaughter,* although she was married to Gaius Marcellus, and himself asked to marry Pompey's daughter, though she was engaged to Faustus Sulla. When he had put all Pompey's associates and a large part of the senate under obligation to himself through loans made with low interest or none at all, he wooed with the most lavish generosity both those whom he selected from all the remaining orders and those who made requests to him of their own accord, even including freedmen and slaves who were particularly favoured by their patrons or masters. Indeed, he was the only recourse—and a most willing one—for those who were accused of crimes, those who were in debt and spendthrift young people, making exceptions only in the case of those who were so weighed down by accusations or poverty or who were so much in thrall to luxury that even he could not rescue them. To these he would say clearly and openly that what they needed was a civil war.

[28] He took no less trouble to win over kings and provinces throughout the world, offering thousands of prisoners as a gift to some, and to others auxiliary troops, beyond what was authorized by the senate and people, whenever and wherever they required them. Besides this he enhanced the foremost cities of Italy, of the Gallic provinces and the Iberian, as well as those of Asia and Greece, with the most splendid public works. By this time everyone was astonished by his actions and wondered what their object might be. The consul Marcus Claudius Marcellus proclaimed in an edict his intention to take action on a matter of greatest importance to the state and proposed to the senate that Caesar's command should be concluded early, since the campaign was completed, peace prevailed, and the victorious army ought to be disbanded. Nor should his candidacy in the elections be admitted, if he remained absent from Rome, since Pompey, despite his subsequent action, had not annulled the plebiscite. For it had happened that when Pompey drew up the law concerning the rules governing magistracies, he had forgotten to make an exception of Caesar's case in the section which debarred those absent from Rome from standing for election, and it was only

when the law was already inscribed on bronze and lodged in the treasury that he corrected the error. Nor was Marcellus satisfied with snatching from Caesar his provinces and his exceptional privilege, but he even proposed that the colonists, whom Caesar had settled in Novum Comum according to the bill of Vatinius, should be deprived of their citizenship, on the grounds that it had been given them to serve Caesar's own plans and was not authorized by law. [29] Caesar, disturbed by these events and thinking (as they say he was often heard to observe) that it was more difficult to force him down now, when he was leader of the state, from first into second place, than it would be to force him from second place to last, resisted with all his resources, working partly through the vetoes of the tribunes and partly through Servius Sulpicius, the other consul. In the following year, when Gaius Marcellus (who had succeeded his first cousin Marcus as consul) continued the same tactics, Caesar engaged as his defenders by means of extensive bribery Gaius' consular colleague, Aemilius Paulus, and Gaius Curio, the most turbulent of the tribunes. However, when he saw that nothing was going his way and that even the consuls elect were opposed to him, he sent letters begging the senate not to deprive him of the privilege the people had granted him, or else to make the other generals give up their armies also. For he was confident, it is thought, that he would more easily be able to summon his veterans together when he wanted them than Pompey would his new recruits. Besides this he proposed to his opponents that, while giving up eight legions as well as Transalpine Gaul, he should be allowed to retain two legions and the province of Cisalpine Gaul or at least one legion and Illyricum, until he should enter his consulship.

[30] However, when the senate would not intervene and his opponents asserted they would make no bargains concerning the welfare of the state, he crossed into Nearer Gaul and, after completing all the local court hearings, stopped at Ravenna, intending to assert his claim through war, if the senate took any oppressive action in response to intervention on his behalf by the tribunes of the plebs.* And this was Caesar's excuse for civil war. However, people think that there were other reasons too. Gnaeus Pompey used to say that because, with the resources of a private citizen, Caesar could not complete the enterprises he had begun, and could not satisfy the expectations he had aroused among the people regarding his return

to Rome, he wanted to turn everything upside down and bring chaos. Others say that he was afraid of being forced to give an account of the actions he had undertaken in contravention of auspices, laws, and tribunician vetoes during his first consulship.* For Marcus Cato repeatedly declared, even swearing it on oath, that he would impeach Caesar as soon as he had disbanded his army. And it was commonly predicted that, if he returned as a private citizen, he would answer the charges surrounded by armed men, on the precedent of Milo.* Asinius Pollio's account* makes this seem more likely, for he records that when, on the field of Pharsalus, Caesar looked out over his slaughtered and scattered enemies, he uttered the following words: 'It was they who wanted this; for I, Gaius Caesar, would have been found guilty, despite all my achievements, if I had not turned to my army for aid.' There are some who think that he had come to love the habit of command, that, having weighed up the relative strengths of his own and his opponents' resources, he grasped the opportunity to seize the power which he had coveted from his earliest youth. Indeed, it seems that this was the view of Cicero who writes in the third book of his 'On Duties',* that Caesar was always quoting some lines of Euripides, which Cicero himself translates:

If the law is to be broken, let it be broken
That power may be gained; otherwise, respect it.

[31] And so when the news came that the tribunician veto had been overridden and that the tribunes themselves had left Rome, Caesar quickly sent ahead his cohorts under cover. Meanwhile, so that suspicion would not be aroused, he concealed his intentions by himself attending some public spectacles, inspecting plans for the school for gladiators he was planning to build, and later, as was his usual way, throwing himself into the entertainment of numerous guests. Then, after the sun had set, he had mules from the neighbouring bakery harnessed to a carriage and embarked on his journey in the greatest secrecy with a small number of companions. His lights went out and he lost his way, wandering for some time until, at dawn, he located a guide and found the route on foot, following narrow paths. He caught up with his cohorts at the River Rubicon, which was the boundary of his province, where he paused for a while, thinking over the magnitude of what he was planning, then, turning to his closest companions, he said: 'Even now we can still turn back. But once we

have crossed that little bridge, everything must be decided by arms.' [32] As he paused, the following portent occurred. A being of splendid size and beauty suddenly appeared, sitting close by, and playing music on a reed. A large number of shepherds hurried to listen to him and even some of the soldiers left their posts to come, trumpeters among them. From one of these, the apparition seized a trumpet, leapt down to the river, and with a huge blast sounded the call to arms and crossed over to the other bank. Then said Caesar: 'Let us go where the gods have shown us the way and the injustice of our enemies calls us. The die is cast.' [33] And so the army crossed over and welcomed the tribunes of the plebs who had come over to them, having been expelled from Rome. Caesar addressed the soldiers, appealing to their loyalty, with tears, and ripping the garments from his breast. It was even thought that he promised equestrian status to each of them but this view is unfounded. For during the course of his speech as he urged them on, he would often point to the finger of his left hand, emphasizing that to give satisfaction to all those who were going to help him defend his dignity, he would happily tear the ring from his own finger. Those on the edge of the assembly could see better than they could hear and conjectured the meaning of his speech on the basis of his gestures. Thus the rumour spread that he had made a promise of the equestrian ring and four hundred thousand sesterces.*

[34] His subsequent actions may be summed up in order as follows. He occupied Picenum, Umbria, and Etruria and, having defeated Lucius Domitius (who had been nominated his successor now that Italy was at war and was in control of Corfinium* with a garrison) then let him go free, he set off along the Adriatic coast for Brundisium.* It was there that the consuls and Pompey had taken refuge, hoping to make the crossing as soon as possible. Having attempted in vain to impede their escape with all manner of strategems, he returned to Rome, where, having summoned a meeting of the senate to discuss public business, he started out against Pompey's strongest forces, which were in Spain under the command of three of his legates, Marcus Petreius, Lucius Afranius, and Marcus Varro, declaring to his associates beforehand that he would go to the general-less army and then turn to the army-less general. And despite having to lay siege to Massilia, a city along his route which closed its doors to him, and delays caused by a severe

shortage of corn rations, he rapidly brought everything under his control.

[35] From here he returned to Rome, then crossed over to Macedonia where he blockaded Pompey for almost four months behind vast ramparts, before finally defeating him at the battle of Pharsalus* and pursuing him, when he fled to Alexandria. Learning that Pompey had been killed, he waged war against King Ptolemy (for he perceived that the king meant to take him, too, unawares). This was under the most difficult circumstances, as both terrain and timing were against him, for it was the winter season and he was fighting within the city walls of an enemy who was both numerous and very shrewd, while he himself lacked all resources and was quite unprepared. When he won nevertheless, he handed over the kingdom of Egypt to Cleopatra and her younger brother, for he feared to make it into a province lest it should at some point offer a power-hungry governor the means to stir up revolution. From Alexandria he crossed over to Syria and then to Pontus, spurred on by the news that Pharnaces, the son of Mithridates the Great, was taking advantage of the troubled times to make war and was now most formidable after numerous victories. Within five days of his arrival and within four hours of laying eyes on the king, Caesar scattered his forces in a single encounter, often noting the good fortune of Pompey who had secured his greatest military reputation through defeating such a feeble enemy. After that he defeated Scipio and Juba who were stirring up what remained of their adherents in Africa, and the sons of Pompey* in Spain.

[36] During the entire course of the civil wars, Caesar suffered no major setbacks, except through his legates. Of these, Gaius Curio died in Africa, while in Illyricum Gaius Antonius* was taken prisoner by the enemy. Publius Dolabella lost his fleet, also off Illyricum, and Gnaeus Domitius Calvinus lost his army in Pontus. Caesar himself always had the greatest good fortune and his victories always seemed assured, except on two occasions, once at Dyrrachium, when Pompey repulsed him but did not follow up his advantage—Caesar remarked that Pompey did not know how to conquer him—and again in the final battle in the Spanish campaign, when things looked so bad he even contemplated taking his own life.

[37] When the campaigns were finished, he held triumphs on five occasions, four times in the same month,* after the defeat of Scipio

(though not on succeeding days), and one further time, after the defeat of the sons of Pompey.* His first and most splendid triumph was celebrated over Gaul, the next over Alexandria, then Pontus, after that Africa, and finally Spain, on each occasion with different equipment and displays. On the day of the triumph over Gaul, when he was travelling through the Velabrum, he was almost thrown from his chariot when the axle broke. He climbed the Capitol by torch-light, with forty elephants bearing lamps to the right and to the left. In his triumph over Pontus, one of the the carts in the processions had on the front of it a placard with the words 'I came, I saw, I conquered', not detailing the events of the campaign, as was the case with the others, but emphasizing the speed with which it was completed.*

[38] To every one of the foot soldiers of his veteran legionaries he gave as booty (besides the two thousand which he had paid each at the beginning of the civil conflict) twenty-four thousand sesterces. He also gave them plots of land, though not all together, so as to avoid displacing any property holders. To each man of the people he gave, besides two modii of wheat and two pounds of oil, the three hundred sesterces he had once promised, along with an extra hundred to make up for the delay. He also remitted a year's rent to those in Rome who paid up to two thousand sesterces and in Italy up to five hundred. He added a banquet and a distribution of meat and, after the Spanish victory, two dinners. For when he decided that the first had been rather mean and not served with his customary liberality, five days later he provided another one which was most lavish.

[39] He sponsored spectacles of various kinds: a gladiatorial contest, plays in all regions of the city, and performed by actors in every language, as well as circus performances, athletic contests, and a sea-battle. In a gladiatorial fight in the Forum, Furius Leptinius, a man of praetorian family, and Quintus Calpenus, who had once been a senator and legal advocate, fought to the finish.* The children of the princes of Asia and Bithynia performed a Pyrrhic dance.* During the plays, the Roman knight Decimus Laberius performed in a mime he himself had written and, when he was given five hundred thousand sesterces and a golden ring,* he left the stage and crossed the orchestra to take his seat in the fourteen rows.* For the circus races, the area of the circus itself was extended at either end, with a broad canal surrounding the circuit. Here the most noble young men made

displays with four-horse and two-horse chariots and by jumping between pairs of horses. Two squadrons, one of older and one of younger boys, performed the Troy game.* Five days of animal fights were provided. For the final one, two battle lines were drawn up, with five hundred foot soldiers, twenty elephants, and three hundred knights assigned to each side. And so that there would be more space for the encounter, the central barriers were removed and in their place two camps were set up, one facing the other. In a temporary stadium contracted in an area of the Campus Martius, athletes competed for three days. In the sea-battle, which took place on a lake excavated in the lesser Codeta,* ships with two, three, and four banks of oars from the Tyrian and Egyptian fleets engaged, manned by a huge number of fighters. Drawn by all these spectacles, a vast number of people flooded into Rome from every region, so that many of the visitors had to lodge in tents put up in the streets or along the roads. And the crowds were so great on a number of occasions that many people were crushed to death, even including two senators.

[40] After this Caesar turned to the reorganization of the state, reforming the calendar which had been so disrupted through the negligence of the *pontifices* and their arbitrary use of intercalation over a long period of time* that the harvest festivals no longer fell in the summer and those celebrating the vintage no longer fell in the autumn. Caesar adjusted the calendar to the course of the sun, so that there were three hundred and sixty-five days and, abolishing the intercalary month, he instituted an extra day to be added to every fourth year. However, in order to make the arrangement work from the following first of January, he added two extra months between November and December. Thus that year, since it also had an intercalary month according to the old practice, lasted fifteen months.

[41] He increased the membership of the senate* and made new appointments to the ranks of the patricians,* as well as adding to the number of praetors, aediles, quaestors, and also minor magistrates.* He restored to the senate those who had been expelled as a result of a decision of the censors* or had been condemned by the court for electoral corruption.* He shared the choice of higher magistrates with the popular assemblies so that, except in the case of candidates for the consulship, half the posts were filled by those chosen by the people, the rest by those whom he himself selected. He would also

circulate brief written statements to the voting tribes: 'The dictator Caesar to this tribe. I commend to you this man and that man, so that they may hold their positions with the support of your votes.' He also allowed the sons of the proscribed to compete for office.* He reduced the number of categories of judges to two, the equestrian and the senatorial, abolishing that of the paymasters which had been the third.*

He held a census of the people, not in the traditional manner or place, but proceeding street by street, getting information through the landlords of housing blocks. He reduced the number receiving the public corn-dole from 300,000 to 150,000. And, to avoid the convening of further assemblies for enrolment purposes, he arranged that the places of those who died should be filled each year by the praetors from among those not on the list, chosen by ballot.

[42] Having sent out eighty thousand citizens to settle in colonies overseas, he prescribed—in order to maintain the population of the now depleted city—that no citizen older than twenty and younger than forty,* unless he was on military service, should be absent from Italy for more than three years at a time, that no senator's son should travel abroad unless serving as an officer or accompanying a magistrate, and also that cattle farmers should have youths of free birth as no less than a third of their herdsmen. He conferred citizenship on all who practised medicine or taught liberal arts in Rome, so that they would more willingly continue to live in the city and that others, too, might join them. In order to dispel the hope that debts might be abolished—for which there was frequent pressure—he finally decreed concerning money lent at interest that debtors should satisfy their creditors by means of property handed over in accordance with its purchase value before the civil war, deducting from the principal whatever interest had been paid or pledged. This measure reduced the amount of debt by around a quarter. He dissolved all guilds, apart from those of ancient foundation.* He increased the penalties for crimes and, since the wealthy were more ready to become involved in crime because they were merely exiled without loss of property, he prescribed, according to Cicero,* that those guilty of murdering a close relative should forfeit all their possessions, while those guilty of other crimes should forfeit half.

[43] He administered justice most conscientiously and strictly. He even expelled from the senate those condemned of extortion. He

dissolved the marriage of a man of praetorian rank on the grounds that he married his wife just two days after her previous husband had divorced her, although there was no suspicion of adultery. He imposed customs duties on imported merchandise. He banned the use of litters, and the wearing of purple-dyed garments and of pearls, except in the case of those of a particular position and age and on set days. He particularly enforced sumptuary legislation, stationing inspectors all around the meat-market who were to confiscate and bring to him any forbidden delicacies which were put out for sale, and sometimes he sent out lictors and soldiers who were even to remove dishes from dining-tables which had escaped the scrutiny of the inspectors.

[44] Day by day he developed more numerous and more ambitious plans both for the enhancement and improved organization of the city and for the security and expansion of the empire. First, he planned to construct a temple to Mars of unprecedented size, having filled in and made level the lake where he had staged the sea-battle, and also a theatre of enormous magnitude, to be located just by the Tarpeian rock.* He also intended to reduce the body of civil law and reorganize the best and most useful elements of that vast and amorphous collection into the smallest possible number of books. He planned to open libraries of works in Greek and Latin to the most extensive possible public, putting Marcus Varro* in charge of equipping and managing them; also to drain the Pontine marshes, to empty the Fucine lake, to make a road from the Adriatic sea, along the ridge of the Apennines, as far as the Tiber, to cut a canal through the Isthmus, to contain the Dacians who were overrunning Pontus and Thrace; and then to make war on the Parthians, through lesser Armenia, engaging in battle with them, however, only if he had first tested their forces.*

As he was contemplating and setting about these projects death cut him short. But before I give an account of that, it will not be inappropriate to set out in summary form the details of his appearance, comportment, dress and conduct, as well as matters relating to his governmental and military undertakings.

[45] It is said that he was of lofty stature and fair complexion, with well-formed limbs, rather a full face, and keen, dark eyes. His health was good, although towards the end of his life he used to faint all of a sudden and even had nightmares. On two occasions, also, he suffered

an epileptic fit while engaged in public business. He was most particular in the care of his person—not only did he have his hair cut and face shaved scrupulously but he also had his body hair plucked out—as some have alleged with disapproval.* He regretted most bitterly the loss of his looks through baldness and was often the butt of jokes on the subject from his detractors. For this reason he was in the habit of combing his thinning hair upwards from his crown and, out of all the honours decreed to him by the senate and people, he accepted and took advantage of none so willingly as the right to wear his laurel wreath in perpetuity.

Even the manner of his dress was out of the ordinary. For he would wear a broad-striped tunic with fringed sleeves down to his wrists,* and always belted on the outside—though he wore his belt rather loosely.* Indeed, this is what provoked the warning Sulla is supposed to have given the aristocrats on numerous occasions: ‘Beware of the boy with the loose belt.’

[46] He first lived in a modest house in the Subura.* Later, however, when he was Pontifex Maximus, he lived on the Sacred Way in the official residence. Many record his great passion for luxuries and refinements: that he had razed to the ground a villa on Lake Nemi, which he had completed from its foundations at vast expense, because he was not completely satisfied with it (even though he was at that time short of funds and in debt); that when he was on campaign, he would take around with him materials for the construction of mosaic and cut-marble floors; [47] that his invasion of Britain was motivated by the hope he would find pearls there and that in estimating their size he would sometimes feel their weight in his own hand; he was a most avid collector of jewels, embossed metalwork, statues, and paintings from earlier times; his fine-looking and well-educated household slaves were purchased at great expense, something of which even he himself was ashamed, so that he would not let the sums be entered in his accounts; [48] he regularly hosted parties throughout the provinces, using two dining-rooms, soldiers and foreigners reclining in one, and respectable Roman civilians with distinguished provincials in the other. He was so strict in the regulation of his household, regarding matters both great and small, that he had his baker put in fetters for serving bread to the guests different from that which was served to himself,* and imposed capital punishment on one of his favourite freedmen because he had

committed adultery with the wife of a Roman knight (even though no complaint was made against him).

[49] There were no stains on his reputation for manliness, apart from his stay with King Nicomedes, which was a constant source of criticism and was mentioned in taunts from every quarter. I shall not discuss* the notorious lines of Licinius Calvus: 'Whatever Bithynia ever owned and Caesar's bugerer'—not to mention the speeches made against him by Dolabella and the elder Curio, in which Curio called Caesar the queen's concubine and the inner partner of the royal litter, while Curio spoke of the whorehouse of Nicomedes and the Bithynian brothel. I am also passing over the edicts of Bibulus in which he decries his colleague as the queen of Bithynia, alleging that the man who was once in love with a king was now in love with a king's power. It was at that time, Marcus Brutus reports, that a certain Octavius, who, being not quite right in the head, was rather outspoken, at a large gathering called Pompey king and greeted Caesar as queen. Gaius Memmius, however, even accuses him of acting as cup-bearer to Nicomedes with the rest of his catamites at a large party, attended by, among others, some Roman traders, whose names Memmius lists. Cicero, however, was not content with having written in certain letters that Caesar had been led by courtiers into the king's chamber where he reclined on a golden bed with purple coverlet, and that the virginity of the man descended from Venus was lost in Bithynia; he once remarked, when Caesar was speaking in the senate in defence of Nysa, the daughter of Nicomedes, and recalling the king's kindness to himself: 'Make no mention of that, I beg you, for it is well known what he gave you and what you gave him.' Finally, in his triumph over Gaul, his men chanted, among the other songs soldiers usually come out with as they march behind the chariot,* the following most notorious lines:

Caesar had his way with Gaul;
Nicomedes had his way with Caesar:
Behold now Caesar, conqueror of Gaul, in triumph,
Not so, Nicomedes, conqueror of Caesar.

[50] Everyone agrees that he was inclined to be unrestrained and extravagant in love-affairs and that he damaged the reputations of a great many women of rank, including Postumia, wife of Servius Sulpicius, Lollia, wife of Aulus Gabinius, Tertulla, wife of Marcus

Crassus, and even Mucia, the wife of Gnaeus Pompey. Certainly Pompey was criticized by the elder and the younger Curios and by many others when, having divorced a wife who had borne him three children because of the man he used to lament as an Aegisthus,* he later took the same man's daughter in marriage* because of his own lust for power. But above all Caesar loved Servilia, the mother of Marcus Brutus, for whom, during his last consulship, he bought a pearl worth six million sesterces and, in the course of the civil war, in addition to other gifts, knocked down to her some extensive estates which were on sale at auction at a very modest price. Indeed many were astonished at the low price and Cicero wittily remarked: 'The price was higher for a third was knocked off.' For it was believed that Servilia was prostituting her daughter, Tertia,* to him. [51] Nor did he refrain from affairs in the provinces, as emerges particularly from this couplet, also declaimed by the soldiers in the Gallic triumph:

Men of Rome, look out for your wives; we're bringing the bald adulterer home.

In Gaul you fucked your way through a fortune, which you borrowed here in Rome.

[52] He also had love-affairs with queens, among them Eunoe of Mauretania, the wife of Bogud,* to whom and to whose husband Caesar gave many, great gifts, as Naso* records. But most particularly he loved Cleopatra, with whom he often prolonged parties until dawn, and with her, too, he journeyed by royal barge deep into Egypt, and would have reached Ethiopia but his army refused to follow him. Moreover, he welcomed her to Rome* and only let her go home when he had showered her with the greatest honours and gifts. The child born to her he allowed to be called by his name. Indeed, several Greek writers record that he was like Caesar in both appearance and bearing. Mark Antony confirmed to the senate that Caesar had actually acknowledged the child and that Gaius Matius, Gaius Oppius, and others of Caesar's friends were aware of this.* However, Gaius Oppius published a book, as though the matter needed some excuse and defence, alleging that the boy was not, as Cleopatra claimed, the child of Caesar. Helvius Cinna, tribune of the plebs,* confessed to several people that he had had ready the text of a law, which Caesar had instructed should be passed during his own absence, to the effect that he should be permitted to marry

whichever and however many women he pleased for the purpose of having children. And lest there should be any doubt as to his shocking reputation for submitting himself to men and for adultery, the elder Curio, in one of his speeches, termed Caesar 'a man to every woman and a woman to every man'.

[53] Not even his enemies denied that he was very sparing in his consumption of wine. It was Marcus Cato who said: 'Caesar's the only man to have tried to overturn the state when sober.' Indeed, Gaius Oppius records that he was so indifferent to what he consumed that, on one occasion, when his host had served stale oil instead of fresh, and no one else would touch the food, Caesar ate heartily, so that he should not seem to be reproaching his host either for carelessness or for lack of manners.

[54] However, he showed no restraint as a magistrate or general. For as some have borne witness in their memoirs, as governor in Spain* he took money from allies on false pretences in order to pay off his debts, and made hostile raids on some towns of the Lusitani, though they had obeyed his orders and opened their gates when he approached. In Gaul, he despoiled shrines and temples to the gods of their offerings and destroyed cities more often in the hope of booty than because they had committed some offence. It was for this reason that he had so much gold and sold it throughout Italy and the provinces for three thousand sesterces a pound.* During his first consulship, he stole three thousand pounds of gold from the Capitol, replacing it with the same quantity of gilded bronze.* He exchanged alliances and kingdoms at a price, extorting from Ptolemy alone nearly six thousand talents, in his own name and that of Pompey. Later, indeed, he covered the burdensome costs of his civil wars, his triumphs and his public munificence through the most outrageous pillage and sacrilege.

[55] As regards both eloquence and military skills he either equalled or excelled in glory the very best. He was certainly counted among the leading advocates, after his speech against Dolabella.* Indeed, when Cicero, in his 'Brutus', goes through the orators, he says he cannot see to whom Caesar would take second place, describing him as maintaining a style of speech which is elegant, impressive, too, and even splendid and ample.* And to Cornelius Nepos he writes thus on the same subject: 'What then? Who, of all those whose only business is oratory, would you place above him as an orator? Whose

witticisms are sharper or more numerous? Who is more vivid or more elegant in his choice of words?" In his youth he seems to have modelled his style on that of Caesar Strabo,* even using for a proposed speech of his own some phrases from the speech Strabo wrote on behalf of the Sardinians. He is said to have had a high voice when speaking in public, with impassioned movements and gestures, and considerable charm. He left a number of speeches, among them some attributed to him on poor grounds. With some justification, Augustus was of the view that the text of Caesar's 'On Behalf of Metellus' was a version taken down by stenographers who failed to follow accurately what he said, rather than written by himself. For in some texts I find that the title is recorded not as 'On Behalf of Metellus' but rather 'A Speech Written for Metellus', although the words seem to be spoken by Caesar, in defence of Metellus and himself, refuting accusations brought against them both by common opponents.* The authenticity of another speech, 'To the Soldiers in Spain', is also doubted by Augustus, although it survives in two sections, one apparently delivered at the first battle, the other at the second (at which Asinius Pollio says he had no time to give an address, as he suddenly came under attack from the enemy).

[56] He also left 'Commentaries' on his actions in the Gallic war and the civil war against Pompey, though the authorship of the works on the Alexandrian war, the African war, and the Spanish war is uncertain. Some think it was Oppius, others Hirtius. Certainly it was the latter who completed the final and unfinished book of the Gallic war.* Cicero has the following comments on Caesar's 'Commentaries', again in the 'Brutus': "The "Commentaries" he wrote are most worthy of praise. They are plain, direct, and elegant, almost naked in their lack of all ornament. Yet though it was his aim that they should serve others as a ready basis on which those who wished might write proper histories, he perhaps encouraged the foolish who want to crimp and curl their material but he deterred sensible men from putting pen to paper."* On the same 'Commentaries', Hirtius makes the following pronouncement: 'They are so much approved of in the judgement of all, that they seem to have removed rather than provided an opportunity for writers. Yet the admiration I feel is even greater than that felt by others. For while they know how well and purely they are written, I know how easily and quickly he did it.'* Asinius Pollio thought they were written carelessly and inaccurately,

for often Caesar was too ready to credit other people's accounts of their actions and gave a rather faulty version of his own, perhaps on purpose, perhaps even misremembering. It was his plan to rewrite and correct them. He also left a work in two books 'On Analogy'* and the same number of speeches in criticism of Cato,* as well as a poem entitled 'The Journey'. The first of these works he composed during his crossing of the Alps, when he was on his way back from Cisalpine Gaul to join his army after dispensing justice in the local courts, the speeches against Cato during the time after the battle of Munda, and the poem during a journey of twenty-four days from Rome to the further part of Spain. There are also some letters which he wrote to the senate. He seems to have been the first to send these written in columns to form a short book of record, for previously consuls and generals had always written straight across the scroll.* There are also letters to Cicero* and to close friends concerning private matters, in which, if he wanted to communicate something secretly, he would write in code, changing the order of the letters of the alphabet, so that not a word could be made out. To decipher this and read it, one must substitute for each letter the one which comes four places later, thus 'D' for 'A' and so on. There are also some works which he is said to have written in his boyhood and adolescence, including 'The Praises of Hercules' and a tragedy 'Oedipus', as well as a collection of sayings. However, Augustus prohibited the publication of any of these works,* in a short and direct letter which he sent to Pompeius Macrus, who had been given the task of organizing the libraries.

[57] He was most talented in the use of arms and in horse-riding and had astonishing powers of endurance. On the march, he would sometimes precede his men on horseback, more often on foot, his head uncovered, rain or shine. He completed the most lengthy journeys at incredible speed, covering a hundred miles a day, when travelling light in a hired carriage. If rivers were going to cause delay, he would cross them either by swimming or else using inflated skins as floats, so that he often arrived in advance of the messengers sent to announce him.

[58] In the conduct of his expeditions, it is hard to say whether he was more cautious or more daring. He would never take his troops on a route where they might be vulnerable to ambush unless he had first made an inspection of the country, nor did he transport them to

Britain until he had personally organized an investigation of the harbours, the route and points of access to the island. Moreover, when he heard news that his camp was under siege in Germany, he made his way there through the enemy posts, disguised as a Gaul. He crossed from Brundisium to Dyrrhachium in winter, passing among the ships of the enemy and, when his troops hesitated, after he had ordered them to follow, and would not respond when he repeatedly summoned them, finally he himself, with his head covered, secretly embarked on his own into a little boat by night, not revealing his identity nor allowing the captain to yield to the hostile weather, until he was almost capsized by the waves.

[59] He was never induced to abandon or postpone any enterprise through regard for omens.* He did not put off his expedition against Scipio and Juba,* when the victim escaped as he was trying to make a sacrifice.* Even when he fell to the ground on disembarking from his ship he interpreted this as a positive omen: 'I've got you, Africa,' he said. And in order to get around the prophecies which proclaimed that the name of Scipio was fated to be fortunate and invincible in that province, he included in his entourage a very degraded member of the Cornelian family, who was known as Salvito, due to the disreputable life he led.* [60] He would commence battle not just when he had planned to do so but also if opportunities arose, often straight after a march, and sometimes in the most dreadful weather conditions, when his action would be least expected. It was only towards the very end that he was more reluctant to join battle, considering that, the more victories he had won, the less he ought to tempt fate and that a victory could never bring him as much as a defeat could take away. He never routed his enemies without also driving them out of their camp, not letting up even when they were terrified. When the outcome of a battle was uncertain, he would send away the horses, his own among the first, in order to force his men to stay by removing their means of flight. [61] Indeed, his horse was an extraordinary creature, whose feet were almost human, for its hooves were divided so that they looked like toes. When this horse was born on his estate, seers interpreted it as an omen that Caesar would become lord of all the world. He raised it with great care and was himself the first to ride it—it would tolerate no other rider. Later on he even dedicated a statue of it before the temple of Venus Genetrix.

[62] When his army was losing ground, he would often rally his

men single-handed, standing in the way of those who were fleeing, laying hold of each soldier, even grabbing them by the throat and turning them round to face the enemy. Some of them were indeed so terrified that one standard-bearer even threatened Caesar with the point of his standard when Caesar tried to hold him up, while another left him holding the standard, when Caesar stood in his way. [63] His determination was just as great, and even more clearly demonstrated. After the battle of Pharsalus, when he had sent his forces on ahead into Asia and was crossing the straits of the Hellespont by ferry, Lucius Cassius, who was on the enemy side, obstructed his way with ten battleships. But Caesar did not retreat and, as he drew near, encouraged Cassius to give himself up, then took him on board as a suppliant. [64] Engaged in attacking a bridge near Alexandria, he was forced by a sudden enemy onslaught to take to a boat, which many others also rushed to join. He then jumped into the sea and swam two hundred yards to the nearest ship, all the while holding up his left hand so that the papers he was holding would not get wet, and dragging his military cloak* gripped between his teeth so that it would not be taken by the enemy as a trophy.

[65] The value he placed on his soldiers was determined not by their character or station in life but by their prowess alone. He would treat them with strictness and indulgence in equal measure. For he would not impose restraints on them at all times and in all places but only when the enemy was at hand. Then, however, he would impose the very strictest discipline, never announcing beforehand when a march or battle would take place but keeping his men ready and alert at all times, so that he might suddenly lead them forth wherever he wished. On many occasions he would do this even when he had no cause, particularly during rainstorms or on feast days. Issuing frequent warnings that they should watch him closely, he would often slip away by day or by night and go on a longer march in order to tire out those who were lagging behind. [66] When his men were stricken with fear by rumours concerning the enemy's numbers, rather than seeking to play them down or deny them he would instead reinforce them with exaggeration and embellishment. Thus when there was great alarm at the imminent arrival of Juba, he summoned his soldiers to an assembly and declared: 'You should know that in a very few days the king will arrive with ten legions, thirty thousand cavalry, a hundred thousand light infantry and three

hundred elephants. So let people leave off asking any more questions or speculating, and believe what I say, for my information is reliable. Otherwise I shall give orders that they be put in a worn-out boat to be carried away to whatever lands the wind takes them.'

[67] Some offences he would overlook or not punish in accordance with regular discipline. Rather, while he was extremely strict in investigating and punishing desertion or mutiny, he would take little notice of other things. Sometimes, when they had fought a great battle and been victorious, he would let his men off their duties and allow everyone to indulge themselves as they pleased. And he used to boast that his soldiers could fight well even when they were dripping with perfume.* In assemblies he would address them not as 'soldiers' but by the more flattering term 'comrades'* and he so looked after their appearance that he had their weapons polished and decorated with gold and silver, both for show—and so that the men would keep hold of them more determinedly in battle, fearing the cost of replacement. He had such affection for his men that when news came of the Titurian disaster,* he let his hair and beard grow and would not cut them until he had secured vengeance.

[68] By these means he made his men utterly loyal to him and supremely brave as well. When he embarked on civil war, every centurion of every legion offered to supply a horseman from his own funds and all his soldiers offered their service without pay and without rations—for the wealthier ones took care of the needs of those of limited resources. Nor throughout that long period did anyone whatsoever desert his cause. Indeed, many of them, when as captives they were offered their lives on condition that they take up arms against Caesar, refused. So great was their ability to tolerate hunger and other deprivations, not only when they were besieged but even when they themselves laid siege to others, that when Pompey saw among the defence works at Dyrrhachium* some of the bread made from grasses with which they were sustaining themselves, he remarked that he was at war with wild beasts, and gave orders that the bread should be taken away and concealed from everyone, lest knowledge of the enemy's endurance and tenacity should break the spirits of his men.

How bravely they fought is shown by the fact that on the one occasion, at Dyrrhachium, when the fighting went against them and they asked of their own accord for punishment, their leader felt

obliged to console rather than punish them. In other battles, though they were fewer in number, they readily overcame countless enemy troops. Indeed, one cohort of the sixth legion, left in charge of a stronghold, kept four of Pompey's legions at bay for a number of hours, though nearly all of them had been wounded by the enemy's arrows, of which a hundred and thirty thousand* were later found within the palisade. And no wonder if one considers individual cases, such as that of the centurion Cassius Scaeva or the regular soldier Gaius Acilius, not to mention many others. Scaeva had lost an eye and was hit in the thigh and the shoulder, while his shield had received a hundred and twenty strikes, yet he still kept control of the gate into the fortress. During the naval battle at Massilia Acilius had his right hand chopped off when he laid hold of an enemy prow but, imitating the famous example set by the Greek Cynegirus,* leapt into the ship, driving back his assailants with the boss of his shield. [69] During the ten years of the Gallic war, they did not once mutiny. There were a few occasions during the civil wars but they speedily returned to their duties, in response to their general's authority rather than any leniency on his part. For he would never give ground to trouble-makers but always went forth to meet them. Indeed, at Placentia,* though Pompey's forces were still at large, he declared the entire ninth legion dishonourably dismissed, only agreeing to reinstate them after many abject entreaties and when those responsible had been punished. [70] When the men of the tenth legion demanded retirement and bonuses at Rome, threatening serious harm against the city, at a time when the war was raging in Africa, he did not hesitate to go to them, though his friends advised against it, and disband them. But with one word—addressing them as citizens rather than soldiers—he won them over and brought them round, for they at once replied that they were his soldiers and, although he asked them not to, they followed him to Africa of their own accord. Even then he imposed on the most troublesome a fine of a third of the booty and the land which they had been due to receive.*

[71] Even when he was a young man he was unfailing in his care for and loyalty toward his supporters. He defended the young aristocrat Masintha* so stalwartly against King Hiempsal that in the quarrel he pulled the beard of King Juba's son.* When Masintha was declared tributary to the king, Caesar at once snatched him away from those who were trying to arrest him and hid him at his own

house for some time. Soon afterwards, setting out for Spain after his praetorship,* he carried him off concealed in his own litter, which was surrounded by friends paying their respects, as well as the lictors with their fasces.*

[72] He always treated his friends with such consideration and kindness that once, when Gaius Oppius was accompanying him on a journey through woodland and was suddenly taken ill, Caesar let him have the only shelter available, himself sleeping on the ground in the open air. Once he had taken control of the state, however, he promoted to the most elevated positions some who were of very humble origins and, when he was criticized for this, he declared openly that if he had made use of the help of brigands and cut-throats in defending his honour, he would reward even such men with equal favour. [73] On the other hand, he never maintained such serious grudges that he would not readily relinquish them, if the occasion arose. Despite Gaius Memmius' ferocious speeches against him, to which he had replied with equal sharpness, Caesar even gave him his backing when he sought the consulship.* When Gaius Calvus, after writing defamatory epigrams, sent friends to request a reconciliation, Caesar anticipated him, unprompted, with a letter of his own.* As for Valerius Catullus, whose verses about Mamurra had done lasting damage to his reputation* as Caesar did not deny, when he apologized, Caesar invited him to dinner that very day and continued to exchange hospitality with his father, as he was accustomed to do.

