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Tacitus and Bracciolini: The Annals Forged in the XVth Century

TACITUS AND BRACCIOLINI.
THE ANNALS FORGED IN THE XVth CENTURY.
by JOHN WILSON ROSS (1818-1887)
Originally published anonymously in 1878.

Non ulli Tacitus patuit manifestius unquam.
SOSSAGO. _Epigrammata_.

Excellentissimum Poggium, immortalem quidem virum, sed prope hac aetate sepultum, redivivium donaveris nobis. BICCIONI. _Epistola Hyacintho de Lan inscripta._

Is ... reliquit, quae et facundiam, et mirificam ingenii facilitatem ostendunt. Tendebat toto animo, et quotidiano quodam usu ad EFFINGENDUM ... Sed habet hoc dilucida illa divini hominis in dicendo copia, ut estimanti se imitabilem praebeat, _experienti spem imitationis eripiat_. Eam igitur dicendi laudem POGGIUS si non facultate, at _certe voluntate_ complectebatur. Scripsit ... Historiam ... magnuum munus. PAOLO CORTESE (Bishop of Urbino). _De Hominibus Doctis_.

Quaestio ... contra communem totius orbis traditionem ac fidem, contra tot historicocum ... nemine contradicente, consensum, demum agitari coepta est; et a nobis ... tam abunde ventilate, ut magis copia quam inopia laborare videamur. GISBERT VOET. _Spicilegium ad Disceptationem Historicam de Papissa Johanna.(LONDON: 1878)

I DEDICATE TO MY ESTEEMED AND ESTIMABLE BROTHER ROBERT DALRYMPLE ROSS

This Research into The Authorship of the Annals of Tacitus

AS A VERY SLIGHT TOKEN OF MY AFFECTION AND ALSO OF MY ADMIRATION FOR HIS RARE ASSEMBLAGE OF QUALITIES LOFTY MORAL RECTITUDE THE KINDLIEST FEELINGS OF THE HEART DEVOTION TO HIGH OCCUPATION APTITUDE FOR BOOKS AS FOR AFFAIRS

AND A REFINED ENLIGHTENMENT TO APPRECIATE THE GENIUS OF TACITUS AND OF BRACCIOLINI

AND FULLY TO APPREHEND AN INVESTIGATION UNDERTAKEN IN THE TRUE INTERESTS OF HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE.

PREFACE

The theory broached in this book involves a charge of the grossest fraud against a most distinguished man, who rose to high posts in public affairs and won imperishable fame in letters. There being blots on his moral character, it would be censurable to fasten upon his memory this new imputation of dishonesty, were it not substantiated by irresistible evidence.

The title of this book quite explains what its design is,--to contribute something towards settling the authorship of the Annals of Tacitus, which encomiastic admirers imagine to be the most extraordinary history ever penned, and the writer "but one degree removed from inspiration, if not inspired." This wondrous writer I assert to be the famous Florentine of the Renaissance, Poggio Bracciolini, in favour of which view I have tried to make out a case by bringing forward a variety of passages from the "History" and the "Annals" to show an extensive series of contradictions as

to facts and characters, departures from truth about matters connected with ancient Roman life, laches in grammar and use of words that never could have proceeded from any patrician or plebian of the world-renowned old Commonwealth, with a number of other things that will readily strike the intelligent and sober mind as utterly inconsistent with the existing belief of the "Annals" being the production of Tacitus. All this is case in the shade for the fullest light to be thrown on the subject, when not wishing to make my theory a matter of speculation but founded in common sense, I give a detailed history of the forgery, from its conception to its completion, the sum that was paid for it, the abbey where it was transcribed, and other such convincing minutiae taken from a correspondence that Poggio carried on with a familiar friend who resided in Florence.

A reader of acumen and critical faculty following a writer in an inquiry of this nature places himself in the position of a lawyer who will not accept the interpretation of an Act of Parliament, or even a clause in it, as correct, except,--as his phrase goes,--it "runs upon all fours:" he knows that it is with a speculation in a literary matter as with a chapter of a statute: he struggles to raise only a single valid objection against what is advanced: if successful he at one destroys the whole of the theory, from thus exposing it to view as not "running upon all fours;" the fabric is, in fact, discovered to be reared on a false foundation; it must, therefore, fall as at the slightest breath a child's house built of cards; and the theory becomes one more added to the list of those that are apocryphal. If on examination it should be agreed that the theory in this book is without a flaw, I conceived that I shall have done not a small, but a considerable service to the cause of true history.

LONDON, _April_ 3, 1878.

CONTENTS.

BOOK THE FIRST. TACITUS.

CHAPTER I.

TACITUS COULD BARELY HAVE WRITTEN THE ANNALS.

I. From the chronological point of view.
II. The silence preserved about that work by all writers till the fifteenth century.
III. The age of the MSS. containing the Annals.

CHAPTER II.

A FEW REASONS FOR BELIEVING THE ANNALS TO BE A FORGERY.

I. The fifteenth century an age of imposture, shown in the invention of printing.
II. The curious discovery of the first six books of the Annals.
III. The blunders it has in common with all forged documents.
IV. The Twelve Tables.
V. The Speech of Claudius in the Eleventh Book of the Annals.
VI. Brutus creating the second class of nobility.
VII. Camillus and his grandson.
VIII. The Marching of Germanicus.
IX. Description of London in the time of Nero.
X. Labeo Antistius and Capito Ateius; the number of people executed for their attachment to Sejanus; and the

marriage of Drusus, the brother of Tiberius, to the
Elder Antonia.

CHAPTER III.

SUSPICIOUS CHARACTER OF THE ANNALS FROM THE POINT OF TREATMENT.

I. Nature of the history.
II. Arrangement of the narrative.
III. Completeness in form.
IV. Incongruities, contradictions and disagreements from the
History of Tacitus.
V. Craftiness of the writer.
VI. Subordination of history to biography.
VII. The author of the Annals and Tacitus differently illustrate
Roman history.
VIII. Characters and events corresponding to characters and
events in the XVth century.
IX. Greatness of the Author of the Annals.

CHAPTER IV.

HOW THE ANNALS DIFFERS FROM THE HISTORY.

I. In the qualities of the writers; and why that difference.
II. In the narrative, and in what respect.
III. In style and language.
IV. The reputation Tacitus has of writing bad Latin due to the
mistakes of his imitator.

CHAPTER V.

THE LATIN AND THE ALLITERATIONS IN THE ANNALS.

I. Errors in Latin, (_a_) on the part of the transcriber;
(_b_) on the part of the writer.
II. Diction and Alliterations: Wherein they differ from those
of Tacitus.

BOOK THE SECOND. BRACCIOLINI.

CHAPTER I.

BRACCIOLINI IN ROME.

I. His genius and the greatness of his age.
II. His qualifications.
III. His early career.
IV. The character of Niccolo Niccoli, who abetted him in the
forgery
V. Bracciolini's descriptive writing of the Burning of Jerome
of Prague compared with the descriptive writing of the
sham sea fight in the Twelfth Book of the Annals.

CHAPTER II.

BRACCIOLINI IN LONDON.

I. Gaining insight into the darkest passions from associating
with Cardinal Beaufort.
II. His passage about London in the Fourteenth Book of the
Annals examined.
III. About the Parliament of England in the Fourth Book.

CHAPTER III.

BRACCIOLINI SETTING ABOUT THE FORGERY OF THE ANNALS

I. The Proposal made in February, 1422, by a Florentine, named Lamberteschi, and backed by Niccoli.
II. Correspondence on the matter, and Mr. Shepherd's view that it referred to a Professorship refuted.
III. Professional disappointments in England determine Bracciolini to persevere in his intention of forging the Annals.
IV. He returns to the Papal Secretaryship, and begins the forgery in Rome in October, 1423.

CHAPTER IV.

BRACCIOLINI AS A BOOKFINDER

I. Doubts on the authenticity of the Latin, but not the Greek Classics.
II. At the revival of letters Popes and Princes offered large rewards for the recovery of the ancient classics.
III. The labours of Bracciolini as a bookfinder.
IV. Belief put about by the professional bookfinders that MSS. were soonest found in obscure convents in barbarous lands.
V. How this reasoning throws the door open to fraud and forgery.
VI. The bands of bookfinders consisted of men of genius in every department of literature and science.
VII. Bracciolini endeavours to escape from forging the Annals by forging the whole lost History of Livy.
VIII. His Letter on the subject to Niccoli quoted, and examined.
IX. Failure of his attempt, and he proceeds with the forgery of the Annals.

BOOK THE THIRD. THE LAST SIX BOOKS OF THE ANNALS.

CHAPTER I.

THE CHARACTER OF BRACCIOLINI.

I. The audacity of the forgery accounted for by the mean opinion Bracciolini had of the intelligence of men.
II. The character and tone of the last Six Books of the Annals exemplified by what is said of Sabina Poppaea, Sagitta, Pontia and Messalina.
III. A few errors that must have proceeded from Bracciolini about the Colophonian Oracle of Apollo Clarius, the Household Gods of the Germans, Gotarzes, Bardanes and, above all, Nineveh.
IV. The estimate taken of human nature by the writer of the Annals the same as that taken by Bracciolini.
V. The general depravity of mankind as shown in the Annals insisted upon in Bracciolini's Dialogue "De Infelicitate Principum".

CHAPTER II.

THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

I. The intellect and depravity of the age.
II. Bracciolini as its exponent.

III. Hunter's accurate description of him.
IV. Bracciolini gave way to the impulses of his age.
V. The Claudius, Nero and Tiberius of the Annals personifications of the Church of Rome in the fifteenth century.
VI. Schildius and his doubts.
VII. Bracciolini not covetous of martyrdom: communicates his fears to Niccoli.
VIII. The princes and great men in the Annals the princes and great men of the XVth century, not of the opening period of the Christian aera.
IX. Bracciolini, and not Tacitus, a disparager of persons in high places.

CHAPTER III.

FURTHER PROOFS OF FORGERY.

I. "Octavianus" as the name of Augustus Caesar.
II. Cumanus and Felix as joint governors of Judaea.
III. The blood relationship of Italians and Romans.
IV. Fatal error in the _oratio obliqua_.
V. Mistake made about "locus".
VI. Objections of some critics to the language of Tacitus examined.
VII. Some improprieties that occur in the Annals found also in Bracciolini's works.
VIII. Instanced in (_a_) "nec--aut".
(_b_) rhyming and the peculiar use of "pariter".
IX. The harmony of Tacitus and the ruggedness of Bracciolini illustrated.
X. Other peculiarities of Bracciolini's not shared by Tacitus: Two words terminating alike following two others with like terminations; prefixes that have no meaning; and playing on a single letter for alliterative purposes.

CHAPTER IV.

THE TERMINATION OF THE FORGERY.

I. The literary merit and avaricious humour of Bracciolini.
II. He is aided in his scheme by a monk of the Abbey of Fulda.
III. Expressions indicating forgery.
IV. Efforts to obtain a very old copy of Tacitus.
V. The forgery transcribed in the Abbey of Fulda.
VI. First saw the light in the spring of 1429.

CHAPTER V.

THE FORGED MANUSCRIPT.

I. Recapitulation, showing the certainty of forgery.
II. The Second Florence MS. the forged MS.
III. Cosmo de' Medici the man imposed upon.
IV. Digressions about Cosmo de' Medici's position, and fondness for books, especially Tacitus.
V. The many suspicious marks of forgery about the Second Florence MS.; the Lombard characters; the attestation of Salustius.
VI. The headings, and Tacitus being bound up with Apuleius, seem to connect Bracciolini with the forged MS.
VII. The first authentic mention of the Annals.
VIII. Nothing invalidates the theory in this book.
IX. Brief recapitulation of the whole argument.

BOOK THE FOURTH. THE FIRST SIX BOOKS OF THE ANNALS.

CHAPTER I.

REASONS FOR BELIEVING THAT BRACCIOLINI WROTE BOTH PARTS OF THE ANNALS.

I. Improvement in Bracciolini's means after the completion of the forgery of the last part of the Annals.
II. Discovery of the first six books, and theory about their forgery.
III. Internal evidence the only proof of their being forged.
IV. Superiority of workmanship a strong proof.
V. Further departure than in the last six books from Tacitus's method another proof.
VI. The symmetry of the framework a third proof.
VII. Fourth evidence, the close resemblance in the openings of the two parts.
VIII. The same tone and colouring prove the same authorship.
IX. False statements made about Sejanus and Antonius Natalis for the purpose of blackening Tiberius and Nero.
X. This spirit of detraction runs through Bracciolini's works.
XI. Other resemblances denoting the same author.
XII. Policy given to every subject another cause to believe both parts composed by a single writer.
XIII. An absence of the power to depict differences in persons and things.

CHAPTER II.

LANGUAGE, ALLITERATION, ACCENT AND WORDS.

I. The poetic diction of Tacitus, and its fabrication in the Annals.
II. Florid passages in the Annals.
III. Metrical composition of Bracciolini.
IV. Figurative words: (_a_) "pessum dare"
(_b_) "voluntas"
V. The verb "foedare" and the Ciceronian use of "foedus".
VI. The language of other Roman writers,--Livy, Quintus Curtius and Sallust.
VII. The phrase "non modo--sed", and other anomalous expressions, not Tacitus's.
VIII. Words not used by Tacitus, "distinctus" and "codicillus"
IX. Peculiar alliterations in the Annals and works of Bracciolini.
X. Monotonous repetition of accent on penultimate syllables.
XI. Peculiar use of words: (_a_) "properus"
(_b_) "annales" and "scriptura"
(_c_) "totiens"
XII. Words not used by Tacitus: (_a_) "addubitare"
(_b_) "extitere"
XIII. Polysyllabic words ending consecutive sentences.
XIV. Omissions of prepositions: (_a_) in.
(_b_) with names of nations.

CHAPTER III.

MISTAKES THAT PROVE FORGERY

I. The gift for the recovery of Livia.
II. Julius Caesar and the Pomoerium.
III. Julia, the wife of Tiberius.
IV. The statement about her proved false by a coin.

V. Value of coins in detecting historical errors.
VI. Another coin shows an error about Cornatus.
VII. Suspicion of spuriousness from mention of the Quinquennale Ludicrum.
VIII. Account of cities destroyed by earthquake contradicted by a monument.
IX. Bracciolini's hand shown by reference to the Plague.
X. Fawning of Roman senators more like conduct of Italians in the fifteenth century.
XI. Same exaggeration with respect to Pomponia Graecina.
XII. Wrong statement of the images borne at the funeral of Drusus.
XIII. Similar kind of error committed by Bracciolini in his "Varietate Fortunae".
XIV. Errors about the Red Sea.
XV. About the Caspian Sea.
XVI. Accounted for.
XVII. A passage clearly written by Bracciolini.

CHAPTER THE LAST.

FURTHER PROOFS OF BRACCIOLINI BEING THE AUTHOR OF THE FIRST SIX BOOKS OF THE ANNALS.

I. The descriptive powers of Bracciolini and Tacitus.
II. The different mode of writing of both.
III. Their different manners of digressing.
IV. Two statements in the Fourth Book of the Annals that could not have been made by Tacitus.
V. The spirit of the Renaissance shown in both parts of the Annals.
VI. That both parts proceeded from the same hand shown in the writer pretending to know the feelings of the characters in the narrative.
VII. The contradictions in the two parts of the Annals and in the works of Bracciolini.
VIII. The Second Florence MS. a forgery.
IX. Conclusion.

BOOK THE FIRST. TACITUS.

"Allusiones saepe subobscurae ... mihi conjectandi aliquando, et aliquando exploratae veritatis fundamento innitendi materiam praebuere."
DE TONELLIS. Praef. ad Poggii Epist.

TACITUS AND BRACCIOLINI.

CHAPTER I.

TACITUS COULD BARELY HAVE WRITTEN THE ANNALS.

I. From the chronological point of view.--II. The silence preserved about that work by all writers till the fifteenth century.--III. The age of the MSS. containing the Annals.

I. The Annals and the History of Tacitus are like two houses in ruins: dismantled of their original proportions they perpetuate the splendour of Roman historiography, as the crumbling remnants of the Coliseum preserve from oblivion the magnificence of Roman architecture. Some of the subtlest intellects, keen in criticism and expert in scholarship, have, for centuries, endeavoured with considerable pains, though not with success in every instance, to

free the imperfect pieces from difficulties, as the priesthood of the Quindecimvirs, generation after generation, assiduously, yet vainly, strove to clear from perplexities the mutilated books of the Sibyls. I purpose to bring,--parodying a passage of the good Sieur Chanvallon,--not freestone and marble for their restoration, but a critical hammer to knock down the loose bricks that, for more than four centuries, have shown large holes in several places.

Tacitus is raised by his genius to a height, which lifts him above the reach of the critic. He shines in the firmament of letters like a sun before whose lustre all, Parsee-like, bow down in worship. Preceding generations have read him with reverence and admiration: as one of the greatest masters of history, he must continue to be so read. But though neither praise nor censure can exalt or impair his fame, truth and justice call for a passionless inquiry into the nature and character of works presenting such difference in structure, and such contradictions in a variety of matters as the History and the Annals.

The belief is general that Tacitus wrote Roman history in the retrograde order, in which Hume wrote the History of England. Why Hume pursued that method is obvious: eager to gain fame in letters,--seeing his opportunity by supplying a good History of England,--knowing how interest attaches to times near us while all but absence of sympathy accompanies those that are remote,--and meaning to exclude from his plan the incompleted dynasty under which he lived,--he commenced with the House of Stuart, continued with that of Tudor, and finished with the remaining portion from the Roman Invasion to the Accession of Henry VII. But why Tacitus should have decided in favour of the inverse of chronological order is by no means clear. He could not have been actuated by any of the motives which influenced Hume. Rome, with respect to her history, was not in the position that England was, with respect to hers, in the middle of the last century. All the remarkable occurrences during the 820 years from her Foundation to the office of Emperor ceasing as the inheritance of the Julian Family on the death of Nero, had been recorded by many writers that rendered needless the further labours of the historian. Tacitus states this at the commencement of his history, and as a reason why he began that work with the accession of Galba: "Initium mihi operis Servius Galba iterum, Titus Vinius consules erunt; nam post conditam urbem, octingentos et viginti prioris aevi annos multi auctores retulerunt." (Hist. I. 1.) After this admission, it is absolutely unaccountable that he should revert to the year since the building of the City 769, and continue writing to the year 819, going over ground that, according to his own account, had been gone over before most admirably, every one of the numerous historians having written in his view, "with an equal amount of forcible expression and independent opinion"--"pari eloquentia ac libertate." Thus, by his own showing, he performed a work which he knew to be superfluous in recounting events that occurred in the time of Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius and Nero.

What authority have we that he did this? Certainly, not the authority of those who knew best--the ancients. They do not mention, in their meagre accounts of him, the names of his writings, the number of which we, perhaps, glean from casual remarks dropped by Pliny the Younger in his Epistles. He says (vii. 20), "I have read your book, and with the utmost care have made remarks upon such passages, as I think ought to be altered or expunged." "Librum tuum legi, et quam diligentissime potui, adnotavi, quae commutanda, quae eximenda arbitrarer." In a second letter (viii. 7) he alludes to another (or it might be the same)

"book," which his friend had sent him "not as a master to a master, nor as a disciple to a disciple, but as a master to a disciple:" "neque ut magistro magister, neque ut discipulo discipulus ... sed ut discipulo magister ... librum misisti." That Tacitus was not the author of one work only is clear from Pliny in another of his letters (vi. 16) speaking in the plural of what his friend had written: "the immortality of your writings:"--"scriptorum tuorum aeternitas;" also of "my uncle both by his own, and your works:"--"avunculus meus et suis libris et tuis." In the letter already referred to (vii. 20), Tacitus is further spoken of as having written, at least, two historical works, the immortality of which Pliny predicted without fear of proving a false prophet: "auguror, nec me fallit augurium, historias tuas immortales futuras." From these passages it would seem that the works of Tacitus were, at the most, three.

If his works were only three in number, everything points in preference to the Books of History, of which we possess but five; the Treatise on the different manners of the various tribes that peopled Germany in his day; and the Life of his father-in-law, Agricola. Nobody but Fabius Planciades Fulgentius, Bishop of Carthage, supposes that he wrote a book of Facetiae or pleasant tales and anecdotes, as may be seen by reference to the episcopal writer's Treatise on Archaic or Obsolete Words, where explaining "Elogium" to mean "hereditary disease," he continues, "as Cornelius Tacitus says in his book of Facetiae; 'therefore pained in the cutting off of children who had hereditary disease left to them'": "Elogium est haereditas in malo; sicut Cornelius Tacitus ait in libro Facetiarum: 'caesis itaque motum elogio in filiis derelicto.'" (De Vocibus Antiquis. p. 151. Basle ed. 1549). Justus Lipsius doubts whether the Discourse on the Causes of the Corruption of Latin Eloquence proceeded from Tacitus, or the other Roman to whom many impute it, Quintilian, for he says in his Preface to that Dialogue: "What will it matter whether we attribute it to Tacitus, or, as I once thought, to Marcus Fabius Quinctilianus? ... Though the age of Quinctilianus seems to have been a little too old for this Discourse to be by that young man. Therefore, I have my doubts." "Incommodi quid erit, sive Tacito tribuamus; sive M. Fabio Quinctiliano, ut mihi olim visim? ... Aetas tamen Quinctiliani paullo grandior fuisse videtur, quam ut hic sermo illo juvene. Itaque ambigo." (p. 470. Antwerp ed. 1607.) Enough will be said in the course of this discussion to carry conviction to the minds of those who can be convinced by facts and arguments that Tacitus did not write the Annals.

Chronology, in the first place, prevents our regarding him as the author. Though we know as little of his life as of his writings--and though no ancient mentions the date or place of his birth, or the time of his death,--we can form a conjecture when he flourished by comparing his age with that of his friend, Pliny the Younger. Pliny died in the year 13 of the second century at the age of 52, so that Pliny was born A.D. 61. Tacitus was by several years his senior. Otherwise Pliny would not have spoken of himself as a disciple looking up to him with reverence as to "a master"; "the duty of submitting to his influence," and "a desire to obey his advice":--"tu magister, ego contra"--(Ep. viii. 7): "cedere auctoritati tuae debeam" (Ep. i. 20): "cupio praeceptis tuis parere" (Ep. ix. 10); nor would he describe himself as "a mere stripling when his friend was at the height of fame and in a proud position": "equidem adolescentulus, quum jam tu fama gloriaque floreres" (Ep. vii. 20); nor of their being, "all but contemporaries in age": "duos homines, aetate propemodum aequales" (Ep. vii. 20). From these remarks chiefly and a few other circumstances, the modern biographers of Tacitus suppose there was

a difference of ten or eleven years between that ancient historian and Pliny, and fix the date of his birth about A.D. 52.

This is reconcilable with the belief of Tacitus being the author of the Annals; for when the boundaries of Rome are spoken of in that work as being extended to the Red Sea in terms as if it were a recent extension--"claustra ... Romani imperii, quod _nunc_ Rubrum ad mare patescit" (ii. 61),--he would be 63, the extension having been effected as we learn from Xiphilinus, by Trajan A.D. 115. It is also reconcilable with Agricola when Consul offering to him his daughter in marriage, he being then "a young man": "Consul egregiae tum spei filiam juveni mihi despondit" (Agr. 9); for, according as Agricola was Consul A.D. 76 or 77, he would be 24 or 25. But it is by no means reconcilable with the time when he administered the several offices in the State. He tells us himself that he "began holding office under Vespasian, was promoted by Titus, and still further advanced by Domitian": "dignitatem nostram a Vespasiano inchoatam, a Tito auctam, a Domitiano longius provectam" (Hist. i. 1). To have "held office" under Vespasian he must have been quaestor; to have been "promoted" by Titus he must have been aedile; and as for his further advancement we know that he was praetor under Domitian. By the Lex Villia Annalis, passed by the Tribune Lucius Villius during the time of the Republic in 573 after the Building of the City, the years were fixed wherein the different offices were to be entered on--in the language of Livy; "eo anno rogatio primum lata est ab Lucio Villio tribuno plebis, quot annos nati quemque magistratum peterent caperentque" (xl. 44); and the custom was never departed from, in conformity with Ovid's statement in his Fasti with respect to the mature years of those who legislated for his countrymen, and the special enactment which strictly prescribed the age when Romans could be candidates for public offices:

> "Jura dabat populo senior, finitaque certis
> Legibus est aetas, unde petatur honos."
> Fast. v. 65-6.

After the promulgation of his famous plebiscitum by the old Tribune of the People in the year 179 A.C., a Roman could not fill the office of quaestor till he was 31, nor aedile till he was 37,--as, guided by the antiquaries, Sigonius and Pighius, Doujat, the Delphin editor of Livy, states: "quaestores ante annum aetatis trigesimum primum non crearentur, nec aediles curules ante septimum ac trigesimum";--and the ages for the two offices were usually 32 and 38.

From Vespasian's rule extending to ten years we cannot arrive at the date when Tacitus was quaestor; but we can guess when he was aedile, as Titus was emperor only from the spring of 79 to the autumn of 81.

Had his appointment to the aedileship taken place on the last day of the reign of Titus, he would then be but 29 years old; and though in the time of the Emperors, after the year 9 of our aera, there might be a remission of one or more years by the Lex Julia or the Lex Pappia Poppaea, those laws enacted rewards and privileges to encourage marriage and the begetting of children; the remission could, therefore, be in favour only of married men, especially those who had children; so that any such indulgence in the competition for the place of honours could not have been granted to Tacitus, he not being, as will be immediately seen, yet married. In order, then, that he should have been aedile under Titus,--even admitting that he could boast, like Cicero, of having obtained all his honours in the prescribed years--"omnes honores

anno suo"--and been aedile the moment he was qualified by age for the office,--he must have been born, at least, as far back as the year 44.

This will be reconcilable with all that Pliny says, as well as with his being married when "young"; for he would then be 32 or 33, and his bride 22 or 23; for the daughter of Agricola was born when her father was quaestor in Asia--"sors quaesturae provinciam Asiam dedit ... auctus est ibi filiý." (Agr. 9). Nor let it be supposed that a Roman would not have used the epithet "young" to a man of 32 or 33, seeing that the Romans applied the term to men in their best years, from 20 to 40, or a little under or over. Hence Livy terms Alexander the Great at the time of his death, when he was 31, "a young man," "egregium ducem fuisse Alexandrum ... adolescens ... decessit" (ix. 17): so Cicero styles Lucius Crassus at the age of 34;--"talem vero exsistere eloquentiam qualis fuerit in Crasso et Antonio ... alter non multum (quod quidem exstaret), et id ipsum adolescens, alter nihil admodum scripti reliquisset". (De Orat. ii. 2): so also does Cornelius Nepos speak of Marcus Brutus, when the latter was praetor, Brutus being then 43 years of age:--"sic Marco Bruto usus est, ut nullo ille adolescens aequali familiarius" (Att. 8); to this passage of Nepos's, Nicholas Courtin, his Delphin editor, adds that the ancients called men "young" from the age of 17 to the age of 46; notwithstanding that Varro limited youth to 30 years:--"a 17 ad 46 annum, adolescentia antiquitus pertingebat, ut ab antiquis observatum est. Nihilominus Varro ad 30 tantum pertingere ait." But Tacitus being born in 44 is not reconcilable with his being the Author of the Annals, as thus:--

Some time in the nineteen years that Trajan was Emperor,--from 98 to 117,--Tacitus, being then between the ages of 54 and 73, composed his History. He paused when he had carried it on to the reign of Domitian; the narrative had then extended to twenty-three years, and was comprised in "thirty books," if we are to believe St. Jerome in his Commentary on the Fourteenth Chapter of Zechariah:

"Cornelius Tacitus ... post Augustum usque ad mortem Domitiani vitas Caesarum triginta voluminibus exaravit." [Endnote 013] It was scarcely possible for Tacitus to have executed his History in a shorter compass;--indeed, it is surprising that the compass was so short, looking at the probability of his having observed the symmetry attended to by the ancients in their writings, and having continued his work on the plan he pursued at the commencement, the important fragment which we have of four books, and a part of the fifth, embracing but little more than one year. Whether he ever carried into execution the design he had reserved for his old age,--writing of Nerva and Trajan,--we have no record. But two things seem tolerably certain; that he would have gone on with that continuation to his History in preference to writing the Annals; and that he would not have written that continuation until after the death of the Emperor Trajan. He would then have been 73. Now, how long would he have been on that separate history? Then at what age could he have commenced the Annals? And how long would he have been engaged in its composition? We see that he must have been bordering on 80, if not 90: consequently with impaired faculties, and thus altogether disqualified for producing such a vigorous historical masterpiece; for though we have instances of poets writing successfully at a very advanced age, as Pindar composing one of his grandest lyrics at 84, and Sophocles his Oedipus Coloneus at 90, we have no instance of any great historian, except Livy, attempting to write at a very old age, and then Livy rambled into inordinate diffuseness.

II. The silence maintained with respect to the Annals by all writers till the first half of the fifteenth century is much more striking than chronology in raising the very strongest suspicion that Tacitus did not write that book. This is the more remarkable as after the first publication of the last portion of that work by Vindelinus of Spire at Venice in 1469 or 1470, all sorts and degrees of writers began referring to or quoting the Annals, and have continued doing so to the present day with a frequency which has given to its supposed writer as great a celebrity as any name in antiquity. Kings, princes, ministers and politicians have studied it with diligence and curiosity, while scholars, professors, authors and historians in Italy, Spain, France, England, Holland, Germany, Denmark and Sweden have applied their minds to it with an enthusiasm, which has been like a kind of worship. Yet, after the most minute investigation, it cannot be discovered that a single reference was made to the Annals by any person from the time when Tacitus lived until shortly before the day when Vindelinus of Spire first ushered the last six books to the admiring world from the mediaeval Athens. When it appeared it was at once pronounced to be the brightest gem among histories; its author was greeted as a most wonderful man,--the "unique historian", for so went the phrase--"inter historicos unicus."

Now, are we to be asked quietly to believe that there never lived from the first quarter of the second century till after the second quarter of the fifteenth, a single individual possessed of sufficient capacity to discern such eminent and obvious excellence as is contained in the Annals? Are we to believe that that could have been so? in a slowly revolving cycle of 1,000 years and more? ay, upwards of 1,300! If that really was the case, it is enough to strike us dumb with stupor in contemplating such a miraculous instance of perpetuated inanity,--among the lettered, too!--the learned! the studious! the critical! If that was not the case, what a long neglect! Anyhow, the silence is inexplicable. It indicates one of two things,--duncelike stupidity or studious contempt. Both these surmises must be dismissed,--the first as too absurd, the second as too improbable. There can arise a third conjecture--Taste for intellectual achievements, and appreciation of literary merit, had vanished for awhile from the earth, to return after an absence of forty generations of mankind. Again, this supposed probability is too preposterously extravagant to be for an instant credited because it cannot for a moment be comprehended. In short, how marvellous it is! how utterly unaccountable! how inexpressibly mysterious!

Pliny does not say a word about the Annals. The earliest Latin father, Tertullian, quotes only the History (Apol. c. 16). St. Jerome, in his Commentary on Zechariah (iii. 14), cites the passage in the fifth book of the History about the origin of the Jews; he also notices what Tacitus says of another important event, the Fall of Jerusalem, which, having occurred in the reign of Vespasian, must have been narrated in the History. The "single book" treating of the Caesars, which Vopiscus says Tacitus wrote, must have been the "History," ten copies of which the Emperor Tacitus ordered to be placed every year in the public libraries among the national archives. (Tac. Imp. x.) Orosius, the Spanish ecclesiastic, who flourished at the commencement of the fifth century, has several references to Tacitus in his famous work, Hormesta. This great proficient in knowledge of the Scriptures and disciple of St. Augustin quotes the fifth book of the History thrice (Lib. V., cc. 5 and 10), and thrice alludes to facts recorded by Tacitus,--the Temple of Janus being open from the time of Augustus to Vespasian (vii. 3);--the number of the Jews who

perished at the siege of Jerusalem (vii. 9); and the possibly large number of Romans who were killed in the wars with the Daci during the reign of Domitian (vii. 10):--all which passages must have been in the lost portions of the History.

In his Epistles and Poems, that man of wit and fancy, with an intellect and learning above the fifth century in which he lived, --Sidonius Apollinaris,--has one quotation from Tacitus and three references to him. The quotation, which occurs in the fourteenth chapter of the fourth book of his Epistles, is from the last section of the History, (that part of the speech of Civilis where the seditious Batavian touches on the friendship which existed between himself and Vespasian); and his three references are, first, to the "ancient mode of narrative," combined with the greatest "literary excellence" (iv. 22); secondly, to "genius for eloquence" (Carm. xxiii. 153-4); and thirdly, to "pomp of manner" (Carm. ii. 192); the not inelegant Christian writer enumerating qualities that specially commend themselves in the History. When Spartian praises Tacitus for "good faith," the eulogy is more appropriate to the writer of the History than the Annals, howbeit that so many moderns, including the famous philologist and polygrapher, Justus Lipsius; the Pomeranian scholar of the last century, Meierotto; Boetticher and Prutz all question the veracity of Tacitus; while for what he says of the Jews Tertullian vituperates him in language so outrageous as to be altogether unbecoming the capacious mind of the Patristic worthy, who calls him, "the most loquacious of liars,"--"mendaciorum loquacissimus;" --in which strain of calumny he was, from the same cause of religious fervour, followed centuries after,--in the seventeenth,--by two of the most renowned preachers and orators of their day, the famous Jesuit, Famianus Strada, and his less known contemporary, but most able Chamberlain of Urban VIII., Augustino Mascardi,--as if all these pious Christians found it quite impossible to pardon a heathen, blinded by the prejudices of paganism, for believing what he did of the Hebrews; and for recording which belief he ought to receive immediate forgiveness, seeing that Justin, Plutarch, Strabo and Democritus said as bad, if not worse things of that ancient people and their sacred books. [Endnote 019]

Cassiodorus, the Senator, is the only writer of the sixth century, who makes any allusion to Tacitus, and that but once, in the fifth book of his Epistles, to what the Roman says in his Germany of the origin of amber, about which naturalists are still divided, that it is a distillation from certain trees. Freculphus (otherwise written Radulphus), Bishop of Lisieux, who died in the middle of the ninth century (856), in the second volume of his Chronicles, --the sixth chapter of the second book,--quotes Tacitus as the author of the History, the passage being in reference to the Romans who fell in the Dacian war. We have no proof that the Annals was in existence in the twelfth century from what John of Salisbury says in his Polycraticon (viii. 18), that Tacitus is among the number of those historians, "qui tyrannorum atrocitates et exitus miseros plenius scribunt;" for in his completed History Tacitus must have expatiated pretty freely on the "atrocious tyranny" of Domitian, and the "unfortunate termination of the lives of tyrants."

From the time of John of Salisbury till shortly before the publication of the Annals, no further reference is made to Tacitus by any writer or historian, monkish or otherwise, not even of erudite Germany, beginning with Abbot Hermannus, who wrote in the twelfth century the history of his own monastery of St. Martin's at Dornick, and ending with Caspar Bruschius, who, in the sixteenth century, wrote an Epitome of the Archbishoprics and

Bishoprics of Germany, and the Centuria Prima (as Daniel Nessel in the next century wrote the Centuria Secunda) of the German monasteries. And yet in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, all kinds of writers quote the Annals about as freely and frequently as they quote the History, and that not once or twice, but five or six, and even seven and eight times, in the same work. It would be impossible to mention them all, the writers being "as numerous as the leaves in Vallambrosa's vale";--a figure that can hardly be considered hyperbolic when the enormous number of these writers can be partially guessed from the following catalogue of those who delighted in antiquarian researches, whose productions cited are archaeological, and who made all their references to the Annals for the purpose of merely illustrating archaic matters; nevertheless, the number of such writers alone amounts to as many as a score; moreover, the whole twenty are to be found in one compilation comprised in but five volumes,--Polenus's New Supplement to the collections of Graevius and Gronovius, entitled "Utriusque Thesauri Antiquitatum Romanarum Graecarumque Nova Supplementa";--the Friesland scholar, Titus Popma in his "De Operis Servorum"; the Italian antiquary, Lorenzo Pignorio, Canon of Trevigo, in his treatise "De Servis"; the renowned critic, Salmasius, in his explanation of two ancient inscriptions found on a Temple in the island of Crete ("Notae ad Consecrationem Templi in Agro Herodis Attici Triopio"); Peter Burmann in his "De Vectigalibus"; Albertinus Barrisonus in his "De Archivis"; Merula, the jurist, historian and polygrapher, in his "De Legibus Romanorum"; Carolus Patinus in his Commentary "In Antiquum Monumentum Marcellinae"; Polletus in his "Historia Fori Romani"; Aegyptius in his "De Bacchanalibus Explicatio"; Gisbert Cuper in his "Monumenta Antiqua Inedita"; Octavius Ferrarius in his "Dissertatio de Gladiatoribus"; William ý Loon in his "Eleutheria"; Schaeffer in his "De Re Vehiculari"; Johannes Jacobus Claudius in his "Diatribý de Nutricibus et Paedagogis"; Antonius Bombardinus in his "De Carcere Tractatus"; Gutherlethus in his work on the "Salii," or Priests of Mars; the learned Spaniard, Miniana, in his "De Theatro Saguntino Dialogus"; Gorius in his "Columbarium Libertorum et Servorum"; Spon in his "Miscellanea Erudita Antiquitatis" and Jaques Leroy in his "Achates Tiberianus." In fact, the Annals of Tacitus is noticed, or quoted, or referred to, or commented upon at length (as at the commencement of the sixteenth century by Scipione Ammirato), in an endless list of works, with or without the names of the authors, which by itself is all but conclusive that the Annals was not in existence till the fifteenth century, and not generally known till the sixteenth and seventeenth.

But to return for a moment to what was done by two writers, who lived before the fifteenth century,--Sulpicius Severus, who died A.D. 420; and Jornandez, who, in the time of Justinian, was Secretary to the Gothic kings in Italy. Now, it must not be withheld,--for it would be too uncandid,--that identical passages are found in the Annals ascribed to Tacitus and the Sacred History of Sulpicius Severus.

In order that the reader may see the identity of the passages, we place them in juxtaposition, italicising the words that are found in both works:--

Sulpicius (ii. 28). "_Inditum imperatori flammeum, dos et genialis torus et faces nuptiales; cuncta denique, quae_ vel _in feminis_ non sine verecundia conspiciuntur, _spectata_."

Annals (xv. 37). "_Inditum imperatori flammeum_, visi

auspices, _dos et genialis torus et faces nuptiales; cuncta denique spectata, quae_ etiam _in femina_ nox operit."

Sulpicius (ii. 29). "Sed opinio omnium invidiam incendii in principem retorquebat, _credebaturque imperator gloriam innovandae urbis quaesisse_."

Annals (xv. 10). "_Videbaturque Nero condendae urbis novae_ et cognomento suo adpellandae _gloriam quaerere_."

Sulpicius (v. 2). "Quin et novae mortes excogitatae, _ut ferarum tergis contecti laniatu canum interirent_. Multi _crucibus affixi, aut flamma usti_. Plerique in id reservati, ut, CUM _defecisset dies, in usum nocturni luminis urerentur_."

Annals (xv. 44). "Et pereuntibus addita ludibria, _ut ferarum tergis contecti, laniatu canum interirent_, aut _crucibus affixi, aut flammandi_, atque, UBI _defecisset dies, in usum nocturni luminis urerentur_."

These passages, of course, have, till this moment, been regarded as taken by Sulpicius Severus from the Annals, on the unquestioned assumption that that work was the composition of Tacitus. The passages, however, were taken from the Historia Sacra: they bear traces of having been so appropriated, from Sulpicius Severus composing with a harmony almost equal to Tacitus, and a grammatical correctness on a par with the Roman, while the author of the Annals mars that harmony, here by the change of a word, and there by the reconstruction of a sentence; and the grammatical correctness by substituting for "cum," which strictly signifies "when," "ubi," which strictly signifies "where": hence, from resembling Tacitus less than Sulpicius Severus, he seems, of two writers convicted of plagiarism, to be the one who purloined the passages from the other; and if he introduced but trifling alterations, it was because the accomplished presbyter of the fifth century was the master of a neat Latin style, which will bear comparison with that of the best classical writers. Indeed, Sulpicius Severus is likened for style and eloquence to Sallust; he is known as the "Christian Sallust"; and Leclerc in the twentieth volume of his Bibliothýque Choisie, is loud in praise of his Latin, which is, certainly, purer than could have been imagined for his time. He was, nevertheless the very last authority that the author of the Annals ought to have followed for authentic particulars with respect to Nero; for as that emperor was the first persecutor of the Christians, there was nothing too bad that the church-building ecclesiastical writer did not think it right to state of him, as (in his own language) "the worst, not only of princes, but of all mankind, and even brute beasts"; he went, in fact, to the extreme length of believing, being a ridiculously credulous Chiliast, that Nero would live again as Anti-Christ in the millennian kingdom before the end of the world.

It is generally supposed that Jornandez,--whose works are so valuable for their history of the fifth and sixth centuries of our aera,--when speaking, in the second chapter of his History of the Goths, of one "Cornelius as the author of Annals," is speaking of Tacitus,--"Cornelius etiam Annalium scriptor." Camden in his Britannia questions whether Tacitus is meant by "Cornelius"; and, certainly the passage quoted, which is about Meneg in Cornwall, is nowhere to be found in any of the works written by the ancient Roman. But if Tacitus be meant, the passage is an interpolation, because the historical books ascribed to Tacitus bear in all the MSS. either the title "Augustae Historiae Libri," or "Ab Excessu divi Augusti Historiarum Libri," and so in all the first published

editions--that of Vindelinus of Spire about 1470, of Puteolanus and Lanterius about 1475, of Beroaldus in 1515, and the early editions of Venice 1484, 1497 and 1512; of Rome in 1485; Milan 1517; Basle 1519, and Florence (the Juntine Edition) 1527--it not being till 1533, that Beatus Rhenanus first gave those books the name "Annals" (it being Justus Lipsius who, close at the commencement of the last quarter of that century,--in 1574,--first divided the books into two parts, to one of which he gave the name "Annals," and to the other, "Histories"). Then how could Jornandez, who lived in the sixth century, have known any writings of Tacitus by the name of "Annals," when that title was not given to them until the sixteenth century?

We may now, after close research, advance this with extreme caution, and certainty:--no support can be derived from citations or statements made by any writer till the fifteenth century that Tacitus wrote a number of books of the Annals. Should any one extensively read known authors, living between the second and the fifteenth century, besides those mentioned, who quote Tacitus, it will be found that their quotations are from the History, the Germany, or the Agricola; and this can be predicted with just as much confidence, as an astronomer predicts eclipses of the sun and the moon, and, for their verification, needs not wait to see the actual obscuration of those heavenly bodies.

III. In turning to the different MSS., we find that the age of all of them confirms in an equally corroborative manner the theory that Tacitus did not write the Annals. Here let it be noted that the age of a MS. can easily be discovered; and that, too, in a variety of ways:--by the formation of the characters, such as the roundness of the letters; or their largeness or smallness;--the writing of the final l's; the use of the Gothic s's and the Gothic j's; the dotting, or no dotting of the i's; the absence or presence of diphthongs; the length of the lines; the punctuation; the accentuation; the form or size; the parchment or the paper; the ink;--or some other mode of detection. Those MSS. need only be examined which contain either the whole or the concluding books of the Annals.

Of the seven MSS. in the Vatican, that numbered 1,864, (referred to by John Frederic Gronovius, and other editors of Tacitus as the "Farnesian," from its having been transferred from the Farnese Palace to the Vatican,) is supposed to be the oldest, for it is believed to be of the fourteenth century; but the vellum on which it is written is of the sixteenth; so is the vellum of No. 1,422. No. 1,863 was thought by Justus Lipsius to be almost as old as No. 1,864, to have been of the close of the fourteenth century; but it is written on vellum of the middle of the fifteenth century. Nothing can be ascertained, either from its form or the substance on which it is written, of No. 2,965, but the Bipontine editors declared its date to be 1449. No. 1,958, which Puteolanus used in 1475, for his edition (containing the concluding books of the Annals) was copied at Genoa in the year 1448. The two others, numbered 412 and 1,478, are both written on vellum of the fifteenth century.

The oldest Paris MS. is in the Bibliothýque Nationale, and is written on paper of the close of the fifteenth century. Nobody knows what has become of the MS., which is supposed to have been anterior to the editions at the end of the fifteenth century, and was in the library of the Congrýgation de l'Oratoire, to whom it was presented by Henri Harlai de Sancy, who brought it from Italy and died in the Oratory in 1667.

The MS. of Wolfenbuttel (Guelferbytana), used by Ernesti in his edition, was bought at Ferrara on the 28th of September, 1461; beyond that nothing is known of it. The MS. in the library of Jesus College, Oxford, is of the year 1458; the Bodleian, numbered 2,764, is of the century after, though the great Benedictine antiquary, Montfaucon, in that monument of labour and erudition, Bibliotheca Bibliothecarum MSS. Nova, is of opinion that it is as old as 1463; and that in the Harleian collection of MSS. in the British Museum, also numbered 2,764, stated to date back to 1412, can scarcely be older than 1440 or 1450, from the diphthongal writing, first introduced by Guarino of Verona, who died in 1460. The MS. of Grenoble, written on very fine vellum, and containing the whole of the Annals, is of the sixteenth century. The three Medicean, the Neapolitan and the other Italian MSS. are all of very modern writing. As to the MSS. of Wurzburg and Mirandola, the former is not to be found, and the latter was not in existence even in the time of Justus Lipsius.

The four most important MSS. are those known as the First and Second Florence, the Buda and that from which Vindelinus of Spire published the last six books. The two oldest are the "Second Florence" and the "Buda." It would seem that the "Second Florence", from the note at the end, dates back to the year 395, though the Benedictines in their Nouveau Traitý de Diplomatique (vol. iii. pp. 278-9) thought they recognized in it a Lombard writing of the tenth or eleventh century; Ernesti modified that to the ninth; others again changed it to the seventh and even the sixth; but it will be shown to satisfaction in the course of this treatise that it belongs to the fifteenth century. So the Buda MS., believed by Justus Lipsius to be as ancient as the Second Florence (which he thought with the Benedictines was of the tenth or eleventh century) was considered by James Gronovius to be very modern; and very modern it is, being traceable to a little after the same period as the Second Florence, namely, the fifteenth century. The First Florence, which was stated to have been found in the Abbey of Corvey, and which furnished the opening six books of the Annals as first given to the world by Beroaldus, is of an age that has hitherto never been determined; but that age will be shown, towards the close of this work, to be the first quarter of the sixteenth century. The MS. from which Vindelinus of Spire published his edition, was in the Library of St Mark's, Venice, but,--according, to Croll and Exter,--it is no longer to be found.

The case, then, stands thus with respect to the MSS.;--no MS. of the works of Tacitus, whose existence can be traced back further than the sixteenth century, contains the whole of the Annals; and no MS. of the works of Tacitus, whose existence can be traced back further than the first half of the preceding century, has the closing books of the Annals.

Here let me briefly recapitulate;--it being very important for the reader to bear in mind that three things have now been shown:--first, that, from the chronological point of view, Tacitus could barely have written the Annals; secondly, that, from the silence preserved about that book by all writers for upwards of 1300 years from the death of Tacitus, there is cause for supposing it was not in existence from his time, that is, the second century to the fifteenth and sixteenth (the commencement of the fifteenth century being the time of the forgery of the last six books, and the commencement of the sixteenth the time of the publication of the forged first six books);--and thirdly, that there is nothing to contradict this theory of mine in the age of any of the known MSS. containing a part, or the whole of the Annals; but, on the contrary, to verify it, from the age of the oldest being limited

to the fifteenth century; and that if there be, or ever have been others older, it is singular, and puzzling to account for, that one of two things should have occurred; either that they are lost, or else that their age cannot be determined,--both which latter things are actually the case with respect to the two MSS. from which the Annals was originally printed,--that which supplied the concluding books being lost, and that which contains the whole of it being of an age that nobody up till now has been able to determine.

CHAPTER II.

A FEW REASONS FOR BELIEVING THE ANNALS TO BE A FORGERY.

I. The fifteenth century an age of imposture, shown in the invention of printing.--II. The curious discovery of the first six books of the Annals.--III. The blunders it has in common with all forged documents.--IV. The Twelve Tables.--V. The Speech of Claudius in the Eleventh Book of the Annals.--VI. Brutus creating the second class of nobility.--VII. Camillus and his grandson.--VIII. The Marching of Germanicus.--IX. Description of London in the time of Nero.--X. Labeo Antistius and Capito Ateius; the number of people executed for their attachment to Sejanus; and the marriage of Drusus, the brother of Tiberius, to the Elder Antonia.

I. I have now so far cleared the way as to be in a fair position to enter with feasibleness into an investigation of the Annals, with the view of proving that it was not written by Tacitus.

In beginning the investigation, I shall proceed on the assumption that it is a modern forgery of the fifteenth century, having as grounds for this assumption that it was the age when the original MSS. containing the work were discovered; that the existence of those MSS. cannot be traced farther than that century; that (which is of vast consequence in an inquiry of this description) it was an age of imposture; of credulity so immoderate that people were easily imposed upon, believing, as they did, without sufficient evidence, or on slight evidence, or no evidence at all, whatever was foisted upon them; when, too, the love of lucre was such that for money men willingly forewent the reputation that is the accompaniment of the grandest achievements of the intellect. Take, for example, the noble art of printing; for inventing it any man of genius might reasonably be proud. His name, if known, would be emblazoned on the scroll of imperishable fame; be displayed for ever on the highest pyramid of mind; and his country would receive an additional beam of splendor to its previous blaze of renown. But who, for a certainty, knows the inventor of printing? or the country of its origin? Was it Holland in the person of Coster of Haarlem? Or Germany in the person of Mentel, the nobleman, of Strasburg? Or Guttenberg, the goldsmith, of Mayence? Was it neither of these countries? or none of these men? And why this uncertainty? Because a few men possessing the secret, which they kept cautiously to themselves, of printing by means of movable blocks of wood, preferred accumulating enormous sums, equivalent to fair fortunes, by receiving five, six and even between seven and eight hundred gold sequins from a King of France or a Pope of Rome, a Cardinal or an Archbishop, for a bible, which, printed, was passed off as written. We all know how the whole imposture exploded, by the King of France and the Archbishop of Paris comparing the bibles which they had bought of Faust during his stay at the Soleil d'Or in the Rue St. Jacques, Paris. Each thought his bible so superb that the whole world could not produce such another for beauty,--the books being fine vellum copies of what are now known as the Mazarin Bible;--and what was their

amazement on discovering, after a very close comparison, that everything was exactly alike in the two copies,--the flower-pieces in gold, green and blue, with grouped and single birds amid tendrils and leaves, the illuminated letters at the beginning of books with variegated embellishments and brilliant hues of scarlet and azure, the crimson initials to each chapter and sentence, along with astonishing and incomprehensible conformity in letters, words, pagination and lines on every page.

II. The temptation was great to palm off literary forgeries, especially of the chief writers of antiquity, on account of the Popes, in their efforts to revive learning, giving money rewards and indulgences to those who should procure MS. copies of any of the ancient Greek or Roman authors. Manuscripts turned up, as if by magic, in every direction; from libraries of monasteries, obscure as well as famous; from the most out-of-the-way places,--the bottom of exhausted wells, besmeared by snails, as the History of Velleius Paterculus; or from garrets, where they had been contending with cobwebs and dust, as the Poems of Catullus. So long as the work had an appearance of high antiquity, it passed muster as an old classic; and no doubt could be entertained of its genuineness, if, in addition to its ancient look, it was brought in a fragmentary form. We have no history of the last six fragmentary books of the Annals--at least, up to this time; though I shall give it towards the end of this inquiry; but we are told all about the discovery of the fragmentary first six books by Meibomius, the Westphalian historian, and Professor of Poetry and History at Helmstýdt at the close of the sixteenth century in his Opuscula Historica Rerum Germianicarum, while telling the story of the life of Witikind, the monk of the Abbey of Corvey; by Justus Lipsius in note 34 to the second book of the Annals; by Brotier, and other editors of Tacitus.

John de Medici, that magnificent Pope, had been scarcely elected to the Pontifical chair by the title of Leo X. in the spring of 1513, when he caused it to be publicly made known that he would increase the price of rewards given by his predecessors to persons who procured new MS. copies of ancient Greek and Roman works. More than a year, nearly two years elapsed; then his own "Thesaurum Quaestor Pontificius"--"steward," "receiver," or "collector",--Angelo Arcomboldi, brought to him a new MS. of the works of Tacitus, with a most startling novelty--THE FIRST SIX (or, as then divided, FIVE) BOOKS OF THE ANNALS! Everybody was amazed; and everybody was extremely anxious to know where and how it had been obtained. The story of Arcomboldi was that he had found the stranger among the treasures on the well-stored shelves in the Library of the Benedictine monastery on the banks of the Weser, at Corvey, in Westphalia, long famed for the high culture of its learned inmates. The MS. was given out as being of great antiquity, traceable to, at the very least, the commencement of the ninth century; for it was said to have belonged to one of the most distinguished and accomplished scholars of the abbey, Anschaire, whom Gregory IV. in the year 835 appointed his Legate Apostolic in Denmark and Sweden, and who Christianized the whole northern parts of Europe. The MS. was conned with care: it was musty, discoloured and antique-looking; furthermore, it was of the usual orthodox nature of recovered ancient MSS.--it was fragmentary: the genius of Tacitus was believed to be detected in the newly found books: 500 gold sequins were counted out from the Papal Treasury to the greedy discoverer: at the expense of Leo, the scholastic Philippo Beroaldi the Younger, who was Professor of the learned languages in the University of Rome, and who wrote Latin lyric poetry (in the opinion of Paulus Jovius) with the elegance and correctness of Horace, superintended the text; the

celebrated Stephen Guilleret came all the way from Lorraine to print it; and the "Historiarum Libri quinque nuper in Germaniý inventi" were ushered forth to the world in Rome _literis rotundis_ on the first day of March, 1515. From that day to this the imposture has slumbered; the counterfeit coin has passed current, nobody having noticed the absence of the true ring of the genuine metal.

III. The books of the Annals must not merely be assumed to be forgeries; they must be proved to be so; for, if forgeries, they cannot be as invulnerable as walls of adamant. It is nothing that nobody has suspected they were forged;--nothing that the editors and commentators, who, for the most part possessed of remarkable perspicacity and discernment, have applied their minds to minute revision and close examination of these books, have, after such diligent attention never considered them to be spurious, but belonging to the domain of true history;--nothing that they have stood for close on four hundred years unchallenged, deceiving the wisest and the most learned as well as the best and the most experienced in matters of this description. The cause is obvious: the forger fabricated with the decided determination of defying detection. He did not rely upon his own sagacity alone: he called in the assistance of two of his cleverest friends: three of the astutest men in the most enlightened portion then of Europe,--Italy,--sat in conclave over the matter for nearly three years, deliberating in every possible way how to avoid suspicious management and faulty performance: consequently, the forgery is anything but plain and palpable; nay, it is wonderfully obscure and monstrously difficult: nevertheless, like all forged documents, it is bungled--ay, in spite of the pains taken to keep free from bad and blundering work, it is, occasionally (as will be seen in the present book, from this point until the close), clumsily, awkwardly, grossly, ridiculously bungled.

In the last generation there was a famous trial for forgery in Edinburgh. A number of documents, thirty-three, were impounded as forged to obtain for the forger the title of a Scotch Earl and domains covering many millions of acres,--a larger area of square miles than were included in the whole united territories of the now dethroned Dukes of Tuscany, Parma and Modena, or all the possessions put together of the German Electors, Margraves and Landgraves. In such a number of legal documents executed by one man, and that man, too, a civilian, it was almost next to an impossibility that there should not be a good deal of bungling. One of the blunders was the King of Scotland giving away lands and provinces that never belonged to Scotland, for they were lands and provinces in New England; another was the name of Archbishop Spottiswoode as witness to a document executed by King James I. at Whitehall on the 7th of December, 1639, whereas Archbishop Spottiswoode had been dead eleven days, his monument in Westminster Abbey bearing as the date of his death, the 26th of November in that year. So the author of the Annals, who, as will be hereafter shown, lived in the fifteenth century, could not possibly write many books of ancient Roman History without, every now and then doing or saying something that was attended with dreadful fatality to his fraud; for he could not write them without palpable blunders; and some are so clumsy as to surpass conception what bungling can do.

IV. He makes Tacitus commit an error about the contents of the Twelve Tables, which is really as monstrous as if we could fancy ourselves reading in the pages of a native historian of mark, Hume, Henry, or Lingard, some blunder, into which a schoolboy could not fall, about the contents of Magna Charta, the Bill of

Rights, the Declaration of Rights, or any other well known English law, on which the constitution of the country is primarily founded. In a work given out as written by Tacitus we are told that the Twelve Tables first fixed interest for usury at an "uncia," or twelfth part of an as per hundred asses per month, or one per cent per annum:--"Primo Duodecim Tabulis sanctum 'ne quis unciario foenore amplius exerceret,' cum antea ex libidine locupletium agitaretur" (An. VI. 16). Into this error the Author of the Annals must surely have been seduced by some shocking mediaeval writer of ancient Roman history or antiquities, under whose guidance he again falls into another mistake when ascribing to tribunitian regulations the reduction of the interest to one-half per cent. per annum, or the sixth part of an as per hundred asses a month:--"dein rogatione tribuncia ad semuncias redacta" (L. c.). The truth is that, in the year of Rome 398, a hundred and four years after the Twelve Tables were composed,--the Tribunes Duillius and Moenius passed the original law of interest at one per cent: twelve years after,--in the year 410,--the interest was reduced to one half per cent. under the consulate of Lucius Manlius Torquatus and Caius Plautius;--as may be seen by referring to the seventh book (16, 27) of Livy,--or still better, the clear exposition of this error by Montesquieu in the 22nd chapter of the 22nd book of his "Esprit des Loix." The author of the Annals is then only right when stating that originally the interest was one per cent. per annum, and afterwards reduced to half that amount. In everything else he blunders to an extent that is inexplicable in an ancient Roman. Were any staunch upholder of the authenticity of the Annals to be here called upon compulsorily to give a reason, unprepared or premeditated, plausible or probable, why, after this exposure of such an error, he still believed it possible that the blunder could have been made by Tacitus, who achieved a brilliant reputation as an historian writing truthfully of his countrymen, as a lawyer practising successfully among them, as a statesman filling with ability exalted offices, and thus possessed such pledges for being admirably informed and exceedingly cautious, he would be reluctantly forced to take refuge in the quibbling of Shakespeare's Sir John Falstaff: --"I would not tell you on compulsion. Give you a reason on compulsion! If reasons were as plenty as blackberries, I would give no man a reason on compulsion, I!"

The Twelve Tables are most fatal for the author of the Annals; they bring out his imposture so clearly to the broad glare of noonday. Tacitus is made to place on record for the enlightenment of posterity that, after those Tables were composed, his countrymen ceased making just and equal laws, only occasionally penal enactments; but more frequently, on account of the differences between the two orders, decrees for attaining illegitimate honours and for banishing distinguished citizens, along with other sinister legislation:--"Compositae Duodecim Tabulae, finis aequi juris; nam secutae leges, etsi aliquando in maleficos ex delicto, saepius tamen dissensione ordinum, et apiscendi illicitos honores, aut pellendi claros viros, aliaque ob prava, per vim latae sunt" (III. 27). The statement is about as contrary to fact as if an English historian were to assert that after Charles I. assented to the Petition of Rights, there was an end to all further enlargement in this country of the rights, liberties and privileges of the subject,--the only laws passed since then being for the repression of crime, the mitigation of the penal code, and the establishment of religious equality; because if we set aside all the laws that were passed by the Romans for the bettering of their State after the year 449 before our aera,--which is the date of the composition of the Twelve Tables,--and look only at those which extended social equality, we

find enactments "aequi juris," such as the Lex Canuleia which allowed the intermarriage of patricians and plebeians, and the Leges Liciniae, which put both orders on a par in holding public offices. It is clear that these laws never came to the knowledge of the author of the Annals; and it is for the reader to decide for himself whether he thinks it likely that a lawyer and statesman of the stamp of Tacitus could have been ignorant of the removal of these weighty and vexatious class inconveniences.

V. Had Tacitus written the Annals, he would have known more of the speech which Claudius spake in the Senate (XI. 24), when the inhabitants of Transalpine Gaul petitioned to be rendered eligible to the highest offices of the State, than to direct the eloquence of the Emperor in favour of all the extra-provincial Gauls in general, and the Aedui in particular. From the way in which he wrote harangues--that of Galgacus in his Agricola, for instance, --he would have caught in his alembic the essence of the original, and sublimated it; but he would not have placed before us an offspring that does not reflect one feature of its parent. Yet that is what the author of the Annals did with the speech of Claudius: he fabricated that which bears not the faintest resemblance to the original. If the assumption be considered as true that he forged the Annals, he could not have done otherwise; for when he was engaged in the business of forgery, the speech was not in existence, it not being until 1528, more than a hundred years after the Eleventh Book of the Annals was written by him, and considerably over half a century after it was first printed in Venice, that a copy of the speech of the Emperor Claudius, which had long been lost, was found again buried within the earth at Lyons, and as so discovered is still preserved, engraved on two brass plates in the vestibule of the Town Hall of Lyons, a lasting memento of the modern fabrication of the Annals.

VI. The author of the Annals ascribes to Brutus the creation of the second class of nobility, which Brutus no more created than (as Famianus Strada observes,) "Pythagoras originated the idea of the transmigration of souls." The statement that "few were left of the families to which Romulus gave the title, the 'gentes majores,' or 'old clans,' and Lucius Brutus the 'gentes minores,' or 'young clans'":--"paucis jam reliquis familiarum, quas Romulus 'majorum,' et Lucius Brutus 'minorum gentium' adpellaverant" (XI.25):--could never have been written by a Roman; because, in the first place, it was not Romulus who created the whole patrician body known as the "majores gentes"; the only senators whom he created were the "decuriones," or heads of the various "gentes" of the united Romans and Sabines; to these Tullus Hostilius added the most distinguished citizens of the Albans, when they were removed to Rome in his reign;--and it was the united descendants of these two sets of patricians who were called by subsequent generations "patricii majorum gentium": in the second place, it was Tarquinius Priscus who enlarged the patrician body by creating the 100 representatives of the Luceres, or Etruscans, senators, and it was the descendants of these who were "called," by way of distinction from the others, "patricii minorum gentium." The new sort of nobility which originated with Brutus was a very different kind of thing: the new eminence or dignity conferred on the senators elected by Brutus was confined to themselves only, being strictly personal and purely titular: until then Roman senators had been styled simply "Patres," but from that time downwards they were denominated "Patres CONSCRIPTI." No Roman could have been ignorant of this; and if the author of the Annals did not know it, we ought not to be too severe upon him, when we shall see afterwards that he was a Florentine of the fifteenth century: then on account of his having lived so many centuries after the events of which he

writes, it is quite excusable that he should fall into a state of confusion with respect to this rather out of the way matter, though into such a state of confusion no Roman could have fallen on account of his intimate acquaintance with the outlines of his constitution, the customs of his country, and the distinctions of rank in native society.

