The Personal Traits of Suetonius
as Exemplified in his Works

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THE PERSONAL TRAITS OF Suetonius as Exemplified in His Works

by

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A. B. University of Illinois, 1914

Thesis

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I HEREBY RECOMMEND THAT THE THESIS PREPARED UNDER MY SUPERVISION BY Odessa Madge Myers
ENTITLED The Personal Traits of Suetonius as Exemplified in His Works
BE ACCEPTED AS FULFILLING THIS PART OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF Master of Arts

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Committee on Final Examination*

*Required for doctor's degree but not for master's.
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THE PERSONAL TRAITS OF SUETONIUS AS EXEMPLIFIED IN HIS WORKS

In the opening section of his "Pragmatism", William James approvingly quotes Mr. Chesterton to the effect that "for a general about to fight an enemy, it is important to know the enemy's numbers but still more important to know the enemy's philosophy." Much the same thing might be said concerning an historian, that in order to pass a critical estimate upon his works, we must know his philosophy of life and his political and social point of view. For example, a Christian's representation of the court life of any one among the early Caesars would differ very materially from that of a Stoic, a libertine, or one who felt that loyalty and devotion to his imperator which springs from comradeship in many a trying campaign. Indeed, for the later Roman Empire, the sources disagree so radically, the Christian writers maligning a pagan, and the pagan in turn defaming a Christian emperor, that one prominent historian of antiquity has recently expressed his despair of ever approximating an exact and honest portraiture of these men or of the general culture of their times. To exercise critical control over an historian's record is obviously much easier when we have some objective statements regarding his personal habits, likes and dislikes, and political and religious creeds. Otherwise, we must fall back upon a subjective interpretation of his works, and subjectivity should be eliminated as far as possible.

possible from historical criticism. We probably know less, objectively, about the historians of antiquity than about any other class of writers, and yet, these are just the men in whose cases, personal biographical details would be of the utmost consequence for determining the value of their reports. Two notable examples are Herodotus and Livy, about whom we know almost nothing from any objective source. Conditions are almost as unsatisfactory in the case of Thucydides, Tacitus and Polybius, and, of course, of the historians of less importance, we usually have no knowledge at all.

As regards Suetonius, we know little enough about him objectively, but even then, perhaps more than we do about any other ancient historian. The purpose of this paper is to show how far we can trace in his works the personal traits which we know, quite incidentally, from disinterested and purely objective sources, were characteristic of the man. And I shall restrict myself to just those traits upon which Suetonius' intimate friend, Pliny the younger, throws light. Evidence of another character, whether objective or subjective one might perhaps quibble over, is furnished by the list of his works other than the "Caesares". One is justified in assuming that out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh, and that from a man's list of published monographs, a fair inference can be drawn for his principal intellectual interests. Of course, we must not press this too far, particularly for a scientific specialist in a field of study which has been worked over for generations. Here, the actual choice of specific points of investigation is frequently determined by many accidents and a
single writing may not be an indication of a profound personal interest. Yet, even here, the sum total, the general trend and direction may be fairly used as evidence, and of course, always so far antiquity, where there was no overcrowding of the general field and the most interesting subjects, but where any man like Suetonius was perfectly free to write as he cared upon any topic, so that the deliberate choice of topics is undoubtedly an indication of a personal predilection.

An investigation of the works of Suetonius for his personal qualities is facilitated by the type of his writings. He was, in general, a writer of biography. He not only used the biographical method for historical writing, but also the peculiarly biographical material, as distinct from historical material, that is, the evidence found in wills, letters, epigrams, satirical invectives or town talk. Not that the method was an invention, for it had been employed before his time, in Latin, by such writers as Varro, Santra, Hyginus and Probus. However, they had used it in portraying the characters of literary men and philosophers, and not merely of kings, generals, and statesmen. Suetonius was original in that he was the first to apply the method of biographical study, which was appropriate for philosophers and men of letters, to great historical figures and men of action. His predecessors and contemporaries used the annalistic form. Of the latter class, Tacitus is the best example, a historian whose chief interest was in ferreting out motives and analyzing characters. His excellent dramatic ability