[74] Even in taking his revenge he was naturally inclined toward leniency. When he had at his mercy the pirates who had captured him, he had them crucified, since he had earlier sworn that he would do so, but he gave orders that they should be strangled first.* He could never bring himself to harm Cornelius Phagites, who lay in wait for him at night during the time when he was sick and in hiding, so that it was only by handing over a large sum of money that he was able to escape being delivered to Sulla.* When Philemon, his slave-secretary, had promised Caesar's enemies that he would bring about his death through poison, Caesar merely put him to death without further punishment.* When he was summoned as a witness in the case against Publius Clodius, who was accused of adultery with Caesar's wife Pompeia and at the same time of polluting religious rites, he denied that he knew anything of the matter, though his

mother Aurelia and his sister Julia had faithfully told the whole story before the same judges. And when he was asked why, if he knew nothing, he had nevertheless divorced his wife, he replied: 'In my view, my family needs to be as much free of suspicion as free of crime.'*

[75] He certainly showed astonishing moderation and mercy both during the period of his rule and after his victory in the civil war. When Pompey proclaimed that anyone who did not fight for the republic would be deemed an enemy, Caesar declared that he would count among his allies those who were undecided or belonged to neither party. To all those whom he had promoted to the rank of centurion on Pompey's recommendation, he gave permission to go over to Pompey's side. When conditions of surrender were under discussion at Ilerda and, during the frequent comings and goings between the two sides, Afranius and Petreius, suddenly changing their minds, seized some Caesarian agents, who were in their camp and killed them, Caesar could not bring himself to duplicate the act of treachery that had been committed against him.* In the course of the battle of Pharsalus, he proclaimed that citizens were to be spared, and later he allowed each of his men to save any man he chose of the opposite party. And it will be found that, apart from those who died in battle, none of the Pompeians lost their lives, with the exception of Afranius, Faustus, and the young Lucius Caesar.* And even these, it is thought, were not killed through any wish of Caesar's. The first two had rebelled after seeking and obtaining forgiveness, while Lucius Caesar had cruelly put to death Julius' slaves and freedmen with fire and the sword and had also slaughtered the animals which Julius had bought for a public entertainment. Finally, at the conclusion of the war, he gave permission to all those whom he had not already forgiven to return to Italy and to hold magistracies and army commands. He had even restored to their position the statues of Lucius Sulla and of Pompey which had been broken up by the common people.* And thereafter, if anyone planned or said anything threatening against him, he preferred to restrain rather than punish them. He thus took no further action against conspiracies and night-time meetings other than to make clear through edicts that he was aware of them. When people spoke of him critically, he was content to urge in public that they should desist. He bore with good grace the harm to his reputation caused by the most defamatory

book written by Aulus and Caecina and the highly abusive poems of Pitholaus.*

[76] However, other things he did and said outweighed these, so that it is thought he abused his power and was justly killed. Not only did he accept excessive honours—one consulship after another,* the dictatorship in perpetuity, responsibility for morals,* as well as the forename ‘Imperator’ and the title ‘Father of his Fatherland’, a statue displayed with those of the kings,* and a raised seat at the theatre—he even allowed privileges to be bestowed on him which were greater than is right for mortals: a golden seat in the senate house and in front of the speaker’s platform, a chariot and litter in the procession for the circus games,* temples, altars, statues placed beside those of the gods, a couch,* a priest,* an extra college of Luperci,* and a month of the year named after him.* Indeed, there were no honours which he did not either confer or receive as he willed. His third and fourth consulships he held in name only, contenting himself with the powers of the dictatorship, which had been conferred on him at the same time as the consulships. And in each of these two years, he appointed two consuls in his place for the final three months, in the mean time holding no elections apart from those for tribunes of the plebs and the plebeian aediles. He also appointed prefects, rather than praetors, who were to take care of affairs in the city during his absence.* When one of the consuls suddenly died the day before the Kalends of January, he gave the office to a man who requested it for the few hours it was vacant. And with equal disregard for law and traditional practice, he allocated magistracies for several years in advance, conferred the emblems of consular rank on ten ex-praetors, and admitted to the Senate men who had been given citizenship, some of whom were half-barbarous Gauls. Moreover, he put his own slaves in charge of the mint and the collection of public revenues and delegated the care and command of three legions, which he had left at Alexandria, to Rufio,* the son of his freedman and one of his pretty boys.

[77] His public sayings, as recorded by Titus Ampius,* were characterized by equal arrogance: ‘The republic is nothing—just a name, without substance or form,’ ‘Sulla was a fool when he gave up the dictatorship,’ ‘Men should now have more consideration in speaking with me and regard what I say as law.’ Such was the level of insolence he reached that, when a seer pronounced of a sacrifice

that the entrails were ominous and the heart was missing, Caesar declared that future sacrifices would be better, since such was his wish, nor should it be thought a sign of ill omen, if an animal had no heart.*

[78] However, the extreme and fatal envy he inspired was particularly provoked by the following: when the entire senate came to him, bringing many decrees conferring the highest honours, he received them in front of the temple of Venus Genetrix, without getting up. Some think that he was held back when he tried to rise by Cornelius Balbus. Others believe that he made no attempt to get up and that when Gaius Trebatius actually advised him to rise, he gave him a very hostile look. This action of his seemed the more intolerable, because, when during his triumph he rode past the tribunes' benches, he himself had been so indignant at Pontius Aquila,* one of the tribunes, who had remained seated, that he declared: 'So tribune Aquila, take the republic from me!' And for days afterwards he would make no promises to anyone, except with the condition, 'So long as Pontius Aquila permits.' [79] He added to this insult, showing his contempt for the senate, another deed of even greater insolence. For when, at the time of the Latin festival* he was returning to the city, amid the other excessive and unprecedented demonstrations by the people, one member of the crowd had placed a laurel crown, bound with a white ribbon,* on his statue and the tribunes of the plebs, Epidius Marullus and Caesetius Flavus had given orders that the ribbon should be removed from the crown and that the man should be thrown into chains. Caesar, regretting, perhaps, that the reference to kingship had met with such a poor reception, or else, as he claimed, that he had been robbed of the glory to be had from refusing the honour, took the tribunes severely to task and deprived them of their authority. And after that time he was never able to shake off the rumour that his ambition was to take the title of king, even though, when the common people greeted him as king, he replied that he was not King but Caesar* and when, during the Lupercalia,* the consul Antony several times brought a diadem toward his head as he stood before the rostra, he pushed it away and had it sent to the Capitol to Jupiter Best and Greatest.* Indeed, various rumours were in circulation—that he was planning to move to Alexandria or to Troy, taking with him the riches of the empire, since Italy was now depleted by levies, and leaving the city of Rome

to be looked after by his associates; and that at the next meeting of the senate Lucius Cotta would announce the proposal of the Board of Fifteen* that, since the oracular books stated that the Parthians could not be beaten except by a king, Caesar should be given the title 'king'.*

[80] It was for this reason that the conspirators decided to speed up their planned action, in order to avoid having to give their assent to such a proposal. And so they all brought together the various plans which they had previously pondered separately in groups of two or three. For the people were unhappy at the present state of affairs, making covert—and even public—criticisms of Caesar's tyranny and demanding champions. When foreigners were admitted to the senate, the following placard was set up: 'Well done, those who refuse to show a new senator where the senate house is!' And the following verse was heard everywhere:

Caesar led Gauls in his triumph—and into the senate house;
The Gauls put aside their trousers and put on the broad stripe.*

When Quintus Maximus, who had been made suffect consul for three months, entered the theatre and the lictor gave the usual sign to take note of his arrival, there was a unanimous shout, 'He is no consul!' At the elections, after the tribunes Caesetius and Marullus had been removed from their posts, a number of votes were found proposing them as consuls. Some people wrote on the statue of Lucius Brutus: 'If only you were living!' and on that of Caesar himself:

Brutus was made first consul, since he threw out the kings,
He, since he's thrown out the consuls, eventually gets to be king.

More than sixty people were involved in the conspiracy against him; the leaders were Gaius Cassius and Marcus and Decimus Brutus. At first they were in doubt as to whether, during the elections in the Campus Martius when he was calling the tribes to vote, they should divide into groups and throw him from the bridge,* then hold him and kill him, or else if they should attack him on the Sacred Way* or at the entrance to the theatre. When it was announced that the senate meeting on the Ides of March would take place in Pompey's Senate Chamber,* they readily chose this time and place instead.

[81] Caesar's murder was, however, foretold by clear portents. A

few months beforehand, some colonists, sent in accordance with the Julian law to the colony of Capua,* were tearing down some ancient tombs, in order to construct villas, and were working all the harder since, looking carefully, they were discovering a number of vessels of ancient workmanship, when they found a bronze tablet, fixed on a tomb, which was said to be that of Capys,* founder of Capua, and bearing a message in Greek words and characters to this effect: 'When the bones of Capys are moved, it shall come to pass that one of his descendants shall be slain at the hands of a kinsman, and soon afterwards avenged—a great disaster for Italy.' The source for this—lest anyone should think it a fiction or fantasy—is Cornelius Balbus, a very close friend of Caesar. And just a few days before, the news came that some herds of horses which Caesar had dedicated to the River Rubicon when he crossed it, letting them wander free without a keeper, were obstinately refusing food and weeping copiously. When Caesar was making a sacrifice the seer Spurinna warned him to look out for danger which would come no later than the Ides of March. The day before the same Ides, when a king's bird* was flying toward Pompey's Senate Chamber, with a laurel sprig in its mouth, other birds of various kinds from a nearby grove attacked it and tore it to pieces in the same Chamber. And that very night which ushered in the fatal day, Caesar himself had a dream, in which he was sometimes flying above the clouds and sometimes joining his right hand with that of Jupiter,* while his wife Calpurnia had a vision in which the pediment* of the house fell in and her husband was run through in her arms. Then suddenly the doors of the bedchamber flew open of their own accord.

Because of these things—and because his health was poor—Caesar long debated whether to stay in and postpone the business he had meant to undertake in the senate. In the end, when Decimus Brutus pressed him not to disappoint the packed meeting which had now been waiting for some time, he made up his mind and set out, when it was almost the fifth hour.* He thrust in amongst the papers he held in his left hand, intending to read them later, the message which someone he met on the way held out to him, giving him warning of the conspiracy. Then, though he could not get favourable omens, despite sacrificing a number of victims, he entered the Senate Chamber, dismissing religious scruple and mocking Spurinna for making false predictions, since the Ides of March had come and

brought him no harm. Spurinna, however, replied that though they had come, they had not yet gone. [82] When he was seated, the conspirators gathered around him, as if to show their respect, and immediately Tillius Cimber, who had taken on the task of initiating the action, came up close to Caesar, as though about to make a request. When Caesar shook his head and waved him away, putting off his business for another time, Cimber grabbed his toga at the shoulders. Caesar then cried out ‘But this is force!’ and one of the Casca brothers stabbed him from behind, just below the throat. Caesar grabbed Casca’s arm and ran him through with a writing implement but, as he tried to leap forward, he was held back by another wound. When he realized that he was being attacked on all sides with drawn daggers, he wrapped his toga around his head, at the same time using his left hand to pull it down over his thighs, so that, with the lower part of his body also covered, his fall would be more decent. And so it was that he was stabbed twenty-three times, saying nothing and letting out merely a single groan, at the first blow—though some people relate that when Marcus Brutus came at him, he said in Greek: ‘You, too, my son?’ He lay lifeless for some time, after everyone had run off, until three young slaves put him on a litter and carried him home, one arm dangling. Among all those wounds, according to Antistius the doctor, none was fatal with the exception of the second he received, in his breast.

It was the conspirators’ intention to drag the dead man’s body into the Tiber,* seize his goods and rescind his legislation, but they abandoned this plan through fear of the consul Mark Antony and the Master of Horse, Lepidus. [83] In response to the request of his father-in-law, Lucius Piso, Caesar’s will was opened and read out in Antony’s house (he had written it on the Ides of September of the previous year* in his villa near Lavinum and given it for safe-keeping to the chief Vestal Virgin). Quintus Tubero records that, from the time of Pompey’s first consulship right up to the start of the civil war, he was in the habit of designating Gnaeus Pompey as his heir and this was announced to a gathering of soldiers. But in his final will, he designated as his three heirs his sisters’ grandsons, Gaius Octavius to receive three-quarters of the estate, and then Lucius Pinarius and Quintus Pedius to share the rest.* At the end of the document, he even adopted Gaius Octavius into his family and gave him his name. Quite a few of his assailants were nominated as tutors

to his son, in case he should have one, while Decimus Brutus was even among the heirs in the second rank.* To the Roman people he left his gardens on the banks of the Tiber for public use and to each man three hundred sesterces.

[84] When the funeral was announced, a pyre was built on the Campus Martius next to the tomb of Julia* and on the rostra was placed a golden shrine, modelled on the temple of Venus Genetrix.* Within was an ivory couch with gold and purple coverings and at its head stood a pillar hung with the clothes he was wearing when he was killed. Since it seemed there would not be enough time in the day for those making offerings, instructions were given that there should be no procession but that they should make their way by any city streets they chose and bring their gifts to the Campus Martius. As part of the funeral games, some songs were sung which were adapted from Pacuvius' 'Judgement of Arms' to express grief and anger at Caesar's killing:

Did I save these that they should murder me?

as well as comments to similar effect from Atilius' 'Electra'.* In place of the funeral oration, the consul Mark Antony had a herald read out the senate's decisions to vote Caesar all honours both human and divine and also the oath by which they all had bound themselves to ensure his safety. To these statements he added a few brief words of his own. Magistrates and ex-magistrates carried the bier from the rostra down into the forum. While some were urging that he be cremated within the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus and others in Pompey's Senate Chamber, all of a sudden two figures appeared, girt with swords and each brandishing two javelins. With blazing torches they set fire to the bier and immediately the crowd of bystanders loaded on dry branches, the judgement seats, and the benches, as well as anything else that could serve as an offering. Then the flute-players and the actors* tore off the clothes which they had taken from among the triumphal finery to wear for the occasion, ripped them up and threw them into the flames, while veteran legionary soldiers threw on the weapons with which they had decked themselves out for the funeral. A considerable number of matrons, too, threw on the jewellery they were wearing, as well as the amulets and togas of their children. At the height of public grief, a crowd of foreigners gathered in groups and lamented Caesar, each in their

own way, in particular the Jews,* who flocked to the funeral pyre night after night. [85] Straight after the funeral the common people made for the houses of Brutus and Cassius armed with torches and were only just held back. Encountering Helvius Cinna* and confusing his name with that of Cornelius Cinna for whom they were searching because the previous day he had spoken out in strong terms against Caesar, they killed him and carried round his head impaled on a spear. Later on they set up a solid pillar of Numidian marble almost twenty feet high in the Forum and inscribed it with the words 'To the Father of the Fatherland'. And for long afterwards they continued to make sacrifices there, undertake vows, and to sort out certain disputes by an oath made in Caesar's name.

[86] Caesar left some of those close to him with the suspicion that he had no wish to live much longer and had taken no precautions, since his health was deteriorating, and that it was for this reason that he took little notice either of portents or of the advice of his friends. There are those who think that he had such faith in the most recent decree of the senate and their oath that he dismissed the armed guard of Spanish troops who had previously attended him. Others take a different view, holding that he preferred to fall victim just once to the plots that threatened him from all sides, rather than be perpetually on guard against them. Some say that he was even in the habit of remarking that his safety was more a matter of concern for the republic than it was for him. After all, he had long ago achieved outstanding powers and honours. However, if anything happened to him, the republic would not remain at peace but, its condition quickly deteriorating, it would soon suffer civil war.

[87] Nearly all authorities agree that his death was of just the kind of which he approved. For once, when he read in Xenophon* that during his last illness Cyrus had sent some instructions concerning his funeral, he expressed contempt for this slow mode of death, preferring a sudden and rapid end. The day before he died, a discussion had arisen over dinner at Marcus Lepidus' house as to what was the best way to finish one's life, in which Caesar voiced his preference for a death which was quick and unexpected.

[88] He died in the fifty-sixth year of his life* and was included in the ranks of the gods, not only by formal decree but also by the conviction of the common people. Indeed, at the first games which were given after his deification by his heir Augustus, a comet shone,

appearing around the eleventh hour* for seven days in succession and it was believed to be the soul of Caesar who had been received into heaven. For this reason, a star is placed on top of the head of his statue.

It was decided that the Senate Chamber, in which he was killed, should be closed off and that senate meetings were never to take place on the Ides of March which should be renamed the Day of Parricide. [89] Of the murderers, virtually none survived more than three years or met a natural end. All were condemned, each meeting a different fate, some by shipwreck, others in battle. A few even took their own lives with the same dagger they had used to make their impious attack on Caesar.

THE DEIFIED AUGUSTUS

[1] That the Octavii were in ancient times the leading family in Velitrae* is affirmed by many indications. An area in the busiest part of town long ago had the name 'Octavian' and an altar was to be seen dedicated by an Octavius. This man, when serving as leader in a war with a neighbouring people, happened to be in the middle of making an offering to Mars when he heard the news that the enemy had suddenly attacked. Snatching the victim's entrails from the fire, he presented them half raw before commencing the battle from which he returned victorious. There was also a decree of the people on record, prescribing that in future, too, the entrails should be offered to Mars in the same way and that the remaining parts of the sacrificial victims should be given to the Octavii.

[2] The family had been enrolled in the senate among the minor families* by King Tarquinius Priscus. Then, soon afterwards, they were included among the patricians by King Servius Tullius. In the course of time they transferred themselves to the plebeians, then, after a long interval, they returned, through the agency of the Deified Julius, to the patriciate.* The first of the family to be elected to a magistracy by the vote of the people was Gaius Rufus. As an exquaestor, he fathered two sons, Gnaeus and Gaius, who in turn produced the two branches of the Octavian family. These two branches were very different in their fortunes: Gnaeus and his descendants all held the highest magistracies, while Gaius and his progeny, whether by chance or through their own wishes, remained in the equestrian order down to the time of Augustus' father.

An ancestor of Augustus served as a military tribune in Sicily under the command of Aemilius Papus during the Second Punic War.* Augustus' grandfather, a man of considerable wealth, lived in great tranquillity to a ripe old age, having satisfied his ambitions with service as a municipal magistrate. That story is, however, told by others; Augustus himself writes no more than that he was born into an old-established and prosperous equestrian family, his father being the first in the family to attain senatorial rank. Mark Antony taunts Augustus with having as his great-grandfather an ex-slave who had earned his living as a rope-maker in the neighbourhood of Thurii,

while his grandfather was a financial agent. I have not been able to find out anything more about Augustus' ancestors on his father's side.

[3] His father, Gaius Octavius, was from his earliest years a man of great wealth and reputation, so I at least am surprised that some claim that he too was a financial agent and even that he was employed to distribute bribes and perform other services relating to elections in the Campus Martius.* For he grew up sustained by an ample fortune and had no trouble in securing offices which he fulfilled with distinction. After his praetorship he acquired by lot the province of Macedonia. On his way to the province he carried out an extraordinary commission from the senate, wiping out the gang of runaway slaves (remnants of the armies of Spartacus and Catiline) who were occupying the countryside around Thurii.* In governing his province he displayed justice and bravery in equal measures. Not only did he defeat the Bessi* and the Thracians in a great battle but his treatment of our allies was such that Cicero, in letters which are in existence, urged and advised his brother Quintus (at that time serving as proconsul of Asia with too little success) that he should imitate his neighbour Octavius in securing the favour of our allies.* [4] Returning from Macedonia, he met a sudden death before he could declare himself a candidate for the consulship. Three children survived him: the elder Octavia, whose mother was Ancharia, and the two he had by Atia, the younger Octavia and Augustus.

Atia was the daughter of Marcus Atius Balbus and Julia, who was the sister of Julius Caesar. Balbus' father's family came from Aricia and displayed many senatorial portraits,* while on his mother's side he was very closely related to Pompey the Great. He himself served as praetor before going on to take part in the twenty-man commission responsible for dividing the Campanian territory among the Roman people, as prescribed by the Julian law.* Here again Mark Antony has disparaged Augustus' ancestry, casting aspersions on his mother's family also. He alleges that Augustus' maternal great-grandfather came of African stock and earned his living first by keeping an oil-shop and later a bakery in Aricia. Cassius of Parma, for his part, taunts Augustus in a letter with being the grandson not only of a baker but also of a money-changer, alleging: 'Your mother's dough came from the crudest bakery in Aricia; a money-changer from Nerulum shaped the loaf with his filthy hands.'

[5] Augustus was born a little before sunrise eight days before the Kalends of October* in the consulship of Marcus Tullius Cicero and Gaius Antonius, at the Ox Heads in the Palatine district, on the spot where he now has a shrine, established shortly after he died. For, according to senate records, one Gaius Laetorius, a young man of patrician family, in an attempt to mitigate a penalty for adultery, which he claimed was too severe for one of his age and family, also drew to the attention of the senators the fact that he was the possessor and, as it were, guardian of the spot which the Deified Augustus first touched at his birth, and sought pardon for the sake of what he termed his own particular god. It was then decreed that this part of the house should be consecrated. [6] To this day his nursery is displayed in what was his grandfather's country home near Velitrae. The room is very modest, like a pantry. People in those parts believe he was actually born here. No one goes into this room unless it is essential and even then they undergo ritual purification first, for there is a long-established belief that those who enter incautiously are seized with trembling and fear. Indeed, this was later confirmed. The new owner of the villa, either by chance or because he wanted to test the story, went to sleep in that room and it happened that before the night was far advanced he was suddenly thrust out by an unknown force and they found him lying with his bed-clothes outside the door, in a semiconscious state.

[7] When he was a baby Augustus was given the name Thurinus, either to commemorate the place of his ancestors' origin, or because it was in the area around Thurii that his father Octavius, soon after his birth, had successfully waged war on the runaway slaves. That he was surnamed Thurinus I can relate on reliable authority for I myself obtained a little bust of him when he was a child, an old one of bronze with this name inscribed on it in letters of iron, now almost worn away. I made a present of this bust to the emperor,* who worships it among the Lares of his private apartment. But Mark Antony in his letters regularly calls Augustus Thurinus by way of an insult. Augustus responded to this merely with an expression of surprise that his old name should be thrown at him as if it were a term of abuse. Later on he took the surnames of Gaius Caesar and then of Augustus, the first in accordance with the will of his great-uncle, the second on the proposal of Munatius Plancus. Responding to the suggestion of others that Augustus ought to be called Romulus

on the grounds he too was, as it were, a founder of the city, Munatius argued successfully that he should rather take the name Augustus, a name not only new but also grander. For holy places, also, and places where something has been consecrated by augural rites are termed ‘august’ [*augusta*], either from the term for an increase in dignity [*auctus*] or from the phrase denoting the movements or feeding of birds [*avium gestus gustusve*], as Ennius* too tells us when he writes:

After renowned Rome was founded with august augury . . .

[8] He lost his father when he was four years old. In his twelfth year, he gave a funeral oration in honour of his grandmother Julia in front of an assembly of the people. Four years after he had taken on the toga of manhood he received military gifts in Caesar’s African triumph, although he had taken no part in the war on account of his age. Soon afterwards, when his great-uncle had set out for Spain to make war on the sons of Pompey, Octavian went out after him, although he had only just recovered from a serious illness.* Moreover, despite suffering a shipwreck and travelling with only a handful of companions along roads beset by the enemy, he won the good opinion of Caesar who soon came to appreciate not only his endeavour in making the journey but also the strength of his character.

After he had retaken the Iberian provinces Caesar was planning an expedition against the Dacians and then the Parthians; Octavian, who had been sent on ahead to Apollonia, devoted himself in the mean time to study. When he first learned that Caesar had been killed and that he himself was his heir, he hesitated for some time as to whether he should call on the neighbouring legions for assistance, eventually dismissing the idea as premature and hasty. Instead, he returned to Rome to claim his inheritance, despite his mother’s unease and the insistent attempts of his stepfather, the ex-consul Marcus Philippus, to dissuade him. Then he levied armies and held control of the state, first with Mark Antony and Marcus Lepidus, then just with Antony for nearly twelve years, and lastly for forty-four years on his own.

[9] Having stated the main themes, as it were, of his life, I shall set out the individual details, not according to the order of events but by topic so that they may be more clearly perceived and assessed.

He was five times involved in civil war, with campaigns at Mutina, Philippi, Perusia, in Sicily, and at Actium. In the first and last, he

fought against Mark Antony, the second against Brutus and Cassius, the third against Lucius Antonius, brother of the triumvir, and the fourth against Sextus Pompeius, son of Gnaeus Pompey. [10] In all cases his reason and motive for embarking on civil war was the following: he held that his foremost duty was to avenge the death of his great-uncle and protect his achievements. As soon as he returned from Apollonia, he decided to attack Brutus and Cassius first by force, hoping to catch them unawares, then, when they foresaw the danger and escaped, through the courts where they were declared guilty of murder in their absence. Moreover, he himself provided games to celebrate Caesar's victories, since those who had been given responsibility for this had not dared to do it. And, in order that he might have more authority in carrying out this and other plans, when one of the tribunes of the plebs happened to die, he offered himself as a candidate, even though he came from a patrician family and was not a senator.* However, the consul Mark Antony, whom he had counted on as his prime supporter, opposed all his undertakings, demanding a heavy bribe without which he refused even common and ordinary justice in any matter. So he transferred his support to the optimates, though he knew they regarded him with hostility, particularly because he was fighting a campaign to expel Decimus Brutus (who was at that time besieged in Mutina) from the province conferred on him by Caesar and ratified by the senate. With the encouragement of some, Octavian contracted hired assassins against him. Then, when the plot was discovered and he feared retaliation, he engaged the services of veterans to protect himself and the republic, offering them as large a reward as he was able. Placed in command of the army he had raised, with the rank of pro-praetor, he was instructed to give support to Hirtius and Pansa (who had become consuls) in the war against Decimus Brutus. Within three months he had brought to an end in two battles the war which had been entrusted to him. In the first, Mark Antony writes that he had run away, finally reappearing two days later with neither military dress nor horse. In the second it was commonly agreed that he had fulfilled his role not only as leader but even as a soldier in the midst of the fighting, taking the standards on his own shoulders, when the standard bearer of his legion was seriously wounded, and carrying them for some time.

[11] Since, in the course of this war, Hirtius died in the line of

battle and Pansa not long afterwards from a wound, a rumour developed that both had been killed through his agency so that, with Antony routed and the state bereft of both consuls, he would be left with sole command over the victorious forces. Indeed, the death of Pansa aroused such suspicion that the doctor Glyco was imprisoned on the grounds that he had applied poison to the wound. Aquilius Niger adds to this that Octavian himself actually killed one of the consuls, Hirtius, in the heat of the battle. [12] However, when he learned that Antony, having fled from Rome, was welcomed by Marcus Lepidus and that other leaders and armies were seeking to come to terms in support of their party, he renounced the optimates' cause without delay, alleging as the pretext for his change of side the words and acts of certain men, some of whom called him a boy, while others pronounced that he should be honoured then disposed of,* so that neither he nor the veterans would need to receive their due. And, to display more clearly how much he regretted his former association, he imposed an enormous fine on the citizens of Nursia and, when they could not pay it, banished them from their city, because they had at public expense erected a monument to those of their fellow citizens who had fallen at Mutina, inscribing on it that they had given their lives for liberty.

[13] Having embarked on an alliance with Antony and Lepidus, although he was weak and unwell, he brought the war at Philippi to a close also, in two battles, in the first of which he was driven from his camp and scarcely managed to escape to Antony's wing.* He was not restrained in victory but sent the head of Brutus to Rome to be thrown at the foot of Caesar's statue, and was savage in his treatment of the most prominent of the captives, not even sparing them insulting language. When one begged him piteously for burial he is said to have replied that the birds would decide. When two others, a father and son, begged for their lives, they say he ordered them to draw lots or play mora,* to determine which of them should have his own life spared, and watched them both die, for, when the father, who had offered to be the one to die, was killed, he then made the son take his own life too. For this reason the others, amongst whom was Marcus Favonius (that emulator of Cato), when they were led past in chains, respectfully acknowledged Antony as victorious general but openly reviled Octavian with the most insulting abuse.

After victory, responsibilities were divided between them, with

Antony taking control of the east and Octavian assuming the task of returning the veterans to Italy and securing land for them in the municipalities. However, he could satisfy neither the veterans nor the landowners, for the latter complained that they were being pushed off their land and the former that they were not being given the treatment their good service had deserved.

[14] At that time he forced Lucius Antonius (who, trusting in the consulship, which he held at the time, and in his brother's power, was plotting to seize control) to take refuge in Perusia* and starved him into surrender, not without enduring great risks himself both before the war and during it.* For, when, during some games, he gave orders that the official should remove a common soldier who was sitting in the fourteen rows reserved for the orders,* a rumour was spread by his detractors that he had later had this same man tortured and killed, and he only just escaped death himself, as an angry crowd of soldiers gathered. What saved him was the sudden appearance of the missing man, safe and sound. Then, when he was offering a sacrifice near the walls of Perusia, he almost fell into the hands of a group of gladiators who had burst out of the town.

[15] After the capture of Perusia,* he inflicted punishment on a large number of people, responding to all those who begged for mercy or sought pardon with the same words: 'You must die.' Some people record that three hundred senators and equestrians were selected from those who had surrendered to be slaughtered like sacrificial victims on the Ides of March at the altar dedicated to the Divine Julius. There are some who relate that he engineered the war with the specific purpose that those who were secretly opposed to him and supported him through fear rather than choice would be tempted to follow Lucius Antonius' lead, and that when he had defeated them and confiscated their property he would be able to give the veterans the rewards they had been promised.

[16] The Sicilian war* he began early on but it was long drawn out with frequent interruptions, sometimes for the ships to be repaired which he had lost as a result of two wrecks caused by storms, even though it was summer, and sometimes when peace was made in response to the demands of the people (for supplies were cut off and there was a famine of increasing severity). Eventually, once the ships were repaired and twenty thousand slaves were given their freedom so that they could serve as oarsmen, he created the Julian harbour at

Baiae by letting the sea into lakes Lucrinus and Avernus. And, having trained his forces here the whole winter long, he defeated Sextus Pompeius between Mylae and Naulochus, though on the brink of battle he had been so deeply asleep all of a sudden that his friends had to wake him so that he could give the signal. This was, I should think, the source of Mark Antony's criticisms: that he could not even give his line of battle a proper inspection but lay on his back in a stupor, his gaze heavenward, and did not get up and appear before his men until Marcus Agrippa had already routed the enemy ships. Others criticize his words and actions, claiming that when the ships were lost in the storm he had cried out that he would conquer even against the will of Neptune and that the next time the circus games were held, he had Neptune's image removed from the festival procession.* And scarcely did he endure any more or greater dangers in any of his other wars. When his army had crossed over to Sicily and he had returned to the mainland to collect the remaining part of his forces, he was ambushed by Sextus Pompeius' commanders, Demochares and Apollophanes, and in the end only just managed to escape with one boat. Again, when he was going on foot via Locri to Regium, he caught sight of some of Pompeius' biremes coasting along the shore and, thinking they were his, went down to the water, where he was almost captured. Moreover, as he was escaping along remote footpaths, a slave of his one-time friend Aemilius Paulus, still grieving at the proscription of Paulus' father* for which Augustus had been responsible, saw this as an opportunity for revenge and tried to kill him. After the flight of Pompeius, his other colleague Marcus Lepidus, whom he had summoned from Africa to his aid, ambitious and confident with his twenty legions, laid claim to sole power with dire threats. Augustus wrested his army from him and, allowing him his life in response to his entreaties, banished him to Circeii* for the rest of his life.

[17] He finally broke off his alliance with Antony, which had always been shaky and unreliable, though patched up at various times with reconciliations, and, in order to demonstrate more clearly how Antony had abandoned the ways of a Roman citizen, he made sure that the will (which Antony had left in Rome) naming even his children by Cleopatra among his heirs, was opened and read out before an assembly of the people. Once Antony was declared an enemy, however, he did send out to him all his relatives and friends,

including Gaius Sosius and Gnaeus* Domitius, who were still at that time consuls. He publicly gave leave, also, to the people of Bononia* not to join all of the rest of Italy in swearing to uphold his own cause, on the grounds that they had been among the clients of Antony's family from days of old. Not long afterwards he was victorious in the naval battle at Actium,* though the battle continued until such a late hour that even the victor was obliged to spend the night on board ship. Leaving Actium, he moved on to winter quarters on Samos, where he received the disturbing news that the troops whom, after the victory, he had selected from all the army divisions and sent on ahead to Brundisium, were mutinying, demanding booty and their discharge. Octavian set out for Italy, his crossing twice disrupted by storms, first as he passed between the headlands of the Peloponnese and Aetolia and then again off the Ceraunian mountains.* He lost a number of his galleys on each occasion, while the one he was travelling in had its rigging torn away and its rudder broken. After remaining in Brundisium a mere twenty-seven days, during which time he satisfied all the demands of his soldiers, he travelled around via Asia and Syria to Egypt. He laid siege to Alexandria, where Antony and Cleopatra had taken refuge, and soon gained possession of the city. Antony, indeed, who made a belated attempt to come to terms, he forced to kill himself (Octavian viewed his dead body). Cleopatra he greatly desired to lead as a captive in his triumphal procession and even had Psylli* brought to her who were to suck out the venomous liquid—it was believed that her death was caused by the bite of an asp. He honoured them both with a joint burial, giving orders that the tomb which they themselves had started to build should be completed. The younger Antony (the elder of his two sons by Fulvia) Octavian dragged away from a statue of the Deified Julius where he had taken refuge when his repeated entreaties were having no effect, and killed. Caesaron too, whom Cleopatra claimed was fathered by Julius Caesar, he had captured as he tried to flee, tortured, and put to death. The other children of Antony and Cleopatra he spared and, afterwards, as if they were bound to him by family ties, he provided for them and looked after them in a manner appropriate to their rank.

[18] At that time also he paid homage to the sarcophagus containing the remains of Alexander the Great, laying a golden crown on it and scattering it with flowers when it was brought out from its inner

chamber for him to see.* When he was asked if he would also like to view the tomb of the Ptolemies, he replied that he wanted to see a king, not dead bodies. He reduced Egypt to the status of a province and, so as to make it a readier and more fruitful source for Rome's grain supply, he made use of his soldiers to clear out all the channels into which the Nile overflows, as they had silted up over the years. So that the victory at Actium would be even more celebrated in the memory of future generations, he founded the city of Nicopolis nearby and established games there to take place every five years. He enlarged the ancient temple of Apollo and, having adorned the place where his camp had been with spoils from the enemy ships, he dedicated it to Neptune and Mars.

[19] After this there were quite a few disturbances, plans for rebellion, and conspiracies, which he took action against, having got wind of them on a number of different occasions before they came to fruition. They included that of the young Lepidus,* later that of Varro Murena and Fannius Caepio, shortly afterwards that of Marcus Egnatius, then Plautius Rufus and Lucius Paulus, husband of the emperor's granddaughter.* Besides these, there was Lucius Audasius, who had been charged with forgery and was both aged and infirm, and Asinius Epicadus, a half-breed of Parthian blood, and finally Telephus, a woman's slave and usher. For among those who conspired against him and endangered his life were numbered even men of the lowest sort. Audasius and Epicadus planned to bring his daughter Julia and grandson Agrippa from the islands where they were confined, to the armies, while Telephus planned to attack both the emperor and the senate, in the belief that he himself was destined by fate to rule. Indeed, on one occasion a servant attached to the Illyrian army was arrested one night just by his sleeping quarters, armed with a hunting knife, having slipped past the door-keepers. It was unclear whether he had lost his mind or was feigning insanity, for he could not be made to say anything even under torture.

[20] He himself conducted a total of two foreign wars, that against Dalmatia when he was still a young man and that against the Cantabrians, after the defeat of Antony.* He was even wounded in the course of the Dalmatian war, when in one battle his right knee was hit by a stone, and on another occasion he suffered wounds to a leg and both arms when a bridge collapsed. His other wars were conducted through legates, though he did intervene or come near to it during

the campaigns against the Pannonians and Germans, advancing from Rome as far as Ravenna, Milan, and Aquileia. [21] Nevertheless, he conquered Cantabria, Aquitaine, Pannonia, Dalmatia together with the whole of Illyria, also Raetia and the Vindelicii and Salassi, peoples of the Alpine regions, in some cases leading the troops himself, in some with others acting under his auspices. He also put a stop to the incursions of the Dacian forces, slaughtering three of their leaders as well as a large number of men. He forced the Germans back beyond the River Albis,* with the exception of the Suebi and the Sigambri who submitted to him. These he transported to Gaul where they were settled in a region on the banks of the Rhine. Other peoples who gave trouble he also reduced to submission. Nor did he make war on any people without just and pressing cause. So far was he from being motivated by the desire for additions to his territories or to his martial glory that he forced certain German chieftains to take an oath in the Temple of Mars the Avenger that they would faithfully observe the peace that they themselves requested, and from some, indeed, he tried to exact hostages of a new kind—women—because he felt they did not care enough about men who were left as pledges. Yet he allowed everyone the opportunity to take back their hostages whenever they wished. Nor, in the case of those engaging in more protracted or perfidious rebellion, did he ever exact any more severe penalty than the sale into slavery, in accordance with the law, of captives who were not to be employed in a nearby region nor to be set free within a thirty-year period. Through his reputation for virtue and moderation, he induced even the Indians and Scythians, peoples known to us only by report, to send agents, unprompted, in order to obtain the friendship of himself and the Roman people. The Parthians, too, readily conceded to him, even when he laid claim to Armenia, and, offering hostages as well, returned the military standards, when he asked for them, which they had taken from Marcus Crassus and Mark Antony.* Moreover, when a number of men were competing to be their king, they would not approve a candidate until one was chosen by Augustus.

[22] Since the foundation of the city, Janus Quirinus had been closed before Augustus' time on only two occasions.* Having obtained peace by land and by sea, he closed it on three occasions in the space of a much briefer period. Twice he entered the city celebrating an ovation, after the battle of Philippi and, again, after the

Sicilian war. He held three regular triumphs, for Dalmatia, Actium, and Alexandria, all in the same continuous three-day period.

[23] He suffered only two humiliating disasters, both, indeed, in Germany, that of Lollius and that of Varus.* The Lollian disaster was more a matter of loss of face than of real damage, but in the Varian he sustained the almost catastrophic loss of three legions, slaughtered together with their commander, their legates, and all their auxiliary forces. When it was first reported he set up watches throughout Rome in case there should be any disturbance and he extended the periods of office for the provincial governors so that the allies would be kept in check by men of experience who were known to them. He vowed major games to Jupiter Best and Greatest, in the hope that the state might return to a better condition (which had come about in the course of the war against the Cimbri and the Marsi). Indeed, it is said that he was so disturbed that for months at a time he let his beard and hair grow and would hit his head against the door, shouting: 'Quintilius Varus, give me back my legions!' And for years he marked the anniversary of the disaster as a day of mourning and sadness.

[24] In military matters he brought changes and innovations in many areas and also reinstated some practices from the old days. He enforced discipline most strictly, not allowing even his legates to visit their wives, except most grudgingly and in the wintertime. A Roman knight, who had cut off the thumbs of his young sons so that they might be unfit for military service, he had sold at auction, together with his property. However, when he saw that some tax-gatherers were about to buy him, he made him over to a freedman of his own so that he would be allowed to live as a free man, though kept away from the city. When the tenth legion were insolent in obeying orders he gave them all a dishonourable discharge and, when other legions insistently demanded release, he let them go but without the rewards they were due for their length of service. If any of his cohorts yielded ground in battle, he had every tenth man killed and fed the rest on barley.* If any centurion left his post he punished him with death, as he did the ordinary soldiers. In the case of other offences, he applied various humiliating penalties; for instance, men might be ordered to stand for the whole day in front of the commander's quarters, sometimes wearing unbelted tunics or else carrying ten-foot measuring poles or even a lump of turf.*

[25] After the civil wars neither in the assembly nor in his edicts did he address any soldiers as his ‘comrades’ but as ‘soldiers’, nor did he allow his sons* or stepsons, when they held military commands, to use any other term of address, for he thought the term ‘comrades’ too ingratiating to be consistent with military order, or the current state of peace, or the dignity of his own family.* Except in the case of fire in Rome or if disturbance was feared when there were difficulties with the corn supply, he used freedmen as soldiers on only two occasions, once to protect those colonies adjoining Illyria and once to safeguard the bank of the River Rhine. These men he levied from men and women of some wealth and immediately set them free, placing them under the same standard so that they were not mixed with the men of free birth, nor equipped with the same arms. As military prizes he was more ready to confer trappings or collars (prized for their gold and silver) rather than he was crowns for scaling ramparts or walls, which brought greater honour. The latter he distributed very sparingly but without favour and often even to private soldiers. He presented Marcus Agrippa with a blue banner in Sicily after his naval victory.* It was only those who had celebrated triumphs, although they had accompanied him on military expeditions and taken part in his victories, that he did not consider should share in such honours, on the grounds that they themselves also had the right to award them to whomever they chose. His view was that nothing so little became a great leader as haste and rashness. Often he would proclaim the following: ‘Make haste slowly!'; ‘A safe commander's better than a bold one',* and ‘Whatever is done well is done with speed enough.' He said that one should never embark on a battle or a war unless the hope of profit was shown to be greater than the fear of loss. For he used to compare those who sought a minimal gain at no small risk to someone going fishing with a golden hook, when no catch could bring a profit equal to the loss if the hook were gone.