VII. The author of the Annals takes the grandson of the great dictator Camillus to have been his son, when he observes: "after the illustrious recoverer of the city" (meaning Rome) "and his son Camillus": "post illum reciperatorem urbis, filiumque ejus Camillum," (II. 52). In that case what becomes of the exclamation of Spartian in his Life of the Emperor Severus, when speaking of great Romans who had no illustrious children: "What of Camillus? For had he children like himself?" "Quid Camillus? Nam sui similes liberos habuit?" Why, certainly, "he had children like himself," if Marcus Furius had been his son, and not his grandson; for he was Consul and Dictator like the renowned and noble-minded Lucius Furius. The mistake is easily accounted for in a modern European writing Roman history from the famous Marcus Furius Camillus being Consul only eleven years after his grandfather, which makes it look as if it was the son who succeeded, and not the grandson. But it cannot be explained in a Roman, who must have taken so much pride in the second Romulus of his country as to have known all about his family relations. The error is only comparable to the extreme case of an Englishman being supposed to take such very little interest in Queen Victoria as to mistake her for a daughter of William IV.

VIII. To be called upon to believe that these blunders could have been committed by Tacitus, is to ask one to believe that he, who made no such mistakes in his History, ceased to write like a Roman when composing the Annals. It is truly writing, not like an ancient Roman, but a modern European, when in the first book of the Annals Germanicus is represented consulting whether he will take a short and well known road, or one untried and difficult, though the reason is, that by going the longer, he would go the unguarded way, and really do things quicker: "consultatque, ex duobus itineribus breve et solitum sequatur, an impeditius et intentatum, eoque hostibus incautum. Delecta longiore via, cetera adcelerantur" (I. 50). Were it not for this passage, one would have thought that, in the days of Tiberius, Germany was almost as bare of roads as the present interior of Arabia and Chinese Tartary; and that each tribe in that enormous wilderness of wood and morass was approached, as the present people of Dahomey, Ashantee and Timbucto, by a single path; and that it was only, after the lapse of centuries, when, in the due course of things, Germany had assumed a more civilised character, that there were two, three, or more roads; so that we can quite understand it being said of the Bavarian general, John de Werth, in the seventeenth century, that he did this,--march out of the direct way, which was watched, by another road, which was longer because it was unguarded: thus pouncing on the enemy by night, and taking them so by surprise that they fled in alarm, he gained a bloodless victory, without the drawing of a sword from its scabbard. Any advantage that a modern general would gain in this way was not open to an ancient general, particularly when invading the country of a people like the Germans, mere savages, who knew no more of such arts of warfare, as guarding roads and sending out scouts, than Red Indians, Maoris and Hottentots of the present time. Sir Garnet Wolseley, making his way to Coomassie, as a crow would fly, is just about the manner in which we may be sure that Germanicus made his way into Germany--as straight as he could go. But military history is not the forte of the author of the Annals. He

knew it and avoided it as much as he could,--very unlike Tacitus, who, practically acquainted with military as well as civil affairs, writes with an obvious liking, of combats and civil wars, and, according to military authorities competent to pass an opinion, shows everywhere familiarity with battles, marches, management of armies and conduct of generals.

One cannot understand how Tacitus, whose youth was passed in a camp, should not have known the whole minutiae about the Roman army; and that he should, with respect to its ensigns, exhibit extraordinary ignorance. The fact stood thus:--the legions had "signa," or standards; the "socii," or allies, that is, the Latins, had "vexilla," or flags; so, perhaps, had the Romans when marching under arms to a new settlement, or "colony"; but, certainly, soldiers raised in the provinces had no ensigns at all, neither standards nor flags; yet in the first book of the Annals we hear of some "maniples," or "infantry companies" of the legions that had been raised in Pannonia, when the news reached them of the breaking out of a mutiny in the camp, tearing to pieces their _flags_: "manipuli ... postquam turbatum in castris accepere, _vexilla_ convellunt" (I. 20). The mistake is similar to that which would be made if any one among ourselves were to give colours to our volunteers or standards to our yeomanry.

Here it may be noticed that the figures of speech of Tacitus are, like those of most ancient Romans, chiefly military. To be of the highest rank is, with him, "to lead the van,"--"primum pilum ducere" (Hist. IV. 3), or to set about a thing, "to be girt" (as with a sword),--"accingi" (Hist. IV. 79). The author of the Annals, though borrowing the latter phrase, goes anywhere but to the field of battle for his figures; he takes them mostly from the ways of ordinary civil life, selecting his metaphors, now from the trader's shop or the merchant's counting-house, as "ratio constat" (An. I. 6), used when the debtor and creditor sides of an account balance one another; now from seamen steering and tacking vessels, or coachmen driving horses, as "verbis moderans" (An. VI. 2), which Nipperdey says ought to be rendered, "touching-up and reining-in his words, and driving only at this."

IX. When Julius Caesar came to this country, he found the Britons, without an exception, thorough barbarians, the best of them living in places that were fortified woods. The author of the Annals, only a century after this wild state of things in the barbarism of the inhabitants and the rudeness of their abodes, speaks of London, in the reign of Nero, in the year 60, as if it were the chief residence of merchants and their principal mart of trade in the civilized world. If there be one thing certain, it is that centuries after,--in the middle of the fourth,--the people of London were only exporters of corn;--no certainty that they carried on any other kind of commerce, except it might be doing a little business in dogs, and slaves whom they captured from neighbouring barbarians,--their imports being polished bits of bone, toys and horse-collars. Progressing, rapidly under the Romans, Saxons, Danes, Normans, and in the time of the Plantagenets, they were in the fifteenth century a great and wealthy people, illustrious for their commercial transactions, dealing in every species of commodity, visited by merchants from every part of Europe, and envied by the most flourishing communities, such as the trading oligarchies of Italy. Any one living at that time,--especially in Italy (where many circumstances induce me to believe that the author or forger of the "Annals of Tacitus" lived),--and hearing a great deal of the wealth, greatness and immense antiquity of London, might easily fall into this mistake, grievous in its enormity as it is. But any

one living about the time of Nero, as Tacitus did, could never have described London in this flourishing state of commercial greatness and prosperity. The chances are he never would have heard of London; for that would be supposing in a Roman at the close of the first or the commencement of the second century of our aera a geographical knowledge more minute than that of the President of the Royal Geographical Society, unless at the haphazard mention of any particular village in the newly annexed Fiji Islands, Sir Henry Rawlinson could enter into a correct account of its chief characteristic. But if we are to go to the extreme length of supposing that Tacitus had heard of London, he would know that it was a place of no repute, utterly insignificant, far inferior in importance to two now almost forgotten places in Essex and Hertfordshire,--Maldon and St. Alban's,--called then respectively Camelodunum and Verulamium,--the former being a "colonia," and the latter a "municipium,"--London being a mere "praefectura." It is then the height of absurdity to believe that if Tacitus wrote the Annals we should have heard in that work London spoken of as "remarkably celebrated for the multiplicity of its merchants and its commodities": "copia negotiatorum et commeatuum maxime celebre" (XIV. 33).

X. The author of the Annals pretends to know more about prominent individuals in Rome than was known to their distinguished contemporaneous countrymen. He writes of Labeo Antistius, as if that jurisconsult were an example to the age in which he lived of all the virtues and all goodness, and possessed, to a masterly extent, accomplishments and acquirements; for thus he speaks of him in conjunction with Capito Ateius: "Capito Ateius ... principem in civitate locum studiis adsecutus--Labeonem Antistium, iisdem artibus praecellentem ... namque illa aetas duo pacis decora simul tulit; sed Labeo incorrupta libertate ... celebratior" (An. III. 75). Horace, who was a contemporary of Labeo's, says that he was a maniac, or, at any rate--"considered very crazy in the company of the sane":--

> "Labeone insanior inter
> Sanos dicatur." (Sat. I. III. 82.)

Hitherto Horace by the side of "Tacitus" has been no better than a clay pitcher by a porcelain vase; thus his disparaging, but, doubtless, quite correct estimate of Labeo has been till now altogether disregarded, in consequence of this passage in the Annals, from its author being credited with having exceeded what the ancient Romans had left us in the way of history.

So great is the repute of the Author of the Annals for supremacy in the historian's art that Justus Lipsius places no faith whatever in Suetonius when that, possibly, most veracious historian records in his Life of Tiberius (61) the number of the people who were executed for their attachment to Sejanus as amounting to twenty; the universally applauded, and, generally considered, most judicious Batavian critic of the sixteenth century, without a manuscript or edition for his authority, alters this number for One Thousand, because the author of the Annals speaks of a "countless" mass of slain of all ranks, ages, and both (he says "all") sexes, and further describes corpses as lying about singly or piled up in heaps: "jacuit _immensa_ strages, omnis sexus, omnis aetas, illustres, ignobiles, dispersi aut aggerati" (VI. 19).

Hence, too, Dr. Nipperdey, in drawing up a table of the Augustan family, in order to guard the reader against being perplexed by the relationships of that house, treats the same Suetonius as of

no account when he says,--and Suetonius twice says it (Cal. I., Ner. 5),--that Drusus, the brother of Tiberius, married "the younger Antonia." "In default of other evidence on the question of fact," says the learned professor, "we must follow the better author, Tacitus,"--the better author being the writer of the Annals, who, on two occasions (I. 42; XII. 64), makes the "elder Antonia" the wife of Drusus.

Examples of this description could be multiplied. But it is not necessary to pursue this line of argument farther,--at least, at present. What is required just now is not so much proof that the author of the Annals did not write like the Romans, but that he did not write like Tacitus, notwithstanding the strenuous efforts he made to imitate him, and be mistaken for him by contemporaries and posterity. To do this I must bring forward from the History and the Annals an accumulation of coincidences, seeing that the fabricator, being a most acute person, must have proceeded upon the same principle as a man who forges a cheque upon a banker, and who, in the prosecution of his design, endeavours to imitate, as closely as he can, the handwriting of his victim, and do everything carefully enough to escape immediate detection, whatever may afterwards ensue.

CHAPTER III.

SUSPICIOUS CHARACTER OF THE ANNALS FROM THE POINT OF TREATMENT.

I. Nature of the history.--II. Arrangement of the narrative.--III. Completeness in form.--IV. Incongruities, contradictions and disagreements from the History of Tacitus.--V. Craftiness of the writer.--VI. Subordination of history to biography.--VII. The author of the Annals and Tacitus differently illustrate Roman history.--VIII. Characters and events corresponding to characters and events of the XVth century.--IX. Greatness of the Author of the Annals.

I. Before proceeding to point out the imitations, and show where, in the efforts to write, and make history after the likeness of Tacitus, the author of the Annals fails; and, from the signal nature of his failures, his efforts are seen to be counterfeit, I may observe that a constant endeavour on his part to escape detection renders his imposture difficult to perceive and still more difficult to expose. A man of his penetration and power to enter far into subjects was, of course, deep enough to contrive every species of artifice to conceal his fraud; and as we have no record of his having been seen in the act of fabrication, or of his ever having been even suspected of so doing, I must prove the forgery by a detail of facts and circumstances. I can do this only by going through the Annals minutely,--examining the matter, manner, treatment, knowledge, views, sentiments, language, style, --in fact, a variety of circumstances,--everything that can be thought of;--for if it really be a forgery, it cannot be exactly like the History of Tacitus in any one thing, whatever that one thing be;--then I shall leave the reader to himself, to take into account the whole of the circumstances, and judge whether such a combination could have existed in a genuine work by Tacitus, and is compatible with such a production.

We are to look, first, what the nature of the history purports to be;--whether there is nothing peculiar as to its character.

It will be obvious to the least sagacious that the most paramount and absolutely necessary thing to be accomplished was a vast and comprehensive execution that should correspond to the vast and

comprehensive execution of Tacitus. Here was something to be done seemingly insuperable; for how can any one hope to imitate the execution of another, with such marvellous nicety that no distinction can be discerned between the two on the minutest test of microscopic investigation? more especially if the execution to be imitated be that of a man of real genius, consequently unparalleled in its way, of a mighty nature, and, in addition to its mightiness, a thing of the purest individuality. Now, the History of Tacitus is an execution of this description; it is a work of real genius; therefore, it is a distinct essence,--a realization of all the special aptitude possessed by the master-spirit that penned it. But though this cannot be done, yet any one having genius,--and a powerful genius,--by following its bent directly, may expect to exhibit in the execution of a work an ability that shall be considered equal to the ability displayed in the execution of another, even though that other be a man of great genius; but it can only be upon this very sage precaution,--that he exercises his ability, which must necessarily be of a very different kind, in quite a different manner. The forger of the Annals had much too acute a discernment not to know this;--he was also well aware that he had a very strong forte. We know the department in which he excelled,--dealing with despotism, servility and bloodshed. But then, if he was to do this, he would do that, which would be a very strong proof that his work was a forgery; for if he was to do this, he could not take up the continuance of history as Tacitus intended to go on with it namely, with Nerva and Trajan;--that he could not do, because in dealing with those two rulers he would have to deal with men remarkable for mildness, generosity, leniency and good-heartedness;--thus he would have to deal with a subject which must be fatal to his attempt; for it would be opposed to the play of his peculiar gifts, which to be brought out properly required that he should write only of Emperors noted for cruel, unnatural, blood-thirsty tyranny. The plan of his undertaking, to be attended with success, therefore compelled him, whether he liked it or not, to go back to Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius and Nero.

II. This must have been greatly against his will as a forger, because this difficulty must have risen up before his mental vision in colossal magnitude--that nobody, on careful consideration, could admit that Tacitus would have written the narrative of the half-century from the death of Augustus to the accession of Galba, after what he says at the commencement of his History, that the subject next to engage his attention would be the events that happened in the reigns of Nerva and Trajan. This, I repeat, is a point that brings forcibly before us the certainty of the Annals being forged, unless any one can believe with Niebuhr that, if Tacitus completed his History before the death of Trajan, and could not write of that Emperor as long as that Emperor lived, but "feeling a void," and "desiring to produce another work," he resumed History with the rule of Tiberius; but nobody can believe this, because it gets us into this enormous, nay, inexplicable difficulty--Why the writer, who, in the History, had shown an epic construction, with an epic opening and an epic story, should observe in the Annals quite another arrangement, and distribute the narrative in a studiously annalistic form? when, too, the disjointed record of the journalist was to be combined with the distinct arrangement of the historian who took the continued transactions of a nation in their multiplicity of details as they occurred at the same time in different places, and related them in clear and due unity in the subject.

III. Out of this variance in the two works arises another tremendous difficulty which we have to look at:--The Annals and

the History are intended, the one to be the complement to the other. Then two works, which are necessary to each other, ought to be, when separated, incomplete: if one man wrote them they would be incomplete when separated; but if two men wrote them, they would be complete in themselves. Now, are the History and the Annals incomplete, when separated? or complete in themselves? Everybody acknowledges that they are complete in themselves; each contains everything requisite for the full understanding and enjoyment of each; each has its peculiar force; each its distinct beauty; and for uniformity to exist in the two many passages in both must be destroyed; and the most ingenious can give no just or adequate cause for the destruction of the passages, even as he can give no just or adequate cause for their existence, except that which I am advancing that it was because two men wrote the two works.

IV. This accounts at once for all the incongruities they owe their existence naturally enough to the following simple causes:--the different kinds of information possessed as well as the different views of things entertained by two different individuals; and, along with these, an occasional failing of the memory; for a man, who forges such a very long work as the Annals, must every now and then forget,--however tenacious his memory may be,--what the man, whom he simulates, has said, here and there, in this or that work, upon some minor point in Roman history, not associated with nor essential to the principal thing he has always to keep steadily in mind,--his main matter. Thus we find no end of little trips in the Annals, many of which we will point out in their proper places as we proceed with this investigation: at present it is sufficient for the illustration of our remark to call the reader's attention to this fact:--In the Annals Augustus is represented having as his successors in the first degree Tiberius and Livia; in the second degree his grandchildren and great-grandchildren, and in the third degree the leading nobles, including even some of those whom he hated, such, we may presume, as Labeo, his detractor, Gallus Asinius, who was thirsting for empire, and Lucius Arruntius, who would have made the attempt to unseat him had the opportunity presented itself:--"Tiberium et Liviam haeredes habuit ... in spem secundam, nepotes pronepotesque: tertio gradu primores civitatis scripserat, plerosque invisos sibi, sed jactantia gloriaque ad posteros" (An. I. 8). Such an account of Augustus adopting these relations, and, after them, strangers and enemies, "out of vain-glory and for future renown,"--that is, to be admired by posterity for an unexampled display of humanity,--could not have been written by Tacitus, being different in every respect from what he relates,--and what he says, by the way, is also said by Suetonius,--that Augustus, looking for a successor in his own family, placed next to himself in dignity, so as to be prepared to be his successor, his nephew, Marcellus, then his son-in-law, Agrippa, next his grandsons, and lastly, his step-son, Tiberius Nero:--"divi Augusti, qui sororis filium, Marcellum, dein generum, Agrippam, mox nepotes suos, postremo Tiberium Neronem, privignum, in proximo sibi fastigio collocavit" (Hist. I. 15).

Such disagreements, due,--in all probability, more than to anything else,--to the occasional failure of the memory,--are sufficient in themselves to prove that the Annals and the History did not proceed from the same source. Accordingly, the man who forged the Annals, having apparently, this overwhelming and troublesome difficulty ever uppermost in his mind, seems to have taken measures for guarding against it as well as he could, and with as much care as he could. This taking precautions against the failure of memory must have been one of the main reasons, why he elected writing of Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius and Nero, when, as

Tacitus, he ought to have written of Nerva and Trajan. He was thus enabled to relate a series of events prior to, and entirely different from the series of events related by Tacitus; there was thereby no possibility of his narrative clashing with that of his archetype; the most trying difficulties were in this way got over with sufficient ease; the only danger was with regard to a few individuals who lived during the two periods, and a few facts, that trailed their circumstances from one period into the other; but his main history would have nothing in common with the main history of Tacitus.

V. To borrow a phrase of Gualterius--he ran the risk of "falling into Scylla in trying to avoid Charybdis":

"Incidit in Scyllam, qui vult vitare Charybdin."

How could he convince the world that Tacitus would act with such twofold inconsistency as to write of Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius and Nero, when he had said that he would not do so, on account of the number of writers who had recorded the occurrences of their reigns, and that if he resumed the duties of an historian it would be with the reigns of Nerva and Trajan. The world,--and nobody knew it better than the author of the Annals,--is easily convinced; and there is no inconsistency, however monstrous, that it considers unaccountable. He, therefore, set about the task of convincing the world that Tacitus did this. Acting up to his own maxim, that "the way to get out of disgraceful acts that are evident is by audaciousness": "flagitiis manifestis subsidium ab audacia petendum" (An. XI. 26), he resorted to audacity in a trick, which has been hitherto eminently successful,--making the world believe from a single remark which he introduced into his narrative as the double of Tacitus, that that noble Roman was really guilty of this twofold inconsistency, so that changeableness, unsteadiness of purpose and self-contradiction should seem to be his leading characteristics. Without ever intending to write the history of Augustus,--or he never would have begun the Annals with an introduction in which he epitomizes principal events in the Roman State from its very foundation, otherwise what had he left to himself in a subsequent historical composition of a prior date for an appropriate exordium,--he says in his third book that he would make the memorable events in the reign of Augustus the subject of a new history, should his health and life continue:--"cetera illius aetatis memorabo, si plures ad curas vitam produxero" (An. III. 24)--evidently only because Tacitus had said at the commencement of his History, that he had reserved as the employment of his old age, should his life be long enough, the reigns of Nerva and Trajan:--"quod si vita suppeditet, principatum Divi Nervae et imperium Trajani ... senectuti seposui" (Hist. I. 1). There was then one and the same man saying in one place:--"I am going to write the History of Augustus when I am an old man;"--(and this being said in the Annals, the author of that book must have wanted the world to presume that the writer would have chosen the form of biography for it):--and in another place: "I am going to write the history of Nerva and Trajan when I am an old man"; (and this being said in the History, the author of the Annals must have supposed that the world might presume that the writer would have chosen the form of history for this continued production).

The author of the Annals having done this, opened out before himself the very widest field for indulging in all sorts of contradictions; for, after this, who would not be, and who is not, prepared for any contradictions? The contradictions come; and they are strange and numerous.

VI. There is a systematic subordination of history to biography throughout the Annals, in which imperial events are sacrificed to the prominence and effect of individual delineations: in the History there is a general, comprehensive review of the Empire at the time of Nero's death; Rome is the centre, and the subject matter the condition of a people affected by the imperial system of government. The History conveys political instruction; the Annals supplies materials for studying the human mind and the motives of human conduct: in imparting a knowledge of events respecting the Roman nation, the writer of the History, who is gifted with graphic power, places _images_ before us, whereas the writer of the Annals, aware that in picturesqueness he was inferior to Tacitus, gives us _impressions_, while he investigates social phenomena and elucidates the principles of human nature. One work is historic, the other philosophic. One man generalizes, the other particularizes. We are presented with one set of interests in the History, with another set in the Annals. In the History we see the struggles of an empire and the convulsions of the world; in the Annals we are shut out from such a prospect, to have our view limited to the deeds of one or two emperors, and a few renowned individuals.

VII. Such differences, so striking and so essential, prove the Annals to be a forged book; for all these differences in the two works can only be ascribed to the entirely different turns of mind peculiar to two writers. Tacitus wrote as he did, from having a profounder knowledge of the springs of action in the political world than the author of the Annals. The author of the Annals, surpassing Tacitus with respect to the moral world, wrote as he did, from knowing better the motives that influence men's minds, and the passions that sway their hearts. The result of two such very different men composing two such very different works, is, that the contrast is almost as great when we turn from the History to the Annals, as when we turn from a general history of England by a Hume or a Lingard where we notice the origin of Englishmen's liberties and privileges, the chivalrous scenes of the past and the proud glories of the present, to the local record of some county, as Kent or Lancashire, by a Hasted or a Baines, embodying information of boroughs and parishes, town councils and corporations, where such things become of substantial importance as the clauses of charters, the collection of market dues, donations of maces and drinking cups to mayors, and gold or silver cradles to their ladies on the birth of babies during the year of office.

If the Annals is really to be considered a forgery, this, instead of being a matter of surprise, ought to be just the thing to be expected; because a clever fabricator, foreseeing that he would be suspected, and eager to foil detection, would know that the curious inquirer into a research of the present description would thus become baffled at every turn from inability, if not to discover it himself, at least, to explain to the satisfaction and conviction of others, the incompatibility of the workings of one spirit in one book with the workings of the other spirit in the other book, when the two compositions were so differently contrived. But if the Annals is to be considered as genuine, then nobody can explain why the same individual should illustrate Roman history in this singular fashion,--both works being designed, as universally admitted, the one to be a complement to the other. What should be the inducement of the author of the Annals if he did not wish the world to deny that it was his handiwork to write his book so very differently from the History of Tacitus? For what was there in the times of Rome under Galba, Otho, Vitellius and

Vespasian so very different from what the Roman Empire was under their immediate predecessors, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius and Nero, that the part which has to do with events in the days of the first-named four emperors should treat of imperial transactions and be deficient in many of the memorials which claim notice in the part dealing with Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius and Nero; and, that the part which has to do with events in the times of the last-named four emperors should all but avoid what is amply recorded in the part, dealing with Galba, Otho, Vitellius and Vespasian, imperial occurrences finding but an occasional and almost accidental notice in the Annals, where the mind is encumbered with the minutiae of circumstantial details of individual deeds.

VIII. The author of the Annals, who (as I shall convincingly show hereafter) lived in the XVth century, seems, on account of that, to have had a still stronger reason than those just given for selecting as his subject the half century after the death of Augustus: its characters and events corresponded closely to the characters of the princes who ruled, and the nature of the movements that were going on all over Europe in his time; for in forging history, that was to pass as written by Tacitus, it was incumbent that he should have the same advantage as the Roman,--be on the same level with him in the occupation of ground. Now, the ground occupied by Tacitus was the time of himself, which enabled him to give a complete and copious reflex of a period through which he had lived with thoughtful attention. Thus his colours are bright. Unless antiquity supplied the author of the Annals only the framework of his picture, and the events of the time when he lived gave the scenes for the painting, his colours would fail, and his outlines become unsteady. In other words, there could not be the scrupulous minuteness and the perfect freedom which make history live and breathe, unless, like Tacitus, he registered facts in which he took the deepest interest, from feeling their influence directly and powerfully exerted over himself, and the living and loved around him. Thus his hand, by being guided as the hand of Tacitus, would throw life into his work. And, truly, there is as much life in the Annals as in the History; but, instead of the air of the first century breathing around it, it is the air of the fifteenth.

This can be tested by many a character; one will suffice, that of Caius Piso in the fifteenth book (48). Pliny and Juvenal tell us that Piso was consul suffectus under Claudius: the Tabulae Arvales add that he was a member of the College of Twelve who offered sacrifice when there was increase in the produce of the soil. Writers and records of antiquity say no more of Caius Piso, not even mentioning the name of his father. On such a little known man a forger of Roman history could safely expatiate; the author of the Annals does so in a portraiture that bears the stamp of the fifteenth century: this is particularly observable when Piso is spoken of as "of brilliant repute among the populace for virtues," or, rather, "qualities that wore the form of virtues,"--"species virtutibus similes";--that he was "far from being morosely moral, or restrained by moderation in pleasures; mild in temper and soft in manners; given to pompous show and occasionally steeping himself in luxurious excesses,"--"procul gravitas morum, aut voluptatum parsimonia: lenitati ac magnificentiae et aliquando luxui indulgebat." This does not appear to be at all applicable to the character of any conspicuous personage belonging to the Roman Empire in the first century, when Romans were warriors still, preserving, amid some effeminacy, much of the hardy vigour of their Republican predecessors, ever and anon throwing aside the toga for the sagum, and rushing from the Forum to the field, to

battle with ferocious and demi-nude savages, whom ever subduing they carried home captives chained to their triumphal chariots; but it does seem to be uncommonly applicable to a time when many a priest, whose writings manifest a lax habit of thinking and betray a levity, indeed, licentiousness, ill according with a religious turn of mind, rose to the position of a great dignitary of the Church and a powerful arbiter of the destinies of his kind. As that was an age when Alexander VI. was a Pope, and Lucretia Borgia the daughter of a Pontiff and consort of a reigning Duke of Italy, we can readily credit the author of the Annals, and laud him for admirable, life-like portraiture, when he says that a character and conduct, such as Piso's, "met with the approbation of a large number of people, who, indulging in vice as delightful, did not want at the head of affairs a strict practiser of the moral duties and an austere abstainer from vice:"--"pluribus probabatur, qui in tanta vitiorum dulcedine summum imperium non restrictum nec perseverum volunt."

The character is too vague in its outlines to be any particular individual's; but as all its points fit many an Italian priest who became a Cardinal or a Bishop and a chief minister to a prince, in the time of the Renaissance, as well as in the period immediately before it, and that immediately after it,--it shows how men reflect the age they live in,--how the principal biographies in any certain time convey a pretty accurate idea of the tone of mind then prevailing; further, and above all, it shows to what a great degree the books of the Annals reflect the chief features of the period when they were written, and how deeply their author enters into the spirit of his age.

As with characters so with events. Heaps of passages in the Annals read like incidents in the fifteenth century. It is more like a picture in an Italian court at that period than in a Roman Emperor's in the first century, when the arrest is made of Cneius Novius for being found treacherously armed with a dagger while mixing with the throng of courtiers bowing to the prince; and then when he is stretched on the rack, no confession being wrung from him as to accomplices; and the doubt that prevailed whether he really had fellow-conspirators. "Cneius Novius, eques Romanus, ferro accinctus reperitur in coetu salutantium principem. Nam, postquam tormentis dilaniabatur, de se non infitiatus conscios non edidit, incertum an occultans." (An. XI. 22.)

IX. In this way do I fancy I perceive the author of the Annals chose his subject and worked his materials, so as to do most justice to his talents, and more easily reach the height attained by Tacitus. When he had apparently thus sketched the plan of his edifice, and set about struggling with the difficulties of the elaboration, he encountered these with such eminent success that the reality of his literary labour is one of the most surprising facts in the history of the human mind. He seems never to have once deviated from his design nor to have ever been perplexed by embarrassments in the course of his undertaking, notwithstanding the voluminousness of its nature. In such a procedure, where the time he chose to descant upon fits in with all he wanted to accomplish, we see the first indication of the vast judgment he possessed, as well as the correct notion he had formed of the extent of his superior powers. In detecting in the author of the Annals so much judgment and such an exact estimate of his great mental faculties, we see the difficulty to be coped with in distinguishing between him and Tacitus, and thus in distinguishing between the spurious and the genuine: but this distinguishing can be accomplished by a minute, and only a most minute examination of the two works.

CHAPTER IV.

HOW THE ANNALS DIFFERS FROM THE HISTORY.

I. In the qualities of the writers; and why that difference. --II. In the narrative, and in what respect.--III. In style and language.--IV. The reputation Tacitus has of writing bad Latin due to the mistakes of his imitator.

I. Statesmen learn the things which are of use to them in government by reading the History, because Tacitus recounts the actions of the world under the imperial rule of Rome. All men can profit in the choice of morals from reading the Annals, on account of its writer relating principally the actions of sovereign princes and illustrious persons in their private capacity.

This diversity of treatment results from the difference in the qualities of the writers. Tacitus possessed a consummate knowledge of the true policy of States, and the use and extent of government. Accordingly, he reveals measures necessary for the successful carrying on of war, or the proper and equitable administration of affairs in peace, while he places before us a graphic and presumably true picture of the mode in which the Romans ruled their Empire in the first century of the Christian aera. The author of the Annals was acquainted with an entirely different form and order of statesmanship and politics. Hence he immerses us in crooked turnings of false policy and dark intrigues of bad ambition, forcibly reminding us of what made the greatest portion of the European art of government in the fifteenth century towards the close of the mediaeval and the commencement of the modern periods. He favours us with a paucity of maxims relating to government in general, or the different branches and offices which make up the body politic; but enters, with tedious fulness, into the rise, operation, consequences and proper restraint of the genuine passions and natural propensities of mankind in individuals, public and private.

We search in vain in the History for any trace of the melancholy that we find in the Annals; and in vain do we look in the Annals for any pictures of virtue and lessons of wisdom which in the History are taught us by bright examples and illustrious actions. Had the same hand that wrote the Annals written the History, we should have had in the latter work a very different treatment. The record would have been dark and dismal, even to repulsion, the opportunities being ample for an historian of gloomy disposition to indulge his humour, when the character of the History is thus described with truth in the Preface to Sir Henry Saville's translation of it:--"In these four books we see all the miseries of a torn and declining state; the empire usurped; the princes murdered; the people wandering; the soldiers tumultuous; nothing unlawful to him that hath power, and nothing so unsafe as to be securely innocent." Then, after stating what we learn from the examples of Galba, Otho, Vitellius and Vespasian, the writer adds: "In them all, and in the state of Rome under them, we see the calamities that follow civil war, where laws lie asleep, and all things are judged by the sword." In going over such a dreary period of human history, Tacitus is as composed and cheerful as if he was dwelling on the gayest and brightest of themes.

The cause of this is to be found in the fact that there was nothing to overshadow the soul of Tacitus with gloom. However painful and dire may have been the constraint to other Romans during the fifteen years' rule of Domitian, he had no ground of complaint: far from that; for he says that he was advanced by that

Emperor further in dignity than by Vespasian and Titus. In the reign of Trajan he must have been supremely happy; for he speaks of it himself as "a time of rare felicity,"--"rara temporum felicitate,"--when men might "think what they pleased and express what they thought." His domestic life must have been blest by the perfect devotion and tender attachment of a wife, who, then in her prime, had surely verified the brilliant hopes of the promising bride. (Agr. 9.) In the maturity of his days he lived again in his children; for that he had children we know from the Emperor Tacitus, a century and a half after, boasting of being his descendant, a pride that was shared in the fifth century by Polemius, a Prefect of Gaul, as we learn from a remark of the Prefect's friend, Sidonius Apollinaris. He enjoyed the most brilliant of literary reputations, as the anecdote sufficiently reveals of a stranger, who, addressing him at a public spectacle, and being informed that he must know him well from his writings, remarked: "Then you must be either Tacitus or Pliny." He was happy in the friendship of Pliny the Younger, and men as good, eminent and distinguished as that elegant disciple of Cicero's.

There was then nothing, in the fortunes of Tacitus to make him trenchant, biting and cynical; but, on the contrary, most gentle, as he was, and most placid and benign. Such being his character, a kind interpretation and a candid sense of actions and individuals meet us on every page of his History. Still in enumerating the virtues of eminent persons he does not omit their vices or failings: his way of doing this is peculiar. He tells us Sabinus served the State for five and thirty years with great distinction at home and abroad, and was of unquestionable integrity, but adds jestingly "he talked too much."--"Quinque et triginta stipendia in republicý fecerat, domi militiaeque clarus; innocentiam justitiamque ejus non argueret: _sermonis nimium erat_." (Hist. III. 75.) Otho and Vitellius quarrel and charge each other with debaucheries and the grossest crimes; the historian then, with dry humour, remarks, "neither was wrong":--"Mox, quasi rixantes stupra et flagitia invicem objectavere: _neuter falso._" (Hist. I. 74.) This witty and ridiculing vein does not prevent him from being always kindly. The benignity of his nature is seen in all his portraitures (which look, by the way, like the portraitures of real men); it is observable in his character of Licinius Mucianus (I. 10), Cornelius Fuscus (II. 86), Helvidius Priscus (IV. 5), and others;--lovely portraits where defects or peccadilloes are given along with real and positive virtues, and in an antithetical manner. His antithetical manner is preserved in the Annals; but, instead of blandness, we come across a propensity to form unfavourable opinions of character and conduct, as when the Athenians are designated "that scum of nations":--"colluviem illam nationum" (II. 55); and Octavia, "the sprig of a gipsy fiddler" [Endnote 074]:--"tibicinis Aegyptii subolem." (XIV. 61) There is wit and ridicule in both works, but it is not the wit and ridicule of the same individual; it is sprightly and amusing in the History; it is ungracious and actually cruel in the Annals.

This difference in the writing of Tacitus and the author of the Annals may be accounted for in many ways,--perhaps in none better than this:--When Tacitus lived no one despaired of public cares being attended to, or the plans of the wise being employed in advancing the national welfare; but when the author of the Annals lived, everybody despaired; private profligacy was as rampant as public misery, and, amid the universal degeneracy, scheming politicians disregarded the good and greatness of their country to be intriguers at court for the improvement of their position.

Those were the times when Louis XI. supplied the places of the

ministers and marshals, the generals and admirals of France, the Dunois, the La Tremoilles, the Brýzýs and the Chabannes with mere creatures--new and obscure men who aided him in his artful schemes and plans of government: he made his barber an ambassador, his tailor a herald at arms, and his phlebotomist a chancellor: he imposed enormous taxes on the people, and when the people revolted, he ordered some of the ringleaders to be torn to pieces alive by horses, and the others to be beheaded, as occurred at Rheims, Angers, Alenýon and Aurillac. Francis of Carrara, the Lord of Padua, cruelly murdered the Venetian General, Galeaz of Mantua, when the Doge and Council of Venice refused to ratify the terms of a capitulation. Suspicion attached to the peace in which Ivan Basilowitch lived and ruled in his palace at Moscow, surrounded completely by a wooden wall. Enclosed, too, by a very large tract of land, and in a most magnificent mansion which he built for himself and his companions at Ripaglia, a place pleasantly situated on the Lake of Geneva, Amedeus, the last Count and first Duke of Savoy, so abandoned himself in his unobserved private and solitary life, to all kinds of debaucheries, that Desmarets says in his "Tableau des Papes" (p. 167) that from that originated the phrase "to feast and make merry,"--"faire repaille"; yet this very Amedeus afterwards acted the part of the only true Pope at Tonon during the greater portion of the two years, 1440 and 1441, having been elected to the Pontificate by the Fathers of Basle during the Papacy of Eugenius IV. When the throne of Don Carlos, the Infant of Navarre, was usurped, on the death of his mother, Blanche of Navarre, by her husband, John I. of Aragon, a disgraceful quarrel and a prolonged war ensued between father and son, when the son, being repeatedly defeated in battle, was finally captured and cast into prison by the father, and poisoned by his mother-in-law; although he was deserving of a better fate, being an enlightened prince who wrote a History of the Kings of Navarre, which is still preserved in the archives of Pampeluna. A blind and feeble old monarch, Muley Albohaýan, King of Granada, ordered the massacre of a number of children by his first marriage; Ziska destroyed 550 churches and monasteries in Germany alone; and, for attempting reforms in religion, Huss and Jerome of Prague were cruelly burnt alive at the stake. These and similar horrors of those distressful times, which find fit counterparts in revolting incidents in the Annals, could not but deeply affect the soul of a man ardently loving liberty and devoted to humanity as, unquestionably, was the forger of that work: hence throughout his book the sting which misfortune gives, and the moodiness which melancholy begets.

A spirit of liberty runs through his work; but the spirit is not the same as that which pervades the History of Tacitus any more than that his merits are like the Roman's in precision of delineating actions and characters. The good temper of Tacitus causes him to differ from other writers in the estimation of character. He gives a better account of Galba and Vitellius than Suetonius; of Vitellius and Nero than the abbreviator of Cassius Dio, Xiphilinus, of Otho than Juvenal; and of Vinius than Plutarch. Galba, who, in Suetonius, puts to death, with their wives and children, the Governors in Spain and Gaul who did not side with his party during the life of Nero, is, with Tacitus, a prince remarkable for integrity and justice, and such faults as he has are not, strictly speaking, his own, but those of worthless friends who abuse his confidence, for we are told that it is the pernicious counsels of Titus Vinius and Cornelius Laco, the former depraved and profligate, the other slothful and incapable, which first lose him the popular favour and ultimately prove his ruin: "Invalidum senem Titus Vinnius et Cornelius Laeo, alter deterrimus mortalium, alter ignavissimus, _odio flagitorum oneratum, contemptu inertiae destruebant_." (Hist. I. 6 _in._) Vitellius,

who, according to Suetonius, puts one of his sons to death, and poisons his mother, or starves her to death, is, in Tacitus, a tender father doing all for his offspring that fortune permits him to do in his excess of adversity (Hist. II. 59), and a respectful, sensitive son seeking to abdicate his empire in order to rescue his parent from impending evils. (Hist. III. 67.) Juvenal shows us Otho carrying into the tumult of the battle-field the effeminacy that disgraces him in time of peace; Tacitus represents Otho as an active warrior (Hist. II. 11); and convinces us that there was more of good than evil in that emperor. Xiphilinus paints the wife of Vitellius as wickedly dissolute; Tacitus as a respectable woman of whom the State had no complaint to make in her misfortune. He can find virtues even in Vinius (Hist. I. 13), whom the Roman people execrated and whom Plutarch castigates in terms of unmeasured reprehension.

The Author of the Annals brings before our vision quite opposite reflections from the mirror of life: his pictures are quite horrid of revolting crimes unrelieved by virtuous actions in Tiberius, Claudius, Nero, Sejanus, Agrippina, Messalina, Albucilla, and other men and women. His character of Tiberius is the wonderfully drawn portrait of the most absolute and artful tyrant that was ever created by the fancy of man; and we may be as certain that such a character never existed as we may be assured that that the wise maxims and fine things were ever uttered which he tells us passed the lips in private of Emperors and Ministers of State. Though not a single virtue relieves the vices of Tiberius in the Annals, Suetonius speaks of him as showing clemency when a public officer; Cassius Dio describes him as so humane that he condemned nobody for his estate, nor confiscated any man's goods, nor exacted money by force; and Velleius Paterculus makes him all but a pattern of the virtues,--if Velleius Paterculus is an authority,--it being just possible that his "Historiae Romanae ad Marcum Vinicium Consulem" may some of these days be as clearly proved to be as glaring a modern forgery, as I am now attempting to prove the Annals of Tacitus to be: certain it is that what we have of Velleius Paterculus is supplied by only one MS., which was found under very suspicious circumstances in very suspicious times.

II. The general train of the narrative may be as nervous in the Annals as in the History; but the latter is proof against all objections to imperfection and hurry of narrative: every now and then errors of this description mar the workmanship of the Annals, showing at once that it was not composed by Tacitus. From what he did in the History, he never would have abruptly dropped the proceedings in the Senate with regard to Tiberius and the honours paid to his family: there would have been a measure of time and place in the campaigns of Germanicus: he would have told us what urged Piso to his acts of apparent madness; and whether he was guilty or innocent of poisoning Germanicus: we should have known whether the adopted son of Tiberius came to a violent end; whether Agrippina perished on account of food withheld from her in her dungeon; and how Julia, the granddaughter of Augustus died. This habit of occasionally neglecting to impart complete information, which is not at all in the manner of Tacitus, cannot be due to the difference of arrangement in the two works; which, in itself, is a very suspicious difference; for the plan in the Annals is to give the transactions of every year in chronological order, whereas that in the History is not to keep each year distinct in itself, but allow occurrences to find their proper place according to their nature, before the time when they happen. [Endnote 081]

In addition to this very suspicious difference, there is another

producing so much doubt that alone it seems to stamp with truth the theory of the Annals being a forgery.

Tacitus passes over in silence men renowned for learning who took no part in the historical events related by him. The author of the Annals, at the end of one historic year, before passing on to record the events of that which follows, mentions their deaths, as of the two famous juris-consults, Capito Ateius and Labeo Antistius. (III. 74.) In this style of writing we detect two men differing from each other as widely as De Thou differs from Guicciardini: De Thou, confining himself to his own times, descends into minutiae, so as to record the deaths of the great men of his day; Guicciardini, with his eye fixed on his country, passes over memorials of individuals to dwell on the various causes which brought about the great changes in the civil and ecclesiastical policy of his stirring period.

Another thing extremely suspicious is that nowhere in his History, nor even in his biographical work, Agricola, does Tacitus introduce a whole letter. All that he does is to give the substance, and not the contents, as the letter from Tiberius to Germanicus in Germany. (Hist. V. 75.) Elsewhere he refers merely to the contents of letters, as in the second book of the History (64). Speeches are found in his works, for this reason:--Speeches form no small part of what is transacted in the senate, at the army and before the emperor; they issue to the public, they pass through the mouths of men, and they form much weighty matter. Tacitus then seems to have thought that if he inserted speeches, he would be maintaining the majesty of history by attending to great matters, but that if he inserted letters, as they refer generally to private affairs, he would be faulty as an historian, by ceasing to be grave and becoming trifling. There is no accounting, then, for the letter that is found in the Annals (III. 53), if we are to assume that that work was the composition of Tacitus, except we are ready to admit that he was capable of descending from the accustomed gravity of his lofty historical manner to be a rival for supremacy in the small style of such indifferent memoirists, as Vulcatius Gallicanus, who has almost as many letters as there are pages in his very short life of the Emperor Avidius Cassius. [Endnote 083]

Nobody can satisfactorily explain why, or how it was possible that, Tacitus should have contradicted in the Annals what he says in the History of the Legions of Rome and the Praetorian and Urban Cohorts. He tells us in his History that his countrymen had legions in Britain, Gaul, and Italy; in the Annals we are told that the Romans had no troops in those countries. We gather from the Annals, that there were eight legions in Germany, three in Spain, and two each in Moesia, Africa, and Pannonia; from the History we find that there were seven legions in Germany, three in Moesia, two in Spain, and one each in Africa and Pannonia. We are told in the History that the Praetorian Cohorts were nine, in the Annals ten. So we are told in the History that the Urban Cohorts were four (_quatuor urbanae cohortes_ scribebantur) (Hist. II. 93), and in the Annals three (insideret urbem proprius miles, _tres urbanae_). (An. IV. 5.) It matters not what are the right statements in these several instances; all that concerns us in our inquiry is that, here beyond all question are two different men, possessing quite a different knowledge, informing us about the same things; and the disagreements would be mighty puzzling on any other theory than that which we are advancing,--that two different men wrote the History and the Annals.

So, again, with respect to the twenty-one, and afterwards twenty-five priests of Apollo, the "Sodales Augustales," otherwise styled "Sacerdotes Titii," the latter name being given to them, according to Varro, after birds similarly called, whose motions it was their duty to watch in certain auguries (though what the ancients called the "titius," by the way, is about as little known as what Pliny calls the "spinthurnyx,"--Servius and Isidorus thinking they might have been "doves," from such fowls being styled by the common people "tetas" and "tetos"). Livy makes no mention of these priests; neither does Dionysius of Halicarnassus, though Dionysius was very fond of entering into details of Roman antiquities. Tacitus gives one origin to this priesthood, the author of the Annals another; Tacitus, describing the gladiatorial shows by which the birthday of Vitellius was celebrated in the year 15, says, that the Emperor Tiberius consecrated those priests to the Julian House, in imitation of their first institutor, Romulus, who consecrated them to King Tatius: (facem Augustales subdidere: quod sacerdotium, ut _Romulus Tatio regi_, ita Caesar Tiberius Juliae genti, _sacravit_.) (Hist. II. 95.) The author of the Annals, as if this passage had entirely slipped his attention, or dropped from his memory, or forgetting that he was engaged in the forgery of a work by Tacitus, corrects that view by making quite a different statement, that it was King Tatius, and not Romulus, who first instituted, and apparently consecrated that order of priesthood to himself, his exact words being: "that same year saw established a new religious ceremony, by the priesthood being added of the 'Augustales Sodales,' as of yore Titus Tatius, to retain the holy rites of the Sabines, had instituted the 'Sodales Titii'":--Idem annus novas caermonias accepit, addito sodalium Augustalium sacerdotio, ut quodam _Titus Tatius_ retinendis Sabinorum sacris _sodales Titios instituerat_. (An. I. 54.) As many writings bearing upon the remote time of Romulus and the Sabine kings may be lost, and the author of the Annals may have had, in the fifteenth century, authorities not extant now, to warrant him in writing history so very differently from Tacitus; and as that Roman in such matters must have taken what he said on trust from others, we cannot here decide who was right and who wrong; but what is most important in this investigation is that the disagreement is quite sufficient to convince us that Tacitus did not write the Annals.

We shall hereafter more particularly distinguish the two works by other differences in their matter and form, the manner of their authors, and the substance of the things treated of: for the present we may proceed to distinguish them by some differences in their style and language.

III. In these respects nothing is easier than to detect two writers, no matter how careful they may be in endeavouring to imitate the style and language of each other: there will always be some shade,--and indeed, a very strong shade,--whereby to distinguish their manner of thinking and their choice and arrangement of words; there will be more or less purity, simplicity, grace and propriety in their choice of language; more or less beauty, precision, cadence and harmony in their collocation of words: their cogitative faculty will vary in measure of thought--in force or tenuity; nor will they resemble in their train of ideas,--be that regular, methodical and uniform, or unsteady, scattered and disorderly. There must ever be these important differences; they spring out of individual idiosyncrasy; their exercise is involuntary, being dependent upon the native taste and turn of mind of the writer; from such influence he can no more escape, than he can avoid in his physical qualities a peculiar gait or tone of voice, look, laugh, or mode of bearing.

If any one question this, let him take up any of the dramas written conjointly by members of the School of Shakespeare in the reign of James the First. They all tried to shape themselves in the same mould; they served apprentices to one another in constructing and composing the drama; Cartwright strove to write like his instructor, Ben Jonson; Massinger like his master, Shakespeare; Shakespeare, too, like Marston and Robert Green (for Marston taught him how to write tragedy, and Green taught him how to write comedy): they believed that they eminently succeeded in catching each other's manner, and to such a nicety, that they could write together, without the handiwork of one being distinguishable from the handiwork of the other. In this spirit Shakespeare wrote with Fletcher; Dekker with William Rowley; Ford, too, with Dekker; numerous others similarly composed in companionship, Middleton, Marston, Day and Heywood; but any one acquainted with their separate productions, consequently, with their style and language can hardly fail to point out what this one wrote, and what was written by the other. Test this by Shakespeare, who, it would be supposed, is the most difficult to detect because it is generally stated and believed that he wrote in a variety of styles; it is only a seeming variety; his mode of versification certainly differs--he changed his measures with his subjects; still the same fancy is always at work, impressing images with strength on the mind; there is no change in the weightiness of the style, the quaintness of the language, the justness of the representations, the depth of the reflections, whether he be writing the two worst plays in which he took part (for portions only seem to have been supplied by him), Pericles and Titus Andronicus, or his two best, conceived so massively and executed in such a masterly manner, Macbeth and Othello. In the Two Noble Kinsmen, which he wrote with Fletcher, any body familiar with his acknowledged dramas, can trace him as easily as a traveller follows with his finger the course of the Rhone while that river is traversing the Lake of Geneva; for one can tell with as much certainty, as if assured of it, that he wrote the whole opening of that tragedy, or First Act, while his light, airy and more sprightly collaborator wrote all the closing part, or last Act.

Now, the author of the Annals seems to have displayed remarkable diligence in a careful study of the style and language of Tacitus with the view of reproducing them in the multiplicity and variety of expressions that would necessarily occur in the course of the very long work he meditated forging. To judge from his handiwork, he was specially struck by certain peculiarities:--such as dignified and powerful expression, with extraordinary conciseness joined to loftiness of diction;--hence, his brevity, being dissembled, and altogether foreign to his own natural diction, which was most copious, has a hardness and obscurity, of which the brevity of Tacitus is totally void. He seems to have furthermore observed how the language of Tacitus has a poetical complexion, is figurative, nor altogether free from oratorical tinsel with mixture of foreign, especially Greek construction, and the most peculiar, new and unusual turns of expression, alliterations and similar endings of words. Yet notwithstanding all this care and diligence he was utterly incapable of approaching in language and style so close to the great original he pretended to be as to be confounded with him; he was, indeed, not a bit more successful in approaching his prototype, than that emulous imitator of Tacitus, Ammianus Marcellinus.

Much might be taken from the Excursus of Roth and the Prolegomena of Dýderlein and Býtticher greatly to strengthen this part of my argument; but, their treatises being well known, I abstain, merely observing that, from their remarks, it will be seen that only in

the Annals are verbs constructed in a very uncommon and frequently archaic manner, as the ancient perfect, _conpesivere_ (IV. 32), of which there is no example in Tacitus, as there is in Catullus:

> O Latonia, maximi
> Magna progenies Jovis,
> Quam mater prope Deliam
> _Deposivit_ olivam. XXXIV. 5-8.

It will be also seen in the above-mentioned most able production of Dýderlein that the infinitive and the particles _ut, ne_ and _quod_ are joined with many verbs; that there is an interchange of _ad_ and _ut_ (An. II. 62); a joining of the present and the perfect, and a joining of the infinitive with those two tenses. In the midst of this damaging criticism Dýderlein quotes Walther, who has also commented upon the Annals, but in terms of enthusiastic commendation, for he praises such writing as first-rate workmanship--"adjustments by design," says the ingenious German; not, of course, the unconscious errors, that a modern European might make in a case of forgery: the discovery reminds me of Mr. Ruskin's unqualified eulogies of everything done by the brush of Turner, which caused the great artist to observe: --"This gentleman has found out to be beauties what I have always considered to be blemishes."

Professor Hill, also, in his "Essay upon the Principles of Historical Composition" has noticed in the Annals some modes of construction not to be met with in any Roman writer, such as a wrong case after a verb,--a genitive after _apiscor_ which governs an accusative: "dum _dominationis_ apisceretur" (VI. 45); and an accusative after _praesideo_ which governs a dative: "_proximum_ que Galliae _litus_ rostratae naves praesidebant" (IV. 5).

IV. Here let me pause for a moment to glance at a prodigious thing that has been done to Tacitus: it really has no parallel in literature: a number of foreigners have impugned his knowledge of his native tongue. The learned German, Rheinach (Beatus Rhenanus), began, for he could not admit in his Basle edition in 1533 of the works of Tacitus that the language of that Roman was equal to the language of Livy, being florid, affected, stiff and unnatural; his observation being, that "though Tacitus was without elegance and purity in his language, from Latin in his time being deteriorated by foreign turns and figures of speech; yet there was one thing he retained in its entirety, and that was blood and marrow in his matter": "Quamvis Tacitus caruerit nitore et puritate linguae, abeunte jam Romano sermone in peregrinas formas atque figuras; succum tamen et sanguinem rerum incorruptum retinuit." Eight years after the famous Tuscan lawyer and scholar, Ferretti, followed by accusing Tacitus in the preface to the edition of his works published at Lyons in 1541, of writing with inelegance and impurity: "consequently," he says, "in the estimation of eminent literary men Tacitus is not to be ranked after, but rather before Livy; and yet his style, which was florid, though smacking of the thought and care that pleased in the days of Vespasian and his son, and which, from that time,--on account of the Latin language gradually declining in purity,--steadily degenerated into a kind of affected composition, ought not to be placed on a par with nor preferred to Livy's, whose language flows naturally and agreeably, for his was the age of the greatest purity": "Unde factum, ut praestantium in literis virorum judicio Livio non sit postponendus Tacitus, quin potius anteferendus: non quod hujus floridum, ac meditationem et curam olens dicendi genus, quale sub Vespasianis placuit, ac indies exin degeneravit in affectatam quandam compositionem, exolescente paulatim sermonis latini puritate,

Livianae dictioni, illi naturaliter amabiliterque fluenti (nam id seculum purissimum fuit), aequari debeat, aut praeferri." Next came the Milanese schoolman, Alciati, who preferred the certainly sometimes elegant and polished phrases of Paulus Jovius (in his letter to Jovius himself prefixed to the edition of 1558 of the renowned Bishop of Nocera de' Pagani's principal production, the 45 books of Historia Sui Temporis):--"they will not ask of you the reason why you have not reached the soft exuberance of Livy, after you have thoroughly regretted imitating the calm solemnity of Sallust, and been satisfied with only the few flowers you have plucked with a discriminative hand out of the gardens of Quintus Curtius more frequently than the thorny thickets of Cornelius Tacitus": "Non reposcent a te rationem, cur lacteam Livii ubertatem non sis assecutus; postquam et te omnino piguerit Sallustii sobrietatem imitari, et satis tibi fuerit pauculos tantum flores ex Quinti Curtii pratis, soepius quam ex Cornelii Taciti senticetis arguta manu decerpsisse." Then succeeded, as fast as flakes falling in a snow-storm, a long string of acute critics, each with his just objections, and each more pointed than his predecessors in his animadversions, down to the present day, when, I suppose it may be said that the eminent Dr. Nipperdey stands foremost amongst the exposers of the bad Latinity of Tacitus. The Tacitus, thus universally proclaimed, and for nearly a dozen generations, not to be a competent master of his own tongue, is not the Tacitus of the History, it is the "Tacitus" of the Annals; and when hereafter I point out who this "Tacitus" of the Annals was,--an Italian "Grammaticus," or "Latin writer" of the fifteenth century,--the reader will not be at all surprised that he every now and then slips and trips in Latin;--on the contrary, the reader would be amazed if it were not so; because he would regard it as a thing more than phenomenal,--as a matter partaking of the miraculous;--he must consider himself as coming in contact with a being altogether superhuman;--if the "Tacitus" of the fifteenth century, who, as a Florentine, may have been a complete master of the choicest Tuscan, had written with the correctness of the Tacitus of the first century, who, as befitted a "civis Romanus" of consular rank, was perfectly skilled in his native tongue;--aye, quite as much so as Livy, Sallust, or any other accomplished man of letters of ancient Rome.

CHAPTER V.

THE LATIN AND ALLITERATIONS IN THE ANNALS.

I. Errors in Latin, (_a_) on the part of the transcriber; (_b_) on the part of the writer.--II. Diction and Alliterations: Wherein they differ from those of Tacitus.

I.--An anecdote is told of our present sovereign that, on one occasion, conversing with the celebrated scene painter and naval artist, Clarkson Stanfield, her Majesty, hearing that he had been an "able-bodied seaman," was desirous of knowing how he could have left the Navy at an age sufficiently early to achieve greatness by pursuing his difficult art. The reply of Stanfield was that he had received his discharge when quite young in consequence of a fall from the fore-top which had lamed him,--and for the remainder of his life,--whereupon the Queen is stated to have exclaimed: "What a lucky tumble!" In a similar strain the author of the Annals, after he had handed over his work, according to the custom of his time, for transcription, must have been induced to exclaim, when he marked how the monk who had put his thoughts on vellum, had made him write nonsense in almost every other sentence: "What a lucky transcriber!" The knowledge that he would have a transcriber, who was no adept in Latin, must have been one of the greatest

factors in his calculations as a forger. Otherwise how could he entertain the shadow of a hope that his book could pass current, when, in order that it should take its place in the first rank of Roman classics, it was imperative that he should write Latin to perfection. That was impossible; and his fabrication must have been detected immediately upon its publication, even though his age was destitute of philological criticism, unless everybody had known that the scribes in convents who copied the classics were famous for committing endless blunders in their transcriptions. Thus, his good fortune stood steadfastly by him all through his extraordinary forgery; at its initiation as well as during the subsequent stages of it.

There was in his time a regular profession of transcribers, who may be looked upon as the precursors of printers. Numbered among them were some who had great fame for transcribing;--learned men, who knew Latin almost, if not quite, as well as they knew their mother-tongue, Cosimo of Cremona, Leonardo Giustiniani of Venice, Guarino of Verona, Biondo Flavio, Gasparino Barzizza, Sarzana, Niccoli, Vitturi, Lazarino Resta, Faccino Ventraria, and some others;--in fact, a host; for nearly all the literary men, in consideration of the enormous sums they obtained for copies of the ancient classics carefully and correctly written, devoted themselves to the occupation of transcription, as, in these times, men of the highest attainments in letters, some, too, of the greatest, even European, celebrity, give their services, for the handsome remunerations they receive, to the newspaper and periodical press. But, in the fifteenth century, the vast majority of writers of manuscripts,--those who were in general employment from not commanding the high prices obtained by the "crack" transcribers, and might be compared to "penny-a-liners" among us, suppliers of scraps of news to the papers,--were still to be found only in convents, knowing more about ploughs than books, and for literary acquirements standing on a par with professors of handwriting and dancing masters of the present day. These monkish transcribers wrote down words as daws or parrots articulate them; for just as these birds do not know the meaning of what they utter, so these scribes in monasteries did not understand the signification of the phrases which they copied. We can easily understand how to these manipulators of the pen an infinite number of passages in the Annals, which are still "posers" to the most expert classical professors in the leading Universities of Europe, must have been as dark as the Delphic Oracle,--or the Punic speech of the Carthaginian in Plautus's Comedy of Poenulus to everybody (except, of course, the great Oriental linguist, Petit, who knew all about it, for in the second book of his "Miscellaneorum Libri Novem" he explains the whole speech, without the slightest fear of anybody correcting the mistakes into which he fell).

The jumble occasioned by the interminable blunders of the monastic writers (for there were two of them, as will he hereafter seen) causes both the codices of the Annals to be phenomena for confusion. Unique as literary gems, and preserved in the Laurentian Medicean Library in Florence, they are the greatest attraction to literary sightseers visiting the lucky library in which they are carefully deposited; and, I believe, have a fancy value set upon them as a fancy value is set upon the Koh-i-noor.

Any member of the medical faculty, even the latest licentiate of the Apothecaries Hall, who knows the fatal effect of wear and tear upon the system caused by ceaseless worry, can explain why Philippo Beroaldi the Younger departed this life five years after undergoing the labour of preparing for the press at the order of

Leo X. the MS. found in the Westphalian Convent, containing the first six books of the Annals. When we consider the chaos in which that dismal MS. presented itself to the eyes of the unfortunate Professor in the University of Rome, we can readily conceive how he must have consulted, as he told us he did, "the learned, the judicious and the subtle" about the correction of errors of the knottiest nature which came upon him so fast that, to express their abundance, he instinctively borrows his figure of speech, from water gushing from a fountain or coming down in a cataract:-- "the old manuscript," says he, "from which I have undertaken to transcribe and publish this volume, _gushes forth_ with a multiplicity of blunders:"--"vetus codex, unde hunc ipsum describendum atque invulgandum curavi, pluribus mendis _scatet_." One example, out of a legion, will suffice:--In the passage in the eleventh book where Narcissus is represented begging pardon of Claudius for not having told him of Messalina's intrigue, the MSS. at Florence and Rome run thus (according to the report of James Gronovius): "Is veniam in praeteritum petens quod ci CIS V&CTICIS PLAUCIO DIMU-lavisset." Half a century before, Vindelinus of Spire,-- who distributed books to all the inhabitants of the world as Triptolemus of old distributed corn,--broke the back-bone of this gibberish, when first publishing the concluding books (from that Vatican MS. which is no longer to be found), by editing "quod _eicis Vecticis Plautio dissimu_ lavisset." Beroaldi altered this to "quod _ei cis Vectium Plaucium dissimu_ lavisset." This was retained in all editions, as the best that could be thought of, till Justus Lipsius, who collated the MSS. of Tacitus in the Vatican Library, as he collated the MSS. of other ancient authors in that and the Farnese and Sfortian Libraries, during his two years stay in Rome, changed it to "quod _ei cis Vectium cis Plautium dissimu_ lavisset." So for a century that remained as the latest improvement till again amended by John Frederic Gronovius, who, seeing the Vatican and Florentine MSS. while searching the treasures of literature in Italy during his tour in that country, edited _cis Vectios cis Plautios_. Most editors adopt, according to fancy, the rendering of Lipsius or Gronovius, on account of Vectius Valens and Plautius Lateranus being two distinguished Romans in the days of Claudius who intrigued with Messalina. For my own part, I prefer the conjectural emendation of the Bipontine editors who, giving up as hopeless the corrupted passage, edit "quod _incestae uxoris flagitia dissimu_ lavisset," which, if not precisely what was written, carries with it the recommendation of being intelligible, and doing away with the unmeaning _cis_.

On account of the corruption of the text in the two oldest MSS. that supply the Annals,--the First and Second Florence,--I am aware what care must be taken, when touching upon the Latin in the Annals, not to ascribe to the author faults that were the errors of other people. One ought to be guarded when coming across "reditus," which ought to be "rediturus" (II. 63), and "datum," which ought to be "daturum" (II. 73).

I must pause to observe that, here as elsewhere, in examining the Latinity of the Annals, I cite from the original editions of the last six books by Vindelinus of Spire published in 1470, and the first six books by Beroaldus published in 1515, all editions now in use having "rediturus" and "daturum," but without the authority of a single MS.

These blunders we may fairly father on the monkish transcribers, the more so as their handiworks abound with faults, arising from one of these four causes,--inability of perceiving propriety of expression; which people call "stupidity"; disinclination to the

requisite exertion; known as "laziness";--misunderstanding the meaning of the author, or destitution of knowledge.

The errors that spring from ignorance are the most striking; they show the purely negative state of the transcribers' minds; how uninformed they were of facts, and how uninstructed in arts, literature or science. Evidently the transcriber of the first Six Books had never heard of the "Sacerdotes Titii," and seeing that the author had mentioned Tatius in the first portion of the clause in a passage in the First Book (54), he writes "Sodales _Ta_tios," instead of "Sodales _Ti_tios";--"ut quondam Titus _Tatius_ retinendis Sabinorum sacris sodales _Tatios_ instituerat"; just as evidently, from ignorance of the language, having no notion what the author was saying in another passage in the Second Book (2), but seeing that he had used the word "majorum" in the previous sentence, he writes nonsensically "ipsorum _majoribus_" for "ipsorum _moribus_" (II. 2); nor knowing what the "propatulum" was in a Roman house, but misled by the author having almost immediately before (IV. 72) spoken of "soldiers being fastened to the patibulum"--or, as we should say, "hanged on the gallows,"--he writes (IV. 74), "in _propatibulo_ servitium" instead of "in _propatulo_ servitium," the "propatulum" being an open uncovered court-yard, differing from the "aedium," as being in the forepart of the dwelling.