and his psychological insight are frequently brought into use in his description and interpretation of events. With Suetonius, the stress was put upon personality and events were told only when they helped to interpret the character of his subject. Such a style is undoubtedly more appropriate for the portrayal of men of letters and philosophers than it is for historical narration. In the case of those whose achievements are, in the main, intellectual and moral, their personalities and characters are more important than their deeds, but when it comes to statesmen and men who control public affairs, their acts are certainly of more moment than their personal habits of life. Nevertheless, the introduction of such a method by Suetonius proved to have a great influence upon subsequent historical writing. With Tacitus, the annalistic method appears in Latin for the last time for nearly three hundred years, while practically all Roman historiography after the time of Suetonius was wholly under his ban. His choice of this particular biographical method is easily understood when we realize that his purpose was not to replace annalistic historiography by biography but that he had collected and arranged his material to be used as a supplement to regular history. 1 However, it can not be said that it was entirely inappropriate for the period which the author is describing. During the reign of the twelve Caesars, the fortunes of the Empire were to a degree dominated by the character of the emperor. A period in which the ruler set the fashions and styles of art, religion and literature and when a citizen's

1. Fr. Leo, op. cit., p. 268.
manner of living was determined largely by the imperial tastes, is best described by the delineation of the emperor's character. In a complicated civilization where different attitudes of mind abounded and several theories of conduct prevailed, it was probably too true that the general character of a whole epoch might be determined by the way in which a great and masterly personality might throw his immense influence and prestige upon one side or the other of the evenly balanced scales.

Because Suetonius spent his efforts in portraying the characters of others, it becomes easier for us to recognize his own characteristics. In describing another, a writer unconsciously reveals himself and shows his own attitude toward different phases of life. In the first place, something can be inferred as to his interests from the phases of life that he portrays, and in the second place, his attitude can be determined from the way in which he portrays those phases.

The only objective evidence that we have about the personal characteristics of Suetonius is found in certain letters of his friend, the younger Pliny. It is the more significant because it comes from the occasional correspondence of an intimate acquaintance who had obviously no intention of depicting any individual traits. The things which Pliny tells are the natural subject matter of informal correspondence and constitute, for that reason, quite unimpeachable evidence. In a letter written in the year 97, Pliny says that his friend had a superstitious belief in the ominous nature of dreams. It appears that Suetonius had asked him to have some lawsuit postponed because he had had a troublesome dream. The letter reads
thus: "Scribis te perterritum somnio vereri ne quid adversi in actione patiaris, rogas ut dilationem petam et pauculos dies, certe proximum, excusem". From this we might infer that Suetonius was superstitious, at least, in so far as he believed in such things as omens, signs and portents. This is indeed no unusual characteristic for his time, for we find the emperor Hadrian and even Pliny himself paying attention to such things, but Suetonius' feelings upon this subject were strong enough to color materially his historical work and to affect the proportional importance he attributed to events. In another letter written in this same year, Pliny asks Baebius Hispanus to see that a certain piece of land is sold to his friend at a modest price. He says very emphatically that Suetonius wants a good bargain and is anxious for the price to be moderate. From the tone of the letter, we can not only infer that he was not extravagant but that he was extremely careful as to how he spent his money, the sort of man who would be sure of getting his "money's worth" in making a bargain. The passage in question runs as follows: "Tranquillus, contubernalis meus, vult emere agellum, quem venditare amicus tuus dicitur. rogo eures quanti aequum est emat: i'a enim delectabit emisse,....in hoc autom agello si modo adriserit pretium, Tranquilli mei stomachum multa sollicitant, vicinitas urbis, opportunitas vise, medicaritas villae, modus ruris, qui avocet magis quam distinguat....haec tibi exposui quo magis soires, quantum esset ille mihi, ego tibi debiturus, si praediolum istud, quod commendatur his dotibus,

tam salubriter emerit, ut paenitentiae locum non relinquat."