[26] He received magistracies and honours before the prescribed age, some of which were newly devised and in perpetuity. The consulship he appropriated in his twentieth year, having positioned his legions near the city ready to attack and sent men to demand it for him in the name of the army.* However, when the senate hesitated, the centurion Cornelius, who led the delegation, threw back his cloak, pointed to the hilt of his sword and did not shrink from

saying in the senate house: ‘This will do it if you don’t.’ His second consulship he held nine years later and the third after a further year; after that he was consul for successive years until he held the office for the eleventh time.* Subsequently he turned it down on the many occasions it was offered, until after a great interval of seventeen years, he accepted it for the twelfth time and then two years later he sought it of his own accord for the thirteenth time,* so that it was as holder of the highest magistracy that he led each of his two sons, Gaius and Lucius, into the Forum to embark upon their public careers. The five consulships from the sixth to the tenth he held for the full year, the others for nine, or for six, or four, or three months, though the second he held just for a few hours. For, on the morning of the first day of January, after he had sat for a short time in his curule seat in front of the temple of Capitoline Jupiter, he gave up the honour and appointed another to his place as substitute. He did not begin them all in Rome,* though, taking up his fourth in Asia, his fifth on the island of Samos, and his eighth and ninth in Tarraco.

[27] For ten years he ruled as part of the triumvirate for reconstituting the state. Although he resisted somewhat longer than his colleagues the option of proscriptions, once they were embarked upon he was more severe than either of the others. For while they were swayed in many cases by personal considerations and entreaties in favour of particular individuals, he alone argued strongly that no one should be spared. He proscribed even Gaius Toranius, his own guardian, who had been his father Octavius’ colleague as aedile. Julius Saturninus records this, too, that when the proscriptions were finished and Marcus Lepidus, speaking in the senate, defended what had happened but offered hope of clemency for the future, on the grounds that sufficient punishment had been exacted, Octavian by contrast declared that he had only consented to the proscriptions on condition that all possibilities would remain open to him in future. However, as a sign that he regretted this intransigence, he later raised Titus Vinius Philopoemon to the status of knight because he was said to have concealed his patron when the latter was proscribed.* As triumvir, too, he provoked unpopularity in many ways. For once, when he was addressing the soldiers and a crowd of civilians had been allowed to listen, he noticed that Pinarius, a Roman knight, was writing something down and, thinking that he was an informer and a

spy, gave orders that he be run through on the spot. As for the consul designate, Tediūs Afer, who had been complaining spitefully about some deed of his, he terrified him with such dire threats that he hurled himself to his death. And when the praetor Quintus Gallius came to pay his respects with some folded tablets covered by his cloak, Octavian, suspecting him of concealing a sword, did not dare to have him searched at once, in case it should turn out to be something else, but soon afterwards had him seized from the tribunal by centurions and their men and subjected to torture as if he were a slave. And, when he admitted nothing, he gave orders that he should be killed, first gouging out the man's eyes with his own hand. He wrote, however, that the man had asked for an audience then treacherously attacked him and that, after he had been thrown into custody and then sent into exile, he had met his end in a shipwreck or an attack by thieves.

He accepted tribunician power in perpetuity and on one occasion and then another chose a colleague,* each for periods of five years. He also accepted the supervision of morals and of laws in perpetuity and it was through this authority, even though he was not censor, that he three times conducted a census of the people, the first and third times with a colleague,* the second on his own.

[28] On two occasions he considered yielding up the state, first just after the fall of Antony, mindful that Antony had often criticized him for standing in the way of its restoration, and then as a result of exhaustion after a long illness, even going so far as to summon the magistrates and senate to his house and giving them an account of the state of the empire. However, taking the view that he himself would be in some danger as a private citizen and that it was rash to entrust the state to the judgement of the many, he continued to hold power. It is hard to say whether his intentions were outdone by his achievements. These intentions he would emphasize from time to time, even committing himself to them in an edict with the following words: 'May I maintain the state safe and sound, in its rightful condition and may I reap the fruits of this result which I seek so that I am spoken of as the man responsible for this best of regimes and that when I die I shall carry with me the hope that the foundations which I have laid for the state will remain in place.' And he brought about his own wish, doing his utmost to ensure that no one regretted the new form of government. As for the city itself, which was not

decked out in a manner fitting such a great empire and which was also subject to fires and floods, he so improved it that it was with justification that he boasted he had found it a city of brick and left it a city of marble.

[29] He undertook much public building. Foremost among his projects were: his Forum with the Temple of Mars the Avenger; the Temple of Apollo on the Palatine; the Temple of Jupiter the Thunderer on the Capitol. His reason for constructing the new Forum was the large number of people and the amount of judicial activity which seemed to render the existing two forums insufficient, thus requiring a third in addition. So, even before the Temple of Mars was completed, the Forum was quickly put into public use and it was provided that public trials, separate from other trials, as well as the selection by lot of jurors, would take place there. He had vowed the Temple of Mars when he undertook the war at Philippi to avenge his father. Accordingly he decreed that it was here that the senate would conduct its debates as to whether wars should be waged or triumphs awarded, from here that those about to undertake provincial commands should set out, to here that victorious leaders should bring the insignia of their triumph on their return. The Temple to Apollo he had erected on the site of that part of his Palatine residence which the *haruspices* had announced was desired by the god when it was struck by lightning. To this he added a portico with Latin and Greek libraries. And it was here that, in his later years, he would often conduct meetings of the senate and revise the lists of jurors. The Temple of Jupiter the Thunderer he consecrated after he had an escape from danger. For once when he was travelling by night on campaign in Spain, a flash of lightning struck his litter and killed the slave who was lighting the way. Some works, also, he undertook in the name of others, that is, his grandsons, his nephew, his wife, and his sister, such as the Portico and Basilica of Gaius and Lucius, similarly the Porticos of Livia and of Octavia and the Theatre of Marcellus. As for other prominent men, he often exhorted them, so far as the resources of each permitted, to beautify the city with monuments, whether new or restored and improved. At that time, many men undertook many projects; for instance, Marcus Philippus the Temple of Hercules of the Muses, Lucius Cornificius the Temple of Diana, Asinius Pollio the Atrium of Liberty, Munatius Plancus the Temple of Saturn, Cornelius Balbus a theatre, and

Statilius Taurus an amphitheatre, while Marcus Agrippa undertook many outstanding enterprises.

[30] The area of the city he divided into regions and districts and made provisions so that the former were watched over by magistrates, selected by lot each year, and the latter by 'masters' who were chosen from the common people of each district. To protect against fires, he instituted night-watches and guards. In order to prevent floods, he widened and cleared the channel of the Tiber, which had become congested with rubble and projecting buildings. So that the city was more easily accessible from all quarters, he himself took responsibility for repairing the Flaminian Way as far as Ariminum,* and assigned the rest to men who had celebrated triumphs, who were to use their spoils to pave them. He rebuilt temples which had collapsed from old age or been destroyed in fires, and these and others he decked out with the most splendid gifts, depositing as a single gift in the chamber of the Temple of Capitoline Jupiter sixteen thousand pounds of gold, as well as pearls and other precious stones valued at fifty million sesterces.

[31] When, after the death of Marcus Lepidus, he at last accepted the office of Pontifex Maximus* (which he had never ventured to take from him while he was still living), he had collected from all over and burned whatever works in Greek or Latin were popularly supposed, on the basis of no or unreliable authority, to be prophetic (there were more than two thousand of them). He kept only the Sibylline books, even from these making a selection, and deposited them in two golden cases under the pedestal of the Palatine Apollo. Since the calendar which had been brought to order by the Divine Julius* was subsequently confused and muddled through neglect, he restored it to its previous order. In the course of this process, he gave his own name to the sixth month rather than September, the month of his birth,* on the grounds that both his first consulship and also his most splendid victories had fallen in the former. He increased not only the number and dignity of the priesthoods but also their privileges, especially in the case of the Vestal Virgins. And when the death of one required that another be chosen to fill her place and many people engaged in intrigue to prevent their daughters being included among those in the lottery, Augustus swore that if any of his granddaughters had been of the right age he would have put her name forward. He reinstated many ancient rituals, too, which had gradually fallen

into disuse, such as the augury of Safety,* the office of the Flamen Dialis, the Lupercalia, the Secular Games, and the Compitalician Games. He forbade beardless young men to participate in the Lupercalia and also with regard to the Secular Games banned young people of either sex from being present at any spectacle which took place by night, unless they were accompanied by an older relative. He laid down that the *lares Compitales* should be decked with flowers twice a year, in spring and summer.

After the immortal gods he honoured the memory of leaders who had found the empire of the Roman people small and left it great. For this reason he restored the public works each had undertaken, leaving the inscriptions in place, and dedicated statues of all of them with their triumphal ornaments in the two colonnades of his Forum, also proclaiming too in an edict that he had done this so that he himself, while he lived, and the rulers of later ages would be required by the Roman people to take the lives of these men as their model. The statue of Pompey he moved from the meeting-hall in which Gaius Caesar was killed and installed on a marble arch opposite the main entrance of Pompey's Theatre.

[32] Many reprehensible practices had remained from the lawlessness customary in times of civil war or had even arisen in peace-time to the detriment of public order. For a large number of robbers went about openly, armed with swords, ostensibly for their own protection. In the countryside, travellers were seized and committed to the slave prisons of landowners, with no distinction drawn between slave and free. Numerous gangs were formed, on the pretext of being new work associations, but with exclusively criminal intentions. Augustus therefore brought the robberies under control by stationing watchmen in suitable locations, inspected the slave-prisons, and abolished any work associations which were not established and legitimate. He had burned the records of old debts to the treasury, which were the most frequent excuse for false accusations. Property in the city to which the state had a disputed claim he judged to belong to the current holders. The names of those who had been under accusation for a long time or those against whom the accusation served no other purpose than to give pleasure to their enemies he removed from the lists, stipulating that if anyone wished to renew the case, he would risk incurring himself the penalty prescribed for the crime.* However, lest a crime should slip away unpunished or a business suit

collapse from delay, he appointed an additional thirty days, on which honorary games had been taking place, for the prosecution of legal business. To the three divisions of jurors he added a fourth, composed of men of a lower census class, to be called the *ducenarii** and to give judgement in cases involving lesser amounts. He enrolled as jurors men aged at least twenty-five* (that is five years younger than was previously the rule). However, when many men sought to evade court duties, he grudgingly conceded that each division should take it in turns to have a year's exemption and that the usual practice of holding court business during the months of November and December should be abandoned.

[33] He himself pronounced judgement with great thoroughness and often up to nightfall, with his litter positioned near the tribunal if his body was ailing, or even from his bed at home. However, he administered justice not only with great diligence but also with particular mercy and if anyone were plainly guilty of parricide, he is said to have posed his questions thus: 'Surely you did not kill your father?' so that the accused would avoid the punishment of being sewn into the sack,* which is only imposed if he confesses. And when the case concerned the forgery of a will and all the witnesses were liable under the Cornelian law,* he would pass to those who considered the case with him, not only the two tablets, indicating guilt or acquittal, but also a third which could excuse those who were shown to have been induced to sign by trickery or misunderstanding. Every year he referred appeals in cases involving litigants at Rome to the urban praetor, and those involving inhabitants of the provinces to men of consular rank, placing one of them in charge of the business for each province.

[34] He revised the laws and in some cases enacted new ones such as those relating to excessive expenditure, to adultery, to chastity, to electoral improprieties, and to the regulation of marriages. With this last he was introducing measures rather more severe than with the others and was prevented by the clamour of protesters from making them law until he had omitted or modified some of the penalties, allowing an exception of three years* and increasing the rewards.* And when, during the public shows, a knight insistently called for the law's abolition, Augustus drew attention to the children of Germanicus whom he had summoned and seated, some beside him and some in their father's lap, indicating with his gestures and

expression that they should not balk at following the young man's example.* When he learned, too, that the force of the law was being evaded through betrothals to young girls and through frequent remarriages, he shortened the duration of betrothals and imposed a limit on divorces.

[35] Since the number of senators was swelled by a disorderly and undignified rabble—for there were more than a thousand of them, some most unworthy men who had been admitted after Caesar's death through favour or bribery (these were commonly referred to as *Orcini**)—Augustus returned it to its former size and glory by means of two reviews, the first conducted by the senators themselves in which each man chose one other, the second by himself and Agrippa. It was on this occasion that he is believed to have presided protected by a cuirass under his tunic and wearing a sword at his side, with ten strong men, friends from the senatorial order, standing around his seat. Cremutius Cordus writes that no member of the senate was allowed to approach him unless on his own and once his toga had been searched. Some senators he induced to resign through shame, though even to these he allowed the right to wear senatorial garb, sit in the front rows at the games, and take part in public banquets. And so that those who were selected and approved should fulfil their duties with greater seriousness and also less inconvenience, he prescribed that, before taking his seat, each man should make an offering of incense and wine at the altar of the deity in whose temple the meeting took place; that regular senate meetings should take place no more than twice in each month on the Kalends and the Ides, and that in the months of September and October the only members required to attend were those chosen by lot whose number would be sufficient for the enactment of legislation. He also established a council, whose membership was renewed by lot every six months and with whom he would discuss matters of business before referring them to a full meeting of the senate. When it came to issues of moment he would ask for senators' opinions, not in the traditional order, but in any order he pleased so that everyone was on the alert in case he had to give an opinion rather than merely agreeing with what had already been said.

[36] He also initiated many other developments including the following: that the proceedings of the senate should not be published; that magistrates should not take up posts in the provinces immedi-

ately on leaving office; that a fixed sum should be allowed the provincial governors for the mules and tents which were usually contracted for at public expense; that responsibility for the treasury should pass from the urban quaestors to the ex-praetors or praetors; that the centumviral court* which by custom had been convoked by ex-quaestors, should be convoked by the Board of Ten.* [37] So that more men could participate in state administration, he devised some new official posts: for the supervision of public works, of roads, of aqueducts, of the Tiber channel, of the distribution of grain to the people, as well as for the prefecture of the city, the Board of Three for selecting senators, and another for reviewing the companies of knights, whenever necessary. He appointed censors—an office which had long been left vacant. He increased the number of praetors.* He even demanded that whenever he himself accepted the consulship he should have two colleagues rather than one, but did not get his way, for everyone insisted that his honour was already sufficiently limited as he did not hold office alone but with a colleague.

[38] He was no less generous in honouring military achievements,* ensuring that more than thirty generals were awarded proper triumphs, while a greater number were awarded triumphal ornaments. So that the sons of senators would more readily become accustomed to public life, he gave permission for them to wear the broad stripe from the time when they assumed the toga of manhood and to attend the senate house, and, when they served in the army for the first time, he gave them as posts not only the tribunate in a legion but also the command of a cavalry division. And so that no one should lack military service, he often put two holders of the broad stripe in charge of a single cavalry division.

He frequently reviewed the companies of knights, reintroducing the custom of the parade after a long interval. However, he did not allow anyone to be forced to dismount by an accuser in the course of the parade, which often used to happen, and he gave permission to the elderly or anyone with a conspicuous bodily defect to send their horse forward for review and themselves come on foot, if they should be summoned. Later on he allowed those who were over thirty-five and did not wish to retain it to give up their horse. [39] With the help of the ten men he had been granted, on his request, by the senate, he required each knight to give an account of himself, imposing punishments on some of the reprobates and demotions on others and

warnings of various kinds on many more. The mildest form of warning was to hand over to them in public some tablets which they were to read silently on the spot. Others were taken to task because they had borrowed money at a low rate of interest and then invested it at a higher rate.

[40] If there were insufficient candidates of senatorial rank standing for election as tribunes, he appointed some from among the Roman knights, with the provision that when they finished their term of office they might be members of whichever of the two orders they chose. However, when a large number of knights who had lost much of their ancestral fortunes during the civil wars did not dare to sit in the first fourteen rows at the theatre, through fear of incurring the penalties of the Theatre Law, Augustus announced that none were liable if they themselves or their parents had ever possessed the equestrian census.* He held a census of the people district by district and, so that the commoners should not be called away from their work too frequently for the purpose of collecting their corn rations, he decided to distribute tickets for four months' supply three times per year; but at their request he allowed a return to the previous system whereby each person collected his own ration on a monthly basis. He also restored the older arrangements for elections,* bringing corruption under control through a variety of penalties, and distributing to his fellow members of the Fabian and Scaptian tribes a thousand sesterces each of his own money on the day of the election, to stop them from looking for any money from the candidates. He thought it a matter of great importance to preserve the people pure and untainted by any admixture of foreign or servile blood, giving grants of Roman citizenship most rarely and placing a limit on manumissions. When Tiberius wrote to him on behalf of a Greek client, he replied that he would only make the grant if the man came to him and explained why he deserved to have it. And when Livia sought citizenship for a Gaul from a tributary province, he refused it, offering instead immunity from taxation with the comment that he would rather endure some loss of revenue than that the honour of Roman citizenship be made commonplace. Not only did he put many obstacles in the way of slaves seeking freedom, and still more in the way of those seeking freedom with citizenship, by making careful provision for the number, situation, and status of those who were set free, but he also stipulated that no one who had ever been

bound or tortured should ever receive citizenship, no matter what their degree of freedom.* He sought, too, to revive the ancient manner of dress and once, when he saw at a public meeting a crowd of people dressed in dark clothes, he grew angry and cried out:

Behold the Romans, lords of the world, the toga'd race!*

and he made it the business of the aediles to prevent anyone being seen again in or near the Forum unless wearing a toga and without a cloak.

[41] He often showed generosity to all classes when the opportunity arose. For when the regal treasures were brought to the city in the Alexandrian triumph he made ready money so plentiful that interest rates fell and land values greatly increased, and afterwards, whenever there was a surplus from the property of those who had been condemned, he loaned it without interest for fixed periods to those who could give security for double the sum. He increased the property qualification for senators, requiring one million, two hundred thousand sesterces rather than eight hundred thousand, making up the amount in the case of those who did not have it. He often gave presents of money to the people, of differing sums, sometimes four hundred, sometimes three hundred, occasionally two hundred or five hundred sesterces per man. Nor indeed did he overlook the young boys, although it was not customary for them to be included before their eleventh year. When the corn-supply was under threat, he often gave out grain to each man at a very low price, sometimes for nothing, and he doubled the money tokens.*

[42] However, so that he would be recognized as a ruler who sought the public good rather than popularity, when the people complained at the scarcity and high price of wine he reproved them most severely: his son-in-law Agrippa had made sure through the provision of numerous aqueducts that no one should go thirsty. And again, when the people demanded gifts of money which had been promised, he replied that he was a man of his word. However, when they called for something which had not been promised, he criticized their shamelessness and impudence in an edict and made it clear that he would not give anything, although he had been planning to. With no less seriousness and firmness, when he discovered that many slaves had been freed and added to the list of citizens, he proclaimed that nothing would be given to those to whom nothing had been

promised,* while to the rest he gave less than he had promised, so that the sum set aside was enough to go round. At one time, when there was a serious food shortage and measures to relieve it were fraught with difficulty, he expelled from the city slaves who were for sale, as well as the schools of gladiators and all foreigners, with the exception of doctors, teachers, and some household slaves. Then, when the corn supply was restored, he wrote that he was moved to abolish the distribution of grain permanently, since people's reliance on it had led to the neglect of agriculture. However, he would not carry out his plan, he wrote, since it was bound to be restored at some point as a measure to secure popular favour. And subsequently he regulated the business to take as much account of the farmers and merchants as of the people.

[43] In the frequency, variety, and magnificence of the games he provided he outdid all who had gone before. He says that on four occasions he gave games in his own name and on twenty-three in the name of other magistrates who were either away from Rome or lacked sufficient resources. Sometimes he even provided games in the individual districts of the city on many stages with actors speaking all sorts of languages. He provided gladiatorial games not only in the Forum and amphitheatre but also in the Circus and the voting enclosures, though these were sometimes nothing more than wild beast fights. He provided a show of athletes in the Campus Martius, for which wooden seating was constructed, and also a naval battle, having excavated ground near the Tiber in the area which is now the Caesars' grove. On the days when games took place, he stationed watchmen around the city so that it would not be at the mercy of thieves when there were so few people who stayed at home. In the Circus he gave entertainments consisting of chariots, runners, and animal fighters, some of them young people of the highest families. In addition to this he gave very frequent performances of the game of Troy with older and younger boys, taking the view that it was a noble and ancient custom for the pick of the nobility to acquire fame in this manner. When Nonius Asprenas was disabled through falling during the game Augustus honoured him with a golden collar and permitted him and his descendants to call themselves 'Torquati'.* Soon afterwards, however, he called an end to these games when the orator Asinius Pollio complained earnestly and bitterly in the senate about the fall sustained by his grandson Aeserninus, who had also

broken his leg. Sometimes Augustus would even employ Roman knights in his plays and gladiatorial shows, until a senatorial decree forbade the practice.* After that he put on show no one of decent family other than a young man, Lycius, and only then as a sight, for he was less than two feet tall, and weighed only seventeen pounds but had a booming voice. On one day during the gladiatorial games he exhibited in the arena the first Parthian hostages ever brought to Rome and then seated them in the second row above his box. He was also in the habit of providing additional sights, if there was something available which was unusual and worth seeing. These displays would take place on days when there were no games, in whatever location was suitable. Thus, a rhinoceros was shown in the voting enclosures, a tiger in the theatre, and a serpent of fifty cubits in front of the Comitium. When he was giving votive games in the Circus he happened to fall ill and led the procession of sacred chariots reclining in his litter. On another occasion, at the inauguration of the games with which he dedicated the Theatre of Marcellus, he chanced to fall flat on his back as the joints of his curule chair had come loose. And at the games given for his grandsons, when the populace were afraid the seating was going to collapse and could not by any means be calmed or reassured, he went over from his own place and sat in the area which had given most cause for concern.

[44] The most disorderly and unruly behaviour of audiences at the games he regulated and brought under control, prompted by the insulting treatment of a senator who, when he went to some well-attended games at Puteoli, was not offered a seat by anyone. Thus, a decree of the senate was passed prescribing that whenever any kind of public spectacles were given anywhere, the first row of seats was to be reserved for senators; and Augustus banned the ambassadors of free and allied peoples from sitting in the orchestra in games at Rome, since he had discovered that sometimes even freedman came on embassies. He separated the soldiers from the civilians. To married men of the common people he assigned their own rows, while youths had a special section next to that of their tutors, and he decreed that no one dressed in dark clothing should sit in the central rows.* Nor did he allow women to watch gladiatorial fights except from the highest seats (though it had been the custom for men and women to watch such shows together).* To the Vestal Virgins alone he gave a separate place in the theatre, opposite the praetor's

tribunal.* As for shows involving athletes, he was so strict in excluding women from them that, when a boxing match was arranged for the games given in honour of his appointment as Pontifex Maximus,* he put it off until the morning of the following day and proclaimed that he did not wish to see women in the theatre before the fifth hour.

[45] He himself was in the habit of watching the circus games from the upper-storey apartments* of his friends and freedmen, but sometimes he would sit in the imperial box and in the company of his wife and children. He would stay away from the games sometimes for several hours or occasionally whole days, but he excused himself and sent others who were to take his place presiding. However, whenever he was present, he would not occupy himself with any other business. This was either to avoid the criticisms which he was aware had been made by the people of his father Julius Caesar, since the latter used to spend time at the games reading and replying to letters and reports, or else because of his own enthusiasm for and pleasure in watching the games, which he made no attempt to cover up but often frankly admitted. For this reason, even at other people's games and gladiatorial fights he would offer from his own funds rewards and prizes, numerous and splendid, and whenever he was present at a contest of the Greek kind* he rewarded all the participants according to their merits. He was keenest on watching boxers, particularly those of Latin birth, and not only the recognized and regular performers, whom he would even pit against Greeks, but also the urban rabble who, though untrained, would fight boldly in the narrow streets. Indeed, he honoured with his concern all the different sorts of people involved in providing different varieties of games for the public. He maintained and reinforced the privileges of the athletes. He forbade people from providing gladiatorial games without allowing contestants to appeal for their lives if conquered. He limited the right of magistrates, sanctioned by an old law, to punish actors at any time and in any place, restricting this to the duration of the games and within the theatre. Nevertheless, it was always with great severity that he regulated the wrestling matches and gladiatorial contests. And the misbehaviour of the actors he curtailed to such a degree that when he found out that Stephanio, an actor in Roman plays, was attended by a Roman matron with her hair cropped to look like a boy, he gave orders that the actor should be whipped with rods in the three theatres.* As for Hylas,

pantomime actor,* when the praetor made a complaint, Augustus had him scourged in the atrium of his own house, with everyone watching; while Pylades was banned from Rome and from Italy because, when a member of the audience hissed him, he gestured with his finger* to make an exhibition of him.

[46] Once the city and its affairs were thus put in order, he added to Italy's population by himself establishing twenty-eight colonies* and endowed many places with public works and sources of revenue. In some respects and to some degree he even gave Italy the same status and dignity as Rome, devising a new manner of election in which the colony decurions cast votes in each of the colonies for the city magistracies, then sent them under seal to Rome in time for the election day.* To sustain the supply of men of good family and keep up numbers among the common people, he appointed to equestrian military positions even those who were recommended by one of the towns, while to those common people who, when he visited the regions of Italy, could prove that they had sons or daughters, he would give out a thousand sesterces for each child.

[47] The more important provinces, and those which could not easily or safely be ruled by magistrates with an annual term of command, he himself took charge of, while the others he left to the proconsuls to be distributed by lot. However, he changed the arrangements for a number of provinces over the years and frequently made visits to many provinces in both categories. Some of the allied cities* whose ungoverned behaviour threatened disaster he deprived of their freedom, while to others he offered relief from their burden of debt and rebuilt others which had been destroyed in earthquakes. Some he rewarded for the services they had rendered the Roman people with a grant of Latin or Roman citizenship.* Indeed, it is my belief that there was not a province which he did not visit, with the exception of Africa and Sardinia; when he meant to cross over to these from Sicily, in pursuit of the defeated Sextus Pompeius, he was held back by continuous and severe storms and never thereafter had the opportunity or reason to make the journey.

[48] Those kingdoms which he had gained control of through conquest with a few exceptions he either restored to those from whom he had taken them or else joined them to other foreign nations. The kings to whom he was allied he also joined to one another with mutual ties and was always very quick to promote and

encourage marriages and friendships among them. He would always treat all of them with consideration as integral parts of the empire and when a ruler was too young or was failing in his powers he would appoint a regent until he had grown up or recovered his strength. Many of their children he brought up and educated together with his own.

[49] From his military forces, he stationed legions and auxiliaries in the different provinces. He posted one fleet to Misenum and the other to Ravenna to protect the upper and lower seas. The remaining forces he assigned to protect either the city or his own person, having dismissed the band of Calagurritani* whom he had kept about him as part of his bodyguard until the defeat of Antony, and then the band of Germans whom he kept until the defeat of Varus. However, he never allowed more than three cohorts in the city and these were not to have a permanent base. The others he would station in winter and summer quarters in the surrounding towns. For all soldiers, wherever they were he applied a fixed system of salaries and bonuses, stipulated in accordance with each man's rank, the length of his military service, and the rewards he would receive on his retirement, so they would not be tempted to revolt afterwards in protest over their age or lack of means. So that he would always have ready funds available to maintain them and give them their benefits, he established a military treasury to be supplied by new taxes. And so that events in all the provinces could be more speedily and promptly reported and known, he first stationed young men and later vehicles at short intervals along the military roads. The latter arrangement seems more convenient as it means that the men who have brought the letters from a particular place can themselves be questioned, if this is necessary.

[50] In sealing official documents, reports and letters, he first used a sphinx, then an image of Alexander the Great* and finally one of himself, sculpted by the hand of Dioscurides, which later emperors also continued to use as a seal, following his example. To all his letters he would add the exact time, not only of day but also of night, to indicate when they had been sent.

[51] There are many great instances of his clemency* and his lack of pretension. I shall refrain from recording each and every example of those of the opposite faction to whom he gave immunity and even allowed to hold office in the state. He was content to punish two men

of the common people, Junius Novatus and Cassius Patavinus, one with a fine and the other with a mild form of exile, although the former had publicly circulated the most bitter letter concerning Augustus under the name of the young Agrippa,* while the latter had proclaimed at a large dinner party that he lacked neither the strong desire to run the emperor through nor the spirit to do it. And at a trial, when chief among the charges made against Aemilius Aelianus of Corduba was that he was in the habit of expressing his bad opinion of Caesar, the emperor turned to the accuser and, feigning anger, said: 'I wish you would give me proof of that; I shall give Aelius reason to know that I, too, have a tongue and I shall have more to say about him.' And he took the inquiry no further either at that time or later. Moreover, when Tiberius complained rather forcefully about the same thing in a letter, he replied: 'My Tiberius, do not give way to your youthful impulses or get too angry at anyone who speaks ill of me. We should be satisfied if we have the means to prevent anyone from doing us ill.'

[52] Although he knew it was the custom to dedicate temples even to proconsuls, he would not allow them to be dedicated to himself in any province unless they were dedicated to Rome also. Within the city of Rome itself, indeed, he most obstinately refused this honour. Even the silver statues which had earlier been set up to honour him he had melted down, every one, and, with the money raised, he dedicated golden tripods to Palatine Apollo. When the people strongly pressed him to accept the dictatorship,* he went down on one knee, threw back his toga, and bared his breast, beseeching them to refrain.

[53] He always shrank from the title 'Master'* as an insult and a reproach. On one occasion at the games when he was watching a farce, the line was spoken: 'O good and just master!' and the whole audience indicated their enthusiastic agreement, as if the words were addressed to the emperor. He immediately called a halt to their unbecoming adulation with his gesture and expression and, on the next day, reproached them most severely in an edict. Thereafter he would not even allow his children and grandchildren to call him 'master', whether jokingly or in earnest, and forbade them to use such obsequious titles even among themselves. Almost always his arrival at or departure from Rome or any other town was in the evening or at night so that people would not be troubled by the need

to pay him respect.* When consul, he went about in public places on foot and at other times in a sedan chair. All and sundry were permitted to attend his receptions, including the common people,* and he acknowledged the wishes of his petitioners with such good humour that once he teased a man that he was as nervous of handing over his petition as if he were giving a present to an elephant. On days when the senate met, he always greeted the senators in the senate house,* addressing each by name with no one prompting him, while they remained in their seats. Even as he left, he would pay his respects in the same manner, while they stayed seated. In the case of many, he discharged the mutual obligations of friendship, and did not fail to attend all their feast days until he was advanced in years and had once been made uncomfortable by the crowd at a betrothal ceremony. When the senator Gallus Cerrinius had suddenly lost his sight and decided to end his life by starvation, Augustus went in person to console him, though he was not a close friend, and persuaded him to live.

[54] When he spoke in the senate, someone might say to him: 'I do not understand' or another: 'I would argue against you, if I had the chance.' From time to time when he stormed out of the senate in anger at the unbridled exchanges between the speakers, people would remind him that senators should be allowed to speak their minds on matters of state. When, during a senate review, each man was selecting his own candidate,* Antistius Labeo chose Marcus Lepidus who had been the emperor's enemy and was now in exile. Asked if there were not other men more worthy, Labeo replied that each man made his own judgement. Yet no one suffered for his outspokenness or rudeness.

[55] Even when pamphlets insulting him were circulating in the senate, he was not alarmed but took great care to refute them. Without enquiring about the authors, he merely prescribed that in future anyone who under a false name produced pamphlets or poems defaming someone should be brought to trial. [56] When he was attacked by people's spiteful or malicious jokes, he protested in an edict. However, he vetoed attempts to legislate against freedom of speech in wills.* Whenever he took part in elections for public office, he went the round of the tribes with the candidates he was recommending and entreated their support in the traditional manner. He himself would cast his own vote with his tribe, just like one of the

people. When he was a witness in court proceedings he allowed himself to be questioned and contradicted with an even temper. His Forum he made rather narrow, not daring to expropriate the owners of the adjacent houses. He never recommended his sons to the people for election without adding the words: 'If they deserve it.' When they were still boys and everyone stood to greet them in the theatre and remained standing to applaud them, he complained in the strongest terms. He wished his friends to be prominent and influential in the state, yet to have the same legal status as other men and to be governed just the same by the laws and the courts. When his close friend Nonius Asprenas was brought to trial, accused of poisoning by Cassius Severus, Augustus asked the senate to advise him where his duty lay, for he was unsure whether, if he stood by him, he might be thought to be protecting a guilty man from justice, while if he kept away, he might be thought to be betraying his friend and condemning him in advance of the verdict. And with their general agreement he sat in the court for some hours, but in silence and without even speaking to praise the defendant's character. He did appear on behalf of his clients, for instance, one Scutarius, one of his former special officers, who was accused of slander. In the case of only one man from among all those brought to trial did he bring about an acquittal and even then only after he was begged to, making a successful appeal to the accuser in the presence of the jury. The defendant was Castricius who had brought the conspiracy of Murena* to his attention.

[57] One may easily imagine how much he was loved for these virtues. The decrees of the senate I pass over as they could seem motivated by necessity or reverence. The Roman knights on their own initiative and by common consent celebrated his birthday over two days every year. People of every rank, fulfilling a vow made for his good health, would throw a coin into the lacus Curtius* every year and on the Kalends of January, too, on the Capitoline they would give a new year's gift, even when he was away from Rome. With these funds he purchased the most precious images of the gods which he dedicated in each district of the city, such as an Apollo in the Street of the Sandal Makers, a Jupiter in the Street of the Tragedian and so on. When his house on the Palatine was destroyed by fire,* veterans, guilds,* the tribes, and even individuals from other walks of life with great willingness brought funds for its rebuilding, each in

accordance with his own means, though the emperor would take only a little from each of the heaps, keeping no more than a penny from anyone. And when he returned from a provincial command, they attended him not only with congratulations but also with songs. It was the custom, too, that whenever he entered the city no one suffered punishment.

[58] All joined together with alacrity and unanimity in conferring upon him the title 'Father of the Fatherland'.* First of all the common people made the attempt, sending messengers to him at Antium. When he would not accept it they greeted him in throngs, crowned with laurel, as he arrived at the games in Rome. Soon afterwards the senators made the attempt in the senate house, issuing no decree or proclamation, but making the offer through Valerius Messala. Expressing the views of all, he said: 'May good fortune attend you and your house, Caesar Augustus! For with these words, in our view, we are praying for the perpetual happiness of the state and the felicity of this city. With one voice, the senate, together with the people of Rome, salutes you as Father of the Fatherland.' Moved to tears, Augustus replied to him with these words (which I quote directly as I did those of Messala): 'My highest hopes realized, O senators, what else can I ask of the gods, but that they permit me to retain your general good will to the very end of my days?' [59] In honour of the doctor Antonius Musa, through whose skill the emperor recovered from a dangerous illness,* they raised money to set up a statue, next to the image of Aesculapius.* Some heads of families stipulated in their wills that sacrificial victims should be driven to the Capitoline by their heirs and that a thank-offering should be made on their behalf, because Augustus had survived them, and that they should carry before them a placard to proclaim their purpose. A number of Italian cities made the anniversary of his first visit to them the first day of their year. And many of the provinces, besides setting up temples and altars, established five-yearly games in nearly all their towns.

[60] The friendly and allied kings, each in his own kingdom, founded cities named Caesarea and they resolved jointly, with all of them contributing to the cost, to complete the Temple of Olympian Zeus at Athens, on which work had begun long ago,* and to dedicate it to his Genius. And often they would leave their kingdoms and pay their respects to him, as clients, dressed in togas and without their

regal insignia,* not only when he was in Rome but even when he travelled in the provinces.

[61] Since I have now described him as a commander and magistrate and shown how he governed the state throughout the entire world in war and in peace, I shall now discuss his personal and domestic life, giving an account of his character and fortune at home and with his family, from his youth until his dying day.

His mother he lost during his first consulship and his sister Octavia* in his fifty-fourth year.* To both he paid particular respect when they lived and the greatest honours when they died.

[62] When he was a young man he had been betrothed to the daughter of Publius Servilius Isauricus but when, after their first dispute, he was reconciled to Antony and both their armies entreated them to cement the alliance with a family tie, Augustus married Antony's stepdaughter Claudia, who was Fulvia's daughter from her marriage to Publius Clodius and only just of marriageable age. However, when relations soured with his mother-in-law, Fulvia, he divorced her before he had consummated the marriage. Soon afterwards he took as wife Scribonia, who had previously been married to two men of consular rank and had already produced children for one of them. He divorced her, too, 'unable to tolerate her bad character any longer', as he wrote and at once broke up Livia Drusilla's marriage to Tiberius Nero, although she was pregnant at the time. Her he loved dearly, favouring her all his life beyond all others.

[63] From Scribonia he had a daughter, Julia, but from Livia no children, despite his dearest wish. Though a child was conceived, it was born prematurely. He married Julia first to Marcellus, son of his sister Octavia, although he had only just reached adulthood; then, when he died, to Marcus Agrippa, having persuaded his sister to give up her son-in-law to him (for at that time Agrippa was married to one of the two Marcellas and had children by her). When he too had died, Augustus considered possible matches, even with members of the equestrian order, over a long period of time, before choosing his own stepson Tiberius, forcing him to divorce his pregnant wife by whom he was already a father. Mark Antony writes that Augustus first betrothed Julia to his own son Antony, and later to Cotiso, king of the Getae, at the same time requesting in turn the hand of the king's daughter for himself.*

[64] From Agrippa and Julia he had three grandsons, Gaius,

Lucius, and Agrippa, and two granddaughters, Julia and Agrippina. The younger Julia he married to the son of Lucius Paulus the censor and Agrippina to Germanicus, his sister's grandson. Gaius and Lucius he adopted into his own household, having made a ritual purchase of them with penny and scales* from their father Agrippa, and, from a tender age, brought them up to serve the state, having them designated consuls* and sending them off to tour the provinces and armies. He so educated his daughter and granddaughters that they even acquired the habit of working wool,* and forbade them to say or do anything underhand or which might not be reported in the daily chronicles.* So strictly did he prohibit them from associating with anyone outside the family that he wrote to Lucius Vinicius, a distinguished and honourable young man, to reprove him for his immodest action in once coming to pay his respects to his daughter at Baiae. He himself taught his grandsons to read, to take notes, and many other skills,* particularly insisting that they take his handwriting as their model. Whenever he dined with them he would always sit them with him on the lowest couch,* and whenever he made a journey they would always precede his carriage or ride beside him on horseback.