How illiterate he and the transcriber of the last Six Books were will be seen in examples and remarks by Kritz in his Prolegomena to Velleius Paterculus; by Dýderlein in his Preface to his edition of Tacitus; by Ernesti in his Notes to the Annals; by Sauppe, the able editor of the Oratores Attici, in his Epistolae Criticae, addressed to his learned relation, Godfrey Hermann, and, above all, by Herý, in his "Studia Critica," or elaborate treatise on the Florentine Manuscripts of Tacitus. Both transcribers seem to have had a taste for rhyming and to have thought that the beauty of writing Latin consisted in obtaining jingles, to get which they mix up two words into one, as "san_us_ repert_us_," for "san_e_ is repertus" (VI. 14); or coining, as "_templores flores_," for "_templorum fores_" (II. 82); or changing the termination of a word, in order that it may resemble in sound, the word that follows, as "don_aria_ mili_taria_" for "_dona militaria_" (I. 44); or the word that precedes, as "potu_isset_ tradi_disset_" for "potuisset tradi" (XII. 61).

The same bungling is shown with respect to adjectives, the number, gender and case of which are changed, as "tris_tios_ primordio," for "tris_tiores_ primordio" (I. 7); "amore an odio incert_as_" for "amore an odio incert_um_" (XIII. 9), and "conqueren_tium_ irritum laborem," for "conqueren_te_ irritum laborem" (XV. 17). The number, mood and tense of verbs are also changed as "quotiens concordes agunt sper_nun_tur: Parthus," for "quotiens concords agunt, sper_ni_tur Parthus" (VI. 42); "nationes promptum habe_re_" for "nationes promptum habar_et_," and "neque dubium habe_retur_" for "neque dubium ha_betur_." (XII. 61).

They sometimes succeed, from their stupidity or laziness, in completely puzzling the reader by omitting syllables, and transposing and substituting consonants and vowels, thus producing the most confounding gibberish, as "_pars nipulique_" for "Pharasmani Polemonique" (XIV. 26); or adding a letter, as "m_orte_m" for "m_ore_m" (III. 26), or omitting a syllable, as "eff_unt_" for "eff_und_unt" (VI. 33). From the same fault they every now and then double a letter, as "Ami_ss_iam" for "Ami_s_iam", or omit one of the double letters, as "antefe_r_entur" for "antefe_rr_entur" (1. 8); or, when two words occur, one ending, and the other beginning with the same letter, they either omit the last letter of the

preceding word, as "event_u_ Suetonius" for "event_us_ Suetonius" (XIV. 36), or the first letter of the following word as "quipped _l_apsum" for "quippe _e_lapsum" (V. 10). But it is in single syllables or words or letters that they most abound in errors, frequently omitting them without the mark of a _lacuna_, or any defect; now they omit single letters, when the second word begins with the same letter as that with which the first ends; at times in the first word, as "victori_a_ sacrari," for "victoria_s_ sacrari" (III. 18); at times in the second word, as "ad _e_os" for "ad _d_eos" (I. 11) now they add single letters as "vitae ejus" for "vit_a_ ejus" (I. 9), or "a_u_diturus" for "aditurus" (XV. 36); or voluntarily add a syllable, that the termination of one word may correspond to the commencement of another, as "Stratonicidi_ve_ _ve_neri" for "Stratonicidi Veneri" (III. 63), or repeat syllables or words (what is called "dittography"), as "Cujus adversa pravitati _ipsius_, prospera ad fortunam _ipsius_ referebat" (XIV. 38). Puteolanus was the first to throw out the second _ipsius_, and substitute for it "reipublicae," which most of the editors of Tacitus have retained, though Brotier edits, I cannot help thinking properly, on account of the antithesis in which the Author of the Annals delighted:--"whose adversity he ascribed to his depravity, and whose prosperity to his good fortune":--"cujus adversa, pravitati ipsius; prospera, ad fortunam referebat" (XIV. 38); so that the second _ipsius_ in the MS. is not wrong, only inelegant and unnecessary.

Having thus seen the nature of the errors committed by the transcribers, we may now pass on to what we must consider as the errors of the writer. There is very little doubt that he alone is responsible for the following: using the poetic form "celebris" for the prose form "celeber"--Romanis haud perinde _celebris_ (II. 88, in fin.), which so startled Ernesti that he is almost sure the author must have written "celebratus;" still he would not dare to alter it on account of its being repeated on two other occasions--Pons Mulvius in eo tempore _celebris_ (XIII. 47): Servilius, diu foro, mox tradendis rebus Romanis _celebris_ (XIV. 19);--so merely contents himself with the observation that "those who are desirous of writing elegant Latin will not imitate it:" "studiosi elegantiae in scribendo non imitabuntur." Those desirous of attaining an elegant style would not write as in the Annals, "exauctorare," with the meaning of "putting out of the ranks and into the reserve," as when we find it stated that "a discharge should be given to those who had served twenty years, and that those should be _put out of the ranks and into the reserve_, who had gone through sixteen years' service, there to be kept as auxiliary troops, free from the other duties which it was customary to render to the State, except that of repelling the invasion of an enemy":--"missionem dari vicena stipendia meritis; _exauctorari_, qui senadena fecissent, ac retineri sub vexillo, ceterorum immunes nisi propulsandi hostis" (An. I. 36);--here we have a meaning of the word "exauctorare" very different from its sense of "a final discharge," in which it is understood by Tacitus towards the opening of his History, when he is describing the distracted state of Rome, and continues: "during such a crisis tribunes were _finally discharged_, Antonius Taurus and Antonius Naso, from the body guard; Aemilius Pacensis from the troops garrisoned at Rome, and Julius Fronto from the watch": "_exauctorati_ per cos dies tribuni, e praetorio Antonius Taurus et Antonius Naso; ex urbanis cohortibus Aemilius Pacensis; e vigiliis Julius Fronto" (Hist. I. 20);--nor would a person desirous of writing graceful Latin use "destinari" for being "elected" to an office, as "_destinari_ consules" (An. I. 3) where Tacitus uses "designari,"--"consule _designato_" (Hist I. 6).

Grammatical mistakes of the most extraordinary character are

sometimes made. There is neglect of indispensable attraction; "non medicinam _illud_" (I. 49) for "_illam_," and "non enim, preces sunt _istud_" (II. 38) for "_istae_;"--proper Latinity requires that, in "nihil reliqui faciunt quominus invidi_am_, misericordi_am_, met_um_ et ir_as_ _per_mov_erent_ (I. 21), the four nouns should be in either the ablative or genitive, and the verb in the present, with (as Dr. Nipperdey says) _moveant_ in preference to _permoveant_. "An" is used as an equivalent to "vel;"--"metu invidiae, _an_ (vel) ratus" (II. 22,) and as if synonymous with "sive," "sive fatali vecordia, _an_" (seu, or sive) "imminentium periculorum remedium" (XI. 26.) In the sentence where Tiberius is described as, according to rumour, being pained with grief at his own and the Roman people's contemptible position for no other "reason" more than that Tacfarinas, a robber and deserter, would treat with them like a regular enemy:--we have the only instance in a classical composition reputed to be written by an ancient Roman, of "alias" conveying the idea of _cause_, instead of being an adverb of _time_:--"Nec _alias_ magis sua populique Romani contumelia indoluisse Caesarem ferunt, quam quod desertor et praedo hostium more agerat" (III. 73).

These errors we must believe to be the author's; considering their gravity, we are compelled to ask ourselves the question: "Could this writer have been an ancient Roman?" If we answer in the affirmative, how can we explain coming repeatedly across this sort of writing, "lacu IN ipso" (XII. 56), that is, a monosyllabic preposition placed between a substantive and an adjective or pronoun, a kind of composition found in the poets, but disapproved by the prose-writers, who, if so placing a preposition, used a dissyllable and put the adjective first. Independently of a monosyllabic preposition thus standing frequently between a substantive and an adjective or pronoun (judice _ab_ uno: III. 10--urbe _ex_ ipsa: XII. 56--senatuque _in_ ipso and urbe _in_ ipsa: XIV. 42 & 53.--portu _in_ ipso XV. 18); there are other occasional abnormal collocations of the preposition, such as, after two words combined by a copulative particle, or two of them: diisque et patria _coram_ (IV. 8), Poppaea et Tigellino _coram_ (XV. 61) and between two words connected by apposition: montem _apud_ Erycum (IV. 43), uxore _ab_ Octavia (IV. 43--XIII. 12). These usages are not found in the other works ascribed to Tacitus, nor any of the ancient Latin prose-writers; though common enough in the poets, the three instances being found in Virgil;--the first in the Aeneid:--

> "Cum litora fervere late
> Prospiceres arce _ex_ summa:"
> Aen. IV. 409-10;
>
> "Vespere _ab_ atro
> Consurgunt venti:" Aen. V. 19-20

And--

> "Graditur bellum _ad_ crudele Camilla:"
> Ib. XI. 535;

The second in the Georgics:

> "Si non tanta quies iret frigusque caloremque
> _Inter_:"
> Georg. II. 344;

And shortly after,

> "Pagos et compita _circum_:"

Ib. 382;

And the third in the Aeneid:

"Duros mille labores
Rege _sub_ Eurystheo, fatis Junonis iniquae,
Pertulerit:"
Aen. VIII. 291-3.

The Latinity, therefore, is good; but though good, it can scarcely be said to be that of an ancient Roman; for an ancient Roman never resorted to such inflexions in prose, only when writing poetry to get over the difficulties of rhythm; hence a modern European would easily fall into the error, from taking the Latin of Virgil to be most perfect; and from deeming that what was done in verse could, with equal propriety, be done in prose.

Though nothing could be more natural than for a modern European to think that the right Latin for "good deeds," was "bona facta" (III. 40), an ancient Roman would have written "_bene_ facta," just as he would have used for the expression "if bounds were observed," "si modus _adhiberetur_," not "si modus _adjiceretur_" (III. 6). He would have followed "inscitia" with a genitive, as Tacitus, "inscitiam ceterorum" (Hist. I. 54), and not with a preposition, as "finis inscitiae _erga_ domum suam" (XI. 25), for "an end of ignorance of his family"; nor have used that noun absolutely, as "quo fidem _inscitiae_ pararet" (XV. 58); "in order that he should create a belief in his ignorance." Instead of "hi _molium objectus_, hi proximas scaphas scandere" (XIV. 8), for "some clambered up the heights that lay in front of them, some into the skiffs that were nigh at hand," he would have used the participle, "_moles objectas_"; and written "_loca_ opportuna" instead of "_locorum_ opportuna permunivit" (IV. 24), for "he fortified convenient places."

Ancient writers among the Romans, such as Cicero and Livy, used the comparative in both clauses with quanto and tanto; the more recent writers, such as Tacitus and Sallust, used the comparative with them in, at least, one clause. We find in the Annals these ablatives of quantus and tantus, as if their real force was not known, used with the positive in both clauses. A European putting into Latin: "the more closely he had at one time applied himself to public business, the more wholly he gave himself up to secret debaucheries and vicious idleness;" would think his language quite correct when he wrote: "quanto _intentus_ olim publicas _ad_ curas" (mark the place of the monosyllabic preposition), "tanto occultos _in_ luxus" (again), "et malum otium _resolutus_" (IV. 67).

A Roman did not use the verb "pergere" in the sense of "continuing or proceeding" in a _matter_, only of "continuing or proceeding" where there is _bodily motion_. Yet the author of the Annals for "things would come to a successful issue, that they were going on with," has "prospere cessura, quae _pergerent_" (I. 28); an ancient Roman would have written "per_a_gerent," as may be seen from Livy, who expresses "I will go on with the achievements in peace and war": "res pace belloque gestas _peragam_" (II. 1); Pliny, "let us now go on with the remainder": "reliqua nunc _peragemus_" (N.H. VI. 32, 2); and Cornelius Nepos, "but he went on, not otherwise than one would have thought, in his purpose": "tamen propositum nihilo secius _peregit_" (Att. 22). As many will believe, contrary to myself, that this was a blunder of the copyist (notwithstanding that it is not in the style of his blundering), I will not insist upon it; though I must insist upon the following being an error on the part of the writer for "giving praises and thanks":--"laudes et grates

habentem" (I. 69): A Roman could not have said that: had he used "laudes et grates," his phrase would have been "laudes et grates _agentem_";--had he used "habentem," his phrase would have been "laudes et grat_iam_" (or grat_ias_) "habentem." "Diisque et _patria_ coram)" (IV. 8), is much more in keeping with the ragged language of St. Jerome in his Vulgate than the precision of Tacitus in his History:--There are two mistakes: the first is the collocation of the preposition which has been already noticed; the second is the phrase "standing before the _eyes_ of a country," which is the real meaning of "patria _coram_"; it is akin to "looking a matter in the _face_," which is met with,--(and which I almost deem elegant,)-- in the cumbrous oratory of Lord Castlereagh, but which I should be very much astonished to discover had originated from the lips of another statesman, the very opposite in speech of the renowned Foreign Secretary,--the ornate and correct rhetorician, so famed for the concinnity of his phrases, the Earl of Beaconsfield.

II. From the diction point of view, the Annals could not have been written by Tacitus, as the language at times is anybody's but his. When "ubi" signifies "where" (at the place itself), and not "whither" (to a distance from the place where a person stands), "Answer me, Blaesus, _whither_ have you thrown the corpse?" "Responde, Blaese, _ubi_" (quo?) "cadaver abjeceris?" (I. 22) it is the language of Suetonius in that passage in the life of Galba, where he speaks of Patrobius casting the Emperor's head into that place, where by Galba's order Patrobius's patron had been assassinated; "eo loco, _ubi_" (quo) "jussu Galbae animadversum in patronum suum fuerat, abjecit" (Galb. 20). When two words are coupled with que--que we have the language of the poets, Virgil, Ovid, Terence, Silius Italicus, Manilius, and among prose writers, Sallust (exempli gratia) "meque regnumque" (Jug. 10) when "infecta" is used in the sense of "poisoned," "infected": "the times were so infected and soiled with sycophancy"--"tempora illa adeo _infecta_ et adulatione sordida fuere" (III. 65), we have the language of Pliny the Elder, when speaking of honey "not being infected with leaves," that is, not having the taste of leaves--"minime fronde infectum" (N.H. XIII. 13); and when "que," as if it were "et," means "too," or "also,"--"till that was _also_ forbidden": "donec id_que_ vetitum" (IV. 74), and "his mines of gold, _too_": "aurarias_que_ ejus"(VI. 19), we have the language of Pliny the Younger, "me, _too_, from boyhood," "me_que_ a pueritia" (Ep. IV. 19). Just as Cicero uses "domestic" for "personal;"--"exempla domestica, "_my own_ speeches" the author of the Annals uses "at home" for "personal," and "personally";--"_domi_ artes" (III. 69), "_personal_ qualities;"--"_domi_ partam" (XIII. 42), "_personally_ acquired." When he desires to put into Latin: "How honourable their liberty regained by victory, and how much more intolerable their slavery if again subdued," he writes: "quam decora victoribus libertas, quanto _intolerantior_ servitus iterum victis" (III. 45), misapplying "intolerantior" for "intolerabilior" with Florus (IV. 12), who is clever in committing errors in grammar and geography. There is ringing the changes with Livy, when we read in the Annals (II. 24) "_quanto_ violentior, _tantum_" (for tanto) "illa," and in the great Roman historian, "_quantum_" (for quanto) "laxaverat, _tanto_ magis" (Livy XXXII. 5). It is using, too, in the sense of Livy (XLI. 8, 5) the verb "differere," instead of the customary expression, "rejicere." The language is peculiar to himself when he uses "differre" for "spargere" in the phrase "and to be spread abroad among foreigners": "differique etiam per externos" (III. 12), as the style is peculiar to himself in omitting the past time (fuisse) when no doubt is left by the preceding context or the immediate sequel in the same sentence, that the past time is referred to in the passage where Silius boasts that "his soldiers continued to be loyal, while others fell into sedition; and that his empire would not have remained to

Tiberius, if there had been a desire for revolution also in those legions of his": "suum militem in obsequio duravisse, cum alii ad seditiones prolaberentur: neque mansurum Tiberio imperium, si iis quoque legionibus cupido novandi fuisset" (IV. 18), where after "mansurum," according to Dr. Nipperdey, there should be "fuisse."

Further proof is afforded by the use of the word "imperator," that the diction in the Annals is not that of Tacitus. Having lived in the time of the Caesars, he never could have heard a countryman in speech or writing use "Imperator" other than as signifying one individual, not the commander in chief of the army, but the occupant of the supreme civil authority, "Imperator" being the noun proper of "imperium." In this restricted sense Tacitus always uses the word, because it was understood with that signification by every Roman of his time. For example, in his Agricola (39), he means by "imperatoria laus" "the renown in arms of the Emperor," who was then Domitian. The author of the Annals, who was not aware of this nice distinction, uses Imperator, not as it was used in the time of Tacitus, but as it was used in the days of the Republic. He, too, like Tacitus, uses the noun in its adjectival form, but he does not apply it, as Tacitus does, to that which belongs to the Emperor, but to that which belongs to a general; for he means by "imperatoria laus" (II. 52), "the fame of a general," even of Germanicus. He seems to have thought that it could be given to any member of the imperial house, for he applies it without distinction to Germanicus, who was the son of an Emperor, as to the Emperors Caligula, Claudius and Nero, when speaking of the daughter of Germanicus, Agrippina, who was the mother of Nero, wife of Claudius and sister of Caligula: "quam _imperatore genitam_, sororem ejus, qui rerum potitus sit, et conjugem et matrem fuisse" (XII. 42); he applies it even to the wife of an Emperor's son, for he styles Agrippina, the wife of Germanicus, "imperatoria uxor" (I. 41); he gives the title to the barbarian generals among the Germans (II. 45), which no Roman in the time of the Empire, or, perhaps, even of the Republic, could have possibly done; and, further, to military chiefs, who corresponded then to our present generals of division, for, when speaking of Caractacus as "superior in rank to other _generals_ of the Britons," he expresses himself: "ceteros Britannorum _imperatores_ praemineret" (XII. 33).

That a modern European wrote the Annals is also very clear from the undistinguishing use in that work of the cognate word, "princeps," which, like "imperator," had two different meanings at two different periods of Roman history, meaning, in the time of the Republic, merely "a leading man of the City," and, in the time of the Empire, the Emperor only. This every Roman, of course, discriminated; hence Tacitus everywhere uses the word in its strictly confined sense of "Emperor" (Hist. I. 4, 5, 56, 79 _et al._). For "the leading men of the Country," his phrase is not, as a Roman would have expressed himself in the Republican period, "principes viri urbis," but "primores civitatis." The author of the Annals, who was in the dark as to this, uses "principes" in the Republican sense of "leading men," as occurs in the observation: "the same thing became not the _principal citizens_ and imperial people" (meaning, the aristocracy and freemen), "as became humble" homes (meaning, the dregs of the populace), or, "States" (meaning, the occupants of thrones): "non cadem decora _principibus viris_ et imperatori populo, quae modicis domibus aut civitatibus" (III. 6). He also misapplies the word to the sons of Emperors, as if he were under the impression that they were styled "princes" by the ancient Romans as by modern Europeans, for thus he speaks of the sons of Tiberius, Drusus and Germanicus: "except that Marcus Silanus out of affront to the

Consulate sought that office for the _princes_": "nisi quod Marcus Silanus ex contumelia consulatus honorem _principibus_ petivit" (III. 57).

The author of the Annals is quite as remarkable as Tacitus for antithesis: sometimes two antitheses occur together in Tacitus in the same clause. He is as remarkable for an equal balancing of phrases. But only in the Annals is the style of Tacitus mingled with the manner of some other Roman writer, as the easy and flowing redundance of Livy (I. 32, 33); the peculiar alliterations, triplets, ring of the sentences and flow of narrative of Sallust (XIV. 60-4), the antiquated expressions, new words, Greek idioms, and concise and nervous diction throughout of that historian; along with words and phrases, borrowed from the poets, especially Tibullus, Propertius, Catullus, above all, Virgil.

There is neither in Tacitus, nor the author of the Annals, the strength and sublimity of expression found in that great master of rhetoric, Cicero. The eloquence of Tacitus is grave and majestic, his language copious and florid. The language of the author of the Annals is cramped; and he maintains a dignified composure, rather than majesty; occasionally he has an inward laugh in a mood of irony, as when commending Claudius for "clemency," in allowing a man,--whom he has sentenced to execution, to choose his own mode of death. His close, dry way, too, of saying things savours of harshness, and differs widely from the Greek severeness of manner observable in Tacitus. The crucial test is to be found in a few trifling matters of style. So far from displaying the same care as Tacitus to avoid a discordant jingle of three like endings, he will write bad Latin to get at the intolerable recurrence. Rather than have a similar ending to three words Tacitus will depart from his rule of composition which is to balance phrases,--"dissipation, industry"; "insolence, courtesy";--"bad, good";--but to avoid a jingle he writes "luxuria, industria"; _comitate, arrogantia"_; "malis bonisque artibus mixtus" (Hist. I. 10), his usual style of composition requiring "luxuri_a_, industri_a_; arroganti_a_, comitate." He prefers incorrect Latin to such sounds. He writes, "coque Poppaeam Sabinam--deposuerat" (Hist. I. 13), instead of what the best Latinity required, "coque j_am_ Poppae_am_ Sabin_am_." The author of the Annals, not having his exquisite ear, nor abhorrence of inharmonious concurrence of sounds, actually goes out of his way, by disregarding grammar, carefully to do Tacitus, also by disregard of grammar, as carefully avoided, to procure three like endings, as "uter_que_ opibus_que_ at_que_ honoribus pervignere" (An. III. 27), when Tacitus would have unquestionably written, "uterque opibusque _et,_" and, moreover, have written correctly, because the Romans never followed "que" with "atque," always with "et."

The author of the Annals falls into the opposite fault of having three like beginnings as "_a_dhuc Augustum _a_pud" (I. 5), which is in the style of Livy or Cicero, but not Tacitus. At the same time no writer is so fond of alliteration as Tacitus; yet he resorts to it with so much judgment, that it never grates on the ear, and with so much art that it all but passes notice. It is perceptible in the Germany and the Agricola as well as the History; though in the latter work it is carried to greater perfection, and is more systematically used, being found in almost every paragraph. The rule with Tacitus is this:--When he resorts to alliteration in the middle of a sentence where there is no pause, he uses words that differ in length, as "_justis judiciis_ approbatum" (Hist. I. 3), "_tot terrarum_ orbe" (I. 4), "_pars populi_ integra" (6); and so throughout the

History, till at the close, we find the same thing uniformly going on:--"_miscebantur minis_ promissa" (V. 24); "_poena poenitentiam_ fateantur" (V. 25); "_Vespasianum vetus_ mihi observantiam" (V. 26). But--and particular attention is called to this--when the alliteration is found at the end of a sentence, or (where there is a pause) in the middle of a sentence, he prefers words of the same length, but different quantities, as, at the beginning of the History;--_senectuti seposui_ (I. 1); "_plerumque permixta_; "_sterile saeculum_" (ibid); and so throughout the work to the end, where we still find the same regularity of identical alliteration: "_clamore cognitum_" (V. 18); "_coeptý coede_" (V. 22); "_oequoris electum_" (V. 23); "_merito mutare_" (V. 24). This peculiarity of composition, so distinctive of Tacitus, unfortunately for his forgery, ENTIRELY escaped the attention of the author of the Annals; he seems to have thought that any kind of alliteration, so long as it was constantly carried on, would sufficiently mark the style of Tacitus. Accordingly he has all kinds of alliterations, except the right ones, for they are quite different from, and, indeed, the very reverse of those of Tacitus; sometimes they are twofold (I. 6); sometimes threefold (I. 5); sometimes even four together--"posita, puerili praetexta principes" (I. 8);--from which last Tacitus would have shrunk with horror at the sight, as Mozart is stated to have rebounded and swooned at the discordant blare of a trumpet. As to using in the middle of sentences words that differ in length as a rule they do not, from the first of the kind, "_ortum octo_" (I. 3), to the last of the kind, "_voce vultu_" (XVI. 29); at the end of sentences, he uses words that, instead of not differing, do differ in from the first of the kind, "_Augustum adsumebatur_" (I. 8), to the last of the kind "_sortem subiret_" (XVI. 32) and "_sestertium singulis_" (XVI. 33).

After this overwhelming proof of forgery, I need not press another syllable upon the reader. If not convinced by this, he will be convinced by nothing; for here is just that little blunder which a forger is sure to make: so far from being insignificant it is all-important; it swells out into proportions of colossal magnitude, at once disclosing the whole imposture, it being absolutely impossible that Tacitus should have so systematically adhered to a particular kind of alliteration in that part of his history which deals with Galba, Otho, Vitellius and Vespasian, and have so suddenly and utterly neglected or ignored it in that part of the history which deals with Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius and Nero.

END OF BOOK THE FIRST.

BOOK THE SECOND. BRACCIOLINI.

> Si per se virtus sine fortuna ponderanda sit, dubito an hunc primum omnium ponam.
> CORNELIUS NEPOS. _Thrasybulus._

CHAPTER I.

BRACCIOLINI IN ROME.

I. His genius and the greatness of his age.--II. His qualifications. --III. His early career.--IV. The character of Niccolo Niccoli, who abetted him in the forgery.--V. Bracciolini's descriptive writing of the Burning of Jerome of Prague compared with the descriptive writing of the Sham Sea Fight in the Twelfth Book of the Annals.

Though I have dwelt on the harshness of style and manner, and the occasional inaccuracies in grammar and language of the author of the Annals, it must not be supposed that I fail to appreciate his merit. In some of the qualities that denote a great writer he is superior to Tacitus; nor can anyone, not reading him in his original form, conceive an adequate notion of how his powers culminate into true genius,--what a master he is of eloquence, and how happy in expressing his very beautiful sentiments, which, sometimes having the nature of a proverb or an epigram, please by the placing of a word. His general ideas are scarcely retained in a translation: such a reproduction deprives them of the train of images and impressions which cluster round them in his language of poetry and suggestion, giving them spirit and interest, and imparting to them strength and ornament:--As winter is thrown over a landscape by the hand of nature, so coldness is thrown over his page by the hand of a translator: the student who can familiarize himself with his thoughts as expressed in the tongue in which he wrote, and reads a translation, is in the position of a man who can walk in summer along the bank of a majestic river flowing beautifully calm and stately by meadows pranked with flowers and woods waving in varied hues of green, yet prefers visiting the scene in winter when life and freshness are fled, the river being frozen, the flowers and greenness gone from the fields, and the leaves fallen from the trees.

The question arises,--Who was this wonderful man? If unknown, can he not be discovered?

John Leycester Adolphus, famous for his History of George the Third, discovered the author of the Waverley Novels in Sir Walter Scott, when the Wizard of the North was styled "The Great Unknown," by pointing out coincidences in the pieces and poems, known to be the productions of Scott, in such matters as the correct morals, the refined manners, the Scotch words and idioms, the descriptive power, the picturesque and dramatic fancy, the neat, colloquial turns in dialogue, the quaint similes, the sprinkle of metaphors, the love of dogs, the eloquent touches with regard to the pure and tender relations of father and daughter; and clinched the investigation by showing the freedom and correctness in the use of law-terms and phrases, which indicated clearly that the author was a lawyer. It being easy when a way has been shown to follow in the track, I turned to the period in question, which, I knew, must be the first half of the fifteenth century, to look for a writer, whose qualities, literary and moral,--or rather immoral,--could win for him the triumphal car of being the Author of the Annals--if triumph can, in any way, be associated with such ingloriousness as forgery,--and, after a little looking about, I found him in one whose compositions display, not to a remote, but in a close degree the energy, the animation, the feeling, the genius, the true taste, the deep meaning, and glimpses, ever and anon, of that signal power, which, rising into truly awful magnificence, of looking deeply into the darkest recesses of the human heart, runs through the Annals like the shining waters of a river in whose rich sands roll grains of gold.

The age of that writer was instinct with mental power: men were giants of intellect: Italy had soared to the highest pinnacle in the domain of mind, unequalled by preceding ages, except those of Pericles and Augustus: beginning in the fourteenth Century with Dante and Petrarch, and ending at the beginning of the sixteenth with the father of the modern political system, Machiavelli, it rose to the highest point of its altitude, and remained there through the whole of the fifteenth, when such bright lights shone constantly in the meridian of mind, as that Prince of the Church,

Cardinal Sadoleti, great as a poet, equally great as a philosopher, whose poems on Curtius and the Curtian Lake and the Statue of Laocoon would have done honour to Virgil, while in his "De Laudibus Philosophiae" Cicero lives again in style and manner of thinking.

During that long interval of splendour, achievements of the intellect are upon record that fully establish the existence of the most remarkable genius. Poliziano in a letter (Ep. XII. 2) to Prince Pico of Mirandola tells of one of these marvellous feats that was done by a youthful prodigy, only eleven years old, of the great family of Orsini (Fabius Ursinus). First young, Fabio Orsini sang; then recited verses of his own: requested to turn the verse into prose, he repeated the same thoughts unfettered by measure in an unassuming manner, and with an appropriate and choice flow of expression. After that subjects were proposed to him for epistolary correspondence, on which he was to dictate ex tempore to five amanuenses at once, the subjects given being "of a nature so novel, various, and withal so ludicrous that he could not have been prepared for them": after a moment's pause he dictated a few words to the first amanuensis on one subject; gave his instructions on a different theme to the second; proceeded in like manner with the rest, then returning to the first, "filled up every chasm and connected the suspended thread of his argument so that nothing appeared discordant or disjointed," and, at the same instant, finished the five letters. "If he lives," concluded Poliziano, "to complete the measure of his days," and "perseveres in the path of fame, as he has begun, he will, I venture to predict, prove a person, whom, for admirable qualities and attainments, mankind must unite to venerate as something more than human."

In that age some men had such an enthusiastic predilection to antiquity that they were animated by an ardent zeal for collecting ancient manuscripts, medals, inscriptions, statues, monumental fragments, and other ancient and classical remains. Others, again, were suspected of the intention to impose their own productions on the public as works of antiquity; one man, who never ceased to regret that it had not been his lot to live in the days of Roman splendour, Peter of Calabria, styled himself in his Commentaries on Virgil, Julius Pomponius Sabinus, and in his notes to Columella, Julius Pomponius Fortunatus, his object in both instances being that he should be mistaken for some Roman who had flourished in the purest ages of Latinity; and Foy-Vaillant, the celebrated numismatist of the seventeenth century, actually places him, in one of his numismatical works, in the list of ancient authors, while Justus Lipsius and Pithaeus both took him to have been a "Grammaticus", or "writer in Latin," of the earlier middle ages, all the time that he was an Italian academician, who flourished in the fifteenth century, having been born in 1425 at a place that has been called "The Garden of Almond Trees,"--Amendolara, in Upper Calabria.

It would be idle to suppose that the author of the Annals was actuated by the simple purpose of Peter of Calabria; there is ground for believing that some deeper, and less pure, motive instigated him to commit forgery. Though no Peter of Calabria, he was a matured Fabio Orsini; and the only drawback from his fabricated work is that it is not to be looked upon as Roman history, always in the most reliable shape, but rather as a form of the imagination which he selected for expressing his views on humanity;--to paint crime; to castigate tyranny; to vindicate honesty; to portray the abomination of corruption, the turpitude of debauchery and the baseness of servility;--to represent fortitude in its strength and grandeur, innocence in its grace and

beauty, while standing forth the sturdy admirer of heroism and freedom; the tender friend of virtue in misfortune; the austere enemy of successful criminality, and the inflexible dispenser of good and evil repute.

That a man of such great parts and extensive learning, with such fine thoughts, beautiful sentiments and wise reflections;--such a cool, abstracted philosopher, yet such an over-refined politician;--such a gloomy moralist, yet such an acute, fastidious observer of men and manners, was a cloistered monk or any obscure individual whatever was an idea to be immediately dispelled from the mind, for that the Annals was composed by such a man would have been about as incomprehensible an occurrence, as it would be impossible to conceive that an acrobat who exercises gymnastic tricks upon the backs of galloping horses in an American circus could discharge the functions of a First Lord of the Treasury or a Justice in the High Court of Judicature, or that a pantaloon in a Christmas pantomime could think out the Principia of Sir Isaac Newton or the Novum Organum of Lord Bacon. The fact was, the author was a conspicuous, shining light of his generation; the associate of princes and ministers; who, from the commanding position of his exalted eminence, cast his eyes over wide views of mankind that stretched into sweeping vistas of artifice and dissimulation; and who, for close upon half a century, participated prominently in the active business,--the subdolous and knavish politics,--of his time.

II. Everybody knows the fable of the old man, the boy and the ass; but not one in a thousand knows that it was written nearly four hundred years ago by a man who for forty years was a member of the Secretariate to nine Popes, from Innocent VII. to Calixtus III. First in the Bugiale of the Vatican, where the officers of the Roman Chancery, when discussing the news of the day, were making merry with sarcasms, jests, tales and anecdotes, one of the party having observed that those who craved popularity were chained to a miserable slavery, it being impossible from the variety of opinions that prevailed to please everybody, some approving one course of conduct, and others another, the fable in question was narrated in confirmation of that statement.

Poggio Bracciolini was not only the author of that fable, I am now about to bring forward reasons for believing, and with the view of inducing the reader to agree with me, that he,--and nobody else but he,--was the writer of the Annals of Tacitus.

He was in every way qualified to undertake, and succeed in, that egregious task. He was one of the most profound scholars of his age, more learned than Traversari, the Camaldolese, and if less learned than Andrea Biglia, superior to the Augustinian Hermit in a more natural, easy and cultivated style of composition and in a wider knowledge of the world: acquainted somewhat with Greek and slightly with Hebrew, he possessed a masterly and critical knowledge of Latin which he had carefully studied in his native city, Florence, with the most accomplished Latinist of the day, Petrarch's valued friend, the illustrious Giovanni Malpaghino of Ravenna.

Bracciolini was not of a character to have revolted at the baseness of fabrication;--an inordinate love of riches, more devouring in his breast than his next strongest passion, love of knowledge, was sufficient to egg him on to it. Throughout life, his moral conduct was unfavourably influenced by the scantiness of his means. It was to beguile the anxiety occasioned by his narrow circumstances that he devoted himself to intense study, from

knowing that superior attainments combined with splendid talents would secure for him great offices of trust and profit: he saw how those who were esteemed the most learned as well as the most able gained the best lucrative posts under the governments of the Popes and Princes of his day: he, therefore, employed himself in the pursuit of knowledge for the sake of attaining high rank and great wealth; knowledge was, accordingly, only so far pursued by him as it would be productive of money, and get him through the world in honour and affluence. Up to the age of twenty-six he had the run of, what was then considered,--when good manuscripts were uncommonly costly and very scarce,--a magnificent library of 800 volumes, that belonged to his veteran friend, Coluccio Salutati, Chancellor of the Republic of Florence; amid those stores of knowledge he courted the Muses ardently, all the while cultivating diligently the acquaintance of the leaders of society, uniting the character of the scholar with that of the man of the world, and becoming as accomplished in politeness and as profound in mastery of the human heart as in scholarship and learning;--qualities conspicuous in his acknowledged writings, no less than in that extraordinary masterpiece, the Annals of Tacitus.

Notwithstanding that the period in which he flourished was remarkable for its number of men, who, by their genius and learning revived the golden ages of ancient literature, he was admitted by all to be without his equal, be it in erudition or intellect, power of writing or intimacy with Latin. Guarino of Verona, in spite of the severity with which he was treated by him in his controversies, likens him, in one of his Epistles (Ep. Egreg. Viro Poggio Flor. 26 Maji 1455), to "the purest models of antiquity," and commends him for his "vigorous eloquence and encyclopaedic stores of information": "pristini socculi floret, et viget eloquentia, virtutisque thesaurus." Another of the best spirits of that age, Benedotto Accolti of Arezzo, in his work on the Eminent Men of his Time, puts him on a level with, if not superior to any of the ancient historians, Livy and Sallust alone excepted; for he says, "some of whom" (he is speaking, along with Bracciolini, of Bruni, Marsuppini, Guarino, Rossi, Manetti, and Traversari) "so wrote history, that, with the exception of Livy and Sallust, there were none of the ancients to whom they might not justly be considered as equal or superior"--"quorum aliqui ita historias conscripserunt, ut Livio et Sallustio exceptis, nulli veterum sint, quibus illi non pares aut superiores fuisse recte existimentur" (Benedict. Accoltus Arez. in Dial. de Praest. Viris sui aevi. Muratori. t. XX. p. 179). L'Enfant does not make this exception, for, speaking of Bracciolini's History of Florence, he says, that in "reading it one is reminded of Livy, Sallust and the best historians of antiquity":--"A lýgard de son Histoire, on ne sauroit le lire sans y reconnoýtre Tite Live, Salluste, et les meilleurs historiens de l'antiquitý" (Poggiana, Vol. II. p. 83). Sismondi, too, in the opening pages of the 8th volume of his "Histoire des Rýpubliques Italiennes du Moyen Age," says in a footnote (p. 5) that Bracciolini, in common with Leonardo Bruni and Coluccio Salutati carried off the palm as a Latin writer from all his predecessors in the fourteenth century:--"ý la fin du siýcle on vit paroitre Leonardo Bruni, dit d'Arýtin, Poggio Bracciolini, et Coluccio Salutati, qui devoient l'emporter, comme ýcrivains Latins, sur tous leurs prýdecesseurs." Although Sismondi is quite right as to the date when Bruni and Salutati flourished, he is altogether wrong in supposing that Bracciolini made an appearance before the public at any time in the fourteenth century; quite at the end of it he was only in his twentieth year: the next century had well advanced towards the close of its first quarter before (with the exception of some Epistles) he began to write, which was not until after he had passed his fortieth year.

Along with these superior merits of an intellectual writer thus freely accorded to him by some of his more distinguished contemporaries and by illustrious historians, Bracciolini possessed the plastic power that makes the forger. He wrote in a great variety of styles and manners; sometimes treating subjects with condensation, and sometimes with diffusiveness. His language is elevated and his sentences are rounded and smooth in his Funeral Orations, in which there is no inflation, nothing declamatory, a perfect absence of straining after effect, yet a rising with ease into veins of sublime rhetoric, while he is close, severe and antique:--hence the principal position that is given to him as an orator by Porcellio in a poem where Marsuppini is called upon to chaunt the praises of Ciriano of Ancona (see Tiraboschi, VI. 286): in ascribing to Marsuppini the place of honour, Porcellio leaves others who are inferior in verse-making to follow; such as, he says, "_the_ Orator Poggio, the sublime Vegio, and Flavio, the Historian":--

> Tuque, Aretine, prior, qui cantas laude poetam,
> Karole, sic jubeo, sit tibi primus honos.
> Post alii subeant: Orator Poggius ille,
> Vegius altiloquus, Flavius Historicus.

Then it would seem that, as Vegio and Biondo Flavio were, in the opinion of Porcellio, unsurpassed, the first, for the sublimity of his diction, and the second, by his historical writing, so Bracciolini was lifted by his oratory above all his contemporaries. Wit, polish, and keen sarcasm, with abundance of acute observations on the human character, distinguish his Essay on Hypocrisy, published at Cologne in 1535 by Orthuinus Gratius Daventriensis in his "Fasciculus Rerum Expetendarum et Fugiendarum." His Letters are written in an easy, agreeable style, with constant sportiveness and endless felicity of expression. In his Dialogues he is delicate, lively, and careful. Facility and happiness of diction are conspicuous in his "Description of the Ruins of the City of Rome," along with accuracy and picturesqueness in representation of objects. But whatever he did, all his writings (including the Annals), bear the stamp of one mind: they indicate alike the predominance of three powers exercised in an equal and uncommon degree, and without which no one can stand, as he does, on the loftiest pedestal of literary merit,--sensibility, imagination and judgment, working together like one compact, indivisible faculty.

In addition to this versatility in composition, which enabled him to imitate any writer, his career fitted him for the production of the Annals by instilling into his mind the peculiar principles of morals and behaviour which find apt illustration in that work. No one could have written that book who had not been admitted within the veil which hides the daily transactions of the great from the profane eyes of the vulgar; and who had not come into frequent personal contact with courts that were corrupt, and with princes, ministers and leading men of society who were objects of unqualified abhorrence.

III. Young Bracciolini who as the son of a notary of Florence in embarrassed circumstances, inherited no advantages of rank or fortune, when he had attained, at the age of 23, a competent knowledge of the learned languages under the instruction of Malpaghino, Chrysolaras [Endnote 136] and a Jewish Rabbi, made his first entry into life by receiving admission, perhaps,--it being the common custom in the fifteenth century,--by purchase, into the Pontifical Chancery as a writer of the Apostolic Letters. At that

early age the scene that opened itself to his eyes was calculated to destroy all faith in the goodness of human nature. He found in the occupant of St. Peter's Chair, in Boniface IX., a man, ambitious, avaricious, insincere in his dealings, and guilty of the most flagrant simony, bestowing all Church preferments upon the best bidder, without regard to merit or learning, and making it his study to enrich his family and relations.

Bracciolini did not come into the closest communion with the Popes till he became their Principal Secretary, which was when he was between forty and fifty years of age, Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, afterwards Pius II., stating in the 54th chapter of his History of Europe that he "dictated" (or caused to be written) "the Pontifical Letters during the time of three Popes";-"Poggium ... qui Secretarius Apostolicas tribus quondam Romanis Pontificibus dictarat Epistolas";--and though Aeneas Sylvius does not mention the names of the Pontiffs, he must have meant Martin V. (1417), Eugenius IV. (1431) and Nicholas V. (1447). Nevertheless, as one of the writers of the Apostolic Letters, Bracciolini was in a position to have seen a great deal that left a lasting impression on his mind of the wickedness of a corrupt court, the Papal one at this period being thus described by Leonardo Bruni, to Francis, Lord of Cortona:--"full of ill-designing people, too apt to suspect others of crimes, which they themselves would not scruple to commit, and some, out of love for calumny, taking delight in spreading reports, which they themselves did not credit"; so that when Innocent VII. died suddenly of apoplexy, the rumour gained belief that he had been poisoned, a violent death seeming quite a natural end to a life of leniency to murder.

Not one star of light shone across the long and dreary gloom of the papal court experiences of Bracciolini. On the deposition of Gregory XII. for that Pope's duplicity and share in the intrigues and dissensions which disgraced the Pontifical palace for three years, Bracciolini seems to have retired from Rome, and to have remained a resident in Florence during the greater part of the ten months' reign of the mild, pious and philosophical Alexander V., the only able and virtuous divine, who sat in those dark times on St. Peter's throne.

IV. For losing that one glimpse of light in public life, Bracciolini was more than compensated by a beam of beneficent Fortune in his private career, which threw such lustre on his path, that it rescued him from what must have been his inevitable fate, morbid cynicism: it was one of the happiest incidents that ever occurred to him:--he formed the acquaintance of a man, seventeen years his senior--who, in the lapse of a very short time, became to him a father and adviser, to whom present or absent he imparted every one of his schemes, thoughts, cares, sayings and doings; who was the unfailing allayer of his anxieties, alleviator of his sorrows, and most constant support of all his undertakings,--Niccolo Niccoli,--of whom I must take notice, as he was one of the most active stimulators of the forgery of the Annals.

Though by no means affluent, and frequently straitened in circumstances ("homo nequaquam opulens, et rerum persaepe inops," says Bracciolini of him, Or. Fun. III.), nevertheless, he made enough money, as well as possessed the munificent spirit to build at his own expense, and present to the Convent of the Holy Spirit in Florence an edifice in which to deposit the books bequeathed to the Brothers by Boccaccio; and, at his death, he left to the public in the same City his own manuscripts, which he had accumulated at great cost and with much pains. He was one of the

few laymen, not to be found out of Italy, who had learning and a knowledge of Latin, which he had acquired with that eminent scholar, philosopher and theologian, about half a dozen of whose works have come down to us, Ludovicus Marsilius; but learning and Latin were essential to the carrying on of his very pleasant and most lucrative occupation;--that of amending and collating manuscripts previous to their disposal for coin; a business, in which, we are told by Bracciolini, that he surpassed everybody in excessive expertness ("solertissimus omnium fuit in emendis ac comparandis libris fructuosissima ac pulcherrima omnium negotiatione," Or. in Fun. Nic. Nic.); we can, consequently, conceive what immense sums he must have received for manuscripts of the best ancient Greek and Roman classics, when properly spelt, correctly punctuated, and freed from errors.

His qualities, as enumerated by his friend, Bracciolini, in a most enthusiastic Funeral Oration over his remains (Pog. Op. 273-4), were such as to show, if there be no exaggeration in the description of him, that he was as much a wonder as any of the great Oracles of his age. His attainments were varied; his information extensive; his judgment sound, and to be relied upon, being given not for the mere sake of assent nor for flattery, but for what he believed to be true; "he got into a considerable sweat," says Bracciolini, "when he read Greek," ("in Graecis literis plurimum insudavit"), but was enabled to range over every department of literature in Latin, of which his knowledge was critical and most masterly, for the same authority assures us "not a word could be mentioned, the force and etymology of which he did not know"--"nullum proferebatur verbum cujus vim et originem ignoraret" in geography he stood without a rival; for, his memory, being like a vice, retaining everything he read, even to names, he knew the minutiae, of every country better than those who had been residents in them; though he rarely practised the art, he was a master of rhetoric; as a conversationist he held his company in entranced silence from the wisdom of his remarks, the dulcet flow of his words, and his transcendent memory bringing together from all quarters, with appropriateness to every subject under discussion, the valuable stock of his miscellaneous reading. Nothing could be more natural than that such a wonderful instance of the human intellect should court the congenial society of lovers of learning; he made his house the resort for them; and he placed at the disposal of the studious his library, which was the best in Florence, now that Salutati's, after his death, had been disposed of by his sons at auction.

Bracciolini was so struck by the attainments and captivated by the character of this man, that an acquaintance casually formed speedily ripened into an intimacy of the most confidential, cordial and communicative kind. Bracciolini, during his stay in Florence, was a guest in the house of Niccoli; and there, for nearly a year, he resumed and pursued his studies with ardour amid the rich stores of the large and select assortment of manuscripts, amounting to not far from a thousand in number. He was thus adding to the treasures of his lore with daily assiduity, when the news reached Florence that Cardinal Cossa had (notwithstanding the well-known virtues of Alexander V.) poisoned his predecessor, and had been elected to the pontifical chair by the title of John XXIII.

Behold Bracciolini once more in the palace of the Pontiffs of Rome; and now acting, in the capacity of Secretary, or, more properly, writer of the Apostolic Letters, to a Pope who was a poisoner. John XXIII. was even worse than that: he was a most atrocious violator of laws, human and divine; and some crimes he committed were so heinous that it would be indecent to place them

before the public. One can imagine how agreeable must have been the occupation to that Pope of a military rather than an ecclesiastic turn, and fonder of deeds of violence and bloodshed than of acts of meekness and Christianity, when he was presiding at Constance over that General Council, which sent to the stake those Bohemian followers of the Morning Star of the Reformation, Huss and Jerome of Prague, to be burnt alive, according to general belief, with their clothes and everything about them, even to their purses and the money in them, and their ashes to be thrown into the Rhine; but, as will be immediately seen, from the account of an eye-witness, in a state of perfect nudity.

V. Bracciolini, who witnessed the burning of Jerome of Prague, gives a description of it in one of his Epistles, in a manner equal to anything that may be found in the Annals;--indeed, many of his contemporaries thought that his Epistles reflected the style and spirit of antiquity,--Beccadelli of Bologna, for example, who says, writing to Bracciolini: "Your Epistles, which, in my opinion, reflect the very spirit of the ancients, and, especially, the antique style of Roman expression":--"Epistolae tuae, quae veterum sane, et antiquum illum eloquentiae Romanae morem, prae ceteris, mea sententia exprimunt" (at the end of Lusus ad Vencrem, p. 47). The style is simpler, more unambitious, and more flowing and smooth than is usually found in the Annals; but, (as in the descriptive passages in that work), free play is given to the fancy which works unclogged by verboseness; and judgment marks the circumstances in a description which progresses, apparently without art, to the close of the beautiful climax, and strongly moves the compassion of the reader:--"When he persisted with increased contumacy in his errors, he was condemned of heresy by the Council, and sentenced to be burnt alive. With an unruffled brow and cheerful countenance he went to his end; he was unawed by fire, or any kind of torture, or death. Never did any Stoic suffer death with a soul of so much fortitude and courage, as he seemed to meet it. When he came to the place of death, he stripped himself of his clothes, then dropping on his bended knees clasped the stake to which he was to be fastened: he was first bound naked to the stake with wet ropes, and then with a chain, after which not small, but large logs of wood with sticks thrown in among them were piled around him up to his breast; then when they were being set on fire he began to sing a sort of hymn, which the smoke and the flames hardly put a stop to. This was the greatest mark of his soul of fortitude: when the executioner wanted to light the fire behind his back, so that he should not see it, he called out, 'Come here, and set fire to it before my eyes; for if I had been afraid of it, I never should have come to this place, which it was in my power to have avoided.' Thus did this man, perish, who was excellent in everything but faith. I saw the end of him; I watched every scene of it. Whether he acted from conviction or contumacy, you would have pronounced his the death of a man who belonged to the school of philosophy. I have laid before you a long narrative for the sake of occupation; having nothing to do I wanted to do something, and give an account of things very different, indeed, from the stories of the ancients; for the famous Mutius did not suffer his arm to be burnt with a soul so bold, as this man his whole body; nor Socrates drink poison half so willingly as he endured burning."

I shall now place the passage before the reader in the Latin, as it was written by Bracciolini, with some words in Italics, upon which I shall afterwards comment:--

"_Cum pertinacius_ in erroribus perseveraret, per Concilium haeresis damnatus est, et _igni_ combustus. Jucunda fronte et

alacri vultu ad _exitum_ suum _accessit_, non _ignem_ expavit, non tormenti genus, non _mortis_. Nullus unquam Stoicorum fuit _tam constanti animo, tam_ forti _mortem_ perpessus, quam iste _oppetiisse_ videtur. _Cum_ venisset ad _locum mortis, se ipsum exuit vestimentis, tum_ procumbens, flexis genibus, veneratus est _palum_, ad quem ligatus fuit: primum funibus manentibus, _tum_ catena undus ad _palum_ constrictus fuit; ligna deinde circumposita pectore tenus non minuscula, sed grossa palaeis interjectis, _tum_ flamma adhibita canere coepit hymnum quendam, quem fumus et _ignis_ vix interrupit. Hoc maximum _constantis animi_ signum: _cum_ lector _ignem_ post tergum, ne id _videret_, injicere vellet: --'huc,' inquit, '_accede_, atque in conspectu accende _ignem_; si enim illum timuissem, nunquam ad hunc _locum_ quem effugiendi facultus erat, _accessissem_.' Hoc modo vir, praeter fidem, egregius, consumptus est. _Vidi_ hunc _exitum_, singulos _actus_ inspexi. Sive perfidia, sive _pertinacia_ id _egerit_, certe philosophiae schola interitum _viri_ descripsisses. Longam tibi cantilenam _narravi_ ocii causa, nihil _agens_ aliquid _agere_ volui, et res tibi _narrare_ paulum similes histories priscorum. Nam neque Mutius ille _tam_ fidenti _animo_ passus est membrum uri, quam iste universum corpus; neque Socrates _tam_ sponte venenum bibit, quam iste _ignem_ suscepit." [Endnote 145]

It will be seen, as a peculiarity in composition, that, in this not very long sentence, several words are re-introduced, and sometimes over and over again, when the repetition could have been avoided, as: "accedere," "agere," "videre," "narrare," "pertinacia," "constans," "animus," "mors," "exitus," "ignis," "vir," "locus," "palus," "cum," "tum," "tam," &c. As this runs through the whole of Bracciolini's compositions with much frequency, it is to be expected that it would be found to some extent in the Annals; because a man who so writes, writes thus unconsciously and unavoidably, and even when engaged in a forgery, striving to imitate the style and manner of another, he could not escape from so marked and distinctive a mannerism. Bracciolini, accordingly, is found adhering in the Annals to this uniformity of manner: many passages more forcibly illustrative of this peculiarity might be quoted; but I select the sham sea-fight in the XIIth book, for two reasons, because it is pretty much of the same length as the burning of Jerome of Prague, and because it is of a similar nature,--descriptive:--

"Sub idem _tempus_, inter _lacum_ Fucinum amnemque Lirin perrupto monte, quo magnificentia _operis_ a pluribus _viseretur, lacu_ in ipso navale _proelium_ adornatur; ut quondam Augustus, structo cis Tiberim stagno, sed levibus navigiis et minore copia _ediderat._ Claudius triremes quadriremesque et undeviginti hominum millia armavit, cincto _ratibus_ ambitu, ne vaga effugia forent; _ac_ tamen spatium amplexus, ad _vim_ remigii, gubernantium artes, impetus _navium_, et _proelio_ solita. In _ratibus_ praetoriarum cohortium manipuli turmaeque adstiterant, antepositis propugnaculis, ex quis catapultae ballistaeque tenderentur: reliqua _lacus_ classiarii tectis _navibus_ obtinebant. Ripas et colles, _ac_ montium _edita_, in modum theatri _multitudo_ innumera complevit _proximis_ e municipiis, et alii urbe ex ipsa, _visendi cupidine_ aut officio in _principem_. Ipse insigni paludamento, neque procul Agrippina chlamyde aurata, praesedere. _Pugnatum_, quamquam inter sontes, fortium virorum animo; _ac_, post multum vulnerum, occidioni exempti sunt. Sed perfecto _spectaculo_ apertum _aquarum_ iter. Incuria _operis_ manifesta fuit, haud satis depressi ad _lacus_ ima vel media. Eoque, _tempore_ interjecto, altius effossi specus, et contrahendae rursus _multitudini_ gladiatorum _spectaculum editur_, inditis pontibus pedestrem ad _pugnam_. Quin et convivium effluvio _lacus_ adpositum, magna formidine cunctos adfecit; quia _vis aquarum_

prorumpens _proxima_ trahebat, convulsis ulterioribus, aut fragore et sonitu exterritis. Simul Agrippina, trepidatione _principis_ usa, ministrum _operis_ Narcissum incusat _Cupidinis ac_ praedarum. Nec ille reticet, impotentiam muliebrem nimiasque spes ejus arguens." (An. XII. 56-7).

In this passage it will be observed that the same thing takes place in the repetition of words:--"lacus," "ratis," "vis," "navis," "ac," "multitudo," "Cupido," "princeps," "tempus," "spectaculum," "edere," "proelium," "visere," "proximus," "aqua," "opus" and "pugna." The conjunctive particle "ac," is more particularly to be noted as an out of the way word for the ordinary copulative "et": "_ac_ tamen spatium amplexus"; "_ac_ montium edita"; "_ac_ post multum vulnerum," occurring so frequently in such a brief sentence is just like the monotony of composition in the extract from Bracciolini with respect to "cum": "_cum_ pertinacius in erroribus perseveraret"; "_cum_ venisset ad locum mortis"; "_cum_ lictor ignem post tergum," &c.

But this is not all as to the resemblance which the passage from Bracciolini bears to the writing in the Annals. The expression "quam iste _oppetiise_," i.e. mortem, "videtur," has its exact counterpart in the Second Book of the Annals in the phrase: "vix cohibuere amici, quo minus eodem mari _oppeteret_," i.e. mortem (II. 24). When, too, Bracciolini says of Jerome of Prague, "_se ipsum exuit_ vestimentis," "_strips himself_ of his clothes," instead of simply, "takes off his clothes,"--"exuit vestimenta,"--we have an expression precisely like that in the Annals, "_neutrum_ datis a se praemiis _exuit_," that is, "_strips neither_ of the rewards which he had given him" (XIV. 55), instead of "takes away the rewards,"--"praemia exuit."

But I will go by-and-bye more fully into matters of this kind. At present it is necessary that I should still pursue the career of Bracciolini,--or rather so much of it as is absolutely needed, in order that the reader may see how curiously it prepared and formed him to be the author of such a peculiar work as the Annals, which in its characteristic singularity, could have proceeded from him only, and by no manner of means from Tacitus.

CHAPTER II.

BRACCIOLINI IN LONDON.

Gaining insight into the darkest passions from associating with Cardinal Beaufort.--II. His passage about London in the Fourteenth Book of the Annals examined.--And III. About the Parliament of England in the Fourth Book.

I. In the autumn of 1418, after the breaking up of the Council of Constance, Bracciolini left Italy and accompanied to England a member of the Plantagenet family, the second son of John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, Henry Beaufort, whose placid and beardless face the great Florentine seems to have first seen at the Ecumenical Council which that princely prelate had turned aside to visit in the course of a pilgrimage he was making to Jerusalem. Henry Beaufort was then Bishop of Winchester, but afterwards a Cardinal, and though there was another Prince of the Roman Church, Kemp, Archbishop of York and subsequently of Canterbury, Beaufort was always styled by the popular voice and in public acts "The Cardinal of England," on account, perhaps, of his Royal parentage and large wealth, more enormous than had been known since the days of the De Spencers: he had lands in manors, farms, chaces, parks and warrens in seven counties, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire,

Oxfordshire, Wiltshire, Somersetshire, Hampshire and Surrey, besides having the Customs of England mortgaged to him, and the cocket of the Port of Southampton with its dependencies,--an indebtedness of the State which is so far interesting as being the foundation of our National Debt.

Bracciolini had now an opportunity of watching and unravelling the wiles of this august prelate and patron of his; he thus gained still more insight into the ways of the worldly and the feelings of the ambitious; acquired a masterly knowledge of the dark passions and became versed in the crooked policy of court intrigue. He had quitted provinces at home laid waste by hostile invasions and cities agitated by the discord of contending parties; Genoa sending warships to ravage in the Mediterranean, Venice reducing to subjection the smaller States along the Adriatic, and Florence warring with Pisa, still to fix his eyes on darkness and the degradation of humanity; for he was visiting a country,--as England was in the fifteenth century,--buried in the gloom of barbarism, and forlorn in its literary condition, with writers, unworthy the name of scholars, Walsingham and Whethamstede, Otterbourne and Elmham, inditing bald chronicles; students applying their minds to scholastic philosophy; divines confounding their wits with theological mysteries; and men with inclinations to science, as Thomas Northfield, losing themselves in witchcraft, divination and the barbarous jargon of astrology, while rendering themselves, at any moment, liable to be apprehended by order of the doctors and notaries who formed the Board of Commissioners for the discovery of magicians, enchanters and sorcerers; for it was the age when invention framed the lie of the day, the marvellous military leadership of Joan of Arc, and credulity stood as ready to receive it as little boys in nurseries the wondrous tale of Jack and the Beanstalk. Through this mist the figure of Cardinal Beaufort loomed largest, unsociable, disdainful, avaricious, immeasurably high-stomached (for he deemed himself on an equality with the king); and, in spite of immoderate riches, inordinately mean: along with these unamiable qualities, he upheld the policy of Martin V., which was to destroy the independence of the National Church of England: he was treacherous to his associates, and murderous thoughts were not strangers to his bosom.

Bishop Milner, in his History of Winchester under the Plantagenets (Vol. I. p. 301), denies that there is solid ground in history for representing Beaufort as depraved, and condemns Shakespeare for having endowed Humphry, Duke of Gloucester, with merit of which he deprived the memory of Cardinal Beaufort. The late Dean Hook, too, in his elegantly written life of Archbishop Chicheley (p. 97) is of opinion that Beaufort "has appeared in history with his character drawn in darker colours than it deserves." Those two distinguished dignitaries, one of the Roman Catholic and the other of the English Church, do not then seem to have heard of the anecdote related by Agnes Strickland, in her Life of Katherine of Valois (p. 114), that Henry V., when Prince of Wales, was narrowly saved from murder by the fidelity of his little spaniel, whose restlessness caused the discovery of a man who was concealed behind the arras near the bed where the Prince was sleeping in the Green Chamber in the Palace at Westminster, and a dagger being found on the person of the intruder, he confessed that he was there by the order of Beaufort to kill the Prince in the night, showing that the Cardinal was guilty of a double treachery, for he was setting on the heir-apparent at the time to seize his father's crown; nor do Milner and Hook seem to have known that the death of the Duke of Gloucester was principally contrived by Wykeham's successor in the See of Winchester, and that, whether poisoned or

not, the Duke was hurried out of the world in a very suspicious manner, one of the first acts of Margaret of Anjou after her coronation being, in conjunction with the Wintonian diocesan to bring about the death of that Prince after arresting him in a Parliament called for the purpose at St. Edmund's Bury; Shakespeare, accordingly, had historic truth with him, when he represented the Cardinal suffering on his death-bed the tortures of a murderer's guilty conscience, from being implicated in taking away by violence the life of Humphry, Duke of Gloucester:--

"Alive again! Then show me where he is,
I'll give a thousand pound to look upon him.
He hath no eyes, the dust hath blinded them.
Comb down his hair. Look, look! it stands upright
Like lime twigs set to catch my winged soul.
Give me some drink; and bid the apothecary
Bring the strong poison that I bought of him":--

to which a looker-on observes:--

"O! thou Eternal Mover of the Heavens,
Look with a gentle eye upon this wretch."

It could have been with no gentle eye that Bracciolini looked on Cardinal Beaufort, whose "bad death," as Shakespeare makes the Earl of Warwick observe, "argued a monstrous life."

Repeatedly in letters to his friend Niccoli, during two years and more of anxiety and discontent passed by him from 1420 to 1422 in the Palace of the Prince Prelate, Bracciolini complained bitterly of the magnificent promises not being fulfilled that the Cardinal had held forth to him on condition of his accompanying him to England. In vain he looked forward to considerable emolument; day after day he found himself doomed to the common lot of those who depend on the patronage of the great;--"in suing long to bide":--

"To lose good days that might be better spent;
To waste long nights in pensive discontent;
To speed to-day, to be put back to-morrow;
To feed on hope; to pine on fear and sorrow;
To fret the soul with crosses and with cares;
To eat the heart through comfortless despairs;
To fawn, to crouch, to wait, to ride, to run,
To spend, to give, to want, to be undone."

And, really, Bracciolini may be said to have been "undone"; for when he got what he had bargained to purchase, the frivolous goodwill of his master, it was, as he expressed it, "the birth of the mouse after the labour of the mountain": he obtained a benefice of 120 florins a year, with what he did not anticipate would be attached to it,--hard work.

In order to have a precise and not a vague and confused idea of the galling effect produced on his feelings by this offer, it is necessary to turn to two paragraphs (37, 38), in the Second Book of the Annals;--for I cannot divest myself of the suspicion that this incident in his life is there indirectly referred to, where an account is given that has no historical basis of the "nobilis juvenis, in paupertate manifesta," Marcus Hortalus, whose noble parentage and straightened circumstances closely corresponded to the birth and means of Bracciolini. When seeking recompense from Tiberius for his four sons, he calls on the Emperor to behold in them "the scions and offspring of what a multitude of consuls! what a multitude of dictators! which he says not to mortify, but

to excite commiseration."--"En! stirps et progenies tot consulum! tot dictatorum! nec ad invidiam ista, sed conciliandae misericordiae refero;" commenting on which Justus Lipsius bursts into the angry exclamation: "What a braggart, lying speech on this man's part! For where was this multitude of consuls, this multitude of dictators? Why, I can find only one dictator and one consul in the Hortensian family; the dictator in the year of Rome, 467, when the Commons revolted; and the Consul, Quintus Hortensius, the grandfather of the speaker,--who, perhaps, however, reckoned in the ancestors also in his mother's line": --"Vaniloqua hominis oratio et falsa! Ubi enim isti tot consules, tot dictatores? Certe ego in Hortensia gente unum, dictatorem reperio, et Consulem unum; dictatorem anno urbis 467 secessione plebis; consulem, Q. Hortensium hujus avum. Sed intellegit fortasse majores suos etiam ex gente materna."