At another time Pliny appears to have had the common experience of being annoyed by some displeasing characteristic of a friend. This annoyance was occasioned by an act of indecision or changeableness on the part of his friend, and Pliny gives expression to his feeling in a sarcastically polite letter which he wrote to Suetonius in the year 101. It seems that the letter had asked to have a certain tribuneship, which he had secured for him, transferred to a relative. Pliny congratulates him upon his generosity and gratitude so effusively and in such fulsome terms that one can not help feeling that he is indulging in a little irony at the expense of his friend. The general tone of the letter itself clearly expresses annoyance and discomfiture. "Facio pro cetera reverentia, quam mili praestas, quoad tam sollicite petis ut tribunatum quem a Nericio Marcelllo, impetravi tibi in Caesennium Silvanum, prolingum tuum, transferam. mihi autem sicut iuvundissimum ipsum te tribunum ita non minus gratum alium per te videre neque enim esse congruens arbitror, quem augere honoribus. cupias, huic pietatis titulis invindere, qui sunt omnibus honoribus paludriores. video etiam, cum sit egreos et mereri beneficia et dare, utranque te laudem simul asecuratum, si quid ipse meruisti alii tribus. praeterea intelleo mili quodque gloriae fore, si ex hoc tuo facto non facerit ignotum alioque meos non gerere tantum tribunatus posse verum etiam dare. quare ego vero honestissimae voluntati tuae pareo. neque enim adhuc nomen in numeros relatum est, ideoque liberum est nobis Silvanum in locum tuum subdere: cui cupio tam gratum esse munus tuum,

quam tibi meum est". 1

A few years later, in a letter dated 105, Pliny expressed his impatience because Suetonius was delaying the actual publication of a work in announcement of which Pliny had composed a few laudatory verses. Pliny very courteously attributes the delay to a desire to put on the last finishing touches, and yet we wonder if it might not rather have been caused by indecision of character because Suetonius had obviously given him reason to expect that he would put his production before the public by a certain date and then had changed his mind to his friends manifest embarrassment. He says, "Libera tandem hendecasyllaborum moorum fidem, qui scripta tua communibus amicis soponderunt. appellantur cotidie et flagitantur, ac iam periculum est ne cogantur ad exhibendum formulam accipere. sum et ipse in edendo haesitator tu tamen meam quoque cun- tationem tarditatemque vicisti. pröinde aut rumpe iam moras aut cave ne eodem istos libellos, quos tibi hendecasyllabi nostri blanditiis elicere non possunt, convicio sceazones extorqueant perfectum opus absolutumque est nec iam splendescit lima, sed atteritur. patere me videre titulum tuum, patere audire describi legi venire volumina Tranquilli mei. aequum est nos in amore tam mutuo eandem percipere ex te voluptatem, qua tu perfrueris ex nobis". 2

It will be interesting to note how Suetonius' attitude toward women is affected by his own experience with them. We

are led to believe that his married life had not been happy from that letter of Pliny's in which he asks the emperor Trajan to grant the "ius trium liberorum" to him. He says that there are two reasons why such a privilege should be granted to him. One is because he deserves his friends' good opinion of him, and the other is due to the fact that he has not been fortunate in his marriage. He says, "huic ius trium liberorum necessarium faciunt duae causae: nam et iudicia amicorum promeretur et parum felix matrimonium expertus est impetrandumque a bonitate tua per nos habet quod illi fortuna malignitas denegavit." The phrase "parum felix matrimonium" has a sinister sound and suggests an unhappy experience of some sort or other, probably not the mere accidents of death and the like. A man who has experienced a "parum felix matrimonium" is not unlikely to have his whole attitude toward women affected by his own misfortunes. We should therefore, expect to find that Suetonius was somewhat of a misogynist. Examination of his works fully bears out this conjecture for we find many instances where he takes occasion to speak of the bad characteristics of different women. Even Martial and Juvenal, who are noted for their sarcastic remarks about women, say some good things about them but

1. \textit{judicia amicorum}—compare J. Marquadt: \textit{La Vie Privée des Romains}, (tr. Henry, Paris, 1891), pp. 96 ff. Pliny probably wants it to be understood that wealthy friends of Suetonius had indicated their willingness to add his name to their list of legatees, in case he was set free from the disabilities attendant upon childlessness. The term "ius trium liberorum" is comprehensive for a number of special privileges enjoyed by men who were parents of three or more children, of which, probably the most highly valued, and undoubtedly the one referred to here, was the unrestricted right to receive legacies from any quarter.

we find only one instance when Suetonius speaks well of any woman; all other references to women are either defamatory or quite colorless.

In this same letter, Pliny calls Suetonius a most upright and honest man, "Suetonium Tranquillum, probissimum honestissimum eruditissimum virum". To be sure, we must realize that Pliny is writing a letter of recommendation for his friend and, rather naturally, he would stress his good points, and yet, even for one's friend, a man would hardly make statements which bore no semblance to the truth. We can infer at least that Pliny regarded Suetonius as a man of probity and sincerity, and we are justified in expecting to find signs of such characteristics in his works; both in the manner of handling his materials and especially in the fair-mindedness with which, despite a personal predilection or distaste for an individual, he nevertheless presents fully both sides of the case.