[65] But his happiness and confidence in the offspring of his house and their upbringing were destroyed by Fortune. The Julias, his daughter and granddaughter, he sent into exile, for they were tainted with every form of vice. He lost both Gaius and Lucius within the space of eighteen months, Gaius dying in Lycia and Lucius in Massilia. He adopted his third grandson Agrippa and, at the same time, his stepson Tiberius, by a law passed by the assembly of the curiae in the Forum.* But he disinherited Agrippa soon afterwards because of his low and violent character and sent him away to Surrentum.* Yet he bore the deaths of his dear ones more readily than their disgrace. For he was not so very cast down by the loss of Gaius and Lucius, but in the case of his daughter he sent a complaint to the senate to be reported by a quaestor, while he himself stayed away, and, for a long time, overcome with shame, he avoided people's company and even contemplated having her killed. Certainly, when at around that time one of the freedwomen, Phoebe, who had been party to her activities, hanged herself, he observed that he would rather have been the father of Phoebe. In her place of exile he banned Julia from drinking wine or enjoying any other relative

luxury and would allow no man, whether slave or free, to go near her without his express permission, insisting that he should be informed in such cases of the individual's age, stature, colouring, and even whether he had any distinguishing features or scars. After five years he at last had her transferred from her island* to the mainland and a somewhat milder regime. He could by no means be persuaded that she should be recalled altogether, and when the Roman people repeatedly entreated him and pressed him insistently he called out before a public meeting that they should have such daughters and such wives. When his granddaughter Julia produced a child after her fall from grace, he insisted that it should be neither acknowledged nor brought up. When Agrippa became no more tractable but rather more unbalanced daily, he had him taken to an island* and posted a detachment of soldiers to guard him there. He even prescribed through a senatorial decree that he should be held in perpetuity in that particular place. And whenever anyone referred either to him or to one of the Julias he used to groan and even exclaim:

Oh, that I had never married and died without children!*

The only terms he used for them were his three sores or his three cancers.

[66] While he did not readily make new friends, he cherished his existing ones most constantly, not only acknowledging fittingly the virtues and merits of each of them but even putting up with their vices and faults, provided they were not excessive. From among all his friends, scarcely any can be found who fell into disgrace, aside from Salvidienus Rufus and Cornelius Gallus. The former he had raised to the rank of consul and the latter to the prefecture of Egypt, in both cases from humble beginnings. Salvidienus he handed over to the senate for punishment when he plotted revolution, while Gallus he banned from his home and from his provinces because of his ungrateful and malicious temper. But when he, too, as a result of the condemnations and senatorial decrees of his accusers, was forced to die, Augustus praised the loyalty of those who were so indignant on his behalf, yet also shed tears and bemoaned his lot, that he alone had not the power to decide how far he wished to take his anger toward his friends. His other friends, despite occasional disagreements, flourished till the end of their days, in power and wealth the leading men of their respective orders. He sometimes found Marcus

Agrippa too impatient and Maecenas too talkative, to mention no others; for the former, when he had some slight reason to suspect Augustus' feelings had cooled and that Marcellus was preferred to himself, left everyone behind and went off to Mytilene, while the latter gave away to his wife Terentia the secret that Murena's conspiracy had been discovered.*

He required from his friends their good will in return, as much from the dead as from the living. For, although he was far from seeking to be made people's heir and would never accept anything left to him in the will of someone he did not know, the final judgements of his friends he scrutinized with the greatest of care, nor was his regret feigned if his treatment was too mean or unaccompanied by compliments, nor his joy, if he was acknowledged with gratitude and affection.* It was his custom when he received legacies or inheritances* from anyone who was a parent either to pass it on at once to their children, or, if they were not yet of age, to give it back to them with interest on the day they received their toga of manhood or married.

[67] As patron and master he was no less exacting than he was kind and forgiving. Many of his freedmen he honoured greatly and was very close to them, such as Licius and Celadus and others. When his slave Cosmus spoke very ill of him he merely put him in irons. When, as he was walking together with his steward Diomedes, they were suddenly attacked by a wild boar and Diomedes in fear got behind him, he chose to see this as evidence of cowardice rather than of intent to harm, and, because there had been no plot, turned a situation involving serious danger into a joke. But when he discovered that Polus, who was among the dearest of his freedmen, was having affairs with married women of rank, he forced him to kill himself. And, because his secretary Thallus had revealed the contents of a letter for five hundred denarii, he had his legs broken. As for the tutor and attendants of his son Gaius, because they had taken advantage of his ill-health and death to indulge their pride and greed in his province, he had them thrown into the river with heavy weights loaded onto their necks.

[68] In his early youth he was accused of many kinds of vice. Sextus Pompeius attacked him for being effeminate.* Mark Antony alleged he had bought his adoption by his uncle with sexual favours, while Antony's brother Lucius asserted that after his chastity had been assailed by Caesar he had even submitted himself to Aulus

Hirtius in Spain for the sum of three hundred thousand sesterces and that he was in the habit of applying hot nutshells to singe his legs,* so that the hairs would grow softer. On one occasion, however, on a day when games were being held, the entire people interpreted as an insult directed at him and with great accord showed their approval of a line proclaimed on stage by a special priest of the Mother of the Gods,* as he beat his drum:

See how an effeminate rules the globe with his finger!*

[69] Not even his friends deny that he committed adultery, suggesting by way of excuse that his motive was not lust but policy, as he sought to find out the plans of his opponents more easily through each man's wife. Mark Antony objected not only that he had contracted his marriage to Livia in excessive haste but that he had in front of her husband led the wife of a man of consular rank from the dining-room off into his bedroom, later returning her to the party with burning ears and dishevelled hair,* also, that he divorced his wife Scribonia because she showed too openly her resentment at the influence of his mistress, and that he got his friends to procure women for him, stripping naked respectable married ladies and grown girls not yet married to inspect them, as if they were the wares of Toranius the slave-dealer. Antony even wrote to him in the following words, without any note of coolness or hostility: 'What's troubling you? That I'm having a go at the queen? Is she my wife? Have I just started this or has it been going on for nine years? So do you only have a go at your Drusilla? As you are a man in good health, I'm sure when you read this you'll have been going at Tertulla or Terentilla or Rufilla* or Salvia Titisenia or all of them. Does it matter where and with whom you get your thrills?'

[70] There were also stories about a rather secret dinner he arranged, which was commonly referred to as the dinner of the Twelve Gods.* For this the guests reclined in the dress of one or other of the gods or goddesses, with Augustus himself attired as Apollo.* Not only do Antony's letters take him to task for this most acerbically, naming each of the guests, but there are also some notorious verses whose author is unknown:

As soon as that company of villains had hired their costumes,
Mallia saw six gods and six goddesses,

While Caesar impiously dared to play at being Apollo
And represented new adulteries of the gods at his banquet.
At this time all deities removed themselves from earth
And Jupiter himself abandoned his golden throne.*

Stories about the banquet were fuelled by the fact that the city was at that time suffering from hunger and food shortages and on the following day there was a protest that all the food had been eaten by the gods and that Caesar was indeed Apollo but Apollo the Tormenter (the god is worshipped under this title in one part of the city). He was also notorious for his passion for precious tableware and Corinthian bronze and for his love of gambling. Indeed, in the time of the proscriptions, the following words appeared on his statue: 'My father dealt in silver, I deal in Corinthian,'* for it was thought that the names of some men had been included among those proscribed because of their Corinthian vases. Then, during the Sicilian war, the following epigram was current:

After he was twice defeated at sea and lost his ships,
Hoping to win at something, he gambled constantly.

[71] Of all these accusations and slanders, the allegations that he had submitted himself to men he refuted with the greatest of ease through the purity of his life both at the time and later, similarly his alleged greed for riches, since on the capture of Alexandria he took nothing for himself from the royal treasure apart from one murrine* goblet and soon afterwards he had melted down all the golden vessels, which had been in everyday use.* As regards the affairs with women, the allegations held. Indeed, later on he had a keen taste for deflowering virgins, who would even be procured for him from all over the place by his wife. He was not concerned at all at his own reputation for gambling, playing unpretentiously and openly for his own amusement, even when he was an old man, not only in the month of December* but also on other holidays and even on working days. There is no doubt about this; a letter exists in his own hand in which he says:

I dined, my dear Tiberius, with the same men. Vinicius and the elder Silius joined the party. During the meal we gambled like old men, both yesterday and today. When the dice were thrown, whoever had got a 'dog' or a six put in a denarius for each of the dice. Then whoever threw a Venus scooped the lot.*

And again in another letter he wrote:

My dear Tiberius, we enjoyed a very pleasant Quinquatria.* For we played games all day long and made the gaming board hot. Your brother made a great fuss, though in the end he didn't lose much at all, for little by little against his expectations he won back most of the large sums he had initially lost. For my part, I lost twenty thousand sesterces, since I was playing extravagantly with an open hand, as I generally do. For if I had asked everyone to return for the stakes I had let go, or had kept for myself what I gave away to others, I would have been fifty thousand up. But I prefer it like this, for my generosity will bring me celestial glory.

He wrote to his daughter: 'I have sent you two hundred and fifty denarii, the same amount I gave to each of my guests, in case they wanted to play dice or odds and evens during dinner.'

[72] It is generally agreed that in other aspects of his life he was very restrained, attracting no suspicion of any other faults. He lived at first near the Roman Forum, at the top of the Ringmakers' steps, in a house which had belonged to the orator Calvus. Later he lived on the Palatine but in the no less modest house which had belonged to Hortensius. It was notable neither for its size nor for its decor, having within it small colonnades of Alban stone* and no marble decoration at all nor any suites with lavish flooring. And for more than forty years, he slept in the same bedroom winter and summer, and even though he found the city detrimental to his health in winter, he still continued to spend his winters in town. If ever he had some business he wanted to conduct in secret or without interruption, he had a particular room on a higher level which he used to call his Syracuse or his little workshop and this is where he would go, or else to the suburban villa of one of his freedmen. When he was ill he would sleep in the house of Maecenas. For relaxation he would generally repair to the coast and the islands off Campania, or else to the towns closest to Rome, Lanuvium, Praeneste, and Tibur, too, where he would frequently pronounce judgement from the portico of the Temple of Hercules. He was angered by extensive and luxurious places in the country and when his granddaughter Julia had had a rather lavish place built he had it razed to the ground. His own country places, modest as they were, he furnished not with statues or painted panels but rather with terraces and plantations and objects notable for their great age and rarity, such as the enormous bones of

huge monsters and beasts from Capri, which were said to be the bones of giants, and the weaponry of heroes.

[73] The plainness of his household utensils and furniture is evident even now from the remaining couches and tables, many of which are scarcely smart enough for an ordinary citizen. They say that he would always sleep on a bed which was low and equipped with simple coverings. He rarely wore clothes which were not produced in his own household by his sister, his wife, his daughter, or his granddaughters.* His togas were neither close-fitting nor voluminous, his purple stripe neither broad nor narrow.* His shoes were a little raised to make him seem taller than he was. At all times he would keep clothes for public wear and shoes in his bed-chamber, ready for any sudden and unexpected occasions.

[74] He gave dinner parties with great frequency, though they were always formal, having great care for the rank and personal qualities of his guests. Valerius Messala relates that he never invited anyone who was a freedman to dinner with the exception of Menas, and even then only after he had been deemed of free birth, as a result of the defeat of Sextus Pompeius' fleet.* Augustus himself writes that he once invited a man in whose villa he used to stay* and who had earlier acted as his scout. Often he would arrive at the dinner party rather late and leave rather early, so that the guests would begin their meal before he had taken his place and would stay on after he had left. He would serve a dinner of three courses or, when he was being particularly generous, six; while avoiding extravagance he was always hospitable. He would draw into the general conversation those who were silent or whispering and he would provide entertainers and actors and even street performers from the circus, and frequently story-tellers also.

[75] Holidays and religious festivals he would observe lavishly on the whole, but sometimes just with amusements. On the Saturnalia,* and at other times if the fancy took him, he would sometimes distribute gifts of clothing, gold and silver, and sometimes coins of every denomination, including old ones issued by kings and other nations, and occasionally nothing but hair-cloth, sponges, pokers, tongs, and other things of that kind with mysterious and punning labels. At dinner parties he would auction lots of widely differing value or else pictures with only their reverse sides on view, thus through the dictates of chance frustrating or fulfilling the hopes of

the purchasers. He would insist that every couch* should make bids and have a share in either the loss or the gain.

[76] As for food (for I do not omit even this), he ate sparingly and generally only simple food. He had a particular taste for coarse bread, small fish, moist cheese moulded by hand, and green figs from the second crop. He would even take food before dinner, the time and place dictated by his stomach. These are his own words from his letters: 'I had some bread and some little figs in my carriage.' And another time: 'When I was on my way home from the Regia in my litter, I ate an ounce of bread and a few grapes from a hard-skinned cluster.' And again: 'No Jew, my dear Tiberius, observes his Sabbath fast* so scrupulously as I have kept fast today, for it was only in the baths after the first hour of the night that I ate two mouthfuls of bread before I was rubbed with oil.' Because of his carelessness in this respect, he would often eat on his own either before the beginning or after the end of a dinner party, while during the party itself he would not touch a thing.*

[77] He was naturally inclined to be very sparing in his consumption of wine also.* Cornelius Nepos records that when he was with his troops at Mutina he would not usually have more than three glasses at dinner. Later on, even when he was indulging himself most freely, he never had more than a pint; if he had more than this, he would throw it up. His favourite wine was Raetican but he rarely drank before dinner. Instead of a drink he would have some bread soaked in cold water or a piece of cucumber, a tender lettuce-heart or an apple, fresh or dried, with a tart flavour.

[78] After lunch, he would take a short rest, just as he was, with his clothes and shoes on and no blanket for his feet, putting his hand over his eyes. After dinner he withdrew to his couch where he would work by lamplight. There he would remain until late into the night when he had completed what remained of the day's business or most of it. He went thence to bed where he would sleep no more than seven hours and even then not continuously for he would wake up three or four times in the course of those hours.* If, as happens, he could not get back to sleep, he would summon readers or story-tellers and when sleep had returned to him he would often not wake until after first light. When he was awake after dark, he would always have someone sitting with him. He hated having to get up early and, if he had to rise earlier than usual for reasons of business or for some

religious purpose, to minimize the inconvenience he would stay as close by as possible in the room of one of his friends. Still, he was often short of sleep and would drop off as he was being carried around the streets or when there was some delay and his litter was set down.

[79] His appearance was striking and he remained exceedingly graceful all through his life, though he cared nothing for adorning himself. He was so little concerned about arranging his hair that he would employ several hairdressers simultaneously for speed and sometimes he would have his hair clipped and his beard shaved at the same time, while he himself meanwhile was reading something or even doing some writing. The expression of his face, whether he was speaking or silent, was so calm and serene that one of the leading men of Gaul confessed to his fellows that he was so impressed and won over that he abandoned his plan to throw the emperor over the cliff, when he was admitted to his presence as he was crossing the Alps. His eyes were clear and bright; he liked it to be thought that they revealed a godlike power and was pleased if someone who regarded him closely then lowered their gaze, as though from the sun's force.* In old age, however, the sight of his left eye diminished. His few teeth were weak and decayed. His hair curled slightly and was yellowish. His eyebrows met. His ears were of medium size. His nose protruded above then curved in below. His complexion was between dark and pale. He was short of stature (although his freedman and record-keeper Julius Marathus relates that he was five feet nine inches tall*) but did not appear so because his limbs were well made and well proportioned so that one only noticed his height by comparison when someone taller was standing next to him.

[80] It is said that his body was mottled with birthmarks spread out over his chest and stomach which in their shape, number, and arrangement resembled the constellation of the bear, but that he also had numerous callouses, resembling ringworm, which were caused by itching on his body and harsh and frequent use of the strigil.* He was rather weak in his left hip, thigh, and leg so that sometimes he even limped but he got his strength back through treatment with sand and reeds.* In the index finger of his right hand, too, he sometimes felt such a weakness that when it was bent up and contracted in the cold he was hardly able to write even with a fingerstall made of

horn. He also complained about his bladder, though the pain was relieved when he finally passed some stones in his urine.

[81] In the course of his life he experienced a number of severe and dangerous illnesses, particularly after the conquest of Spain, when, desperately ill as a result of abscesses in his liver, he was obliged to undergo an unusual and dangerous remedy; since hot fomentations were unsuccessful the doctor, Antonius Musa,* made him submit to cold ones. Some maladies recurred every year and at a particular time. Around the time of his birthday* he was frequently unwell. In early spring he suffered from an enlargement of the midriff, while when the winds were southerly it was catarrh. His constitution was disturbed as a result, so that he could not easily tolerate either cold or heat.

[82] In winter he wrapped himself up in four tunics and a thick toga, as well as an undershirt, a woollen vest, and coverings for his thighs and shins. In the summer he would have the doors of his bedroom open and often he would sleep in an open court beside a fountain, with someone fanning him, too. He could not bear the sun even in winter and he would wear a broad-brimmed hat when he went for a walk in the open at home also. Journeys by litter he would make by night and in short and easy stages so that it would take him two days to reach Praeneste or Tibur.* And if a place could be reached by sea, he always preferred to take a boat. Such was the state of his health that he took great care of himself, above all bathing only rarely. More often he would be rubbed with oil or work up a sweat by a fire, after which he had poured over him water, either cool or lukewarm from the heat of the sun. Whenever he needed to use hot salt water or sulphur baths for his muscles, he made do with sitting in a wooden tub, which he himself referred to by the Spanish term *dureta*, and immersing his hands and feet in turn.

[83] Immediately after the civil wars he stopped taking part in exercises with horse or arms in the Campus, at first turning to pass-ball and balloon-ball,* but not long afterwards confining himself to riding or going for walks, at the end of which he would do some running and jumping, wrapped in a cloak or blanket. For relaxation he would sometimes go fishing with a rod, and sometimes play at dice, or marbles or nuts with little boys. Boys whose looks and manners were endearing he would seek out from all over the place, but

particularly Moors and Syrians. For he loathed dwarves and cripples and anything like that as ill-omened and freaks of nature.

[84] From his earliest youth he pursued eloquence and the liberal arts with the utmost diligence. During the war at Mutina, despite the mass of things he had to attend to, he is said to have spent some time each day reading, writing, and declaiming. Indeed, thereafter he never once addressed the senate, or people, or army without first preparing and organizing his speech, although he was quite capable of speaking off the cuff without preparation. And so that he would not risk forgetting, or waste time in memorizing, his practice was to read everything out from a written text. Remarks also to individuals and even to his wife Livia, if they were about something serious, he would always write out and read from his notes, in case in speaking off the cuff he should say less or more than he meant to. His manner of speaking was attractive and quite particular; he practised regularly with an elocution teacher. But sometimes when his throat troubled him he addressed the people by means of a herald.

[85] He composed numerous works of various kinds in prose, some of which he would read to a family gathering or as if to an auditorium, for instance his 'Reply to Brutus concerning Cato'.^{*} He read these volumes through almost to the end, but handed them over to Tiberius to finish when he was tired, being then advanced in years. He also wrote, 'Exhortations to Philosophy' and something 'On his own Life',^{*} which he described in thirteen books up to the Cantabrian war and no further. His ventures into poetry were brief. One book, written by him in hexameter verse, survives which has as its subject and title 'Sicily'. There is another, similarly brief, 'Epigrams' which he mainly composed when taking his bath. However, the tragedy which he began with great enthusiasm he later destroyed when the writing did not go well. And when his friends asked what was happening to Ajax he replied that Ajax had fallen on his sponge.*

[86] He cultivated an elegant and restrained manner of speaking which avoided the vanity of an artificial style of arrangement, as well as the 'rank odour', as he termed it, 'of far-fetched vocabulary'; his principal concern was to express his meaning as clearly as possible. The better to achieve this end, and so that nowhere would a reader or a listener be confused or slow to understand, he had no hesitation in putting prepositions before the names of cities nor in repeating rather frequently conjunctions whose omission leads to some obscur-

ity, even if it is more stylish. Affected writers and those fond of archiac forms, as erring in opposite directions, he despised equally and sometimes took them to task, particularly his friend Maecenas whose ‘scented curls’, as he called them, he attacked relentlessly, making fun of him through parody. But he did not spare Tiberius either, watching out for his sometimes effete and far-fetched expressions. Mark Antony, however, he laid into as a madman on the grounds that he aimed to produce writings which would be admired rather than understood. Then, making a joke of his perversity and inconsistency in choosing a style of speaking, he added this comment: ‘Are you so uncertain, too, whether you should take as a model Annius Cimber* or Veranius Flaccus that you even make use of terms which Sallustius Crispus took from Cato’s “Origines”?* Or do you think the high flown style of Asiatic orators with their empty phrases should be adopted into our own language?’* Once, when in a letter he was praising the intelligence of his granddaughter Agrippina, he commented: ‘But you really must take care that you do not write or speak with affectation.’

[87] Some characteristic expressions he used rather frequently in everyday speech can be seen in letters in his own hand, in which he sometimes writes, when he wants to say that certain men will never pay: ‘they’ll pay on the Greek Kalends.’* And when he wants to encourage his addressee to put up with present circumstances whatever they are, he says: ‘Let us be satisfied with the Cato we have.’ To convey the speed of something fast, he says, ‘Quicker than asparagus cooks.’ He would often say *baceolus* [‘idiotic’] instead of *stultus* [‘stupid’], *pulleiacus* [‘darkish’] for *pullus* [‘dark’], *vacerrosus* [‘crack-brained’] for *cerritus* [‘insane’] and talked of feeling *vapide* [‘flat’] rather than *male* [‘ill’], as well as using *betizare* [‘go like a beet’] instead of *languere* [‘feel weak’] or, as common people say, *lachanizare* [‘flop’]. He would also say *simus* for *sumus* [‘we are’] and used *domos* for the genitive singular form [of *domus* ‘house’] instead of *domuos*. His usage of these two forms was invariable, in case anyone should mistake for errors what was his usual practice. In an examination of his handwriting the following characteristics stand out: he does not divide up his words and when there is not space for all the letters in a line, instead of running them on into the next line, he writes them underneath and draws a line around them.

[88] He did not particularly observe orthography, that is the

practice and rule of spelling as taught by the grammarians, and seems rather to have followed the guidance of those who advise writing words as they are spoken. As for his changing or leaving out not just letters but even syllables, that is a mistake people often make. I would not myself have pointed it out except that, to my surprise, others have reported that he appointed a replacement for a provincial governor who was an ex-consul on the grounds that he was an uncouth and ignorant fellow, for he had noticed that the man wrote *ixi* for *ipsi* ['themselves']. If he wanted to write in code, he would put 'b' for 'a', 'c' for 'b' and so on for the rest of the alphabet but putting a double 'a' for 'x'.

[89] Nor was his interest in the teachings of the Greeks any less keen. His teacher of declamation was Apollodorus of Pergamon whom, despite the man's great age, he took with him from Rome when, still in his youth, he made a journey to Apollonia.* Later he took his fill of various kinds of learning in the company of Areus, the philosopher, and his sons Dionysius and Nicanor. He did not, however, reach the stage of being able to speak Greek fluently or compose anything in it. If it was required, he would put something together in Latin and have others translate it. Yet he was not altogether unfamiliar with their poetry and even took pleasure in old comedies, often having them put on in public shows. When reading authors in Greek or Latin, he looked out most particularly for precepts and examples which would be of benefit in public or private life. These he would often copy out word for word and send to members of his household, or to those in charge of armies or provinces or to the city magistrates, whenever any of them was in need of advice. Sometimes he would even read out texts in their entirety to the senate and would have them included in edicts to the people, for instance Quintus Metellus' 'On Increasing the Population' and Rutilius' 'On Limiting Building', so as to show people in both cases that he was not the first to raise such matters but that they had been a cause of concern in earlier days.* He gave every encouragement to the men of talent of his day. When they gave recitations of their work he was a well-disposed and patient listener, not only in the case of poetry and history, but also speeches and treatises. He took great offence, however, if anything was written about him which was not weighty and by the best of authors, often instructing the praetors that his name should not be made commonplace in speaking competitions.

[90] In matters to do with the divine, we are told that his attitudes were as follows: he showed some weakness in being so afraid of thunder and lightning that he always took with him a sealskin for protection* and at any sign of a big storm he would take refuge in a room which was underground and vaulted. As I said earlier,* he once had a close brush with lightning when making a journey by night.

[91] He paid regard both to his own dreams and dreams others had about him. Though he had made a decision because of ill health not to leave his tent at the battle of Philippi, he did leave it nevertheless because of the warning in a friend's dream. This was fortunate, as it turned out, for the camp was captured and his litter was run through and pulled apart in the enemy attack, as it was thought he was still lying there. Always during the spring he himself would have frequent and alarming dreams which were without substance and came to nothing. At other times they were less frequent but more likely to have significance. As he used to make constant visits to the Temple of Jupiter the Thunderer which he had dedicated on the Capitoline, he dreamed that Jupiter Capitolinus complained to him that he had taken away his worshippers and that he himself replied that he had placed Jupiter the Thunderer there beside him as a doorkeeper. Soon after, in consequence, he had bells put on the apex of the Thunderer's roof, since these usually hang from doors. It was also because of a dream that on a particular day every year he would beg from the people, holding out his empty hand for them to put pennies in.*

[92] He would respect some auspices and omens as the most reliable of indicators. If his shoes were put on in the morning the wrong way, the left instead of the right, it was a bad omen. If, when he was embarking on a long journey by land or by sea, there happened to be drizzling rain, it was good omen indicating that he would return soon and with success. However, he was particularly influenced by prodigies. When a palm tree* sprang up between the joints in the paving in front of his house he moved it to the inner court of his household gods and took great care to ensure its flourishing. When a most ancient oak tree on the island of Capri, whose branches had withered and drooped to the ground, recovered at his arrival, he was so delighted that he handed over Aenaria to the city of Naples in exchange for the island.* He also had regard for particular days, never setting out on a journey the day after market-day,* or embarking on

any important business on the Nones; though in this case, as he writes to Tiberius, all he feared was the unlucky sound of the name.*

[93] As for the religious customs of foreigners, some he regarded with reverence as ancient and traditional, while the rest he held in disdain. For he was initiated into the mysteries at Athens* and when later at Rome he was sitting in judgement in a case concerning the privileges of priests of Athenian Ceres and some rather secret matters were being discussed, he sent away the court and the crowd of bystanders and heard the disputants alone. On the other hand, not only did he omit to make a small detour to see Apis,* when travelling through, but he even praised his grandson Gaius because on a journey through Judaea he did not pay his respects in Jerusalem.*

[94] And now that we are on this subject, it would not be irrelevant to add an account of the events before his birth, on the very day he was born, and subsequently, from which could be drawn the hope and expectation of his greatness and enduring good fortune. When, in ancient times, part of the wall of Velitrae had been touched by lightning, this was seen as a sign that a citizen of the town would one day be ruler; bolstered by this, the people of Velitrae immediately waged war with the Roman people, and on many subsequent occasions too, almost to their own destruction. Finally, however, it became clear that this event had been a sign portending the power of Augustus. Julius Marathus records that a few months before Augustus was born a prodigy was generally observed at Rome, which announced that nature was bringing forth a king for the Roman people. The senate, he continues, was most alarmed and agreed that no child born in that year should be raised. However, those whose wives were pregnant ensured that the decree was not registered in the treasury,* since each hoped that the prodigy referred to his own child. I read in the books of Asclepiades of Mendes, entitled 'Theologoumena', that Atia, attending the sacred rites of Apollo in the middle of the night, had her litter positioned in the temple and fell asleep, while the other matrons were also sleeping. All of a sudden, a serpent slid up to her, then quickly went away. On waking, she purified herself, as she would after sleeping with her husband. And at once there appeared on her body a mark in the image of a snake and she was never able to get rid of it, so that ever afterwards she avoided going to the public baths. Augustus was born ten months later and for this reason is believed to be the son of Apollo. It was

Atia, too, who before she gave birth, dreamed that her insides were carried to the stars and spread over all the earth and the skies. Octavius, the father, dreamed that the sun rose from Atia's womb.

On the day Augustus was born, when the conspiracy of Catiline was being discussed in the senate house and Octavius stayed away until late because his wife was in labour, Publius Nigidius, hearing why he was delayed, when informed of the hour of the birth, asserted (as is generally known) that the master of the world was born. When Octavius, who was leading an army through remote regions of Thrace, sought guidance concerning his son at some barbarian rituals in the grove of Father Liber,* the same prediction was made by the priests, for so great a flame had leapt up when they poured wine on the altar, that it passed beyond the peak of the temple roof and right up to the sky, a portent which had only previously occurred when Alexander the Great* offered sacrifice at that altar. And on the very next night thereafter, he dreamed he saw his son of greater than mortal size with a thunderbolt and sceptre and emblems of Jupiter Best and Greatest and a radiate crown, on a chariot decorated with laurel drawn by twelve horses of astonishing whiteness.

When Augustus was still a baby, as is recorded in the writings of Gaius Drusus, he was placed one evening by his nurse in his cot on level ground but the next morning he had disappeared. He was only found, after a long search, in a tower of great height where he lay facing the rising sun. When he first began to speak, he ordered some frogs to be silent who happened to be croaking in his grandfather's villa and they say that from that time no frog croaked there. When he was having a snack in a grove by the fourth milestone along the road to Campania, suddenly an eagle snatched the bread from his hand and, after flying up high into the air, unexpectedly came back and, dropping down gently, returned it to him. After the dedication of the Capitoline temple, Quintus Catulus* had dreams for two nights in succession: first that Jupiter Best and Greatest, when a number of youths were playing around his altar, took one of them aside and placed in the fold of his toga the image of the republic, which he carried in his hand; and, on the next night, that he noticed the same boy in the lap of Capitoline Jupiter and when he gave orders that the boy be brought down, this was forbidden by a warning from the god, as the boy was being reared for the salvation of the state. And on

the next day Catulus encountered Augustus, who was otherwise unknown to him, and looking upon him with wonder, remarked on his great similarity to the boy in his dream. Others give a different account of Catulus' first dream, namely that when a number of well-born youths asked Jupiter for a guardian, he pointed out one of their number, on whom they were to depend for all their wishes and, having touched the boy's mouth with his fingers then brought them to his own lips. Marcus Cicero, when following Julius Caesar up to the Capitol, happened to tell his friends of his own dream of the previous night: a boy of noble appearance was let down from the sky on a golden chain. He came to rest before the doors of the Capitoline temple and was presented with a whip by Jupiter. Immediately afterwards Cicero saw Augustus, who was then relatively unknown and had been summoned to the ceremony by his great-uncle Caesar, and declared that he was the one whose image had appeared to him in his dream.

When Augustus took on the toga of manhood, his broad-striped tunic was ripped in two and fell at his feet. Some interpreted this as meaning no less than that the order whose emblem this was would some time become subject to him. The Deified Julius, in the course of taking over a place for his camp at Munda, when a palm tree was discovered in the wood which was being cut down, gave orders that it be preserved as an omen of victory. From this a shoot at once sprang forth which within a few days had so matured that it not only equalled its parent in size but even overshadowed it and it was filled with the nests of doves, even though that breed of bird has a particular aversion to hard and spiky leaves. They say that Caesar was particularly influenced by that sign in wishing for no other successor than his sister's grandson. Having withdrawn to Apollonia, Augustus went with Agrippa to the studio of the astrologer Theogenes. When a great and almost incredible future was predicted for Agrippa, who was the first to put his questions, Augustus concealed the details of his own birth and kept refusing to reveal them, through fear or shame that he himself would turn out to be of lesser importance. However, when, after much persuasion, he slowly and unwillingly disclosed them, Theogenes jumped up and venerated him. Soon Augustus had acquired such faith in fate that he made public his horoscope and had a silver coin struck with the image of the star sign Capricorn, under which he was born.

[95] When he returned from Apollonia, after the death of Caesar, and entered the city, all at once, although the sky was clear and calm, a circle appeared around the sun, like a rainbow, and suddenly the monument to Caesar's daughter Julia was struck by lightning. In Augustus' first consulship, when he was taking the auspices, twelve vultures appeared, as they had to Romulus,* and, when he slaughtered the victims, all their livers were found to be doubled inwards underneath; all the experts agreed in interpreting this as an omen portending a good and great future.

[96] He even sensed in advance what would be the outcome of all his wars. When the troops of the triumvirs had withdrawn to Bononia an eagle, which came to rest on the top of his tent, set upon two ravens who were attacking it from each side, bringing them to the ground. From this the entire army drew the conclusion that such a dispute would arise between the colleagues as indeed happened, and predicted what the outcome would be. When Augustus was travelling to Philippi a Thessalian declared that his victory was assured on the authority of the Deified Julius, whose image had appeared to him when he was travelling along a byway. When a sacrifice that was being offered near Perusia did not go well and he gave orders that more victims should be offered, the enemy suddenly burst in and seized all the ritual equipment. The *haruspices* agreed that the dangers and setbacks which were predicted for the sacrificer would all befall those who had taken the entrails, and this was exactly what happened. The day before he and his fleet engaged in the Sicilian war, he was walking along the shore when a fish jumped out of the water and landed at his feet. When at Actium he was going to join the fray, he met an ass with his driver. The man's name was Eutychus, while the animal was called Nicon.* After his victory he placed bronze images of them both in the temple which he had made of the place where his camp had been.

[97] His death also, which I shall recount later, and his divinization thereafter were both foretold through the clearest signs. When he was performing the rites* to mark the end of the lustrum in the Campus Martius with a great crowd of the people in attendance, an eagle flew around him a number of times, then went over to a nearby temple where it landed on the first letter of the word 'Agrippa'. Noticing this, he instructed his colleague Tiberius to pronounce the vows which it is customary to undertake for the next lustrum. For he

himself, although the tablets were written out and ready, was not willing to embark upon what he would not bring to a conclusion. At around the same time, the first letter of his name was struck from the inscription on his statue by a bolt of lightning. This was understood to mean that he would only live for a further hundred days, for that was the significance of the letter 'C', and that it would come to pass that he would be included among the gods, for 'aesar', the remaining part of the name 'Caesar', means 'god' in the language of the Etruscans.

Then, when he was about to send Tiberius to Illyria and planning to accompany him as far as Beneventum,* he was held up by litigants requiring his judgement in one case after another and declared that, whatever tried to delay him, he would stay in Rome no longer, and this was soon seen as another omen. For, having embarked on his journey, he got as far as Astura, and thence, contrary to his usual practice, put to sea before daybreak, as the wind was favourable; thus he succumbed to an illness, which began with diarrhoea. [98] Then, having travelled along the Campanian coast and around the neighbouring islands, he rested for four days in an inlet by Capri, feeling particularly inclined to enjoy leisure and the company of his friends. As he happened to be sailing past the bay of Puteoli, the passengers and sailors of an Alexandrian ship, which had just arrived, dressed in white, wearing crowns, and offering incense, heaped upon him great praise, saying that it was thanks to him that they lived, travelled, and enjoyed liberty and good fortune. Greatly pleased by this event, he divided four hundred gold coins amongst his companions, extracting an undertaking on oath from each of them that they would only spend the money on Alexandrian merchandise. And for the rest of the days which followed, he gave out, amongst other presents, togas and Greek cloaks, proposing a rule that Romans should adopt Greek dress and language, and Greeks Roman dress and language. He was an enthusiastic observer of the exercises of the ephebes, of whom there was still a significant number on Capri, according to the traditional practice.* He even provided a feast for them which he himself attended, allowing them, even demanding of them, licence to joke and fight over tokens for apples and sweets and all kinds of things. Indeed, he indulged in every kind of fun.

The neighbouring part of the island of Capri he termed the City of Do-nothings, on account of the idleness of those of his com-

panions who had retreated there. But one man, of whom he was very fond, Masgaba by name, he used to call 'Ktistes',* as though he were the island's founder. This Masgaba had died the previous year and Augustus, noticing, as he looked out from the dining-room, that his tomb was surrounded by a crowd of people and many lights,* composed a line of poetry off the cuff, which he declaimed out loud:

The founder's tomb I see in flames.

And, turning to Tiberius' friend, Thrasyllus, who was reclining opposite him and knew nothing of the matter, he asked him which of the poets he thought was the author. When Thrasyllus hesitated, he added another line:

Seest thou Masgaba honoured with lights?

and asked his opinion on this one also. When the other replied simply that, whoever wrote them, they were very good, he burst out laughing and made many jokes. Shortly thereafter he crossed over to Naples, even though his digestive system was already weakened through intermittent illness. Nevertheless he sat through the whole of the five-yearly gymnastic contest which had been established in his honour, then set out with Tiberius for their destination. But, his condition worsening on the way back, he finally took to his bed at Nola and held a long meeting in secret with Tiberius, whom he had recalled from his expedition. After this, he was unable to give his mind to any further matter of importance.

[99] On his last day, he kept asking whether there was any disturbance in the streets because of him. Asking for a mirror, he gave instructions that his hair should be combed and his drooping features rearranged. Then, when the friends he had summoned were present, he inquired of them whether they thought he had played his role well in the comedy of life, adding the concluding lines:

Since the play has been so good, clap your hands
And all of you dismiss us with applause.*

Then he sent everyone away and suddenly, in the middle of questioning some people who had come from Rome about the illness of Drusus' daughter, he slipped away, as he was kissing Livia, with these words: 'Live mindful of our marriage, Livia, and farewell.' Thus did he have the good fortune to die easily and as he had always

wished. For whenever he heard that anyone had died quickly and without suffering, he would pray that he himself and his dear ones would have a similar ‘euthanasia’* — that was even the term he used. Before he died he gave only one indication that his mind was disturbed, when he suddenly took fright and complained that he was being taken away by forty young men. And this too was really a premonition rather than a symptom of mental failing, for that was the number of the praetorian soldiers who carried him forth for the funeral. [100] He died in the same bedroom as his father Octavius, when two Sextuses, Pompeius and Appuleius, were consuls, on the fourteenth day before the Kalends of September,* at the ninth hour, when he was thirty-five days short of seventy-six years.

Councillors from the towns and colonies carried his body from Nola as far as Bovillae,* by night, because of the season of the year, and in the intervals it was placed in the basilica or the largest temple in one of the towns. From Bovillae, it was taken by the equestrian order who carried it to Rome where it was placed in the vestibule of his house. The senators so competed to show devotion in the elaboration of the funeral and in honouring his memory that amongst many other proposals some were of the view that the funeral procession should come through the triumphal gate, that the Victory from the senate house should head the procession, and that the dirge should be sung by boys and girls who were the children of the leading citizens. Others recommended that on the day of the funeral people should take off their gold rings and replace them with iron ones, and some that his bones should be collected up by priests of the senior colleges.* There was even one who advocated that the name of the month of August should be transferred to September, since he had been born in the latter and died in the former. Another man proposed that the entire period from the day he was born to the day he died should be termed the Augustan age and should appear as such in the records. However, though a limit was placed upon the honours, his eulogy was delivered twice, once by Tiberius in front of the Temple of the Deified Julius and once in front of the old rostra by Drusus, Tiberius’ son. Then he was carried on the shoulders of senators to the Campus Martius, where he was cremated. There was even an ex-praetor who swore that after the cremation he saw Augustus’ image ascending into the sky. The remains were gathered by leading men of the equestrian order, dressed in unbelted tunics,

their feet bare, before being enclosed in the Mausoleum. This monument he had had built between the Flaminian Way and the Tiber bank in his sixth consulship and had planted around it trees and walkways which he had then made available for public use.