Lipsius would have spared himself the trouble of inditing this indignant note and throwing out this useless suggestion had he known that Bracciolini forged the Annals, and playfully interspersed his fabrication occasionally with fanciful characters and fictitious events. The picture of Marcus Hortalus, who had received from Augustus the munificent gift of a million sesterces, being in the days of Tiberius once more poor, married, with children, and seeking aid from the State for his four sons, seems to be all purely imaginary, introduced merely as a photograph from life, the feelings and conduct of Hortalus, after the treatment of his sons by Tiberius, being such a faithful reflex, as far as can be judged from his own confessions, of the feelings and conduct of Bracciolini himself after the way in which his hopes of preferment were blasted by Cardinal Beaufort. Just as Hortalus, if he had been left to himself, would have remained a bachelor, and only from pressure on the part of Augustus, became a husband, and, while incapable of supporting children, a father, so Bracciolini would have remained in Italy and never visited this country, had it not been for the importunities of the Cardinal, and never turned his thoughts to preferment in the Church, which he is invariably telling us he disliked, had not Beaufort given assurance that he would put him in the way of holding some high and lucrative post in England; and then when he received a paltry benefice, instead of expressing thanks like the other dependents on the Prince Prelate, he was silent, from fear of the power possessed by Beaufort, or from retaining even in his contracted fortunes the politeness which he had inherited from his noble forefathers:--"egere alii grates; siluit Hortalus, pavore, an avitae nobilitatis, etiam inter angustias fortunae, retinens" (An. II. 38).

II. We are indebted to Bracciolini's stay among us for one or two matters that are interesting about our country. His two years' residence here filled him with a marked admiration of London as well as with the most confused ideas of the antiquity and greatness of its commerce; and though comments have already been made on his description of it as eminently absurd, the passage is too curious not to be examined again; the more so as it has misled good historians of London, who believing that the account actually proceeded from Tacitus, have taken it to be incontrovertibly true, whereas it is only true, if it be applied, as it is applicable only to the advanced state of society and the large commercial town of which Bracciolini was the eye witness towards the close of the reign of Henry V., and the commencement of that of his infant son and successor. The slightest investigation will carry conviction of this.

A hundred years before the birth of Tacitus, Britain was so

monstrously barbarous and obscure, that Julius Caesar, when wanting to invade it and wishing for information of its state and circumstances, could not gain that knowledge, because, as he tells us, "scarcely anybody but merchants visited Britain in those times, and no part of it, except the seacoast and the provinces opposite Gaul": ("neque enim temere praeter mercatores illo adiit quisquam, neque iis ipsis quidquam, praeter oram maritimam, atque eas regiones, quae sunt contra Gallias." (Caesar De Bell. Gall. IV. 20). From this we see that, in the middle of the century before the Christian era, the only trade with Britain was then confined to the shores, and the southern parts, from Kent to Cornwall: it is then, against every probability that, in a period extending over no more than about a hundred years, this trade should have extended up the navigable rivers and have reached London enough for it to have risen up, by the year 60 of our era, into an immense emporium and be known all over the world for its enormous commerce. That this was not the case we know from Strabo, who lived in the time of Augustus, and who, though saying a great deal about our island and its trade, has not a word about London, howbeit that the author of the Annals does record in his work that it was exceedingly famous for the number of the merchants who frequented it and the extent of its commerce; but it is not likely that it was so, if the whole island did no more trade than Strabo informs us, the articles exported from all Britain being insignificant and few;--corn and cattle; such metals as gold, silver, tin, lead and iron; slaves and hunting dogs (Strabo III. 2. 9.--ib. 5. 11.--IV. 5. 2), which Oppian says were beagles. Musgrave, in his Belgicum Britannicum adds "cheese," from some wretched authority, for Strabo says that the natives at that time were as ignorant of the art of making cheese, as of gardening and every kind of husbandry:--[Greek: "Mae turopoiein dia taen apeirian, apeirous d'einai kai kaepeias kai allon georgikon."] (IV. 5. 2).

The statement, then, that London had the very greatest reputation for the number of its merchants and commodities of trade in Nero's time is utterly unfounded--nothing more nor less than outrageously absurd; the picture, however, is quite true if London be considered at the time when Bracciolini was here. Its merchants then carried on a considerable trade with a number of foreign countries, to an extent far greater, and protected by commercial treaties much more numerous than previous to investigation I could have been led to suppose. The foreign merchants who principally came to the Port of London were those of Majorca, Sicily, and the other islands in the Mediterranean; the western parts of Morocco; Venice, Genoa, Florence and the other cities of Italy; Spain and Portugal; the subjects of the Duke of Brabant, Lorraine and Luxemburgh; of the Duke of Brittany, and of the Duke of Holland, Zealand, Hanneau and Friesland; the traders of the great manufacturing towns of Flanders; of the Hanse Towns of Germany, 64 in number, situated on the shores of the Baltic, the banks of the Rhine, and the other navigable rivers of Germany; the people of the great seaport towns of Prussia and Livonia, then subject to the Grand Master of the Teutonic Order of Knights, along with the traders of Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Iceland.

In addition to these bringing their goods here in their own bottoms, a great number of other foreign merchants were established in London for managing the trade of their respective States and Cities, performing, in fact, the duties now attached to the office of Consul, first instituted by the maligned but enlightened Richard III. These foreign merchants being as powerful as they were numerous, formed themselves into Companies: independently of the German merchants of the Steel Yard, there were the Companies of the Lombards; the Caursini of Rome; the

Peruchi, Scaldi, Friscobaldi and Bardi of Florence, and the Ballardi and Reisardi of Lucca. The Government protected them, and, as they were viewed with intense jealousy by the native traders, they were judged, in all disputes, not by the common law, but the merchant law, which was administered by the Mayor and Constables; and of the mediators in these disputes, two only were native, four being foreigners, two Germans and two Italians.

The Londoners had made prodigious advances upon their forefathers in the commodities of merchandize in which they dealt. Their most valuable articles of exportation were wool and woollen clothes in great varieties and great quantity; corn; metals, particularly lead and tin; herrings from Yarmouth and Norfolk; salmon, salt, cheese, honey, wax, tallow, and several articles of smaller value. But their great trade was in foreign imports and that was entirely in the hands of foreign merchants who came here in shoals, bringing with them their gold and silver, in coin and bullion; different kinds of wines from the finest provinces in the south of France, and from Spain and Portugal; also from the two last countries (to enter into a nomenclature that's like the catalogue of an auctioneer for monotony of names and unconnectedness of things), figs, raisins, dates, oils, soap, wax, wool, liquorice, iron, wadmote, goat-fell, red-fell, saffron and quicksilver; wine, salt, linen and canvas from Brittany; corn, hemp, flax, tar, pitch, wax, osmond, iron, steel, copper, pelfry, thread, fustian, buckram, canvas, boards, bow-staves and wool-cards from Germany and Prussia; coffee, silk, oil, woad, black pepper, rock alum, gold and cloth of gold from Genoa; spices of all kinds, sweet wines and grocery wares, sugar and drugs, from Venice, Florence and the other Italian States; gold and other precious stones from Egypt and Arabia; oil of palm from the countries about Babylon; frankincense from Arabia; spiceries, drugs, aromatics of various kinds, silks and other fine fabrics from Turkey, India and other Oriental lands; silks from the manufactories established in Sicily, Spain, Majorca and Ivica; linen and woollen cloths of the finest texture and the most delicate colours from the looms of Flanders for the use of persons of high rank; the tapestries of Arras; and furs of various kinds and in great quantities from Russia, Norway and other northern countries. The native merchants of London, the Anglo-Saxons and Anglo-Normans, carried on an enormous inland trade. They supplied all parts of the kingdom with corn from the many granaries which filled the City of London. There was a constant buying and selling of live horned cattle and sheep. Trade was great among goldsmiths, jewellers, gilders, embroiderers, illuminators and painters; and makers of all kinds of commodities sent their goods from every part of the provinces, knowing that they were wanted and would meet with immediate purchasers.

If those were the days when Florence had its Cosmo de' Medici, who spent millions of florins in building palaces, churches and charitable foundations to beautify his native town; and when Bourges had its Jean Coeur who was rich enough to furnish Lewis VII. with sufficient gold crowns to support the armies with which that monarch recovered his possessions from the English, London, too, had its Hende, Whittington and Norbury affluent and magnificent enough to lend their sovereign immense sums of money, and adorn the city in which they had amassed their stupendous fortunes with useful and ornamental buildings--Bridewells, Colleges, Hospitals, Guildhalls and Public Libraries. Well might Bracciolini, without the slightest particle of exaggeration, say of London, as he saw it, that it was "COPIA negotiatorum et commeatuum MAXIME CELEBRE" (An. XIV. 33).

In leaving this passage I cannot help remarking that the expression, "copia negotiatorum et commeatuum," has a turn that is frequently found in the Annals; it is a cast of phrase not affected by Tacitus; but it is exactly the manner of arranging words in a sentence to which Sallust is partial: "frequentiam negotiatorum et commeatuum," he says in his "Jugurtha" (47); it is obvious that in this passage Sallust means by "commeatuus," "supplies of corn and provisions," as it is equally obvious that Bracciolini (though following the phraseology of his favourite Latin author,) gives it, in the sentence quoted from the Fourteenth Book of the Annals, a wider meaning, "commodities of merchandize."

III. If Bracciolini erred with respect to London, in magnifying it into a town of superlative commercial splendour in the days of Nero, which, I repeat, is wildly ridiculous, he more grossly erred with respect to our form of government; for when he decried it, and prophesied its decadence and downfall, his sagacity and judgment were impugned.

When he was here our country was in the infancy of its example as a land ruled by the most admirable political arrangements. It can readily be believed with what interest and surprise the proud Italian, who had seen nothing of the kind in his own land of high civilization, must have witnessed our parliaments regularly meeting, as had been the case for generations, since the reign of Edward I. in 1293, knights and burgesses popularly elected by the inhabitants of the counties and boroughs sitting in council with the king, surrounded by his barons and bishops, priors who were peers and abbots who had mitres. With an outspoken contempt of England, and an overweening admiration of Italy, he avails himself of an opportunity of sneering covertly at our harmonious combination of the three forms of government, the monarchy, the oligarchy and the republic.

It is scarcely necessary to say that, as reference is made to the English Parliament, the editors of Tacitus have all been puzzled as to the meaning of the phrase, "delecta ex his et consociata," in the following passage, where the author of the Annals speaks of "the commonalty, or the aristocracy, or a monarch ruling every nation and community"; and that "a form of government based on a SELECTION AND CONJUNCTION OF THESE is easier praised than realised; or if it is realized, cannot last":--"cunctas nationes et urbes populus, aut primores, aut singuli regunt: DELECTA EX HIS ET CONSOCIATA reipublicae forma laudari facilius, quam evenire; vel si evenit, haud diuturna esse potest" (IV. 33). Now the phrase, "delecta ex his," selected from these, that is, the monarchy, the oligarchy and the republic, and meaning that the selections were of all the excellences and none of the faults of each, is in every way applicable to only one form of government,--our Parliamentary government, which is at once legislative and executive, and, as it is now, it almost was in the days when Bracciolini was on a visit to us in the opening days of the infant king, Henry VI. Then not only was the "populus," or "commonalty," represented by knights, citizens and burgesses of their own choosing; but the "primores," or "aristocracy," had their representatives also in the larger barons, bishops, priors who were peers and mitred abbots; priors who were not peers, and abbots who had not mitres, as well as many of the smaller barons, not receiving writs of summons: the king himself, being an infant at the breast, had his representative, the "selection" being from his own family, in the person of his uncle Humphry, Duke of Gloucester, who was his substitute in the Parliament as the Protector or Regent; and even when the king was an adult, and

absent in wars, as Edward I. when engaged in the conquest of Wales, he was represented in Parliament by Commissioners, as our sovereign is to this day.

But Bracciolini not only said that the selections were from the monarchic, aristocratic and popular elements, but that they were "associated" or "conjoined"--"consociata." Here all the editors of Tacitus by their silence or otherwise fairly admit that the passage is utterly beyond their comprehension,--"one of those things," in fact, "which," in the words of Lord Dundreary, "no fellow is supposed to understand." As for the word, "consociata," James Gronovius was of opinion that Tacitus must have written "concinnata"; but not having the boldness, after the fashion of Justus Lipsius of making alterations, according to his own sweet pleasure, without the authority of manuscript or edition, he followed Beroaldi, who, as much puzzled as any of the subsequent editors, had substituted "constituta" for the nonsensical word in the blundering MS. "consciata," though common sense should have told him that "consociata" was meant, it being evident that the transcriber, infinitely more puzzled than the editors, for he could not have had the remotest conception of what he was doing, had merely omitted a vowel in his usual careless way. It was not till Ernesti's time, 1772, that the proper word was restored. Ernesti, too, fancied that he had discovered something in the Roman government, according to the description by Polybius, which justified the language in the Annals. "I have no doubt," he says, "but that Tacitus had in his mind (along with other historians) Polybius, who, in the 9th and following chapters of the 6th book of his History, praises the Roman Republic for combining the excellences of all the three forms of government, while avoiding the faults of each, and he speaks of that system of government as being alone perfect which is compounded of these three." "Neque dubito, Tacitum in animo habuisse cum alios historicos, tum Polybium qui 6. 9 sqq. rempublicam romanam laudat hoc nomine, quod omnium illarum trium formarum commoda complexa sit, vitatis singularum vitiis, eamque solam rempublicam perfectam esse dicit, quae sit e tribus istis temperata."

Let us then see exactly what it is that Polybius does say. After speaking of a balance between the three forms of government in the Roman administration being so fine that it was no easy matter to decide whether the government was aristocratic, democratic or monarchical (VI. 11), he proceeds to point out the several powers appropriated to each branch of the constitution;--the apparently regal rule of the Consuls, the aristocratic authority of the Senate, and the share taken by the people in the administration of affairs (_ibid._ 12, 13, 14). This done, his endeavour is to show not that there was any "selection and conjunction" as stated in the Annals, of the several forms, but quite on the contrary, "counteraction and co-operation": to this he devotes an entire chapter, with these remarks by way of preface:--"With respect, then, to the several parts into which the government is divided, the nature of every one of them has been shown; and it now remains to be pointed out how each of these forms is enabled to COUNTERACT the others, and how, on the other hand, it can CO-OPERATE with them:--[Greek: "Tina men oun tropon diaergaetai ta taes politeias eis ekaston eidos, eirgaetai tina de tropon ANTIPRATTEIN boulaethenta, kai SYNERGEIN allaelois palin hekasta ton mergan dunatai, nun phaethaesetai."] (VI. 15.)

After this, it cannot be supposed that reference is made to the Commonwealth of Rome. Still less so, when, in the very next sentence the author of the Annals attempts to show that an equally blended administration cannot endure, because of the example

afforded by Rome (proving how well he knew that the Romans had mixed together in their government the elements of the three forms); he says, that when the Plebeians had the principal power, there was submission to the will of the populace; when the Patricians held the sway, the wishes of the aristocratic section of the community were consulted; and when Rome had her emperors, the people fared no better than during the reign of the kings: here are his words:--"Therefore as in the olden time" (during the Republic), "when the plebeians were paramount, or when the patricians were superior in power," (in the first instance) "the whim of the populace was ascertained and the way in which their humour was to be dealt with, and" (in the second instance) "those persons were accounted astute in their generation and wise who made themselves thoroughly conversant with the disposition of the Senate and the aristocracy; then when a change took place in the Government" (from the Republic to the Empire), "there was the same state of things as when a King was the ruler":--"Igitur, ut olim, plebe valida, vel cum patres pollerent, noscenda vulgi natura et quibus modis temperanter haberetur, senatusque et optimatium ingenia qui maxime perdidicerant, callidi temporum et sapientes credebantur; sic, converso statu, neque alia rerum quam si unus imperitet." (l.c.)

What he is striving in his usual dark way to establish is this:-- Here was the failure of the Roman form of administration; the Romans were the most accomplished people in the art of government; the English, who are semi-barbarous, can know nothing about government; it is then idle on their part to imagine that they are endowed with such a vast amount of political knowledge as to be qualified by their own reflections alone to build up a new and magnificent form of government; when, too, that form of government is essentially different from our superb oligarchies in Italy, the most civilized and cultivated part of the world in everything, especially politics; the English style of government is, also, strictly based on the old Roman mode of administration, and when that failed, how can any sensible man deem that the English method of administration will ever work successfully. Hence his remarks: "raking up and relating this," (namely, how the Roman government never worked well at any time,) "will be of benefit," (to whom? forsooth, the English,) "because few" (in matters of statesmanship), "by their own sagacity distinguish the good from the very bad, the practicable from the pernicious; the many gain their wisdom from the acts of others; yet as examples bring benefit so do they meet least with a probation." If that be not the meaning of his words, then they must remain, as in all translations, without meaning. Yet the Latin, crabbed as it is, (and it is always crabbed in the Annals), seems to me to be simple enough:--"haec conquiri tradique in rem fuerit; quia pauci prudentia honesta ab deterioribus, utilia ab noxiis, discernunt; plures aliorum eventis docentur; ceterum ut profutura ita minimum oblectationis adferunt" (l.c.).

That he does not mean the Roman form of government is further seen by his remark that the kind of administration spoken of is "easier to be commended than _realized_"--"laudari facilius, quam _evenire_"; just as it is easy to see from his language that he has before him an instance of some government framed like that which he says will not exist for any length of time; for whenever he employs the hypothetical particle, "_si_" about anything that is absolute and beyond doubt, he always uses it with the indicative and not the conditional. As he then writes, "si _evenit_," (not "si _eveniat_"), "if it _is_ realized," (not "if it _be_ realized,") he really has in his mind some State constituted according to his description.

It should now be borne in mind that he was in this country before

he forged the Annals, and was in the household of Cardinal Beaufort, who had repeatedly filled the office of Chancellor, on whom devolved the duty of issuing the writs to the members of the Parliament, Commoners as well as Peers; for that great officer the Speaker, was not yet invested with the authority so to do with respect to the Lower House; not only, then, had Bracciolini heard of the English Parliament, but the precise nature of it must have come frequently under his cognizance. In fact, it was no other than the English Parliament to which he refers.

That being accepted, there were several reasons to induce him to doubt the durability of our Parliament: the Crown possessed too great power in those assemblies: it was with difficulty that the great barons could be got to attend, their delight being to reside at their castles in the country, and take no part in political affairs; it was also difficult to get the representatives of the counties and boroughs to attend, on account of the long distances that many had to come, and the great expenses of their attendance; sometimes in a county the properly qualified person,--an actual knight,--could not be found, and there was no representative from a county, until upwards of twenty years after Bracciolini had left us, when esquires and gentlemen could be returned; sometimes a city or borough would not send a member, either by pleading poverty in not being able to pay the wages of the two representatives, or from not finding among their townsmen two burgesses with the qualifications required by the writ, that is, sufficiently hale to bear the fatigue of the journey, and sufficiently sensible to discharge the duties of close attendance on Parliament; for every member was then required to be present at the Parliament; hence each small freeholder from a county and each burgess had to find three or four persons of credit to be sureties for him that he would attend; and the constituents of each were forced to bear the cost of his attendance.

In addition to these difficulties there were other drawbacks that seemed to threaten a speedy termination to these Parliaments. The session was very short; the business was prepared beforehand, the laws being drawn up by the bishops, earls, barons, justices, and others who formed the king's council; and several statutes and laws were thus hastily and ill considered.

In spite of all these excuses for Bracciolini, experience has proved that his observation was shallow; and it is possible that, with his profound insight into the human mind, he might not have made it had he gone deeply into English character; but it seems that he deemed it unworthy of his study, England being "a country, which," as he says, "he did not like at all,"--"hujus patriae, quam parum diligo" (Ep. I. 2). With such an aversion to us it is no wonder that he had no faith in the continuance of our Parliament, for no stronger reason, probably, than that it was an English institution; but had he foreseen its durability he would have been a greater wonder than he was from having his eyes more fully opened than were the eyes of any man at that period to the rare qualities possessed by Englishmen; their unpretending magnanimity; their fine talents for business; their keen views in policy; the great things they had done in the arts of peace and war, as well as their capability of continuing to accomplish still greater achievements in both; the solidity of their understandings and their reflective spirits, which, when directed and applied to political schemes, devise and consummate sound and lasting reforms of the State.

CHAPTER III.

BRACCIOLINI SETTING ABOUT THE FORGERY OF THE ANNALS.

I. The Proposal made in February, 1422, by a Florentine, named Lamberteschi, and backed by Niccoli.--II. Correspondence on the matter, and Mr. Shepherd's view that it referred to a Professorship refuted.--III. Professional disappointments in England determine Bracciolini to persevere in his intention of forging the Annals.--IV. He returns to the Papal Secretaryship, and begins the forgery in Rome in October, 1423.

I. About this period Bracciolini commenced the forgery of the Annals. In noticing the preliminary steps to that fabrication, and then glancing back at a few circumstances peculiar to his age, while touching upon some incidents hitherto passed over in his biography, we shall have all the necessary lights and shades in his life that will be of use to us in the maintenance and illustration of our theory.

Although he received in exchange for the living of 120 florins a year another of the annual worth of ý40 with slighter duties attached to it, he still continued to express dissatisfaction at his fortunes, and desire a sinecure canonry in England that would enable him to live in literary ease at home. When, however, an alternative was presented to him of returning to the Pontifical Secretariate, through the intercession of one of his powerful Italian friends, Cardinal Adimari, Archbishop of Pisa, he rudely scouted the overture upon these grounds: that he would "rather be a free man than a public slave"; that he had "a smaller opinion of the Papacy and its limbs than the world believed"; that "if he had thought as highly of the Secretaryship to the Pope, as many did, he would long before have gone back to it; and that if he lost everything, from what he now had, he would not want."--"Video quae Cardinalis Pisanus scribit de Secretariatu. Sane si ego illud officium tantum existimarem, quantum nonnulli, ego jamdudum istuc rediissem: sed si omnia deficerent, hoc quod nunc habeo, non deerit mihi. Ego minus existimo et Pontificatum et ejus membra quam credunt. Cupio enim liber esse, non publicus servus" (Ep. I. 17).

Just as he was in this bad humour, disgusted with his patron and the world, and in the most cynical of moods, a proposal reached him from Florence, which, as set forth to view by himself in communications to his friend Niccoli, is so dimly disclosed as to be capable of two interpretations: The Rev. William Shepherd in his Life of him understands his ambiguous terms as having reference to a professorship, the words of Mr. Shepherd being:

--"Piero Lamberteschi ... offered him a situation, _the nature of which is not precisely known_, but which was probably that of public professor in one of the Italian Universities" (Life of Poggio Bracciolini, p. 138). Now I conceive, and shall attempt to prove that the proposal was not about a "situation," but to forge additional books to the hopelessly lost History of Tacitus.

Niccolo Niccoli seems to have been at the bottom of the business; at any rate, he appears to have advised his bosom friend to undertake the task; for Bracciolini says that he "thinks he will follow his advice, while writing to him from the London Palace of Cardinal Beaufort, in a letter dated the 22nd of February, 1422, respecting "a suggestion" and "an offer" made by his fellow-countryman, Piero Lamberteschi, who, he says, "will endeavour to procure for me in three years 500 gold sequins. If he will make it 600, I will at once close with his proposal. He holds forth sanguine hopes about several future profitable contingencies,

which, I am inclined to believe, may probably be realized; yet it is more prudent to covenant for something certain than to depend on hope alone." "Placent mihi quae Pierus imaginatur, quaeque offert; et ego, ut puto, sequar consilium vestrum. Scribit mihi se daturum operam, ut habeam triennio quingentos aureos: fient sexcenti, et acquiescam. Proponit spem magnam plurium rerum, quam licet existimem futuram veram, tamen aliquid certum pacisci satius est, quam ex sola spe pendere" (Ep. I. 17).

Speaking further on in the letter about Lamberteschi, he says: "I like the occupation to which he has invited me, and hope I shall be able to produce something WORTH READING; but for this purpose, as I tell him in my letters, I require the retirement and leisure that are necessary for literary work." "Placet mihi occupatio, ad quam me hortatur, et spero me nonnihil effecturum DIGNUM LECTIONE; sed, ut ad eum scribo, ad haec est opus quiete et otio literarum."

II. The expression of his hope that he would "produce something worth reading," and the mention of his want, in order that he should accomplish what was required of him, "retirement and leisure for literary work," quite set at rest Mr. Shepherd's theory that the proposal had reference to a Professorship. In the first place, professors in those days did not collect their lectures and publish them for the behoof of those who had not the privilege of hearing them delivered. They did not give their addresses an elaborate form, nor introduce into them the novel views and profound and accurate thought with which Professors now dignify their vocation from chairs in Universities, especially those of Oxford and Cambridge, or places of public instruction, as the Royal Institution in Albemarle Street, with its Professor Tyndall, or the Royal School of Mines and Museum of Practical Geology in Jermyn Street, with its Professor Huxley. They could not then "produce something worth reading." In the second place they did not require the "retirement and leisure necessary for literary work"; they talked about what they knew in the most simple and artless manner; made no preparations beforehand; walked into a class room, and, book in hand, Greek or Roman classic, discoursed to their pupils about the meaning of this or that passage or the rendering of this or that word benefiting the juvenile class with the spontaneous harvest of their cultivated minds, and giving the opinions of others a great deal more freely than they gave their own: all that they said, too, was detached and trite; and if books are valuable, as consisting of perfectly combined parts, and new or extraordinary contents, the lectures of the fifteenth century professors would not have been worth the paper on which they were written. Bracciolini, then, would never, in the contemplation of turning a professor, have spoken of "producing something worth reading"; nor, for the discharge of professorial duties, would he speak of requiring "retirement and leisure for literary work." It is clear that Mr. Shepherd is altogether wrong in his conjecture.

And now as to mine. If the dim revelations concerned a plan about forging the Annals, then "something worth reading" Bracciolini certainly did produce; for the Annals is,--taking the circumstances under which it was composed into consideration--about one of the most wonderful literary creations that we have; on every page there is indication of the "labour limae,"--the filing and polishing that are the result of the "retirement and leisure necessary to literary work"; and, though not bearing a very striking resemblance to the History of Tacitus, of which it is intended to be the supplement, it was, nevertheless, contrived with so much artfulness that, for more than four hundred years, it has deceived the scholars of Europe: yes, indeed, the author

"Gave out such a seeming
To seal their eyes up,--close as oak,--
They thought 'twas Tacitus."

The more the passages in these interesting letters are considered, the stronger becomes the impression that they are all about a scheme for forging the Annals of Tacitus. Even those which seem to give a colouring to Mr. Shepherd's view in reality favour mine.

A part of the original scheme appears to have been that Bracciolini was to go to Hungary: what for is not mentioned. It then becomes a matter of conjecture. Mine is, that, on account of the belief current in those days that singular treasures of ancient history were to be found more readily than elsewhere in barbarous countries, and that the more barbarous the country the greater the chance of recovering an ancient classic, so Bracciolini was to go, or feign that he had gone to Hungary, and then on returning give out that he had there found some of the lost books of the History of Tacitus. If this be not the right conjecture, it can barely be understood why Bracciolini should make a mystery about this visit. "If I undertake a journey to Hungary," he says, "it will be unknown to everybody but a few, and down the throats of these I shall cram all sorts of speeches, since I will pretend that I have come from here," that is, from England. "Si in Hungariam proficiscar, erit ignotum omnibus, praeter paucos; quin simulabo me huc venturum, et istos pascam verbis." (Ep. I. 18). This intention to keep the journey to Hungary a secret looks as if his going there were connected with the wrong act suggested, seeing that men usually resort to concealment when they commit a wrong act, and endeavour to lead people astray with respect to it (as Bracciolini showed an inclination to do) by misstatements and falsehoods: then Bracciolini knew well that the commission of a forgery would be immediately suspected were it bruited abroad that he had come from Hungary where he had found a long-lost classic because those were days when book-finders were in the habit of first forging works, and then visiting far distant lands to report on their return that they had there recovered MSS. which they themselves had written.

Another passage strengthens my view, though, at a first glance, it favours Mr. Shepherd's. After observing that his friend "knew well how he preferred liberty and literary leisure to the other things which the vast majority held in the highest estimation and made the objects of their ambition," Bracciolini proceeds thus: "And if I were to see that I should get that which our friend Picro expects, I would go not only to the end of Europe but as far as to the wilds of Tartary, especially as I should have the opportunity of paying attention to Greek literature, which it is my desire to devour with avidity, were it but to avoid those wretched translations, which so torment me that there is more pain in reading than pleasure in acquiring knowledge."--"Id primum scias volo, me libertatem et otium litterarum praeponere rebus caeteris, quae plures existimant permaximi, atque optant. Sique videro id me consecuturum, prout sperat Pierius noster, non solum ad Sarmatas, sed Scythas usque proficiscar, praesertim proposita facultate dandi operam Graecis litteris, quas avide cupio haurire, ut fugiam istas molestas translationes, quae ita me torquent, ut pluris sit molestiae in legendo, quam in discendo suavitatis." (Ep. I. 18.)

This is the passage that must have particularly induced Mr. Shepherd to think that what was offered to Bracciolini was a Professorship; and as Bracciolini spoke of the opportunity that would be afforded to him of studying Greek literature, that the

Professorship was of Greek. But Mr. Shepherd ought not to have conjectured that the Professorship must have been in some Italian University; it is clear that if Bracciolini was to carry out the proposal of Lamberteschi, he was, from the original plan, to have gone to Hungary. The Professorship must, therefore, have been in Hungary. But in 1422 no professor was wanted in that country, because it had no university: Hungary then was, and remained a wilderness of unlettered barbarism for nearly half a century after, it not being until 1465, half a dozen years from the death of Bracciolini, that Matthias Corvinus established in Buda the first Hungarian University, filling it with valuable works which he got copied from rare manuscripts in the principal cities of Italy, especially Rome and Florence, and inviting to it men as learned as Bracciolini, not only from Italy, but also France and Germany. What Bracciolini really alludes to is not a professorship, but the money he was to get for his forgery,--the 500 or 600 gold sequins; and as money was then worth about twenty times more than it is now, it was a moderate fortune of ten or twelve thousand pounds; and when he should have such means at his disposal, he would have quite sufficient for his purpose; he could then forsake the clerical duties which were so onerous and distasteful to him, to devote himself in peace and comfort to his favourite study of Greek literature, with which he became specially captivated just at this period of his life from reading for the first time in the magnificent library of Cardinal Beaufort the works of the Greek fathers, above all, Chrysostom, whom he looked upon as the greatest of all writers; for writing to Niccoli from the London palace of Cardinal Beaufort in the summer of 1420, he speaks of "preferring Chrysostom to everybody else whom he had ever read,"--"Joannes Chrysostomus, quem omnibus, quos ego unquam legerim, praefero" (Ep. I. 7); and, on another occasion, in a letter to the same friend, again referring to Chrysostom, he bursts into the enthusiastic exclamation: "this man by a good shoulder, or more, overtops everybody":--"hic vir longe humero supereminet omnes" (Ep. I. 8). A still greater, nay, "the greatest reason for his desire of returning to Greek literature," he gives in a letter to Niccoli dated London, the 17th of July, 1420, that, in "skimming over Aristotle during the spring of that year, not for the purpose of studying him then, but reading and seeing what there was in each of his works,"--he had found that sort of "perusal not wholly unprofitable, as he had learnt something every day, superficial though it might be, from understanding Aristotle in his own language, when he found him in the words of translators either incomprehensible or nonsensical." "Ego jam tribus mensibus vaco Aristoteli, non tam discendi causa ad praesens, quam legendi, ac videndi, quid in quoque opere contineatur: nec est tamen omnino inutilis haec lectio; disco aliquid in diem, saltem superficie tenus, et haec est causa potissima, cur amor graecarum litterarum redierit, ut hunc virum quasi elinguem, et absurdum aliena lingua, cognoscam sua."

III. As Bracciolini gave his assent to the fabrication of additional books to the History of Tacitus, his friends Niccoli and Lamberteschi as well as himself were of opinion that his presence was required in Italy, in order that the three should take counsel together, and, discussing the matter in concert, deliberate fully what was best to be done: "nam maturius deliberare poterimus, quid sit agendum," he says in a letter addressed to Niccoli from London on the 5th of March, 1422; and as he left England for Italy in the summer, and did not begin his forgery till the autumn of the next year, he spent the interval of some eighteen, nineteen or twenty months in continually holding cabinet councils with his two friends, and secretly devising with them on what plan he could best execute the addition to the

History of Tacitus; no doubt, he thought they had so cleverly arranged matters in providing against all mishaps that he never would be found out. "Veniam ad vos," he continues in the same letter; "et tunc propositis in unum conditionibus, discussisque in utramque partem rationibus, meliorem, ut spero, eligemus partem."

Bracciolini was, notwithstanding, undesirous of leaving England just yet, from keeping his eye fixed upon the main chance. There was the pleasant prospect before him of his living, which had such heavy duties attached to it, being exchanged for a sinecure worth ý20 a year, "all," he said, "he coveted, and no more"; but it being uncertain when such good fortune would attend him, he knew not what to do,--whether, as things now stood, he should return to Italy, and lose all chance of getting the free benefice, or stay a little longer in England and wait the possible exchange. "Credo me inventurum pro hac beneficium liberum, et sine cura XX librarum: hoc si fieri poterit, satis est mihi, nec opto amplius; veruntamen nescio quando hoc inveniam; neque scio, an sit melius isto venire, prout res nunc se habent, an expectare paulum, quaerens an possem hanc facere permutationem" (Ep. I. 18). Three months passed without the exchange being effected, whereupon as time progressed, his hopes, like the courage of Bob Acres, "oozed out at his fingers' ends." Still he was unwilling to lose what had cost him a great deal of importunity, as well as much time and anxiety of mind by any fault on his part, such as being in too great a hurry over the matter; so he told his friend Niccoli when writing to him in June; as that "there was nothing else which detained him in England but the business of effecting the exchange of his benefice, which from the badness of the times was a much worse living than it was considered to be:" he also came to the definite determination that if in two months what he had been looking for turned up, he would make his arrangements immediately and be off to his two friends at home; and even if he got nothing, still he would start for Italy in August at the latest. "Ut alia epistola ad te scripsi, nihil aliud me hic tenet, nisi cura permutandi hoc beneficium, quod defectu temporum multo tenuius est, quam ferebatur. Nollem enim, id quod tanto et temporis impendio quaesivi, et animi sollicitudine, nunc amittere vitio festinandi. Si his duobus mensibus emerserit aliquid, quod cupio, concludam statim, atque ad vos veniam; sin autem nihil invenero, etiam veniam ad vos." (Ep. I. 22 in.)

Cardinal Beaufort had in the April of 1422 promised to get him a prebend for his church,--a simple, as distinguished from a dignitary prebend. If without a dean and chapter inducting him into a prebendal stall, which he did not want, he could go to Italy and there draw every year the stipend granted for the maintenance of a prebendary out of the estate of an English collegiate church, possibly in the diocese of Winchester, he would not have visited England in vain. But when he reminded the Cardinal of his promise, and claimed its performance, Beaufort receded from his position. "To trust the speeches of such persons," said Bracciolini, "is like holding a wolf by the ears," (quoting what the old Greeks used to say, [Greek: ton oton echein ton lukon] when they wanted to denote the awkward position of a man holding on to something when it was difficult for him to cling to it, and still more dangerous for him to let it go). From that moment Bracciolini ceased to place any further trust in Cardinal Beaufort, and turned with redoubled zest to the proposal of Lamberteschi as one on which he alone relied: "Quidam me duobus jam mensibus suspensum tenet promittens mihi daturum praebendam quandam pro hac ecclesia: nunc autem cum rem urgerem, et ad calcem cuperem pervenire, recessit a promissis suis. Credere verbis istorum est, ac si auribus lupum teneas. Tu vero da operam, et cum

primum Petrus responderit, me de eo facias certiorem: nam hoc solum expecto" (Ep. I. 21). From this time his mind was made up: he would leap the Rubicon: he would go in for the forgery, and his friend must have confidence in him. So speaking of his powers for the great task which he meditated he proceeds thus interestingly in the letter to Niccoli bearing date London, the 10th of June, 1422: "I want you to have no distrust: give me the leisure and the time for 'writing that HISTORY'" (the nearest approach this to a disclosure of the grand secret so frequently hinted at by him in the London letters of the spring and summer of 1422), "and I will do something you will approve. My heart is in the work, though I question my powers." Then quoting the sentiment from Virgil about "labour overcoming everything," he proceeds with unabated interest: "I have not for four years devoted any attention to literature, nor read a single book that can be considered well-written,--as you may judge from these letters of mine which are not what they used to be; but I shall soon get back into my old manner. When I reflect on _the merits of the ancient writers of history, I recoil with fear from the undertaking_" (mark that); "though when I consider what are the writers of the present day, I recover some confidence in the hope that if I strive with all my might, I shall be inferior to few of them." He then implores his friend to let him know the reply of Lamberteschi as soon as possible. "Nec dubites volo; si dabitur otium et tempus DESCRIBENDI GESTA ILLIUS, aliquid agam quod probabis. Cor bonum, adest mihi; nescio an vires aderint: tamen 'labor omnia vincit improbus.' Quatuor his annis nullam dedi operam studiis humanitatis, nec legi librum, quod ad eloquentiam spectaret; quod ex ipsis litteris meis potes conjicere. Non sunt enim quales esse consuevere; sed tamen brevi tempore redigar in priorem statum. _Cum priores rerum scriptores considero, deterreor a scribendo_; cum vero nostri temporis, nonnihil confido, sperans me paucis inferiorem futurum, si omnino nervos intendero. Tuum vero sit studium, ut quam primum certior fiam responsionis Petri" (Ep. I. 21).

IV. He did not remain in England long after this; soon after the midsummer of 1422 he left this country. His motive for taking this step may have been that he ended by giving up all hope of exchanging his laborious living for a sinecure free benefice, or of obtaining a permanent appointment to a prebend that was without any jurisdiction attached to it; or, what may be far more likely, he resolutely abandoned every object he had in view in England for the far brighter prospects that opened out before him at home if he undertook the forgery which had been proposed to him by Lamberteschi, and to which he had been invited by the promise of, in the first instance, a magnificent pecuniary reward, and afterwards the possibility of many rare advantages.

Only a fortnight after the last letter to Niccoli he addressed to him another, the last he wrote from London, on the 25th of June, 1422, couched in language which showed how deeply involved his Florentine friend was in the plot of the forgery: "If Lamberteschi would only place something certain before us, which we could adopt or approve," he wrote; and "How heartily I hope that Lamberteschi will do what would be so agreeable to us both." "Si Petrus certum quid responderit, quod sequi ant probare possimus"--"Quam maxime exopto, ut Petrus perficiat, quae vellemus" (Ep. I. 22).

From this day we hear no more of him in London. Sometime during the summer of 1422 he returned to Rome, and, following the advice of the Cardinal Archbishop of Pisa, went back to his old employment in Rome at the Secretariate, but now, it would appear, as the Principal Secretary to the Pope,--a post which he obtained with little or no intercession, as borne testimony to by himself:

--"Ego effectus sum Secretarius Pontificis, et quidem nullis precibus, vel admodum paucis" (Ep. II. 2).

Here then was Bracciolini again in Rome, not then a city of saints and sacred things, but of scoffing priests and absolved sinners: we all know what Luther said on returning to Wittenberg, after his first visit to Rome: "everything is permitted there except to be an honest man." If that was true at the commencement of the sixteenth century, it was much more true at the commencement of the fifteenth.

Count Corniani, in his "Ages of Italian Literature," is of opinion that Bracciolini had been in Hungary (II. 76). If so, it must have been after he left England; he could not then have been so soon, as I have stated, in Rome: he was there, however, for a certainty, as some of his letters now extant show, in the earlier portion of the spring of the following year; even this is against his having been in Hungary, except on the ground that almost immediately after he had arrived there, he found that whatever it was that Lamberteschi had offered to him was neither practicable nor agreeable; therefore he relinquished it and accepted the office of Secretary in the Papal Court. Bracciolini, however, does not seem to have gone to Hungary; nor was there any necessity that he should have done so, if my theory be correct; for then, so far from Lamberteschi's offer being neither practicable nor agreeable, it was both so feasible and pleasant, that it was in order to accomplish it, he expressly accepted the Secretary's post in the Court of Rome. He could not have carried out the forgery had he remained in England, because he would not have had the necessary leisure, on account of the heavy duties attached to his cure; and we have seen how he could get neither a sinecure nor a simple prebend; but to be in the Secretariate of the Papacy was to be the holder of an office with little or nothing to do, which gave him ample leisure for literary pursuits. He, therefore, became reconciled to accepting the Papal Secretaryship; "it being the way with a wise man," he observed in a philosophic spirit, "to do the best he can under circumstances, and be satisfied." If by being Secretary to the Pope he saw he could procure what he wanted, which was "obtaining a support," stick to the Secretariate he would; accordingly, he staid in Rome, devoting himself to his books. "Parere temporis semper sapientis est habitum. Si videro me hac via consecuturum, quod cupio, hoc est aliquod sustentaculum, tum adhaeream: quiescens in studiis, hic manebo" (Ep. II. 2).

As if preparing for some great literary undertaking connected with antiquity, he wrote from Rome on the 15th of May, 1423, to his friend Niccoli to let him have without the least delay all his notes and extracts from the various books (and they not a few and miscellaneous) which he had read; here it may be observed that what Cortese, Bishop of Urbino, says of the Camaldolese General, Traversari, is strictly applicable to him:--"Such was his inexhaustible love of reading, he regretted a moment spent away from his books; and every day, when not engaged in writing, devoured the compositions of the ancient Greeks and Romans": ("Erat in hoc homine inexhaustus quidem legendi amor; nullum enim patiebatur esse vacuum tempus. Quotidie aut scribebat, aut aliquid ex Graecis Latinisque litteris mandabat"):--"Mittas ad me, rogo, singula commentariola mea, hoc est, excerpta illa ex variis libris, quos legi, quae sunt plurima, ac dispersa; collige simul omnia, oro te, et ad me quamprimum mittas" (Ep. II. 2).

Having, no doubt, obtained in due time the notes and extracts wanted, apparently in the autumn of 1423, he then set about the commencement of his immortal and wonderful forgery, or, as he

styles it in the fabrication itself, his "condensed and inglorious drudgery,"--"nobis in arto et inglorius labor" (Annal. IV. 31); for in a letter written from Rome in the night of the 8th of October that year he makes a reflection about "beginnings of any kind being arduous and difficult," following up the remark with these striking words: that "what the ancients did pleasantly, quickly and easily was to him troublesome, tedious and burdensome"; a remark which he could not have made unless he was attempting something in the way of the ancients; unless, moreover, he was just setting about it; then he consoles himself by again repeating his favourite sage old saw from Virgil: that "hard work gets over everything":--"In quibusvis quoque rebus principia sunt ardua et difficilia; ut quod antiquioribus in officio sit jucundum, promptum ac leve, mihi sit molestum, tardum, onerosum. Sed 'labor omnia vincit improbus'" (Ep. II. 5).

A month after this significant declaration he was hard at work forging the Annals of Tacitus; for we find him earnestly plying for books that were indispensable for any one writing the history of the early Roman Emperors. In a letter to Niccoli dated Rome, the 6th of November, 1423, he begs his friend to do all he can to get him some map of Ptolemy's Geography; to bear it in mind in case one should happen to fall in his way; also not to forget Suetonius and the other historians, and, above all, Plutarch's Lives of Illustrious Characters: "Vellem aliquam Chartam Ptolemaei Geographiae, si fieri posset; in hoc cogita, si quid forte inciderit; ac etiam Suetonium, aliosque Historicos, et praesertim Plutarchi Viros Illustres non obliviscaris" (Ep. II. 7).

If it be said that Bracciolini wrote a History of Florence, and that these remarks which, unquestionably, refer to some "history" from the expression "describendi gesta illius," apply to that work, it must be borne in mind that he did not write that history until towards the close of his life, that is, more than thirty years after these letters which passed between him and Niccoli, for the events recorded in his History of Florence are carried down to as late as the year 1455; that that historical work is the only one he wrote under his own name; that it is no more written in imitation of the ancients, than any other of his acknowledged productions; and that even if it were, he would not have required for its composition such maps as Ptolemy's, nor such works as those of Suetonius and Plutarch. In fact, the most acute ingenuity cannot rescue Bracciolini from the charge that in October 1423 he, then resident in Rome, began to forge a work with the intention of palming it off upon the world as written by an ancient Roman: as I proceed I shall convincingly show that that ancient Roman was Tacitus, and that that work was the Annals.

CHAPTER IV.

BRACCIOLINI AS A BOOKFINDER.

I. Doubts on the authenticity of the Latin, but not the Greek Classics.--II. At the revival of letters Popes and Princes offered large rewards for the recovery of the ancient classics.--III. The labours of Bracciolini as a bookfinder.--IV. Belief put about by the professional bookfinders that MSS. were soonest found in obscure convents in barbarous lands.--V. How this reasoning throws the door open to fraud and forgery.--VI. The bands of bookfinders consisted of men of genius in every department of literature and science.--VII. Bracciolini endeavours to escape from forging the Annals by forging the whole lost History of Livy.--VIII. His Letter on the subject to Niccoli quoted, and examined.--IX. Failure of his attempt, and he proceeds with the forgery of

the Annals.

I. When we thus see Bracciolini setting to work in this quiet, business-like manner to forge the Annals of Tacitus, as if it were a general, common-place occurrence, a grave suspicion enters the mind whether it was not a thing very ordinarily done in his day; if so, whether we may not have a wholesale fabrication of the Latin classics; which is very annoying to contemplate when we remember the number of works we shall have to reject as not having been written by ancient Romans but by modern Italians, of the fifteenth, and possibly the close of the fourteenth centuries. The suspicion becomes all the stronger with the fact before us that the literature of the ancient Romans was totally extinguished in Europe in the very opening centuries of the Christian aera; and that their language would have been also lost had it not been preserved till the age of Justinian (527-565) by the pleadings and writings of the leading lawyers; after which it is generally believed that it was continued to be preserved, along with the literature of the ancient Romans, in the buildings founded by the various monastic orders of Christians. Here again we are met by another equally vexing circumstance, it being excessively questionable whether monasteries ever really conserved, to any, even the least extent, the interests of human knowledge. Monks never had any love for learning; did not appreciate the volumes of antiquity; in fact, could not read them; for the Latin was not their Latin; and they are not likely to have preserved what they did not appreciate and could not read: the libraries they founded were for bibles, missals and prayer-books: the schools they established were for teaching children to read the Testament and prayer book, and to sing hymns and psalms, while the ancient manuscripts they transcribed were, at best, the hagiological productions of the Fathers of the Christian Church.

But even if the works of the ancient Romans were preserved by the monks in their convent libraries, that was only till the approach of the last quarter of the sixth century. Then came the dark period of the conquest of Italy by the last swarm of the northern barbarians from their native settlements in Pannonia: Italy continued under the iron yoke of the dominion of these illiterate Lombards till their final overthrow towards the commencement of the last quarter of the eighth century by the great conqueror, warrior, Christian and devoted admirer of learning, Charlemagne: during that period literature became entirely extinguished, for in all the vigour and savage freedom of their fresh and unworn barbarism these Pannonian dunces were as diligent for two whole centuries (568-774) in demolishing monasteries and destroying books as in levelling fortresses and ravaging cities. For six centuries after, a confused assemblage of different races of boors, Franks, Normans and Saracens, occupied Italy; they cared not a fig for knowledge; they did not know what a book was, for they did not know the alphabet, engaged as they were, like those kindred spirits in after ages, the Ioways, Mohicans and Ojibbeways, in perpetual wars and bloodshed: all this time the light of literature never once broke in upon the scene: at length traces of it were discerned in the revival of learning during the age of Petrarch and the Father of modern Italian prose, Boccaccio, in the middle of the fourteenth century. Thus for eight hundred years there was a moral eclipse of all that was excellent in human knowledge in Italy and the whole West of Europe.

Fortunately there was no such middle age of darkness in Greece: there the light of science and literature remained unextinguished: the knowledge of the works of antiquity was cultivated in the East with enthusiasm; and while we may be confident that we possess the

works of all those high and gifted spirits who adorned that bright period which extends from Homer and Hesiod to Plato and Aristotle, and again the works of all those Greeks who flourished from the death of Alexander the Great to the death of Augustus Caesar, the brightest of whom were Menander, Theocritus, Polybius, Strabo, and a gorgeous array of philosophers, sophists and rhetoricians, we can be by no means sure that we have the real works of the Roman classics; there must even be the gravest doubt as to the probability; for, though during the close of the fourteenth century, throughout the fifteenth, and at the commencement of the sixteenth, books purporting to be of their writing were constantly being recovered, it was invariably under distressingly suspicious circumstances; exactly the Roman author that was wanted turned up; and always for a certainty that Roman author for whom the highest price had been offered; the monastery was rarely famous, seldom in Italy, but obscure and situated in a barbarous country; the discoverer, too, was not, as is generally supposed, an ignorant, unlettered monk or friar, who could not read what he found, and who could not, therefore be suspected of having forged what he stated he had discovered; it was invariably a most cultured scholar, nay, a man of the very highest literary attainments, an exquisitely accomplished writer, to boot; a "Grammaticus," forsooth, who possessed a masterly and critical knowledge of the Latin language.

II. The unlettered gloom in which Italy had been immersed for ages was effectually dissipated by the great number of learned and illustrious Greeks who took refuge in the West of Europe, in order to escape from Ottoman Power long before the fall of Constantinople. On account of their enlightenment, literature revived in Florence, Venice and Rome; it speedily spread from the Cities of the Great Merchants and of the Popes into the provincial and inferior towns; thus Italy was the first country in the West where good taste, enlightened views, and generous emulation in the sciences and the fine arts took the place of the ignorance, the avarice and the venality which for centuries had held sole sway in that civilized portion of the world. Princes and nobles vied with Popes and Cardinals in the restoration of letters; and now the best way for a man to advance himself was to show a desire for the promotion of letters; above all, for the discovery of manuscripts of the ancient classics, which, when long looked for, and not found, were usually,--from the too tempting reward, which was a fortune,--forged by some unscrupulous "Grammaticus," or writer of Latin.

III. At the commencement of the fifteenth century, a little band of men lived in Rome: some were Apostolic Secretaries; all were famous for their abilities; five were scholars endowed with sterling talents, Antonio Lusco Cincio de Rustici, Leonardo Bruni, and two others from Florence, Bracciolini, and Dominici, afterwards Cardinal Archbishop of Ragusa. (Pog. Vita p. 180 from Joannes Baptista Poggius in Orat. Card. Capranicae (Miscell. Ballutii Tom. 3.) They were all friends; and their delight was, like their masters, the Popes, to retire in summer from the heat of Rome into the cool air of the Campagna; there, after a frugal repast, they held discourse daily, like men of mind, on a variety of engaging topics: "sumus saepius una confabulantes variis de rebus," says Bracciolini in a letter to Francesco Marescalcho of Ferrara (Op. Pog. 307), and continues: "incidit inter nos sermo de viris doctis et eloquentibus." Thus

> "Oft unwearied did they spend the nights,
> Till the Ledaean stars, so famed for love,
> Wondered at them from above--
> They spent them not in toys, or lust, or wine;

But search of deep philosophy,
Wit, eloquence, and poetry,
Arts which they loved."

Of these men, the most extraordinary for superlative qualifications, and, apparently that inseparable companion of the highest order of genius, indefatigable energy, was Bracciolini. Muratori, in his "Annali d'Italia" (anno 1459) speaks of him as "letterato insigne di questi tempi," and, as leaving behind him when he died on the 30th of October, 1459, "molte opere e gran nome" (Vol. XIII. 481).

When Bracciolini first joined the Papal Court, Guarino of Verona, Aurispa and Filelfo were making continuous voyages to Greece in order to fetch home manuscripts of Greek authors yet unknown in Italy; at this time were found and first brought to the West of Europe the poems of Callimachus, Pindar, Oppian and Orpheus; the Commentaries of Aristarchus on the Iliad; the works of Plato, Proclus, Plotinus, Xenophon and Lucian; the Histories of Arrian, Cassius Dio, and Diodorus Siculus; the Geography of Strabo; Procopius and some of the Byzantine historians; Gregory of Nazianzen, Chrysostom, and other Greek Fathers of the Church. In emulation of these men Bracciolini and a band of bookfinders, assisted and rewarded by the wealth of Princes and Popes, went up and down the countries of Europe to find manuscripts of the ancient works of the Romans that were supposed to be lost; and it is generally believed that the republic of letters is more indebted to him than to anybody else of his manuscript finding age for the numerous books that were found, and which without such timely recovery we are given to understand, from the decaying state of the manuscript and the pernicious place where it was lighted on, would very soon, in almost every instance, have been irrecoverably lost.

When Bracciolini accompanied the Papal Court in the capacity of Secretary to the Council of Constance in 1414, he, one day, went with two friends, Cincio, the Roman gentleman and scholar of fortune, of the family de Rustici, and the eminent schoolman and finished writer Bartolommeo de Montepulciano to the monastery of St. Gall about twenty miles distant from Constance for the purpose of finding new manuscripts; his companions found Lactantius, "De Utroque Homine," Vitruvius on Architecture and the Grammar of Priscian, while he himself found, in addition to the Commentaries of Asconius Pedianus on eight of Cicero's Orations,--the three first books, and half of the fourth of the Argonauticon of Valerius Flaccus. On this discovery being communicated to Francesco Barbaro, the latter in his reply spoke of other discoveries of Bracciolini's, of some of which we have no account as to where they were found, nor when, except before 1414: Tertullian, Lucretius, Silius Italicus, Ammianus Marcelinus, Manilius (his unfinished poem on "Astronomy," clearly a forgery), Lucius Septimius Caper, Eutychius and Probus; and, adds Barbaro, "many others,"--"complures alios," among which Aulus Gellius may be included. All these were found not by Bracciolini alone, but always in the company of very remarkable characters, and more frequently than any other, Bartolommeo de Montepulciano, of whom nothing is known, except that he was a splendid scholar, and great bookfinder, or forger (the terms are synonymous), and that he resided in Rome in a pleasant villa situated near the Lateran Church (Pog. Op. p. 2).

In the oration which he delivered over the remains of his friend Niccoli (Op. 272) Bracciolini says that he found in French and German monasteries, besides Quintilian, Silius Italicus, and part of the poem of Lucretius, some orations of Cicero and Nonius

Marcellus. In his Treatise "de Infelicitate Principum" (p. 394), and in one of his Letters (II. 7), he mentions having found Cicero's Orations along with Columella in the Monastery of Cluny in the Maconnois district of Burgundy; he gives the number of the Orations of Cicero, which were eight (Ep. IV. 2), and which are generally supposed to have been those for Caecina, Rubirius and Roscius, against Rullus and Lucius Piso, and those relating to the Agrarian Laws. He also found Cicero's two treatises De Legibus and De Finibus. In his Descriptio Ruinarum Urbis Romae he states that he found in the Monastery of Monte Casino, near Naples, Frontinus on the Aqueducts of Rome, and it was, as we know from one of his letters (III. 37), in July 1429. The Abbý Mýhus, in the preface to his edition of the works of Traversari, adds that he found the eight books of the Mathematics of Firmicus, which is confirmed by himself (Ep. III. 37). While in England he recovered the poems of Julius Calpurnicus who wrote pastorals in the reign of the Emperor Carus; he also lighted in the monasteries on part of Petronius Arbiter (Ep. IV. 3), also part of Statius, and book XV. in Cologne in 1423 (ib.); six years after he found the following twelve plays of Plautus: Bacchides, Mostellaria, Mercator, Miles Gloriosus, Pseudolus, Poenulus, Persa, Rudens, Stichus, Trinummus and Truculentus. In fact, he was occupied nearly all his days, as long as he was in the vigour of life, in traversing Germany and other lands in search of ancient manuscripts, which he recovered in monasteries at different times and in different places; nor was he to be deterred from these toils, which have been likened to the labours of Hercules, by any stress of weather, length of journey or badness of roads.

IV.--The account which he gives in his Dialogue "De Infelicitate Principum," while dwelling upon a custom of his of going from one country to another in far distant and barbarous parts for Latin books, opens our eyes to a very strange state of belief which obtained at the beginning of the fifteenth century with respect to the refined works of the ancients;--that, because a number of these manuscripts were discovered by him, and his band of bookfinders, in obscure monasteries in barbarous countries, there was to be deduced therefrom a definite conclusion that many more were to be discovered in that way; and that this conclusion was so firmly lodged in the minds of men it prevented Popes and Princes from continuing to offer that pecuniary aid and those other rewards which they had been for a long time in the habit of tendering for the recovery of such manuscripts:--"When these," says he in the above-mentioned treatise, "had been brought to light by him, and when the very sanguine and certain hope was held forth of more being found, never after that did either a Pope or a Prince give the slightest attention or assistance to the recovery of those most illustrious men out of the convents of barbarians:"--"haec cum ab eo fuissent in lucem edita, cumque uberior et certa spes proposita esset ampliora inveniendi, nunquam postea aut pontifex aut princeps vel minimum operae aut auxilii adhibuit ad liberandos praeclarissimos illos viros ex ergastulis barbarorum" (p. 393). This statement is so remarkably curious that it requires a little consideration.

We can easily understand how the valuable works of the Greeks and Romans, from the importance attached to them and the appreciation in which they were held, were safest and longest preserved in their respective countries, and that, therefore, they could have been found, sooner than elsewhere, in Greece and Italy; but after those countries had been thoroughly ransacked, it is not so clear to comprehend how it should follow that their works were to be just as rapidly and easily found in other, and those barbarous countries, nay, indeed, more rapidly and more easily. To put this

forth was to endeavour to prepare people's minds for the numbers of discoveries that were made, or, perhaps, more properly, pretended to be made in foreign parts. It was, in fact, to pursue this course of reasoning:--If those works had remained in civilized hands, centuries would not have elapsed without the world being cognizant of their existence; the learned could not have lost sight of them; the select few would have transmitted copies from generation to generation; but when they passed into the possession of unlettered men living in barbarous countries, they would then be altogether hidden from view; such people would treat them as swine treat pearls; spurn them; not keep them in libraries, but throw them away as useless lumber into cellars, pits, dark holes, dirty passages, dry wells; fling them away as refuse into dustbins or upon dungheaps. Nearly as much says Bracciolini by these shadowy phrases: "in darkness"; "in a blind dungeon"; "in a dirty dungeon;" "in dismal dungeons," and "in many dens," as for instance, "for the sake of finding books that were kept by them in their convents shut up _in darkness_ and _in a blind dungeon_" (Op. 393)--"He had rescued renowned authors out of _the dismal dungeons_ in which, against their will and without being used, they had been kept concealed (for they were shut up in _many a den_ and _foul dungeon_" (ib.):--"in tenebris"; "carcere caeco"; "foedo carcere"; "diris carceribus," and "multis vinculis," e.g.:--"librorum perquirendorum gratia, qui in ergastulis apud illos reclusi detinentur _in tenebris_, et _carcere caeco_" (Op. 393)--"Autores praeclaros ... _ex diris carceribus_ quibus inviti obsoletique opprimuntur eruisset (sunt enim _multis vinculis_ et _foedo carcere_ abstrusi" (ib.). Books thrown away in such places must be regarded, when recovered, as found by the purest accident; hence it was at once comprehensible how they had remained unknown to the world for hundreds of years; for who would think of looking for books in such places?

Yet it was precisely in such places that Bracciolini and his companions looked for the books that they wanted; what is still stranger, they always found in such queer places the exact books they were in search of. It was so, for example, when they recovered the books in the monastery of St. Gall; the books were not found where, Bracciolini admits, they ought to have been, on account of their excellence, on the shelves of the library, but where slugs and toads are more frequently looked for and found than books and manuscripts, in an exceedingly dirty and dark dungeon at the bottom of a tower and one of these books, Quintilian, though described as "sound and safe," is also described as being "saturated with moisture and begrimed with mire," as if it had been made dirty expressly for the occasion of the recovery: "Quintilianum comperimus, adhuc salvum et incolumem, plenum tamen situ et pulvere squalentem. Erant non in bibliotheca libri illi, ut eorum dignitas postulabat, sed in teterrimo quodam et obscuro carcere, fundo scilicet unius turris." (From a letter of Bracciolini to Guarino of Verona, preserved in St. Paul's Library, Leipzic--printed at the end of Poggiana, and dated Jan. 1, 1417).

V. This kind of reasoning, when admitted, throws the door open to fraud and forgery; but it cannot be admitted, because it is fallacious in reality, sound in appearance only, as will be seen by only putting a few natural questions:--How came these books into such places? Who took them from Italy, Greece, or other enlightened parts of the globe? If some learned monk, made abbot or prior of a convent of Germany or Hungary? or some equally learned priest sent as bishop to christianize the heathen in still more barbarous lands in the North in a far distant age, why should

succeeding monks, fonder, be it granted, of ploughing and reaping than reading and writing, treat as refuse books which, though not deemed by them of any value, as far as their own tastes and inclinations were concerned, they, nevertheless, knew were held in the very highest esteem by the studious in more civilized parts; and that these studious people, understanding the language in which they were written, and considering their contents most precious, would willingly give in exchange for them at any time not large, but enormous sums of money?

These are questions that cannot be answered with satisfaction: they seem to give the highest colouring of truth to what has been suggested, that there was a wholesale forgery of these books; and one is almost inclined to give Father Hardonin credit, for being quite right, when he expressed as his belief that, perhaps, not more than two or three of the ancient Latin classics were really written by the old Romans. [Endnote 208]

VI. The clause in the passage just quoted from the "De Infelicitate Principum":--"never after" (Bracciolini had found a great many books abroad, in Germany and elsewhere) "did either a Pope or a Prince give the slightest attention or assistance towards the recovery of those most illustrious men out of the convents of barbarians."--"nunquam postea aut Pontifex aut Princeps vel minimum operae aut auxilii adhibuit ad liberandos praeclarissimos illos viros ex ergastulis barbarorum," shows that before the time of Bracciolini the custom prevailed of valuable assistance and large money rewards being given by Popes and Princes for the recovery of ancient classics; and therefore confirms what was stated in the first portion of this inquiry that the custom was not confined to the age of Leo X., but ranged back to, at least, a hundred, if not, half as many more years. In that way men, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, made large fortunes. In that way Bracciolini made his.

The finding of any ancient Latin MSS. was a distinct profession in those days, and Bracciolini may be said to have studied the art, of which he was one of the greatest experts, so carefully, and to have practised it with such ability and diligence as to have elevated it into a science. Many enterprising scholars before him had devoted themselves with indefatigable perseverance to traversing, sometimes singly, but more frequently in bands of two, three, or more, Italy, Greece, Spain, and the more civilized countries of Europe for the purpose of ransacking,--or pretending to ransack,--the shelves of convent libraries of their treasures. As scarcely anything was more profitable than searching for MSS.,--particularly when it was certain that, after the looking for, they would be found, if not of the particular authors wanted, yet of others that would repay for the searching;--and as Emperors and Popes, Kings, Princes, Cardinals, Ministers and Bishops paid fabulous prices for the literary treasures of ancient Rome, Bracciolini improved upon this plan by extending the area of search into the woods of Germany, the wildernesses of Bohemia and Hungary, and the not then over civilized fastnesses and forests of England and marshes and bogs of France: the great thing with him and his companions was, when they could not find, to forge; all they had to ascertain was simply which ancient Roman was particularly wanted and would fetch the highest price; and as the band consisted of men of genius of different tastes or faculties,--poetical, historical or narrative, philosophical, grammatical or critical, and scientific or mathematical, if the reward was sufficiently munificent to pay for the time and labour, the highly valued work that was wanted, no matter to what department of literature or science it belonged, was sure to turn up, sooner or

later; and if the man who was to forge was not in the proper mood of inspiration for the business, some other fabricated writer was put forward on the ground that he was quite equivalent in merit to the author that was desiderated, as when a thief or other vagabond is wanted by a London Detective, he is certain to turn up in due time, and if not the actual delinquent, at any rate somebody else as bad, who serves equally well for the culprit.