To sum up, we learn from Pliny that Suetonius was superstitious, thrifty, changeable, or at least not always certain in what he wanted, yet thoroughly honest; furthermore we have reason to expect that his attitude toward womankind would be one of hostility, or at all events, disrespect. We shall now proceed to examine the whole body of his works with a view to discovering to what extent the personal characteristics just mentioned may have affected his choice of subjects or the method of their treatment, or both.

In the actual choice of subject matter we do not find much that is significant of his personal characteristics. His

περι ἑπιστημονής πορναν

bears out to the full
our assumption that his attitude toward women was one of hostility or at least disrespect, since this whole production deals with the most depraved class of women and he takes the trouble to bring such characters before the public. That the work was not scientific, that is, an investigation of the causes and the progress of the social evil, seems clear from the title and his well known style of anecdotal composition, while there is nothing in his extant works, or in what we know otherwise of his character to suggest that his purpose may have been a moral one, i.e., to warn against the evils of an irregular life by depicting the real misery of its most conspicuous devotees. This same attitude of mind seems to be shown also by his selection of the theme, "Terms of Insult and Blasphemy and their Origin". Many of the terms which he discusses and explains had rather a vile origin and the choice of such a subject seems fairly to indicate a prurient or at least, a cynical cast of mind. For evidence of the other characteristics we must resort to his works.

Many passages bear out the express testimony of Pliny that Suetonius was superstitious. In several instances we find him not only revealing his own feelings about certain prophecies or portents, but even attempting to prove their infallibility to others. In telling about the death of Julius Caesar he says,

"Sed Caesari futura caedes evidentibus prodigiis denuntiata est". Here he is not quoting the statement of any other writer but this is a plain straightforward expression of his own opinion. The fact that he uses the adjective "evidentibus" with "prodigiis" shows clearly his belief in the occurrence of portents and their unmistakable relation to certain happenings. After mentioning different signs of this sort, he emphasizes his belief in their occurrence by saying, "cuius rei, ne quis fabulosam aut commenticiam putet, auctor est Cornelius Balbus, familiarissimus Caesaris". Again, in the case of Augustus he makes certain positive statements about mysterious happenings in the emperor's nursery at his grandfather's country house. Here, as before, he does not say "dicitur", or "quidam dicunt", or use any similar phrase, but makes the assertions as though quite on his own authority, a thing which he would hardly do if he did not believe that they were true. His words are: "huc introire nisi necessario et caste religio est, concepta opinione veteri, quasi temere adeuntibus horror quidam et metus obiciatur, sed et mox confirmata. nam cum possessor villae novus seu forte seu temptandi causa cubitum se eo contulisset, evenit ut post præcissimas noctis horas exturbatus inde subita vi et incerta paene semianimis cum streto simul ante fores inveniretur". By his concluding statement, "sed et mox confirmata. nam ... evenit ut..." in which he cites on instance to prove the validity of the superstitious

1. Jul., 81 in.
2. Jul., 81 m.
3. Aug., 6 ex.
belief, he shows that he shared the opinion of the neighborhood concerning such strange happenings. A little farther on he tells of Augustus' belief in dreams and then he shows how profitable it was for him to have paid attention to the dream of a friend on a particular occasion. "Sorum neque sua neque aliena de se neglegebat. Philippensi acie quamvis statuisset non egredi tabernaculo propter valitudinem, egressus est tamam amici somnio monitus; cessitque res prospere, quando captis castris lectica eius, quasi ibi cubans remansisset, concursu hostium confossa atque lacerate est". Concerning the same emperor he says, "Mors quoque eius, de qua dehinc dicam, divinitasque post mortem evidentissimis ostentis praecognita est," and again, in the case of Nero, the employment of the same adjective expresses his belief as to the positiveness of the omens. "Terrebatur ad hoc evidentibus portentis somniorum et auspiciorum et ominum, cum veteribus tum novis". In still another passage he testifies to his own faith quite clearly by saying that the future could be perceived by certain portents. He is telling of the omens which occurred before the birth of Augustus and says, "Et quoniam ad haec ventum est, non ab re fuerit subtextere, quae ei prius quam nasceretur et ipso natali die ac deinceps evenerint, quibus futura magnitudo eius et perpetua felicitas sperari animadverti posset".