[101] In the consulship of Lucius Plancius and Gaius Silius, three days before the Nones of April,* one year and four months before his death, he had made a will, in two books, partly in his hand and partly in those of his freedmen Polybius and Hilarion, and deposited it with the Vestal Virgins. This they now brought forth, together with three rolls, sealed in the same manner. All of these were opened in the senate and read out. He designated as primary heirs Tiberius, who was to receive one half and one sixth of his property, and Livia, who was to receive a third. They were also ordered to take his name. His secondary heirs* were Drusus, the son of Tiberius, who was to receive one third, while the remainder went to Germanicus and his three male children. In third place were many relatives and friends. To the Roman people he left forty million sesterces, to the tribes* three million five hundred thousand, to the praetorian guard a thousand each, to the city cohorts five hundred, and to the legionaries three hundred. This sum, he ordered, was to be paid at once for he always had it to hand and ready. He gave various legacies to other people, some amounting to twenty thousand sesterces. These were to be paid out on a day in a year's time, with the excuse that the size of his holdings was limited and even his heirs would get no more than a hundred and fifty million. For, although he had in recent years received fourteen hundred million through the wills of his friends, almost all of this, together with the estates of his two fathers* and his other inheritances he had spent for the benefit of the state. He gave orders that if anything happened to the Julias, his daughter and granddaughter, they were not to be buried in his tomb. As for the three rolls, in one he set out the instructions for his funeral, in the second a list of his achievements, which he wished to have inscribed in bronze and set up in front of his Mausoleum,* while in the third he gave an account of the entire empire, how many soldiers there were serving in each place and how much money there was in the treasury, in the provincial accounts, and in outstanding taxes. He added the names of his freedmen and slaves from whom details could be obtained.

TIBERIUS

[1] The patrician branch of the Claudii—for there was also a plebeian one, no less distinguished in influence or standing—had its origins at Regilli,* a town of the Sabines. From there, accompanied by a large band of clients, the family moved to Rome, not long after the city's foundation, at the instigation of Titus Tatius, Romulus' partner in power—or, as is more generally held, that of Atta Claudius, the head of the family—about six years after the expulsion of the kings.* Co-opted into the ranks of the patricians, they received from the state land for their clients beyond the River Anio and a plot to serve for their own burial at the foot of the Capitoline hill. In succeeding years, they obtained twenty-eight consulships, five dictatorships, seven censorships, six triumphs, and two ovations. Though the family was identified by a variety of forenames and *cognomina*, they agreed to renounce the forename of Lucius, after one who carried the name was convicted of robbery and another of murder. However, to the *cognomina* they added that of Nero, which, in the language of the Sabines, means brave and strong.

[2] Many of the Claudii are known to have rendered numerous outstanding services to the state—and also disservices. To mention only the most important: Appius Caecus* argued successfully against entering into alliance with King Pyrrhus, pointing out the harm it would bring. Claudius Caudex* was the first to lead the fleet across the straits and drive the Carthaginians from Sicily. Tiberius Nero, when Hasdrubal came from Spain with a great army, checked him before he could join his brother Hannibal.* Against these must be weighed Claudius Regillianus, who, when he was a member of the council of ten for drafting laws, attempted to ascribe servile status to a freeborn girl so that he could gratify his lust.* This was the cause of another secession of the plebs from the patricians. Claudius Russus* set up a statue of himself crowned with a diadem at the Forum of Appius* and sought to get all Italy in his power through patronage. Claudius Pulcher,* when he was taking the auspices in Sicily and the chickens would not eat, defied the omen, throwing the chickens into the sea with orders that, if they would not eat, then they must drink, and began his sea-battle. When he was defeated and received

instructions from the senate to appoint a dictator, he named his messenger Glycias, making further mockery of the state's perilous situation.*

Among the women, too, there are similar examples of good and evil, since the family may claim both the Claudia who, when the ship carrying the sacred objects of the Idaean mother of the gods* ran aground in the Tiber, pulled it from the shallows, having prayed out loud that the ship would follow her only if her chastity were irreproachable; and that other Claudia* who was brought before the people on a kind of treason charge unprecedented for a woman, because, when her carriage was making slow progress due to the density of the crowd, she openly proclaimed her wish that her brother Pulcher were alive again, so that he might lose another fleet and reduce Rome's crowds. Indeed, it is notorious that, with the exception of Publius Clodius who, with the aim of sending Cicero into exile had himself adopted by a man who was not only plebeian but also younger than himself,* the Claudii were always conservatives to a man and resolute defenders of the influence and standing of the patricians. Indeed their arrogance and contempt for the plebs was such that even when on a capital charge before the people they would not wear mourning or plead for mercy. Several of them in the course of an argument or a brawl struck tribunes of the plebs. Indeed one of them, who was a Vestal Virgin, as her brother celebrated a triumph without the people's authorization, climbed into his chariot and rode with him all the way to the Capitol, so that none of the tribunes could lawfully veto his action or prevent him.*

[3] Tiberius Caesar was born from this stock—and indeed on both sides, for his father's family was descended from Tiberius Nero and his mother's from Appius Pulcher, both of whom were sons of Appius Caecus. He was also a member of the Livii, for his maternal grandfather had been adopted into that family. Although the latter were plebeians, yet their distinction was such that they had been honoured with eight consulships, two censorships, three triumphs, and even a dictatorship and the post of Master of Horse. Though the family boasted many noble men, Salinator and the Drusi stood out. Salinator, as censor, gave to all the tribes a mark of dishonour on the grounds of inconsistency, because, although after his first consulship they had charged him with and convicted him of many offences, they had gone on to elect him consul a second time and censor.* Drusus

aquired the *cognomen* borne by himself and his descendants when he killed Drausus, the enemy's general, in single combat. It is even said that it was he who, when he was propraetor, brought back from the province of Gaul the gold which had long ago been given to the Senones to ransom the Capitol—despite the story that it was seized from them by Camillus. His grandson, because of his brilliant manœuvres against the Gracchi, was given the title 'Patron of the Senate'. This man's son was murdered through the trickery of his opponents, as he pursued numerous different strategies in the course of a similar dispute.

[4] Nero, the father of Tiberius, served as quaestor under Julius Caesar, and contributed much to the victory when he was put in charge of the fleet during the Alexandrian war. For this reason he was made a pontifex, taking the place of Publius Scipio, and sent to establish colonies in Gaul, including those at Narbo and Arelate.* However, when Caesar was murdered, and everyone else, fearing the anger of the mob, voted for an amnesty, he supported a move to reward the tyrannicides. Later, when his praetorship was about to expire and a dispute arose among the triumvirs at the end of the year, he held on to the insignia of his office after the proper term and followed the consul Lucius Antonius, brother of the triumvir, to Perusia. He alone maintained his allegiance, fleeing when all the others on his side had surrendered, first to Praeneste, then to Naples, finally, having vainly tried to enlist slaves by promising them their freedom, escaping to Sicily. However, resentful that he had not at once been given access to Sextus Pompeius and that he was not permitted to use the fasces, he went over to Mark Antony in Achaia. With him he shortly returned to Rome, once peace had been negotiated between all parties. There he surrendered his wife Livia Drusilla in response to the suit of Augustus, even though she was at that time pregnant and had already borne him a son. Not long after that day he died. Two children survived him, Tiberius Nero and Drusus Nero.

[5] Some believe Tiberius was born at Fundi, on the feeble grounds that his maternal grandmother came from there and that, shortly after the time of his birth, an image of Good Fortune was set up in the town by order of the senate. However, as many more reliable sources claim, he was born at Rome, on the Palatine hill, on the sixteenth day before the Kalends of December,* when the consuls

were Marcus Aemilius Lepidus (for the second time) and Lucius Munatius Plancus, in the course of the war at Philippi. For that is how it appears in the gazette and the public records. Yet there are still some who write that he was born in the previous year, the consulship of Hirtius and Pansa, and others, that it was the year after, that of Servilius Isauricus and Lucius Antonius.

[6] His infancy and boyhood were unhappy and disturbed, as he accompanied his parents in their flight here, there, and everywhere. On one occasion, in Naples, when, with an enemy attack imminent, they attempted to make their way secretly to a ship, he twice nearly gave them away with his wailing, once when he was taken from his nurse's breast, and again when he was taken all of a sudden from his mother's arms by people who were trying to help the poor women in their plight. He was taken all around Sicily, too, and Greece and was given over publicly to the protection of the Spartans, because they were clients of the Claudii. Travelling on from there by night, he nearly lost his life when a fire suddenly flared up in the woods, completely surrounding the party, so that Livia's hair and clothes were singed. The gifts which he received in Sicily from Pompeia, the sister of Sextus Pompeius, a robe, a brooch, and a golden amulet, may still be seen even now at Baiae. Once back in Rome, he was adopted as heir in the will of the senator Marcus Gallius. Accepting the inheritance, he soon renounced the name, on the grounds that Gallius had been among the enemies of Augustus.

When he was nine years old he gave a speech on the rostra in praise of his deceased father. Later, as an adolescent, he accompanied Augustus' chariot in the triumph after Actium, riding the left trace-horse, the right one being ridden by Marcellus, the son of Octavia. He presided at the city festival and took part, during the circus games, in the game of Troy as leader of the band of older boys.

[7] The chief events of his adolescence, once he had assumed the toga of manhood, and of that part of his life preceding the start of his reign were as follows. He provided a set of gladiatorial fights in memory of his father and another in memory of his grandfather Drusus at different times and in different places, first in the Forum and then in the amphitheatre, even recalling some gladiators who had earned their retirement with a payment of a hundred thousand sesterces each. He also gave other games, though without attending

them himself.* All was done magnificently, thanks to the funds of his mother and stepfather.

He took as his wife Agrippina, the daughter of Marcus Agrippa and niece of Caecilius Atticus,* to whom Cicero wrote his letters. From her he acknowledged a son, Drusus, but although she suited him well and was indeed pregnant again, he was forced to set her aside and then straight afterwards to marry Julia, the daughter of Augustus. This caused him great anguish for he loved Agrippina dearly and disapproved of Julia's mode of life, having sensed that she desired him even when her former husband was living—as indeed was generally recognized. After the divorce he regretted having sent Agrippina away and once, when by chance he caught sight of her, he went after her, his eyes so full of tears and sadness that measures were taken to ensure she should never come into his sight again. At first he lived with Julia harmoniously and with affection, but soon they fell out and so severely that he lived apart from her thereafter, once the child, which was the bond of their union, was gone (born at Aquileia, it died in infancy). He lost his brother Drusus in Germany and accompanied his body all the way back to Rome, walking before it the entire distance.

[8] Embarking on his civil career, he acted as advocate for King Archelaus, as well as for the people of Tralles and the Thessalians, each being prosecuted on a different charge before Augustus as judge. He made a speech to the senate on behalf of the people of Laodicea, Thyatira, and Chios who had suffered a terrible earthquake and were begging for assistance. Fannius Caepio, who had conspired with Varro Murena against Augustus, he summoned before the judges on a charge of treason and secured his condemnation. At the same time, he was responsible for two public offices, one being that of the corn supply which was at that time limited, the other an investigation into slave-prisons throughout Italy. Their governors had a bad reputation since they were alleged to detain travellers, as well as those who tried to hide themselves there in fear of military service.

[9] His first military post was as tribune, serving in the Cantabrian campaign. Then, having led an army into the east, he restored the kingdom of Armenia to Tigranes, crowning him with a diadem on the tribunal. He also took back the standards which the Parthians had taken from Marcus Crassus.* After this he had charge of Gallia

Comata* for about a year, at a time when it was troubled by barbarian incursions and disputes amongst its nobles. Then he made war on the Raeti and Vindelici,* then the Pannonians, then the Germans. In the war against the Raeti and Vindelici, he conquered the Alpine tribes, in the Pannonian war the Breuci* and Dalmatians, and in the German war he took forty thousand prisoners whom he drove into Gaul, assigning them territory on the banks of the Rhine. Because of these achievements he received an ovation and entered the city in a chariot,* having earlier, as some people believe, been granted triumphal ornaments—a new kind of honour which no one had been given before. He secured his magistracies before the usual age, holding almost in succession the quaestorship, the praetorship, and the consulship. In the interval between his first and second consulships, he even received a five-year grant of tribunician power.

[10] In the midst of such fortunate circumstances, relatively young and in good health, he suddenly decided to retire, withdrawing himself as far as possible from public life. It is uncertain whether this was because he hated his wife—for, while he did not dare to accuse her of anything or to divorce her, neither could he bear to continue living with her—or because he could thus ensure that people did not tire of his presence, for absence would safeguard his prestige, perhaps even adding to it, if the state should have need of his services. Some think that, as Augustus' children* were by then grown up, he was ceding to them of his own accord the role of second in command which he had long occupied as if it were his, following the example of Marcus Agrippa, who went away to Mytilene when Marcus Marcellus took public office, so that he should not seem either to stand in his way or to overshadow him through his presence. This was the reason he himself adduced—though later on. At the time, he sought leave of absence, claiming he had had enough of public life and needed a rest from his labours. He did not relent even in the face of his mother's urgent prayers and his stepfather's complaints to the senate that he was being deserted. Indeed, when they persisted in their attempts to restrain him, he refused to eat for four days. When he eventually received permission to go, he left his wife and son in Rome and went at once to Ostia, offering not a word to any of those who came after him and kissing goodbye only a few at the moment of departure.

[11] From Ostia he sailed along the shore of Campania, pausing

only briefly when news came that Augustus was ill. But when a rumour circulated that he was lingering in the hope of fulfilling his highest ambition, he made his way to Rhodes, though the weather was all but against him, for he had been won over by the island's beauty and healthy atmosphere when he stopped off there on the way back from Armenia. Here he contented himself with a modest town house and a country villa not much more spacious, and adopted a private mode of life. From time to time, attended by neither lictor nor messenger, he would take a walk in the gymnasium exchanging greetings with the ordinary Greeks in the manner of an equal. One morning, when he happened to be making plans for the day, he announced that he would like to make a visit to whoever in the town was sick. His attendants misinterpreted this wish and gave orders that all the sick were to be brought into the public portico and there laid out in groups according to the manner of their affliction. Distressed by this unexpected occurrence, he long debated what to do, eventually going around to each individual, apologizing for what had happened even to the humblest and most insignificant.

Only one single occasion was noted on which he manifestly made use of his tribunician power: he was a regular attender of the schools and lecture halls of the professors and once, when a rather fierce quarrel had arisen among the opponents of the Sophists, one man was bold enough to abuse him because he took sides and expressed his support for the opposition. And so he quietly withdrew to his house and at once reappeared with his attendants. The man who had abused him was summoned by the herald to appear before the tribunal where Tiberius ordered that he be taken to prison.

Subsequently he learnt that Julia his wife had been convicted of licentiousness and adultery and that, on Augustus' authority, a divorce notice had been issued in his name. And, although he was pleased by the news, yet he did his duty as far as he could, writing frequent letters to the father on behalf of the daughter, urging that, whatever her merits, she be allowed to keep whatever gifts he had ever given her.* When the period of his tribunician power had elapsed, he finally admitted that what he had hoped to avoid through his withdrawal was nothing other than the suspicion that he was a rival to Gaius and Lucius. Since he was now safe from such accusations, as they were established and evidently occupied the second position, he sought permission to see his relatives again, for he

missed them very much. However, his request was not granted and he was even told that he should give up all care for his relatives whom he had abandoned so willingly.

[12] Thus he stayed on at Rhodes against his will, only with his mother's help securing the position of legate of Augustus, as a pretext for his humiliating position. From that time then, his life was not just private but fraught with fear and danger and he concealed himself in the country inland in an attempt to avoid the attentions of those stopping off on sea journeys who persistently sought him out. Indeed, no general or magistrate, whatever their destination, failed to put in at Rhodes. And greater causes for concern were added to these. For, when he went to Samos to visit his stepson Gaius, who had a command in the east, he perceived him to have grown hostile as a result of accusations made by Marcus Lollius, his companion and instructor. Tiberius had also fallen under suspicion of having some centurions to whom he was patron, when they returned to their camp from leave, send ambiguous messages to a number of men which seemed to suggest he was testing whether these individuals might be persuaded to join a rebellion. When he was informed of this by Augustus, he insistently demanded that someone, of no matter what rank, be appointed to act as scrutineer of his actions and words.

[13] He dropped his usual equestrian and military exercises and put aside the national dress, wearing instead a Greek cloak and slippers. In this manner he passed nearly two years, accruing more contempt and hatred daily, so that the people of Nemausus* tore down his images and statues and when, at a private party, his name came up in conversation, there was one man who promised Gaius that, if the order were given, he would at once sail to Rhodes and return with the head of the exile—for so was he termed. Thus he was forced, not at this point by fear but by a crisis, to demand, through his own most insistent prayers and those of his mother, that he be allowed to return. And his demands were successful, though partly indeed by chance. For Augustus had determined that he would make no decision regarding this matter unless his elder son Gaius was in agreement. It happened at that time that Gaius had fallen out with Marcus Lollius and was thus ready to listen to his stepfather's requests. And so with Gaius' permission Tiberius was recalled, but on condition that he should acquire no public role or office.

[14] He returned in the eighth year after his withdrawal with great and firm hopes for the future, hopes which he had entertained since his early youth as a result of omens and predictions. When Livia was pregnant with him she sought out various omens to discover whether or not she would produce a male child. An egg was taken out from under a hen and warmed in turn with her own hands and those of her attendants and from this a chick hatched out crowned with a magnificent crest. And the astrologer Scribonius promised great things for the child, even that he would one day hold power, though without regal insignia (for at that time, the rule of the Caesars was still unknown). Then, when he embarked on his first military campaign and was leading his troops through Macedonia into Syria, it happened that altars at Philippi consecrated in earlier times by victorious legions all of a sudden blazed with fire of their own accord. And soon after, passing near Patavium on his way to Illyricum, he made a visit to the oracle of Geryon where he drew a lot which gave instructions that, if he wished for guidance, he was to throw golden dice into the fountain of Aponus.* It turned out that the dice he threw displayed the highest score. Even today you can see these dice under the water. A few days before he was recalled, an eagle—which had never before been seen on Rhodes—perched on the roof of his house. And the day before he was informed about his recall, as he was changing his tunic, his clothes seemed to burst into flames. It was at this time too that he had particular experience of the powers of the astrologer Thrasyllus, when, as he sighted a ship, he declared that good tidings were on their way. And this happened as they were taking a stroll together, at the very moment when Tiberius had determined that Thrasyllus should be thrown into the sea, for, since events were turning out for the worse against his predictions, he had judged Thrasyllus to be a traitor whom he had rashly taken into his confidence.

[15] On his return to Rome, he immediately introduced his son Drusus to public life but transferred his own household from the old house of Pompey in Carinae to the Gardens of Maecenas on the Esquiline* and devoted himself completely to a life of retirement, attending only to his personal business and taking no part in public duties. But when, within the space of three years, Gaius and Lucius had died, he was adopted together with their brother Marcus Agrippa* by Augustus, though he himself first had to adopt Germanicus, his own brother's son. And after this he performed

none of the actions of a family head and retained no aspect of the powers he had given up. For he could neither make gifts nor free slaves and was unable to receive any inheritances or legacies, except as additions to his personal fund.* And from that time no measure was omitted which might add to his status, the more so when, after Agrippa was excluded and banished, it was clear that hope of the succession lay with him alone.

[16] He received a second grant of tribunican power for five years and was given the task of pacifying Germany. The envoys of the Parthians, when they brought their instructions to Augustus in Rome, were given orders to attend Tiberius in his province also. However, when news came of a revolt in Illyricum, he went over to take charge of the new campaign, which was the most serious military enterprise against an external enemy since the Punic wars. This he conducted over a three-year period with fifteen legions and the same number of auxiliary forces, in the face of great difficulties in all quarters and a terrible shortage of resources. And although several times recalled, he nevertheless persevered, fearing that, if they gave ground voluntarily, the enemy, being close by and most formidable, might press forward. His perseverance brought great rewards, for he conquered and brought under control all of Illyricum which lies between Italy, the kingdom of Noricum, Thrace, and Macedonia, between the River Danube and the Adriatic sea.

[17] His glory was increased still further by circumstances. For around this time, Quintilius Varus with his three legions perished in Germany and it was universally believed that the victorious Germans would have joined forces with the Pannonians, if Illyricum had not first been defeated. Because of this he was awarded a triumph and many other great honours. And some people even took the view that he should be given the *cognomen* ‘Pannonicus’, others opting for ‘Unconquered’, and quite a few for ‘Pious’. However, Augustus intervened concerning the matter of the *cognomen*, repeating his promise that Tiberius would be happy with the name he would receive on the death of his father. Tiberius himself deferred the triumph while the state was in mourning for the Varian disaster. Nevertheless, he entered in the city clad in his bordered toga and crowned with a laurel wreath and mounted a tribunal which had been set up in the Saepta, where he took his seat beside Augustus, flanked by the two consuls, while the senate stood in attendance.

From there, having addressed his greeting to the people he was taken on a circuit of the temples.

[18] The next year he returned to Germany and, realizing that the Varian disaster had come about as a result of the general's foolhardiness and negligence, he took no actions without the backing of his council; though in all other situations he had been content to rely on the judgement of himself alone, now, against his habit, he consulted with numerous men as to how the war should be conducted. He also paid greater attention to detail than he had previously. When he was about to cross the Rhine he subjected all the baggage to a fixed limit and would not embark on the crossing until, standing on the bank, he had made an examination of the loads carried by the waggons, to make sure that nothing was being transported which was not permitted and necessary. Once on the further side of the Rhine, he ordered his manner of living as follows: he took his food seated directly on the ground and often spent the night without a tent for shelter;* he would give orders for the next day, along with notice of any last-minute tasks, in writing, adding the warning that if anyone was uncertain of anything he was to apply to him personally and no other, no matter what hour of the night.

[19] His disciplinary regime was extremely harsh, with punishments and humiliations drawn from the examples of antiquity, so that even a legionary legate who had sent a few soldiers across the river with one of his freedmen to do some hunting received a mark of shame. Although he left almost nothing to fortune and chance, he embarked on battles with rather greater heart whenever it happened that he was working by night and the lamp, suddenly and for no reason, flickered and went out; for he had faith, as he used to say, in an omen tried and tested in all his own military campaigns and those of his ancestors. However, just as the campaign was brought to a successful conclusion, he came very close to being assassinated by one of the Bructeri* who had infiltrated his attendants but betrayed himself through his nervousness. A confession of his planned crime was extracted from him through torture.

[20] After two years' absence he returned from Germany to Rome where he celebrated the triumph* which he had earlier postponed, accompanied by his legates who had been awarded triumphal ornaments at his request. But before he took the route towards the Capitoline, he alighted from his chariot and went down on his knees

to honour his father who was presiding. Bato, the general of the Pannonians, he enriched with great gifts and installed in Ravenna,* thus expressing his gratitude that when he and his army were trapped in a difficult place, Bato had allowed them to escape. Then he provided a banquet of a thousand tables for the people of Rome and each man received a gift of three hundred sesterces. With the profits of his campaigns, he dedicated the Temple of Concordia as well as the Temple of Castor and Pollux in his own name and that of his brother.

[21] Not long after this, a law was passed, on the motion of the consuls, making him jointly responsible with Augustus for the administration of the provinces and appointing them both to the censorship. After the census was completed, Tiberius was on his way to Illyricum, when he was suddenly called back to find Augustus stricken, though still living, and they spent an entire day closeted together. I know the tale is commonly told that when Tiberius had just left after their secret conference, the voice of Augustus was heard by his attendants to utter the words: ‘Alas for the wretched Roman people who will be at the mercy of such slow-grinding jaws!’ Nor am I unaware of the story told by some that Augustus clearly and with no concealment disapproved of Tiberius’ fearsome disposition so that sometimes when engaged in lighthearted and relaxed conversation he would break off when Tiberius appeared. Nevertheless, so the story goes, he was won over by his wife’s entreaties and agreed to the adoption, perhaps moved by the hope that, with such a successor, he himself would one day be the more regretted. And yet I cannot be made to believe that the most circumspect and sagacious emperor would have acted in any way rashly concerning a matter of such importance. Rather, having weighed up the vices and the virtues of Tiberius, he judged the virtues to be dominant, particularly since he had sworn before a public assembly that he was adopting him for the good of the Roman state and had described him in letters as a superlative military man and the sole defence of the Roman people. By way of example, I include some excerpts from these below:

Farewell, most sweet Tiberius, and good luck in your enterprise. You lead your men for me and for the Muses. Most sweet man, and—if this isn’t so, may I never be happy myself—most brave, most dutiful general. Farewell.

Truly do I praise the conduct of your summer campaigns, my Tiberius. In my view no one else could have done as well as you did in the face of so many difficulties—and such apathy on the part of your men. Those who were with you all agree that the famous line can be applied to you:

‘One man alone through his care has saved our state.’*

If anything arises which requires more careful thought, or if I am annoyed about something, how much indeed, by Jupiter, do I long for my Tiberius and those lines of Homer come to mind:

‘If only he should follow, we too might return home both,
Though from the raging flames, for he is very wise.’*

When I hear and read that you are worn out by your ceaseless labours, the gods forsake me if my body does not shiver in sympathy. I beg you to spare yourself, lest news of your failing should finish off your mother and me and expose the Roman people to danger concerning the future of their empire.

If you are not to be well, it makes no difference to me whether I myself am well or ill.

I beseech the gods to spare you for us and keep you healthy now and in the future, if they are not wholly hostile to the people of Rome.

[22] Tiberius did not make public the news of Augustus’ death until young Agrippa had met his end. The tribune who had been appointed as his guard killed him after receiving letters ordering him to do so. As for these letters, there was some doubt whether Augustus had left them when he died, to remove a source of dissension in the aftermath; or whether Livia had dictated them in Augustus’ name—with or without the knowledge of Tiberius. When the tribune reported that his orders had been carried out, Tiberius replied that he had given no such orders and that the tribune should render an account of himself to the senate—perhaps by this means he sought for the present to avoid unpopularity. Soon, through his silence, the matter was quite forgotten.

[23] However, after he had convened the senate by means of his tribunician power and had begun his address, suddenly, as if unable to sustain his grief, he let out a groan and, wishing that his life as well as his voice would fail him, handed over the text of his speech to be continued by his son Drusus. Then he had Augustus’ will brought in and read out by a freedman. Only those witnesses drawn from the senatorial order were allowed to be present; the others identified

their seals outside the senate house. The will began as follows: ‘Since harsh fortune has robbed me of my sons Gaius and Lucius, Tiberius Caesar shall be heir to two-thirds of my estate.’ This too increased the suspicions of those debating the matter that he had chosen Tiberius as successor through necessity rather than preference, since he had not refrained from prefacing his will in this way.

[24] Although he did not hesitate to take on and to exercise imperial power and had an escort of soldiers (thus possessing both the reality of rule and its appearance), for a long time he refused the actual title. When his friends urged him to take it, with impudent hypocrisy he reproved them, saying they did not know what a monster the empire was, and when the senate begged him, going down on their knees, he put them off with ambiguous answers and crafty delaying tactics, so that the patience of some was strained to breaking-point and one exclaimed, amid the shouting, ‘Either do it or have done with it!’ And another openly complained that, while others were slow to do what they promised, he was slow to promise what he was already doing. At last, acting as if under compulsion and lamenting that he was shackling himself to a wretched and onerous burden, he accepted the principate, but only in such a way as to create the hope that he would one day lay it down. These were his words: ‘Until I reach the point when you can deem it right to give me some rest in my old age.’

[25] The reason for his delay was the fear of disasters which were impending on all sides—so that he often used to say he was holding a wolf by its ears. For Agrippa’s slave, whose name was Clemens, had gathered a considerable force of men to revenge his master, Lucius Scribonius Libo, a man of noble birth, was secretly devising a revolution and a double mutiny had arisen in the armies of Illyricum and Germany. Both armies made many demands for extra privileges, most particularly, that they should receive pay equal to that of the Praetorian guard. Moreover, the troops in Germany disdained an emperor not of their own making and urged Germanicus, who was at that time their commander, to seize the supreme power—though he firmly resisted their demands. Fearing this possibility most particularly, Tiberius asked the senate to appoint him to any public office it pleased, for no man on his own could manage the whole empire, unless with a colleague—or many colleagues. He also made out that he was ill so that Germanicus would be reassured that he would soon

succeed or at least become partner in the empire. Once the mutinies were quelled, he also managed to capture Clemens by means of a trick. Unwilling to undertake harsh measures too soon into his reign, he waited until his second year in office to expose Libo before the senate, content in the mean time to be merely on his guard. When they were offering sacrifice together among the *pontifices*, Tiberius took care that a knife of lead was substituted for the usual sacrificial one and when Libo requested a private audience he would not grant it except in the presence of his son Drusus, and throughout the interview he held on to Libo's right arm, pretending to lean on it for support, as they walked together.

[26] However, once his fears had subsided he behaved in a very unassuming manner, at least at first, and gave himself fewer airs than an ordinary citizen.* Many splendid honours were offered to him but he accepted only a few modest ones. He grudgingly permitted his birthday, which fell during the Plebeian circus games, to be marked by the addition of one extra two-horse chariot. He refused to allow temples or priests to be decreed to him, not would he even permit statues or images of himself unless with his prior consent. And these were only allowed on condition that they would be placed not among the statues of the gods but among the other temple ornaments. He intervened to prevent an oath being taken to ratify his acts* and also to stop the month of September being called 'Tiberius' and that of October 'Livius'.* He refused to take 'Imperator' as a forename, or to take the *cognomen* 'Father of the Fatherland' and he also turned down the proposal to adorn his entrance hall with the civic crown.* And although he had a right to it as Augustus' heir, he did not use the name 'Augustus' in writing letters to anyone except kings and princes. He held only three consulships after succeeding to power, one for a few days, another for three months, and a third, while he was away from Rome, until the Ides of May.*

[27] He was so opposed to flattery that he would permit no senator to approach his litter to pay his respects or to broach some matter of business, and indeed once, in his attempts to avoid a man of consular rank who went down on his knees to beg his pardon, he fell flat on his back. And if, in the course of a conversation or a formal speech, some too flattering remark was made about him, he did not hesitate to interrupt at once, chastise the speaker, and correct him. When a certain fellow called him 'Master' he told him not to

address him again in this insulting way.* When another man spoke of his ‘sacred tasks’ and yet another reported that he had come to the senate on the emperor’s authority, he obliged them to correct themselves and speak of ‘persuasion’ rather than ‘authority’ and ‘laborious’ rather than ‘sacred’.

[28] However, when it came to insults, hostile rumours, and lampoons concerning himself and his family he was calm and patient and would often proclaim that in a free state minds and tongues should be free.* When once the senate demanded that such crimes and such offenders should be prosecuted, he observed, ‘We do not have so much leisure that we ought to concern ourselves in more business. Once you go down this road, you won’t be able to undertake anything else. Under this pretext, everyone’s quarrels will fall to you to deal with.’ We also have a most unassuming comment which he made to the senate: ‘If someone speaks against me, I shall take care to give an account of my words and actions; if he does so again, we shall be mutual enemies.’* [29] And this was more remarkable because he himself almost exceeded politeness in addressing and paying his respects to individual senators and the senate as a whole. Falling out with Quintus Haterius in the senate, he said: ‘I ask you to forgive me, if I have, as a senator, spoken too freely against you.’ And then, addressing himself to all, he remarked:

O senators, I have said on this and on many previous occasions, that a good and beneficent emperor to whom you have entrusted so much power and so freely, should be the servant of the senate, often of the citizens as a whole, and frequently even of particular individuals. I do not regret having said this; as my masters you have been and are still good, just, and kind.

[30] Maintaining the traditional dignity and power of both senate and magistrates, he even introduced some appearance of a free state. For there was no public or private issue no matter how small or how great which was not referred to the senate: taxes and monopolies; the construction and repair of public works; even the recruitment and disbanding of soldiers and the stationing of legions and auxiliary forces; finally, questions such as whose commands they would like extended, who should be put in charge of other military campaigns, and what replies, and in what form, should be sent to the letters of kings. He forced the commander of a cavalry troop who was accused

of violence and looting to plead his case before the senate. He was always unaccompanied when he entered the senate. Once when he was ill he was brought in a litter but he sent his attendants away.

[31] When some measures were passed contrary to the opinion he had expressed he did not even make a complaint. Though he was of the view that magistrates elect ought to remain in Rome so they might accustom themselves to their duties, one of the praetors elect was granted permission to travel abroad with ambassadorial status.* On another occasion, though he took the view that some money which had been left to the Trebiani for the purposes of building a new theatre should be used instead for the construction of a road, he was not able to prevent the wishes of the testator from being confirmed. Once when there happened to be a division of opinion over a senatorial motion and he joined the side whose numbers were fewer, no one followed his lead. Other matters, too, were always conducted through the magistrates and in accordance with the regular law, and so great was the authority of the consuls that some African ambassadors complained to them that the time they spent with Caesar (to whom they had been sent) was wasted. And this was no surprise when all could see that he himself, too, stood to greet the consuls and made way for them in the street.

[32] He reproved men of consular status who had command of armies, on the grounds that they had not made reports to the senate of their activities and that they had referred to him the award of some military honours, as if they themselves did not have authority for such awards. He praised a praetor most warmly because, when embarking on his term of office, he revived the ancient custom of commemorating his ancestors in his public address. He attended the funeral processions of some illustrious persons even as far as the pyre. He showed the same restraint in dealing with humble persons and matters of lesser import. When he summoned the magistrates of Rhodes because they had addressed public documents to him without the proper concluding formula,* without even upbraiding them he sent them back with orders merely to rewrite the documents. The grammarian Diogenes used to offer a lecture in Rhodes every seventh day and when Tiberius came to hear him on a different day, Diogenes did not receive him but sent a message through a slave boy that he should come back on the right day. When Diogenes came to Rome to greet him and stood at his door, his only reproof was to tell

him to come back in seven years' time. When governors tried to persuade him to increase the burden of taxes on the provinces, he replied that it was the job of a good shepherd to shear his flock, not to skin it.

[33] He showed only gradually what kind of emperor he was, for a long time presenting himself as merely unpredictable, though more generally inclined to benevolence and disposed to favour the public good. And at first he would only intervene to prevent errors. Thus, he rescinded certain regulations made by the senate and frequently offered himself as adviser to magistrates presiding in court, taking his seat either next to them or opposite them at the end of the platform. And if there was any suggestion that the accused had been acquitted through personal influence, he would at once approach the judges, either from the floor or from the quaestor's tribunal and remind them of the laws, of their oath, and of the nature of the offence on which they sat in judgement. He also undertook to provide remedies if idleness or bad habits caused a lapse in public morality.

[34] He cut back expenditure on games and gladiatorial shows, limiting the wages of actors and restricting the number of pairs of gladiators. He complained bitterly that the price of Corinthian vases had soared to great heights and that thirty thousand sesterces had been paid for three mullets,* imposing limits on the price of tableware and specifying that the senate should carry out annual checks on market prices. To the aediles he entrusted the task of regulating inns and cook-shops* to such an extent that not even pastry might be put on sale. And, in order to encourage public parsimony through his own example, he himself would often have served at formal dinners half-eaten dishes from the previous day or one half of a boar, insisting that it was just as good as a whole one.* He issued an edict against kissing on everyday occasions and prohibiting the exchange of New Year's gifts after the Kalends of January. He had been in the habit of returning gifts in person, of four times the value of those he received, but stopped doing this since he was annoyed at being interrupted throughout the month by those who had not been able to gain access to him on the holiday itself.

[35] In the case of women of good family who had prostituted their chastity, where there was no member of the public to act as accuser, he passed a law that they would be judged by a council of their relatives in the traditional manner. He excused from his oath a

Roman knight who divorced his wife, though he had previously sworn he would never separate from her, when he found her committing adultery with their son-in-law. Women of ill-repute had started registering themselves as prostitutes, in order to lose the status and dignity of matrons and thus to escape the penalties specified by the law,* and the most profligate young persons of both the senatorial and equestrian orders were voluntarily assuming the status of the legally infamous, in order to free themselves from the restrictions which senatorial legislation had placed on their appearances in the theatre and arena.* All such persons were made liable to exile so that no one should be able to evade the law by means of such subterfuge. He stripped a man of his senatorial status on learning that he had retired to his villa before the beginning of July, so that he could rent a house in the city more cheaply after that date.* Another he deposed from the quaestorship because he married a woman on the day before the distribution of posts and divorced her the day afterwards.*

[36] He suppressed foreign cults and the religions of the Egyptians and the Jews, obliging those who practised such rituals to burn their religious garments and all their paraphernalia. The young men of the Jewish people he had sent to regions where the climate was severe, ostensibly on military service. The rest of that people, and others of similar beliefs, he banished from the city, with the penalty of slavery for life if they did not obey. He also banished astrologers, though he excused those who asked forgiveness and promised they would give up their art.

[37] He gave particular attention to securing relief from bandits and robbers, as well as from lawless rebellions. Throughout Italy he stationed armed forces in greater numbers than was customary. At Rome, he established barracks where the praetorian guard, who had previously been billeted in lodgings in different places, would be concentrated. He took great care to contain public unrest most severely, if it arose, and to prevent it arising in the first place. When a fight in the theatre ended in violent death, he had sent into exile both the heads of the gangs and the actors about whom the dispute had arisen and no popular protests ever succeeded in making him recall them. When, at the funeral of a chief centurion, the populace of Pollentia* would not allow the procession to leave the forum until they had extorted from the heirs money to pay for gladiatorial

games, he dispatched one cohort from Rome and another from the kingdom of Cottius,* concealing the purpose of their journey, and had them suddenly reveal their arms and sound their trumpets, then rush into the town where they put most of the populace and the local magistrates in prison for life. He abolished the practice of asylum,* whether established by law or by custom, wherever it was observed. When the people of Cyzicus* dared to commit violence of a serious kind against Roman citizens, he took away from them the freedom which they had been granted for their part in the war against Mithridates.

He embarked on no military campaigns himself after becoming emperor but contained enemy attacks through the agency of his generals and even then with some delay and only when necessary. Hostile kings he controlled more through threats and complaints than force. Some he lured to Rome with flattery and promises and would not allow them to return home, such as Marobodus the German, Rhescuporis from Thrace, Archelaus from Cappadocia, in the last case reducing his kingdom to a province of the empire.

[38] For two entire years after becoming emperor he did not set foot outside the city gates. Subsequently he left only to visit nearby towns, never venturing further than Antium,* and even then only very rarely and for a few days. Yet he often pronounced that he meant to review the provinces and the armies and made preparations for such an expedition nearly every year, with transport arranged and provisions organized throughout the towns and colonies. Finally, he permitted vows to be undertaken for the outward and homeward journey, so that the people jokingly called him ‘Callipides’—famous in the Greek proverb for running without making the slightest progress.

[39] However, after the loss of both his sons—Germanicus had died in Syria, Drusus in Rome—he sought retirement in Campania, so that almost everyone firmly believed and observed that he would never return and indeed that he would shortly die. Both views were justified—almost—for he never again returned to Rome and, a few days after his departure, when he was dining at a villa called Spelunca near Tarracina,* a mass of huge rocks suddenly fell from above, crushing many of the guests and attendants; he himself was lucky to escape. [40] He travelled through Campania, and once he had dedicated the Capitol at Capua and the Temple of Augustus at

Nola—the alleged reason for his journey—he took himself to Capri, an island of which he was especially fond since it was accessible only by means of a single small beach and was otherwise surrounded by a rocky cliffs of great height and deep seas. He was immediately recalled, however, by the insistent entreaties of the populace, because of the disaster which had occurred at Fidenae* where, during some gladiatorial games, more than twenty thousand people had met their deaths through the collapse of the amphitheatre. He travelled over to the mainland and made himself available to all, which was the more striking given that, on leaving the city, he had given an order that no one should disturb him and, throughout his trip, he had rejected any who tried to approach him.

[41] On returning to the island, however, he threw off all concern for public affairs, to such a degree that he never thereafter filled vacancies in the equestrian jury divisions, nor did he change any appointments among the military tribunes, nor the prefects, nor the provincial governors. For several years he ruled Spain and Syria without consular governors. He allowed Armenia to be taken over by the Parthians, and Moesia to be laid waste by the Dacians and Sarmatians and the provinces of Gaul by the Germans. Great was the disgrace to the empire and no less great the danger.