VII. Bracciolini now engaged in forging an addition to the History of Tacitus, impelled to it from his intolerable and restless passion for the acquisition of a fortune, greater even than his constantly increasing avidity for knowledge, soon saw that it was a task beset by enormous difficulties; nay, difficulties of an apparently insuperable nature. We have no record that he was aware of this; but we require no record to know it; his proceedings pointed to it: We have already speculated as to the reasons which must have induced him to forge the Annals so strangely as he did, but before those reasons could have entered his mind, they must have been preceded by others: it is to be presumed that he endeavoured, in the first instance, to continue the History of Tacitus, as Tacitus himself would have continued it, by following up the history of Domitian with that of Nerva; but the few materials that were left rendered it impossible for him to record the events in that Emperor's reign on the broad and expansive plan adopted by Tacitus, which was to spread out the events of one year so that they should fill four lengthy books. He therefore gave up the notion as utterly impracticable; but in trying to get out of the forgery of the Annals he suggested another scheme of fabrication just as audacious, and which he seems to have imagined would have been just as remunerative.

Two months after he had written for Ptolemy's maps, Plutarch's Lives, and the works of Suetonius and other historians of the first Roman Emperors, he addressed another letter to his Florentine friend, Niccoli, dated the 8th of January, 1424, in which he hinted at no less a forgery than the whole of Livy's History, and if circumstances had been favourable to it, we should have, doubtless, had a composition so like the original,--even so much more like than even what was afterwards honourably and admirably done by Freinshemius,--as to have defied detection. His statement was that a learned Goth, who had been a great traveller, had told him he had seen the Ten Decades of Livy's History in the Cistercian Abbey of Sora, near Roschild, about a day's journey from Lubeck. He wrote in the highest spirits, as gay as a butterfly, as playful as a kitten, and as light as a balloon; he implored his friend to lose no time in seeking out Cosmo de Medici and get his consent for the finding of these volumes, which he described as written in two large, oblong volumes in Lombard characters. He added that the man who had brought the news was not to be relied upon, yet he wished to believe him in a matter "out of which coin could be made to such an amount as to be absolutely incredible,"--"ex qua tantum lucrum fieri posset, quam esse omnino incredulus" (Ep. II. 9).

He wished it to be further communicated to Leonardo Bruni who had just been appointed Chancellor of the Republic of Florence, in hopes, no doubt, that Bruni would further the scheme by money assistance; he also wrote about it to Leonello d'Este;--all which eagerness on his part with respect to forging the lost books of Livy can be easily accounted for, when, in exchange for a mere copy of Livy's imperfect history he got from Beccadelli of Bologna, the minister of King Alphonso I. of Arragon, a sum sufficient wherewith to purchase a landed estate:--"Poggio vendette un codice di Tito Livio per acquistarsi un podere, e il

Panormita vendette un podere per acquistare il codice di Tito Livio" (Corniani, tom. II. p. 122). Although, for the purpose of making a statement with a telling or striking effect, these are the words of Count Corniani in his "I Secoli della Letteratura Italiana," it was not exactly "a farm" that was taken and given by the accepter and disposer of a manuscript copy of Livy; Count Corniani himself is immediately his own contradicter by quoting in a note a passage from one of Beccadelli's Letters (Lib. V.), to the effect that the "farm" in Bracciolini's case was a "villa at Florence," as Beccadelli thus wrote to King Alphonso: "But I also want to know who in your judgment acted wiser, Poggio or myself; he, that he might buy a _villa at Florence_, sold a Livy which he had written with his own hand and was a most beautiful copy; I, that I might buy a Livy, sold a farm by auction":--"Sed et illud a prudentia tua scire desidero, uter ego an Poggius melius fecerit: is ut _Villam Florentiae_ emerit, Livium vendidit, quem sua manu pulcherrimus scripserat; ego ut Livium emam, fundum proscripsi." If Bracciolini could get so much for an incomplete copy of Livy's History, what might he not hope to get for a complete one? Imagination wanders into the realms of fairy. I am confident that if he had received the requisite encouragement from Niccolo Niccoli, or Leonardo Bruni, or Cosmo de Medici, or that munificent patron of letters, Leonello d' Este, afterwards that enormously wealthy prince, the Marquis of Ferrara, and had undertaken the task, he would have been more successful as an imitator of Livy than he proved himself to be (marvellous though he was) as an imitator of Tacitus. The genius of Livy, and also of Sallust, was more in accord with his own than the staid majestic coldness and the solemn curt sententiousness of Tacitus. Indeed, he was such a devoted admirer of Livy and Sallust, that he reminds the reader of them throughout his History of Florence; in the Annals, too, he goes out of his way to lavish praises upon them, and upon them only of all the Roman historians: he speaks of Sallust as the "finest writer of Roman history": and of Livy, as "famous, above others, for eloquence and fidelity":--"Caius Sallustius, rerum Romanarum florentissimus auctor" (III. 30):--"Titus Livius, eloquentiae ac fidei praeclarus in primis" (IV. 34). Tacitus nowhere expresses such very lofty opinions of his, two fellow and rival historians; on the contrary, he does not seem to have so thoroughly approved their style and manner; at any rate, he carefully avoided their mode of treating history. It is true that in his Agricola he speaks well of Livy, but at the same time he places Fabius Rusticus exactly upon the same level with him:--for he says "that Livy among the ancients, and Fabius Rusticus among the modern authors were the most eloquent": "Livius veterum, Fabius Rusticus recentium, eloquentissimi auctores" (10); he, therefore, never could have spoken of Livy, as Bracciolini speaks of him in the Annals, as "famous, _above others,_"--"praeclarus _in primis_." This is another of those little slips of Bracciolini's, which, without question, at once, bring his forgery to light.

VIII. After these remarks, it cannot but be highly interesting to the reader if I now place before him the whole of the very remarkable, and what should be ever-memorable letter about the contemplated forgery of Livy, not only for the subject on which it touches, but as exhibiting Bracciolini in his most playful, and, it may also be added, most roguish mood:--

"A learned man who is a Goth in race, and has travelled over a great part of the world, has been here; he is a man of a good understanding, but unreliable. He said that he had seen the X. Decades of Livy, in two big and oblong volumes written in Lombard characters, and there was on the title page of one volume a note

that the codex contained the ten decades of Titus Livy, and that he had read some parts of these volumes. This he asserts with an air of truth that commands belief; he told the same tale to Cardinal Orsini, and to many more, and to all in the very same words, so that I think this is no fib of his. What more do you want? This statement of his, and his serious countenance, cause me to give some credence to him. For it is a very good thing to be misled in a matter of this kind, out of which coin can be made to such an amount as to be absolutely incredible. Therefore I have wanted to write to you about this, that you may talk over it with Cosmo, and anxiously set to work for these volumes to be searched for; it will be an easy job for you. The books are in the Monastery at Sora that belongs to the Cistercian Order, about two German miles from Roschild, that is, a little more than a day's journey from Lubeek. Prick up your ears, Pamphilus. Two volumes big, oblong, in Lombard characters, are in the monastery at Sora that belongs to the Cistercian Order, about two German miles from Roschild, and to be reached from Lubeek in two days or so. See then that Cosmo writes as soon as possible to Gherard de Bueri, for him to betake himself there when he has the opportunity,--aye, betake himself at once to the Monastery. For if this is true, it will be a triumph over the Dacians. The Cardinal will send somebody there, or commission a person to start post-haste. I don't want such a big pill as this to slip out of our own throats; therefore, be on the stir, look alive, and don't sleep over it. For this is just what the man has stated, and though he might seem to talk too fast, yet there is no reason why he should tell an impudent lie, especially as he can gain nothing by telling lies. Therefore, I, who am such a sort of man as scarcely to believe what I see, am induced to think that this is not entirely false, and in a matter of this kind it is a proper thing to be deceived. Run then to Cosmo,--press him,--importune him to make an advance for these books to be brought to you safe and sharp. Adieu. Rome, the 8th of January, 1424. What you do, mind you let me know. In haste. Tell this to our Chancellor, Leonardo. In that monastery nearly all the kings of the Dacians are buried:"--

"Venit huc quidam doctus homo natione Gothus, qui peragravit magnam partem orbis; homo quidem est ingenio acuto, sed inconstans. Idem retulit se vidisse X. decades Livii, duobus voluminibus magnis, et oblongis, scriptas litteris Longobardis, et in titulo esse unius voluminis, in eo contineri decem decades Titi Livii, seque legisse nonnulla in iis voluminibus. Hoc ita verum esse asserit, ut credi possit; retulit hoc Cardinali de Ursinis, multisque praeterea, et omnibus eisdem verbis, ut opinor, non esse haec ab eo conficta. Quid quaeris? Facit assertio sua, et constans vultus, ut credam aliquid. Melius est enim peccare in hanc partem, ex qua tantum lucrum fieri posset, quam esse omnino incredulus. Itaque volui hoc ad te scribere, ut loquaris cum Cosmo, desque solicite operam, ut haec volumina quaerantur; nam facile erit vobis. Libri sunt in Monasterio de Sora, ordinis Cisterciensium, prope Roschild ad duo milliaria theutonica, hoc est, prope Lubich paulo amplius quam est iter diei unius. Arrige aures, Pamphile. Duo sunt volumina, magna, oblonga, litteris Longobardis, in Monasterio de Sora, ordinis Cisterciensium, prope Roschild, ad duo milliaria theutonica, quo adiri potest a Lubich biduo amplius. Cura ergo, ut Cosmus scribat quam primum diligenter ad Gherardum de Bueris, ut, si opus sit, ipse eo se conferat; imo omnino se conferat ad Monasterium. Nam si hoc verum est, triumphandum erit de Dacis. Cardinalis mittet illuc nescio quem, aut committet uni propediem discessuro. Nollem hunc tantum bolum de faucibus nostris cadere; itaque matura, ac diligenter; ne dormias. Nam haec vir ille ita affirmavit, ut quamvis verbosior videretur, tamen nulla esset causa, cur ita impudenter mentiretur, praesertim nullo

proposito mentiendi praemio. Ego igitur ille, qui vix credo quae video, adducor, ut hoc non omnino esse falsum putem, et hac una in re honestum est falli. Tu igitur curre, insta, preme Cosmum, ut aliquid expendat, quo litterae cito tutae deferantur. Vale. Romae die VIII. Januarii 1424. Quid autem egeritis, cura, ut sciam. Manu veloci. Dicas haec Leonardo nostro Cancellario. In eo monasterio omnes fere Dacorum reges sepeliuntur." (Lib. II. Ep. 9.)

I cannot pass away from this singular letter without some comment. It is very certain that there never was known to have been any such copy of Livy in the Monastery of Sora, though Tiraboschi, who is simple enough to believe in the sincerity of Bracciolini, speaks of these volumes as having shared the same fate as other manuscripts, that is, being lost:--"questo si raro codice ha avuta la stessa sorte degli altri" (Vol. I. p. 452 n.). We may be assured that the "two big, oblong volumes" never had an existence:--the two volumes, like Sir John Falstaff's men in buckram, increase in number in the telling, for in a subsequent letter addressed by Bracciolini to Leonello d'Este, the "two" become "THREE": what is more, the learned Goth's "serious statement" is "a sacred oath"; the "Lombard characters" are intermixed with some "Gothic" ones, and "another person" is found who declares that he has also seen the whole of the Decades of Livy:--"Nicolaus quidam, natione Gothus ... _sancte juravit_ esse ... TRIA praegrandia volumina, et oblonga, conscripta literis Longobardis et nonnullis praeterea _Gothicis_ intermixtis ... nunc quoque _alius testis_ horum librorum reperiatur, qui se quoque decades omnes vidisse asseveret" (Pog. Ep. XXX., post lib. De Variet. Fortun.). After this one is almost inclined to exclaim with Shakespeare's Prince Hal: "Prithee, let him alone: we shall have more anon." Where there is such inconsistency in the putting of a statement, the account looks uncommonly like a figment. We may be equally sure that the learned Goth never had an existence, any more than the "two" volumes, or the "three" volumes; (for, with the different statements, it is difficult to determine their number), nor, consequently, can there be any truth about the communication made by the Goth to Cardinal Orsini, and many others.

It will have been observed also that Bracciolini himself insists on the probable myth of the whole tale; the learned Goth is "unreliable"; he maintains that he is "telling no fib"; Bracciolini doubts himself whether what he hears is "true," but he can "see no reason why the man should lie": thus repeatedly in a very short letter he strongly suspects the veracity of the story--he only believes it because he wishes to believe it.

The whole thing was trumped up by himself for a very obvious reason: he wanted to ascertain whether Cosmo de' Medici (or any other rich man) would give money (in fact, a fortune,) for the recovered portion of the whole History of Livy: that being ascertained, he had his own scheme of further procedure; he kept that to himself; it has died with him, and, never having been revealed, it can only be divined:--my conjecture (looking at the character of Bracciolini) is that he would have played upon the credulity of Cosmo de' Medici, Leonardo Bruni, Leonello d'Este (or any other man whom he could have duped) till he had had time, which would have been years, to forge what he would have continued to assert, until the completion of the forgery, was in existence somewhere in Germany, a mistake only having been made by the "learned Goth" as to the name and site of the monastery. Hence his speaking of that imaginary individual as "unreliable,"--or whatever else he may mean by "inconstans,"--a word that he uses to denote a man who might fall into mistakes, as, for example, in not

recollecting the exact name or precise situation of a monastery, but who could not possibly err as to the nature of a book which he had seen, handled, opened and read, and had learning to understand what he read.

IX. Notwithstanding the enthusiasm and energy, as well as the craft and force, with which he laid the foundation for its acceptance, nothing came of this grand determination--this indirect proposal of his to produce by imposture the whole lost portion of the history of Livy; so whether he liked it or not, if he wanted to get a sum equivalent in these days to a little fortune of ý10,000 at the least, he had to return to the fabrication of the Annals of Tacitus; and get through the ungrateful task as best he could. So, "hanging down his ears," as Horace says,

> "ut iniquae mentis asellus,
> Cum gravius dorso subiit onus,"

he steadily set to work in the January of 1424, with a patient soul and an iron will to the completion of the dolorous drudgery from which he had ascertained to his sorrow there was no escape.

All went on for months,--for years in silence and secresy, as the case always is when mischief is brewing. Upwards of three years and a half thus elapsed; then the low and hidden rumblings of the volcano were again heard; once more vague and mysterious utterances with respect to Tacitus passed in their correspondence between Bracciolini and Niccoli. Two years,--or nearly that time,--again passed: then followed the pangs of labour from the womb of forgery: through the hands of Bracciolini came a hitherto thoroughly unknown MS. of Tacitus, which he said had been brought to him by a monk from a far distant convent in the easternmost corner of Saxony, on the borders of Bohemia; (the reader will be pleased to observe not "Hungary" although the country adjacent to it;--so circumstances shift and vary, in the lapse of years, and owing to the inconstancy of men's intentions). The new codex was an affair at once startling and gratifying: it was such a triumph over darkness in the progress of knowledge that it rivalled a conquest over the Dacians in the march of civilization: for the first time it brought to light as the opening portion of the History of Tacitus what are now known as "The Last Six Books of the Annals." These I shall now endeavour to point out were the handiwork of Bracciolini, to whose wondrous power of assimilating his literary abilities to those of another I must pay this just tribute;--that in those six books of the Annals he mastered the simplicity, though he came far short of the elegance of Tacitus.

END OF BOOK THE SECOND.

BOOK THE THIRD. THE LAST SIX BOOKS OF THE ANNALS.

> Quum itaque multa ex Taciti operibus deessent, ut Nicoli voluntati morem gereret Poggius, nil omisit intentatum, ut per Monachum nescio quem ý Germania Tacitum erueret.
> MEHUS, _Praefat. ad Lat. Epistol. Traversarii._

CHAPTER I.

THE CHARACTER OF BRACCIOLINI.

I. The audacity of the forgery accounted for by the mean opinion Bracciolini had of the intelligence of men.--II. The character and tone of the last Six Books of the Annals exemplified by what is

said of Sabina Poppaea, Sagitta, Pontia and Messalina.--III. A few errors that must have proceeded from Bracciolini about the Colophonian Oracle of Apollo Clarius, the Household Gods of the Germans, Gotarzes, Bardanes and, above all, Nineveh.--IV. The estimate taken of human nature by the writer of the Annals the same as that taken by Bracciolini.--V. The general depravity of mankind as shown in the Annals insisted upon in Bracciolini's Dialogue "De Infelicitate Principum".

I. There is a great difference between the first six books of the Annals and the last six books; the latter portion is more historical, and less biographical than the first portion: there is an obvious attempt to assimilate it as closely as possible to the work of Tacitus; and any material difference in the character of the two productions is not to be detected at a superficial glance. Hence many most intelligent readers are led astray in believing that the Annals and the History of Tacitus proceeded from the same hand, from not sufficiently bearing in mind that whatever a history may be, the general character must always be the same; plots and intrigues being alike, as well as stratagems and revolutions; also persons and passions: the reason is clear: man ever remains the same, affording the same examples of virtues and vices, and carrying on wars in the same way, according to interest and ambition, while the most important events in which he plays a part resemble in having their origin from trivial causes, as rivers, even the mightiest, take their source from insignificant springs.

But while nobody discerns any such material difference in the character of the Annals and the History of Tacitus as to be struck with wonder, everybody is filled with amazement at there being in the two works two such very different conceptions of historical composition. In the History only full light is thrown on important events and leading characters: that this may shine the brighter every common action is thrown into the shade, and every small individual passed over unmentioned. But the pages in the last six books of the Annals are crowded with incidents, great and small, and figures, good, bad and indifferent. Contrary also to Tacitus, who disposes materials in a just order, arranging those together that refer to the same thing at different times, the writer of the Annals speaks of cognate things, that should be associated, separately, as they occur from year to year, thus reducing his narrative from the height of a general history to the level of a mere diary.

The audacity of the forgery is here something absolutely marvellous;--and it never would have been attempted by any one who was not made of the stuff of Bracciolini: it was the stuff that makes a forger: anyone with proper appreciation of men's intelligence would not have dared to do this; but, instead of regarding the majority of his kind as sagacious, or even more so than they are, and knowing much, or more than they do,--as is the case with well-disposed people,--Bracciolini, who was far from being of a benevolent nature, fell into the very opposite extreme, of looking upon men as remarkably stupid and ignorant. Nothing is more common than meeting in his works with contemptuous disparagements of his kind; he scoffs at human nature for its deficiency of understanding; he does not hesitate decrying its want of thought, as in his Essay "De Miseriý Humanae Conditionis": "we must at times recollect," says he, "that we are men, silly and shallow in our nature":--"aliquando nos esse homines meminerimus, hoc est, imbecillis fragilisque naturae" (p. 130); or, "I admit the silliness of mankind to be great": "fateor--magnam esse humani generis imbecillitatem" (p. 90); or, "Knowledge is cultivated

by a few on account of the general stupidity": "quoniam communi stultitia a paucis virtus colitur" (p. 91): pretty well this for one work. Then opening his "Historia Disceptativa Convivalis," the reader lights on him sneering at the "shallowness and silliness of his age":--"haec fragilis atque imbecilla aetas" (p. 32). As in his elaborate and carefully conned works, so in his Epistles thrown off on the spur of the moment,--as when he is inviting his friend Bartolomeo Fazio to stay with him in Florence, he continues: "Though I have lived in this city now for a great many years, from my youth upwards, yet every day as if a fresh resident I am overcome with amazement at the number of the remarkable objects, and very often am roused to enthusiasm at the sight of those public buildings which fools, from the stupidity of their understandings, speak of as erected by supernatural beings":--"quamvis in ea jam pluribus annis ab ipsa juventute fuerim versatus, tamen quotidie tamquam novus incola tantarum rerum admiratione obstupesco, recreoque persaepe animum visu eorum aedificiorum, quae stulti propter ingenii imbecillitatem a daemonibus facta dicunt" (Ep. IX. Bartol. Facii Epist. p. 79, Flor. Ed. 1745).

II. With such a low notion of men's intelligence and the stupidity of his age (though it was a clever one,--at least, so far as Italy was concerned, the country of which he had the closest knowledge and with which he had the most constant intercourse), it is to be expected,--quite natural, in fact, that he should have regarded lightly the difficulties he had to encounter in his endeavours to imitate Tacitus; and though he must have been thoroughly conscious that it was not in his power victoriously to surmount them, yet he cared not, for he did not fear detection, viewing, as he did, with such withering and lordly disdain the want of perspicacity which, in his fancy, characterized his species. He worked on, then, as best he could, with courage and confidence; every now and then doing things that never would have been done by Tacitus: the story, for example, of Sabina Poppaea in the 14th book; Tacitus would have surely passed it over as, though having some relation to the public, coming within the province of biography. Unquestionably, Tacitus would have rejected as strictly unhistorical the dark tale of murder and adultery of the tribune of the people, Sagitta, and the private woman, Pontia, which has no more to do with the historical affairs of the Romans, than a villainous case of adultery in the Divorce Court, or a monstrous murder tried at the Old Bailey is in any way connected with the public transactions of Great Britain. [Endnote 231]

What history, then, we have in the last six books of the Annals does not remind us in its character of the history taken note of by Tacitus.

The tone and treatment, too, are not his.

The Jesuit, Rýný Rapin, in his Comparisons of the Great Men of Antiquity (Rýflexions sur l'Histoire, p. 211), may, with a violent seizure of ecstacy, fall, like a genuine Frenchman, into a fit of enthusiasm over the description, as "exquisite in delicacy and elegance" ("tout y est dýcrit dans une dýlicatesse et dans une ýlýgance exquise" says he), of the lascivious dancing of Messalina and her wanton crew of Terpsichorean revellers when counterfeiting the passions and actions of the phrenzied women-worshippers of Bacchus celebrating a vintage in the youth of the world, when the age was considered to be as good as gold: the gay touches in the lively picture may be introduced with sufficient warmth to enrapture the chaste Jesuit priest, and judiciously enough to contrast boldly with the dreadful, tragic details of the shortly ensuing death of the Empress; but they are not circumstances that

would have ever emanated with their emotional particularities from the solemn soul of Tacitus. The passage is only another powerful proof how absolutely ineffectual was the attempt of Bracciolini to render history after the style of the stern, majestic Roman.

III. Every now and then, too, the most extraordinary errors with respect to facts cannot be explained by the hypothesis that Tacitus wrote the Annals; for there could not have been such deviations from truth on the part of any Roman who lived in the time of the first Caesars: on the other hand, the errors are just of the character which makes it look uncommonly as if they were the unhappy blunders of a mediaeval or Renaissance writer such as Bracciolini. An instance or two will best illustrate what is meant.

In the Twelfth Book Lollia Paulina is made to consult the Colophonian Oracle of Apollo Clarius respecting the nuptials of the Emperor Claudius: "interrogatumque _Apollinis Clarii simulacrum_ super nuptiis Imperatoris" (An. XII. 22). How could this be? when Strabo, who lived in the time of Augustus, tells us that in his day that oracle no longer existed, only the fame of it, for his words are: "the grove of Apollo Clarius, in which there used to be the ancient oracle":--[Greek: "alsos tou Klariou Apollonos, en ho kai manteion aen pote palaion"] (XIV. I. 27). This is quite convincing that Tacitus could not have written those words.

There is another reason against Tacitus having made the statement: he must have been aware from personal knowledge that his countrymen obtained all their oracular responses from water. Bracciolini might have known that this custom prevailed among the Romans during the time of the Caesars, had he consulted Lucian's Alexander or Pseudomantis, Melek (better known as Porphyry), and, above all, Jamblicus, who, in his book upon Egyyptian, Chaldaean and Assyrian Mysteries, speaks (III. 11) of the habit among the Romans of "interpreting the divine will by water": [Greek: di hudatos chraematizesthai], and explains the manner how, "for in a subterraneous temple" (by which, I presume, Jamblicus means a "sanctified cave or grotto") there was a fountain, from which the augur drank," [Greek: einai gar paegaen en oiko katageio, kai ap autaes pinein ton prophaetaen.] How can we believe that Tacitus was ignorant of such an ordinary native ceremony, and one, too, that must have come repeatedly within his ken?

Another error is, apparently, very trifling, but it becomes quite startling when we are to suppose that it was made by Tacitus, an accepted authority upon the people in question,--the ancient Germans of the first century of our aera:--that people who (according to Sanson's Maps and Geographical Tables) inhabited what was then known as "Germany," namely, the country between the Danube and the Rhine, with Denmark, Norway, Sweden, the western portion of Poland and some part of the kingdom of Hungary,--are represented as having HOUSEHOLD GODS, for we are told that if Italicus had had the spirit of his father (Flavius, brother of Armin), he would have done what his parent did, wage war more rancorously than any man, against his country and his "Household Gods"; "Si paterna Italico mens esset, non alium infensius coutra patriam ac _Deos Penates_, quam parentes ejus exercuisse" (An. XV. 16). Into this mistake Tacitus could not possibly have fallen, from being thoroughly acquainted with the manners of the Germans, as he has shown in his work on that subject: he knew that that people had only one set of gods whom they worshipped publicly in sacred groves and woods, but none corresponding to the Roman Dei Penetrales, privately worshipped at home.

We have read scarcely more than a page from the commencement of that portion of the Annals where the forgery began,--the Eleventh Book,--before we find that a mistake is made about Gotarzes being the brother of Artabanus: for he is described as having "compounded poison for the particular purpose of killing his 'brother' Artabanus and his wife and son": "necem fratri Artabano conjugique ac filio ejus praeparaverat" (An. XI. 8). Artabanus was the father, as may be seen in Josephus: "not long after Artabanus died, leaving his kingdom to his son Vardanes: [Greek: "Met' ou polun de chronon Artabanos telueta, taen Basileian to paidi Ouardanae katalipon"] (Antiq. Jud. XX. 3, 4 in init). Vardanes (according to Josephus), but (according to other writers) Bardanes was the brother of Gotarzes; as was known to Bracciolini who speaks of "Gotarzes revealing to his brother," meaning Bardanes, "a conspiracy of their countrymen which had been disclosed to him": "cognitis popularium insidiis, quas Gotarzes _fratri_ patefecerat" (An. XI. 9). It cannot be said that Bracciolini was unacquainted with Josephus; for he follows him closely in the last six books of the Annals; further he mentions him in his letters, for he says that he has been "a long while waiting for his works," (to make use of them in his forgery): "Jamdiu expectavi Josephi libros," &c. (Ep. III. 28): his memory, notwithstanding, entirely failed him with respect to the passage in question, or else he paid no heed to it.

While he makes this misstatement about Gotarzes and Artabanus he falls into another blunder with respect to Bardanes: he circumscribes the limit of his reign to less than one twelvemonth,--the year when the Secular Games were celebrated which, according to his own account, was the year 800 from the Foundation of Rome, or the year 47 of the Christian Aera ("Ludi Saeculares octingesimo post Romam conditam ... spectati sunt." An. XI. 11).

Soon after his accession Bardanes, (according to the narrative we have of him in the Annals), found a rebel in his brother Gotarzes, who waged war against him, defeated him, and, gaining his kingdom, had him assassinated by a body of Parthians, who "killed him in his very earliest youth while he was engaged in hunting and not anticipating any harm:" "incautum venationique intentum interfecere primam intra juventam" (An. XI. 10). All these circumstances are made to occur in such rapid succession to each other that they occupied only one year, if so much; for they are all shown as taking place during the consulship of Valerius Asiaticus and Valerius Messalla.

Now let the reader turn to the Life of Apollonius of Tyana by Philostratus. He will there see that the Magician of Cappadocia on his arrival in Babylon was told that Bardanes had been reigning two years and as many months; Apollonius stopped in the palace of the king twenty months; then he started on a tour to India; he travelled about the Asiatic Peninsula for a considerable time; next he went on a visit to the Brahmins with whom he staid four months; after that he returned to Babylon, where he found Bardanes as he had left him, still king and in the enjoyment of excellent health. It is necessary that I should substantiate this by extracts from Philostratus. In a conversation with one of the king's courtiers Apollonius asks the question: "What year that was since Bardanes had recovered his kingdom?" and received the reply that it was "the third, two months of which they had already reached": [Greek: "poston de dae touto etos tae anaktaetheisae archae; pritou, ephae, haptometha duo aedae pou maenes"] (I. 28): in another conversation with Damis Apollonius says that he "is off to India"; that he has been staying at the court "already a year

and four months"; though "the king will not let him take his departure until the completion of the eighth month": [Greek: age, o Dami, es Indous iomen ... eniautos gar haemin aedae, kai tettares ... oude anaesei haemas ... ho Basilaeus proteron, ae ton ogdoon telesai maena]: the biographer then speaking of the visit to the Brahmins, says that Apollonius spent four months with them": [Greek: maenon tettaron ekei diatripsanti]: and "on his return to Babylon he found Bardanes as he had left him," that is, on the throne and in the enjoyment of health: [Greek: es Babylona ... anapleusai para ton Ouardanon, kai tuchontes auton oion egignoskon] (III. 58).

We have proof positive here that Bardanes sat on the throne of Babylon for at least four years and a half; quite contrary to the account in the Annals. Philostratus is generally regarded as a most reliable writer of antiquity; we may be, therefore, tolerably certain, from the look out given us in the pages of the historian of Lemnos, that Bardanes did not die, as we are told in the Annals, in his earliest youth by assassination after a short reign of less than one year, but that he reigned long, lived to a good old age, and died a natural death.

One more example of this kind, which almost seems to bring home the forgery to Bracciolini; and then we will pass on to other matters (for the present).

Nowhere in his works do I find that Bracciolini makes any reference to Lucian or Strabo, or even mentions their names. I think if he had read them, he would have known better than to have spoken of Nineveh being in existence in the reign of the Emperor Claudius, because this is the reverse of what we are told by Lucian and Strabo. For all that, we hear in the Annals of troops "along their march capturing the City of Nineveh, that most ancient capital of Assyria": "Capta in transitu urbis Ninos vetustissima sedes Assyriae" (An. XII. 13). In Lucian's amusing Dialogue, entitled "Charon," when Mercury points out the tomb of Achilles on Cape Sigaeum and that of Ajax on the Rhoetaean promontory, Charon wants to see Nineveh, with Troy, Babylon, Mycenae, and Cleone, the following being the conversation; "I want to point out to you," says Mercury, "the tomb of Achilles: you see it on the sea? That's Cape Sigaeum in the Troad: and on the Rhoetaean promontory opposite Ajax is buried. CHAR. Those tombs, O Hermes, are no great sights. Rather point out to me those renowned cities, of which I have heard below,--Nineveh, the capital of Sardanapalus, Babylon, Mycenae, Cleone and that famous Troy, on account of which I remember ferrying across there such numbers that for ten whole years my skiff was never high and dry and never caught cold," (that being Charon's fun, according to Lucian's conception, in conveying that all that long time his boat was _in the water_ (hence "catching cold") from being perpetually used: [Greek: "Thelo soi deixai ton tou Achilleos taphon, horas ton epi tae thalattae; Sigeion men ekeino to Troikon, antikru de ho Aias tethattai en to Rhoiteio. CHAR. Ou megaloi, o Hermae, oi taphoi tas poleis de tas episaemous deixon moi aedae, has kato akouomen taen Ninon taen Sardanapalou, kai Babulona, kai Mukaenas, kai Kleonas, kai taen Ilion autaen, pollous goun memnaemai diaporthmensas ekeithen, hos deka oloneon maede neolkaesai, maede diapsuxai to skaphidion."] The reply that then follows of Mercury shows that not a remnant was left of Nineveh in the very ancient time of Croesus, and that nobody even then knew of its site: "Nineveh, O Ferryman, is quite destroyed, and not a trace of it is left now, nor can you tell where it used to be": [Greek: "Hae Minos men, o porthmen, apololen aedae, kai ouden ichnos eti loipon autaes oud an eipois hopou pot' ae"] (Charon 23). Strabo says the

same with respect to the destruction of Nineveh: "The city of Nineveh was thereupon demolished simultaneously with the overthrowal of the Syrians: [Greek: Hae men oun Ninos polis aephanisthae parachraema meta taen ton Suron katalusin"] (XVI. I.3), --though to speak of the inhabitants as "Syrians," at such a juncture is hardly correct language on the part of Strabo; it should have been "_Assyrians_," if Justin is right in saying that that people only took the name of _Syrians_ after their empire was at an end: "for thirteen hundred years," says he, "did the Assyrians, who were _afterwards called the Syrians_, retain their empire": "Imperium Assyrii, qui _postea Syri dicti sunt_, mille trecentis annis tenuere" (Justin I. 2).

Had Bracciolini been acquainted with these things, they would have made such an impression upon his mind that he could never have forgotten them. But as he wrote ancient history in the fifteenth century, and did not know what Lucian and Strabo had said of Nineveh, he took as an authority for his statement a most indifferent historian who flourished towards the close of the fourth century of our aera, Ammianus Marcellinus; for I know of nobody but Marcellinus, who makes this statement; nor is there likely to be anybody else, because the statement is ridiculous. It will be remembered that Bracciolini recovered the work of Ammianus Marcellinus: it is then reasonable to presume that he had read, if not studied his history. Indeed, there can be very little doubt that it was Marcellinus who misled him: for when he was setting about the forgery and importunately soliciting Niccoli to supply him with books for that purpose in the autumn of 1423, Ammianus Marcellinus was one of these authorities: in the letter dated the 6th of November that year, he says he was "glad that his friend had done with Marcellinus, and would be still more glad if he would send him the book": "Gratum est mihi te absolvisse Marcellinum, idque gratius si me librum miseris" (Ep. II. 7). We may be certain the book, being "done with" by Niccoli, was sent to him on account of the importance of his having it, for the carrying out of his undertaking; thus he makes Tacitus commit the same mistake as Marcellinus committed,--that Nineveh was in existence in the time of the Roman Emperors: "In Adiabena is the city of Nineveh, which in olden time had possessed an extensive portion of Persia"; "In Adiabena Ninus EST civitas quae olim Persidis magna possederat" (XXIII. 6). Tacitus lived a good three hundred years before that historical epitomist of not much note or weight; and could not, on his authority, have been dragged, like his "discoverer" and student, Bracciolini, into this monstrous error.

IV. But it is in the estimate of human nature, and the invariable disparagement pervading the delineation of the character of every individual, in the last six books of the Annals, that the Italian hand of Bracciolini is unmistakably detected, and the Roman hand of Tacitus not at all traceable. Shakespeare makes Iago say of himself: "I am nothing if not critical,"--meaning censorious. Bracciolini might have said the same of himself. He was never so much "at home," (by which I mean that he never seemed to have been so completely "happy"), as when lashing the anti-pope Felix, Filelfo, Valla, George of Trebizond, Guarino of Verona, or some other great literary rival of whose fame he was jealous; carping at others, whose intellectual attainments were at all commensurate to his own, and accusing of foul enormities persons who were possessors of rhetorical merit, as he accused the "Fratres Observantiae," for no other reason that one can see except that those interlopers in the monastic order (the "Brothers of Observance" being a new branch of the Franciscans) preached capital sermons.

There is no getting at any insight as to his nature from the biographies of him; they are all such faint and imperfect sketches: we learn nothing of him from that curiosity of literature, L'Enfant's astonishing performance, "Poggiana"--in which the pages and the blunders contend for supremacy in number, and the blunders get it,--nor from that bald, cold business, entitled "Vita Poggii," which Recanati, flinging aside brilliancy and clinging fast to fidelity in facts and plainness of speech, prefixed to his edition of Bracciolini's "Historia Florentina," published at Venice in 1715, and which Muratori, sixteen years after, reprinted at Milan along with the said "History of Florence, in the 20th volume of his "Rerum Italicarum Scriptores;"--nor from the Rev. William Shepherd's innocent affair, "The Life of Poggio Bracciolini"; but the deficiencies of the biographers have been supplied by a true man of genius, Poliziano, who has hit off his character in a noun substantive and an adjective in the superlative. In his History of the Pazzi and Salviati Conspiracy against Lorenzo de' Medici,--which plot to overthrow the government Bracciolini's third son, Jacopo, joined, and was hanged for his pains in front of the first floor windows of that Prince's palace,--Poliziano says that Jacopo Bracciolini was "specially remarkable for calumny," in which respect," adds the historian, "he was exactly like his father, who was a MOST CALUMNIOUS MAN:"--"Ejus praecipua in maledicendo virtus, in qua vel patrem HOMINEM MALEDICENTISSIMUM referebat" (Politiani Opera, p. 637).

Such being the character of Bracciolini, I may glance aside for a moment to observe that nothing can be more incongruous than that his statue, which his countrymen originally placed in the portico of the Church of Santa Maria del Fiore in Florence (because he had praised them in his history of their city and abused all foreigners), should have been transferred in 1560 by the reigning Duke of Tuscany into the interior of the sacred building and placed among the figures of the Twelve Apostles, where it still remains, the ungodly "Poggio" forming a grotesque portion of the saintly group.

If the son was such an exact counterpart of the father in evil-speaking, as borne testimony to by that admirable and accurate historian, Poliziano, it follows that Bracciolini confirmed by his tongue and pen the words put by Shakespeare into the mouth of the Duke in "Measure for Measure":

> "Back-wounding calumny
> The whitest virtue strikes: What king so strong
> Can tie the gall up in a slanderous tongue?"

Indeed, if faith is to be placed in what Poliziano says, then Bracciolini was, like Thersites in the Iliad, a "systematic calumniator of kings and princes, while at the same time he must have indiscriminately inveighed against the characters of private individuals, run down the productions of all learned men, and, in fact, vilified everybody"; for that is exactly the estimate formed of him by Poliziano:--"Semper ille aut principes insectari passim, aut in mores hominum sine ullo discrimine invehi, aut eujusque docti scripta lacessere: nemini parcere" (Polit. Op. 1. c.).

If this was, really, the distinguishing characteristic of Bracciolini, we have then another very strong point in evidence that he forged the Annals, for the spirit of detraction stands forth in the boldest relief on every page of that production. From the beginning to the end of the last six books (with which we are

at present dealing, as we shall hereafter deal separately with the first six books), there is scarcely such a thing as a good man. Now though we are all perfectly conscious of our shortcomings and those of our kind, so that we spontaneously acknowledge the truthfulness of the smart, though not altogether decorous remark of Ovid's, that "if Jupiter were to strike men with lightning as often as they committed sins, he would in a short time be without his thunderbolts":--

> "Si quoties peccant homines, sua fulmina mittat
> Jupiter, exiguo tempore inermis erit;"

there is, nevertheless, no necessity for exaggerating those faults with the persistency met with in the Annals. Scandal without contradiction is admitted of all persons who are either thought good or who act properly. Every infamous slander is accepted that is cast on the eminent statesman and philosopher, Seneca (XIII. 20 and 42.--XIV. 52-3). Piso, who has the reputation of being a good man, is described as a hypocrite, pretending to have virtues (XV. 48). Fenius Rufus draws no gain nor advantage from his office of superintendent of the stores (XIV. 51), and is held in general esteem for his course of life (XIV. 51.--XV. 50); but he is described as immeasurably severe (XV. 58), harsh towards his associates (ib.), and wanting in spirit (XV. 61). Sylla's innocence is ascribed to despicable pusillanimity and cowardice (XIII. 47). Corbulo, though he took "the shortest route," and "sped his march day and night without intermission" (XV. 12), to relieve Poetus when distressed from the approach of Vologeses and the Parthian army, is said, contrary to these statements, to "have made no great haste in order that he might gain more praise from bringing relief when the danger had increased" (XV. 10). Because Flavius, the brother of the German hero, Armin, takes up his abode in Rome, he is accused of being a "spy." (XI. 16). This is, certainly, the writing of a malicious, altogether spiteful man,--a man, too, irrational in his calumny,--revelling, in short, in the spirit of detraction.

V. It is, of course, (if there be any truth in the present theory), a thing by no means strange, but, on the contrary, to be thoroughly expected, when this temper and turn of mind are strongly enforced by Bracciolini in his Dialogue "De Infelicitate Principum"; his friend, Niccoli, one of the interlocutors, when asked "why he was more prone to blame than praise," replies that "there was no difficulty at all in giving an explanation, because he had been taught it by the experience of advanced age and the antecedents of a long life: he had too often been wrong in praising men, because he had found them worse than he had thought them; yet he had never been wrong when he had abused them, for there was such a multitude of rogues amongst men, such an amount of vices and crimes, such a superabundance of hypocrites, from people preferring to seem rather than be good, so many who threw such a veil of honesty over their rascalities, that it was perilous, and akin to falsehood, to bestow laudation on anybody." "'Cur in vituperando sis quam in laudando proclivior.' 'Hoc facile est ad explicandum,' Nicolaus inquit, 'quod longa aetas et ante acta vita me docuit. Nam in laudandis hominibus saepius deceptus sum, cum hi deteriores essent quam existimarem, in vituperandis vero nunquam me fefellit opinio. Tanta enim inter homines versatur improborum copia,--ita sceleribus omnia inficiuntur, ita hypocritae superabundant, qui videri quam esse boni malunt,--ita quilibet sua vitia aliquo honesti velamento tegit, ut periculosum sit et mendacio proximum quempiam laudare'" (Pog. Op. 394). Though these words are ascribed to his friend Niccoli, they exactly expressed his own sentiments, as may be seen in the letter to his

friend, Bartolommeo Fazio, from which we have already quoted, where he speaks of himself as being "always excessively averse to the language of praise," and further reproves it as "a species of vice":--"non adulandi causa loquor, nam abfuit a me longissime semper id vitii genus" (Ep. IX. Bartol. Facii Epistol).

In that strongly expressed sentiment of the world being filled with so many knaves that it was dangerous, and all but destructive of truth, to believe in honesty, we have the keynote to the whole of the Annals; and the last six books are marked by a universal cynical disbelief in human honesty; for from the first character, Asiaticus, who is accused of every kind of corruption and abomination (XI. 2), down to Egnatius, with his perfidy, treachery, avarice, lust, and superficial virtues (XVI. 32), all are patterns of the vices, few, except the aged Thrasea, being bright examples of virtue. I have no doubt this description of the general depravity of Adam's descendants, the dwelling on which was so delectable to the disposition of Bracciolini, was a very correct portraiture of the human race in the fifteenth century, when, in Italy especially, and, above all, in Rome, the light from the lamp of Diogenes was, I suspect, very much wanted to find an honest man.

CHAPTER II.

THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

I. The intellect and depravity of the age.--II. Bracciolini as its exponent.--III. Hunter's accurate description of him.--IV. Bracciolini gave way to the impulses of his age.--V. The Claudius, Nero and Tiberius of the Annals personifications of the Church of Rome in the fifteenth century.--VI. Schildius and his doubts.--VII. Bracciolini not covetous of martyrdom: communicates his fears to Niccoli.--VIII. The princes and great men in the Annals the princes and great men of the XVth century, not of the opening period of the Christian aera.--IX. Bracciolini, and not Tacitus, a disparager of persons in high places.

I. The fifteenth century was the most curious of all ages: it has never been properly depicted, except on its darker side, indirectly, in the Annals. It is usually regarded as an age of barbarism; it was not that; it must ever be memorable for splendour of genius and the promotion of letters. A proof of the esteem in which literary excellence was held is afforded by the conduct of the Sultan of Turkey, Mahomet II., who deemed a mere ode by Filelfo a sufficient ransom for that scholar's mother-in-law, Manfredina Doria, and her two daughters. Astronomers were treading for the first time in the right track after two thousand years, since the days of Pythagoras, as may be seen by the hypothesis of Domenico Maria, about the variability of the axis of the globe, and by the labours of Mueller, better known by the Latin name derived from his native town of Koenigsberg, Regiomontanus, who almost anticipated Copernicus in discovering the true system of the universe. Few before or since have so excelled in mathematics and mechanics as Peurbach. Divinity had a profound and subtle exponent in the mild and gentle Thomas ý Kempis. The age nursed the man who first philosophized in politics, Machiavelli. Italy was ablaze, like the galaxy, with a countless number of brilliant lights that shone in classical lore and accomplishments. Alberti shewed by his Gothic church dedicated to St. Francis (now the Cathedral at Rimini), that the genius of architecture was again abroad as much inspired as when Hermogenes reared the temple of Bacchus at Teos. Chaucer, the morning star of poetry in England, briefly preceded one greater, and even more

learned, Rowley, whose few fragments recovered, as asserted by the sprightly boy-finder, Chatterton, in a chest in the muniment room of the church of St. Mary Redcliffe, Bristol, reveal to us what we have unfortunately lost; his Battle of Hastings, though far away from the power and grandeur of the poetry, recalls, if not the tramp and march of the verse, attempts at the subdued tone, ease of manner, effect and picturesqueness of thoughts and figures, along with frequent, rich similes drawn from nature, which meet us at every turn in the Iliad, then newly brought to Europe, and with which the delighted poet had evidently saturated his astonished soul, a few of his expressions being close copies and some of his language a literal translation from Homer. [Endnote 251] All over Europe princes and nobles signalized themselves in martial achievements and the art of war: some revived memories of the mightiest: the great hero of antiquity, Cyrus, had not a history more obscured with fable than the great hero of the Tartars, Tamerlane; the tale of George Castriot, surnamed Scanderbeg, for his acts of valour and feats of strength, is as mythical as the tale of Ninus: Francis Sforza, Duke of Milan, could have stood by the side of Pausanias, having as signally defeated at Mont Olmo the great general Francis Piccinino as the King of Sparta crushed at Plataea the brilliant chief, Mardonius; the Hungarian sovereigns, John Corvinus Hunniades and his son Matthias occupied the ground that was held by the Theban princes, Pelopidas and Epaminondas; for the two Woiwodes of Transylvania kept their country free from the enslavement of the Turk, as the two Boeotarchs preserved Thebes in independence from the rule of the Lacedaemonians. Never did Athens produce a general superior to our own gallant and magnanimous Henry the Fifth:--

> "quo justior alter
> Nec pictate fuit, nec bello major et armis."

Still the age, though distinguished for intellect and valour, was degraded by the most monstrous villainies that were ever perpetrated, and the most detestable characters who ever existed; and a becoming procreation of such an intellectual and depraved age was that revolting monster in letters,--the Annals.

The Muses were courted more than the Graces: talents were held in higher esteem than the virtues. Men were unremitting, indiscriminate worshippers of money; they were not trained in the school of good morals; and when people, brought up without the pale of the precepts of probity, are congenitally cursed with a greed for pelf and a legion of evil and rascally proclivities, they become easily pervious to the promptings of all sorts of knavery.

Profligacy was so wide-spread that it extended to men usually supposed to be most pious and exemplary in their lives: Bishops, Archbishops, Cardinals and the Pope himself, though celibats and holders of ecclesiastical dignities, did not arrive at Delphi without touching at Cythera: indirect evidence is afforded of this by the treatises which physicians, shortly after the commencement of the next century, wrote on the disease then called "Morbus Gallicus," when Gaspard Torella wrote his for the purpose of benefiting the manners of the Bishop of Avranches, Ulrich von Hutten his as a safeguard for the perils that attended the habits of the Cardinal Archbishop of Mayence, and Peter Pintor his to warn that gay pope, Alexander VI., of the danger of his ways, the Spanish physician even expressing the kind hope (which may not have been fulfilled) that the Holy Father would be preserved "morbo foedo et occulto his temporibus affligente": there is direct evidence of this state of abandonment to vice on the part

of consecrated men from Bracciolini, who, during his excursion to the Baths of Baden in 1416, gave an account of that favourite watering place of the fifteenth century, where abbots, monks, friars and priests comported themselves with more licentiousness than the laity, laid aside all thoughts of religion, and sometimes bathed with women, whose hair they decked with ribbons and wreaths of flowers: "hic quoque virgines Vestales, vel, ut verius loquar, Florales: hic abbates, monachi, fratres, sacerdotes majori licentia quam caeteri vivunt, et simul quandoque cum mulieribus lavantes, et sertis quoque comas ornantes, omni religione abjecta" (Ep. I. 1). Joanna II., Queen of Naples, when a Doctor of Laws of Florence was sent to her court on an embassy from his fellow-citizens, and, seeking a private interview, made a coarse declaration of love, could look with a pleasant smile upon him, and ask mildly "If that was also in his instructions?" At the wonderfully numerous assembly that attended at Constance on the 22nd of April, 1418, on the formal dismissal of the Ecumenical Council by the newly elected Pope, Otto Colonna, who took the name of Martin V., there were present no fewer (according to one account) than 1,500 courtezans, many of whom heaped up a great mass of money, one accumulating 800 gold sequins, equivalent now to a little fortune of ý16,000, not so much, it appears, from among the 80,000 married laymen, who were Emperors, Kings, Princes, Dukes, Counts and Knights, bankers, shop-keepers, bakers, tailors, barbers and merry-andrews, as from among the 18,000 celibats, who were the Pope, the prelates, the priests, the presbyters, the monks and the friars, grey, white and black.

II. As a notable informer in the Annals of the exact spirit of his age, Bracciolini necessarily places before his reader not a few pictures of the deterioration of moral principles in the aphrodisiac direction; his book reflects in the most vivid light the strange and very wonderful depravities of his period, some so huge as to deviate greatly out of the common course of nature. From time to time the historic and philosophic gravity of the last six books of the Annals suffers great eclipses by his leaving aside weighty affairs of State to descend into petty descriptions of the erratic conduct of Messalina, with her extravagant lewdness (XI. 26-8), Nero, with his abominable pollutions (XVI. 37), and that Emperor's mother, Agrippina, with her monstrous incest (XIV. 2). These matters, even if true of the ancient Romans in the first century of our aera, Tacitus, we may be certain, would have avoided as not coming within the scope of the historian's province, and as being altogether uncongenial to his sublime tone of elevated sentiments and high-minded refinement. But anyone conversant with the writings and temper of Bracciolini will know well that such passages, instead of being in any way distasteful, would be altogether agreeable. To be convinced, one has only to glance at the collection of anecdotes, styled "Facetiae," at the end of his works, which even a frequenter of the Judge and Jury Society would consider justly liable to objection, howbeit that a pious gentleman in holy orders who wrote a Life of Bracciolini, the Reverend William Shepherd, can find words of palliation for them as sprightly pleasantries. They show us Bracciolini in his merry mood; they give us a fresh glimpse into the fifteenth century; they may be considered the best jokes or Joe Millerisms of the fifteenth century, such as the one commencing "Homo ý nostris rusticanus, et haud multum prudens" (Pog. Op. 423), the one that follows entitled "De Vidua accensa libidine cum paupere" (ibid); and that which begins "Adolescens nobilis et forma insignis" (p. 433).

The taste of Bracciolini which is shown by these "Facetiae," is still more forcibly exhibited in a letter to Becadelli of Bologna

(Ep. II. 40), in which he gloats over a book of indecent epigrams which his friend had written; he describes it as a "work at once waggish and luxuriating in voluptuousness," "opus et jocosum et plenum voluptatis," and as "a most sweet book," "liber est suavissimus." With respect to his own feelings on reading it, he observes, "that he was delighted beyond measure at the variety of the subjects and the elegance of the poetry; at the same time he wondered how things so improper and so obscene could be represented by his friend so gracefully and so neatly, and" he was of opinion that "the many excessive obscenities were expressed in such a manner that they seemed not only to be depicted but to have been actually committed; for he could not help thinking that they must be considered as facts, and not as fictions merely for the sake of entertaining the reader":--"Delectatus sum, mehercule, varietate rerum et elegantia versuum: simulque admiratus sum res adeo impudicas, adeo ineptas tam venuste, tam composite a te dici, atque ita multa exprimi turpiuscula, ut non enarrari, sed agi videantur: neque ficta a te jocandi causa, ut existimo, sed acta aestimari possunt." Such was his extravagant commendation, and, consequently, his hearty approbation of a most unnatural production, "Hermaphroditus," which ultimately received the censure of the author himself, who was ashamed that he had written it, as shown in the following epigram preserved by Cardinal Quirini in his "Diatriba in Epistolas Francisci Barbari":--

"Hic faeces varias Veneris, moresque prophanos,
Quos natura fugit, me docuisse _pudet_."

III. We shall now see how accurately a writer in the middle of the last century, the Reverend Thomas Hunter, in his "Observations on Tacitus" (p. 51), hit off the character of Bracciolini, all the while that he fancied he was venting objurgations on the staid old Roman: "If he is anywhere happy in his description, it is in the display of ... luxury refined and high-flavoured ... Never writer had a happier pen at describing wickedness ... Were we to give room to suspicions ... we should say that he might have been ... a party in every lewd scene he represents."

Mr. Hunter proceeds: "Messalina's guilty amours with Silius are described with a gay and festive air, with that pride of voluptuousness, and feeling taste of pleasure, as show the writer well versed in court intrigue. The description is too luscious, and may lead to a perpetration of the crime, rather than an abhorrence of the criminals."

Only one fault is to be found with this criticism, which is both excellent and curious,--excellent, because remarkable for its simple truthfulness,--curious, because it looks as if Hunter, who knew nothing about Bracciolini, had the eyes of a cat and could see in the dark;--the fault is that the writer applies the criticism to one eminently undeserving of its causticity;--because though we have quoted "If he is," Hunter wrote, "If Tacitus is"; now Tacitus never wrote any descriptions of the nature commented on by the Vicar of Wrexham; they are not to be found in any of the works that pass under his name except the Annals; there is this excuse to be found for Hunter, that, at the time when he wrote, he was compelled to take the majestic Roman Consul to be the author of the Annals; but though his criticism is not applicable in a single syllable to Tacitus, it is strictly applicable in every word to Bracciolini, whom he never dreamt of as the composer of the Annals.

IV. It matters not what a man may attempt in literature, what style he may adopt, or what old pattern imitate,--he cannot get

away from the impulses of his own time, strive he ever so hard: the tone and colour of his work will be modified by actual history and current politics; his strongest impressions will be influenced by the deeds that are being transacted and the lives that are being passed around him; so that however wide, searching and vigorous may be his powers of observation, thought and intellect, he cannot liberate these from contemporary associations; any endeavour to do that must end in failure, ending, as it must, in artificial coldness and unemotional lifelessness. Bracciolini never made the attempt; he gave way to Nature, and never did his genius shine so brightly, and never was it more prolific, than when dealing with the diversity required of it by the history embraced in the Annals.

V. I am now about to make some remarks which I am glad to say, will get for this book a place in the "Index Expurgatorius" in Rome; and which will do a great deal more than that,--considerably amaze the shade of Bracciolini (supposing that he has a shade), perhaps as much as M. Jourdain was astonished when told that he had been talking prose all his life.

Every student of the Annals, in order rightly to understand its meaning and properly to appreciate its greatness, should bear in mind that the Emperors who play a part in it, Claudius and Nero in the last six books, and Tiberius in the first six, are intended to be the representatives or personifications of the Church of Rome in the fifteenth century. Hence it is that Claudius, Nero and Tiberius are depicted as superhuman in monstrosities,--colossal in crime,--perpetrators of enormities that never yet met, and never will meet, in combination in any single man. Each is, in fact, a fiend, and not a human being. It was thus only that Bracciolini could show us in its true light the Church of Rome as it acted in his day. In the language of Wickliffe it was the "Synagogue of Satan." A mere trifle was it that reprobates in the form of bishops and priests ordained, consecrated and sacrificed. See the Church at an Oecumenical Council; then it capped the climax of cruelty and crime; it resorted to demoniacal subterfuge to condemn good men as heretics and burn them alive, believing that death by fire would inflict the most exquisitely excruciating tortures; at the Council of Constance it sought to condemn Wickliffe, by making an inference from some of his principles that he propagated the doctrine,--"God is obliged to obey the Devil,"--nowhere to be found in the Trialogue, Dialogue, and all the other works, treatises, and opuscles or small pieces bearing the name of that honoured and most pious divine: it consigned to the flames those two intimate friends and associates, John Huss and Jerome of Prague, for holding just and virtuous views about the degradation of the priestly office, and for nobly and fearlessly inveighing against the corruptions of the pontifical court, the pomp and pride of prelates, and the dissipated habits and abuses of the clergy.

When we read in the Annals of men, who, in spite of their nobility, innocence and virtues, were put to death by the sword of the executioner or the poisoned bowl, we must not think that we are reading of real Romans who thus actually suffered: the whole is a fabrication placing before us fictitious pictures, meant to be life-like, of what the DOMINATING POWER CAN DO IN SOCIETY: they are not pictures intended to show with truthfulness monstrosities positively done by Emperors of Rome in the first century: they are pictures that reflect with fidelity the atrocities that stained the Church of Rome in the beginning of the fifteenth century.

Those were the closing days of the ancient period of the most

abominable of all the Inquisitions, that of Spain, before the establishment by Ferdinand and Isabella in 1481 of the modern Inquisition in the Iberian Peninsula: that terrible jurisdiction extended to everybody, dead as well as living, absent as well as present, princes and subjects, rich and poor,--all were liable alike on the bare suspicion of such an insignificant matter as heresy, to corporal punishment, pecuniary fines, confiscation of property, and loss of life, by being burnt at the stake, or,--as occurred to Savonarola, towards the close of the century,--first strangled by the hangman, and then committed to the flames. Only the Nero of the last part of the Annals, or the Tiberius of the first six books of that work, can properly stand forth, in his persecuting spirit, as the counterpart of the Dominican, John de Torquemada, who, in the performance of his duty, as the Inquisitor General in Spain, proceeded against upwards of 100,000 persons, 6,000 of whom he condemned to the flames.

VI. So far, then, from being surprised with Professor Schildius (Professor of History and Greek, and afterwards of Hebrew in the University of Bremen at the commencement of the seventeenth century), and induced to doubt with him, the veraciousness of the Annals, I should have been very much astonished indeed, and, certainly, called in question its fidelity as representing the spirit of the fifteenth century, if it had not recorded (to borrow the language of Schildius) "a number of the most honourable and innocent men, the prides and ornaments of the State, coming to an ignominious end, and for no other crime, forsooth, than that which we call treason-felony": "Quod si non omnium judiciis superior esset Cornelius Tacitus, laboraret Annalium fides, tot nobilissimos et innocuos viros, tot decora et ornamenta Civitatis, indignissimo fine cecidisse crederemus, idque non aliud hercle ob crimen, quam illum, quem diximus, obtentuin laesae majestatis" (Schildi Exercitationes in C. Taciti Annal: XV. p. 29). Substitute for "treason felony" "heresy," and we have the strictest truth with regard to the unutterable ferocity of the Church of Rome in the fifteenth century.

VII. Had any man then living been bold enough to tell the world of the Church of Rome's ferocity in primitive terms, he must have been particularly desirous of being roasted alive: had he even so represented it as to render himself comprehensible by the most quick-witted, he must still have had the martyr's liking for instruments of torture and the blazing faggot: Bracciolini, whom nature had not gifted with the taste of Huss and Jerome of Prague, was so conscious of the perilous position in which he placed himself by undertaking a composition of this description, that he communicated his alarm to Niccoli about the care he must take as to the expression of his views lest he should give offence to princes, in that memorable letter, from which I have already quoted, dated Rome, October 8, 1423, in which he indirectly informed his friend that he had commenced his forgery of the Annals, by confessing that he was engaged on a certain work (or, as he puts it, "certain tiny occupations" ("occupatiunculae quaedam") in the style of Lord Byron, who would speak meanly of any of his marvellous poems, Childe Harold or Manfred, as "a thing"). "Besides," said he, "there are certain tiny occupations in which I am engaged, which do not so much impede me in themselves, as the way in which I tarry over them; for it is necessary that I should be on my guard with respect to the inclinations of princes, that their susceptibilities be not offended, as they are much more ready to vent their rage than to extend their forgiveness if anything be done amiss";--he then ended by making an observation which we have already noticed to the effect that beginnings were always difficult, especially when

an attempt was made to imitate the ancients: "Sunt praeterea occupatiuculae quaedam, in quibus versor, quae non tantum ipsae me impediunt, quantum earum expectatio. Oportet enim paratum esse etiam ad nutum, ne offiendatur religio principum, quorum indignatio promptior est, quam remissio, si quid omittatur. In quibusvis quoque rebus principia sunt ardua ac difficilia; ut quod antiquioribus in officio sit jucundum, promptum ac leve, mihi sit molestum, tardum, onerosum" (Ep. II. 5). Therefore, Bracciolini, in the most strained detortions from literal meaning,--in the darkest nimbus of far-fetched elaboration of mystical allegory, --placed before us the unparalleled cruelty of the Church of Rome in the tiger-like thirst for blood of the Tiberius and the Nero of the Annals.

VIII. In the same manner as we have in the Annals a true and life-like picture of the savage and ravenous fierceness of the Church of Rome in the fifteenth century, so we have the likenesses, drawn, too, with the spirit and vigour of life about them, of the persons who flourished at that period as Princes, Ministers, and their agents and servants, though the likenesses may have been reproduced with some partial poetical exaggeration with regard to the peculiar characters, vices and singular debasement of individuals: this, however, is very certain; people, then, were altogether abnormal. We have already seen how historians tell us that Cardinal Beaufort by his intrigues and those of the Queen of Henry IV. hastened the ruin and untimely fate of Humphry, Duke of Gloucester. Kings so troubled their subjects by their tyranny and excesses, they were deposed, imprisoned, or put to death: in England Richard II. was stripped of his kingdom; in Bohemia Wenceslaus was twice thrown into prison; in Germany, Frederick, Duke of Brunswick, was murdered only two days after he had been elected Emperor; and in France, Jean Sans Peur, Duke of Burgundy, had his life taken on the bridge of Montereau. In the East things fared even worse: sovereigns trampled on sovereigns: Tamerlane, the victor, treated with contumely the once proud conqueror, the vanquished Bayazid, Sultan of Turkey, used his body as a footstool or ladder by which to mount his horse; forced him to lie on the ground while he fed and to pick up the crumbs that fell from his table, and finally shut him up in an iron cage, where he died of a broken heart: if these things be false, as they may be, or exaggerated, as unquestionably they were, yet they point to the spirit of the age, in the simple fact of their having been recounted, and in the still more remarkable fact of their having been believed.

There were no such emperors and persons in high places during the opening period of the Christian aera; or Tacitus in his "History" gives us a very wrong account of them; his views of them are, if not favourable, lenient or apologetic: they do not seem to have had the vices and faults of most men; Tacitus has otherwise successfully thrown a veil over them. Were the whole truth known, it might be found that there is a shameful exaggeration of the vices of Roman Emperors: this looks most probable when we consider the significant reflections made about Princes in one of his miscellaneous productions, by the historian, David Hume,--not the David Hume, _minor_, who, living a long time among the English, and becoming fascinated with their ways, manners, customs and civilization, mooted the union of England and Scotland, more than a hundred years before the great event came off, in that famous historical essay printed in London in 1605 and entitled "De Unione Insulae Britanniae Tractatus;" nor David Hume _minimus_, who wrote the "History of the Houses of Douglas and Angus" but the David Hume, _major_, who wrote the "History of England"--that "there are, perhaps, and have been for two centuries nearly two

hundred absolute princes, great and small in Europe; and allowing twenty years to each reign, we may suppose that there have been in the whole two thousand monarchs, or 'tyrants,' as the Greeks would have called them, yet of these there has not been one, not even Philip of Spain, so bad as Tiberius, Caligula, Nero or Domitian, who were four in twelve among the Roman Emperors." When we find David Hume thus putting the matter, in his Essay on "Civil Liberty," it makes us at once see how highly unlikely it is that all the badness of human nature should have been concentrated in a few individuals who lived at a particular period and in a particular country, those individuals being Emperors, that particular period the commencement of the Christian aera and that particular country ancient Rome. Somewhere or other there must have been a great deal of maligning; nor is it difficult to discover who the maligner was as far as the characters in the Annals are concerned.