As we have remarked before, Suetonius sometimes goes so far as to try to prove the truthfulness of portents by their

1. Aug., 91.
3. Nero, 46 in.
outcome. We find an illustration of this in his life of Vitellius, where he tells how certain predictions were fulfilled concerning the death of the emperor. "Periit cum fratre et filio anno vitae septimo quinquagesimo; nec fefellit coiectura eorum qui augurio, quod factum ei Viennae ostendimus, non aliud portændi praedixerant quam venturum in alicuius Gallicani hominis potestatem, si quidem ab Antonio Primo adversarum partium duce oppressus est, cui Tolosae nato cognomen in pueritia Becco fuerat: id valet gallinacci rostrum." ¹ However, altho he had certain positive beliefs, still it is clear that he did not trust omens and portents promiscuously. We find that there were some dreams which he disregarded,² and in the life of Nero he speaks of a "frivolum auspicium". His words are, "leviterque modo in itinere frivolo auspicio mente recreata, cum adnotasset insculptum monumento militem Gallum ab equite R. oppressum trahi crinibus".³ It seems, if he did not trust all portents that he should have had some consistent theory regarding their differentiation and yet none is apparent. We find only one instance where it seems that he is trying to give a rational explanation to a strange event as an alternative to a superstitious interpretation. It reads, "ac ne dispar eventus in eo narraretur eius qui in Hesiodo refertur, cum opinio hunc non dissimilis maneret, cunas infantis quibus ferebatur apes circumvolarunt osque insedere complures, aut dulcem iam tum spiritum eius haurientes aut facundum et qualem nunc aestimamus

1. Vit., 18 in.
2. See on page 16.
3. Nero, 41.
futurum significantes". 1 In another passage, the employment of the word "fertur" in telling about comets, 2 seems to show some doubt on the author's part. However, the form of expression here used is doubtless that chosen by Isidore so that we do not have Suetonius' own words, and in that case, it would indicate nothing concerning our problem. The passage concerning the bees would suggest that he did not accept all superstitious beliefs without question and yet we are unable to tell on what basis he drew the line of distinction. It is probable that his method was the common sense rule of thumb, that a false omen was one that did not produce what you expected of it. That is unscientific enough and yet, it is what we might expect of the man who gathered and collected with boundless industry, but who seems to have cared little for a theory, an idée générale.

In addition to the evidence which merely shows that Suetonius had superstitious beliefs, we find numerous examples of the various kinds of superstition in which he not only had an interest, but, in many cases, had firm convictions of his own about them, and where he gives conclusive evidence concerning those convictions. One of the most important and trustworthy ways of foretelling future events among the ancients seems to have been by dreams. Suetonius cites many examples of this, often giving the outcome to prove their certainty and thus showing that he himself believed in their significance. However, he seems to have made a distinction between dreams and does not

1. Reif, op. cit., p. 76
2. See note on page 28
seem to pin faith to all of them. For instance, he says concerning the dreams of Augustus after he has told about one very significant one, "Ipse per omne ver plurima et formidulostissima et vano et irrita videbat, relicte tempora rariora at minus vana."¹ That this distinction was we are unable to tell, for in many other cases he shows their significance in a way that makes one feel that he trusted them and yet he nowhere gives any distinguishing characteristics nor does he tell of any theory or plan which he observed in connection with dreams, such as his clear headed friend Pliny suggested to him, namely that he should observe whether his dreams went by similarity or contrariety.² In the case of Julius Caesar's dream before his murder he reveals his own attitude very clearly. He has just said, "Sed Caesaris futura caedes evidentibus prodigis denuntiata est" ³ and in listing those prodigia he proceeds: "Ec vero nocte, cui inluxit dies caedis, et ipse sibi visus est per quietem interim supra nubes volitare, alias cum Iove dextrum imponere;"⁴ A similar instance is found in the passage where he speaks of the murder of Caligula. "Futurae caedis multa prodigia existiterant ... pridie quam perierat, semelavit caulis tertio et in caelo iuxta solium Iovis impulsaunque ab eo dextrum pedem pollice et in terras precipitatum."⁵ He believed that dreams were significant in foretelling the death of Galba: "Magnae et assiduae monstrarum inde a principio exitium ei, quaelis eventit, portenderant."⁶