[42] Nevertheless, having obtained the licence afforded by seclusion, far from the eyes of the city, he finally gave in simultaneously to all the vices he had so long struggled to conceal.* I shall give a detailed account of each from its inception. Even when he was a new recruit in the army camp they used to call him ‘Biberius’ instead of Tiberius, ‘Caldius’ for Claudius, and ‘Mero’ for Nero because of his excessive liking for wine.* Later, when he was emperor and actually engaged in the correction of public morals, he spent a day and a night and the following day in continuous feasting and drinking with Pomponius Flaccus and Lucius Piso, immediately thereafter appointing one governor of Syria and the other urban prefect—even in the letters of appointment he declared them to be his dearest friends at any hour of the day or night. When he was invited to dinner by Cestius Gallus, a lecherous and profligate old man, who had once been given a mark of dishonour by Augustus and whom he himself had criticized in the senate a few days earlier, he accepted with the condition that Cestius change or omit nothing of his usual arrangements and that the attendants should be naked girls. He pre-

ferred a little-known candidate for the quaestorship above some men of noble family because at a dinner the man had drained an amphora in response to his challenge. He made a payment of two hundred sesterces to Asellius Sabinus for a dialogue in which he had set up a competition between a mushroom, a fig-pecker, an oyster, and a thrush.* He created a new post with responsibility for pleasures, to which he appointed the Roman knight Titus Caesonius Priscus.

[43] Then, on retiring to Capri, he even established a suite which was to be the location for his secret pleasures. Here groups of girls and adult pathics selected from all over and the most inventive of sexual deviants whom he used to call 'tight-bums',* would take it in turns to engage in filthy threesomes in his presence, so that the sight would arouse his flagging libido. The bedrooms were variously decked out with paintings and sculptures showing the most provocative images and figures, while the library was equipped with the works of Elephantis,* so that an illustration of the required position would always be available if anyone needed guidance in completing their performance. In the woods, too, and groves all over the island, he set out his 'haunts of Venus' where boys and girls dressed up as Pan and the nymphs solicited outside caves and grottoes. People used quite openly and commonly to talk of 'the old goat's den', making a play on the name of the island.*

[44] He became notorious for still greater and more extreme depravity so that it is almost a crime to describe, to hear, let alone to believe it, the story being that he trained some boys of tender age, whom he called his little fishes, to slip between his thighs when he was swimming and provoke him playfully with their licking and biting. And he even had well-grown infants, not yet weaned, suck on his male member, as if it were a breast—for his age and nature inclined him particularly to this kind of pleasure. Thus when a picture by the artist Parrasius was bequeathed to him with the condition that if he were offended by the subject matter (it represented Atalanta* pleasuring Meleager with her mouth), he should instead have a million sesterces, he not only preferred to keep the picture but set it up in his bed-chamber.* It is even said that once, when he was conducting a sacrifice, he was smitten with the face of the attendant carrying the incense box and could not contain himself but as soon as the holy act was completed he at once led him aside and took his fill of foul pleasure both from the boy himself and also his brother,

who was the flute-player. Then, as they both complained at the humiliation, he had their legs broken.

[45] The degree to which he used to abuse women even of the most distinguished kind is shown most clearly by the death of a woman called Mallonia. When she was brought to him but persistently refused to comply any further, he turned her over to the informers and, even when she stood trial, he would not desist from asking her if she was sorry, so that in the end she left the court, rushed home, and stabbed herself, publicly condemning the hairy, stinking old man and his obscenely filthy mouth. Hence a line from an Atellan play during the next games was taken up with great enthusiasm and much repeated: ‘the old goat is licking the does’ behinds.’

[46] When it came to money, he was mean and grasping, never providing a salary for those who accompanied him on his travels and military expeditions but only offering their board and lodging. Only on one occasion did he treat them generously and that was with his stepfather’s resources. Drawing the men up into three groups according to their rank he gave the first six hundred thousand sesterces, the second four hundred and the third—whom he called his Greeks* rather than his friends—two hundred.

[47] As emperor he completed no public works of any splendour and the few things which he made a start on, the Temple of Augustus and the restoration of Pompey’s Theatre, were still unfinished many years later.* He gave no games at all himself and attended those given by others only very rarely lest any demands should be made of him, particularly after he was forced to buy the freedom of the comic actor Actius.* Having provided assistance for a few impoverished senators, he avoided helping any more by declaring he would assist no one else, unless they could give the senate proof that their circumstances were no fault of their own. In this manner many were frightened off through modesty and shame, amongst these Hortalus, grandson of the orator Quintus Hortensius, who, persuaded by Augustus, had brought up a family of four, despite his limited resources.

[48] On two occasions in total he showed generosity to the people. Once when he offered three-year loans to the value of a hundred thousand sesterces without interest and again when he gave compensation to some owners of apartment blocks on the Caelian hill which

had burnt down. The first offer he was forced into by the people's demands for help during a financial crisis, after he had already issued a decree through the senate that money-lenders should invest two-thirds of their funds in property and that debtors should at once discharge their debts in the same proportion but these measures had failed to solve the problem. On the second occasion, too, he was relieving extreme misfortune. However, he rated this act of generosity so highly that he demanded the name of the Caelian hill should be changed, thenceforth becoming the hill of Augustus. To the soldiers, once he had paid out at double rate what had been stipulated in Augustus' will, he made no further grants, apart from one of a thousand denarii each to the praetorian guard to reward them for not falling in with the plans of Sejanus,* and some rewards for the Syrian legions, because they alone had included no image of Sejanus among their standards. Only very rarely would he discharge veterans, hoping they might die of old age and thus save him their retirement money. He gave no financial aid to the provinces, with the exception of Asia, after some cities were destroyed through an earthquake.

[49] Soon, as time went by, he even turned toward confiscations. It is generally agreed that Gnaeus Lentulus Augur, who was a very wealthy man, was driven through fear and mental torment to take his own life—and to make the emperor himself his sole heir. Lepida, too, a woman of most noble birth, was condemned through the influence of the ex-consul Quirinus, a childless man of immense wealth, who had divorced her, then, after twenty years, accused her of once having procured poison to use against him. Besides this, the foremost men of the provinces of Gaul, Spain, Syria, and Greece were deprived of their property on the most trivial and outrageous charges, some being accused merely of having part of their property in ready money.* In the case of a great many states and private individuals, ancient immunities, as well the rights to exploit mines and collect taxes, were taken away. Moreover, Vonones the King of the Parthians who, after being expelled by his countrymen, had come to Antioch with a quantity of treasure, entrusting himself to the good faith of the Roman people, was perfidiously robbed and killed.

[50] The loathing he felt for his family was first revealed in the case of his brother Drusus, when he brought forth a letter in which Drusus had debated with him the possibility of forcing Augustus to restore liberty,* and later with regard to the rest of them. So far was

he from showing his wife Julia, when she was in exile, a measure of respect and kindness—the least one might expect—that, when her father's orders confined her to a single town, he further forbade her to leave the house or to have any contact with other people. Moreover, he also cheated her of the allowance made her by her father and of her yearly income, alleging that this was a matter of law, since Augustus had made no arrangements for these in his will.* He was angered by his mother Livia on the grounds that she claimed an equal share in his power. He avoided meeting her too frequently or having private conversations with her of any length in order not to give the impression that he was following her advice—though, actually, he sometimes needed it and would make use of it. He was very much offended, too, by a senatorial decree proposing that his titles should include 'son of Livia' as well as 'son of Augustus'. For this reason he would not permit that she be called 'Mother of the Fatherland' nor that she should receive any signal public honour. Moreover, he often warned her that she should abstain from involvement in more serious matters which were not suitable for a woman, especially after he heard that, when a fire had broken out near the Temple of Vesta, she had become involved, urging on the people and soldiers to make still greater efforts, just as she used to do in the time of her husband.

[51] Afterwards, his hostility became patent, for the following reason, so people say. In response to her frequent demands that he appoint to the jurors a certain man who had been given citizenship, he replied that he would only do this on condition that the records plainly stated that his mother had forced him into it. Incensed by this, she brought forth from a hiding place and read out some old notes Augustus had sent her concerning Tiberius' morose and inflexible character. He was so angered that she had kept these for so long and used them against him with such malice that some people think that this was one of his reasons for withdrawing, if not the principal reason. For the whole of the three years when he was away and his mother was still living, he only saw her on one occasion and that was for a few hours on a single day. Soon after, when she was ill, he did not trouble to come to her, then, when she was dead, the impression he gave that he might attend the funeral led to a delay of many days, so that her body was putrid and rotten by the time she was buried. He would not permit her to be deified, although she had requested

it. Her will he ignored as void and within a short time he brought ruin on all her friends and the members of her household, even those to whom, on her deathbed, she had entrusted her funeral arrangements. One of these, though he was a member of the equestrian order, was actually condemned to the treadmill.

[52] As for his sons, he loved neither his natural child Drusus, nor his adoptive son Germanicus with a father's tenderness. He resented the former for his vices—Drusus was somewhat wild and careless in his manner of living. Thus, he was not even much affected by his death but, with only the briefest pause, returned almost at once from the funeral to his usual matters of business, forbidding a longer period of mourning. Indeed, when some ambassadors from Ilium were offering him their condolences a little late, he laughed at them and replied that he should offer them his in return, for the loss of their eminent citizen Hector.* He so disparaged Germanicus that he made light of his most illustrious deeds as insubstantial and criticized his most glorious victories as crippling to the state. Indeed, when Germanicus without permission travelled to Alexandria because of the severe famine which had suddenly afflicted the city, Tiberius complained about him in the senate. It is even believed that he was the cause of his death through the agency of Gnaeus Piso, the legate of Syria. Some people think that Piso, when he was accused of the crime soon afterwards, would have revealed his instructions, had Tiberius not made sure that they were taken from him, as he tried to show them to someone in secret, and that he himself was murdered. Because of this the words 'Give us back Germanicus!' were written up in many places and at night frequently called out. He himself confirmed suspicions when, afterwards, he inflicted cruel treatment on Germanicus' wife and children, too.

[53] When Agrippina, his daughter-in-law, after her husband's death complained a little too freely, he seized her with his hand and said in Greek, 'Do you think you are hard done by, my daughter, if you do not rule?' After that he did not deign to converse with her again. Indeed, after she would not risk eating an apple he offered her at his table, he no longer invited her to dine, pretending that she had accused him of poisoning her, when the affair had been deliberately set up so that he would offer her the fruit to make trial of her, and she would fear it as certain death. On top of all this, having alleged falsely that she was seeking refuge now at Augustus' statue, now

from the armies, he sent her into exile to Pandateria and, when she complained about him, he had a centurion beat her until she lost an eye. Moreover, when she was determined to starve herself to death he gave orders that her mouth be forced open and food stuffed into it. Then, after she persevered and thus died, he attacked her with the most appalling accusations and, when he was persuading the senate to include her birthday among the days of ill omen, he even made a merit of the fact that he had not had her strangled with a noose and thrown onto the Gemonian steps.* In recognition of such clemency, he permitted a decree to be passed thanking him and consecrating a golden offering for Capitoline Jupiter.

[54] Since he had four grandsons, three—Nero, Drusus, and Gaius—from Germanicus, and one—Tiberius—from Drusus, when he lost his own sons he commended the two oldest sons of Germanicus (Nero and Drusus) to the senate, and celebrated the day when each assumed the toga of manhood with gifts to the common people. But when he discovered that the prayers which were publicly made at the start of the year included prayers for their health too, he addressed the senate to the effect that such honours should not be offered except to those who were experienced and mature of age. And from that time, he made clear his true feelings towards them, loading them with all manner of accusations and implicating them in offences through a variety of deceptions, so that they were incited to make complaints about him and were then betrayed. He sent letters making the most bitter and numerous accusations against them and, once they had been declared public enemies, he had them starved to death, Nero on the island of Pontia and Drusus in the innermost depths of the Palatine. It is thought that Nero was forced into taking his own life, when an executioner, sent as if on the authority of the senate, showed him the noose and the hooks.* Drusus, however, was so deprived of food that he had even tried to eat the stuffing from his mattress. The remains of both were so dispersed that it was almost impossible to collect them up.

[55] Besides his old friends and the members of his household, he demanded twenty men from among the leading citizens who were to be his counsellors in public affairs. Of all these, he allowed only two or three to survive, striking down the rest, one for one reason, another for another. Among these Aelius Sejanus brought many others with him in his downfall. This man he had advanced to a

position of the highest power not through benevolence but so that, by means of his plans and trickery, the children of Germanicus might be disposed of and thus his natural grandson, offspring of his son Drusus, might be confirmed as his heir.

[56] He was no more well disposed towards the insignificant Greeks who were his table companions and provided him with much entertainment. When he interrogated a man called Xeno, whose manner of speaking was somewhat affected, as to what his horrible dialect was, and the man replied that it was Doric, he banished him to Cinaria, believing that he was being reproached with his old place of exile, since the Rhodians spoke the Doric dialect. Being in the habit of posing questions taken from his daily reading at the dinner table, when he learnt that the scholar Seleucus was asking his servants about what books he was reading at the time so that he could come prepared, he first banned him from his table and later even compelled him to take his own life.

[57] Even when he was a boy his savage and tenacious nature was not completely hidden.* Theodorus of Gadara, his teacher of rhetoric, it seems, first observed this, most perceptively, and described it in most accurate terms, for when he castigated him he would call him *pleon haimati pepfuramenon*, that is ‘mud steeped in blood’. But it emerged somewhat more clearly when he was emperor, even in the early stages when he was still winning people’s favour through his pretence of moderation. When a buffoon called out loud to the corpse, as a funeral went by, that he should tell Augustus that the people had not yet received the legacies he had bequeathed them, Tiberius ordered that he be brought in and be given what was coming to him; when he was executed, he would tell Augustus the truth. Soon afterwards in the senate, when a certain Roman knight called Pompeius stoutly maintained his opposition on some issue, Tiberius threatened him with imprisonment, asserting that from being Pompeius he would become a Pompeian, thus exulting over him with a nasty play on the man’s name and the eventual fate of the party.

[58] At around the same time, when he was asked by a praetor whether he should have the courts assemble to consider cases of treason, he replied that the laws were to be applied, and he did apply them with the greatest cruelty. A certain man had removed the head from a statue of Augustus so that he might replace it with the head of someone else. This matter was brought before the senate and,

because there was some uncertainty, the witnesses were examined under torture. The defendant was found guilty and in time malicious accusations of the following kind resulted in capital trials: beating a slave near a statue of Augustus, or changing one's clothes there; carrying a coin or a ring bearing his image into a lavatory or a brothel; criticizing any of his words or deeds. Indeed, a man lost his life because he permitted honours to be offered him in his colony on the same day that they had once been offered to Augustus.

[59] He committed many other cruel and savage acts besides these, ostensibly motivated by a concern for dignity and the wish to improve morals* but really because his nature was so inclined, so that quite a few persons complained in verse of the evils he had already committed and anticipated those to come.

O bitter and cruel one, shall I sum you up in a few words?

I'm damned if even your mother can love you.

You are no knight and why is that? You haven't got the hundred thousands.

If the whole truth be sought, your fortune was exile on Rhodes.*

You have transformed the golden age of Saturn, Caesar;

While you live, the age will be always iron.*

He's tired of wine, since now he thirsts for blood.

That he drinks as greedily now as he used to drink wine without water.*

O Romulus, behold Sulla, fortunate for himself not for you.*

Behold, too, if you will, Marius, returned to Rome,

Behold the hands of an Antony,* bringing civil war

And dripping with gore from more than one slaughter,

And say: Rome is falling! Whoever comes to rule from exile,

Rules with much bloodshed.

At first, he insisted that such things should be seen as made up by people who could not tolerate the treatment they deserved and were prompted by malice and ill-temper rather than expressing true feelings. He used to say repeatedly: 'Let them hate me provided they respect me.'* Later he himself gave clear proof of their accuracy and firm foundation.

[60] Within a few days of his arrival on Capri, as he was engaged in some secret business, a fisherman appeared without warning and offered him a gift of a large mullet. Filled with alarm that the fisher-

man had clambered up to him through the rugged and wild area in the furthermost part of the island, he gave orders that the man's face should be scrubbed with the fish he had brought. Indeed, when the man gave thanks, in the course of his punishment, that he had not brought the emperor the enormous lobster which was also in his catch, Tiberius gave orders that his face should also be mangled with the lobster. He inflicted capital punishment on a soldier of the praetorian guard because he had stolen a peacock from the emperor's pleasure-garden. Once, when he was on a journey and the litter in which he was travelling was held up by briars, he had the man responsible for finding the way, a centurion of the first cohorts, stretched out on the ground and beaten almost to death.

[61] Soon he broke out into all manner of cruelty, with no shortage of victims, since he persecuted first the friends and even acquaintances of his mother, then those of his grandchildren and daughter-in-law, then those of Sejanus. After the latter's death, he became even more savage. From this above all it was clear that, rather than Sejanus urging him on, the man had merely given Tiberius the opportunities the latter wanted—though in the brief account in which he summed up his life, Tiberius dared to record that he had punished Sejanus when he learned of his hostility to the children of his son Germanicus, those boys whom he himself had had killed, one when Sejanus was already in disgrace and the other when he had finally been overthrown.

To go through his cruel deeds one by one would take a long time. It will suffice to recount, by way of example, the different types of savagery in which he engaged. No day, however holy or sacred, was free from human punishment; some he put to death on New Year's Day. Many were accused and condemned with their children—and some by their own children. Relatives were forbidden to grieve for those condemned to death. Splendid rewards were decreed for accusers and sometimes even for witnesses. Never was the word of an informer doubted. Every crime was treated as a capital offence, even when it was just a matter of a few simple words. A poet was prosecuted for including criticisms of Agamemnon* in a tragedy, a historian for describing Brutus and Cassius as the last of the Romans. Authors were attacked and books banned,* even though some years previously they had been well received by audiences which had included the emperor Augustus. Some were thrown into prison and

forbidden not only to read but even to talk and converse together. Summoned to plead their case, some opened their veins at home, certain that they would be condemned and desiring to avoid torment and shame; others drank poison in the middle of the senate house. Yet these men were still dragged to prison, half-dead and trembling, with their wounds bound up. None of those punished was spared being dragged with the hook and thrown onto the Gemonian steps; on one day twenty people were dragged and thrown down, including women and children. Since by tradition it was forbidden that virgins should be strangled, young girls were strangled after first being violated by the executioner. Those who wanted to kill themselves were forced to live. For he believed death to be such a light punishment that when he heard that one of the condemned, Carnulus by name, had anticipated his execution, he cried out: 'Carnulus has escaped me!' When he was looking over prisons and a man called out for a speedy end, he replied: 'I am not yet ready to favour you.' A man of consular status recorded in his annals that he was once present at a large party also attended by the emperor and when the latter was suddenly and loudly asked by a dwarf, who was standing among the clowns near the table, why Paconius lived so long when he was guilty of treason, Tiberius at once reprimanded his insolence, yet a few days later he wrote to the senate, instructing them to decide on Paconius' punishment as soon as possible.

[62] His savagery grew and intensified, when he learned to his great anger how his son Drusus had died. Having earlier attributed his death to disease and a life of self-indulgence, he at last discovered that his son had been poisoned, tricked by his wife Livilla and Sejanus. Then he spared no one torture or execution, so devoting his whole attention for days at a time to this one investigation that, when the arrival was announced of a guest from Rhodes, whom he had summoned to Rome by a friendly letter, he had the man subjected to torture without delay, supposing someone had arrived who was an important witness for the case, then, when his mistake came to light, put to death, so that he would not publicize his mistreatment.

In Capri they still point out the place he used for his executions. From here, according to Tiberius' orders, after long and excruciating torment, the condemned would, while he looked on, be thrown into the sea, where a team of men from the navy would round up the corpses and beat them with poles and oars, in case any breath of life

should remain to them. He had even, among various forms of torture, devised one whereby the victims were tricked into drinking a large measure of wine, then suddenly had their private parts bound with cords so that they swelled up, tormented at once by the cords and by the urge to urinate. Thus, if death had not intervened—and Thrasyllus deliberately, so people say, gave him hope of a longer life, thus persuading him to keep some projects for the future—people believe Tiberius would soon have killed more victims and would indeed have spared none of his remaining grandsons, since he was already suspicious of Gaius and spurned Tiberius on the grounds that he was the offspring of his mother's adultery. Nor is this unlikely, for he used frequently to call Priam* fortunate, on the grounds that he had survived all his descendants.

[63] There is much to indicate how, in the midst of all this, he was not only an object of hatred and loathing but was also himself dogged by great fear and was even the victim of insult.* He gave orders that no one was to consult the *haruspices* in secret or without witnesses. He even attempted to disband those oracles which were situated near the city of Rome but gave up, terrified by the power of the Praenestine lots, for although he had them sealed in a casket and brought to Rome he could not find them in it until the casket was taken back to the temple.* Having assigned provinces to one or two ex-consuls, he could not bring himself to let them go but detained them for so long that, after several years, he granted them successors without their having left the city. In the mean time, they retained their official titles and he even went on giving them many instructions, which they were supposed to have executed through their legates and assistants.

[64] After their condemnation, he would never permit his daughter-in-law and grandsons to be transported anywhere unless they were chained and enclosed in a litter, while soldiers prevented travellers or anyone they encountered on the way from ever looking in on them or even stopping.

[65] Sejanus' plans to usurp his power—though Tiberius was already aware of the public celebrations of his birthday and the golden images of him which were everywhere honoured—he only just managed to overturn; and even then rather through cunning and deceit than through his authority as emperor. For first of all, in order to get him away while appearing to honour him, he made him his

colleague in his own fifth consulship, which he took on after a long interval and in absence for precisely this purpose. Then, having given him the false hope that he might marry into the imperial family and receive tribunician powers, he made accusations against him, when he least expected it, with a shameful and wretched speech in which, among other things, he begged the senators to send one of the consuls to bring him, a lonely old man, into their presence, along with a military escort for protection. Then, too, distrustful and fearing a riot, he gave orders that his grandson Drusus, who at that point was still being held in chains at Rome, should, if the occasion required, be released and given command of the armies. He even had ships made ready, as he contemplated taking refuge with some or other of the legions, and from the highest peak kept watching out for the signals which he had instructed should be raised from afar, as each stage in the plan was reached, in case the messengers were delayed. However, even when Sejanus' conspiracy was suppressed, he felt no more secure nor at ease, for the next nine months not stirring from his villa, which is called the villa of Jupiter.

[66] His troubled mind was further tormented by varied taunts from all quarters, for every single one of the condemned heaped all kinds of abuse on him either in his presence or through placards set up in the front row of the theatre. He reacted to these in very different ways, sometimes, through shame, wanting to keep them all unknown and hidden, sometimes making light of the same accusations and himself repeating and publicizing them. Indeed, he was even attacked in a letter from Artabanes, the king of the Parthians, who accused him of parricide, murder, cowardice, and luxury and advised him to end his own life as soon as possible to appease the most intense and well-justified hatred felt by his citizens.

[67] In the end, he came to feel thorough disgust at himself and, in the following words which begin one of his letters, he confessed all but the worst of his faults: 'Gentlemen of the senate, what am I to write to you? How shall I write to you? What in the end shall I leave unwritten at this time? If I know, may the gods and goddesses condemn me to a worse fate than that I feel is mine today.' It is believed, however, that he was aware of what would happen long before, through knowledge of the future, and he perceived what bitterness and notoriety would be his lot. So that when he began his reign, he refused most obstinately the title of 'Father of the Fatherland' and

would not permit an oath to be sworn in support of his acts, lest he should soon to his shame be found unworthy of such great honours.* One may gather this from the speech which he made concerning both offers, when, for instance, he said that, so long as he was of sound mind, he would always be himself and would never change his character but that one should avoid establishing the precedent, whereby the senate bound itself to approve anyone's acts when he might, by some chance, undergo some change. And he also said:

If at some time, however, you come to doubt my character and my devotion to you—and before that happens, I would rather my own death should preserve me from the loss of your good opinion—the title 'Father of the Fatherland' would bring me no additional honour but would rather be a reproach to you either for your rashness in conferring the title upon me or for your inconsistency in changing your opinion of me.

[68] He was big and strong in body, his height being above average and his chest and shoulders broad, with the rest of his body right down to his toes being well in proportion. His left hand was the more agile and powerful and his joints were so strong that he could push one through a fresh and sound apple and with the tap of a finger he could injure the head of a boy or even a youth. His complexion was pale and his hair at the back of his head grew far down, so that it covered his neck, which seems to have been a family trait. His face was noble though affected by sudden and violent flashes of emotion, with very large eyes, which, astonishingly, could see even at night and in darkness (though only briefly when he had just woken up; then they would lose their sharpness). When he walked, he held his neck stiffly drawn back, with rather a severe expression on his face. For the most part he was silent, only speaking very rarely, even with those closest to him and then with no alacrity. When he spoke, he would always gesticulate rather affectedly with his fingers. All these characteristics, which were unpleasant and suggested arrogance, Augustus had observed and he often tried to make excuses for them to the senate and people, claiming that these faults were ones he was born with and not a reflection of his character. Tiberius enjoyed extremely good health, suffering from virtually no illness throughout the period of his rule, even though from the time he was thirty he had relied on his own judgement and taken no advice or help from doctors.

[69] He had little regard for the gods or anything to do with religion, since he was a devotee of astrology, convinced that fate rules all. However, he was unusually alarmed by thunder and, when the heavens were unsettled, he would always wear a laurel wreath on his head, on the grounds that laurel leaves are never struck by lightning.

[70] He was extremely keen on literary pursuits in both Latin and Greek. In Latin oratory, he took as his model Corvinus Messala, whom he had in his youth observed when Corvinus was an old man. However, affectation and an excess of pedantry made his style obscure, so that he was sometimes judged to perform better when speaking off the cuff than when he had prepared. He also composed a lyric poem, with the title 'Lament for the Death of Lucius Caesar'. He also wrote poetry in Greek in the manner of Euphorion, Rhianus, and Parthenius.* These poets he particularly admired, placing copies of all their works in the public libraries, and setting up their images among those of the most ancient and distinguished authors. For this reason, numerous learned men competed to produce many editions of their works, dedicated to the emperor. However, his greatest passion was for mythology, to the extent that he made himself seem foolish and absurd; for he used to make trial of scholars, a class of men on whom, as was noted above, he was especially keen: 'Who was Hecuba's mother? What was Achilles' name when he was among the virgins? What songs used the Sirens to sing?' And on the first day after Augustus' death when he entered the senate, as if to show his respect and piety, he offered a sacrifice with incense and wine, but without music, following the practice of Minos, who had done this on the death of his son.* [71] However, although he spoke Greek fluently and easily, he would not use the language on all occasions and particularly avoided doing so in the senate,* to the extent that he would first ask pardon for using a foreign term before pronouncing the word 'monopolium'.* And when the word 'emblema'* came up in some senatorial decree, he expressed the opinion that the term should be changed and a Roman word be found in place of the foreign one, or, if none could be found, that the notion should be expressed in a more roundabout way. When a soldier was asked in Greek to give evidence, Tiberius forbade him to reply unless it was in Latin.

[72] On two occasions only during the period of his retirement did he attempt to return to Rome. Once, travelling by trireme, he came

as far as the gardens just by the artificial lake for sea-battles and stationed a guard on the banks of the Tiber to turn away those who came to meet him. The second time he travelled on the Appian Way as far as the seventh milestone from Rome. However, he turned back, having seen the walls of the city but come no closer. With regard to the first occasion, his reasons are unclear. On the second, he was alarmed by a portent. He kept a snake as a pet and when he went to feed it from his own hand, as he usually did, and discovered that it had been consumed by ants, he took this as a warning to beware the power of the many. Then, having made a rapid return to Campania, he was overcome by weakness at Astura, but recovering a little, went on to Circeii. So that no one should suspect that he was ill, he not only attended the games in the army camp but even, when a boar was let into the arena, aimed javelins at it from above. At once a pain gripped his side, his condition worsening when, covered in sweat, he was exposed to a draught. However, he held out, continuing his journey a little further and even when he reached Misenum he was still adhering to his daily routine, still including parties and other pleasures, partly because he could not resist them and partly to conceal his condition. For when the doctor Charicles, who was going off on leave and consequently, as he left the party, took his hand to kiss it, Tiberius, suspecting him of trying to feel his pulse, gave orders that he should come back to the table and resume his place, then prolonged the dinner till late. Not even at that time did he give up his habit of standing in the middle of the dining-room, with a lictor by his side, and addressing each guest by name as they said goodbye.

[73] In the mean time, when he read in the senate records that some accused persons, concerning whom he had written briefly to the effect that they had been named by an informer, had been discharged without even a hearing, he roared that he was being held in contempt and determined to return to Capri by whatever means he could, for he dared undertake no measures except from a place of safety. But he was detained by bad weather and by the increasing severity of his illness and he died not long afterwards at the villa of Lucullus, in the seventy-eighth year of his life and the twenty-third of his reign, on the seventeenth day before the Kalends of April, in the consulship of Gnaeus Acerronius Proculus and Gaius Pontius Nigrinus.* Some people believe that he was the victim of a slow and

debilitating poison given him by Gaius, others that in recovery from a chance fever he asked for food but was denied it. Some say that a pillow was forced onto him, when he asked for a ring which had been removed from him when he passed out. Seneca writes that when he realized he was dying he removed the ring as if to give it to someone but held onto it for a little while then put it back again on his finger, tightening his left hand into a fist and keeping it this way for some time. Then all at once he called for his servants and, when no one came, rose to his feet and, his strength failing, fell down not far from his bed.

[74] On his final birthday, he dreamt that the Apollo Temenites,* a statue of great size and wonderful workmanship which he had brought to Syracuse to place in the library of the new temple, made a sign to him that it could not be dedicated by him. And, a few days before he died, the lighthouse at Capri collapsed as the result of an earthquake. At Misenum, when the hot ashes and embers which had been brought in to warm his dining-room had subsided and long been cold, they suddenly blazed up again in the early evening and continued to give light until late into the night.

[75] The people were so delighted at his death that when they first heard the news some ran about shouting 'Into the Tiber with Tiberius!' while others prayed to Mother Earth and the shades that he should be given no place in the underworld except among the wicked, while others threatened his corpse with the hook and Gemonian steps,* their resentment at the memory of his earlier cruelty exacerbated by a more recent atrocity. For, in accordance with a decree of the senate, there was always a space of ten days before the condemned actually received their punishment and it happened that some were due to be killed on the day Tiberius' death was announced. These men begged people for protection but, since Gaius was still away and there was no one who might be approached and appealed to, the guards strangled them and threw them onto the Gemonian steps, fearing to do anything contrary to the rules. On account of this people's resentment increased still further, for the tyrant's savagery seemed even to have survived his death. When they sought to move the body from Misenum, many cried out that they should move it instead to Atella* where it should be half-burned in the amphitheatre,* but it was taken to Rome by some soldiers and cremated in a public funeral.

[76] Two years before he had made two copies of his will, one in his own hand and the other in that of a freedman but to the same effect, and had had them witnessed with the seals of some very lowly persons. According to this will, he made his grandsons Gaius, son of Germanicus, and Tiberius, son of Drusus, his heirs in equal part, each to be sole heir if the other died. He left legacies for many people including the Vestal Virgins, as well as to every soldier in the army and each member of the Roman commons, and also to the individual magistrates of the city districts.

CALIGULA

[1] Gaius Caesar's* father Germanicus, the son of Drusus and the younger Antonia, was adopted by his paternal uncle Tiberius.* He held the quaestorship five years in advance of the time laid down by law and went straight on to the consulship.* He had been sent out to take command of the army in Germany when news came of the death of Augustus. The legions most obstinately refused to acknowledge Tiberius as emperor and sought instead to offer supreme control of the empire to Germanicus. He, however—with greater loyalty or courage it is hard to say—held them back and not long afterwards defeated the enemy, securing a triumph. Made consul for the second time, he was sent away, before he could take office, to bring order to the East. After he had defeated the King of Armenia and made Cappadocia a province, he died at Antioch, in his thirty-fourth year, of a long-drawn-out illness—indeed there was some suspicion of poison. For dark patches appeared all over his body and he foamed at the mouth, and besides this, when he was cremated, his heart was found intact amongst his bones; it is thought that the heart, when infected with poison, cannot be destroyed by fire. [2] The plot to kill him, people thought, was initiated by Tiberius, through the agency and offices of Gnaeus Piso, who at that time was governor of Syria. He made no secret of the fact that he had to make an enemy either of the father or of the son, as if there were no other option, and even when Germanicus was ill, he set upon him, offering the most bitter insults in word and deed without the least restraint. For this reason, when he returned to Rome, he was almost torn to pieces by the people, while the senate condemned him to death.*

[3] That Germanicus had all the virtues of body and spirit to a degree achieved by no other man is generally agreed. His person was striking, his valour conspicuous, his talent for eloquence and learning, both Greek and Roman, was outstanding. He was noted for his kindness of disposition and was remarkably successful in his endeavours to secure people's goodwill and to merit their affection. One aspect of his appearance out of proportion with the rest was the thinness of his legs but even this he gradually managed to improve through assiduous riding after meals. He often struck down an

enemy fighting at close quarters. He took on court cases even after he had celebrated his triumph. Among the many testimonies he left to his learning were comedies in Greek. He sought to act as an ordinary citizen both at home and abroad, entering free and allied cities without an escort of lictors. Wherever he came across the funeral monuments of famous men, he used to make offerings to their spirits. Intending to bring together in one grave the remains of those who had fallen years previously in the Varian disaster,* he himself began the task of gathering them, picking them up with his own hands. Towards his detractors, whoever they were and whatever their motives, he remained gentle and without malice, so that even when Piso was countermanding his orders and vexing his clients, he was reluctant to grow angry with him until he was convinced that he was the victim of poison and curses. Even then he only went so far as to renounce his friendship, in the manner of our ancestors, and to invoke revenge from his household should anything happen to him.

[4] Endowed with this rich crop of virtues, Germanicus was so esteemed and loved by his family that Augustus (to say nothing of the rest of his relatives), after debating long as to whether to designate him his successor, had him adopted by Tiberius. He was so much loved by the common people, as many writers report, that whenever he arrived anywhere or left anywhere vast crowds came to meet him or see him off, sometimes even endangering his life. Indeed, when he was returning from Germany after the suppression of the mutiny, all the praetorian cohorts came to meet him, although it had been announced that only two were to undertake this duty, while all the people, whatever their age, sex, or status, flooded out of Rome as far as the twentieth milestone.

[5] However, by far the most important and surest verdicts on him date from after his death.* On the day he died temples were attacked with stones, the altars of the gods were overturned, the household gods of some families were cast out into the street, and others exposed their wives' new babies. Indeed, they say that even the barbarians, some of whom were engaged in a civil war while others were at war with us, agreed to a truce, as if they themselves had suffered a common loss. They say, too, that some princes shaved off their beards and had their wives' hair cropped as a sign of the greatest grief, while even the king of kings* is said to have abstained from

hunting expeditions and from banqueting with his magnates, which among the Parthians is the sign of public mourning.

[6] Back in Rome, the citizens, shocked and grieving at news of his ill health, had been waiting for further information, when towards evening a report spread, its source unclear, to the effect that he was recovering. At once crowds flocked to the Capitol with torches and sacrificial victims. They almost tore off the temple doors such was their impatience at any delay to their offerings. Tiberius was roused from sleep by their voices as they rejoiced on all sides, chanting:

Rome is safe, our fatherland safe, for Germanicus is safe.

And when at last his death became known, no consolation, no orders could contain the public mourning, which lasted even through the feast days of the month of December.* The dreadfulness of later events increased the reputation of the dead man and regret for his loss. All believed and with good reason that only respect for Germanicus and fear of him had held in check the cruelty to which Tiberius soon gave rein.*

[7] Germanicus was married to Agrippina, daughter of Marcus Agrippa and Julia, and through her fathered nine children. Two of these were lost as infants, while a third died on the verge of boyhood, a child noted for his sweetness of disposition, whose portrait, showing him as Cupid, Livia dedicated in the temple of Capitoline Venus, while Augustus had another placed in his bedroom which he used to kiss every time he entered the room. The other children survived their father: three were girls, Agrippina, Drusilla, and Livilla, born within the space of three years, and there were the same number of boys, Nero, Drusus, and Gaius Caesar. Nero and Drusus were condemned as enemies of the state by the senate. Tiberius was their accuser.*

[8] Gaius Caesar was born the day before the Kalends of September, in the year when his father and Gaius Fonteius Capito were consuls.* Differing accounts make it impossible to be sure where he was born. Gnaeus Lentulus Gaetulicus* writes that he was born at Tibur, Pliny* that he was born in the region occupied by the Treviri, in a place called Ambitarvius, where the rivers* meet. The latter adds in support of his version that altars are displayed there, with the inscription: 'For Agrippina's delivery'. Verses which were circulating soon after he became emperor suggest that he was conceived in the legions' winter quarters.

Born in a camp, brought up with his father's troops,
Clearly he was destined to be our emperor.

I find, from official records, that he was born at Antium. Pliny refutes Gaetulicus, arguing that his falsehood was motivated by a desire to flatter the young and arrogant prince, adding to his glory by locating his birth in the town sacred to Hercules. He could with more confidence twist the story, for about a year before another of Germanicus' sons had indeed been born at Tibur, also bearing the name Gaius Caesar (his delightful character and early death were mentioned earlier*). Pliny's own argument is refuted by chronology. For those who record the doings of Augustus agree that when Germanicus, after the end of his consulship, was sent to Gaul, Gaius was already born. Nor do any of these altar inscriptions help Pliny's case, for Agrippina gave birth to two daughters while in that region and the term used for 'delivery', *puerperium*, is the same whether the child born is male or female, for in the old days girls were known as *puerae*, while boys might be known as *puelli*.* Besides this, a letter survives written by Augustus to his granddaughter Agrippina a few months before he died which mentions this Gaius in the following terms (for no other child called Gaius was living at that time):

I arranged yesterday with Talarius and Asillius that they shall escort the child Gaius, if the gods are willing, on the fifteenth day before the Kalends of June.* I am also sending with him a doctor, one of my slaves, whom I have told Germanicus to keep if he wishes. Farewell, my Agrippina, and take care that you reach your Germanicus safely.

In my opinion it is quite evident that Gaius could not have been born in a place to which he was first taken from Rome when he was two years old. These facts call into question the verses, which are in any case anonymous. We should believe the only possibility which remains (and which is supported by the authority of official documents), particularly when Gaius himself preferred Antium to all other resorts, loving it as people love the place where they were born. They even say that he was sick of Rome and sought to transfer to Antium the seat and capital of empire.*

[9] His nickname 'Caligula'* he took from a joke current in the camp, for he was carried around among the troops in the dress of an ordinary soldier. The love and favour he enjoyed among them, as a result of being brought up in their midst, is strikingly shown by the

fact that, when the soldiers were in uproar and on the point of frenzy after the death of Augustus, just the sight of him was undoubtedly enough to change their minds. For they only left off when it was reported that Caligula was to be removed because of the danger posed by the mutiny and transferred to the next town. Only then were they overcome with remorse and sought to stop and hold back the carriage, begging to be spared from the threatened shame.