IX. No one will accuse Tacitus of disparaging Princes and persons in high places; but everybody will admit, who is acquainted with the productions of Bracciolini, that he speaks trumpet-tongued of their delinquencies. When in his Dialogue, "De Infelicitate Principum," an attempt is made by Cosmo de' Medici to uphold some of them as "worthy of all praise and commendation for their learning and estimable qualities," the passage follows, as the reply of Niccoli (already quoted), of the hypocrisy and rascality of all men, consequently, of the hypocrisy and rascality of kings, ministers and their agents and servants. Nay, more: Cosmo de' Medici is made to express his astonishment at the spirit of detraction in Niccoli, but is not surprised as he lashes private individuals, to find him bitterly inveighing against princes, being ever ready and fluent in his abuse of the latter, even when they do no harm, and cannot be reproached for their lives: Cosmo de' Medici is, therefore, of opinion that exceptions ought to be made in their favour, and wants to know why Niccoli should be so strongly given to vituperate them:--"Tum, Cosmus, graviter ut assolet, "Facillime," inquit, "Nicolae, (qui mos tuus est), laberis ad detrahendum. Equidem minime miror, si quando es in privatos dicatior, cum in ipsos principes tam facile inveharis, et tamen nullius injuria, aut vitae contumelia facit, ut tam sis promptus, aut copiosus in eorum objurgationem. Novi nonnullos qui abs te excipi deberent ab reliquorum caterva viri docti, egregii, omnique laude et commendatione dignissimi. Unde mecum saepius cogitans addubitare cogor quaenam sit potissimum causa, cur in vituperando sis quam, &c." (Pog. Op. p. 394)

We who live in these days and know how exemplary, as a rule, for piety and excellent conduct, are Popes, Cardinals, Bishops and, in fact, the clergy in the Church of Rome, as well as the dignitaries and pastors in all the other ecclesiastical establishments of Europe, and who, at the same time, honour and admire crowned heads and princes, ministers and great men for their position and virtues, cannot realize to ourselves how there ever could have been such hatefully contemptible personages in the sovereign and loftiest places as are depicted in the Annals, page after page, nor can we bring ourselves to believe that there ever existed such a bevy of brilliant malefactors, except in the judgment and fancy of one who did not shine among the most amiable of mankind as he, certainly, shone among the most able.

CHAPTER III.

FURTHER PROOFS OF FORGERY.

I. "Octavianus" as the name of Augustus Caesar.--II. Cumanus and Felix as joint governors of Judaea.--III. The blood relationship of Italians and Romans.--IV. Fatal error in the _oratio obliqua_.--V. Mistake made about "locus".--VI. Objections of some critics to the language of Tacitus examined.--VII. Some improprieties that occur in the Annals found also in Bracciolini's works.--VIII. Instanced in (_a_) "nec ... aut", (_b_) rhyming and the peculiar use of "pariter".--IX. The harmony of Tacitus and the ruggedness of Bracciolini illustrated.--X. Other peculiarities of Bracciolini's not shared by Tacitus: Two words terminating alike following two others with like terminations; prefixes that have no meaning; and playing on a single letter for alliterative purposes.

I. If there be one man more than another who might easily fall into the error of supposing that an ancient Roman could take in the most capricious and arbitrary way any name he pleased, Flavius, or Julius, or Pius, it would be a man like Bracciolini, who, as Secretary of the Popes for forty years, was in the habit of seeing every now and then, and that, too, at very brief intervals, a Cardinal, on being raised to the dignity of the Papacy, take any name from whim or fancy, and, sometimes a very queer name, too, as a Cossa taking the name of John, or a Colonna the name of Martin. This being admitted, it seems quite consistent that Bracciolini should speak of Augustus Caesar, before he was Emperor, as "Octavianus." When we read in the XIIIth book of the Annals (6), "imperatori" (Bracciolini's word for "General," Tacitus would have written "duci"), "quantum ad robur deesse, cum octavo decimo aetatis anno Cneius Pompeius, nono decimo Caesar OCTAVIANUS civilia bella sustinuerint, we may be assured that we are reading words which were not written by Tacitus, and, as for the matter of that, any Roman, because he would have known that Augustus Caesar, before he was called Augustus, did not bear and never could have borne, the name of Octavianus: the son of Octavius, he was himself Octavius, not Octavianus, as his sister was Octavia (so Pliny the Elder writes, "Marcellus _Octavia_" not Octaviana, "sorore Augusti genitus" N.H. XIX. 6, 1.) Shakespeare knew better than Bracciolini the name of Augustus, before he was Emperor, by making Antony say to him:

> "And now, _Octavius_,
> Listen great things."
> _Julius Caesar_, Act IV. sc. 1.

Whenever we find a Roman's name ending in "_ianus_," we know one of three things: either that he had taken his name from his wife who was an heiress, as Domitianus; or that he was the eldest son of a man who had taken his mother's name, which he was himself allowed to assume by the marriage contract, as Titus Vespasianus; or, when we find a repetition of the same name ending in "ius" and "ianus," as "Aemilius Aemilianus," or in "ianus" and "ius" as "Licinianus Licinius," we know that the individual was of the Aemilian or Licinian family, and had married the heiress of another great Roman house. This was the rule among that ancient people, unless I have been misled by Father Hardouin (See Harduinus. Praef. ad Histor. August. ex Nummis Antiq. Opera Sel. p. 683). The termination, then, "ianus," always indicated marriage with an heiress, just as such a marriage among ourselves is heraldically marked by the husband and wife's coats of arms being placed alongside of each other; and just as we never depart from this custom in escutcheons, so the Romans never varied their rule with respect to such names; then as Augustus Caesar neither

married an heiress, nor was the eldest son of a man who had formed such a marriage; and as this custom of changing the termination of the name was familiar to all the Romans,--if not to every ignorant or ill-bred man, at least, to every well-informed, well-bred man among them,--it follows as clearly, as that 2 and 2 make 4, that Tacitus, the high-born gentleman and consul, could never have written Caesar _Octavianus_.

I am exceedingly sorry to have made these remarks for the sake of the writers of classical biographies, whose reputation is at stake, for one and all, from Lempriýre to Dr. William Smith, mislead those who consult their pages as to the names of Augustus, among which figures "Octavianus"; this is their own fault; they will persist in regarding the Annals as the best and most authentic history we have of the ancient Romans during the period embraced in its records; they reject all other testimony, when all other testimony is far more reliable.

I also grieve very much for the authorities of the British Museum on account of the inscription they have had graved in the Roman Gallery of Antiquities under the bust numbered 3 which represents Augustus in his youth,--"_Octavianus_ Caesar Augustus"; I have been compelled to point out this error in examining a work given out as the production of the ancient Roman, Caius Cornelius Tacitus, when it is the glaring forgery of a bungling mediaeval European "grammaticus," that bungling mediaeval European "grammaticus" being (as I am showing, and the reader is, I trust, becoming more and more convinced as he proceeds) no other than Poggio Bracciolini.

II. I am also extremely sorry for Dr. Adam Clarke that his accuracy in research and his extensive and extraordinary learning, which have hitherto been indisputable, should be now called in question; but they are jeoparded: in his valuable Commentary on the Bible, he says in one of his notes to the Acts of the Apostles (Ch. XXIV. v. 10): "Cumanus and Felix were, for a time, joint governors of Judaea; but, after the condemnation of Cumanus, the government fell entirely into the hands of Felix";--this is not history. In the first place, Cumanus and Felix were never joint governors of Judaea; in the second place, when Cumanus was punished, his government did not "fall" to Felix; Felix succeeded, for Felix was appointed to it. Dr. Clarke could have made this statement on no other authority than that of Bracciolini, who in the 54th chapter of the XIIth book of the Annals, says that Judaea was under the government of Cumanus conjointly with Felix, the province being so divided that Cumanus was governor of Galilee and Felix of Samaria:--"Ventidio Cumano, _cui pars provinciae habebatur_: ita divisis, ut huic Galilaeorum natio; Felici Samaritae parerent" (An. XII. 54). Justus Lipsius was rather startled at the number of mistakes he found in those words: in addition to Felix and Cumanus never being joint governors, Judaea was not a divided province, and Cumanus was, certainly, governor over the Samaritans, as may be seen by reference to Josephus, who can always be relied upon, for what Julius Caesar Scaliger, one of the most learned and famous men of the sixteenth century, said of him everybody knows, from Whiston (quoting it from Bishop Porteus), placing it at the commencement of his admirable popular translation of the Hebrew historian, that "he deserved more credit than all the Greek and Roman writers put together." Well, Josephus, who "deserved more credit than all the Greek and Roman writers put together," says that a disturbance broke out between the Jews and the Samaritans, whereupon "the former burnt and plundered the villages of the latter, and when what had been done reached Cumanus, he _armed the Samaritans_ and marched against the Jews," clearly showing that by "arming the Samaritans," he was governor

of Samaria, and not Felix:--[Greek: Komas tinas ton Samareon empraesantes diarpazousi. Koumanos de, taes praxeos eis auton aphikomenaes ... tous Samareitas kathoplisas, exaelthen epi tous Ioudaious] (Antiq. Jud. XX. 6). Having said this in his "Antiquities of the Jews", Josephus more distinctly says in his "Wars of the Jews" that the Emperor Claudius banished Cumanus, "after which he sent Felix, the brother of Pallas, to be the governor of Judaea, Galilee, Samaria and Peraea": [Greek: meta tauta Ioudaias men epitropon Phaelika ton Pallantos adelphon ekpempei, taes te Galilaias kai Samareias kai Peraias] (De Bello Jud. II. 12. 8).

Cardinal Baronius, in one of the forty folio volumes of his "Annales Ecclesiastici" (A.C. 50. Tom I. p. 355), has fallen exactly into the same mistake as Dr. Adam Clarke, and, from the very same cause, placing implicit confidence in what is stated in the Annals. He says that "the same Josephus is, nevertheless, guilty of an evident mistake when he asserts that Cumanus was convicted in Rome, and that Claudius thence sent to Judaea the brother of his freedman Pallas,--Felix; for Felix was sent along with Cumanus to that province, which was so divided between them, that Felix ruled Samaria, but Cumanus the remainder of the province":--"Sed patentis erroris nihilominus idem Josephus arguitur, dum ait esse damnatum Romae Cumanum ac inde Claudium Felicem Pallantis liberti Claudii Augusti germanum missum esse in Judaeam. Nam Felix simul cum Cumano in eam provinciam missus est, sic ea inter eos divisa, ut Felix Samariam administraret, Cumanus vero reliquam provinciae partem."

Another Cardinal, Noris, who has the credit of being one of the most accurate and learned antiquaries, chronologists and historians of his age (the close of the seventeenth century), for Zedler says of him (_sub vocibus_, "Heinrich Noris"), that he was "einer der gelehrtesten Leute seiner Zeit, ein vollkommener Antiquarius, Chronologus und Historicus," maintains, in his Commentary on the Two Monumental Stones erected at Pisa in honour of the two grandsons of the Emperor Augustus, ("Cenotaphia Pisana",) that Cardinal Baronius was wrong when he made that statement on the authority of the Jewish historian, because "Josephus has nowhere said that Felix was sent from Rome as the successor of Cumanus, but on the contrary, as may be clearly gathered from the 11th," (it should be the 12th) "chapter of his second book of the war, for that immediately after he has spoken of the condemnation of Cumanus by the Emperor Claudius, he says that that Emperor 'sent Felix, the brother of Pallas, to the Jews, to administer their country along with Samaria and Galilee, while he transferred Agrippa from Chalcis to a larger government, giving him the province also which had been Felix's': now that was Trachonitis, Bethanea and Gaulanitis: therefore Felix, before the condemnation of Cumanus, was placed over Judaea, having been the governor, according to Josephus, of that part of Galilee which lay between the river Jordan and the hills of Coelesyria and Philadelphia; and, consequently, he did not go to Judaea from Rome, as that learned man wrongly ascribes to Josephus, but from Galilee beyond the Jordan":--"Verum Josephus nusquam dixit Felicem Roma missum Cumano successorem, immo aperte ex lib. 2. belli cap. 11 oppositum colligitur; siquidem cum dixisset Cumanum Romae damnatum a Claudio Imperatore, statim ait:--'Post haec Felicem Pallantis fratrem misit ad Judaeos, qui eorum provinciam cum Samaria et Galilaea curaret. Agrippam vero de Chalcide in regnum majus transtulit, tradens ei illam quoque provinciam, quae Felicis fuisset.' Erat autem ista Trachonitis, Bethanea, Gaulanitis. Igitur Felix, antequam damnato Cumano, Judaeae imponeretur, Galilaeam transamnanam quae Jordane ac montibus Coelesyriae, ac Philadelphiae includitur, auctore Josepho, regebat; ac proinde in

Judaeam non ex Urbe, ut minus recte vir eruditus Josepho imponit, sed ex Galilaea transamnana advenit." (Cenotaphia Pisana. Diss. sec. p. 333 ed. Ven. 1681.)

Of course, if Josephus wrote thus, the whole matter is settled; Felix was governor with Cumanus, for the province over which he had ruled, Peraea, or Galilee to the eastward of the Jordan, was transferred to Agrippa: but "litera scripta manet:" on turning to Josephus it is found that it was Philip, and not Felix, who held the country that was given to Agrippa:--"And he" (the Emperor Claudius) "transfers Agrippa from Chalcis to a larger government, by giving him the tetrachy that had been PHILIP'S":--[Greek: ek de taes Chalkidos Agrippan ein meizona Basileian metatithaesi, dous auto taen te PHILIPPOI genomenaen tetrarchian.] (De Bello Jud. II. 12). For such dishonesty in attempting to carry his point against another Eminence Cardinal Noris ought to have blushed as scarlet as his stockings.

Ernesti, quite puzzled at the singular statement that a Roman province had two governors, is of opinion that the error was occasioned by statements to be found in the New Testament: "There is," he says, "the additional testimony of St. Luke, or rather St. Paul, who says that Felix was many years set over the Jews, in the third or fourth year after Cumanus had been condemned": "Accedit Lucae auctoritas, vel potius Pauli, qui Felicem multos annos Judaeis praefuisse dicit, anno, postquam Cumanus damnatus est, tertio aut quarto." It is just possible that the passage about Felix being "many years a judge unto that nation," which occurs in the Acts of the Apostles (c. XXIV. v. 10), was what actually misled Bracciolini; the more so, as when he was in this country, he discharged what Dean Hook called "the heavenly occupations of a parish priest" (Life of Becket, p. 359), and for the very reason that he was a consecrated man he must have taken a much greater interest and placed far more trust in St. Paul, than Tacitus or any other heathen among the ancient Romans was likely to have done; but an error so extraordinary about the contemporary government of his country could barely have been committed by such an eminent public man and politician as Tacitus: this is the reason why Cardinal Baronius convicted Josephus of "an evident mistake," for as he properly observed parenthetically in the passage we have quoted, that "we ought to attach faith to Tacitus, whom, certainly, any learned man would clearly prefer to Josephus in matters especially which appertain to Roman magistracies": "si Tacito fidem praebemus, quem certe, in his praesertim quae ad Romanos pertinent magistratus, quivis eruditus Josepho facile anteferat" (l.c.). But as Tacitus did not write the Annals, Josephus is to be preferred to Bracciolini; when, too, it is just the kind of mistake which a writer of the XVth century, as Bracciolini, however learned and careful he might be, would be likely to fall into, from the testimony of St. Paul conflicting with that of Josephus.

III. Another blunder is made by Bracciolini with regard to the Italians and Romans, whom he looks upon as blood relations, fellow countrymen, and possessors of a common capital in the City of Rome. The Italians were not of the same descent as the Romans; and when they were all brought under subjection to Rome in the first half of the third century before the Christian aera, they beheld themselves inhabitants of towns, some of which were "municipia", (having their own laws and magistracy, enjoying the privilege of voting in the comitia and soliciting for public offices in Rome), others "coloni," (conquered places ruled over by poor Romans sent to keep the inhabitants in subjection, having the jus Romanum, Latinum or Italicum, and ceasing to be citizens of Rome); but in

either set of towns the freedom and the sacred rites, the laws of race and of government, the oaths and the guardianship of the Romans did not prevail; in fact, the Italians had not the private rights of the Romans, and, therefore, in the language of Livy, "they were not Roman citizens":--"non eos esse cives Romanos" (XXXIV. 42). Even the privileges they enjoyed, such as immunity from the tribute raised in the Roman provinces, they participated with other people, to whom the privilege had been accorded at various periods;--for example,--the inhabitants of Laodicaea in Syria and of Beyroot in Phoenicia in the time of Augustus;--of Tyre in the time of Severus;--of Antioch and the colony of Emissa in Upper Syria in the time of Antonine, and of the colonies in Mauritania in the time of Titus. Tacitus, therefore, as a Roman citizen, could not, by any possibility, have spoken of Rome being the "capital" of Italy, and the Italians and Romans being people of the "same blood," as the author of the Annals does when he writes: "non adeo aegram Italiam ut senatum suppeditare _urbi suae_ nequiret; suffecisse olim indigenas _consanguineis populis_" (XI. 23).

Nobody can understand those last five words; they have not been understood by the editors, from Justus Lipsius and John Frederic Gronovius to Ernesti and Heinsius: they are capable of more than one interpretation on account of the brevity and obscurity of the expression: I take it that Bracciolini meant to imply that "in the ancient days the natives of Italy were quite on a par with their 'brethren' in Rome," referring to the time when Romans, Latins, Etruscans and Sabines stood on the same level; and in order to make out that Italians are still in the same position, he adds: "there is no regretting what was anciently done in the State," "nec poenitere veteris reipublicae."

An Italian of the fifteenth century, and a Florentine like Bracciolini, was glad to think, and proud to say, nay, ready to believe, and to perpetuate the belief, that Italy and Rome were identical, and the people consanguineous. We see how that pleasing delusion is still cherished fondly by the living countrymen of Bracciolini: General Garibaldi, to wit, as well as the late Joseph Mazzini, always looked upon the City of Rome as the "natural" capital of the Kingdom of Italy; and we can easily believe, with what joy, pride, and confidence in its veracity the gallant general or the devoted patriot, or any other Italian warrior or politician, would have written, as Bracciolini wrote, the passage that we have quoted from the eleventh book of the Annals.

IV. Nor is this the only time when Bracciolini does not maintain the character he assumes of an ancient Roman. Narcissus, addressing Claudius in the eleventh book of the Annals says: "he did not _now_ mean to charge him"--that is, Silius, "with adulteries": "nec _nunc_ adulteria objecturum" (XI. 30). The language used seems to be very good language. A Roman historian, though, would have written, "nec _tunc_": he could not have fallen into the error of failing to define time in reference to himself when ascribing words to persons, any more than he could have failed to vary the grammar to the accusative and infinitive. This elementary principle in Latin composition is known, (as Lord Macaulay would have said,) "to every schoolboy." It was, certainly, well known to such an accomplished "grammaticus" as Bracciolini; and for the very simple reason that he adheres to it on all other occasions. His neglect of it in this instance is as strong a proof as any that can be advanced, of his forgery: it makes that forgery the more obvious, his slip not being accidental, but intentional: it is a deliberate violation of a rule that must never be infringed; but as a countryman will

sometimes run after a jack-a-lantern, till running after it he finds himself in a burying-ground, so Bracciolini suffered himself to be misled by his literary will-o'-the wisp,--alliteration: therefore he preferred writing "_n_ec _n_unc," instead of "nec tunc;" he therefore did that which was fatal to the work that he wanted to palm off upon the world as the composition of a Roman, because a Roman would not have done this, because he could not have done it. Definition of time in reference to himself was a necessity of expression; he could not have sacrificed it for alliteration or any other trick of composition, because he would not have dreamt of changing the time in ascribing words to persons. A modern, on the other hand, would think that a mere trifle; left to himself, he would prefer it; he would also know that his readers, being moderns like himself, would very much admire his composition for the alliteration, whilst finding definition of time in reference to the position of the speaker, much more agreeable to their ears, from their being accustomed to native historians who wrote in the vernacular so defining time in all passages of the kind spontaneously, without art or affectation, and not, as the ancient Romans, stiffly adopting the harsh, unnatural fashion of defining it in reference to the position of the writer.

V. Our word "box" (apart from three technical meanings, one in botany, and two in mechanics), has six different significations for things that have nothing in common with each other;--"a slap on the chaps"; "a coffer or case for holding any materials"; "seats in a theatre"; "a Christmas present"; "the case for the mariner's compass," and "the seat on a coach for the driver." The Roman word, too, "locus," has just the same half-dozen meanings for things as unconnected;--"a passage"; "a country"; "an argument"; "a place"; "a sentence," and "a seat." In five instances "box" is a primitive noun; when it means "a blow on the cheek with the palm of the hand," it is a verbal substantive. Exactly the same number of curiosities distinguished "locus." In five instances it was masculine; when it signified "a seat in a theatre" it was neuter; this was familiar to every Roman with a lettered education: unfortunately it slipped the memory of Bracciolini when he wrote: An. XV. 32: "equitum Romanorum _locos_ sedilibus plebis anteposuit apud Circum." Tacitus would have written "loca."

VI. This brings me again to consider the Latin of Tacitus; no reasonable objection can be found with it; severely captious critics who carp at trifles, and look at language microscopically, point out errors; but they are not so great as the mistakes sometimes made by Cicero and Caesar, Sallust and Livy. As a specimen of the objections we may give the following: a critic has been bold enough to say that in the phrase "refractis palatiis foribus, ruere intus" (Hist. I. 35), Tacitus uses the adverb for _in_ a place instead of the adverb for _to_ a place. "Intus" means "into" or "within," just as well as "in," as may be seen from numerous instances in Cicero, Caesar, Ovid, Plautus, and other writers of inferior reputation in prose and poetry. The phrase then is: "having broken open the palace doors, to rush _within_." Where is the mistake?

Another objection raised is that Tacitus wrongly writes "quantum" as the corresponding adverb to "tanto," "_quantum_que hebes ad sustinendum laborem miles, _tanto_ ad discordias promptior" (Hist. II. 99). It was a common custom among the Romans to use "quantum," if they preferred it, to "quanto," and to follow it with "tanto": at any rate it occurs in Livy twice, if not oftener: _quantum_ augebatur, _tanto_ majore (V. 10);--_quantum_ laxaverat, _tanto_ magis (XXXII. 5). The objections to the

grammar of Tacitus are, as a rule, all on a par with these two; it is not, however, without some pleasurable feeling that one comes across charges made against him of using incorrect forms of speech, were it only from perceiving how extremely happy the fault-finders seem to be in having such an opportunity of gratifying their natural malice.

VII. Vossius, the Canon of Canterbury in the seventeenth century, adopts an entirely different tone in his agreeable treatise on the Roman historians--"De Historicis Latinis." Commenting on the statement made by Alciati and Emilio Ferretti that Tacitus wrote bad Latin, he bursts into an exclamation that may be considered rather uncourteous when applied to His Eminence a Cardinal and to an eminent Jurisconsult, that they were both silly and absurd: "they say," exclaims Gerardus Johannes, "that he did not write Latin properly: how silly is this! how absurd!"--"aiunt, eum non Latine satis scribere: quam, hoc insubidum! quam insulsum!" (I. 30). Perhaps Vossius was of opinion that if Tacitus wrote incorrectly, it must be upon the principle alleged by Quintilian that "one kind of expression is grammatical, another kind Latin," "aliud esse grammatice, aliud Latine loqui" (I. 16) after the accommodating fashion of that kind gentleman of etymology and syntax, Valerius Probus, who in Aulus Gellius (XIII. 20. 1), said "has urb_e_s" or "has urb_is_" was the more correct according to metrical convenience when writing verses, or sonorous utterance when delivering a set oration, which (without being Romans), we can easily understand, when some of our poets rhyme "clear" to "idea," and a Clerkenwell Green orator prefers "obstropalous" to "obstreperous." On some such grounds alone can excuse be found for some anomalous expressions in the Annals; they are irreconcilable to the common rules of grammar; and what may seem strange to the reader, though to me it is quite natural, the very same improprieties that occur in the Annals of words and phrases not according with the established principles of writing occur also in the acknowledged works of Bracciolini.

VIII. (_a_). When the Romans used the disjunctive particle, "nec," in the first branch of a negative sentence, the same word (or its equivalent "neque,") was used in the subsequent branch of the proposition. To couple "aut" with "nec" was a wrong correlative. The rule was so absolute that I know but of one Roman writer who infringed it; and that was because he was a poet,--Ovid:

> "_Nec_ piget, _aut_ unquam stulte elegisse videbor."
> Her. XVI. 167.
>
> "_Nec_ plus Atrides animi Menelaus habebit
> Quam Paris; _aut_ armis anteferendus erit."
> Ib. 355-6.

It will be seen that the error, which is committed twice, occurs in the same poem, the XVIth Heroic, or The Epistle of Helen to Paris, and under the same circumstance of pressure,--the want of a word that began with a vowel,--because a word beginning with a consonant could not, of course, follow the last foot of a dactyle ending with a consonant;--therefore Ovid took refuge in what is called "poetical license," which is a gentle term for expressing departure from syntax. Ovid never again committed the offence, quite sufficient to convince us that it went against his grain to have so written in his XVIth Heroic; he knew that it was not elegant; it was not, in fact, correct, nor in his style; and he would not have done it but that he was cramped by verse. But why, uncramped by verse, the author of the Annals should have written: "hortatur miles, ut hostem vagum, _neque_ paci _aut_ proelio paratum,"

instead of "_neque_ proelia," is difficult to determine, except that he was desirous of imitating Bracciolini, who writes in the letter to his friend Niccoli from which we have already quoted (Ep. II. 7): "muta igitur propositum, et huc veni, _neque_ te terreat longitudo itineris, _aut_ hiemis asperitas." The imitation is, besides, so very close that we find in both cases "neque" is preferred in the first clause to the more usual form of "nec."

VIII. (_b_.) In order to show how closely the expressions peculiar to Bracciolini and his artifices of composition resemble, (as he did not mean them to do, though they did), the style of writing and the language in the Annals, I need, without wandering over the whole work, simply confine myself to the remainder of the sentence from which this fragment is taken; and beg the reader to mark carefully the italicized syllables and words "hortatur miles, ut hostem vagum, _neque_ paci _aut_ proelio paratum, sed perfidiam et ignaviam fuga confitentem exu_erent_ sedibus, gloriaeque _pariter_ et praedae consul_erent_" (An. XIII. 39).

First, there is the correspondence of the two last syllables of the words at the end of two almost equally balanced clauses, with more syllables in the first than the second clause: "sed perfidiam, et ignaviam fuga confitentem exu_erent_ // sedibus, gloriaeque pariter et praedae consul_erent_ //. It will be seen, (without multiplying examples), that the very same thing occurs in the passage quoted in the preceding chapter from Bracciolini's letter about the Baths of Baden: "et simul quandoque cum mulieribus lav_antes_, // et sertis quoque comas orn_antes_" // (Ep. I. 1).

There is the altogether peculiar use of "pariter" in the sense of equality of association or time--"gloriaeque _pariter_ et praedae consulerent," just as in Bracciolini's Treatise "De Miseria Humanae Conditionis" (Pog. Op. p. 121): "Victis postmodum _pariter_ victoribus imperarunt." Three things ought to be noticed: first, "pariter" is the equivalent of "simul"; secondly, it is placed between the connected words; and, thirdly, the phrase ends with a four-syllabled verb--"imperarunt,"--"consulerent." That this is not only Bracciolini's individual phraseology, but his stereotyped cast of expression, is at once seen in the extraordinary sameness of the three things occurring when he again uses it in the Annals: "vox _pariter_ et spiritus _raperentur_" (An. XIII. 16).

IX. The composition of any writer can be easily detected from examining his affinities of language as displayed not only in his use of words, but in his construction of sentences and combination of words.

Nobody can read Tacitus, and not come to the conclusion that if any man ever wrote harmoniously, it is he; but any one reading the Annals must come to the very opposite conclusion, that Bracciolini is the very prince of rugged writers. By varying the accents, Tacitus manages to please the ear even when ending sentences with ugly polysyllabic words, as (taking the instances from the opening of his work): "suspectis sollicitis, adoptanti placebat" (I. 14); "deterius interpretantibus tristior, habebatur" (ib.); "Lusitaniam, specie legationis, seposuit" (I. 13). This is the unmusical way in which Bracciolini ends sentences with long words (taking the instances, also, from the commencement of the forgery): "victores longinquam militiam aspernabantur" (An. XI. 10):--"potissimum exaequaebantur officia ceremoniarum" (An. XI. 11):--"Claudio dolore, injuriae credebatur" (An. XII. 11). Almost the same ring and ruggedness are to be found in:--"marmorea tabula epigramma referente" (Ruin. Urb. Rom. Descript. Op. Pog. p. 136);

--"magistratus, officia, imperia deferuntur" (Mis. Hum. Cond. I. Op. Pog. p. 102); "homines amplissimam materiam suppeditarunt" (De Nobil. Op. Pogg. p. 77).

X. Tacitus avoids, as much as the genius of his native tongue will permit, two words following each other with the same terminations; Bracciolini is not only much given to this, but very partial to a reduplication of sounds, as if the jingle, instead of being most disagreeable, was excessively pleasant to the ear, as in his Letter describing the trial and death of Jerome of Prague (Ep. I. 2): --"_rerum_ plurim_arum_ sci_entiam_, eloq_uentiam_"; and in the Annals (XI. 38) "od_ii_, gau_dii_, ir_ae_, tristiti_ae_."

Bracciolini is fond of using prefixes that have no meaning, as in his Funeral Oration on the death of his friend Niccoli: "moneta _ob_signari est coepta concipiebant" (Op. Pog. p. 278), where he uses "_ob_signari" for "signari," "ob" being without meaning: so in the Annals: "testamentum Acerroniae requiri, bonaque _ob_signari jubet" (XIV. 6).

Another peculiarity of Bracciolini's is (for alliterative purposes) the playing upon a single letter that is repeated again and again at the beginning, in the middle, and, if the letter will allow it, at the end of words. "P" will not permit of being used in Latin at the end of words; but we find Bracciolini thus playing with it in the very first of his letters:--"_p_rojicit eam _p_ersonam sibi acce_p_tiorem, cum illam multi _p_etant _p_orrectis manibus, atque i_p_se," &c. (Ep. I. 1). But "m" does admit of being used at the end of words, and thus we find him, with a friskiness that the staid Tacitus would have in vain essayed to imitate, frolicking with it as a juggler with balls; for the rapidity of the repetition can be compared only to the rapidity of conveyance displayed by a conjuror when he receives into and passes out of his hands a number of balls with which he is playing: "_m_ox, ut o_m_itteret _m_aritum, e_m_ercatur, suu_m m_atri_m_oniu_m_ pro_m_ittens" (An. XIII. 44).

CHAPTER IV.

THE TERMINATION OF THE FORGERY.

I.--The literary merit and avaricious humour of Bracciolini. --II. He is aided in his scheme by a monk of the Abbey of Fulda. --III. Expressions indicating forgery.--IV. Efforts to obtain a very old copy of Tacitus.--V. The forgery transcribed in the Abbey of Fulda.--VI. First saw the light in the spring of 1429.

I. We have pointed out in the preceding chapter some of the more glaring errors committed by Bracciolini in style and syntax, customs and history, not with the view of showing that Niccoli made any mistake when he recommended him to take the task in hand of forging the Annals; for in no way did Niccoli overrate the merit of his friend. The Latin of Bracciolini, though not equal in its elegance to that of his splendid successor, Poliziano, was, nevertheless, superior to the Latin of any of his great contemporaries, none of whom, besides, had his versatility and varied attainments nor his wisdom and philosophy. The world now knows, as his Florentine friend then knew, that he had the requisite splendour of genius to undertake the daring task of writing history as eminently as Tacitus, that is, with as powerful a conception, and as superior an expression: he had already written nobly, sensibly, purely and simply; he had acquired in the Court of Rome, and, what we may call, the Court of the Royal Prelate, Beaufort, the necessary experience of public affairs and

leading individuals, which fitted him to pass sovereign judgment on great men and public events, and he was gifted with the acuteness, the understanding and the prudence to lay down lessons of instruction for mankind.

We have seen with what modesty he approached the immortal production that was fated to lift the name of Tacitus, where it was not before, above even those of Herodotus, Thucydides and Xenophon, Caesar, Sallust and Livy: yet he hesitated, questioning much whether he could clothe himself in the garb of an authoritative ancient speaking in lofty tones to the whole world and to all mankind. He had, too, to take as his model a writer who had not his fluency, and who is never great but when concise. This is the case with himself in the Annals, from his striving to do what his prototype did; with this exception, that when he is great he is never natural. In imitating this conciseness, he is the happiest instance of a writer illustrating the Horatian adage of "striving to be brief, and becoming obscure":

> "Brevis esse laboro,
> Obscurus fio."
> _De Arte Poet._ 25-6:

ever and anon he falls into a graceless obscurity from compressing into a few words what he ought to have said in a more expanded form: his great fault is that he outdoes Tacitus in conciseness: hence he keeps his reader in ignorance of things which would have been known if he had only more fully disclosed them.

His avarice swayed his will stronger than his compunctions. The five hundred gold sequins, which were to be counted out to him on the completion of the work, which it was calculated would occupy three years, was too tempting an offer; and yet the offer was not sufficiently liberal in his opinion: as we have seen, he suggested that it should be increased one-fifth; he was right; for in those days as much, and even twice as much, was sometimes given for a mere translation: Lorenzo Valla got five hundred gold sequins for his Latin translation of Thucydides; Filelfo would have received twice as much, and, in addition to the thousand gold pieces, a handsome town house in Rome and a good landed estate if he would have translated the Iliad and the Odyssey into Latin verse. Bracciolini may, therefore, have succeeded in obtaining the increased price of six hundred sequins. Still he was not the kind of man to have been satisfied with this only: when he translated Diodorus Siculus, he required to be supported while engaged in its execution; and supported he was by the liberality of the Popes. The proposal of Lamberteschi included board and lodging, and in the house of the Florentine; Bracciolini expressed his willingness to accept that; but on the condition that Lamberteschi did not move about, for he wanted, as a prime necessity, to remain quite quiet, as the great literary undertaking in which he was about to be engaged would call for a more than usual amount of patient attention and labour: "libenter vivam cum Piero, nisi Scythae simus, libenter enim quiesco" (Ep. I. 17). We have seen that Bracciolini did not avail himself of what was proffered to him in this matter on account of his re-appointment to the Papal Secretariate: had it not been so he would have unquestionably called upon his friend Lamberteschi to fulfil this part of the contract; as before his appointment to an ecclesiastical living in England, he had been boarded and lodged by Cardinal Beaufort, and that too, on a scale of regal magnificence. He tells us himself in one of his Letters (Ep. I. 6), that, while the Cardinal, as vagrant as a Scythian, was continually absent from home, (it must have been on his episcopal visitations or in the discharge of his

State duties), he staid behind in the Palace in London, passing his time peacefully and pleasantly in a splendid library, and vying at the expense of his princely patron with the magnificence of the king himself in the sumptuousness of his fare and the costliness of his apparel: "Dominus meus, quasi continuo abest, vagus ut Scytha, ego autem hic dego, in quiete libris involvor. Providetur mihi pro victu et vestitu, idque est satis, neque enim amplius vel Rex ex hoc tanto apparatu rerum capit." [Endnote 297]

When we bear in mind his strong desire for gain, we may consider it not unlikely that, adhering to his bargain, he exacted from Lamberteschi some equivalent in lieu of the board and lodging: be that as it may, after the lapse of three years, (as may be seen from letters that passed between himself and Niccoli), he had then completed, as had been rightly calculated, the first instalment of his forgery.

II. In those days when so many valuable works ascribed to the ancients were being constantly recovered, there was a very general (though as I have shown, very silly) belief abroad, that any ancient work, consequently, the lost History of Tacitus, might yet be found in some dark corner of Europe,--some barbarous country such as Germany, Hungary, or Bohemia. Accident decided that Bracciolini chose a place for the asserted recovery of what he had forged different from what had been arranged between himself and his friends in 1422, while they were devising the fabrication, namely, Hungary: when Bracciolini said that, "if he did go to Hungary he would pretend that he had come from England," the object must have been that no one should know the country where the MS. had been recovered; any busybody would be thus effectively foiled in visiting the right spot, and there prying about, making inquiries and ascertaining all the particulars with respect to the alleged discovery of some recent rare manuscript. The place thus decided on by accident was a town in Saxony at the farthest eastern extremity of that country on the borders of Bohemia, named Hirschfeldt, formerly the capital of Hesse Cassel, but which, after the peace of Westphalia, when it was secularized, became only a part of that principality. In the far-away times, it was famous for an Abbey of the Benedictine monks, which had been founded on the banks of the Fulda in the first half of the eighth century, in the year 737, in the reign of King Pepin, by a disciple of St. Boniface, St. Lul, who became Boniface's successor in the Bishopric of Mayence. The accident which caused Bracciolini to choose this convent, the most famous in Germany, as the place whence his forgery was to emanate, was his forming the acquaintance of a member of the abbey, who attended in the name of his brother Benedictines to watch a case that was being litigated for the monastery in the ecclesiastical courts of Rome. From some reason unexplained this monk was under obligation to Bracciolini, who determined that this holy man should be the medium of his forgery being placed before the world. The monk had the necessary qualifications for the tool that was wanted; he was needy and ignorant; above all things, he was stupid. "The good fellow," says Bracciolini in his scornful way to Niccoli, "who has not our attainments, thought that we were equally ignorant of what he found he did not know himself"--"Vir ille bonus, expers studiorum nostrorum, quicquid reperit ignotum sibi, id et apud nos incognitum putavit" (Ep. III 12).

He gave this booby monk a long list of books that he was to hunt out for him on the library shelves of the Abbey of Fulda, including in the catalogue the works of Tacitus; and as he wanted a copy of the latter in the very oldest writing that could be procured, he enjoined the monk to give him a full description of

certain books that were carefully put down in a list; these being very numerous, the monk could not possibly divine that the book particularly wanted was a Tacitus in the oldest characters that could be found.

III. These instructions were given in May, 1427; and, notwithstanding the care and wisdom shown in the matter, something before the close of the summer that year oozed out which seemed to menace a disclosure of the imposture: rumours had got abroad evidently about what was transpiring between Niccoli and Bracciolini, which greatly alarmed the former; but he was quieted by his bolder friend assuring him that "when Tacitus came, he would keep it a secresy; that he knew all the tittle-tattle that was going on,--whence it came,--through whom, and how it was got up; but that he need have no fear, for that not a syllable should escape him."--"Cornelium Tacitum, cum venerit, observabo penes me occulte. Scio enim omnem illam cantilenam, et unde exierit, et per quem, et quis eum vendicet. Sed nil dubites, non exibit a me ne verbo quidem."

These words occur in a letter that bears date Rome, the 25th of September, 1427; and whatever interpretation the reader may feel disposed to put upon them, he must admit, after considering all that has been said, that they seem to confirm wonderfully the truth of our theory, pointing, as they unquestionably do, to some mysterious and deep secret about Tacitus that existed only between Niccoli and Bracciolini; and what could that secret be? It could not be about the recovery of a rare and valuable copy of the works of Tacitus. There would be no necessity of keeping that by one secretly; on the contrary, the proper thing to do was to noise it abroad immediately, and as publicly as could be, so that it might be known to a wide circle of book-collectors, and as large a sum got for it as could be obtained; but if it were a Tacitus in the oldest characters that were to be found in order that it should be made use of as a copy for the letters in a figment, one can then easily understand the cause for all this secresy. "Thus conscience doth make cowards of us all." In fact, forgery, and nothing else than forgery, seems to be the easiest as well as the most feasible explanation of these remarks, which, were it not for this theory, would, instead of being very clear, be quite nebulous.

IV. The Tacitus that was to have come from Germany did not, however, arrive. "I hear nothing of the Tacitus that is in Germany," he observes towards the close of the letter. "I am expecting an answer from the monk."--"De Cornelio Tacito qui est in Germania nil sentio; expecto responsum ab illo monacho." (Ep. III. 14.)

Towards the close of September, then, 1427, what Bracciolini had written had not yet been given to the transcriber: time was passing; and Niccoli sent him in the following month what must have been the oldest copy of Tacitus he had in his collection. Bracciolini thanked him for it, but complained that the Lombard characters, in which it was written, were half effaced; and that if he had only known what he was about to do, he would have spared him the trouble. He went on to say that he remembered having read a copy of Tacitus in antique characters which Niccoli had in his possession, and which he had purchased at the sale of the library of his old friend Coluccio Salutati, or some other large book collector. He was desirous of having that or some other that could be read; for it would be difficult to find a transcriber who, without making mistakes, could read the manuscript that he had sent him:--"Misisti mihi librum Senecae, et Cornelium Tacitum, quod est mihi gratum; et is est litteris longobardis, et majori ex parte caducis, quod si scissem, liberassem te eo labore. Legi olim

quemdam apud vos manens litteris antiquis; nescio Colucii ne esset, an alterius. Illum cupio habere, vel alium, qui legi possit; nam difficile erit reperire scriptorem qui hunc codicem recte legat" (Ep. III. 15).

It is clear from these words that the copy of Tacitus which Bracciolini received in October 1427 from his friend Niccoli so very badly written in Lombard letters as to be for the most part indistinguishable, could not have been for his own reading, nor for his making a copy of it as he was in the habit of doing with the ancient classics, but from his saying that it could not be correctly read by a transcriber, it must have been for the purpose of placing it in the hands of such a person. But why should he put such a Tacitus in the hands of a transcriber? Let the reader ask himself that question; and his reply will be, that it could have been with no other object than that the History and the other works of Tacitus should be copied into the oldest characters that could be obtained by Bracciolini; with this further and more important motive in view, to add to the acknowledged works of Tacitus the new portion that had just been forged, all uniformly transcribed in the same equally old letters in order to deceive the world as to the very great antiquity, and, consequently, the implied authenticity of the fabrication. Bracciolini is, accordingly, most anxious to get a very old copy of Tacitus. "Take care, therefore," he continues in his letter to Niccoli, "that I have another, if it can be done; but you can do it, if you will strive your utmost":--"ideo cura ut alium habeam, si fieri potest; poteris autem, si volueris nervos intendere" (ibid). His anxiety also is very great for the transcriber to set to work at once by his adding: "You have, however, sent me the book without the parchment. I know not the state of mind you were in when you did this, except that you were as mad as a March hare. For what book can be transcribed, if there be not the parchment? Have a care to it, then, and, also, to a second manuscript, but, above all, keep in mind the vellum."--"Tu tamen misisti librum sine chartis, quod nescio qua mente effeceris, nisi ut poneres lunam in Ariete. [Endnote 303] Qui enim potest liber transcribi desint Pergamenae? Cura ergo de eis, et item de altero codice, sed primum de chartis confice" (ibid).

The parchment came in good time, as well as a second old copy of Tacitus that could be read by a transcriber.

V. This was the 2lst of October, 1427. Exactly eleven months and ten days elapsed, during the whole of which time nothing more is heard about old copies of Tacitus and transcriptions on calfskin; all again went on in profound silence and secresy till the llth of September, 1428, when the mountain again laboured; and a little bit of news that dropped from Bracciolini bore a close resemblance to the appearance of a small mouse: "Not a word," says he, "of Cornelius Tacitus from Germany; nor have I heard thence any further news of his works," showing that this must have been in reply to some remark in a letter of Niccoli's expressing surprise, it may be, at the very long time that was being taken in the transcription of the works of Tacitus with the additional new bit:--"Cornelius Tacitus silet inter Germanos, neque quicquam exinde novi percepi de ejus operibus" (Ep. III. 19).

Evidently the needy, ignorant, stupid monk of Hirschfeldt was not over busy in the Abbey of Fulda transcribing the forgery of Bracciolini and incorporating it with the works of Tacitus in closely copied Lombard characters of great antiquity. The monk was not only slow at his work; he was also negligent; for when he went to Rome in the winter following, and should have taken his

transcript to Bracciolini, he had left it behind him at the abbey. "The Hirschfeldt monk has come without the book," writes Bracciolini angrily to Niccoli on the 26th February, 1429; "and I gave him a sound rating for it; he has given me his assurance that he will be back aoain soon for he is carrying on a suit about his abbey in the law-courts, and will bring the book. He made heavy demands upon me; but I told him I would do nothing for him until _I_ have the book; I am, therefore, in hopes that I shall have it, as he is in need of my good offices":--"Monachus Hersfeldensis venit absque libro; multumque est a me increpatus ob eam causam; asseveravit se cito rediturum, nam litigat nomine Monasterii, et portaturum librum. Rogavit me multa; dixi me nil facturum, nisi librum haberemus; ideo spero et illum nos haberemus, quia eget favore nostro " (Ep. III. 29).

VI. As he anticipated, the book ultimately turned up; it might have been in a week or two, or it might not have been till two or three months after; for in a letter that bears the date of neither the year nor the day,--(which I think was sometime in March 1429, though the Chevalier de Tonelli, in his Collection of the Letters of Bracciolini, conjectures must have been in the first week in May,--some time before the 6th of that month,)--a passage occurs in which Bracciolini informs his friend Niccoli that, as far as himself was concerned, everything was "now complete with respect to the 'Little Work,' concerning which he would on some future opportunity write to him, and at the same time send it to him to read in order to get his opinion of it": "Ego jam Opusculum absolvi, de quo alias ad te scribam, et simul legendum mittam, ut exquirendum judicium tuum" (Ep. III. 30). I take it that he is here alluding in his customary jesting manner (from his writing "opusculum" with a big O, to his "great" undertaking, the Annals. If he is not joking, but serious, he must, then, of course, be referring to his treatise, "De Avaritia," which is, certainly, a "little affair," and which he wrote in 1429. However, the monk in the Abbey of Fulda, who had taken a very long time in his transcription of the forgery, had finished his work by the 26th of February, 1429, and must have placed it in Bracciolini's hands a little before or after the month of March in that year.

The deed was then now done. With the consummation of the forgery, all that correspondence suddenly came to an end which had been carried on for years by Bracciolini with Niccoli relative to Tacitus; that correspondence has given much additional colouring of truthfulness to the theory I have proposed to myself to uphold; if there had been nothing else convincing, it should, by itself, leave no shadow of a shade of doubt that Bracciolini forged the Annals of Tacitus. Though, too, we have no positive record of it, we may be as sure as if we had, that the last six books of that production first saw the light some time in the spring of the year 1429.

CHAPTER V.

THE FORGED MANUSCRIPT.

I. Recapitulation, showing the certainty of forgery.--II. The Second Florence MS. the forged MS.--III. Cosmo de' Medici the man imposed upon.--IV. Digressions about Cosmo de' Medici's position, and fondness for books, especially Tacitus.--V. The many suspicious marks of forgery about the Second Florence MS.: the Lombard characters; the attestation of Salustius.--VI. The headings, and Tacitus being bound up with Apuleius, seem to connect Bracciolini with the forged MS.--VII. The first authentic mention of the Annals.--VIII. Nothing invalidates the theory in

this book.--IX. Brief recapitulation of the whole argument.

I. We have, then, seen, how, from the inception to the commencement of the forgery;--how, from its first suggestion to Bracciolini by Lamberteschi and its approval by Niccoli in February, 1422, down to the finishing of the transcription by the monk of the Abbey of Fulda in February, 1429, and its delivery into the hands of Bracciolini in probably the month following, seven years elapsed. The time was, certainly, long enough for the fabrication to have been elaborated into the remarkable completeness by which it is distinguished, and which secured the signal success with which, to all appearances, it was immediately, as it has all along, been attended. Nearly two years were passed in considering how the last Six Books of the Annals could best be done: the composition of those few books was commenced about January, 1424, and completed by May, 1427: several months were then occupied in endeavouring to procure the oldest copy of Tacitus that could be got to serve as a guide for the copyist, nor was it until October, 1427, that the transcriber was supplied with a copy in small Lombard characters; the transcription was then begun, and, after a year and a few months, in February, 1429, the work was finally completed, and next month probably placed in the hands of the fabricator.

Throughout this we see the exercise of an exceeding caution from the beginning to the end which would have provided against all mistakes and mischances, if it were in the power of man to be on his guard against all mischances and mistakes in an achievement of such a description. We have pointed out a few of these mistakes; they may in some instances be considered trifling; looked at from one point of view, trifling they are; but looked at from another point of view, they are most important, nay, startling, because they are mistakes that could not, in any instance, have been made by Tacitus; in several instances they could not have been made by any ancient Roman whomsoever.

Still, the wonder is, not that Bracciolini made these mistakes, but that he did not make a great many more. As for the general merit of his achievement, it is actually marvellous;--the most phenomenal thing ever known to have been done in literature. It has not come within the scope of this inquiry that I should point out the successes of Bracciolini in imitating Tacitus: suffice it that they are sustained, continuous, close, felicitous, wonderful;--so much so that frequently in the pursuing of this investigation I have been induced to throw it aside as a mere barren paradox instead of a thoroughly sound hypothesis, aye, based on a foundation as firm as the Great Pyramid; but every now and then the occurrence of some mistake, which, though at the first glance, it looked very small, nay, insignificant,--of no importance whatever, yet considered more minutely, it bulked out into an egregious, colossal, monstrous blunder which made it impossible for me to believe that the Annals was a production by Tacitus.

If errors pointed out in language or style, in statements or grammar, have shaken the reader's faith in the authenticity of the Annals, that faith must have been still more shaken by the mysterious allusions made by Bracciolini in his letters to Niccoli about Tacitus; the conjectures I have hazarded on these must have gained additional force when references followed to an unknown monk of Hirschfeldt, with mention of copies of Tacitus in Lombard writing, parchment for transcription, and other matters denoting the completion of a literary work in those days.

II. Now, if there be any truth in my theory,--if Bracciolini really forged the Annals,--further, if a transcript of it was made by a monk of the Abbey of Fulda, and if the manuscript is still in existence, it must necessarily be the oldest containing the last six books of the Annals; I will add this more, that if there be one place more likely than another where it would be found, it is the city whence the offer emanated, namely, Florence, and if there be one library more likely than another where it would be deposited, it is the library founded by (for a reason that will be immediately seen) the Medici family. Well, it does so happen that the oldest MS. of Tacitus containing the last six books of the Annals is really preserved in Florence; and in that library, the foundation of which was laid by Cosmo de' Medici, and which is known by the name of the Mediceo-Laurentian Library.

III. There can be very little doubt that Cosmo de' Medici was the famous individual,--the very rich man, for whom the three Florentines, Lamberteschi, Niccoli, and Bracciolini, conspired to get up a forgery of Tacitus. It certainly never once comes out in the correspondence, in language that can be considered "totus, teres atque rotundus," that the man who was imposed upon by Bracciolini and his two accomplices, and who was shamefully deceived into paying the little fortune of five, six, or even more hundred gold sequins for a forgery, was their own most affectionate, intimate, and eminent friend, the merchant of a fortune that placed him on a level with the princes of Italy, Cosmo de' Medici;--but Cosmo de' Medici it was: any other man than he would have jumped at such an offer as having the whole history of Livy, instead of a small fragment of Tacitus, which Bracciolini was positive that he could get (because he was positive that he could forge it); but the illustrious Florentine peremptorily refused the offer, there being no other historian whom he liked so much as Tacitus, nor whom he read with so much pleasure and profit, as borne testimony to by Vossius in his Treatise on the Roman Historians, when speaking of Tacitus in terms which lend additional strength to the truth of our theory of forgery. "The diction of Tacitus," he says, "is more florid and exuberant in the books of the History, terser and drier in the Annals: meanwhile he is staid and eloquent in both: no other historian was read with equal pleasure by Cosmo de' Medici, the Duke of Tuscany, a man, who, if there was one, possessed the greatest genius for statesmanship, and was clearly made to rule": --"Dictio Taciti floridior uberiorque in Historiarum est libris, pressior, sicciorque in Annalibus. Interim gravis utrobique et disertus. Non alium Historicum aeque lectitaret Cosmus Medices, Hetruriae Dux, vir, si quis alius, civilis prudentiae intelligentis-simus, planeque ad imperandum factus" (Vossius. De Historicis Latinis. Lib. I. c. 30. p. 146). Muretus says the same in the second volume of his Orations (Orat. XVIII.): "Cosmo de' Medici, who was the first Grand Duke of Tuscany, a man made to rule, who laid down the doctrine, that that which is commonly called good fortune consists in wise and prudent conduct, delighted in the works of Tacitus; and from the reading of them he derived the most excessive enjoyment":--"Cosmus Medices, qui primus Magnus Etruriae Dux fuit, homo factus ad imperandum, qui eam, quae vulgo fortuna dicitur, in consilio et prudentia consistere docuit, Taciti libros in deliciis habebat; eorumque lectione avidissime fruebatur."--

IV. We may here observe parenthetically that both Vossius and Muretus err in speaking of Cosmo de' Medici, the former as "the Duke," the second as the "First Grand Duke" of Tuscany: it was not till the sixteenth century that the members of that family obtained the absolute sovereignty: in the fifteenth century there was, as Roscoe says in his Life of Lorenzo de' Medici (p. 6), no "prescribed or definite compact" between them and the people; the

authority which Cosmo de' Medici exercised consisted, according to that correct and elegant writer, "rather in a tacit influence on his part, and a voluntary acquiescence on that of the people."

That Roscoe was quite right can be seen by consulting a contemporary writer, Bartolommeo Fazio; in the biographical sketches that he has given of the most illustrious men of his time, who distinguished themselves as poets, orators, lawyers, physicians, painters, sculptors, private citizens, generals, and kings and princes, he has placed Cosmo de' Medici under the heading, "Of Some Private Citizens," ("De Quibusdam Civibus Privatis"); furthermore, he speaks of him in the following terms: --"As a civilian he was exceedingly rich, being not only the wealthiest of all the private men of our age, but in that respect to be compared, moreover, with princes of no mean standing": --"Divitiis civilem modum longe excessit omnium non tantum privatorum hominum nostrae tempestatis locupletissimus, sed etiam cum non mediocribus principibus ea re conferendus" (Bartol. Facius. De Viris Illustribus, p. 57. Flor. Ed. 1745).

After he has spoken of the active part that Cosmo de' Medici took in the administration of public affairs, and the valuable advice that he gave in matters pertaining to war;--of the churches and other public buildings that he erected at his own expense;--the numbers of men whom he raised to public posts;--his beneficence to the poor;--his liberality to foreigners;--his hospitality to his countrymen; and the wonderful way in which he had adorned and embellished his private mansion with Tuscan marble;--Fazio ends by saying that, "in authority and estimation he was unquestionably the PRINCE of his native city":--"Auctoritate et existimatione haud dubie civitatis suae PRINCEPS" (ibid. p. 58). Here we see the cause of the error committed by Vossius, Muretus, and a number of historians; not only this phrase of Fazio's, but the manner in which contemporary Florentines thought of and demeaned themselves towards Cosmo de' Medici.

We may further state, while thus digressing, that, from what Fazio says, we know that Cosmo de' Medici was a great lover of books; for Fazio informs us in his notice of Niccolo Niccoli that Cosmo de' Medici had his library in the magnificent church which at his own cost he had erected in Florence, namely, St. Mark's, ("bibliothecae, quae erat in Marci Evangelistae Templo, quam Cosmus Medices effecerat" (Facius. De Viris Illust. p. 12); "this library he had built on a very extensive scale," and "adorned" it "with an infinite number of volumes of both Greek and Latin authors, of all kinds, and every degree of merit, some of which he had got at heavy expense from various quarters, others being copies contracted for with transcribers":--"bibliothecam, quam amplissimam aedificavit, infinitis librorum voluminibus tum Greacorum, tum Latinorum, cujusque ordinis, ac facultatis exornavit partim undique magno impendio quaesitis, partim conductis librariis exscriptis" (ibid. p. 57).

But to return.--

We see, then, from two such reliable authorities as Vossius and Muretus, that Cosmo de' Medici took a special delight in Tacitus, and ardently enjoyed reading him. We can thus clearly perceive, why it was when a forgery was to be undertaken, it was of an ancient classic, and the selection made was a continuance to the History of Tacitus: we, also, know how natural it was when Bracciolini found, after deliberation and a trial, that there was little or no sympathy between him and Tacitus, and, certainly, no identity of genius, that he should strive his utmost to cast off

such a heavy burden and endeavour to carry a lighter load by fabricating a continuation of Livy; but no guinea is required to be spent for a visit to the sýance of a medium, to call up the spirit of Cosmo de' Medici by the rapping of a table: in the first place, the spirit would be sure not to come, however hard the table might be rapped, from fear of being addressed in Latin or Italian, as spirits are always sulky when they speak languages that are unknown to the medium: in the second place, after what we hear from Vossius and Muretus about the historical studies of the enlightened Princely Florentine, we want no ghost of his to come from the grave, and tell us that he would not have taken one entire book of Livy for one little page of Tacitus. Hence Bracciolini was forced to go on with a forgery that went against his grain; but, uncongenial as it was, he executed it with the skill and power that showed the master mind.

V. The manuscript in the Mediceo-Laurentian library is known as the Second Florence MS.; all the other MSS. of the last six books of the Annals are copies of it: as James Gronovius puts it, "emanated" from it: "ex hoc codice omnia alia scripta Taciti exemplaria _fluxisse_"; just as the other Florentine MS. is the only one containing all the books of the Annals, or as Ernesti says: "it is unique: we have no other manuscript of those books: --"ille unus est, nec alium scriptum illorum librorum codicem habemus;" there was no necessity making many transcripts of the latter codex, for printing had come into use a good half century before it was found,--or, more properly, said to have been found, --in the Abbey of Corvey.

Both these manuscripts are spurious; though it concerns us for the present only to deal with the Second or earlier one:--Of the First or later one I will speak at the proper time.

The second Florence MS., if a forgery, ought to have many suspicious marks about it to denote that it is a fabrication; and, perhaps, there does not exist in the world a more suspicious manuscript, not in one, but sundry, respects.

In the first place, it is written in Lombard characters; of which the Benedictines in their "Nouveau Traitý de Diplomatique," give both a description and a specimen; and from the specimen given, the characters are small and elegant, some being high and ending in volutes or curves, while there is a "mingling of capitals and cursives."

But why should the manuscript have been written in Lombard characters at all? It would seem simply in order to give it an air of excessively great antiquity;--but a more fatal mistake could not possibly have been made.

We know from the letters that Bracciolini wrote to Niccoli that he wanted a very old copy of Tacitus to serve as a guide to the transcriber at Hirschfeldt: Niccoli sent him a Tacitus in Lombard characters; his objection to it was not that the characters were Lombard, but that they were "half-effaced" ("caduca"). We may, therefore, conclude that the copy finally sent to him as a guide for the transcriber, was, also, in Lombard characters; those not "half-effaced," but clear and legible; it is a pity for them, but a good job for me, that he or Niccoli, or both, did not know that Lombard characters were not in use in the century when they wanted it to appear that their forgery was in existence; for they indulged in a trick to make the reader believe that the MS. was in existence at the close of the fourth century at the very latest; and, perhaps, a hundred or two hundred years before, for they put

a note at the end, by which the reader is given to understand, to his mighty surprise, that the manuscript was in the hands of that illustrious Heathen Philosopher, Salustius, not the Syrian and Cynic, of whom an account is given by Suidas, Photius, Fabricitis and others, for he lived in the fifth century, but the Gaul and Platonist, who flourished in the preceding century, of whom Fabricius said that he would "rather ascribe to him who was the friend of the Emperor Julian and the Platonist, than to the other Salustius, who was the Cynic, the elegant treatise that was extant, "On the Gods and the World";--"huic potius Juliani, Platonico, quam alteri Cynico Salustio tribuerim libellum elegantem, qui exstat [Greek: peri Theon kai kosmou]" (Biblioth. Graec. Lib. III. c. 9); Theodoretus also speaks of him in his [Greek: Historia Ekklaesiastikae] (Lib. I. 3), as well as the Emperor Julian in one of his Orations (VIII.) and Ammianus Marcellinus in the 21st and 23rd books of his History. Now, the very fact that Ammianus Marcellinus speaks of this Salustius is the very reason why he should have been selected to be the corrector of the forged MS.; we have already said more than once, --and it cannot be too often impressed upon the reader,--that Bracciolini found the historical books of Ammianus Marcellinus; to all appearances, he had most carefully studied them: it was therefore, from his being quite familiar with the pages of Marcellinus, that he had Salustius suggested to him as the best individual to write the note.

The note is to the effect that Salustius had read and corrected the manuscript when he was residing in Rome during the Consulate of Olibrius and Probinus, and that he had again revised it at Constantinople in the Consulate of Caesarius and Atticus.--"Ego Salustius legi et emendavi Romae felix, Olibio et Probino vc. Coss. in foro Martis controversias declamans oratori Endelechio. Rursus Constantinopoli recognovi Caesario et Attico Consulibus". Olibrius (not Olibius) and Probinus were the two last consuls in the reign of the Emperor Theodosius; that, therefore, gives the date 395; and Caesarius and Atticus were the consuls in the second year of the Emperor Arcadius, so that that gives the date 397.

All the editors of Tacitus cast no doubt on the authenticity of these words; they believe they were actually written by Salustius; the fact is, they have not the slightest suspicion of forgery; under which circumstance, they had no other alternative but to regard the manuscript as a palimpsest, with everything erased except these words, which they believed ought also to have been expunged, as appertaining to the previous, and not the existing MS., and which remained through the negligence of the transcriber. Pichena, accepting everything as genuine, was of opinion that the manuscript was as old as 395; this is an opinion that everybody considers ridiculous, on account of the characters being Lombard, it not being until the sixth century that the Lombards came into Italy, until which date all Latin manuscripts were written in Roman characters.

On account of this, there has arisen, among, the cognoscente of codices, an interminable controversy attended by a startling divergence of opinion with respect to the length of the existence of this manuscript.

Unable to agree with Pichena, Jarnes Gronovius, nevertheless, places it at such an "immense distance in antiquity from all the others," that one must suppose he considered it coeval with the immediate arrival of the Lombards into Italy, and, therefore, about the sixth century. Exterus and Panckoucke, entertaining pretty much the same opinion as James Gronovius, date its origin

from the seventh or eighth century.

A man who took an enormous interest in all literary matters of this description, Cardinal Passionei, deputed, in the middle of the last century, one of the most skilful experts in manuscripts in Italy, Signor Botari, to ascertain the age of this puzzling codex. Botari naturally applied to the principal keeper of the Mediceo-Laurentian Library, Signor Biccioni, who, after consulting with his colleague, Signor Martini, came to the conclusion that it did not date further back than the eighth century.

The Benedictine Brothers, who tell this anecdote, are themselves of opinion that the manuscript is not older than the tenth century; and for these reasons, "the characters, the distance between the words, the punctuation, and some other signs" which are indicative, they say, of that century: "les caractýres, la distance des mots, la ponctuation et plusieurs autres signes marquent tout au plus le Xe siýcle" (t. III. p. 279).

