

**ANCIENT CLASSICS
FOR ENGLISH
READERS. LIVY**

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Ancient Classics for English Readers. Livy by W. Lucas Collins

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W. LUCAS COLLINS

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EDITED BY THE

REV. W. LUCAS COLLINS, M.A.

(*SUPPLEMENTARY SERIES.*)

LIVY

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ANCIENT CLASSICS

FOR

ENGLISH READERS.

EDITED BY THE REV. W. LUCAS COLLINS, M.A.

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THE marked success and general popularity of the Series of "ANCIENT CLASSICS FOR ENGLISH READERS," lately concluded in Twenty Volumes, has been accompanied by some regrets, expressed both by the friendly critics of the press and in private quarters, at its not having been made somewhat more comprehensive.

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LIVY

W. Collins BY THE
REV. W. LUCAS COLLINS, M.A.,

AUTHOR OF
"ÆTORIANA," "THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS," ETC.



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L I V Y.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY.

TITUS LIVIUS PATAVINUS—owing this last name to his having been born at Patavium (Padua)—was one of that brilliant circle of authors who lighted the court of Augustus. His birth may be fixed with most probability in 59 B.C., the year in which Julius Cæsar and Bibulus were consuls. Horace would thus be his senior by about five years, and Virgil ten; and although his name is not mentioned by either poet, he was probably well acquainted with both. Though of provincial origin, as were nearly all the great Roman writers, he came of a family which had in its day given consuls to Rome; and his native city, in which his own particular branch of it had settled, was one of the most important in Italy. His original profession was most probably that of a professor of rhetoric: a vocation not only popular and respectable, but often highly lucrative, if the professor could get his lectures well attended. We know nothing of his first intro-

duction to the capital ; but, if we may trust his contemporary, Horace, literary ability of any kind was a ready passport to the acquaintance of some of the great men about Augustus' court, and through them to the emperor himself. Some such introduction was at least effected ; for he mentions in the early part of his history, very simply and as though it were quite an ordinary event, his having accompanied Augustus into the temple of Jupiter Feretrius, and heard him read the old inscriptions there.* Some degree of intimacy seems also to be implied by the anecdote recorded by the historian Tacitus,† that Livy had expressed such a warm admiration of the character of Pompey, the unsuccessful opponent of the first Cæsar, that Augustus used good-humouredly to call him a "Pompeyite," without allowing the fact of this predilection for his uncle's great rival to interfere in any way with their friendship. It is said that he even had apartments assigned him in the imperial palace.

It may very probably have been in accordance with some suggestion from Augustus himself, or some of the able ministers who were in his confidence, that he first turned his attention from rhetoric to history. A crowd of small authors, eager to meet the tastes of a patron who was himself an author—though he had the good sense to burn his tragedies instead of publishing them—were busy writing on the recent civil wars. The great emperor—let his undefined position be so termed, in default of any other word to express it—was always anxious to magnify the historic glories of Rome. As

* Book iv. chap. 20.

† Tac. Annals, iv. 34.

in that interest he had made Virgil an epic poet almost against his will, so we may conceive he recognised in the eloquent rhetorician all the capacities of a court historian. There can be no doubt, at least, that the author of the 'Annals of Rome' had the hearty concurrence of Augustus in the great work which he undertook. That he must have had free access to public documents and records is evident from the references and quotations in the body of his history. Without such facilities it could never have been written, and to have obtained them implies much more intimate relations with the existing authorities than would be necessarily the case in our more liberal days. Another proof that he enjoyed some degree of intimacy with the family of the Caesars may be found in the statement of Suetonius, that it was at his suggestion that young Claudius Nero, the step-son of Augustus and future emperor, began the study of history. On this slight ground some of his biographers have built a theory that the education of the young prince had been intrusted to him.

Such biographies of him as are extant—notably that by his own townsman, Giacomo Tommasini, bishop of Citta Nuova—are utterly untrustworthy in their details. All that we know of his private life is that he was certainly married, and had at least one son and one daughter. The latter became the wife of Magius or Magirus, who is said by the elder Seneca to have owed his fame as a rhetorician rather to the merits of his father-in-law than to his own. So widespread, indeed, was the reputation of the great historian even