[10] He also accompanied his father on the journey to Syria. On his return from there he lived first with his mother, then, when she was sent into exile, with his great-grandmother, Livia Augusta. When she died, despite his youth he delivered a eulogy for her on the rostra. Next he lived in the house of his grandmother, Antonia. Then, in his nineteenth year he was summoned by Tiberius to Capri, where on the very same day he took on the dress of a grown man and made a dedication of his first beard, though without any of the ceremony which had attended his brothers' coming of age. In this place he was beset by every kind of trap, as people sought to trick him or force him into making complaints, but he never gave them satisfaction. He behaved as though he had forgotten the fate of his family, as if nothing had happened to any of them, while the things he himself had suffered he passed over with a capacity for dissimulation which defied belief. So obsequious was he to his grandfather and the latter's courtiers that it has fairly been observed of him that there was never a better slave—nor a worse master.

[11] Yet even at that time he was not able to control his savage and reprehensible nature.* Indeed, he showed the keenest interest in witnessing the sufferings and torments of those condemned to be tortured, while at night he was in the habit of going out, disguised in a wig and long cloak,* to indulge in gluttony and adultery, and he sought out performances of dancing and singing with the greatest appetite. Tiberius suffered this behaviour lightly, hoping these activities might serve to calm his vicious character. That character was so perceptively assessed by the old man, shrewd as he was, that he used every so often to remark that Caligula alive would bring death for himself and all others, that he was rearing a viper for the Roman people—and a Phaethon* for the world.

[12] It was not long after this that Caligula took in marriage Junia Claudilla, daughter of that most noble man Marcus Silanus. At that time it was intended that he should become augur in place of his

brother Drusus but before he had taken on the office of augur he was promoted to the pontificate—supported by strong endorsements of his piety and distinction. And as the royal house was stripped bare of its other hopes and Sejanus was soon afterwards suspected of treachery and disposed of, he came gradually to hope that he himself might succeed.* To increase his chances, after Junia Claudilla had died in childbirth, he lured Ennia Naevia, wife of Macro, who at that time commanded the praetorian guard, to commit adultery, even promising her marriage if he managed to secure the empire—and he guaranteed this with an oath and a written bond. Having through her wormed his way into Macro's favour, he administered poison to Tiberius, as some believe, and, while he still breathed, ordered first that his ring be pulled off, then, since Tiberius seemed to be resisting, that a pillow be put over his mouth, and he himself with his own hands strangled him.* A freedman, who exclaimed at the dreadfulness of the crime, was immediately sent to be crucified. This seems quite plausible, for some authors report that he himself confessed, if not to the deed itself of parricide, then certainly to planning it, for he often used to boast as a sign of his family loyalty that, in order to avenge the deaths of his mother and his brothers, he had entered the bedroom armed with a dagger while Tiberius slept, then, overcome with pity for the man, had thrown away the weapon and withdrawn. Nor had Tiberius, though aware of what had happened, dared to interrogate him or follow the matter up.

[13] Having thus secured the empire, he was the answer to the prayer of the Roman people, or should I say, all humankind—the ruler most highly favoured by the greater part of provincials and soldiers, many of whom had known him as a child, and by all the people of Rome who remembered his father Germanicus and pitied the sufferings of his family. Thus it was that, as he came from Misenum, though wearing mourning and accompanying the funeral train of Tiberius, among the altars, sacrificial victims, and blazing torches he encountered thronging crowds of people rejoicing greatly who greeted him with auspicious names: 'star', 'chick', 'child', and 'little chap'.

[14] When he entered the city, with the full consent of the senate—and of the crowd that was bursting into the senate chamber—he overrode the wishes of Tiberius, who had in his will named his other grandson, still a child, as co-heir.* And absolute

power over all matters was conceded to him with such public rejoicing that within the next three months, or even less, more than 160,000 victims are said to have been sacrificed. When, a few days later, he crossed over to the islands nearest to the Campanian coast, vows were made to secure his safe return lest the slightest occasion be omitted for displaying care and concern for his well-being. And indeed, when he was in ill health, everyone around the Palatine watched through the night, and there were even some who vowed to fight as gladiators to secure the sick man's recovery, while others posted public notices in which they promised their own lives.* Besides the great affection of the citizens he also enjoyed notable favour from foreigners. For Artabanus, king of the Parthians, who had always shown hatred and contempt for Tiberius, of his own accord sought the friendship of Caligula, attended a meeting with a consular legate, and crossed the Euphrates to offer his respects to the eagles and standards of Rome and to the portraits of the Caesars.

[15] Caligula himself sought to stimulate people's devotion by courting popularity in all sorts of ways. Having praised Tiberius with much weeping before the people and given him a splendid funeral, he at once hurried off to Pandateria and the Pontian islands to collect the ashes of his mother and brothers, his family feeling made all the more conspicuous by a terrible storm. Approaching with reverence, he himself placed the ashes in the urn. No less display attended the journey to Ostia—a standard flying on the stern of the ship—then on up the Tiber to Rome, where he had them carried on two biers into the Mausoleum of Augustus by the most eminent men in the equestrian order, at midday when crowds filled the streets. He also prescribed funeral offerings to be made for them every year on a day of public remembrance, and, more grandly still, circus games in honour of his mother and a carriage in which her image might be transported in the procession. But in memory of his father he gave the month of September the name 'Germanicus'.* After this, by senatorial decree he heaped upon his grandmother Antonia whatever honours had been bestowed on Livia Augusta. His paternal uncle, Claudius, who was at that time only a Roman knight, he made his colleague in the consulship. He adopted his stepbrother, Tiberius Gemellus, on the day he attained his toga of manhood, and gave him the title Prince of Youth.* As for his sisters, he ensured that the following words were added to all oaths: 'Nor shall I hold myself

nor my children dearer than I hold Gaius and his sisters,' while proposals of the consuls* were to include the words: 'That all may be well and fortunate with Gaius Caesar and his sisters.' As a further bid to secure popularity he freed those who had been condemned or exiled and declared an amnesty regarding any criminal accusations outstanding from the previous reign. So that no informer or witness would afterwards remain in fear, he ordered that the records relating to the cases against his mother and his brothers be carried to the Forum and burnt, having first called out loud upon the gods as witnesses that he had not read or touched any of them.* When someone offered him a document concerning his own security he refused to accept it, insisting that he had done nothing which would make anyone hate him, and he claimed he had no ears for informers.

[16] He banished from the city those monsters of lust, the 'tight-bums'*—only with great difficulty was he dissuaded from having them drowned. He made it legal to obtain, to possess, and to read the writings of Titus Labienus, Cremutius Cordus, and Cassius Severus, which had been banned by senatorial decree,* on the grounds that it was much in his interest that their contents be transmitted to future generations. He made available details of the imperial economy, which Augustus had been in the habit of publishing but which Tiberius had kept back. He allowed magistrates freedom in dispensing justice, without having to appeal to him. He inspected the Roman knights strictly and carefully but with moderation, making a public display of withdrawing the horse from those who were guilty of some evil or shame but in the case of those guilty only of a minor misdemeanour, merely omitting their names from the list as it was read out. To lighten the workload of jurors he added a fifth division to the existing four.* He attempted to restore the practice of elections, thereby giving the vote back to the people. Although Tiberius' will had been annulled, he straight away fulfilled its legacies faithfully and without argument, as well as those set out in the will of Julia Augusta,* which Tiberius had set aside. He relieved Italy of the one two-hundredth auction tax. He gave compensation to those who had suffered losses through fire. And in cases where he restored a ruler's authority, he also returned all the money which had in the mean time been collected as customs duty or revenue—Antiochus of Commagene received a hundred million sesterces which had been collected by the treasury. To make clear how he encouraged good

deeds, he gave eight hundred thousand sesterces to a freedwoman because she had kept silent about her patron's crime though suffering terrible tortures when under interrogation. In recognition of these actions, he was voted in addition to his other honours a golden shield which every year on the appointed day the colleges of priests would carry to the Capitol, accompanied by the senate and a chorus of boys and girls of noble birth who would sing an ode in praise of his virtues. It was also decreed that the *Parilia** should be transferred to the day on which he acceded to power, as it marked a new beginning for the city.

[17] He held the consulship four times, the first from the Kalends of July for two months, the second from the Kalends of January for thirty days, the third lasted until the Ides of January and the fourth until the seventh day before the Ides of the same month.* Of all these only the last two were held continuously. He embarked upon the third on his own at Lugdunum.* This was not, as some thought, because of pride or carelessness but because, since he was away, the news could not be conveyed to him that the other consul had died just before the Kalends. He twice gave to the people a gift of three hundred sesterces and twice also hosted a most plentiful banquet for the senatorial and equestrian orders, even including their wives and children. At the second feast he gave out formal attire to the men, and to the women and boys ribbons of red and purple. And, in order to increase public enjoyment in perpetuity, he added an extra day, which he termed 'Juvenalis', to the Saturnalia.

[18] He gave several gladiatorial games, some held in the amphitheatre of Statilius Taurus and some in the Saepta. Among the fighters he included bands of African and Campanian boxers, the very best of both regions. He did not always preside over the games himself but sometimes entrusted the task to magistrates or friends. He provided theatre shows all the time of many kinds and full of variety. Some of them were even staged by night and the whole city was lit up. He also threw gifts of various kinds and distributed a basket of savouries to each man. While people were eating he sent over his own portion to a Roman knight who was sitting across from him and consuming his meal with relish and delight, while to a senator, who behaved similarly, he sent a note announcing that he would make him a praetor out of the regular order. He also gave a great many circus shows which lasted from morning till night, the

interval consisting sometimes of the baiting of panthers, sometimes of military exercises from the Troy game.* In some special games, the arena was scattered with red and green and all the chariots were driven by men of the senatorial order. Some games he gave on the spur of the moment, when, as he was inspecting the Circus equipment from the Gelotian house some people in the nearby houses begged him for them.

[19] Besides this he also thought up a new and previously unheard-of variety of spectacle. For he made a bridge across the middle of the bay of Baiae to the promontory of Puteoli—a space of about three thousand six hundred paces*—by bringing together cargo ships from all around, anchoring them together in two lines and then heaping on top of them earth, to resemble the Appian Way. Across the bridge he travelled back and forth for two days in succession. On the first day his horse was decked out with trappings and he himself was distinguished by his oak wreath, his Spanish shield, his sword, and his golden cloak. On the second day he wore the dress of a charioteer and drove a chariot pulled by a pair of famous horses, carrying with him a boy called Dareus, one of the Parthian hostages, and escorted by the entire praetorian guard and a posse of friends travelling in war chariots. I know that many people believe Caligula thought up the idea of a bridge to outdo Xerxes, who excited much admiration when he threw a bridge over the rather more narrow Hellespont.* Others are of the opinion that he wanted the fame of his great achievement to inspire terror among the Germans and Britons whom at that time he planned to take on. But I remember my grandfather saying, when I was a boy, that the reason for the project had been given away by courtiers who reported that the astrologer Thrasyllus had reassured Tiberius, when he was anxious about who might succeed him and favoured his real grandson, that Gaius was no more likely to rule the empire than he was to ride with horses across the bay of Baiae.

[20] He also gave shows away from home: in Sicily he gave city games at Syracuse and in Gaul he gave mixed games at Lugdunum. Here he also held a competition for eloquence in Greek and Latin and they say that in this competition the losers were obliged to give prizes to the winners and to make speeches praising them, while those who found least favour were ordered to erase what they had written either with a sponge or with their tongues, unless they

preferred the option of being beaten with rods or being thrown into the nearest river.

[21] He completed some public works, such as the Temple of Augustus and Pompey's Theatre, left half-finished by Tiberius.* He began work on an aqueduct near Tibur and an amphitheatre next to the Saepta. Of these works his successor Claudius completed the former* and abandoned the latter. In Syracuse the city walls and the temples to the gods which had collapsed through old age were repaired. He had intended also to rebuild Polycrates' palace on Samos, to complete the temple to Apollo of Didyma at Miletus, to found a city on an Alpine ridge, and above all to dig a canal through the Isthmus of Greece*—he had already sent out a chief centurion to survey the project.

[22] The story so far has been of Caligula the emperor, the rest must be of Caligula the monster.

He took on many titles—the ‘Pious’, ‘Son of the Camp’, ‘Father of the Forces’, and ‘Caesar Best and Greatest’*. On one occasion at dinner at his house, when he heard some kings who had come to Rome to pay him their respects arguing among themselves as to which of them came of the noblest line, he declaimed:

Let there be one Lord, one King!*

He came very close to assuming a diadem on the spot and turning what looked like a principate into the appearance of a monarchy. But when he was reminded that his own position had risen above that of princes or even of kings, he began from that time to lay claim to the majesty of a god. He gave orders that statues of gods noted for their religious and artistic importance, including the statue of Zeus from Olympia,* were to be brought from Greece in order that their heads might be removed and replaced with copies of his own. He extended a part of the palace right into the Forum, taking over the temple of Castor and Pollux as his own vestibule. Often he would stand between the divine brothers displaying himself for worship by those visiting the temple. Indeed, some hailed him as Jupiter Latiaris.* He also set up a temple to himself as god with priests and the most exotic sacrificial victims. In the temple there was a golden statue exactly resembling him which was dressed every day in clothes identical to those he himself was wearing. All the richest men used their influence or offered bribes to become priests of his cult. The sacri-

ficial victims included flamingos, peacocks, black grouse, different breeds of guinea-hens, and pheasants, which were offered up, a different kind each day. While by night he would repeatedly invite the full and shining moon to share his bed and his embraces, in the daytime he used to talk privately with Capitoline Jupiter, sometimes whispering to him, then offering his own ear in turn for a reply, at other times speaking quite loudly and even cursing. For his voice was heard threatening:

Raise me up or you I'll . . .*

Finally, however, he was won over by the god, he claimed, and persuaded to share his home. He had a bridge built right over the temple of the Deified Augustus, joining the Palatine to the Capitol. Soon, in order that he might be still closer, he had foundations laid for a new house in the Capitoline temple precinct.

[23] Because of Agrippa's humble origins, he did not like to be thought of or referred to as his grandson. He would become angry if anyone in a speech or poem included Agrippa among the family of the Caesars. Instead, he used to claim that his mother was born of an incestuous relationship between Augustus and his daughter Julia. Not content with this insult to Augustus, he forbade ritual celebrations commemorating his victories at Actium and off the coast of Sicily, on the grounds that they had been terrible and disastrous for the Roman people. He frequently called his great-grandmother Livia Augusta 'Ulysses dressed as a Roman matron'. He even had the gall to accuse her of low birth, asserting in a letter to the senate that her maternal grandfather was a town-councillor of Fundi, when it was clear from public monuments that Aufidius Lurco had held high office in Rome. When his grandmother, Antonia, came seeking a private audience, he would only see her in the presence of the prefect Macro. It was because of this kind of humiliation and annoyance that she died—though some are of the opinion that she had been given poison, too. He offered her no honours after her death and observed her burning funeral pyre from his dining-room. His brother Tiberius* he caught off guard, sending a military tribune on the spur of the moment to put him to death, while his father-in-law Silanus he compelled to commit suicide by slitting his throat with a razor. He alleged that Silanus, when he himself had put to sea under turbulent conditions, had stayed behind in the hope of gaining control of the

city if anything should happen to the emperor. As for Tiberius, he claimed that he smelt of an antidote of the kind people take when they are afraid of poison. Silanus indeed was prone to seasickness and wanted to avoid the discomfort of a voyage, while Tiberius had taken medicine to cure his persistent and increasingly severe cough. His uncle Claudius Caligula preserved as a butt for jokes.*

[24] He habitually indulged in incestuous relations with all his sisters and at a crowded banquet he would make them take turns in lying beneath him, while his wife lay above.* Of his sisters it was Drusilla whose virginity he is believed to have violated while still a boy. Indeed, it is believed that their grandmother Antonia, who was at that time responsible for their joint upbringing, once actually caught them in bed together. Not long afterwards, when Drusilla was married to the ex-consul Lucius Cassius Longinus, Caligula abducted her and openly treated her as if she were his lawful wife. When he was ill he made her heir both to his property and to the empire. When she died, he declared a period of mourning, during which it was a capital offence to laugh, wash, or dine with one's parents, spouse, or children. Unable to bear his grief, he fled from the city one night all of a sudden, sped through Campania and made for Syracuse. As soon as he arrived he set out again on his return journey, unshaven and with hair unkempt. From that time onwards he refused to take any oath, no matter how important the business, even before an assembly of the people or before the army, unless it was by the godhead of Drusilla. His feelings for his other sisters were not marked by the same passion or reverence but he often prostituted them to his catamites. Thus, during the trial of Aemilius Lepidus it was all the easier for him to condemn them as adulteresses involved in the plot against him. He publicized letters in the hand-writing of all of them which he had obtained through deception and sexual intrigue, and even made an offering in the Temple of Mars the Avenger of three swords intended for his murder, along with an inscription.

[25] As regards marriage, it is difficult to decide whether he behaved worst in acquiring wives, in getting rid of them, or during his marriages. When Livia Orestilla was marrying Gaius Piso* and he himself was a guest at the wedding he gave orders that the bride be taken to his own residence. After a few days he divorced her, then, a couple of years later, had her relegated on the grounds that, in the

mean time, she had resumed relations with her previous husband. According to another story, Caligula, during the wedding banquet, had sent an order to Piso, who was reclining across from him, saying: ‘Get your hands off my wife!’ He had then left the party taking the bride with him and the next day issued an announcement that he had found himself a wife following the precedent set by Romulus and Augustus.* Happening to hear that Lollia Paulina’s grandmother had been in her day a very beautiful woman, he had the granddaughter at once summoned back from the province where she was accompanying her husband, the ex-consul and army commander, Gaius Memmius. Having separated her from her husband he married her but soon afterwards set her aside—with the orders that she was never again to have sexual relations with anyone. As for Caesonia, though her looks were not striking and she was hardly in her first youth (she had already had three daughters by an earlier husband), she was a woman devoted to luxury and sexual excess and he loved her with all the more passion and constancy. Indeed, he would often show her off to the soldiers decked out with cloak, shield, and helmet and riding by his side, while to his friends he would even display her naked. He did not honour her with the title of wife until the day she gave birth, announcing simultaneously that he was her husband and the father of her baby girl. As for the child, whom he named Julia Drusilla, he carried her around to the temples of all the goddesses, placing her in the lap of the statue of Minerva, entrusting her with the care for the child’s growth and education. Her temper seemed to him the surest indication that she was his own daughter, for even then she was so savage that she would try to hurt the little children who played with her by scratching at their eyes and faces.

[26] It would be trivial and superfluous to add to this the manner in which he treated his relatives and friends, Ptolemy, son of King Juba, his cousin (for Ptolemy was the grandson of Mark Antony through his daughter Selene)* and especially Macro and Ennia who had helped him to secure the empire. All these were rewarded for their kinship and for their loyal services with a bloody death. And he was no more respectful or merciful towards the senate. Some who had held the highest offices he allowed to run in their togas alongside his military chariot for several miles, and, when he was eating, to wait upon him, sometimes at the head of the dining-couch, sometimes at his feet, dressed in short linen tunics.* Some, when he had

secretly had them killed, he would repeatedly summon as if they were still living. Then a few days later he would announce falsely that they had taken their own lives. When the consuls forgot to make an edict concerning his birthday, he stripped them of their office so that for three days the state was without its supreme magistrates. A quaestor who was alleged to have been involved in a conspiracy he had flogged.* The clothes which had been stripped off him were placed under the soldiers' feet to give them a firmer grip as they beat him.

He treated the other orders with similar arrogance and cruelty. When he was disturbed in the middle of the night by people trying to secure the free seats in the Circus he had them all driven away with cudgels. In the confusion more than twenty Roman knights and the same number of ladies, along with a vast number of others, were trampled to death. At the theatrical shows, trying to stir up fights between the common people and the Roman knights, he distributed the free tickets early so that the places for the knights were taken by the commonest people. At a gladiatorial show, he had the awnings drawn back when the sun was at its fiercest and would allow no one to leave. He would have the usual equipment taken away and then set the most useless and ancient gladiators against mangy wild animals and have mock fights between respectable family men who were known to be of good reputation but conspicuous for some physical disability. And sometimes he would condemn the people to hunger by closing the granaries.

[27] Through these acts he made the clearest demonstration of his cruel character. When the cattle to feed the wild beasts he had provided for a show were rather expensive, he instead selected criminals for them to devour; he looked over the row of prisoners, without any regard for their individual records, and, from his position in the middle of the colonnade, announced that those 'between the bald-heads' were to be led away. The man who had promised he would fight as a gladiator if the emperor were restored to health, he obliged to fulfil his vow,* looking on as he struggled in combat and not letting him off till he had won his fight and pleaded repeatedly for delivery. Another, who had offered his own life in the same cause but had hesitated to fulfil his pledge, he handed over to his slaves who were to drive the man, wearing sacred wreathes, through the streets, demanding fulfilment, then finally hurl him from a rampart. Many

men of honourable rank he first had disfigured with the marks of branding irons and then condemned to the mines, to road-building, or to the beasts or else he would force them into cages on all fours like animals, or have them sawn in half.* Nor was this always for some serious offence but sometimes merely because they had not liked one of his shows or because they had never sworn by his Genius. He obliged parents to witness the execution of their own children and when one man excused himself on the grounds of ill health he had a litter sent to collect him. Another man he forced from the spectacle of torment direct to a banquet at which, all charm, he tried to make him laugh and joke. The manager of the games and beast fights he had beaten with chains for days on end, while he himself looked on, and only had him killed when the smell of the man's rotting brains made him ill. He had a composer of Atellan drama burnt to death in a fire in the middle of the arena because one of his lines of verse contained a doubtful joke.* When a Roman knight who had been thrown to the wild beasts shouted out that he was innocent, he had him taken out, then, his tongue cut out, thrown back into the arena.

[28] He once asked a man, back after a long period in exile, how he had spent his time there. The man answered, in an attempt to flatter: 'I kept praying to the gods that Tiberius would die, as indeed happened, and that you would come to power.' Thinking that those now in exile were similarly praying for his own death, he sent people around the islands to kill them all. When he had conceived a desire to have one of the senators torn apart, he arranged for some men to accuse him of being a public enemy as soon as he entered the senate, and to stab him with their writing implements before handing him over to the other senators to be torn to pieces. Nor was he satisfied until the man's body parts, limbs, and entrails were dragged through the streets and heaped up together in front of him.

[29] The most appalling deeds he made still worse by what he said. He used to say he loved to praise and admire no aspect of his own nature more than, to use his own words, his *adiatrepia*, that is to say his shamelessness.* When his grandmother, Antonia, tried to give him some advice, he not only disobeyed her but said: 'Remember, I can do anything I please and to anybody.' When he was about to kill his brother,* whom he suspected of taking remedies through fear of being poisoned, he said: 'Do you think you can take a remedy

against Caesar?' When he exiled his sisters, he warned them that he possessed swords as well as islands. A man of praetorian rank, who had withdrawn to the resort of Anticyra on account of his ill health and had written frequently asking for an extension to his leave, he had killed, with the comment that bloodletting was the cure for one who had got no benefit from hellebore* in all this time. When he signed the list every tenth day of those from among the prisoners who were to be put to death, he used to say he was clearing his accounts. One time when a number of Greeks and Gauls had been condemned, he boasted that he had beaten Gallograecia.*

[30] When he had people put to death it was almost invariably by means of numerous minor wounds and always with the same familiar order: 'Strike him so he feels his death!' When a man had been executed in error, his name mistaken for that of the intended victim, Caligula commented that the dead man, too, had deserved the punishment.* He often declaimed that line from tragedy:

Let them hate, provided that they fear!*

He would frequently attack all the senators equally, as if they were all guilty of supporting Sejanus, and of denouncing his mother and brothers, bringing out the records, which he had pretended to have destroyed,* and defending Tiberius' cruelty as unavoidable when there were so many plausible accusers. He ceaselessly reviled the equestrian order as being in thrall to the stage or the arena.* Roused to anger by the crowd cheering on those who competed against his favourites, he shouted out: 'If only the Roman people had a single neck!' And when the crowd called for the brigand Tetrinius,* he termed them Tetriniuses, too. Once five net-fighters in tunics, fighting as a group, surrendered to the same number of *secutores* without putting up any resistance. When the order was given that they should be put to death, one of them picked up his trident and killed all the victors. This Caligula lamented in a proclamation as the cruellest slaughter, and denounced those who had felt able to witness the spectacle.

[31] He used to complain openly about the times he lived in as being unmarked by public disaster. Augustus' reign had the Varian tragedy,* that of Tiberius was memorable for the collapse of a theatre at Fidenae,* while his own, when nothing seemed to go wrong, was in

danger of being forgotten. And every now and again he would express his desire for a terrible military defeat, a famine, a plague, a great fire, or an earthquake.

[32] Even when he was relaxing and taken up with entertainment and feasting, his words and actions were marked by the same cruelty. Often, while he was having his lunch or enjoying himself, the most serious judicial investigations, in which torture was used, were conducted in his presence or else a soldier adept at decapitation would cut the heads of a number of prisoners. When his bridge at Puteoli (the design of which I recounted above*) was being dedicated, he invited a large number of people who were on the shore to come out to him, then at once had them all pushed into the sea. Some managed to get hold of the rudders but he had them pushed back into the sea with poles and oars. In Rome, at a public banquet, finding a slave had stripped off some silver from the couches, he at once handed him over to an executioner to have his hands cut off and hung in front of him around his neck, and he was led around among the banqueters, preceded by a placard indicating the nature of his offence. Once, when he and a *murmillo* from the gladiatorial school had been having a fight with wooden swords and the latter deliberately fell to the ground, he ran the man through with a real dagger and rushed about wearing a palm, as victors do. Another time, when a sacrificial victim was brought to the altar, he, dressed in the robes of a *popa*, raised his mallet high, then brought it down killing the *cultrarius*.* At a rather elegant dinner he suddenly roared with laughter and when the consuls, who were lying nearby, politely asked him why he was laughing, replied: 'Why else than because just a nod on my part would be enough to have either of you slaughtered at once?'

[33] Among his other jokes, he once asked the actor Apelles, when he was next to a statue of Jupiter, which of them was the greater and when Apelles hesitated to answer, he had him flayed with scourges, praising the quality of his voice, as he cried out for mercy, as delightful even when groaning. Whenever he kissed the neck of a wife or a mistress, he would add: 'This lovely neck would be severed the minute I gave the order.' Indeed, from time to time he would exclaim that he might even have to use torture on his own Caesonia to find out from her why he loved her so very much.

[34] The envy and malice with which he regarded persons of almost every period were no less than his arrogance and cruelty.

Some statues of famous men which Augustus had moved from the Capitoline precinct to the Campus Martius because of lack of space, he had overturned and broken up in such a manner that it was impossible to reassemble them with all their inscriptions. And he issued orders banning the future erection of any statue or image to a living man unless authorized or initiated by himself. He even thought of banning the poetry of Homer, remarking that there was no reason he should not be allowed to do as Plato had done,* in banning the poet from his ideal city. Indeed he came close to removing the writings and portraits of Virgil and Livy* from all the libraries, complaining that one had no talent and very little learning, while the other's history was long-winded and sloppy. As regards lawyers, he acted as if he was going to abolish the profession, often threatening that he would make sure, by Hercules, that none of them could give an opinion that went against his own.

[35] From all the greatest nobles he confiscated their family insignia, taking the collar from Torquatus, the lock of hair from Cincinnatus, and from Gnaeus Pompey, the *cognomen* of his ancient line, 'The Great'. Ptolemy, whom I mentioned earlier,* he summoned from his kingdom and welcomed with honour, then executed, for no other reason than because, when he himself was giving some gladiatorial games, he noticed that as Ptolemy entered the splendour of his purple cloak attracted the attention of the crowd. Whenever he came across men with a good head of hair, he had the backs of their heads shaved to spoil their appearance.* There was a man called Aesius Proculus, son of a chief centurion, who was known as the Giant Lover because of his impressive size and appearance. This man was at once dragged from the audience and taken into the arena, where Caligula matched him first with a Thracian, next with a heavy-armed gladiator, then, when the man had twice beaten his opponents, he ordered that he be bound in chains without delay and led about the streets, dressed in rags, to be shown to the women, before being put to death. To sum up, there was no one, however humble his rank, however wretched his lot, whose advantages Caligula did not resent. Since the King of Nemi had held his priesthood for many years, he procured a stronger man to supplant him.* When, one day during the games, an *essedarius* called Porius, who had freed his slave after a victory, was warmly applauded, Caligula rushed from the games in such haste that he trod on the hem of his

toga and fell headlong down the steps in a state of fury shouting that the people who ruled the world gave more honour to a gladiator for the smallest act than to their deified emperors or to himself, their present one.

[36] He had regard neither for his own chastity nor for that of others. He is said to have had sexual relations with Marcus Lepidus, the actor Mnester, and a number of hostages—giving and receiving pleasure in turn. Valerius Catullus, a man of consular family, proclaimed publicly that he had buggered the emperor and was quite exhausted by his sexual demands. In addition to his incestuous relations with his sisters and his notorious affair with the prostitute Pyrallis, there was hardly any woman of distinguished family he did not make advances to. Most of them he invited to dinner, along with their husbands, and as they passed by the foot of his couch, he would appraise them carefully—as if he were buying slaves, sometimes raising their faces with his hand, if they had cast their eyes modestly downwards. Then, as often as he felt like it, he would leave the dining-room, having called to him whichever woman he found most attractive. Not long afterwards he would return,* making no attempt to conceal the signs of his recent sexual activity, and would offer criticism or praise of his partner, listing in detail the good or bad features of her body and her sexual performance. To some women he himself sent a divorce notice, in the name of their absent husbands, and gave orders that these notices were to be entered in the public records.

[37] His ingenuity in extravagant expenditure outdid that of all other prodigals ever; he invented a new kind of bath and the most outlandish varieties of food and drink—he used to bathe in hot and cold perfumed oils and would drink the most precious pearls dissolved in vinegar* and offer his guests loaves of bread and savouries made out of gold. He used to remark that a man should either be frugal or be Caesar. Indeed for several days in a row he scattered among the people coins of larger denominations from the roof of the Basilica Julia. He had constructed some Liburnian galleys, their prows studded with jewels, their sails of many colours, whose ample interiors housed baths, porticoes, and dining-rooms as well as a large variety of vines and fruit-trees, so that lounging on these vessels he might travel by day along the shores of Campania entertained by choirs and orchestras. In the construction of his palaces and villas,

with no regard for expense, he desired nothing more ardently than to achieve whatever was impossible. Great structures were built up in hostile and deep waters, mountains of the hardest flint were tunnelled through, while plains were raised to the level of mountains and excavations levelled mountain peaks flat.* The speed with which these measures were effected was incredible, for delay was punished by death. Thus, to save recounting all his projects in detail, he spent vast sums, including the two thousand seven hundred million sesterces built up by Tiberius Caesar, in the space of less than one year.

[38] In need of money, his funds exhausted, he turned his mind to robbery by means of a variety of cunningly devised false accusations, auctions, and taxes. He claimed that Roman citizenship had been illegally acquired by persons whose ancestors had been granted it for themselves ‘and their descendants’, except in the case of sons, for the term used, *posteri* [‘descendants’], should be understood as covering no one beyond that degree of relationship. When certificates of citizenship issued under the Deified Julius and the Deified Augustus were presented to him he dismissed them as old and out of date. He also accused people of having made false census returns, if they happened to have subsequently acquired any addition to their estates.* Any wills of chief centurions made since the beginning of the reign of Tiberius which failed to specify either Tiberius or himself as heirs he annulled on the grounds of ingratitude. And he declared null and void also the wills of others, if someone said they had intended to make Caesar their heir when they died. Having stirred up this fear, when he was then named as heir alongside relatives by men he did not know and alongside children by their parents, he would claim that men were making a fool of him when they carried on living after having named him heir and to many he sent poisoned sweets.* He himself presided at the trials of such cases, beforehand stipulating the sum he planned to raise during the sitting and only drew business to a close once that sum was raised. Unable to suffer the slightest delay, he once passed a single sentence on forty men who had been arraigned on different charges and boasted to Caesonia of how much he had achieved while she had been having her afternoon nap. Having arranged an auction, he put up and sold all that was left over from the games, himself soliciting bids and exaggerating them to such an extent that some people,

bankrupted by the huge sums they had been forced to pay for goods, opened their veins. In one notorious incident, when Aponius Saturinus had nodded off on one of the seats and Caligula urged the auctioneer not to overlook the man of praetorian rank who kept nodding his head, the bidding did not come to an end until the man had unknowingly acquired thirteen gladiators for nine million sesterces.

[39] And while he was in Gaul he sold for vast sums the jewellery, household goods, slaves, and even the freedmen,* belonging to his condemned sisters. Then, spurred on by the profits he was making, he gave orders that all the furniture of the old palace was to be brought from Rome. Hire vehicles and draught animals from the bakeries were requisitioned for their transport with the effect that there were bread shortages in Rome and many people who were involved in court cases lost them, because they were unable to get to court and thus failed the terms of their bail. In his attempts to offload this furniture he resorted to every kind of deception and flattery, sometimes complaining about the avarice of particular individuals who were not ashamed of being richer than himself, sometimes pretending to feel regret that the property of the imperial family was falling into the hands of ordinary people. When he discovered that a wealthy man of the provinces had paid two hundred thousand sesterces to his secretaries in order, through bribery, to secure an invitation to a dinner party, he was not in the least annoyed that the honour of dining in his company should be valued at such a high price. The next day when the man was attending his auction, he sent a messenger to hand over to him some insignificant object for the price of two hundred thousand sesterces and to tell him that he was to dine with Caesar by personal invitation.

[40] His new and unheard-of taxes were exacted first through the tax-collectors, then, because they were making so much money, through centurions and tribunes of the praetorian guard. There was no kind of object or person which was not subject to some kind of tax. A fixed tax was imposed on all ready-cooked food sold throughout the city. With regard to all lawsuits and court cases, wherever they took place, a levy of one-fortieth of the sum at issue was charged, and a punishment imposed if anyone was found compromising with their opponents or giving up their suit. Porters were taxed an eighth of their daily earnings. Those who profited from

prostitution were taxed whatever they charged for one act of intercourse. To the law's preamble was added the stipulation that anyone who had ever been a prostitute or a pimp was liable for this tax and that even their marriages were not exempt.

[41] When these laws had been announced but not issued in written form and many offences had been committed because of people's ignorance of the exact provisions, in response to popular protest the legislation was at last posted. However, the lettering was so small and the position so awkward that no one was able to read any of it. So as not to leave any method of plundering untried, Caligula set up a brothel on the Palatine, designating a number of rooms and having them furnished in a manner appropriate to the dignity of the location, and installed in them respectable married women and free-born boys. He then sent around the forums and basilicas heralds who invited young men and old to take their pleasure. Those who came were lent money on interest and officials were at hand who openly took down their names as contributors to Caesar's revenue. He was not ashamed to make money even from games of dice where he made a profit through lying and even perjury. And, one time, having given up his turn in the game to the man sitting next to him, he went out into the front hall of his house where, seeing two wealthy Roman knights ride by, he gave orders that they should be seized and their wealth confiscated without delay. He went back triumphantly boasting that he had never had a luckier play.

[42] When his daughter was born, however, he lamented his poverty still more, complaining that he now had to bear a father's burdens as well as those of an emperor, and received contributions to the girl's upbringing and dowry. He announced that he would be accepting New Year's presents at the start of the year and stood in the temple vestibule on New Year's Day in order to take the donations which a crowd of all sorts of people heaped upon him with overflowing hands and togas.* Finally, seized with a passion for handling money, he would often walk with bare feet on the huge heaps of gold pieces he had piled up in the most public places and sometimes he would even roll about in them with his whole body.

[43] He only once got involved in war or military affairs—and even then without having planned to do so. He was on a journey to Mevania to see the grove and river of Clitumnus* when he was advised that he ought to supplement the troop of Batavians who

accompanied him, and he was seized by the urge to undertake a German campaign. He allowed no delay but summoned legions and auxiliary forces from all over the place (the levy was everywhere enforced with great severity) and ordered supplies of all kinds, in quantities greater than ever before. Sometimes he embarked upon the journey and made for his destination with such haste and speed that the praetorian cohorts, against their usual custom, were obliged to load their standards onto pack animals and thus follow him. So lazy and luxurious was his style of travelling, at other times, that he was borne in a litter by eight bearers and the inhabitants of towns along the way were ordered to sweep the roads and sprinkle them with water in order to damp down the dust.

[44] On arriving at the camp, in order to make a show of his strictness and severity as a leader, he dismissed with dishonour the legates who had been too late in gathering together auxiliary troops from different regions. During his review of the troops, he demoted from their posts as chief centurion, on the grounds that they were old and infirm, quite a few men who were now of advanced years, some of them only a few days off retirement. Then, rebuking the rest for their greed, he cut the reward for completion of military service to six thousand sesterces.* All that he achieved was to accept the surrender of Adminius, son of the British king Cynobellinus, who, after he had been thrown out by his father, came as an exile with a tiny band of followers. Acting as though this signified the surrender of the entire island, Caligula sent a grandiose message to Rome, commanding the couriers to ride in their carriage right into the Forum* to the senate house and not to deliver it except to the consuls, in front of a crowded meeting of the senate in the temple of Mars the Avenger.*

[45] Later, not having anyone to fight with, he gave orders for some of his German bodyguards to be taken across the Rhine and hidden, then that after lunch news should be brought in a great commotion that the enemy had appeared. These orders fulfilled, he rushed out into the nearby woods, accompanied by his friends and some of the praetorian cavalry, where they cut down trees and decked them out like war trophies before returning by torchlight. Those who had not come with him he berated as cowards, while those who had accompanied him and participated he rewarded with crowns to mark this novel and unprecedented kind of victory. These,

decorated with images of the sun, moon, and stars, he termed 'the scout's crown'. Another time, some hostages were taken from an elementary school and sent secretly ahead. Then, suddenly abandoning a dinner party, he rushed after them with a body of cavalry as if they were escaped prisoners, seized them, and brought them back in chains. This charade, too, exemplified his extraordinary excesses. Having returned to the dinner, when messengers announced that the troops were drawn up, he urged that they should come and join the party just as they were, though they were dressed in their cuirasses. He also advised them, in Virgil's words, to 'endure and save themselves for better times'.* While all this was going on, he issued a ferocious edict cursing the senate and people in their absence, on the grounds that while Caesar was at war and exposed to such great dangers, they were enjoying regular parties, the circus, the theatre, and pleasant resorts.

[46] Finally, as if he was about to embark upon a war, he drew up his battle lines and set out his catapults and other artillery on the ocean shore. When no one had the least idea what he intended, he suddenly gave the order that they were to gather sea shells, filling their helmets and the folds of their tunics. These were what he termed spoils owed by the Ocean to the Capitol and Palatine. And, as a monument to his victory, he had a very high tower constructed, which would, like the Pharos,* send out beams of light to guide the course of ships by night. As if he had exceeded all previous models of generosity in announcing a donative for the troops of a hundred denarii per man, he told them, 'Depart in happiness, depart in wealth.'

[47] From this he turned to consideration of his triumph. Besides the captives and barbarian refugees, he selected all the tallest men of Gaul, men 'fit for a triumph' as he himself would say, as well as quite a few of the princes, who were to take part in the procession, and forced them not only to dye their hair red and grow it long, but also to learn some words of German and take on barbarian names. He even gave orders that the triremes, in which he had set forth on the Ocean, should be transported to Rome—though most of the journey was overland. He issued written instructions to the procurators to make preparations for a triumph, with the lowest possible outlay, but on a scale grander than ever before—for they had at their disposal the property of all.