Other men have given other opinions of the age of this manuscript; Ernesti, for example, believes that it is as old as the 11th century; others say the 13th; others again give some other time; whereas the exact date is known to the reader, who is aware that it first saw the light in February or March, 1429.

But about this writing of Salustius. Further imposture is shown by what the Philosopher is made to say about his "declaiming controversies" in the Forum of Mars before the Orator Endelechius. There is nothing to show that Salustius, (though he was in Gaul, the prefect in the praetorium, while Julian, the Apostate, was proconsul), was ever in Rome. It is doubtful whether Salustius and Endelechius ever were together; for though both flourished in the time of the Emperor Theodosius, one lived in Rome and the other in Constantinople.

Looking at all the circumstances in this investigation it must be admitted as being uncommonly remarkable, and, therefore, uncommonly suspicious, that the note should have been made by one of whom such very little is known as Salustius; consequently, the very little that would be known of what he did, or what might be affirmed of him that he did:--we have seen from what is said of him by Fabricius that it is not positively known, but only shrewdly conjectured, that he wrote the treatise "De Diis et Mundo";--it is not ascertained whether he was the Salustius who was Consul with the Emperor Julian IV. in the year 363;--it is not settled what were his other names, some, such as Lempriýre, taking them to be Secundus Promo_tus_, others, such as M. Weiss, in the "Biographie Universelle", Secundus Promo_tius_, a third set questioning whether he had any such names as "Secundus" and "Promotus" or "Promotius":--finally, it is not determined how his name, Salustius, ought to be spelt, whether with one or with two l's, when in Suidas it is spelt "Salustius" [Greek: Saloustios], and in Theodoretus "Sallustius" [Greek letters: Salloustios]. And "who shall decide" when a lexicographer and a bishop "disagree?"

There is not yet an end to all the mystery and confusion hanging around this Praefectus Praetorio. Was he ever a Praefectus Praetorio? One cannot then understand why Theodoretus, when speaking of his being [Greek: huparchos] (Hist. Eccl. I. 6 post init.), should express his surprise at it, from Salustius "being a slave to impiety." The general of the Imperial Guard could have discharged his duties just as well whether he was pious or impious: So could the Praefectus Urbi; but this would not have

been the case with the officer who was the superintendent of the public morals,--the Praefectus Morum: It would therefore seem that this was the post held by Salustius, when Ammianus Marcellinus informs us in his History that the Emperor Julian "promoted him to be Prefect and sent him into Gaul:"--"Salustium Praefectum promotum in Galliam missus est" (Lib. XXI. c. 8): Otherwise it is not clear why Theodoretus should write thus in his Ecelesiastical History:--"At this time Sallustius who was Prefect, ALTHOUGH he was a _slave to impiety_:--[Greek: Salloustios de hyparchos on taenikauta, KAITOI tae dussebeia douleuon"] (L. c.)

With all this mystery and confusion attaching to Salustius, there is almost as much confusion and mystery attaching to Sanctus Severus Endelechius,--or Severus, as he is mostly known to the writers of ecclesiastical history. Possevino, the Elder, in the second volume (p. 398) of his "Apparatus Sacer" speaks of him as a teacher of oratory and a poet in the Christian world:--"Severi Rectoris et Poetae Christiani, Carmen Bucolicon". Rheinesius, in one of his Letters (VIII.) to Daumius, misquotes this, by substituting "Rhetoris "for "Rectoris"; in the course of the same letter he makes a remark which causes one to understand what is meant by "declaiming controversies in the Forum of Mars to the Orator Endelechius": Rheinesius says that, the custom of rhetoricians was to bring forward into the forum set matters, or themes" [Greek: Theseis] "for the sake of intellectual exercitation":--"solebant enim oratores etiam fictas materias, seu [Greek: Theseis], in forum producere exercendi ingenii gratia"; --from this being done, we learn towards the close of the letter, when he is speaking of this very note to the Second Florentine MS., that "Endelechius was a master to Sallustius"--"Endelechius ... Sallustio magister fuit."

It is clear that Rheinesius believes everything about the note to the Second Florence MS. But how came a Heathen philosopher,--a very impious one, too, (according to Theodoretus), like Salustius, to be so cordially connected in the fourth century with a devout Christian teacher, like Sanctus Severus Endelechius? Even admitting that there was this freedom of intercourse between the two, do dates agree for the kind of relationship that is said to have existed between them? The time when Salustius was learning oratory from Endelechius was, as the note tells us, the year 395. But Endelechius was the contemporary of Paulinus, the date of whose death was 431, and Endelechius died a little before or after him, (See Rheinesius Epist. ad Daumium VIII. p. 25.) Endelechius must have then been a remarkably juvenile instructor in rhetoric. Shall we say at ten years of age? or eight? or six? or when he was in his cradle? for he died before he was 50.

Why, also, should there have been any written declaration on the part of Salustius, that he had revised the copy? Does it not look as if his certificate of revision was meant to establish this as a fact not to be contravened,--that the Manuscript is as old as the fourth century? The trick is clearly the artifice of an impostor, who wants an attestation, when no attestation is required to substantiate a thing except when the thing to be substantiated is, as in this instance, a falsification. The Benedictine monks say in their "Nouveau Traitý de Diplomatique" (III. 279), "they never saw in any manuscript an attestation of corrections"; more so, when the manuscript is a copy, and not an original, and does not bear any corrections on its margin;--"sur un trýs grand nombre de mss. que nous avons vus, jamais nous n'ayons rýmarquý d'attestations de corrections, transcrites dans les copies." I will be bound to say that they never saw in any other manuscript than this, (the vellum of which is, I suspect, of the 15th century), the letters formed

and the words placed at the distance between each other as obtained in the tenth century, along with the abbreviations and the punctuations of that period.

Nor is this an end of the marks of imposture about this Second Florence MS.

The reader will admit that a very great (and what looks like an insuperable) difficulty was to be got over by some amazingly clever trick not easily conceivable, when a number of books, as if written by Tacitus, were to precede a history which he had composed, commencing: "When I begin this work"--"Initium mihi operis;" those words which now in all the editions properly stand at the head of a separate and substantive work, "Historiarum Liber I." stand in the Second Florence MS. at the head of what is designated the "Seventeenth Book" of the whole production. The device had recourse to is ingenious in the extreme, yet as arrant a mark of imposture as anything that we have pointed out.

The last Six Books of what we now know as "The Annals" are headed "Cornelii Taciti Historiae Augustae LI. XI. _Actionum_ Diurnalium:" that is, "The Books of the History of the Emperors by Cornelius Tacitus, the 11th of the Daily _Transactions_." The first book of what we now know as "The History" has this change in the heading: "_Actorum_ Diurnalium XVII."; that is "the 17th book of the Daily _Affairs_." The implication is that Tacitus meant a vast difference between "_Actiones_ Diurnales" and "_Actus_ Diurnales"; so to leave the reader in doubt as to whether Tacitus had given any explanations as to why he meant to change the character of the narrative but not the numbering of the books, the Sixteenth Book breaks off abruptly; the kind of explanation that must have been given by Tacitus is thus left entirely to the imagination of the reader, for everybody must conjecture, if the affair was genuine, that some sort of explanation was given in the lost part. This is certain that, from the manner in which he wrote the Annals, Bracciolini gave a larger meaning to "actus" than to "actiones," the former meaning "public affairs," and the other "things that were done" of any note or interest; clearly showing that nobody was more conscious than Bracciolini himself how he had failed in attempting to write history in the exact manner in which it was written by Tacitus. I may now place before the reader the astonishment which Seemiller expresses in his "Incrementa Typographica" (pp. 10, 11), that the books about the Emperors of Rome in the first edition of the works of Tacitus printed at Venice in 1469 by the then unrivalled master of his art, Vindelinus of Spire, should not have the titles of "Annals" and "History." The reader now sees the reason why; and, moreover, the reader knows that Seemiller must have seen very few editions of the works of Tacitus.

VI. One or two things more ought to be taken notice of, because they connect Bracciolini with the forged manuscript.

It was usual for monastic transcribers to follow the text of the writer as closely as printers in these days follow the copy of an author. Everybody has his peculiarities: Bracciolini was no exception to this rule. He was in the habit of writing "incipit feliciter" at the commencement of a work: this maybe seen in an old MS. copy of his "Facetiae", preserved in the British Museum, and supposed to have been written at Nuremberg in 1470. This also runs through the headings to the books in the Second Florence MS. To either "feliciter" or "felix," he was so partial, that he shows it in the attestation of Salustius, who is made to write "Ego Salustius legi et emendavi Romae _felix_."

There is another point, which, though as trifling, is as striking.

MSS. were sometimes found with two or more authors bound up together, and these, in the majority of cases, were very old ones. To give the Second Florence MS. an air of antiquity Tacitus is bound up with Apuleius. If an author was to be selected to be bound up with anything done by Bracciolini at this date, and he had been consulted in the matter, there was none more likely for him to have chosen than Apuleius, for his thoughts were now running altogether upon that writer, of whose "Golden Ass" he gave a Latin translation; and the particular part of Apuleius bound up with Tacitus only begins at the 10th chapter, that is, with only what he writes "De Asino Aureo."

These are, as I have said, small points; but looking at surrounding circumstances, they are significant; and stand forth as additional proofs of Bracciolini being concerned not only in the forgery of the last Six Books of the Annals, but also in the forgery of the Second Florence MS.

VII. Another point ought not to be passed over in silence, as it is of much importance.

It has been said in the first part of this investigation that no authentic mention is to be found of the Annals of Tacitus from the second to the fifteenth century; for the simple reason that it was not then in existence. But if it was forged, copied and issued by 1429, it would almost follow that some mention would be made of it not very long after that date: this was actually the case: the first authentic mention of the Annals is by Zecco Polentone, in the Sixth Book of his "De Scriptoribus Illustribus Latinae Linguae": he says that he would "not venture to state very positively what was the number of the books of Tacitus's History; but for himself he had seen the eleventh book (in a fragmentary form) and all the others down to the twenty-first, in which abundant materials had been furnished in an elaborate manner of the life of Claudius and of the succeeding emperors down to Vespasian." This work of Polentone I have never seen, and quote the extract as it is given by the Abbý Mýhus in his Preface to the works of Traversari: "Librorum ejus" (Taciti nempe) "numerum affirmare satis certe non audeo. Fragmenta quidem libri undecimi, et reliquos deinceps ad vigesimum primum vidi, in quis vita Claudii, et qui fuerunt postea Caesares ad Vespasianum usque, ornate, ut dixi, et copiose ornavit" (Mýhus. Praef. ad Latinas Epistolas Traversarii p. XLVII.). The question now arises when did Polentone write this? It could not have been before 1429, because the last six books of the Annals had not yet been given to the world; nor would it have been after 1463, for that date was, according to Pignorius, the year of his death. The first authentic mention of the last six books of the Annals might then have been in the first year after its publication, or it might not have been till the thirty-third; but this is certain, that those books, as might have been expected from their most remarkable character, attracted attention, as they have not ceased to do down to the present day, in the very first generation when they were placed before the public.

VIII. I cannot see that anything I can think of and investigate invalidates my theory: on the contrary, everything that suggests itself immediately and strictly tallies with the truth of it; but if this be not the case with every theory, then that theory is not, and cannot be correct. Take and test any; take and test the theory, for example, of Sir George Cornewall Lewis with respect to the ancient monarchy of Rome; he considered it to be a myth, his principal argument, in my opinion, being, on account of the number of years the seven kings had reigned,--244;--he maintained that

such a length of years in such an exceedingly small number of consecutive reigns is not to be found in the history of any other country; that may be true enough; but only turn the eye to the country contiguous to ours; the land which almost seems to present itself as a matter of course for its great fame and splendour, France; then turn to the most striking and memorable period of its monarchy,--the time of the seven last kings, the Henries and the Louises, just preceding the Great Revolution: the years of their consecutive reigns number 233, so that there are 11 years to the good of Sir George Cornewall Lewis's theory; but if two of those French kings, Henry III. and Henry IV., had not been assassinated, and the last of them, Louis XVI., deprived of his life by an infuriated people, the number of years of those seven monarchs' reigns might have been 270 or 280, possibly even 300. That theory of Sir George Cornewall Lewis cannot then be accepted; there being nothing,--for the leading reason given by him,--that should induce us to question the accuracy of history as regards the Roman monarchy.

IX. But it does strike me most forcibly that after what I have advanced, (it may be, feebly,--I am certain in a manner that is very faulty),--it is simply aversion to novelty that can cause the reader still to believe that Tacitus wrote that part of his History which passes by the name of "Annals": I do not see how the reader can be of that opinion when he ponders over the numerous literary doubts I have raised as to its authenticity, more particularly, of the last six books;--when, too, he remembers how I have shown by facts, dates and circumstances the period when that portion came into existence;--the year when it was begun and the year when it was completed;--the people who were engaged in its production;--the writer who composed it;--the individual who suggested it;--the book-collector who instigated it;--the monk who transcribed it;--the rich man who purchased it;--and, just now, the author who made the first authentic mention of it; and last, but not least, the condition (that is, the exact age and undoubted spuriousness) of the oldest MS. that we have of it:--all goes to prove that, if not the whole work, at any rate, the last Six Books of the Annals are a forgery;--and a forgery, too, so audacious in its conception, and so extraordinary in its bungling,--while all the steps of its execution have been so distinctly set forth according to data that have been given and authorities that have been cited,--that it seems to me to be nothing more nor less than sheer obstinacy, after such clear demonstration, for any body to entertain a doubt about it.

END OF BOOK THE THIRD.

BOOK THE FOURTH. THE FIRST SIX BOOKS OF THE ANNALS.

Hunc lege quaeso librum, quem condidit ore disertus,
Et Latiae linguae Poggius ipse decus.
BEBELIUS. _Utilissimus Liber_.

CHAPTER I.

REASONS FOR BELIEVING THAT BRACCIOLINI WROTE BOTH PARTS OF THE ANNALS.

I.--Improvement in Bracciolini's means after the completion of the forgery of the last part of the Annals.--II. Discovery of the first six books, and theory about their forgery.--III. Internal evidence the only proof of their being forged.--IV. Superiority of workmanship a strong proof.--V. Further departure than in the last six books from Tacitus's method another proof.--VI. The Symmetry of the framework a third proof.--VII. Fourth evidence, the close

resemblance in the openings of the two parts.--VIII. The same tone and colouring prove the same authorship.--IX. False statements made about Sejanus and Antonius Natalis for the purpose of blackening Tiberius and Nero.--X. This spirit of detraction runs through Bracciolini's works.--XI. Other resemblances denoting the same author.--XII. Policy given to every subject another cause to believe both parts composed by a single writer.--And XIII. An absence of the power to depict differences in persons and things.

I. When Bracciolini completed the first instalment of his forgery he was in his fiftieth year. From that date, for the remainder of his life, in consequence of the large remuneration he received for his audacious imposition, he lived in comparatively affluent circumstances. He permanently fixed his residence in a villa which he purchased in the pleasant district of Valdarno in the Tuscan territory;--a villa made profitable by a vineyard, and beautiful by a garden adorned with tasteful ornaments, fountains and classic statues, the workmanship of ancient Greek and Roman sculptors. With the lucrative contingencies attached to his forgery, such as disposing of copies from the original, a privilege which he, doubtless, obtained from his friend Cosmo de' Medici, and for which he must have frequently got large sums of money, he may have gratified the inclination he expressed six years before to his friend, Niccoli, of spending 400 gold sequins a year;--"non sum pecuniosus ... erat animus expendere usque ad CCCC. aureos, non quod tot habeam." (Ep. II. 3.) He now had the means, that sum being equivalent to from 8 to 10 thousand pounds a year in these days. That he made a splendid fortune there can be no question, were it only for the words used by Poliziano in his History of the Pazzi and Salviati Conspiracy against Lorenzo de' Medici, while speaking of his eldest son James "squandering in a few years the ample patrimony which he had inherited": "patrimonium quod ipse amplum ex haereditate paterna obvoverat totum paucis annis profuderat" (Polit. De Pact. Conj. Hist. p. 637), the language used showing that Jacopo Bracciolini was not sole inheritor but co-heir with his brothers. Certain it is that the circumstances of Bracciolini were so much improved after his forgery of the Annals that from that time he had the opportunity of indulging a cherished idea of his earlier manhood devoting himself to literary undertakings. He started off with his treatise on Avarice, (a subject of which he was a very good judge): composition after composition then issued rapidly from his pen; they were no longer anonymous; they were attended by fame; he thus made ample amends for the "inglorius labor", as he styles it himself (An. IV, 32), of the Annals.

These works have been extremely valuable in the course of this inquiry; they are more especially valuable just now in enabling me to trace home to him the authorship of the first six books of the Annals; these works were 15 in number, namely 1. Historia Disceptativa de Avaritia; 2. Two books of Historiae Convivales; 3. An essay De Nobilitate; 4. Ruinarum Urbis Romae Descriptio; 5. A treatise De Humanae Conditionis Miseria; 6. Controversial Writings; 7. Funeral Orations; 8. Epistles; 9. Fables; 10. Facetiae; 11. A Dialogue De Infelicitate Principum; 12. Another entitled "An Seni sit Uxor ducenda"? first published in Liverpool in 1807, and edited by the Rev. William Shepherd; 13. Four books De Varietate Fortunae first published in 1723 by the Abbý Oliva; 14. History of Florence in 8 books, published by Muratori in the 20th volume of his Rerum Italicarum Scriptores; and 15. A Dialogue on Hypocrisy printed in the Appendix to the Fasciculus Rerum Expetendarum et Fugiendarum first published at Cologne in 1535 by Orthuinus Gratius, and in 1689 by Edward Brown with considerable additions.

But these were not his only literary productions. Fazio tells us that he wrote a book upon the manners of the Indians: "scripsit ... de Moribus Indorum" (Facius. De Viris Illustr. p. 17): this is the same as the fourth book of his "De Varietate Fortunae," which is a translation or version of the travels in India of Niccolo di Conti. The same authority also informs us that "he translated the Cyropaedeia of Xenophon, which he dedicated to Alphonso I, King of Naples, from whom he received a very large sum of money for his dedication, even as he dedicated to Pope Nicholas V. his translation of the six books of the historian Diodorus Siculus": --"Cyripaediam, quam Xenophon ille scripsit, latinam reddidit, atque Alphonso Regi dedicavit, pro qua a Rege magnam mercedem accepit. Ejusdem est traductio Diodori Siculi historiographi ad Nicolaum Quintum Pontificem Maximum libri sex" (L. c.) Another translation of his was "The Golden Ass" of Apuleius in ten books; and he edited, (but without notes), the "Astronomicon" of Manilius, --whom, by the way, he misstyles "Manlius."

The advantage which he obtained from the publication of these works was as nothing compared to the large and repeated sums he must have got from his fabrication of the Annals; and the knowledge that he would always have a ready and munificent purchaser in Cosmo de' Medici, induced him to continue his wondrous and daring forgery.

II. We have seen how, at the very least, 500 gold sequins were given by Cosmo de' Medici, for the last six books of the Annals. After the lapse of nearly 90 years, exactly the same sum was awarded for the discovery of the first six books by another de' Medici, Leo X., to Arcimboldi, afterwards Archbishop of Milan, --the 122nd, according to the Abbot Ughelli, in his work that occupied him thirty years,--"Italia Sacra".

Now, it is a very remarkable circumstance that, at the time when Arcimboldi gave out that he had discovered the first six books of the Annals in the Abbey of Corvey, the fourth son of Bracciolini, Giovanni Francesco, then a man 68 years of years, was holding the same office that his father had held before him in the Pontifical Court as Papal Secretary. We have no record that Giovanni Francesco Bracciolini knew anything about the opening books of the Annals, nor where they were to be found: we are not told that he was in any communication on the matter with Arcimboldi: all we know is that he was a colleague in the court of Leo X. of the finder of those books.

On this fact, nevertheless, I build up the following theory:--That Bracciolini having found what a good thing he had made of it in forging the last six books of the Annals, along with the great success that had attended it, set about forging an addendum, with a view of disposing of it when completed to Cosmo de' Medici; --that while he was engaged in the composition, he was surprised by death on the 30th of October, 1459, leaving behind his friend and patron, Cosmo de' Medici, to survive him nearly five years, till the 1st of August, 1464;--that Bracciolini, when he saw that he was approaching the end of his days, must necessarily and naturally have made his sons acquainted with the existence of the work, on account of the great profit that could be made by the disposal of it whenever the favourable opportunity presented itself;--that Giovanni Francesco Bracciolini, in 1513 when John de' Medici was elected to the Pontifical throne, having outlived all his brothers, had then this MS. in his keeping; knowing that it was in an unfinished state, from his father being engaged upon it when he died,--also being aware that there was an ugly gap of

three years between the imprisonment of Drusus and the fall of Sejanus,--believing in the necessity of this gap being supplied, --and regarding Arcimboldi as a greater Latinist and scholar generally than himself, therefore more capable of adding this fresh matter,--at any rate, of putting the manuscript in order for transcription,--he apprised the Pope's Receiver of the treasure; --and that the time which elapsed between the offering of the reward by Leo X. and the turning up of the first six books of the Annals, something more than a year, or even a year and a half, was occupied by Arcimboldi in the revision of the MS. and by a monk in the Abbey of Corvey in transcribing the forgery along with the works of Tacitus.

This theory, founded altogether on the imagination, may be right, or it may be quite wrong; but whether it be wrong or right, it is impossible to believe that Tacitus wrote those books: it is equally impossible to believe that they were forged by Arcimboldi, or that more than one man composed the first six and the last six books of the Annals, were it only on account of the close identity of the character, and the conspicuous splendour of the peculiar ability manifested in both parts.

III. We must, therefore, now endeavour by internal evidence, and by that alone, to convince the reader that Bracciolini, and nobody else but he, forged the first portion of the Annals: too many proofs stand prominently forward to prevent our doubting for a moment that this really was the case, however unaccountable it may seem that 86 years should have intervened between the appearance of the two parts, and 56 after the death of the author.

IV. One strong reason for believing that Bracciolini wrote the first six books is the far greater superiority of the workmanship to that in the last six books, showing that the author was then older, more matured in his mental powers, more experienced in the ways of the world and better acquainted with the workings of the human heart;--for if it be true what Goethe said that no young man can produce a masterpiece, it is, certainly, quite as true that a man's work in the way of intellect, information and wisdom, is better after he is fifty than before he reaches that age,-- provided always that he retains the full vigour of his faculties. Now no one will for a moment say that such workmanship as the delineation of character, say, for example, of Nero and Seneca, in the last part of the Annals can stand by the side of the finished picturing of Tiberius and Sejanus in the first part.

V. Another reason for entertaining this belief is that there is a still further departure in the first six than in the last six books from the method pursued by Tacitus: greater attention is paid to acts of individuals than to events of State: the writer seems to have been emboldened by his first success to follow more closely the bent of his genius, and that was, to make of history a school of morals for imparting instruction by means of revealing the springs of human action and the workings of the human heart.

VI. That, indeed, the two parts proceeded from the same hand is seen in the symmetry of the framework. Each book contains the actions of two, three, four or six years. The latter is the case in the last part,--in the 12th book,--and in the first part,--in the 4th and 6th books. The narrative extends to four years in the 13th book, and to about the same time in the 14th in the last part, and in the first part to the 2nd book; a little more than three years occupies the 15th book in the last part and the 3rd and 5th in the first part; two years the 11th and nearly two years the 1st; in both parts one book is left in a fragmentary state, it

being the 16th in the last part, and in the first part the 5th.

These circumstances go a considerable way towards supporting the hypothesis that the first six books of the Annals were written by the same man who wrote the last six books.

VII. A further evidence of the same authorship is found in the close resemblance which the openings of both parts bear to one another: each refers to crime, the last part opening with the hideous accusations against Silius, and the adulteries of Messalina, while the first part opens with the murder of Agrippa Posthumus.

VIII. The same tone and colouring, too, are thrown over both parts: an unbroken moodiness pervades them; one unceasing series of repulsive pictures of the vices and immoralities of a country fallen into servility and hastening to destruction; men and women commit revolting crimes; the human race is a prey to calamity; individuals are feared and followed by oppression, and that, too, simply because they are distinguished by nobility of birth, or because they are excellent rhetoricians, or popular with the multitude, or endowed with faculties equal to all requirements in public emergencies and State difficulties: we have the same terrible deaths of ministers,--Seneca and Sejanus; the same blending of ferocity and lust in emperors,--Nero and Tiberius; the same accusations and sacrifices of men who are free of speech and honourable in their proceedings.

IX. Statements are made in both parts that appear to be the outcome only of inventive ingenuity and a malignant humour. Thus Sejanus, who is depicted as a peril to the State, both when he flourished and when he fell, has, after his execution, his body ignominiously drawn through the streets, (which looks, by the way, like a custom of the fifteenth century), and those who are accused of attachment to him, including his innocent little children, are all put to death. This seems to be said merely with the view of blackening the character of Tiberius, as the character of Nero is blackened by the statements made about Antonius Natalis. Antonius Natalis takes part in the Pisonian Conspiracy against Nero (An. XV. 54, 55); then he betrays Seneca and the companions of Seneca (ib. 56); after that he gets off with impunity (ib. 71). I may be wrong, but it strikes me that this statement is merely made with the view of attacking Nero as a bad administrator for not punishing a mean conspirator and cruel traitor: Tiberius is similarly assailed for cruelly killing harmless children.

There are no means of showing that what is said of the children of Sejanus is fiction; it can only be surmised: but it can be proved as a fact that what is stated about Antonius Natalis is nothing more nor less than pure romance. He was dead before the conspiracy of Piso: Bracciolini could have seen that had he read carefully the letters of Seneca himself; for the philosopher and statesman speaks of Natalis at the time when he wrote the letter numbered in his works 87, as being dead some time, and "having many heirs" as he had been "the heir of many":--"Nuper Natalis ... et multorum haeres fuit, et multos habuit haeredes" (Ep. LXXXVII.)

X. This statement then about Nero having no foundation, seems to have been merely made out of that spirit of detraction which we have already noticed as characterizing both parts of the Annals: it is the same spirit which runs through the works of Bracciolini: first he praises an individual, and then mars the eulogy of him by introducing some little bit of defamation. To give examples:--We open his collected works, and begin to read his treatise on

Avarice: turning over the first page we find him speaking of a great preaching friar, named Bernardino, whom he lauds as most extraordinary in the command he held over the feelings of his congregation, moving them, as he pleased, to tears or laughter; but he adds that Bernardino did not adapt his sermons to the good of those who heard him, but, like the rest of his class, to his own reputation as a preacher: "Una in re maxime excellit in persuadendo, ac excitandum affectibus flectit populum, et quo vult deducit, movens ad lachrymas, et cum res patitur ad risum.... Verum ... ipse, et caeteri hujusmodi praedicatores, ... non accommodant orationes suas ad nostram utilitatem sed ad suam loquacitatem" (De Avaritia. Pog. Op. p. 2). A few pages further on, we find him speaking of Robert, King of Sicily, as unsurpassed by any living prince in reputation and the glory of his deeds, but the meanness of his avarice, we are told, clouded the splendour of his virtues: "At quid illustrius est etiam hodie regis illius memoria, fama, nomine, gloria rerum gestarum ... si avaritia in eo virtutis laudem extinxisset" (ib. p. 14).

XI. Other resemblances in both parts denote identity of authorship. Mean individuals are magnified and inconsiderable nations exalted; their wars and deeds are related with pompous particularity; battles are fought not worth recording, and enterprizes undertaken not worth reading; Tacitus would have deemed such incidents unworthy of mention; for he takes no more notice of the Hermundurians, than to speak of them as a German tribe faithful to the Romans, and living in friendly relations with them: but in the Annals they are put forward for the admiration of posterity as waging a war with the Callians, and fighting a severe battle with those little creatures. In the last part of the Annals (XII. 55) the Clitae tribes of Cilician boors rush down from their rugged mountains upon maritime regions and cities under the conduct of their leader, Throsobor; so in the first part (III. 74) Tacfarinas makes depredations upon the Leptuanians, and then retreats among the Garamantes. The same Numidian savage in the same part leads his disorderly gang of vagabonds and robbers against the Musulanians, an uncivilized people without towns (II. 52); in the last part Eunones, prince of the Adorsians, fights with Zorsines, king of the Siracians, besieges his mud-huts, and, the historian gravely informs us, had not night interrupted the assault, would have carried his moats in a single day. "These are

> "the battles, sieges, fortunes,--
> The most disastrous chances
> Of moving accidents by flood and field,"

that enlist our sympathies in both parts of the Annals; and of these people, with their

> "hair-breadth 'scapes in the imminent deadly breach,"

"you have little else," says that severe critic of the Annals, the Vicar of Wrexham (p. 89), "but tumults, advances, retreats, kings recalled, kings banished, kings slain, and all in such confusion and hurry," as to be devoid of "satisfaction and pleasure"; and the Rev. Thomas Hunter likens these mean tribes so signalized by immortality to the ill-conditioned natives of India whom the Great Mogul styled "Mountain Rats."

XII. Another great resemblance which induces the reader to believe that both parts of the Annals were composed by a single author is a monotony so very peculiar as to be characteristic of the same individual: it is a monotony quite equal to that of an ancient

mansion in an English county, where one passes from apartment to apartment to be reminded of Gray's "Long Story," for the rooms are still spacious, the ceilings still fretted, the panels still gilded, the portraits still those of beauties rustling in silks and tissues, and still those of grave Lord Keepers in high crowned hats and green stockings;--or the monotony is like that which meets one when walking about a town, where at the corners of all the streets and squares and the beginning and end of every bridge and viaduct; the entrance to a palace or a public office; the gateway to a market or a subway, a park or a garden; the foot of a lamp-post or a statue; a curbstone running round an open space, or a wall abutting on a roadway, the same thing is always found for the purpose of keeping off the wheels of vehicles as they roll by,--a round stone: so one finds in the Annals always the same form given to every subject: that form is policy; through policy everything is done; by policy every person is actuated; policy is the motive of every action; policy is the solution of every difficulty.

Augustus on his deathbed chooses a worse master than himself to be his successor in order that his loss may be the more regretted by the State. Tiberius makes Piso governor of Syria only that he may have a spy for Germanicus as governor of Egypt, for he was envious of the fame and virtues of the successful, popular young general. Nero sends Sylla into exile from mistaking his dullness for dissimulation. Arruntius kills himself because he is intolerant of iniquity. The stupidity of Claudius is discovered to be astuteness, the bestialities of Nero elegance. Nothing is easy, nothing natural; everything is forced, everything artificial.

XIII. Nor does Bracciolini shine as a depicter of character. What a contrast between him and Livy in that respect! And as a describer of imperial occurrences, what a contrast between him and Tacitus! He does not touch the Paduese in his grand form of painting all people and all things in their proper colours: Livy places before us the Kings of old Rome in their pride and the Consuls in their variety; the former with their fierce virtue, the latter with their degraded love of luxury;--Decemvirs in the austerity of their rule and Tribunes with their popular impulses. Tacitus makes us see the movements of mighty events, as clearly as we behold objects shining in the broad light of day,--their vicissitudes, relations, causes and issues;--armies with their temper and feelings; provinces with their disposition and sentiments;--the Empire in the elements of its strength and weakness; the Capital in its distracted and fluctuating state; --all political phaenomena that marked the dreary reality of dominion in the declining days of the Roman Commonwealth. But Bracciolini puts before us nothing like this;--only incongruous, unimaginable and un-Romanlike personages,--people who gibber at us, as idiots in their asylums, as that unfortunate simpleton, the Emperor Claudius;--murderous criminals who glower and scowl upon us, as those two monsters of iniquity, Tiberius and Nero;--pimps and parasites beyond number, who so plague us with their perpetual presence, that the revolted soul at length wonders how so many such beings can be acting together, and be so degenerate, when Nature might have designed most, if not all, of them, for greater and more salutary purposes. While Bracciolini does not, in the least, resemble either of the two great historians of Rome, he is the very reverse of the historical classic of Spain, Mariana, who, in the thirty volumes of his Historia de Rebus Hispaniae, places before us the different characters of different people, distinguishing Mussulmans from Christians, Moors from Arabs, and Carthaginians from Romans; whereas, in the Annals, we perceive no difference between the Parthians and the Suevians, the Romans and

the Germans, the Dandarides and the Adiabenians, the Medes and the Iberians.

CHAPTER II.

LANGUAGE, ALLITERATION, ACCENT AND WORDS.

I. The poetic diction of Tacitus, and its fabrication in the Annals.--II. Florid passages in the Annals.--III. Metrical composition of Bracciolini.--IV. Figurative words: (_a_) "pessum dare"; (_b_) "voluntas".--The verb foedare and the Ciceronian use of foedus.--VI. The language of other Roman writers,--Livy, Quintus Curtius and Sallust.--VII. The phrase "non modo ... sed", and other anomalous expressions, not Tacitus's.--VIII. Words not used by Tacitus, distinctus and codicillus.--IX. Peculiar alliterations in the Annals and works of Bracciolini.--X. Monotonous repetition of accent on penultimate syllables.--XI. Peculiar use of words: (_a_) properus; (_b_) annales and scriptura; (_c_) totiens. --XII. Words not used by Tacitus: (_a_) addubitare; (_b_) exitere.--XIII. Polysyllabic words ending consecutive sentences. --XIV. Omission of prepositions: (_a_) in; (_b_) with names of nations.

I. Any student of Thucydides and Tacitus must have observed that, though both support their opinions by sober, rational remarks, Thucydides expresses himself with logical accuracy in the calm and cold phraseology of passionless prose, whereas Tacitus ever and anon indulges in figures of rhetoric and poetic diction.

He changes things which can be considered only with reference to thought into solid, visible forms, as when he speaks of "wounds," instead of "the wounded," being taken to mothers and wives: "ad matres, ad conjuges _vulnera_ ferunt" (Germ. 7). He ascribes to the lifeless what can be properly attributed only to the living, as when he makes "day and the plain _reveal_," "_detexit_ dies et campus" (Hist. II. 62). He speaks of things done in a place as if they were done by the place itself, as Judaea _elevating_ Libanon into its principal mountain": "praecipuum montium Libanon _erigit_" i.e., Judaea (Hist. V. 6). He applies epithets to objects that are local, as if they were mental or moral, as we hear of "a _chaste_ grove" ("nemus _castum_") in the Germany (40).

Any one who had carefully analyzed his writings with the view of imitating him by forgery could not have failed to notice this; the consequence is that if we were to have a forgery, we should have a very close reproduction of this style of expression, and it would show itself to be forgery, by being without the boldness, spontaneity and novelty of the original; it would be timid, forced, and elaborately close and cramped. Now just this copying of a fabricator is what we find in the Annals. Exactly corresponding, to Tacitus's "_wounds_" instead of "the wounded," is seeing _blood streaming_ in families," meaning "suicides," and "the _hands of executioners_," meaning "the executed": "aspiciens _undantem_ per domos _sanguinem_ aut _manus carnificum_ (An. VI. 39). Precisely akin to Tacitus's "day and the plain revealing" is "night _bursting_ into wickedness": "noctem in scelus _erupturam_" (An. I. 28). For "a country lifting up a mountain into its highest altitude," is the analogous substitute, "the upper part of a town on fire _burning_ everything": "incensa super villa omnes _cremavit_" (An. III. 37): Here, too, is a further extension of poetical phraseology, more clearly proving forgery by denoting the hand of nobody so much as Bracciolini, who was remarkably fond of

borrowing the language of Virgil, (never resorted to by Tacitus), "super" for "desuper":

> "Haec _super_ e vallo prospectant Troies"
> (Aen. IX. 168).

For Tacitus's "chaste grove" we have the expression, like the note of a mockbird, "_just_ places",--when places do not favour either combatant: ("fundi Germanos acie et _justis locis"_ An. II. 5).

This imitation is found not only in the first but also in the last part of the Annals.

By tropes of verbs, nouns, adjectives, and in other ways, Tacitus produces effects that we look for in poets, but not in historians, as he uses "bosom" or "lap" ("sinus"), in the metaphorical sense of a "hiding place", ("latebrae"), in the History (II. 92), and of "a retreat", ("recessus"), in the Agricola (30). So, instead of his "bosom," or "lap", for "hiding place," or "retreat," we find "tears" for "weeping persons," where Seneca endeavours to recall his distracted friends to composure by words of suasion or authority: "Simul _lacrymas_ eorum modo sermone, modo intentior in modum coercentis, ad firmitudinem revocat" (An. XV. 62).

The close crampness of the whole of these instances raises a very strong suspicion that it cannot be the writing of Tacitus, but merely a servile imitation of his manner. It shows, too, that both parts of the Annals proceeded from the same hand.

II. When in the course of the autumn before last an announcement was made of this work in some of the public journals, the compliment was paid to me in one of the most enlightened of them, the _Daily News_, by a brilliant and learned writer, who was a perfect master of his subject, questioning whether it could be possible that Bracciolini had forged the Annals, on account of his mode of composition being so thoroughly different from that of Tacitus. The passages of Bracciolini were properly pronounced to be florid at times, and to bear resemblance to the high-flown magniloquence of Chateaubriand rather than the classic staidness of Tacitus. I have already pointed out how varied was Bracciolini in style, and his variety proved how by an effort he could, if it pleased him, imitate anybody. Still there is truth in the remark, that let him be as guarded as he might, he would, sometimes, fall quite unconsciously into a natural peculiarity. It might then be questioned whether he had forged the Annals unless it can be shown that in both parts of that work he now and again fell into the florid style found in his "Ruinarum Urbis Romae Descriptio", as quoted by the accomplished writer in the _Daily News_, (who took, as he said, the translation of Gibbon), to wit: "The temple is overthrown, the gold is pillaged, the wheel of Fortune has accomplished her revolution."

I cannot do better than give the four instances that are adduced by Famianus Strada in his Prolusions (II. 3) by way of illustrating how every now and then Bracciolini wrote sentences that are marked by the qualities of poetry rather than of prose.

The first occurs in the eleventh book, where Messalina is described in the following manner: "such was her furious lust, that, in mid autumn, she would celebrate in her home the vintage festival; the presses were plied, the vats flowed, and women girt with skins bounded about like sacrificing or raving Bacchantes, she, with hair flowing loosely, waving the thyrsus, and Silius by her side wreathed with ivy and shod with the cothurnus, tossing his head,

while a crew of female wantons shrieked around them":--"Messalina non alias solutior luxu, adulto autumno, simulacrum vindemiae per domum celebrabat: urgeri prela, fluere lacus, et faeminae pellibus accinetae assultabant, ut sacrificantes vel insanientes Bacchae; ipsa crine fluxo, thyrsum quatiens, juxtaque Silius hedera vinetus, gerere cothurnos, jacere caput, strepente circum procaci choro." (An. XI. 31). It is not possible in any translation to convey an adequate notion of the all but rhythmical flow of the last few concluding words, as may be more clearly seen by their being arranged thus:--

"Juxtaque Sillus,
Hedera Vinctus,
Gerere _c_othurnos,
Jacere _c_aput,
Strepente _c_ircum
Procaci _c_horo."

The second instance given by Famianus Strada is in the first part of the Annals, where the Roman commander in Lower Germany, Aulus Caecina, is beset by Armin and the Germans at the causeway called the Long Bridges. Speaking of both armies, the historian says: "It was a restless night to them from different causes whilst the barbarians with their festive carousals, their triumphal songs or their savage yells woke the echoes in the low-lying parts of the vallies and the resounding groves, among the Romans there were feeble fires, broken murmurs, and everywhere the sentinels leant drooping against the pales, or wandered about the tents more asleep than awake: awful dreams, too, horrified the commander; for he seemed to see and hear Quinctilius Varus, smeared with blood and rising out of the marsh, calling aloud, as it were, to him he paying no heed, and pushing back the hand that was held forth to him." "Nox per diversa inquies: cum barbari festis epulis, laeto cantu aut truci sonore subjecta vallium ac resultantis saltus complerent; apud Romanos invalidi ignes, interruptae voces, atque ipsi passim adjacerent vallo, oberrarent tentoriis, insomnes magis quam pervigiles; ducemque terruit dira quies: nani Quinctilium Varum sanguine oblitum et paludibus emersum, cernere et audire visus est, velut vocantem, non tamen obsecutus, et manum intendentis repulisse" (An. I. 65). As in the preceding sentence the closing words are arranged in musically measured cadences, as will be more clearly distinguished when thus presented to the eye:

Sanguine oblitum
Et paludibus emersum,
Cernere et audire
Visus est, velut vocantem,
Non tamen obsecutus,
Et manum intendentis repulisse. [Endnote 357]

Famianus Strada was also struck at the extravagantly florid phraseology in the fifteenth book with respect to Scaevina's dagger being sharpened to a point the day before the intended execution of a plot: "Finding fault with the poniard which he drew from its sheath that it was blunted by time, he gave orders it should be whetted on a stone, and be made to FLAME UP _into a point_." "Promptam vagina pugionem 'vetustatem obtusum,' increpans, asperari saxo, et in _mucronem_ ARDESCERE" (An. XV. 24).

High-flown, poetical language is also used in the first book when the Romans visit the scene of the defeat of Varus. "Caecina," says the historian, "having been sent on to explore the hidden recesses of the forest, and make bridges and conveyances over the waters of the bog and the insecure places in the plains, the soldiers reach

the _sad spot, hideous both in its appearance and from association_." "Praemisso Caecina, ut occulta saltuum scrutaretur, pontesque et aggeres humido paludum et fallacibus campis imponeret, incedunt _moestos locos, visuque ac memoria deformes_" (An. I. 61).

III. A writer so poetically inclined would naturally fall every now and then without being aware of it into metrical composition; Bracciolini frequently does so: for instance: writing to his friend Niccoli from London, he says that at that moment he fancies he is speaking to him, "hearing his tones and returning his speeches": --"jam jam videor tecum loqui, et au/dire no/tas et/reddere voces" (Ep. II. 1).

In another of his letters he falls into hexametrical measure: "la/bris nos/tris om/ni re/rum strepi/tu vacu/us" (Ep. II. 17), about as inharmonious as the complete, inelegant hexameter which we find him writing in the opening words of the Annals:--

"Urbem / Romam a / principi/o re/ges habu/ere."

The whole of this is in imitation of his two favorite authors, --Sallust, who occasionally wrote in hexametrical measure as, "ex vir/tute fu/it mul/ta et prae/clara re/i mili/taris." Jug. V.; --and Livy, who, if Sallust sometimes exceeded the number of feet, sometimes fell short of them, as in the opening words of the Preface to his History: "factu rusne oper/ae preti/um sim."

IV. Another circumstance which causes us to credit Bracciolini with having written the first part of the Annals is that we find there certain poetical or figurative words, which are nowhere to be found in any of the works of Tacitus. One of these is "pessum dare," which means literally "to sink to the bottom," but is figuratively used for "destroying" or "ruining," as when Bracciolini in one of his letters says that he is "desirous of guarding against the weight of present circumstances _sinking him to the bottom_," that is "ruining him:" "id vellem curare, ne praesentiarum onus me _pessumdaret_" (Ep. II. 3). So in the first book of the Annals (9), he speaks of Mark Antony being "sunk to the bottom," that is "ruined" "by his sensualities": "per libidines _pessum datus_ sit"; or of the over-eagerness of Brutidius to grasp at honours undoing him, as it had "sunk to the bottom" "many, even good men": "multos etiam bonos _pessumdedit_" (An. III. 66).

Bracciolini uses "voluntas" as the equivalent of "benevolentia." In the second "Disceptatio" of his Historia Tripartita, "where he means to speak of laws being framed for the good they do the greatest number," he expresses himself: "leges pro _voluntate_" (_i.e._ benevolentia) "majorum conditae" (Op. p. 38). So in the first part of the Annals when he says that "there was no getting any good to be done by Sejanus except by committing crime," he expresses himself in the same way: "neque Sejani _voluntas_" (_i.e._ benevolentia) "nisi scelere, quaerebatur" (An. IV. 68).

V. The meaning "to disgrace," or "dishonour" is given to the verb "foedare." In the first part of the Annals when it is said that silk clothes are _a disgrace_ to men," the expression is "vestis serica viros _foedat_" (II. 33). When in the last part eloquence (periphrastically styled "the first of the fine arts") is spoken of as "_disgraced_ when turned to sordid purposes," the phrase is "bonarum artium principem sordidis ministeriis _foedari_" (An. XI. 6). This meaning is not to be found in any ancient Roman work, in prose or poetry; it might then be taken to be mediaeval; but it seems to be classical; for this reason: Bracciolini in one of his letters to

Niccoli says, and truly enough, that he had formed himself on Cicero: whence it is easy to see that the idea occurred to him of coining that signification for the verb from the meaning which is given to the adjective by the writer whom he regarded as the greatest among the Romans, for Cicero certainly gives that meaning to "foedus" in this passage in his "Atticus" (VIII. 11) "nihil fieri potest miserius, nihil perditius, nihil _foedius_," that is, "nothing can be more miserably, nothing more flagitiously, nothing more _disgracefully_ done"; and this other passage in his Offices (I. 34): "lust is most _disgraceful_ to old age": "luxuria ... senectuti _foedissima_ est": directly following Cicero, and altogether ignoring Tacitus, Bracciolini in the first part of the Annals, when speaking of the dishonourable fawning of the Roman senators, expresses "that _disgraceful_ servility," "_foedum_ illud servitium" (IV. 74).

VI. As this is the language of Cicero, and not Tacitus, so we find in other places in both parts of the Annals Bracciolini using the language of other leading Roman writers, in preference to that of the historian whom he was feigning himself to be. The following few instances will suffice:--Tacitus makes the adjective agree with the substantive: Livy does not. In imitation of Livy Bracciolini, throughout both parts of the Annals, puts the adjective in the neuter, and makes the substantive depend upon it in the genitive. Tacitus never uses the rare form "jutum." It is used in both parts of the Annals (III. 35, XIV. 4). Quintus Curtius uses the form of ere instead of erunt as the termination of the third person plural of the perfect active: it is then in imitation of Quintus Curtius that Bracciolini uses the form ere so constantly throughout the Annals. Tacitus always uses "dies" in the masculine, but Livy sometimes in the feminine when speaking of a specified day. "Postera die" in the third book of the Annals (10 _in._) is then more in the style of Livy than Tacitus.

As for Sallust, Bracciolini was never able to conceal his unbounded admiration of him; nor forbear from imitating him: this did not escape the notice of his contemporaries, who likened him to that ancient historian: he is perpetually borrowing his phrases, from the very first words in the Annals: "_Urbem Romam_ a principio reges _habuere_," after Sallust's "_Urbem Romam ... habuere_ initio Trojani" (Cat. 6) down to the close of his forgery, as in the XVth book (36), "haec atque talia _plebi volentia_ fuere," after Sallust's "multisque suspicionibus _plebi volentia_ facturus habebatur" (Fragmenta. Lib. IV. Delph. Ed. p. 317). To give a few instances from the First Six Books of the Annals: his "ambulantis Tiberii _genua advolveretur_" (I. 13) is Sallust's "_genua_ patrum" _advol-vuntur_ (Fragm.): his "_adepto_ principatu" (I. 7) is Sallust's "magistratus _adeptus_" (Jug. IV.), and "_adepta_ libertate" (Cat.7): his "_spirantem_ adhuc Augustum" (I. 5) is Sallust's "Catilina paullulam etiam _spirans_" (Cat. in fin. 61): his "excepere Graeci _quaesitissimis_ honoribus" (II. 53) is Sallust's "epulae _quaesitis-simae_" (Frag.): his "_magnitudinem paecuniae_ malo vertisse" (VI. 7) is Sallust's "_magnitudine paecuniae_ a bono honestoque in pravum abstractus est" (Jug. 24); and numerous other phrases are so precisely and peculiarly of the same kind as Sallust's, that we know they were taken or stolen from him. But Tacitus does not borrow from anybody; he is himself a great original. As in his unadmitted forgeries, so in his acknowledged works, whether it be a treatise as in his "De Miseria Humanae Conditionis" (I. Op. p. 107), Bracciolini goes on borrowing his choice phrases from Sallust, as "_libidini obnoxios_ fortuna fecit," which is Sallust's "neque delicto, neque _libidini obnoxius_" (Cat. 52); or whether it be one of his Funeral Orations as in that over Cardinal Florian (Op. p. 258), "nunquam ne parvula quidem nota ejus fama _labefactaretur_," or one of his essays, as that from which we have just quoted,--"On the Misery of the Human Condition,"--"vires

Imperii _labefactarent_ flagitiis" (Op. p. 125), which are both Sallust's "vitiis obtentui quibus _labefactatis_" (Fragm. p. 357).

So he prefers Sallust's archaic word "inquies"; for just as Sallust writes "humanum ingenium _inquies_ atque indomitum" (Frag. Lib. p. 172), he, too, writes "nox per diversa _inquies_" (I. 65), and "dies ploratibus _inquies_" (An. III. 4), forgetting that Tacitus always uses the modern word, "inquietus," as "inquieta urbs" (Hist. I. 20).

VII. The phrase in the Annals "non modo ... sed," instead of "non modo ... sed etiam" is peculiar, being at variance with the measured style of all the old Roman writers. It occurs several times in the first part, as "_non modo_ portus et proxima maris, _sed_ moenia ac tecta" (III. 1), as well as in the last part, "_non modo_ milites, _sed_ populus" (XVI. 3). In both instances Tacitus would have written "_sed etiam_ moenia--_sed etiam_ populus."

Nor would Tacitus have erred in using the anomalous expressions pointed out by Nicholas Aagard in his treatise about him, entitled "In C.C. Tacitum Disputatio." Tacitus would never have written, as in the Fourth Book of the Annals (56): "missa navali _copia_, non modo externa ad bella"; he would have used the plural instead of the singular; and, just as he would have used "copiis" instead of "copia", he would have used "ejus" for "sua" in this passage in the sixth book (6): "adeo facinora atque flagitia _sua_ ipsi quoque in supplicium verterant":--we know that he would not have constructed an adjective in the positive when it ought to be in the comparative, as: "_quanto_ quis audacia _promtus_" (An. I. 57); for we have almost just seen how in such a phrase he properly constructs _promtus_ in the comparative: "_tanto_ ad discordias _promtior_" (Hist. II. 99).

VIII.--He now and then forgets himself by using words that clearly never could have been known to Tacitus, because they were words that sprang up in an after age. Thus on one occasion he is led into this error from the desire to express a poetical idea by a poetical word: just as Statius writes "distinctus" in the sense that his predecessors of ages before had used "distinctio":

> "Viridis quum regula longo
> Synnada _distinctu_ variat:"
> Sylv. I. 5. 41.;

so he falls into the blunder of making Tacitus say;--"ore ac _distinctu_ pennarum a ceteris avibus diversum" (An. VI. 28); at the same time he commits another mistake, of which he is repeatedly guilty, and which a Roman carefully avoided--using the rhythm of the hexameter in prose,--(if the Greek quantity with "ceterus" be taken:--

> "penna/rum a cete/ris avi/bus di/versum."

In both parts of the Annals "codicillus" is used in the plural as signifying "the codicil to a will" (VI. 9): "precatusque per _codicillos_, immiti rescripto, venas absolvit"; and in An. XV. 64 Seneca is described as "writing in the codicil of his will" "in _codicillis_ rescripserat." Such Latin not only would not have been written but would not have been even understood by Tacitus; because when he lived his countrymen confined the meaning of "codicillus" to a wooden table for writing on, and thence, figuratively, for "a note" or "letter": it was not till several centuries after,--the first part of the fifth (409-450),--in the reign of the Emperor Theodosius the Younger, that the lawyers used

the word to signify "an imperial patent or diploma"; for "codicillariae dignitates" in the Theodosian Codex (VI. 22. 7) means "offices given by the patent of the Emperor." It is also put here and there in the same Codex (VIII. 18. 7 and XVI. 5. 40) for the "codicil to a will"; but it is used in the singular: the meaning so given to it in the plural, (as in both parts of the Annals), did not come into vogue till a century after, in the time of Justinian, as may be seen by consulting the Twenty-ninth Chapter of the Pandects which treats of the Law of Codicils ("De Jure _Codicillorum_"); and Marcian is quoted to this effect: that "a man who can make a will can, certainly, also make a codicil", the language being "_codicillos_ is demum facere potest, qui et testamentum facere potest" (Lib. VI. c. 3. Marcian VII. Instit.). It looks then tolerably clear that the author of the Annals got his Latin about "codicillus" in the plural signifying the "codicil to a will" either from the Institutes of Marcian or the Pandects of Justinian.

IX. Alliterations occur in the Annals at the end of words four times repeated, as "Cui superposit_um_ convivi_um_ navi_um_ aliar_um_ tractu moverentur" (XV. 37), which is in the style not of Tacitus, but Bracciolini, as "ad liberand_os_ praeclarissim_os_ ill_os_ vir_os_ ex ergastulis barbarorum," already quoted from the treatise "De Infelicitate Principum"; or "mul_tis_ cap_tis_, trecen_tis_ occi_sis_," in his History of Florence (Lib. V. See Muratori XX. p.346).

Another very peculiar alliteration of Bracciolini's is with the letter _c_. Sometimes he alternates it after two words, as in a letter to his friend Niccoli, _C_ommisi hoc idem _c_uidam amico meo _c_ivi Senensi" (Ep. II. 3), exactly as we find it towards the beginning of the first book of the Annals (9) _C_uncta inter se _c_onnexa: jus apud _c_ives modestiam"; or at the end of the second book (88): _c_um varia fortuna _c_ertaret, dolo propinquorum _c_ecidit liberator." He repeats, too, this favourite alliteration four times, sometimes after one word, sometimes after two, as in a letter to Cardinal Julian, the Pope's Legate in Germany: "_c_ertissima quadam _c_onjectura, qua praeteritis _c_onnectens praesentia _c_ausasque" (Op. p. 309). In his History of Florence this quadrupled alliteration of _c_ occurs thus (Lib. II. see Muratori XX. p. 224): "_c_onspiciant; est quippe _c_ommune belluis, quae ratione _c_arent, ut naturali _c_ogente," as we have just seen in a quotation from the fifteenth book of the Annals (31), "gerere _c_othurnos, jacere _c_aput, strepente _c_ircum procaci _c_horo." But these alliterations with _c_ four times repeated, which occur frequently in the Annals generally take place with three or more words intervening between each alliteration, as in this sentence in the first part: "_c_onfertus pedes, dispositae turmae _c_uncta praelio provisa: hostibus _c_ontra, omnium nesciis, non arma, non ordo, non _c_onsilium" (An. IV. 25); or in this sentence in the last part: "_c_ompertum sibi, referens, ex _c_ommentariis patris sui nullam _c_ujusquam accusationem ab eo _c_oactam." (XIII. 43 _in med_.), which is in the style of one of the numerous beautiful alliterations of his favourite poet, Virgil:

> "_C_redunt se vidisse Jovem _c_um saepe nigrantem
> Aegida _c_oncuteret dextra, nimbosque _c_ieret"
> Aen. VIII. 353-4.

But it is not at all in imitation of the manner of Tacitus, who, certainly, sometimes has an alliteration after two words, but it is not with the letter _c_, nor does he alternate it; if an alliteration again occurs immediately afterwards, it is of quite a different character, as in his Agricola (45): "_o_mnia sine dubio, _o_ptime parentum, _a_ssidente _a_mantissima uxore"; and in his History (III. 36) "_p_raeterita, instantia, futura, _p_ari oblivione

dimiserat; atque _i_llum _i_n nemore Aricino."

Bracciolini distinctly shows himself to be the author of the Annals by a very peculiar kind of composition to which he is uncommonly partial,--joining together with an enclitic polysyllabic words of the same length and the same long ending, as "contempl_ationem_ cogit_ationem_que" in his "De Miseria Humanae Conditionis" (Op. p. 130); in the first part of the Annals, "extoll_ebatur_, argu_ebatur_que" (I. 9) and in the last part, respec_tantes_, rogi_tantes_que" (An. XII. 69);--and it is difficult to say whether this is to be found oftener in his acknowledged productions or in his famous forgery.

He is much given to placing together several words ending with i, as in the first part of the Annals: "sed pecorum modo, trah_i_, occid_i_, cap_i_" (IV. 25); and in the last part "illustri memoria Poppae_i_ Sabin_i consular_i" (XIII. 45).

X. He is fond of monotonously repeating the accent on the penultimate syllable of trisyllabic words, as in describing the trial of Jerome of Prague (Ep. I. 11.),--if we are to consider "quae vellet" as equivalent to a trisyllable:--"de_in_de loq_uen_di quae _ve_llet fa_cul_tas da_re_tur"; this most disagreeable monotonous sound, which resembles, more than anything else, the pattering of a horse's feet when the animal is ambling, and which may, therefore, be called the "tit-up-a-tit-up" style, I will be bound to say, is not to be found in anybody else's Latin compositions but Poggio Bracciolini's all the way down from Julius Caesar to Dr. Cumming, --(the famous epistle of the reverend gentleman's to the Pope in which he endeavoured to procure an invitation from his Holiness to attend the Oecumenical Council of 1870): there is the dreadful sound again,--in the first six books of the Annals (II. 17),--just as it strikes the ear in the Letter describing the trial and death of Jerome of Prague--exactly as many as five times repeated,--when Bracciolini, (for now we know it is he, and nobody else but he, who wrote the Annals), is giving an account of the battle between the Cherusei and the Romans: "ple_ros_que tra_na_re Vi_sur_gim con_an_tes, in_jec_ta"; this sound occurs four times consecutively, in the last part of the Annals, when Bracciolini is speaking of Curtius Rufus fulfilling by his death the fatal destiny prognosticated to him by a female apparition of supernatural stature: "def_unc_tus fa_ta_le prae_sa_gium im_ple_vit" (An. XI. 21). Sometimes this very abominable monotony is accompanied by most horrible assonances, as in one of his letters (Ep. III. 23) "err_o_rum tu_o_rum certi_o_rem"; --we catch it again, or something like it, in the last part of the Annals (XIV. 36) in "im_bel_les in_er_mes ces_su_ros," and in the first part: (I. 41) "_or_ant ob_sis_tunt, re_di_ret, ma_ne_ret."

XI. We find in both part of the Annals a very peculiar use of "properus," with the genitive: in the last part: "Claudium, ut insidiis incautum, ita _irae properum_" (XI. 26): in the first part: "libertis et clientibus _potentiae_ apiscendae _properis_" (IV. 59). This is not to be met with in the writings of any of the old Romans; it would seem, then, that the Annals was, as is alleged, a spurious composition of the fifteenth century, and that the same hand wrote both parts.

When Bracciolini wants to put into Latin:--"Nobody will compare my _history_ with the _books_ of those who wrote about the ancient affairs of the Roman people"; he expresses himself:--"Nemo _annales_ nostros cum _scriptura_ eorum contenderit, qui veteres populi Romani res composuere" (An. IV. 32): it is not only a very true observation, but, as far as concerns the use of "annales" and "scriptura," the exact counterpart of what we read in his "Description of the Ruins of the City of Rome", ("Ruinarum

Urbis Romae Descriptio"), when he observes: "though you may wade through all the _books_ that are extant and pore over the whole _history_ of human transactions", he writes: "licet ... omnia _scripturarum_ monumenta pertractes, omnes gestarum rerum _annales_ scruteris" (Pog. Op. p. 132), where it will be observed that in both sentences not only "annales" and "scriptura" occur almost together, but the former has the meaning of "a history" and the latter of "a book," with which significations Tacitus never uses the two words: indeed Tacitus never uses the two words at all.

The use of "totiens," or its equivalent "toties," is peculiar to the author of the Annals: it is never found in Tacitus, but frequently in the writings of Bracciolini, as "tuam _toties_ a me reprehensam credulitatem" (Ep. I. 11):--"_toties_ has fabulas audisti" (ibid):--"toties ... hoc biennio delusus sum in hac re libraria" (Ep. II. 41). So in the Annals: "An Augustum fessý aetate, _toties_ in Germania potuisse" (II. 46):--"anxia sui et infelici fecunditate fortunae _totiens_ obnoxia" (II.75): --"_totiens_ irrisa resolutus" (IV. 9), and in other passages. Bracciolini is so partial to the word that he uses it in its compound as well as simple form, as in one of his letters to Niccoli: "_Multoties_ scripsi tibi" (Ep. I. 17), and at the beginning of the second book of the "Convivales," "addubitari, inquam, _multotiens_" (Op. p. 37).

XII. "Addubitare" is a word which Tacitus never uses, only the author of the Annals, as "paullum _addubitatum_, quod Halicarnassii" (IV. 65). So in the "Ruinarum Urbis Romae Descriptio," when speaking of Marius sitting amid the ruins of Carthage, Bracciolini writes: "admirantem suam et Carthaginis vicem, simulque fortunam utriusque conferentem, _addubitantem_que utriusque fortunae majus spectaculum extitisset" (Op. p. 132).

"Extitere" is a word never used by Tacitus;--or, more properly, he so avoids it that he uses it but once. Bracciolini, on the contrary, is very much given to the use of it. In the Annals it is repeatedly met with; in the last part, (take the fifteenth book,) "centurionem _extitisse_" (XV. 49), "auriga et histrio et incendiarius _extitisti_" (ib. 67):--in the first part, "_extitisse_ tandem viros" (III. 44), "socium delationis _extitisse_" (IV. 66), and on other occasions. So it runs throughout the works of Bracciolini, as in his essay on "Avarice": "si amator _extiterit_ sapientiae" (Op. 20); on "The Unhappiness of Princes," "cogitationesque dominantium _extiterunt_," (Op. 393); on "Nobility," "autorem nobilitatis filiis _extitisse_ (Op. p. 69); on "The Misery of the Human Condition," splendidissimas in illis civitatibus _extitisse_ (Op. p. 119); in his Letters, "egenorum praesidium, oppressorem refugium, _extitisti_" (Ep. III. 17); in his "History of Florence," "quae verba si execranda, et digna odio _extitissent_" (Muratori XX. p. 235);--in fact, in all his productions, whether forged or unforged.

There are, in fact, a number of words, and also phrases, used by Bracciolini that are no where to be found in any of the works of Tacitus. To illustrate this, we will confine ourselves to two examples only of each, and to the first part of the Annals and the History of Florence. To begin with words, and to take "pervastare": in the first part of the Annals: "spatium ferro flammisque _pervastat_" (I. 51): the History of Florence (Lib. I) "caede, incendio, rapinis _pervastatis_" (Muratori tom. XX. p. 213). "Conficta," in the sense of "fabricated": in the first part of the Annals: "in tempus _conficta_" (I. 37): in the History of Florence (Lib. III): "_confictis_ mendaciis" (ib. p. 254). To pass on to phrases, and to take (a word never used

by Tacitus) "impendium" with "posse": in the first part of the Annals: "_impendio_ diligentiaque _poterat_" (IV. 6): in the History of Florence (Lib. V.) "_impendio_ plurimum damni inferre _potuissent_" (ib. 320). "Bellum" with "flagrare": in the first part of the Annals: "_flagrante_ adhuc Poenorum _bello_" (II. 59): in the History of Florence (Lib. V.): "Gallia omnis _bello flagraret_ Florentinos" (ib. 320).

XIII. Whenever Tacitus ends a sentence with a polysyllabic word of five syllables he avoids its repetition at the close of the next sentence. The reverse is the case in the Annals, as, (take the first book of the last part (XI. 22), "rem militarem _comitarentur_, --in the sentence after, "accedentibus provinciarum _vectigalibus_," --in the sentence after that, "sententia Dolabellae velut _venundaretur_"; (or take the first book of the first part (I. 21-2), "eo immitior quia _toleraverat_,"--the sentence after, "vagi circumspecta _populabantur_,"--the sentence after that, "manipularium _parabantur_," --where, to be sure, in the last instance a syllable is deficient, but it is made good by the sonorous sesquipedalian penultimate,-- _manipulariam_. So in the works of Bracciolini: "aures tuae _recusabantur_," in the following sentence, "domi forisque _obtemperares_," in the next sentence, "factorum dictorumque _conscientiae_" (Op. 313).

