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THIS little volume, prepared as an experiment, needs no preface. The Editors have had before them the editions of Oudendorp Weber and Weise, with several others for occasional reference. But the notes are in the main their own, and have been written by them in concert, Mr Haskins supplying the bulk of the matter, and prefixing thereto a chronological table and an abstract of the contents of the book. Mr Heitland has supplied the life of Lucan and remarks on the Pharsalia which form the Introduction, and has also made an Index to the notes. It may be added that brevity has been studied throughout.

CAMBRIDGE, *May* 1875.

LIFE OF LUCAN.

Marcus Annaeus Lucanus was born at Corduba[1], the capital of the province of Baetica in Spain, in the year 39 A.D. His father was M. Annaeus Mela[2], a Roman Knight and well-known as the brother of L. Annaeus Seneca the Stoic philosopher: his mother was C. Acilia[3], daughter of Acilius Lucanus an orator of some note. While yet an infant he was taken by his father to Rome, where he received the best education that the capital of the world could afford. It is said that he studied under the famous grammarian Remmius Palaemon and the Stoic Cornutus. Among his chief friends were Saleius Bassus the epic poet and A. Persius Flaccus the satirist, who were at this time his fellow-pupils under the celebrated masters named above. Our author is said to have displayed his powers at a very early age, and to have been fully aware of his own precocity[4]. Declamations and panegyrical poems seem to have employed his first efforts: he soon gave recitations, and drew great applause from his hearers. His rising talent attracted the notice of Nero[5], who was in the early years of his reign a generous patron of literature: the young poet sang the praises of the young emperor, and was advanced by him to the quaestorship though not of age for that office, and afterwards

[1] Mart. I. 61, Sueton. *fragm.* 10, Statius, *Silv.* II. vii. 24 foll. Cf. also Mart. VII. 22.

[2] Tac. *Ann.* XVI. 17. [3] *Ib.* XV. 56.

[4] Sueton. *fragm.* 10.

[5] *Ib.* 10. It is to be remembered that Nero was a pupil of Lucan's uncle Seneca.

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to the augural priesthood. Thus far his career had been one of unbroken success: but it was soon his misfortune to offend the emperor[1] in some way or other. Nero seems to have shewn a rival's jealousy[2] of the poetic reputation of Lucan, and the latter retaliated by making a scoff of the imperial verses, and even by composing libellous epigrams on them and their author. The *Pharsalia*, on which he had lately been engaged, and which he had begun with extravagant praise of Nero, seems to have now changed its tone: denunciations of tyranny are inserted here and there, and lines that seem to convey dark hints of coming change. We learn from Tacitus that the Emperor had forbidden him to recite in public[3]: this was more than the spirit of the haughty young Stoic could brook, and being a man of considerable wealth[4] he withdrew to his beautiful gardens there to brood over his wrong. In the latter part of the year 64 a conspiracy[5] was formed against Nero, the leading spirits in which were one of the consuls for the following year and some officers of the imperial guard. At its head was placed C. Calpurnius Piso[6], a man of illustrious birth and good abilities, in fact the most eminent of the Roman nobles. But whatever strength the conspirators may have gained from the traditional rivalry of the Pisos with the imperial house was more than neutralized by the easy weakness of their leader's character. Such was the plot to which Lucan and other men of note became parties. The assassination of Nero was to have been effected early in the year 65, but the plan taken up in haste was not carried through with energy[7]; the existence of a conspiracy was soon betrayed[8] to the agents of the emperor: and an accident presently revealed the names of some of its members[10]. These when arrested made disclosure of the names of the others[11], and thus the whole scheme col-

[1] Sueton. *fragm.* 10. [2] Tac. *Ann.* XV. 49. Sueton. *fragm.* 10.
[3] Tac. *Ann.* XV. 49.
[4] *Ib.* XVI. 17. Juv. VII. 79, with Prof. Mayor's notes.
[5] Tac. *Ann.* XV. 48, 49. [6] *Ib.* XV. 48.
[7] *Ib.* XV. 49. Sueton. *fragm.* 10. [8] Tac. *Ann.* XV. 50, 52, 53.
[9] *Ib.* XV. 51. [10] *Ib.* XV. 54, 55. [11] *Ib.* XV. 56.

lapsed. Among the first taken was Lucan, and to him as to others false offers of forgiveness were addressed in order to extort from him the names of accomplices. Here the young poet failed to act up to his Stoic training[1]: under the fear of death his constancy gave way, and after holding out for a while he charged his own mother Acilia with a share in the plot. But neither this nor a string of confessions[2] which followed could save him: he was soon like the rest condemned to die, the mode of death being left to his own choice. Accordingly he nerved himself for his end, went into a hot bath and had his veins opened[3]: there he calmly bled to death in the same way as many other Romans of mark did in those days of tyranny when suicide was the only refuge from despair. While the life-blood ran from him he is said to have repeated aloud some appropriate lines from his own great poem (IX. 811—814):

> sanguis erant lacrimae: quaecunque foramina novit
> humor, ab his largus manat cruor: ora redundant
> et patulae nares: sudor rubet: omnia plenis
> membra fluunt venis: totum est pro vulnere corpus.

Thus died Lucan; and his uncle Seneca and his father Mela[4] were involved in the same ruin. His wife, the beautiful and virtuous Polla Argentaria[5] to whom he had been tenderly attached, survived him many years: and to her were addressed in memory of her husband some short epigrams of Martial, and the long and over-drawn panegyric of Statius.

Viewing the events of Lucan's life as a whole we may fairly point to the life of Naevius as in many respects parallel. The earlier poet sang of the first Punic war, in which he had when a youth taken part; the young enthusiast of the decadence tells of the great civil struggle just past, the effects of which were still felt and seen: bold in the choice of a main subject, both handled it with a vigour for which they likewise found

[1] *Ib.* XV. 56. Sueton. *fragm.* 10. [3] Tac. *Ann.* XV. 57.
[2] *Ib.* XV. 70. Sueton. *fragm.* 10.
[4] Tac. *Ann.* XV. 60—64, XVI. 17.
[5] Statius *Silv.* II. vii. 81—88, 120—131. Mart. VII. 21, 23.

vent in scurrilous invective: and as the great houses of the commonwealth, lashed by the Saturnians of Naevius, worked the ruin of their assailant, so an imperial tyrant, stung by jealousy and incensed at the freedom of Lucan, destroyed him through his own rashness. Indeed, looking at the long-lived popularity of the poems of Naevius, one is almost tempted to ask, May not our poet have caught some of his reckless frankness from an early study of and admiration for the writings of his great forerunner?