[48] Before he left the province, he conceived the most appalling plan—to slaughter those legions which had tried to mutiny after the death of Augustus, on the grounds that they had trapped his father Germanicus, who was their leader, and himself, then a small child.* Only with great difficulty was he dissuaded from this reckless proposition and he could in no way be prevented from carrying through his wish to decimate them.* The legions were summoned, without their weapons, even their swords left behind, to attend an assembly where they were surrounded by armed cavalry. However, when he saw that quite a few of the legionaries, suspecting that something was going on, were slipping away to arm themselves in case violence broke out, he fled from the assembly and at once made for the city, where all his ferocity was displaced onto the senate whom he publicly threatened, in order to divert attention from rumours concerning the extent of his own shameful behaviour. He asserted among his other complaints, that he had been deprived of his merited triumph—though he himself, not long before, had given orders that no honours were to be offered him, on pain of death.

[49] Thus when on his journey home he was approached by legates representing that most distinguished order who begged him to hasten his return, he shouted at the top of his voice, 'I shall come, I shall come and this will be my companion', all the while banging the hilt of the sword he was wearing. He pronounced that he would return—but only to those who wanted him—the equestrian order and the people, for to the senate he would never more be either fellow citizen or prince. He even forbade any senators to come to meet him. Then, having either abandoned or postponed his triumph, he entered the city on his birthday with an ovation. Within four months he was dead, having dared to commit terrible crimes and planning worse ones. For he had proposed to move, first to Antium, later to Alexandria,* having first put to death all the best men of the senatorial and equestrian orders. There can be no doubt about this for amongst his secret papers were found two little books with different titles, one 'The Sword', the other 'The Dagger'. Both contained the names and details of those whom he intended to have killed. A chest full of different poisons was also found, which, when they were soon afterwards on Claudius' orders thrown into the sea, are said to have so polluted its waters that many fish died, their corpses washed up by the tide on neighbouring beaches.

[50] He was tall of stature, very pallid of complexion. His body was ill formed, his neck and legs very thin. His eyes and temples were sunken, while his brow was broad and intimidating. His hair was sparse, his crown being completely bald, while the rest of his body was hairy. Because of this he pronounced it a crime meriting death if, when he was passing, anyone should look down on him from above, or if, for whatever reason, the word ‘goat’ was mentioned. Though nature had made his face hideous and repulsive, he deliberately tried to make it more so by practising all kinds of terrifying and dreadful expressions in the mirror. His health, both of body and of mind, was unstable. When he was a boy he suffered from epilepsy. When he was a little older he was capable of some endurance but sometimes he would suddenly become weak and be unable to walk, stand, think straight, or hold himself up. He himself was aware of his state of mental health and sometimes thought of taking a rest cure to clear his brain. It is thought he was drugged by his wife Caesonia when she administered a love potion which had instead made him mad. He suffered terribly from insomnia for he could never sleep for more than three hours in a night and even this was not calm and peaceful but troubled by strange visions. One time, for instance, he thought he saw an image of the sea speaking with him. Thus, for most of the night, bored of lying awake in his bed, he would sometimes lounge on his couch and sometimes wander through long porticoes, calling out, every now and again, for daylight and longing for it to come.

[51] That such opposed vices, both the greatest arrogance and the greatest timidity, were to be found in the same person, I have no doubt in attributing to his mental infirmity. For this man, who had so little respect for the gods, would, at the slightest hint of thunder or lightning, close his eyes and cover his head, while a bigger storm would make him spring out of his bed and hide under it.* On a tour of Sicily, he greatly mocked the local wonders, then, one night, suddenly fled from Messana, terrified by the smoke and rumbling coming from the peak of Mount Etna. Despite the threats he would utter against barbarians, when he was travelling by chariot, on the farther side of the Rhine, with a tightly grouped body of men through a narrow passage and someone remarked what a panic there would be if the enemy made an appearance somewhere, he immediately mounted a horse and hurried back towards the bridges. And when he

found them crowded with serving men and baggage, he would not tolerate delay but had himself passed from hand to hand over people's heads. Soon afterwards, hearing of an uprising in Germany, he made plans to flee, making ready the fleet as his means of escape from the city. His only comfort was the thought that, even if the enemy took control of the Alps, as the Cimbri had done, or even the city of Rome, as the Senones* had once done, at least he would be left with the overseas provinces. It was this, I think, which later gave his assassins the idea of pretending to the rioting soldiers that he had taken his own life, terrified by the report of a military defeat.

[52] In his clothes, his footwear, and other aspects of his personal adornment his practice never conformed to the traditional manner of Roman citizens, sometimes departing from what was appropriate to his sex, sometimes even from what was right for a mortal. Often he would dress himself in a patterned cloak set with precious stones, a long-sleeved tunic, and bracelets, before making a formal appearance in public. Sometimes he dressed in silk or in women's clothes. For shoes he sometimes wore actor's slippers or platforms,* sometimes soldier's boots or feminine pumps. He was often to be seen with a gilded beard, holding a thunderbolt, a trident, or a *caduceum*—the emblems of the gods—and sometimes even in the regalia of the goddess Venus.* He frequently sported the robes of a triumphant general, even before he went on campaign, and sometimes the breastplate of Alexander the Great, which he had taken from his sarcophagus.*

[53] As regards the liberal arts, he had little time for learning but much for oratory, and was as fluent and quick as could be, especially if he was delivering an accusation against somebody. When he was angry, words and concepts came easily to him and his voice and enunciation were strong. Such was his enthusiasm that he could not keep still and even those standing far away could hear him. When he was about to make a speech, he would threaten that he was going to draw the sword forged by his late-night labours. He had so much contempt for more subtle and refined kinds of writing that he described Seneca—then very much in fashion—as the author of 'mere school essays' and 'sand without lime'.* He was also in the habit of writing responses to the successful pleas of orators and he would compose speeches for the prosecution and for the defence of high-status defendants on trial in the senate. Depending on how his own

compositions turned out, he made his judgements in condemnation or acquittal of each defendant, while the equestrian order, too, was summoned by edict to come and listen to him.

[54] When it came to other sorts of arts, he devoted himself with great enthusiasm to the widest variety. Taking on the roles of Thracian gladiator or charioteer, sometimes even those of singer or dancer, he would engage in battle with real weapons, and drove a chariot in circuses built in various locations. He was so transported by the pleasure of singing and dancing that he could not sit through public spectacles without singing along with the tragic actor as he delivered his lines, and openly imitating the actor's poses, as if praising or criticizing the performance. And indeed, the very reason for which he ordered an all-night festival on the day he died was so that the licence of the occasion might provide an auspicious opportunity for his stage debut.* Sometimes he even used to dance at night. Once, he summoned three men of consular rank to the Palatine at the second watch, then, when they arrived in great fear and dreading the worst, he made them sit on a platform. All at once, and with a great noise of flutes and castanets, he leapt out, dressed in a cloak and ankle-length tunic, and performed a dance, before going away again. However, despite being so multi-talented he never learned to swim.

[55] In relation to all those who were his favourites, his behaviour constituted madness. He used to kiss the pantomime actor Mnester even in the middle of the games. And if, when Mnester was performing, anyone made the slightest noise, he had him dragged from his seat and flogged him himself. When a Roman knight caused a disturbance, he sent a centurion to him with the message that he should go without delay to Ostia and thence travel on to King Ptolemy in Mauretania, carrying a message: 'Do nothing good or bad to the man I have sent you.' He put some Thracian gladiators in charge of his German bodyguards, while he reduced the armour of the *murmillones*.* When a certain Columbus won a victory but was slightly wounded, he gave orders that the wound be rubbed with a kind of poison, which he thereafter termed *Columbinum*. This was certainly how he recorded it amongst his other poisons. He was so wildly keen on the Green Faction* in the circus, that he used often to take his dinner in the stable and stay overnight there. At one of his parties, he gave the driver Eutychus two million sesterces in going-

home presents. As for his horse Incitatus, to prevent whose disturbance he used to send his soldiers, the day before the circus games, to demand silence in the surrounding area, apart from the marble stable, the ebony manger, the purple blankets and the gem-studded collar, he also gave him a house and a household of slaves and furniture, so that guests he invited in his name might be entertained in a more refined manner. It is said, too, that he meant to make him consul.*

[56] While he was running riot and laying waste in this way, a number of people had the idea of making an attempt on his life. However, when one or two conspiracies had been detected and others were hesitating, having so far lacked a favourable opportunity, two men devised a plan and carried it through—not without the complicity of the most powerful freedmen and the praetorian prefects. For the latter had themselves been accused, though falsely, of conspiring in some plot and felt themselves suspected and hated by the emperor. He had aroused great hatred against them by once taking them aside and asserting, his sword drawn, that if they thought he merited death he would take his life himself, and from that time he was constantly making accusations about one to the other and setting them all against each other. When they had decided to make their attempt on him during the Palatine games, at midday, as he made for the exit, Cassius Chaerea, tribune of a praetorian cohort, requested the leading part. For, though he was an older man, the emperor used to taunt him by calling him soft and effeminate* in the most abusive manner, sometimes, when he asked for the watchword, giving him ‘Priapus’ or ‘Venus’, and sometimes, when, for some reason, he gave the emperor thanks, offering his hand to be kissed, then moving it in an obscene gesture.

[57] Many prodigies foretold his violent end. The statue of Jupiter at Olympia, which he had decided to have taken apart and brought to Rome, suddenly gave out a such a laugh that the scaffolding collapsed and the removal men ran away; and at once a man called Cassius approached claiming that he had been ordered in a dream to sacrifice a bull to Jupiter. The Capitol in Capua was struck by lightning on the Ides of March; and on the same day the same thing happened at Rome to the Palatine doorman’s booth. There were some who speculated that the latter omen portended danger to the Palatine’s master from his guards, while the former signified the

violent death of a distinguished man in repetition of that which had taken place years ago on the same day.* The astrologer Sulla, when Caligula made inquiries about his star signs, assured him that certain death was very close. The lots of Fortune at Antium warned him to beware Cassius. He thus gave orders that Cassius Longinus,* who was then proconsul of Asia, should be put to death, forgetting that Chaerea, too, was called Cassius. The day before he met his death, he dreamt that he was standing in the heavens next to Jupiter's throne and that Jupiter pushed him with the big toe of his right foot so that he fell headlong to earth. Some other events are also regarded as prodigies which took place a little earlier on the day itself. When he was making a sacrifice he was sprinkled with the blood of a flamingo. And Mnester the pantomime performed the same tragedy which the tragedian Neoptolemus had produced at the games during which King Philip of Macedon was killed; and in the farce 'Laureolus'—in which the lead actor in trying to run away falls and vomits blood—several of the understudies sought most keenly to show off their talents, so that the stage was overflowing with blood.* Besides this, preparations were being made for a night-time show in which Egyptians and Aethiopians acted stories from the Underworld.

[58] On the ninth day before the Kalends of February,* at around the seventh hour, having delayed getting up for lunch since his stomach was still disturbed by the previous day's overeating, he finally went out, in response to his friends' persuasion. Since there were young aristocrats from Asia, who had been summoned to perform on stage, getting themselves ready in the covered passage through which his route lay, he paused to look them over and give them encouragement. If the leader of the troop had not complained of a cold, he would have gone back and had the show put on at once. There are two versions of the rest of the story. Some say that while he was speaking to the boys Chaerea from behind gave his neck a deep cut with his sword, shouting 'Take this!',* then that the tribune Cornelius Sabinus, the other conspirator, ran his chest through from in front. Others report that Sabinus, having got some centurions who were in on the plot to get rid of the crowd, asked Caligula for the password following usual military practice and, when Caligula replied 'Jupiter',* Chaerea shouted out 'Let it be so!' As Caligula looked behind him, Chaerea split his jaw with a blow. As he lay with his limbs twisted up, repeatedly calling out that he was alive, others

finished him off with thirty wounds. All acted on the signal ‘At it again!’ Some even applied the sword to his private parts. As the commotion began, his bearers came running to his aid with their litter-poles and the German bodyguards not far behind. They slaughtered several of the conspirators, together with some senators who had not been involved.

[59] He lived twenty-nine years and ruled for three years, ten months and eight days. His corpse was secretly transported to the Lamian gardens* and, partially burnt on a makeshift pyre, was buried under turf in a shallow grave. Afterwards, his sisters, back from exile, exhumed it and had it cremated and entombed. It is generally known that prior to this, the caretakers of the gardens were disturbed by ghosts and in the house, too, where he had slept, no night passed without some alarming apparition, until the house itself burnt down in a fire. His wife Caesonia died with him, run through by a centurion’s sword, as did his daughter, who was dashed against a wall.

[60] Anyone might gauge the state of those times from the following circumstances, too. For when news broke of his assassination no one would believe it at first, and people suspected that the story had been devised and spread by Caligula himself in order to discover by this means how people felt about him. Not even the conspirators wanted anyone to succeed to supreme power, while the senate so heartily agreed on re-establishing liberty that the consuls summoned the first meeting not in the Senate house, which was called ‘Julian’,* but on the Capitoline, while some, when expressing their opinions, even proposed to wipe out all memory of the Caesars and pull down their temples. It was however particularly observed and noted that all the Caesars with the forename Gaius died by the sword, starting with the one who was murdered in the time of Cinna.*

THE DEIFIED CLAUDIUS

[1] The father of Claudius Caesar was Drusus, who first had the forename of Decimus, then later that of Nero. Livia, having married Augustus when she was pregnant, gave birth to Drusus less than three months later and it was suspected that he was the child of his stepfather, conceived in adultery.* Certainly the following line was soon circulating:

The lucky ones have children in just three months.

This Drusus, during his *quaestorship* and *praetorship*,* led the army in the war in Raetia, then later in Germany. The first Roman general to cross the Northern Ocean, he had constructed, with enormous labour and trouble, the canals on the other side of the Rhine which even now are known by his name. He also killed many of the enemy and forced them far back into the most remote places of the interior, not leaving off his pursuit until an apparition, in the form of a barbarian woman but of greater than human size, gave a warning, in the Latin language, that the victor should not press further on. Because of these achievements, he secured the right to an ovation and the triumphal ornaments.

After his *praetorship* he at once embarked on the *consulship* and resumed his campaign, but died of an illness, while stationed in the summer camp, which became known as the Accursed from that time. His body was transported by the foremost men of the towns and colonies to Rome, where it was received by the divisions of the scribes* and buried in the *Campus Martius*. The army, too, raised a mound in his honour, around which soldiers would run every year thereafter on a particular day, while the Gallic cities would offer public prayers and sacrifices. Besides this, the senate among many other honours voted him a marble arch, decorated with trophies, on the Appian Way, and bestowed the title ‘*Germanicus*’ on him and his descendants.

Indeed, he is held to have been a man whose spirit was equally keen on military glory and on citizen government. Besides his victories over the enemy, he is also said to have wanted to win the *opimian spoils** and to have often pursued the leaders of the

Germans all over the field, putting himself in great danger. Nor did he ever conceal the fact that, if it were in his power, he would restore the old republic. It is for this reason, I think, that some have been so bold as to record that Augustus did not trust him, recalling him from his province and, when Drusus delayed, having him killed with poison. However, I include this rather for completeness than because I hold it to be true or even likely. For Augustus was so attached to him while he lived, that he always specified him as co-heir with his own sons, and he once declared this in the senate; when Drusus was dead he so praised him before the crowd that he even prayed to the gods that they would make his Caesars* like Drusus and grant him as glorious a death as Drusus had been given. And not content with having a eulogy in verse, which he himself had composed, inscribed on Drusus' tomb, he also composed a memoir of his life in prose. With the younger Antonia* Drusus produced numerous children, though only three survived him: Germanicus, Livilla, and Claudius.

[2] Claudius was born at Lugdunum, when Iullus Antonius and Fabius Africanus were consuls, on the Kalends of August,* the anniversary of the day that the altar to Augustus was first dedicated there. He was named Tiberius Claudius Drusus. Later, when his older brother was adopted into the Julian family, he took the *cognomen* Germanicus.* He lost his father, however, when he was an infant, and throughout his boyhood and adolescence he suffered from various persistent illnesses to such a degree that his mental and physical development was impaired and, even when he reached the right age, he was not considered suitable for any public or private duties. Even after he had come of age,* he was treated as a minor and continued to be under the supervision of a tutor, a barbarian supervisor of goods transport, as he himself complains in certain writings, who had been chosen deliberately to chastise him as brutally as possible on the slightest provocation. Again, because of his state of health, when he presided over the gladiatorial games which he was providing together with his brother in memory of their father, he was dressed in a Greek cloak, an unprecedented sight.* When he assumed his toga of manhood, he was taken to the Capitoline in a litter in the middle of the night, without the usual escort.

[3] From his earliest youth, however, he displayed an unusual devotion to the liberal arts and often even published some of his attempts in different genres.* Nevertheless, even by this means, he

was quite unable to secure any public position or create the hope that he might prove better in future.

His mother, Antonia, used to refer to him as a monstrous specimen of humanity, whom Nature made a start on but never completed. And if she wanted to emphasize anyone's stupidity, she would describe him as a bigger fool than her son Claudius. His grandmother Augusta* always had the greatest contempt for him, speaking to him only on the rarest occasions and giving him instructions in a brief and peremptory note or else via an intermediary. His sister Livilla, when she heard he was to become emperor, expressed her regrets publicly and unambiguously for the harsh and undeserved fate which was befalling the Roman people. As for his great-uncle Augustus, I include some extracts from his letters to make clear what opinion he had of Claudius:

[4] I have, as you instructed my dear Livia, consulted Tiberius as to what we should do with your grandson Tiberius* for the Games of Mars.* Indeed, we are both of the opinion that we should decide once and for all what plan we are to adopt in his case. For if he is sound and, so to speak, all there, have we any reason to suppose he may not advance along the same path by the same steps as his brother has done? If, however, we suspect that he is lacking and impaired in the wholeness both of his mind and of his body, we should not provide those people who are apt to mock and laugh at such things with opportunities to ridicule both him and ourselves. For if we make a separate decision for each occasion and do not determine in advance whether or not he is capable of fulfilling public duties, we shall always be in a quandary. As for the current issue about which you ask my advice, I am content that he should be in charge of the priests' banquet at the Games of Mars, so long as he allows himself to be guided by Silvanus' son, a connection of his by marriage, and does not do anything to make himself conspicuous or an object of ridicule. However, I do not wish him to watch the circus games from the imperial box, for he would be conspicuous, exposed at the front of the spectators. Nor do I wish him to go to the Alban mount or to be present in Rome on the day of the Latin festival. For if he is capable of going to the mount in attendance on his brother, why should he not be made prefect of the city?* So you have my views, dear Livia: we should decide the entire matter once and for all, so that we are not always vacillating between hope and anxiety. You may, if you wish, give this part of my letter to our Antonia to read.

And again in another letter:

Indeed, while you are away, I shall invite young Tiberius to dinner every day, so that he won't be dining on his own with Sulpicius and Athenodorus.* For I'd like him to make a more careful and sensible choice of someone whose gestures, walk, and behaviour he could take as models. The poor boy is unlucky; in important matters, when his mind doesn't wander, his nobility of character is clear enough.

And then in a third letter:

My dear Livia, I'm damned if I'm not filled with wonder that your grandson Tiberius is capable of making speeches that please me. For I can't see how someone who talks such nonsense in conversation speaks such sense in declamation.

There is, however, no doubt as to what Augustus subsequently decided, leaving Claudius with no experience of public office beyond being a member of the college of Augurs,* and not even instituting him as an heir except in the third degree,* and to a sixth part of his estate along with those who were virtually strangers, while the legacy he left was only eight hundred thousand sesterces.

[5] His uncle Tiberius responded to his request for public office by granting him the insignia of a consul but when Claudius pressed more strongly for the office itself all Tiberius did was to write him a note, saying that he had sent him forty gold pieces for the Saturnalia and Sigillaria.* Finally, at that point, giving up all hope of a magistracy, he hid himself away in retirement in Campania where he kept company with some very vulgar people and, already notorious for being slow, he acquired a further reputation for drinking and gambling. Despite this behaviour, however, he still continued to receive attention from individuals and respect from the public.

[6] The equestrian order twice chose him as their advocate to make a deputation on their behalf, once when they put in a request to the consuls that they be allowed to carry the body of Augustus to Rome on their shoulders, and again when they wished to send the consuls their congratulations on the fall of Sejanus.* Indeed, they would even rise up and take off their cloaks, to mark his arrival at the games. The senate, too, voted to appoint him as an additional member to the priests of Augustus,* who were generally selected by lot, and, when he later lost his house in a fire, to have it rebuilt at public expense, and also to grant him the right to state his opinion in the senate among those of consular rank.* This decree was rescinded,

when Tiberius insisted that Claudius was too infirm and promised that he would compensate his loss* through his own generosity. He, however, when he died, left Claudius as an heir only in the third degree, to a third part of his estate, although he also gave him a legacy of around two million sesterces and included his name in the list of family members commended to the armies and the senate and people of Rome.

[7] It was only under his brother's son Caligula, who early on in his reign attempted to secure popularity by every possible means, that he finally embarked on a public career, when Claudius held the consulship as his colleague for two months. And it happened that the first time he entered the Forum with the fasces, an eagle which was flying by landed on his right shoulder.* He secured by lot a second consulship, to be held four years later. On a number of occasions, when Caligula was away, he presided at the games and the people would cheer, some greeting him with 'Long live the emperor's uncle!', some with 'Long live the brother of Germanicus!'

[8] He remained nevertheless a butt for insults. If he arrived a little later than the appointed time for dinner, he only managed to find a place with difficulty after searching around the dining-room. And whenever he dropped off to sleep after eating, which happened quite frequently, he would be pelted with olive- and date-stones. Sometimes jokers would wake him with a whip or a cane, for their amusement. People would put slippers in his hands as he lay snoring, so that if he was suddenly woken up he would rub his face with them.

[9] Nor did he escape actual dangers. First of all, during his consulship he was almost removed from office on the grounds that he had been too slow in making arrangements to commission and set up statues to Nero and Drusus, the emperor's brothers.* Besides this, his position was also often endangered on various occasions when a stranger or even someone from his household made an allegation against him. Moreover, when the conspiracy of Lepidus and Gaetulicus was discovered* and Claudius was sent as part of the delegation to offer congratulations to Caligula in Germany, even his life was in danger, for Caligula was resentful and complained that his uncle had been purposely chosen to come to him as though to take charge of a boy. Indeed, his fury was such that there are some who record that Claudius was actually pushed into the river in the

robes he had arrived in. And from that time there was no occasion on which he was not the last of the consulars to give his opinion, for, in order to humiliate him, he was asked after everyone else. There was also a court case investigating the forgery of a will to which Claudius had been a witness. Finally, forced to spend eight million sesterces in order to become a member of the new priesthood,* he so undermined his family finances that he was unable to meet his obligation to the treasury and, by order of the prefects, his property was put on sale to make up the difference.*

[10] The greater part of his life had been passed in this way, when, in his fiftieth year, he became emperor in the most curious circumstances. Those conspiring against Caligula had shut him out along with everyone else, when they cleared people out of the way, pretending the emperor wanted privacy.* Claudius had retreated to a chamber, known as the Hermaeum. Shortly afterwards, terrified by rumours of the assassination, he crept to an adjacent balcony and concealed himself among the curtains which hung by the door. By chance, a common soldier who was wandering about, noticed his feet, as he hid there, and pulled him out, meaning to ask who he was. When he recognized Claudius, who had fallen to his knees in fear, he hailed him as emperor. The soldier led him from there to his comrades, who were by this time uncertain what to do and complaining. The soldiers put him in a litter and, since his own attendants had run off, took it in turns to carry him, in a state of misery and fear, on their shoulders to the praetorian camp; people they met on the way felt sorry for him, assuming he was an innocent man being rushed off for execution. He was received into the compound and passed the night under military guard, feeling relief rather than anticipation. For the consuls, along with the senate and the city cohorts, had taken control of the Forum and the Capitoline, with the intention of asserting civic liberty.* Claudius himself was summoned through the tribunes of the plebs to come to the senate meeting and advise what action he thought should be taken, but he replied that he was being held by force against his will. On the next day, however, when the senate was proving rather slow in executing its plans, since there was much disagreement between those advocating different courses, and the crowd of people standing around were by now demanding a single leader and calling for Claudius by name, he allowed the armed assembly of soldiers to swear allegiance to him and promised fifteen

thousand sesterces to each man. He was the first of the Caesars to have won the loyalty of the soldiers with bribery.

[11] Once his control was established he considered it most important to expunge all memory of the two days during which the restoration of the republic had been contemplated. He decreed therefore that everything which had been said and done during that time would be forgiven and forgotten in perpetuity. And this was what he actually did except in the case of a few of the tribunes and centurions who had conspired against Caligula. These he had executed both as an example and because he had discovered that they had demanded his own death also. From this he turned his attention to the observance of family duties, stipulating that his most sacred and frequent oath was to be 'By Augustus'. He had divine honours voted to his grandmother Livia, as well as a chariot drawn by elephants in the circus procession, like that for Augustus.* For his parents he arranged public funeral offerings and, besides these, for his father circus games to take place every year on the anniversary of his birth and for his mother a carriage to transport her image through the Circus, and also the title Augusta which she had refused when living. To commemorate his brother,* which he did at every opportunity, he staged a Greek comedy in the competition at Naples and awarded it the crown in accordance with the opinion of the judges.* He did not even leave Mark Antony forgotten and unacknowledged, swearing, in one of his edicts, that he was all the keener to ensure people celebrated the birthday of his father, Drusus, as the same day was also the birthday of his grandfather, Antony. He completed a marble arch dedicated to Tiberius next to Pompey's Theatre, which had once been voted by the senate but then forgotten. As for Caligula, though he rescinded all his acts, yet he would not allow the day of his murder to be celebrated as a festival, despite the fact that it marked the beginning of his own reign.

[12] In promoting himself, he was restrained and unassuming, refraining from taking the forename 'Imperator'* and refusing excessive honours. He held no public celebrations for the betrothal of his daughter or the birth of his grandson, which he marked only with family ceremonies. He recalled no one from exile without the authority of the senate. He requested the senate's permission, before bringing with him to the senate house the prefect of the praetorian guard and the military tribunes, and also sought their ratification of the

judicial acts of his agents in the provinces. He petitioned the consuls for the right to hold markets on his private estates. He frequently attended as one of the advisers at court cases heard by the magistrates. And when they gave games, he would rise up with the rest of the crowd to greet them, paying his respects with word and gesture. When the tribunes of the plebs came to see him, he apologized that, because of the lack of space, he could only hear them if they were standing. Because of this behaviour, in a short time he secured so much affection and support that when it was reported that he had been ambushed and killed as he was travelling towards Ostia, the people were greatly upset and, with horrible curses, insistently attacked the soldiers as traitors and the senators as parricides, only stopping when first one, then another, then numerous magistrates appeared on the rostra to confirm that the emperor was safe and on his way home.

[13] He did not, however, manage to avoid plots completely but was subject to attack by individuals, by factions, and, finally, in civil war. A man of the common people was apprehended in the middle of the night, just by his bed-chamber, armed with a dagger. Two men of the equestrian order were caught ready to ambush him in public places, one armed with a sword-stick to attack him as he came out of the theatre, the other with a hunting knife to set upon him as he was sacrificing in the Temple of Mars. Besides this, Asinius Gallus and Statilius Corvinus, the grandsons of the orators Pollio and Messala, plotted rebellion against him, winning over quite a number of his own freedmen and slaves. Furius Camillus Scribonianus, the governor of Dalmatia, began a civil war against him. However, within five days, Camillus was defeated by the legions who had sworn allegiance to him but then changed their minds, moved by religious feeling. For, as they responded to the order to join the new emperor, the eagles, through some divine intervention, could not be decorated* nor the standards pulled up and moved.

[14] He was consul on four further occasions, in addition to the earlier one. The first two he held in succession, the latter two, in each case after an interval of four years.* On the last occasion he held the office for six months, while the others were all for two months. The third time he held the office as *suffect* in place of a man who had died—a new departure for an emperor. He took immense trouble in administering justice both as consul and when out of office, even on

his personal festival days and those of his family, not infrequently, too, on long-established feast days and days of ill omen. He did not always follow what was set down in the laws but would often moderate their harshness or leniency, in accordance with his sense of equity and justice. He authorized a new trial in the case of some who had lost their suit, in a hearing before private judges, by demanding more than the law laid down, and he exceeded the penalty prescribed by law when he condemned to the wild beasts those who were found guilty of especially serious crimes.

[15] In hearing and deciding cases, he displayed astonishing inconsistency, however, being sometimes judicious and wise, sometimes ill-advised and hasty, and occasionally capricious and like a lunatic. When revising the lists of the divisions of jurors, he dismissed a man who had presented himself without revealing he was immune because of the number of his children,* on the grounds that he was eager to pass judgement. Another man, when challenged in relation to a suit he had brought himself by his opponents (who asserted this was not a matter for a hearing before the emperor but for a regular court), Claudius at once compelled to defend his case before him, claiming that the man would make clear when defending his own interests how fair he would be in judging the affairs of others. When a woman refused to acknowledge a man who claimed to be her son and it was unclear which of them had justice on their side, he forced her into a confession by demanding that she marry the young man. When one party to a dispute was absent, he would frequently rule in favour of those present, regardless of whether their opponent's absence was a matter of choice or of necessity. When someone declared that a forger ought to have his hands cut off, Claudius at once demanded that an executioner be summoned with his cleaver and chopping-block. In the case of a man whose citizenship was in dispute, a trivial argument arose among the lawyers as to whether he should offer his defence dressed in a toga or a Greek cloak; Claudius, as though to show his impartiality, made him change his clothes repeatedly, depending on whether the plaintiffs or the defence were speaking. In one case, he is even thought to have offered a written judgement as follows: that he decided in favour of whichever side was speaking the truth. For these reasons he lost respect to such a degree that he was held in universal and open contempt. One man, making excuses for a witness whom the

emperor had summoned from the provinces, claimed that the man could not appear but for a long time would not give the reason. Eventually, after repeated questioning, he declared: 'He's dead; I think that's a legitimate excuse.' Another, offering thanks that the emperor had allowed him to defend an accused man, added: 'Though that is the usual practice.' I myself used to hear older men claim that advocates would abuse his patience to such an extent that, when he was leaving the tribunal, they would not only call out for him to return but would even hold him back by grabbing the fringe of his toga or taking hold of his foot. And in case this should cause any surprise, I might add that a little Greek lawyer came out with the following comment in his own language in the midst of a heated exchange: 'You are an old man and a fool.' It is common knowledge that a Roman knight, who was accused, on a false charge trumped up by ambitious rivals, of improper conduct towards women, when he saw common prostitutes summoned as witnesses against him and their testimony admitted,* threw the writing implement and tablets he had in his hand at the emperor's face, causing a serious cut on his cheek, and at the same time reviled his stupidity and cruelty.

[16] He also held the office of censor, which had been in abeyance for a long time since the censorship of Plancus and Paulus,* but here too he was unpredictable and inconsistent both in his intentions and in his decisions. During the inspection of the knights,* he let off a young man of bad character without official stigma, because his father claimed he was very happy with him, on the grounds that he had a censor of his own. Another, who was notorious for corruption and adultery, he dismissed with nothing more than a warning: 'That he should give rein to his youth with greater restraint or at least with greater discretion.' He added, too: 'For why should I know what girlfriend you have?' In another case, in response to the entreaties of the man's friends, he removed the mark of ignominy which had been placed by his name but commented, 'Let the erasure be seen, however.' A most eminent man who was a leading figure in the province of Greece but lacked knowledge of the Latin language, he not only dismissed from the list of judges but deprived of his Roman citizenship. He obliged everyone to speak in their own defence as best they could, without the use of advocates. He imposed marks of disgrace on many, some quite unexpectedly for the novel offence of going out

of Italy without informing him and seeking his permission. To one man he gave a black mark, however, because, when he was in his province, he had been the companion of a king, and Claudius referred back to earlier times when a charge of treason was brought against Rabirius Postumus because he had followed Ptolemy to Alexandria to recover a loan.* As a result of the carelessness of his investigators, he attempted to impose marks on a number of people whom he then discovered to be innocent—much to his own shame. He accused some of not being married, not having children, or having insufficient resources, who then showed themselves to be married, or to be fathers, or to have ample means.* One man, who was accused of having stabbed himself, tore off his clothes to show that his body was unscathed. Notable acts of his censorship also included the following: he had a finely crafted silver chariot, which was on sale in the Sigillaria,* bought and then cut into pieces in his presence.* And in one single day, he issued twenty edicts, including one which prescribed that, since the harvest from the vineyards was ample, the wine-jars should be well sealed with pitch, and another which declared that the juice of the yew tree was the best remedy for a snake bite.

[17] He undertook just one military campaign and even that was a modest one. When the senate voted him the triumphal ornaments and he considered the honour insufficient to an emperor's dignity, wishing for the glory of a full triumph, he chose Britain on the grounds that it offered the greatest potential as a place to win it, for no one had made the attempt since Julius Caesar and the island was currently in a state of unrest because some deserters had not been returned. He set sail for that destination from Ostia but was twice almost lost at sea due to violent winds from the north-west, once off Liguria and once near the Stoechades islands. For this reason he travelled from Massilia as far as Gesoriacum by land.* Without a battle or a drop of blood being shed, part of the island surrendered within a very few days and, in the sixth month after setting out, he returned to Rome and held a triumph of the greatest splendour. To witness the spectacle, he permitted not only the provincial governors but even some people who had been exiled to stay in Rome. Among the enemy spoils was a naval crown which he had fixed to the gable of the imperial palace alongside the civic crown, to show that he had traversed and, as it were, conquered the Ocean. His wife, Messalina,

followed his chariot in a carriage. Also following him in the triumphal procession were those who had won triumphal ornaments in the same war but, while the rest went on foot and wore purple-bordered togas, Marcus Crassus Frugi rode a horse with special trappings and wore a tunic embroidered with palms because he was receiving the honour for a second time.

[18] He was always most scrupulous in undertaking responsibility for the city of Rome and for the corn supply. When the Aemilian area was afflicted with a rather stubborn fire, he stayed for two nights in the Diribitorium,* and, when the assistance supplied by the soldiers and his own slaves was not enough, he had the magistrates call on the common people from every area of the city and, with chests full of money in front of him, he urged them to give help, paying each person on the spot a suitable reward for their services. On one occasion, after repeated poor harvests had led to a shortage of corn, he was held up in the Forum by a mob who, hurling insults as well as crusts of bread, attacked him so fiercely that he was scarcely able to escape into the Palace. He then left no means untried of importing supplies even in the winter season. For he offered traders guaranteed profits by undertaking to cover any losses himself, if there should be an accident as a result of bad weather, and to those constructing merchant ships he offered large incentives, corresponding to each person's status: citizens were to be given immunity from the requirements of the Augustan marriage law;* those of Latin status were to be given the privileges of citizenship; women were to be given the privileges of those with four children.* [19] These prescriptions are still in force today.

[20] He undertook many public works which were magnificent rather than necessary. The principal ones were the completion of the aqueduct begun by Caligula, as well as the canal from the Fucine lake and the harbour at Ostia, although he was well aware that Augustus had refused to undertake the canal, despite the repeated requests of the Marsians, while the Deified Julius had several times planned the harbour but abandoned it because of the difficulties involved. By means of the stone-built Claudian aqueduct he brought to the city the cold and plentiful waters of two springs, one known as the Caeruleus, the other as the Curtius and Albudignus,* as well as the waters of the new Anio, and divided their flow among a number of highly ornamented basins. He tackled the Fucine lake, hoping for

profit as much as glory, since some people had undertaken to drain it at their own expense, if they could have the land which was thereby reclaimed. He only just managed to complete the canal in eleven years, with works partly to level and partly to tunnel through a mountain over a distance of three miles, though he had thirty thousand men working on the project continuously and without a break. At Ostia he had the harbour deepened, surrounding it with moles to the left and right and placing an artificial island in the deep water across from the entrance. In order to give this a more secure foundation, he first sank the ship in which the great obelisk had been transported from Egypt,* then, having built up piles, he crowned them with a tower of enormous height, on the model of the Pharos of Alexandria, so that at night time ships might be guided by its lights.

[21] He gave out presents to the people with some frequency and also provided a large number of splendid shows, not according to the accustomed pattern or in the usual places but some which were novel and some which were revived from ancient times and in places where no one before him had held shows. The games celebrating the dedication of Pompey's Theatre, which he had restored after a fire, he inaugurated from a raised seat placed in the orchestra, after first offering sacrifices in the temples at the top* and then coming down through the auditorium, while everyone sat in silence. He also held Secular Games,* claiming that Augustus had held them early, not waiting for the proper time, though he himself wrote in his 'Histories' that, when the games had been in abeyance for a long period, Augustus had revived them after a very exact calculation of the timing. Thus there was laughter when the herald's announcement, with the usual words, invited people to the games 'which no one had seen before and no one would see again', since a number of people were still living who had seen them before and indeed some actors made an appearance who had performed in the earlier games. He often gave circus games in the Vatican Circus, too, sometimes with animal hunts between every five races. The Circus Maximus, however, he adorned with marble starting-stalls and gilded goals,* replacing the earlier ones which were in both cases made of tufa and wood. He also constructed seating reserved for the senators, who had previously watched the games sitting amongst everyone else. Besides the chariot races, he also staged the Troy

game* and showed panthers, which were hunted down by a squadron of mounted praetorian guardsmen, led by the tribunes and the prefect himself. He gave a display of Thessalian horsemen, too, who drive wild bulls around the Circus and, when they are tired out, leap onto them and pull them to the ground by their horns.

He gave numerous gladiatorial shows in many different places. To celebrate the anniversary of his accession, he gave shows in the praetorian camp, though without animal hunts or fine equipment, and others in the Saepta following the regular and usual pattern. He also gave other additional shows in the same place, lasting only a few days, which he was the first to call ‘little presents’,* since, when he was about to give them for the first time, he announced that he was going to invite the people ‘as though to a spur-of-the-moment supper party’. At these shows in particular he was friendly and relaxed, even, when the gold pieces were presented to the visitors, bringing out his left hand to count them off out loud on his fingers, as the common people do.* He would frequently urge the crowd to enjoy themselves with encouragements and exhortations, sometimes calling them ‘masters’, and adding an occasional sprinkling of feeble and obscure jokes. For example, when people called out for the ‘Dove’, he said he would hand him over, ‘if he could be caught’. The following, however, was very good and appropriate to the occasion: when with everyone’s support he had granted the wooden sword* to an *essedarius* whose four sons had pleaded on his behalf, he sent around a placard straight away advising the people ‘How they really ought to have children, when they could see what a support and favour they brought even to a gladiator’. In the Campus Martius he staged the siege and destruction of a town, in the manner of an actual war, and also the surrender of the kings of the Britons, while he presided dressed in a general’s cloak. Indeed, he even staged a sea-battle on the Fucine lake, when he was about to drain it. However, when those who were to fight called out: ‘Hail emperor! Those who are about to die salute you’, he replied: ‘Or not.’* After that pronouncement, none of them was prepared to fight, arguing that he had thereby spared them. Claudius debated for some time as to whether he should subject them all to fire and the sword before finally leaping out of his seat and running all around the lake, despite the embarrassment of his limp, and, offering a mixture of threats and encouragement, compelling them to fight. In this spectacle a Sicilian fleet fought