XIV. A peculiarity in composition, if not actually proving, at least raising the suspicion, that the same hand which wrote the last part of the Annals also wrote the first part is observable in the omission of the preposition _in_, when rest at a place is denoted;--the omission, it is to be remarked, is not where there is a single word, but when two words are coupled together, as in the last six books,--in the description of the Romans bearing on their shoulders statues of Octavia, which they decorate with flowers and place both in the forum and in their temples: "Octaviae imagines gestant humeris, spargunt floribus, _foroque ac templis_ statuunt" (XIV. 61); and in the first six books in the description of servile Romans following Sejanus in crowds to Campania, and there without distinction of classes lying day and night in the fields and on the sea shore:--"ibi _campo aut litore_ jacentes, nullo discrimine noctem ac diem" (IV. 74).

Tacitus, in common with all other Roman prose-writers, uses the names of _nations_ (when the verb implies motion) with a preposition, which is not required with the names of _countries_. The Roman poets are not so particular in this respect, Virgil, for instance, writes, after the Homeric fashion, by the omission of the preposition:

> "At nos hinc alii sitientis ibimus _Afros_:
> Ecl. I. 65;

for "ad Afros." So after Virgil, whom he is always quoting and imitating, Bracciolini writes "ipse praecepts _Iberos_, ad patrium regnum pervadit" (An. XII. 51), for "_ad_ Iberos, _in_ patrium."

CHAPTER III.

MISTAKES THAT PROVE FORGERY.

I. The Gift for the recovery of Livia.--II. Julius Caesar and the Pomoerium.--III.--Julia, the wife of Tiberius.--IV. The statement about her proved false by a coin.--V. Value of coins in detecting historical errors.--VI. Another coin shows an error about Cornutus.--VII. Suspicion of spuriousness from mention of the

Quinquennale Ludicrum.--VIII. Account of cities destroyed by earthquake contradicted by a monument.--IX. Bracciolini's hand shown by reference to the Plague.--X. Fawning of Roman senators more like conduct of Italians in the fifteenth century.--XI. Same exaggeration with respect to Pomponia Graecina and the Romans.--XII. Wrong statement of the images borne at the funeral of Drusus.--XIII. Similar kind of error committed by Bracciolini in his "De Varietate Fortunae".--XIV. Errors about the Red Sea.--XV. About the Caspian Sea.--XVI. Accounted for.--XVII. A passage clearly written by Bracciolini.

It is now, however, time to pass on to other matters more interesting and important, and, it may be, more convincing.

I. Famianus Strada is very much surprised in his Prolusions (I. 2 Histor.) that it should be stated in the third book of the Annals (71), that when a gift for the recovery of Livia was to be presented to Fortune the Equestrian, it had to be made at Antium, where, it is stated, there was a temple which had that title, there being none in Rome that was so named. Here are the words of Bracciolini, in his own style, too, and his own history, neither of which is, nor could be that of Tacitus: "A debate then came on about a matter of religion, as to the temple in which the offering was to be placed, which the Knights of Rome had promised to present to Fortune the Equestrian for the health of the Imperial Princess" (a phrase which no Roman would have used); "for though there were many shrines of that Goddess in Rome, yet there was none with that name: it was resolved:--'that there be a temple at Antium which has such an appellation, and that all religious rites in towns in Italy, and temples and statues of Gods and Goddesses, be under Roman law and rule': consequently, the offering was set up at Antium": "Incessit dein religio, quonam in templo locandum erat donum, quod pro valetudine Augustae equites Romani voverant Equestri Fortunae: nam etsi delubra ejus deae multa in urbe, nullum tamen tali cognomento erat; repertum est, 'aedem esse apud Antium quae sic nuncuparetur, cunctasque caerimonias Italicis in oppidis, templaque et numinum effigies, juris atque imperii Romani esse': ita donum apud Antium statuitur" (An. III. 71). This, however, was not the case; for Famianus Strada says that there was a temple in Rome which had been dedicated to Fortune the Equestrian for more than 200 years by Quintus Fulvius after the war with the Celtiberians, when he was Praetor; and, afterwards when he was Censor, he erected a magnificent edifice in honour of the goddess: the gift and the temple are both mentioned by Livy (XL. 42), also by Vitruvius, Julius Obsequens, Valerius Maximus, Publius Victor, and other historians and antiquaries. One cannot then well understand how a fact like this could have been unknown to Tacitus, who must have been acquainted with all the public buildings in Rome, especially the Temples; though it is quite easy to conceive how the slip could have been made by a writer of the fifteenth century: indeed, it would be odd if Bracciolini had not, now and then, fallen into such errors, which, though trivial in themselves, become mistakes of mighty magnitude in an inquiry of this description.

II. A writer who could be so ignorant about the temples in Rome is just the sort of writer who would display ignorance about the public works in that city. Cognate then with this blunder in the first part of the Annals is the blunder in the last part about that ancient right, the enlargement of the pomoerium. We are told that those only who had extended the bounds of the Empire by the annexation of countries which they had brought under subjection were entitled to add also to the City, and that the only two of all the generals who had exercised this privilege before the time

of Claudius, were Sylla and Augustus. "Pomoerium urbis auxit Caesar more prisco, quo iis qui protulere imperium, etiam terminos urbis propagare datur. Nec tamen duces Romani, quamquam magnis nationibus subactis, usurpaverant, nisi Lucius Sulla et divus Augustus" (An. XII. 23). Justus Lipsius, at this misstatement, is, strange to say, quite contented by merely remarking in a merry mood: "I am not going to defend you, Cornelius: you are wrong: an enlargement was also made by Julius Caesar, who was 'pitched in'" ("interjectus") "between these two." "Non defendo te, Corneli: erras: etiani C. Caesar auxit interjectus inter eos duos." Any critic ought not to be facetiously playful, but seriously startled and unaccountably puzzled, that Tacitus, or any Roman of his stamp, should have been ignorant of a fact which must have been known to all his well informed countrymen, from its having been borne testimony to by so many eminent writers;--by Cicero in his Letter to Atticus (I. 13), by Cassius Dio in the 43rd Book of his History, by Aulus Gellius in his "Noctes Atticae" (XIII. 14), and, omitting all the antiquaries such as Fulvius and Onuphrius, Mark Antony in his Funeral Oration over the remains of Caesar, where he bewails the fate of an Emperor, who had been slain in the City, the pomoerium of which he had enlarged: [Greek: en tae polei enedreutheis, ho kai to pomaerion autaes apeuxaesas] (Cas. Dio. XLIV. 49). This fact seems to have been unknown just as well to Shakespeare as to Bracciolini; or our great national poet would have taken cognizance of it somewhere, perhaps in that part of Mark Antony's speech, where reference is made to what Caesar did for the Romans:

> "Moreover, he hath left you all his walks,
> His private arbours, and new-planted orchards
> On this side Tiber: he hath left them you,
> And to your heirs for ever; common pleasures,
> To walk abroad and recreate yourselves."
> (_Jul. Caesar_, Act III. sc. 2)

III. A writer who could entirely overlook such a memorable achievement of Julius Caesar distinctly shows himself in his incorrectness about the career of such a distinguished member of the Augustan family as Julia, the wife of Tiberius: she is spoken of as having died in the first year of the reign of Tiberius, after having been banished by her father for infamous adulteries to the island of Trimetus, where, deserted by her husband, she must have speedily perished, in lieu of languishing in exile for twenty years, had she not been supported by the bounty of "Augusta". "Per idem tempus Julia mortem obiit quam neptem Augustus convictam adulterii damnatus est, projeceratque haud procul Apulis littoribus. Illic viginti annis exilium toleravit, Augustae ope sustentata" (An. IV. 71).

IV. A very small brass coin preserved in the National Collection in Paris informs us that Julia was alive at least three years after that date. So far from having been doomed by her husband to perish through want, Tiberius held her in such uncommon esteem that he ordered a coin to be struck in her honour in the fourth year of his reign for the money bears the inscription, in Greek capitals, [Greek: IOULIA], with the initials, [Greek: LD], signifying in the fourth year of Tiberius after the death of Augustus.

V. Now let the reader bear in mind that when we find in the Annals a statement so contrary to what we gather from an old coin, we must set down that statement as a pure figment of history; for nothing can be so valuable for correct and exact information as coins, which were always struck among the ancient Romans by public

authority, by the decrees of the Senate or the Comitia Curiata, or by the edicts of the Decuriones (Councils of the Municipal towns or Colonies), and of the Propraetors or Proconsuls of the Provinces.

VI. A coin of the latter description lays bare another very gross error committed in the first part of the Annals in making Caius Caecilius Cornutus governor of Paphlagonia in the time of Tiberius (An. IV. 28): Cornutus must have been a Proconsul of that province in the time of either Galba or Otho. The coin, which is a large brass one, exhibits, on its obverse side, Cornutus with a helmet on his head, and underneath [Greek: AMISOU], meaning that he was the Governor of Paphlagonia, of which "Amisus" was the capital, while on the reverse side are the words [Greek: EPI GAIOU KAIKILIOU KORNOUTOU]; Rome, sitting upon shields, holds the Roman world in her right hand Victory stretches forth hers to place a crown on the head of Cornutus, and beneath is [Greek: ROMAE], which, during the period of the Empire, was inscribed on coins, but only in the time of Galba and Otho, because Amisus, that is Paphlagonia, was then subject to Rome, that is, the Senate, under Caius Caecilius Cornutus, as Africa was under Caius Clodius Mucrinus.

VII. No one would have been more willing than Bracciolini himself to have acknowledged the ample sufficiency of this argument to prove in the cases of Julia and Cornutus the forgery of the Annals; for he was himself a great collector of the coins and medals of antiquity, from which he gained a great deal of his historical information: he must, for example, have had in his possession, or have seen somewhere one of those medals which antiquaries say were struck in the time of Nero with a table, a garland, a pot, and the inscription: "Certa: Quinq. Rom. Co. Se." meaning "Certamen, Quinquennale Romae constituit"; for in the fourteenth book of the Annals (20) he makes mention of a set of games by the name "Quinquennale Ludricum," and in the sixteenth (4) by the title "Lustrale Certamnen, though no one has been able to decide, or even divine, what games these were on account of their exceeding insignificance: his object, then, in mentioning them, when their chief constituents or principal prizes were a table, a garland, and a pot, was evidently to impress his reader with his most intimate knowledge of ancient Roman customs, and leave his reader to infer with certainty that the Annals must have proceeded from a native Roman; but here it strikes me that he altogether defeated his own purpose; for if the Annals had been written by Tacitus, that grave historian took such high ground that he would have deemed it beneath him to notice any such trivial amusements, just as Hume and Henry, in tracing the history of the people of England, did not descend to make any inquiry into or mention of the precise time when such popular games were instituted, as the Maypole or country fairs, horse-racing or football.

VIII. Monuments as well as coins may be relied upon for correcting errors made by historians. There is a monument at Puteoli erected in the time of Tiberius A.D. 30, containing the names of fourteen cities in Asia Minor that were destroyed by a series of earthquakes that took place during seven years in the course of the reign of Tiberius, the first being Cilicia (Nipp. I. 233), which was destroyed A.D. 23, and the last, and greatest of all, being Ephesus, which was reduced to ruins A.D. 29. A passage in the second book of the Annals (47) describes twelve famous cities of Asia owing their sudden destruction to an earthquake occurring at night. We are told that "the usual means of escape by rushing into the open air was of no avail: the yawning earth swallowed up

everybody: huge mountains sank down, level plains rose into hills, and lightning flashed throughout the catastrophe." Substitute "villages" for "famous cities," "hills" for "huge mountains," and we have, perhaps, as good an account as can be found in such few words of one of those dreadful calamities of nature,--though it happened not in the reign of Tiberius but three years before the death of Bracciolini,--the entire destruction of the city of Naples and its surrounding villages in 1456, when all the inhabitants perished, men, women and children, to the number of no fewer than 20,000 souls. "Eodem anno duodecim celebres Asiae urbes conlapsae nocturno motu terrae; quo improvisior graviorque pestis fuit. Neque solitum in tali casu effugium in aperta prorumpendi, quia diductis terris hauriebantur. Sedisse immensos montes, enisa in arduum quae plana fuerint, effulsisse inter ruinam ignis memorant." (II. 47).

IX. It will be here seen that the only thing mentioned as breaking out more suddenly and being more dreadful in its devastation than an earthquake is the "plague": "quo IMPROVISIOR GRAVIORque PESTIS fuit." Bracciolini spoke from personal observation. When he was here in England in 1422, he would not venture abroad nor leave London, on account of the plague which raged in the provinces and extended over almost the whole island (Ep. I. 7.). Details of this pestilence have not come down to us, but we see how terrible must have been its character, when this strong and lasting impression was left on the memory of Bracciolini, that he avails himself of it in this passage of the Annals to serve as a symbol of the worst species of destructiveness, from which we needs must gather that nothing could have broken out so unexpectedly and without apparent cause as the plague in England in 1422, nor have been more frightful and more rapid in its fatality.

X. Another instance in the first part of the Annnals of how Bracciolini modified circumstances from his own period, and then, --knowing that human actions are ever repeating themselves, just as that the human passions remain the same in all ages,--remitted them to the first century, is his account of the fawning of the Roman Senators, when he represents them imploring Tiberius and Sejanus to deign to vouchsafe to the citizens the honour of an audience: the Emperor and the Minister refuse the supplication; their condescension extends no further than to their not crossing over to the island of Caprea, but remaining on the coast of Campania: thither the Senators, the knights, and the vast mass of the commonalty of the City resort to exhibit a disgraceful spirit of sycophancy and servility; they hurry continually to and from Rome, crowd into Campania in such numbers that they are forced to lie in the open fields night and day, some on the bare sands of the seashore, without distinction of rank; and they put up with the insolence of the porters of Sejanus, who deny them ingress to the Minister. "Aram Clementiae, aram Amicitiae effigiesquecircum Caesaris ac Sejani censuere; crebrisque precibus efflagitabant, visendi sui copiam facerent. Non illi tamen in urbem, aut propinqua urbi digressi sunt: satis visum, omittere insulam, et in proximo Campaniae adspici. eo venire patres, eques, magna pars plebis, anxii erga Sejanum; cujus durior congressus, atque eo per ambitum, et societate consiliorum parabatur. Satis constabat auctam, ei adrogantiam, foedum illud in propatulo servitium spectanti. quippe Romae, sueti discursus; et magnitudine urbis incertum, quod quisque ad negotium pergat: ibi campo aut litore jacentes, nullo discrimine noctem ac diem, juxta gratiam aut fastus janitorum perpetiebantur" (An. IV. 74).

A man must be credulous beyond measure who can believe that such degrading servility was ever manifested among all classes by the

ancient Roman people; the picture, nevertheless, seems to have much truth in it, though tinged with exaggeration; but the painting must be transferred from the first to the fifteenth century: there was then a schism in the Church: every now and then the Pope would leave Rome, and stay at Florence, Reate, Ferrara, or some other city in Italy; thereupon crowds of sycophantic devotees, of whom the Roman Church has always had multitudes, would crouch into the presence of the Sovereign Pontiff, and put themselves to a wonderful amount of inconvenience, by thronging into towns beyond the power they possessed of affording accommodation: these flying visits of the Popes into small country towns always occurred during the heats of summer; hence the pilgrims lay in the open air; and all this suffering they submitted to with the patient spirit of martyrs, only to obtain an audience, to have a sight of and a blessing from the Holy Father. When we remember too what was the power of the Popes in those days, we can easily fancy how true is the remainder of the picture when those to whom an audience was denied returned home in alarm, and how ill-timed was the joy of those whose unfortunate friendship with some cruel Papal Minister portended their imminent death. "Donec idque vetitum. et revenere in urbeni trepidi, quos non sermone, non visu dignatus erat: quidam male alacres, quibus infaustae amicitiae gravis exitus imminebat" (l. c.)

XI. The same love of extraordinary exaggeration is found in the last as in the first part of the Annals, showing thereby that the whole work came from the same source. In the thirteenth book Pomponia Graecina is described as changing not her weeds nor her lamenting spirit for "forty" years,--mourning, too, as she was, not for a husband, a son or a father, but Julia, the daughter of Drusus, who was murdered by Messalina. "Nam post Juliam, Drusi filiam, dolo Messalinae interfectam, per 'quadraginta' annos, non cultu nisi lugubri, non animo nisi moesto egit." (An. XIII. 32). Lipsius saw something so extraordinary in this, that, in his usual way, without any authority of manuscript or edition, he cut short the term, substituting "fourteen" for "forty,"--"quatuordecim" for "quadraginta."

XII. A mistake which no Roman could have made occurs in the first part of the Annals, where, we are told that, at the funeral of Drusus, the father of Germanicus, "the images of the Claudii and the _Julii_ were borne around his bier":--"circumfusas lecto Claudiorum _Juliorumque_ imagines" (III. 5). Should the reader turn for the venfication of this curious statement to some modern edition of the works of Tacitus, it is possible that he may find "Liviorum" instead of "Juliorum," for reasons which will be immediately given; but if he will consult any of the MSS. or editions prior to the time of Justus Lipsius, he will find the passage as given. The error was so monstrous, that Lipsius corrected it; because the Romans, at the obsequies of their great, only carried around the bier the images of the ancestors of the deceased. Accordingly Lipsius asks the very pertinent question, how at the funeral procession of Drusus, who was no member of the Julian family, not even by adoption, the images of members of that house could be borne? He, therefore, substituted a family to which Drusus belonged, the Livii. Freinshemius followed him, and some of the subsequent editors, among them Ernesti, who observes he could see no reason why the images of the Livii should have been omitted at the funeral of Drusus; nor anybody else, except for the very strong and simple reason that the author of the Annals, being Bracciolini, was not acquainted with the fact, which must have been familiar to Tacitus, that the Livii, and not the Julii, were the great ancestors of Drusus.

XIII. That Bracciolini was just the sort of man to fall into glaring mistakes, oftener than otherwise from perverseness, or some peculiar humour, such as a resolution to be in the wrong, would appear to be the case from the remarkable error which he commits in his "Historia de Varietate Fortunae," respecting the beginning of the French kingdom which he puts down at "a little beyond the year 900,"--"paulo ultra nongentesimum annum" (Hist. de Var. For. II. p. 45), thus entirely discarding the Merovingian and Carlovingian dynasties, and ascribing the commencement of the French kingdom to the beginning of the Capetian house; and he gives his reason; for he says that until "a little beyond 900," France had been divided among a number of Princes; but so it was even when Hugh Capet, putting an end to the system of anarchy which had prevailed before his time, established real monarchy; yet monarchy, after all, was not so real then as it was in the time of Charlemagne: Capet was only the most powerful prince among a number of others, who, nominally acknowledging him as king, were absolute in their own rights, raised taxes, dispensed justice, framed laws, coined money and made war. It is true that it is not very easy to get at the proper history of France at the period in question, from there not being the requisite authority for a correct knowledge of those dark and distant times: a great deal of obscurity and conjecture, too, exist as to the actual character of the monarchy,--as to whether, for example, Clovis and his predecessors were real kings, or merely knights errant, and whether their successors were as absolute as the Emperors among the Romans, or more magistrates than sovereigns as among the Germans, all sorts of doubts having been raised and mistiness thrown over these and other important matters by the ingenuity of such writers as Adrien de Valois, Boulainvilliers, Daniel, Dubos, Mad'lle de Lýzardiýre, Mably, Montesquieu, Mad'lle Montlozier, Velly and others: still the historians of France are all unanimous in agreeing, that the French monarchy commenced hundreds of years before the date fixed by Bracciolini, namely, at the commencement of the fifth century, some preferring to begin with Marchomir, Duke of the Sicambrian Franks, and others with Pharamond, (though Marchomir, before Pharamond, was, certainly, king of Gallic France).

XIV. We are told in the first part of the Annals (II. 61) that the boundaries of the Roman Empire extended to the Red Sea. This is generally supposed to allude to the possession of Mesopotamia, Assyria and Armenia by the Romans, which they held only for two years, from 115 to 117. Now, none of these provinces, only Arabia, Susiana, Persis, Carmania and Gedrosia, bordered upon what the Romans called "The Red Sea," and we "The Indian Ocean"; for the ancients believed that from about twelve degrees south of the sources of the Nile, from a country named by them Agyzimba, there was a continuation of land stretching from Africa to Asia, an opinion entertained by all the old geographers, from Hipparchus to Marinus of Tyre and Ptolemy, and never abandoned, until long after the death of Bracciolini, when the Portuguese under Vasco de Gama, doubling the Cape of Good Hope, and hugging the shores of eastern Africa and of Asia, reached India by the sea towards the close of the fifteenth century. The Indian Ocean having then been known for many hundred years by the name of the Red Sea, and looked upon as a vast body of inland water, like the Mediterranean, we have, unquestionably, a gross error with respect to the geography of Asia, as it was known in the time of Tacitus, when it is written in the Annals: "Exin ventum Elephantinen ac Syenen, claustra olim Romani Imperii, quod nunc RUBRUM AD MARE patescit."(An. II. 61).

XV. The same confusion of ideas with respect to the Indian Ocean, and pointing to identity of authorship, is found in the last, as

well as in the first, part of the Annals, when the Hyrcanian ambassadors returning home from Rome have a military escort as far as the shores (it is said) "of the Red Sea," which they are to pass over in order to avoid the territories of the enemy:--"eos regredientes Corbulo, ne Euphraten transgressi hostium custodiis circumvenirentur, dato praesidio ad littora 'Maris Rubri' deduxit, unde vitatis Parthorum finibus, patrias in sedes remeavere" (An. XIV. 25). Here the "Red Sea" clearly means the Caspian Sea, because the Parthians lived to the south of the Hyrcanians, and there was no means of the ambassadors by crossing the Euphrates or going southwards, getting into their country without passing through the territory of their enemies, but by travelling northwards they would pass through Media across the Caspian Sea to their own shores. It is difficult to determine whether Bracciolini did not give the name of "Mare Rubrum" to any large body of water which he believed communicated with the Indian Ocean, which he may have thought was the case with the Caspian, in common with Strabo, and before Strabo Eratosthenes, and after Strabo Pomponius Mela: or Bracciolini may have thought that the Caspian had no communication with any other sea,--was perfectly mediterranean, and that being in the midst of land, it ought to have the same name given to it as the lndian Ocean, that neither mingled with nor joined any other sea. Let the error have originated as it might, it is of a character so cognate with that in the second book, as to induce one to believe that both parts of the Annals proceeded from the same hand, and that that could not have been the hand of Tacitus, as in his day the Romans spoke specifically of the Euxine and the Caspian Sea, so that if he had written the Annals, he would have written in the first instance, "ad Pontum Euxinum," and in the second,"Caspii Maris."

XVI. But if my theory be accepted that Bracciolini forged both parts of the Annals, these errors are not at all to be wondered at; for at the commencement of the fifteenth century, even his countrymen, the Italians, especially the rich merchants of his native city, Florence, as well as the other wealthy traders of Venice and Genoa, who dealt in spices and other Oriental productions, alone practised navigation and cultivated commerce in the countries of Asia, and though better informed of those parts of the world than the other nations of Europe, had yet but a confused and false conception of the Red Sea and the waters in the East.

There ought, further, to be no surprise that Bracciolini possessed this limited geographical knowledge of the lands and waters of Asia, considering that, up to his time, only a few travellers, such as Carpin and Asevlino, Rubrequis, Marco Polo and Conti, had penetrated into the central portions of that continent:--as to Africa, its very shape was unknown, for navigation scarcely extended beyond the Mediterranean: at the commencement of the fifteenth century, indeed, not only information about the different quarters of the globe, but letters, arts, the sciences, and the greater part of our present ideas, were all prostrate, --crushed beneath the weight of weapons and silent amid the din of arms, for everybody thought of nothing but wars.

XVII. While treating of maritime matters, I may refer to a passage in the second book of the Annals, which forcibly impresses me as being penned by Bracciolini, in whose declining years Prince Henry of Portugal, with a passion for voyages and discoveries, gave a new direction to the genius of his age by laying the foundation for a revolution which must be for ever memorable in modern history. On Prince Henry giving the signal, navigation spread its sails; discovery followed discovery with amazing, speed; successes

attended every expedition; each started after the other rapidly, and soon in all directions; the navigators returning home brought news so strange,--so animating all minds,--so inspiring all imaginations,--of the fresh lands they had seen that we can easily imagine a writer living in the midst of all these stirring accounts, who was desirous of producing as much effect as possible in a history that he was forging, writing thus of mariners on their "return from a long distance": "they talk about wonders, the power of whirlwinds and unheard of birds, monsters of the deep having the forms of half men and half beasts,--things either actually seen or else believed under the influence of excitement": --Lipsius adds in a note, "rather based on pure fancy,"--"vanitate efficta";--had the great Dutch critic for a moment dreamt that Bracciolini had forged the "Annals of Tacitus," he would have known that the observation, as far as concerned the author's own period, was founded on fact, the English having then had the good fortune to discover,--(or, as it was known to the Romans, more properly, re-discover) Madeira; for the first time, in modern days, the French nobleman in the service of Spain, Jean de Bethencourt, reached the Canaries; the Flemings, too, for the first time got as far as the Azores; above all, Gilianez, in 1433, doubling Cape Boyador, or Nun, arrived on the West Coast of Africa to a few degrees above the equator: every one of them returned with wonderful news of his voyage which was looked upon as something marvellous:--accordingly their great contemporary, Bracciolini, wrote thus, thinking of the miraculous narrative that was told by each adventurous navigator of his time:--"Ut quis ex longinquo venerat, miracula narrabant, vim turbinum, et inauditas volucres, monstra maris, ambiguas hominum et belluarum formas, --visa, sive ex motu credita" (An. II. 24). Nothing was going on in the days of Tacitus, which could have put such a notion in his head; nor is the passage from which it is taken at all in his style, as will be admitted when I immediately proceed to compare and contrast certain passages in Bracciolini and himself with the view of examining the graphic powers which they both possessed.

CHAPTER THE LAST.

FURTHER PROOFS OF BRACCIOLINI BEING THE AUTHOR OF THE FIRST SIX BOOKS OF THE ANNALS.

I. The descriptive powers of Bracciolini and Tacitus.--II. The different mode of writing of both.--III. Their different manners of digressing.--IV. Two Statements in the Fourth Book of the Annals that could not have been made by Tacitus.--V. The spirit of the Renaissance shown in both parts of the Annals.--VI. That both parts proceeded from the same hand shown in the writer pretending to know the feelings of the characters in the narrative.--VII. The contradictions in the two parts of the Annals and in the works of Bracciolini.--VIII. The Second Florence MS. a forgery.--IX. Conclusion.

I. The graphic powers possessed by Tacitus and Bracciolini were considerably influenced by their respective characters, which were widely different: no one can read the works of Tacitus, and not come to the conclusion that he was unassuming; whereas no one can read the works of Bracciolini, without being struck by his inordinate vanity, no matter what he maybe doing, describing the Ruins of Rome, discoursing on the Unhappiness of Princes, moralizing on Avarice or wailing in rhetorical magniloquence over the remains of friends: still he displays himself for admiration. The same thing occurs throughout the Annals. From the first to the last the author stands before his reader on account of the extraordinary manner of his narrative which is ever filling one

with surprize from Emperors and Generals, like Tiberius and Germanicus, weeping like Homer's heroes, and Queens and captive women, like Boadicea and the wife of Armin, exhibiting none of the frailties of their sex, being above the timorous passions, and not shedding a tear even when they are made prisoners, but conducting themselves with all the insolence of conquerors. Roman knights and senators, of the stamp of Lucanus, Senecio and Quinctianus (XV. 49-57) betray the dearest pledges they have in blood and friendship, while slaves, and wantons such as Epicharis, undergo the fury of stripes and tortures to protect those not bound to them by ties of kindred and not even personally known to them. Not only do we find the heroic in malefactors and the criminal in heroes;--the spirited where we expect to come across the sordid, and the mean where we look for the grand, but the supernatural and magical mingle with the real and practical;--the sound of trumpets comes from hills where it is known there are no musical instruments; shrieks of departed ghosts issue from the tombs of mothers; incidents by sea and land are accompanied by wonderfully sublime circumstances; shipwrecks have whatever make up such scenes in their worst appearances.

The whole of this proceeds from Bracciolini indulging his fancy in a latitude which is denied the historian, and allowed only to the poet; hence he sometimes carries circumstances to bounds that border upon extravagance. Tacitus, on the other hand, always maintains his dignity; holding command over his fancy he carries circumstances to their due length, and only to their due extent.

This will be seen in the passages which I shall now select to illustrate the correctness of this remark; and beginning with Bracciolini, I will take his account of a marine disaster in the second book of the Annals.

The picture opens with a scene of beauty: "a thousand ships propelled by creaking oars or flapping sails float over a calm sea: all of a sudden a hailstorm bursts from a circular rack of clouds: simultaneously billows rolling to uncertain heights before shifting squalls that blow from every quarter shut out the view and impede navigation: the soldiers, in their alarm and knowing nothing of the dangers of the deep, get in the way of the sailors, or rendering services not required, undo the work of the skilful seaman: from this point the whole welkin and the whole sea are given up to a hurricane that rages from an enormous mass of clouds sweeping down from the swelling hilltops and deep rivers of Germany: the hurricane made more dreadful by freezing blasts from the neighbouring North, lays hold of the ships which it scatters into the open ocean or among islands perilous with precipitous cliffs or hidden shoals; the fleet, narrowly escaping shipwreck among them, is borne onwards, after the change of tide, in the direction whither the wind is blowing."

The reader is now left to the resources of his imagination; he has to supply a missing link in the chain of the description,--the mooring of the ships; though how or where that could be done it is impossible to conceive; we are, nevertheless, told that the vessels "cannot hold by their anchors"--("non adhaerere anchoris ... poterant"), "nor draw off the water that rushes into them. Horses, beasts of burden, baggage and even arms are thrown overboard to lighten the hulls with their leaking sides and seas breaking over them."

Here the terrible character of the calamity is poetically heightened by the writer observing that, "though there might be greater tempests in other parts of the Ocean, and Germany was

unsurpassed for its convulsions of the elements, yet this disaster was worse than those for the novelty and magnitude of its dangers --the surrounding shores being inhabited by enemies, and the sea so boundless and unfathomable that it was taken to be without a shore, and the last in the world": whence we way infer that the ships had got well out into the Atlantic, which must have presented to the eyes of the Romans pretty much the same appearance that it presented to Bracciolini's contemporaries, the English, Flemings and Spaniards, when, sailing for days together out of sight of land, they were making their way for the first time to (in the language in the Annals) "islands situated a very long way off":--"insulas longius sitas",--Madeira, the Azores and the Canaries.

On such far-away islands described as deserted, "the majority of the ships are cast ashore, the remainder having foundered in the deep; there the soldiers, deprived of the means of existence, perish from starvation, except those who survive by eating the dead horses that are thrown up on the sands"; though it is beyond the reach of the mind to conjecture whence the dead horses could have come after such a description.

"Germanicus, whose galley alone is saved by being thrown on the country of the Chauci, roams about the rocky coast and promontories all those days and nights, bitterly blaming himself as the guilty cause of the mighty catastrophe, and is with difficulty prevented by his friends from casting himself into the sea, and thus putting an end to a life made miserable by such self-accusation. At length the swell subsides; a favourable breeze springs up; the shattered ships return, with few oars and garments spread for sails; some are towed by others more efficient; these being hastily repaired are sent to search the distant islands; by these means several" of the surviving soldiers "are with great pains recovered; the Angrivarii, newly received into alliance with the Romans, return others, who had found their way into the interior of their country; and the petty British princes send back the remainder who had been cast upon their shores." Thus all ends as happily as a comedy; everybody and everything are saved; men and ships return: meanwhile Bracciolini has entertained his reader with a pretty, exciting episode, (what British sailors call "a yarn"), without making himself absolutely ridiculous by placing on record that the Romans in the days of Tiberius lost "a thousand ships"; though he certainly gives credit to his reader for considerable credulity by inviting him to believe that the Romans at any time ever had a fleet amounting to such an enormous number of vessels. [Endnote 401]

"Ac primo placidum aequor mille navium remis strepere, aut velis impelli: mox atro nubium globo effusa grando, simul variis undique procellis incerti fluctus prospectum adimere, regimen impedire: milesque pavidus, et casuum maris ignarus, dum turbat nautas, vel intempestive juvat, officia prudentium corrumpebat. omne dehine coelum, et mare omne in austrum cessit, qui tumidis Germaniae terris, profundis amnibus, immenso nubium tractu validus, et rigore vicini septemtrionis horridior, rapuit disjecitque naves in aperta Oceani, aut insulas saxis abruptis vel per occulta vada infestas. quibus paulum aegreque vitatis, postquam mutabat aestus, eodemque quo ventus ferebat; non adhaerere anchoris, non exhaurire inrumpentis undas poterant: equi, jumenta, sarcinae, etiam arma praecipitantur, quo levarentur alvei manantes per latera, et fluctu superurgente.

"Quanto violentior cetero mari Oceanus, et truculentia coeli praestat Germania, tantum illa clades novitate et magnitudine

excessit, hostilibus circum litoribus, aut ita vasto et profundo, ut credatur novissimum ac sine terris, mari. pars navium haustae sunt; plures, apud insulas longius sitas ejectae: milesque, nullo illic hominum cultu, fame absumptus, nisi quos corpora equorum eodem elisa toleraverant. sola Germanici triremis Chaucorum terram adpulit, quem per omnes illos dies noctesque apud scopulos et prominentis oras, cum se tanti exitii reum clamitaret, vix cohibuere amici, quo minus eodem mari oppeteret. Tandem relabente aestu, et secundante vento, claudae naves raro remigio, aut intentis vestibus, et quaedam a validioribus tractae, revertere: quas raptim refectas misit, ut scrutarentur insulas. collecti ea cura plerique: multos Angrivarii nuper in fidem accepti, redemptos ab interioribus reddidere: quidam in Britanniam rapti, et remissi a regulis" (An. II. 24, 25).

We have no means of testing by minute and accurate comparison the descriptive powers which Tacitus possessed in dealing with such a subject, because he has no account of a marine disaster in any of his works. We must then do the next best we can, see how he deals with a military calamity,--for, though in the account we are about to give, the Romans had been victorious, we must remember the sentiment of the Duke of Wellington, that next to a defeat there is nothing so miserable as a victory. The passage we shall give is that of the visit of Vitellius to the plains of Bedriacum forty days after a battle had been fought and a victory had been won by the Romans.

"Thence Vitellius turned aside to Cremona, and, after he had seen Caecina's contest of gladiators, longed to visit the plains of Bedriacum, and view the field where a victory had been lately won. Horrible and ghastly spectacle! Forty days after the battle,--and the mangled bodies, lacerated limbs and putrefying corpses of men and horses,--the ground stained with gore,--the trees and the corn levelled;--what a dismal devastation!--nor less painful the part of the road which the people of Cremona,--as if they were the subjects of a king,--had strewn with roses and laurels, altars they had raised and victims they had slain,--signs of gratulation for the moment, which very soon afterwards occasioned their destruction. Valens and Caecina were there, and told the points of the battle:--'Here the columns of the legions rushed to the fray: here the cavalry charged: there the bands of the auxiliaries routed the foe.' The tribunes and prefects then began each to praise his own deeds, and utter a medley of truths and falsehoods,--or exaggerations. The rank and file, too, of the troops with shouts that showed their joy turned from the line of march to behold again the field of battle, and wonder as they looked at the piles of arms and the heaps of bodies. And some, when the various turns of chance occurred to their minds, melted into tears and were heavy at heart from sorrow, but Vitellius did not turn aside his eyes nor shudder at so many thousands of his unburied countrymen: he was even glad, and ignorant of his all but impending fate made an offering to the gods of the place."

"Inde Vitellius Cremonam flexit, et spectato munere Caecinae, insistere Bedriacensibus campis, ac vestigia recentis victoriae lustrare oculis concupivit. Foedum atque atrox spectaculum! Intra quadragesimum pugnae diem lacera corpora, trunci artus, putres virorum equorumque formae, infecta tabo humus, protritis arboribus ac frugibus--dira vastitas: nec minus inhumana pars viae, quam Cremonenses lauro rosisque constraverant, exstructis altaribus caesisque victimis, regium in morem: quae, laeta in praesens, mox perniciem ipsis fecere. Aderant Valens et Caecina, monstrabantque pugnae locos: 'Hinc irrupisse legionum agmen: hinc equites coortos: inde circumfusas auxiliorum manus.' Jam tribuni

praefectique, sua quisque facta extollentes; falsa, vera, aut majora vero miscebant. Vulgus quoque militum, clamore et gaudio deflectere via, spatia certaminum recognoscere, aggerem armorum, strues corporum intueri, mirari. Et erant, quos varia fors rerum, lacrimaeque et misericordia subiret; at non Vitellius deflexit oculos, nec tot millia insepultorum civium exhorruit: laetus ultro, et tam propinquae sortis ignarus, instaurabat sacrum diis loci" (Hist. II. 70).

It must be obvious even to the most careless and least perspicacious what a striking contrast there is in the descriptive powers of the two; the objects that Tacitus depicts are not only few in number and telling in character, but seem to be presented to us on the principle of truth, as of actual occurrences; the method he adopts reminds one of that pursued by Sir Walter Scott, no matter whether the descriptive passage occur in one of his poems, as The Lady of the Lake, or in one of his romances, as The Heart of Mid-Lothian: Bracciolini, on the other hand, appears to be inventing,--or, at least, heaping together a number of real circumstances, one or two of which might have happened together, but scarcely all of them at the same time, while he so arranges them as to produce a highly poetic effect: he writes as Lord Byron made up his shipwreck in Don Juan,--as Moore shows us in his Life of the eminent poet,--by selecting here and there a telling incident from the narrative of this or that shipwrecked mariner.

II. Not only in description did Bracciolini fail to imitate the writing of Tacitus; he failed to imitate it also in sequence of ideas. There is unquestionably resemblance in the absence of circumlocution; in such considerable conciseness that words are as sentences; in there being no hyperbole, and in judicious language at all times consonant with the solidity of the instructions conducive to wisdom in political and civil life. But in order to effect this Bracciolini clipped his sentences as a gardener clips hedges: a sentence is now and then like an amputated limb; a word is wanting, like a hand or a foot cut off from an arm or a leg: sometimes the reader sees, what was evidently made with mischievous intent, a great gap in thought, at which he is stopped and disturbed,--as a farmer, when walking in his fields, is brought to a stand-still and overcome with annoyance to see an opening which his cattle have made in his fences, and which he must be at the pains of repairing: so these vacuities in thought require to be botched by the fancy of the reader; the patching may not be the requisite thing to be done: accordingly the gaps cause difficulties in rightly apprehending the meaning of the writer, who, in some passages may, possibly, never be properly understood.

The consequence of this is that no remark is so common as to hear people, especially young persons, say of Tacitus, "How difficult his Latin is!" Even Messrs. Church and Brodripp say so in the Preface to their translation of the "History." Certainly, it is difficult, perhaps impossible, to reproduce in another language the smooth style and polished phrases of Tacitus; but his Latin is easy to follow, whatever he maybe doing,--describing a battle, a riot or a flight;--recording the success of a party, the death of an Emperor, or a disturbance in the Forum. Notwithstanding his fiery, rapid style, he is regular in his connection of thought,--logical in his sequence of ideas, thereby he is always alluring and attractive, while crisp, clear and comprehensible, he dazzles and delights with his picturesque images and glittering beauties. It is otherwise with the author of the Annals, whose style is occasionally enveloped in such Cimmerian obscurities from deficiencies of expression as to beset his work with a formidable opaqueness--anything but Milton's "darkness visible". [Endnote 408]

Many specimens of this might be given, but as the mist is impenetrable, we will turn to one where the light can be seen--the story of the peasant of Termes, who assassinates a praetor, while that officer is passing along a road unattended. The assassin, being on the back of a fleet horse, gallops off to a wood, entering which, after turning his horse loose, he baffles pursuit by clambering over steep and stony parts into the pathless wilderness, "where," continues the writer, "he did _not remain long concealed_; FOR" (mark the sequence), "his horse having been caught and shown through all the towns round, the people knew whose it was, _and_ that led to his apprehension":--"pernicitate equi profugus, postquam saltuosos locos adtigerat, dimisso equo, per derupta et avia sequentis frustratus est, _neque diu fefellit_; NAM prehenso ductoque per proximos pagos equo, eujus foret cognitum, _et_ repertus" (An. IV. 45).

The context is not seen. A man who has committed a murder unseen by anybody effects his escape from pursuit by getting into a wood. Of what consequence was it whether his horse was known or not? for how could that help his pursuer to catch him, if, like a maroon negro, having run away safely into the impenetrable thicket, he staid in the bush for the remainder of his days,--or as long as he was not wanted for a breakfast by a hungry wild beast? The author means us to understand, after the fugitive had baffled pursuit by getting into the depth of the forest, that he lay hidden there for a certain number of days, after which, deeming that all was safe, he returned into the towns to his home: then should come the words: "where he did not remain long concealed, for his horse having been caught," &c.

This obscurity increases when the author of the Annals is in the palace of Tiberius, or in the Senate amid the deliberations of the Patres Conscripti. From his inadequate mode of speech he then outstrips the comprehension of the reader; certainly he quite baffles the intelligence of the very young, his meaning being penetrable only by the keen sagacity of ripe age, for he enters into the recesses of the heart, and reveals the secret workings of the bad passions,--envy, hatred, malice and ambition.

As before, we cannot give one of his best gems, because those are hidden in clouds of darkness, through which nobody can see, only one of them that is shrouded in a light mist through which the eye can dimly peer. So take the passage where Tiberius leaves it to the Senate to choose whether Lepidus or Blaesus shall have the government of Africa. Lepidus refuses in very unmistakable terms, alleging as his reasons the bad state of his health, the tender age of his children, and the marriageable condition of his daughter: the writer then goes on: "another reason that Lepidus had, he kept to himself, though it was understood, Blaesus being the uncle of Sejanus, and that was a very powerful reason with him." "Tum audita amborum verba, intentius excusante se Lepido, cum valetudinem corporis, aetatem liberum, nubilem filiam obtenderet: intelligereturque etiam, (quod silebat), avunculum esse Sejani Blaesum, atque eo praevalidum." (An. III. 35). Of course, that was the most powerful reason for Lepidus refusing the honour, because he knew that if he stood in the way of the promotion of the uncle, the nephew, in those corrupt times, would seek a way of wreaking his vengeance upon him. That is easily enough understood, and certainly did not require any further explanation from the historian. But how about the next sentence? "Blaesus in his reply to the Senate made, (but not in the same resolute tone as Lepidus), a show of refusal, and by the assent of the sycophants he was not supported"; and, without another

syllable, the author leaves the subject and passes on to another matter. "Respondit Blaesus specie recusantis, sed neque eadem adseveratione; et consensu adulantium haud jutus est." (ibid.) In what was he not supported? And whom were the "sycophants," that is the Senators, flattering? Blaesus? They had no cause to care whether they pleased or displeased him. Tiberius? The Emperor was perfectly indifferent as to which of the two men the Senate selected. The author of the Annals, in order that his full meaning may be brought out, wants the reader to supply, after the words "a show of refusal," some such as the following:--"the Senators could see from the sham of Blaesus that the promotion to the office would be highly acceptable to him, and, as they knew it would please Sejanus, they were desirous of doing what would gratify the minister": then should come the words: "and by the assent of the sycophants he was not supported," that is, in his refusal: accordingly the writer leaves his reader to infer that the Senators gave their universal approval to the appointment of Blaesus as the Proconsul of Africa.

There is no such writing as this in any of the works of Tacitus, who, though curt and concise, is always remarkable for concinnity and clearness of expression as well as for perspicuity and consecutiveness of idea. This can be instanced by any passage in the "History": take this where Galba admonishes Piso whom he has adopted to be careful of himself as the successor to the empire, and beware of the perils to which he was exposed by his new position:--

"You are at the age which shuns the passions of youth: your past life has been such you have nothing to regret. You have endured hardship up to this point: prosperity tries our dispositions with sharper probes; because misfortune is borne, we are spoilt by a brilliant position. With your determined character you will preserve those most precious boons of the human soul, honourable principles, an independent spirit and friendly feelings; but others will undermine these by obsequiousness. Flattery, --fawning,--that worst bane of virtuous inclinations,--will assail you:--everybody seeks his own advancement. To-day you and I converse together quite disinterestedly; others all selfishly pay their court to our fortunes in preference to ourselves. Now to counsel an Emperor what he ought to do is a task of much difficulty: humouring the whims of this or that Emperor does not cost the slightest trouble." "Ea aetas tua, quae cupiditates adolescentiae jam effugerit: ea vita, in qua nihil praeteritum excusandum habeas. Fortunam adhuc adversam tulisti: secundae res acrioribus stimulis animos explorant, quia miseriae tolerantur, felicitate corrumpimur. Fidem, libertatem, amicitiam, praecipua humani animi bona, tu quidem eadem constantia retinebis: sed alii per obsequium imminuent. Irrumpet adulatio,--blanditiae, pessimum veri adfectus venenum,--sua cuique utilitas. Ego ac tu simplicissime inter nos hodie loquimur; ceteri libentius cum fortuna nostra, quam nobiscum. Nam suadere principi quod oporteat multi laboris: adsentatio erga principem quemeunque sine adfectu peragitur." (Hist. I. 15).

It will be seen from this literal version of his text, that, notwithstanding his epigrammatic brevity, Tacitus writes with a precision of thought that leaves nothing to be supplied. It may be that the author of the Annals found it impossible to write thus: at any rate he resorts to quite another kind of composition in order to be on a level with his prototype by making his book hard reading, for he gives his reader as much difficulty in following him by leaving gaps in thought, as Tacitus gives his reader by uncommon terseness. The difference of exertion to which the mind

is subjected in understanding the two is pretty much like the difference of exerting the legs which a traveller experiences when moving about a most mountainous region, between toiling painfully up steep but smooth acclivities and taking violent leaps over a succession of ravines.

III. The Rev. Thomas Hunter, in the opening portion of his work entitled "Observations on Tacitus," (to which I have so often referred, and to which I am so much indebted),--misled by giving his assent, as a matter of necessity, to the universal belief that Tacitus and Bracciolini were one,--errs in ascribing to them both a perfect similarity in ambition of pomp and ornament to display learning; Bracciolini bears little or no resemblance in this respect to Tacitus, as may be seen by comparing, or rather contrasting them in any one thing,--say in their digressions. Whenever Tacitus digresses, it is always appropriately,--with taste and judgment. What, for instance, can be more fitting than that he should fall into a little digression about the Temple of Venus in Cyprus, when Titus visits that island (Hist. II. 2 & 3), because Titus had an amorous disposition? or, when he is about to relate such an important event and turning point in the history of the Jews as the destruction of Jerusalem, that he should recount the whole origin of that most mysterious and romantic people (Hist. V. 2)? or, when the Capitol was burnt, give a history of it (ib. III. 71)? On these and other occasions, his digressions are seemly, and afford satisfaction as appertaining closely to the subject.

It is not so with the author of the Annals; he cannot speak about a law, but straightway must tell his reader about laws in general, as he does when speaking of the Lex Poppaea, of which had Tacitus spoken, he would have merely mentioned its qualification, then passed on; or, if digressing, confined his statement to the other laws of a similar kind which had been enacted by his countrymen; but the author of the Annals starts off to talk about laws of all kinds that the whole world had witnessed from the Flood of Deucalion to the time of which he is writing,--consequently he talks about the legislation of Minos, Lycurgus and Solon, the law-making of Numa and Tullus Hostilius, Ancus Martius and Servius Tullius, down to what was done in that way by the Emperor Augustus Caesar (III. 26); and when the cities of Asia contend for the honour of building a temple, away he rambles into a discourse about things in general, the wars of Perseus and Aristonicus; the great antiquity of Troy, proclaimed to be the mother of Rome; the love of home of the Lydians; the first names and settlements of the Tyrrhenians; the Sardinians and Etrurians being of the same descent; the divine origin of Tantalus and Theseus; and the Amazons being the founders of some of the cities in Asia (IV. 55 and 56).

This, it must be admitted, is not in the style of Tacitus; it is, however, exactly in the style of Bracciolini--in proof of which I need only point to the historic details which abound in the Dialogue on the Unhappiness of Princes;--the introduction of the particulars into which he enters when drawing up a comparison for a young friend of Ferrara between Julius Caesar and Scipio Africanus, on the question submitted to him, "which was the greater man" (Op. 357 seq.); and when in the Discourse on Nobility he refers to the statues that adorned the garden of a villa, he enters into remarks on the passion possessed by the ancient Romans of ornamenting their homes with the images of their ancestors (Op. 64-83).

IV. Bodinus, in his "Method to an Easy Knowledge of History,"

first published in 1566, seems to be very much struck at two statements in the Fourth Book of the Annals; in the 33rd chapter the words occur: "we link together cruel orders, continual prosecutions, treacherous alliances, the destruction of the innocent, and trials terminating in similar issues": in the chapter preceding the writer says that he does not narrate "wars, sieges of cities, routings of armies and struggles of politicians and plebeians": Bodinus observes, Tacitus "carefully describes all the wars that occurred in his time; they were conflicts in which he was usually engaged or acted as commander, nor was there after the battle of Actium a single historian who treated so copiously of military and civil affairs":--"Libro quarto profitetur se 'nec bella, nec urbium expugnationes, nec fusos exercitus, nec certamina plebis et optimatium' narrare ... et paulo post: 'nos saeva jussa, continuas accusationes, fallaces amicitias, perniciem innocentium, et easdem exitu causas conjungimus', quanquam omnia bella, quae illis temporibus contigerunt, et quibus fere interfuit aut praefuit, studiose describit: nec post Actiacam victoriam ullus est historicus qui militarem aut forensem rationem copiosius tractavit" (Jo. Bodinus. Methodus ad facilem Historiarum Cognitionem. p. 66. Geneva Ed. 1610).

Can anything be stronger than these simple words of the French Doctor of Civil Law of the sixteenth century towards drawing further the attention of the reader to the truth of the theory maintained in this book? It is not possible that, though Bracciolini thus, as we see, forgot himself for a moment as the imitator of another, Tacitus could have made a slip of this kind. He is always describing battles; he takes a special delight in doing so; it is a species of description in which he particularly excelled, even as it is a species of description in which Bracciolini just as particularly showed weakness; Tacitus could do nothing better, because, as Bodinus says, he was actually engaged in the battles, or else acted in them as a commander. Nor is it true of his History, as it is of the Annals, that it is one perpetual tissue of prosecutions and trials that end in the conviction of innocent persons, treacherous alliances and tyrannical decrees; nor that it avoids all narration of the contentions between the people and the nobles.

V. We seem to be looking at a picture of the middle ages or the Renaissance and not of the first or second century of the Christian aera, when we read the story of Caius Silanus, the Proconsul of Asia, who, accused of malversation and peculation, is first banished to the island of Gyarus, but when the Prince pleads for him, and he is backed by the intercession of a Vestal Virgin of sanctity,--corresponding to a Christian nun or abbess of exemplary piety,--Silanus is removed to the more bearable place of exile, the island of Cythaera (III. 66-9).

Just as we find in the first part of the Annals this picture marking the mediaeval period, we find in the last part a sentiment that strongly denotes the time of the Renaissance, because it is morally wrong: with the greatest coolness Bracciolini states in the eleventh book of the Annals that "employment of stratagem against a deserter and violator of his oath reflects no dishonour on the Roman character": "nec irritae aut degeneres insidiae fuere adversus transfugam et violatorem fidei" (XI. 19): the sentiment would never have proceeded from Tacitus nor any other high-minded Roman of antiquity; but it is strictly in accord with the views and feelings of the Renaissance, or fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth century: in reading the best writers of that period we every now and then come across maxims which a strict morality condemns: Machiavelli, who better reflects the spirit of his age

and Italy than anybody else, except the author of the Annals, occasionally shocks us by such utterances in his Treatise on Livy, as, "it is permissible to deceive for the good of the State, provided that advantage be gained by it"; it is a proper thing "to violate one's word for the good of one's country"; "cruelty which tends to a beneficial end is not blamable and that which profits is praiseworthy"; or in his work entitled "The Prince",--"it is quite enough for a Prince to be virtuous in show, and not in fact"; he should "dissemble to reign well," and "the justice of war is in its utility."

VI. Bracciolini, who was inventing history as well as forging a production, did not deem it necessary to be actuated at all times in his representations by the love of truth: in putting forth supposititious matters as matters of fact, he advanced his own opinions and conjectures as the conjectures and opinions of the persons who figured in his narrative: to give an example: --"Tiberius and Augusta abstained from appearing in public" on the day when the remains of Germanicus were borne to the tomb of Augustus: that may be history; but we are certain that it is not history when we are told what their supposition was about going abroad: "I do not know," says the writer, "whether they supposed that a public expression of sorrow on their part would be derogatory to their imperial dignity, but I rather suspect it was fear that their hypocrisy would be detected when their looks were scrutinised by the eyes of all": "Tiberius atque Augusta publico abstinuere; inferius majestate sua rati, si palam lamentarentur, an ne, omnium oculis vultum eorum scrutantibus, falsi intelligerentur" (Ann. III. 4).

We have another proof here that the whole Annals proceeded from the same hand; this sort of thing goes on as well in the last, as in the first part of that work; in the fourteenth chapter (10), the writer undertakes to describe the state of Nero's punishment after (what may or may not be history) the murder of his mother: we are told, as if Bracciolini possessed the magic of peering into the inmost recesses of the soul, that it was only "at length after Nero had completed the monstrous deed that he became conscious of its enormity": "perfecto demum scelere magnitudo ejus intellecta est". We then follow the Emperor into the privacy of his locked chamber; in the dead of night, we see what he does, when he is hidden from the eyes of all: everybody can pretty well guess (but only guess not positively know) how it fared with him; an evil conscience like a hidden torture wracks the criminal as the vulture fed on the liver of the rock-tied Titan;--the Furies come, causing the guilty to pass sleepless nights, for the Furies are the Demons sent to torture the impious: accordingly Bracciolini thus continues the description:--"during the remainder of the night, he would at one time remain in silence with his eyes fixed immovably, very often springing up out of terror, and with a distracted soul watch for the dawn of day, as if it were to bring death to him":--"reliquo noctis, modo, per silentium defixus soepius pavore exurgens et mentis inops lucem opperiebatur, tanquam exitium allaturam" (L. c.).

Though we all know that investigations of this kind must necessarily be attended with uncertainty, yet in watching Bracciolini's bold proceedings in unfolding the mazes of the human heart by the passions of famous men, we assent readily to his delineations, because the feelings he represents, if not true, seem to be true on account of their being natural and obvious.

This kind of guesswork, nowhere to be found in the pages of Tacitus, has been considered in these days a great improvement in

historical composition,--by none more so than by Lord Macaulay, who made Bracciolini, (supposing him to be Tacitus), the object of his adoration. Modern historians reject what Thucydides, Xenophon, Herodotus, Livy, Sallust, Tacitus, and other ancient writers of history, Greek and Roman, did,--ascribing probable words and phrases to eminent persons on grand occasions, as violations of truth and daring assumptions;--nevertheless, they imitate the practice set by Bracciolini of knowing the motives that influenced illustrious characters.

The cause of a memorable matter of fact,--Luther casting off his allegiance to the Pope,--remains hidden in impenetrable mystery: notwithstanding that, Protestant historians as confidently maintain it was the love of truth, as Catholic biographers boldly assert it was the passion of resentment.

We have the same rash conjectures as to James the Second: after he abdicated the throne of England, he lived to the end of his days in quietness and seclusion, never making an attempt to regain the goodwill of his people, nor breathing a wish for a reconciliation: though that monarch kept his feelings to himself, Lord Macaulay in his History of England (IV. 380), with a comprehensiveness of discernment that is amazing, writes thus: "_in his view_," that is, King James's, "there could be between him and his subjects no reciprocity of obligation. Their duty was to risk property, liberty, life, in order to replace him on the throne, and then to bear patiently whatever he chose to inflict upon them. They could no more pretend to merit before him than before God. When they had done all they were still unprofitable servants. The highest praise due to the Royalist who shed his blood on the field of battle or on the scaffold for hereditary monarchy was simply that he was not a traitor." When such intimate acquaintance is shown with the sentiments of the fallen king, one wonders who knew better his intentions and inclinations, Lord Macaulay, his historian, or Peters, his father confessor. In writing thus Lord Macaulay merely imitated the example set by Bracciolini, who, on almost every occasion, pretends to know motives, detect inclinations, explore the causes of events as well as look into the soul, reveal the passions and determine the judgments of powerful men. It is very pretty, but it is not history; and any one who considers how beyond his power it is to ascertain the principles which regulate his own conduct or the behaviour of those with whom he is in familiar and daily intercourse,--whose peculiar habit, too, he knows well,--must see that the task is not only difficult, but superhuman,--comprised in one plain and simple word --impossible.

VII. A thousand authors may be read, and in vain contradictions looked for in any of them. When, therefore, a writer is found contradicting himself, it is a peculiarity to be noted as uncommonly striking; one contradiction being found, several may be looked for. Bracciolini is one of these writers; his contradictions, too, are most remarkable: they are to be found just as well in his acknowledged productions as in both parts of the Annals. Many instances might be given; the following may suffice:--

In the fourth book of the Annals, Tiberius is represented so full of hatred that a man who had been for a long time in exile does not escape his memory, as occurs with Serenus--"non occultante Tiberio vetus odium adversus exulem Serenum" (IV. 29). In the sixth book, however, Tiberius, though still actuated by hatred, is so forgetful that Rubrius Fabatus remains unharmed through oblivion:--"mansit tamen incolumis oblivione magis quam elementia" (VI. 14). What then is the characteristic of Tiberius?

Forgetfulness or remembrance in his hatreds?

So in his acknowledged works, Bracciolini speaks in one of his letters, as we have seen, of not having such a very high opinion of the Papacy as the world believed: "Ego minus existimo Pontificatum quam credunt" (Ep. I. 17). But in another of his works, "De Infelicitate Principum," (Op. p. 392), he expresses his belief that "all Princes were in the enjoyment of a large amount of happiness, more particularly the Pope, who was considered the greatest of men, and yet gained his position without any anxiety or any labour, any pains or any peril." "Nam cum omnes principes magna existimem felicitate frui, tum vero maxime Pontifices, cum nulla cura, nullo labore, nulla opera, nullo periculo eum statum adipiscuntur, qui habetur maximus apud mortales." What are we then to suppose? that Bracciolini had formed a very lofty, or a very indifferent estimate of the Papacy?

In both parts of the Annals, he displays the same spirit of contradiction; first he praises, then condemns the same things; in the last part he defends Popular Revels (XIV. 20) and objects to them immediately afterwards (ibid); so in the first part he lauds luxury in the second book (33) and censures it in the third (53).

We find the same contradiction with respect to Augustus and deification; in the first book of the Annals we are told that if a man has temples reared to him and is worshipped in the likeness of a god, he commits a grievous wrong, because he deprives divine beings of all their honours: this it is stated was done by Augustus:--"Nihil Deorum honoribus relictum cum se templis et effigie numinum coli vellet" (An. I. 10). After this we should be mightily surprised, did we not know of the humour of the writer with whom we are dealing, to find it asserted in the fourth book, when the people of Lusitania and Boetica (now Portugal, Andalusia and Granada), offer to erect a temple to Tiberius, and he refuses (IV. 37, 38), that that Emperor "showed degeneracy of spirit, because men of the highest virtue have ever sought the greatest honours: thus Hercules and Bacchus were added to the number of the Gods among the Greeks, and Romulus among the Romans: accordingly that Augustus who hoped for deification chose the nobler part, for when we scorn fame we scorn the virtues:--"quidam, ut degeneris animi, interpretabantur: optumos quippe mortalium altissima cupere. Sic Herculem et Liberum apud Graecos; Quirinum apud nos, deum numero, additos. Melius Augustum, qui speraverit ... contemtu famae, contemni virtutes" (IV. 38).

VIII. A few words, in conclusion, may be said about the oldest manuscript containing the first six, and, consequently, all the books of the Annals. This, which, it has been stated, is the First Florence MS., I take to be the identical one that came out of the Abbey of Corvey through the hands of Arcimboldi, because, like its mendacious brother, the Second Florence, it bears upon it the unmistakable stamp of an impudent forgery. Just as the Second Florence pretends to be of the fourth century, if not earlier, from having the attestation of Salustius the Philosopher, so the First Florence professes to be as old as, at the very least, the twelfth century, from being written in characters, which, Taurellus says (Praef. ad Pand. Floren.), are the same as those in the Florentine MS. of the Pandects of Justinian. Now, the Florentine Pandects, which were found at Amalfi, were plundered from that town and taken to Pisa in 1137 by Lotharius Saxe after his successful war with Pope Innocent II., though the two costly volumes were not first deposited in the Grand Duke's Library at Florence until 1406.

Danesius, Bishop of Lavaur (in Languedoc), also bears testimony to the great antiquity of the First Florence MS. But this was nineteen years after the first publication of all the Annals in Rome, it being in 1534 that Danesius, examining it with other ancient works, pronounced upon its very old age.

Ernesti, in his preface to the works of Tacitus, quotes a passage from a letter of Graevius to his friend Heinsius where the great Hellenist is of opinion that the MS. bore the marks of being copied from a supposititious and half learned original; "exemplar, unde illud fluxit, mendosum et ab semidocto interpolatum" (Tom. IV. Coll. Burm. p. 496). But suppose that the manuscript is no copy, but, as I maintain, an original, then the opinion of Graevius becomes extremely valuable in this inquiry, because it actually corroborates what I have said about the manuscript,--that it was transcribed by an ignorant monk, and that it is an audacious forgery.

We have, then, no evidence whatsoever that can be relied upon of the great antiquity of this manuscript: on the contrary what we do know about it as a fact is utterly subversive of such an assumption: this copy in the Mediceo-Laurentian Library in Florence of all the Annals of Tacitus cannot be traced further back than to the possession of a man who flourished in the days of Leo X. and the Emperor Maximilian I.,--Johannes Jocundus of Verona; so that it turns out, on careful investigation that all positive knowledge of this MS. stops at the commencement of the sixteenth century, exactly as all positive knowledge of the other Florentine MS. stops at the commencement of the fifteenth century.

IX. I have now done; and think that I have said quite enough for the spuriousness of the Annals never to be hereafter argued as a moot point, but accepted as an established fact. I need not go into further consideration; because further consideration cannot give more weight to what has been put forward. I, therefore, pause, assured that with only these few facts and observations placed before him, the reader has come to the same conclusion as myself, that, strange as it may be, yet, nevertheless, there is truth in the theory now started for the first time, I dare say, to the amazement of the reader, as to the amazement of everybody, that Tacitus is, and has been, for century after century, wrongly accredited with the authorship of the Annals. It is to dispel all cavil about this, that I have examined the History and the Annals from every imaginable point of view, so as to enable the reader to see the two works as clearly as they can be seen--not that the reader has seen them as clearly as objects are seen under the open sky by the blaze of the noontide sun; still I hope that he has seen them, as objects in broad day are seen,--where there must he some shadows in corners,--in a room, when all the blinds are drawn up and all the windows are thrown open.

T H E E N D.

http://www.archive.org/stream/tacitusandbracci09098gut/8tcbr10.txt