1. Aug., 91 in.
5. Gal., 57 in. et med.
and after citing several portents, he adds, "seeuta sunt aliquanto manifestiores. monile margritis gemmisque convertut ad ornandum Fortanam suam Tusculanam ex omnigaze secererat; id repente quasi augustiores diminuo loco Capitolineae Veneti dedicavit, ac proxime nocte semnivit specie Fortanae quarantia fraudatem se dono destinato, minuitisque eruptarem et ipsam quae dedisset. cunque exterritus luce prima ad expiaendum somniun, praemissis qui reg divinum apparentar, Tusculum excucurrisset, nihil invenerat praebo teres in ore pulchrum stratensque iuxta somnum in actio vitres tecta evitam et in calice dictili merum." Likewise in the case of Vespasian, a dream is listed as one of the portents because of which he had hoped for the imperial dignity: "cost Heronem ... in aem imperii venit iam pridem ab i per tune ostenta concepsit .... At in Achaia somniavit initium sibi suisque felicitatis futurum, simul et dens Heroni exemptus esse; evenitque ut sequenti die progressus in atrium medicus centen ad octoferet fratunque gaude exemptum." Besides these instances we find other passages in which he relates the dreams of different people, either introducing them by some such expression as "dicitur", or merely stating them as facts without making any special comment as to their outcome or their reliability. While these show no positive belief, they at least prove that he was greatly interested in the subject of dreams and in their relation to subsequent or contemporary events. Some examples of this sort are:

"etiam confusum eum somnio proximae noctis - nam visus erat per quietam stuprum matri intulisse - coiectores ad 1. Vesp., 5 in. et ex."
amplissimam spem incitaverunt arbitrium terrarum orbis portendi interpretantes, quando mater, quam subiectam sibi vidisset, non alia esset quam terra, quae omnium parens haberetur."

"In Asclepiadis Mendetis Theologumenon libris lego, Atiam, cum ad sollemne Apollinis saecum media nocte venisset, posita in templo lectica, dum ceterae matronae dormirent, obdormisse; draconem repente irrepsisse ad eam pauloque post egressum; illam expergfectam quasi a concubitu mariti purificasse se; et statim in corpore eius extentisse maculam velut picti draconis nec potuisse umquam exigi, adeo ut mox publicis bilineis perpetuo abstinerit; Augustum natum mense decimo et ob hoc Apollinis filium existimatum. eadem Atia, priusquam pareret, somniavit intestina sua ferri ad sidera explicare per omnem terrarum et caeli ambitum. somniavit et pater Octavius utero Atae iuber solis exortum." 2

"Supremo natali suo Apollinan Tenenitem et amplitudinis et artis eximiae, adventum Syrcensis ut in bibliotheca templi novi poneretur, videret per quietem affirmantem sibi non posse se ab ipso dedicari." 3

"Terrebatur ad hoc evidentibus portentis somniorn et auspiciorn et ominum, cum veteribus tum novis. Nuncquam antea somniare solitus occiso demum matre vidit per quietem navem sibi recenti extortum gubernaculum trahique se ab Octavia uxore in artissimas tenebras et modo minaretum formicarum multitudo oppleri, modo a simulacris gentium ad Pompei theatrum dedicatum.

1. Jul., 7 ex.
3. Tiib., 74.
circumiri creberique progressu; actuarae, quo maxime
laetabetur, posteriori corporis parte in sinice ecleia
transfiguratam ac testutum capite interro hinnitas odere
canores".  

"Dicitur ea noce per quia tam praevertatas genitus minores
edisse repertusque a concursantium hodi eti lection incens
per omnia piaculorum genera Manes Galbae, a quo deturbari
expellique se viderat, propitiare temptasse."  

"dicitur etiam vidisse quondam per quiescan stateram media
parte vestibuli Palatinae domus positam examine aequo, cum in
altera lance Claudius et Nero starent, in altera ipse ac filii.
nec res fefellit, quando totidem annis parique temporis spatio
utrique imperaverunt."  

"Minervam, quam superstiteose celebat, somniavit exceedere
sacrario negantemque ultra se tueri cum posse, quod exarmata
esse a Iove."  

"haec cum maturo premeretur pondere ventris,
ut solet in somnis animus ventura repingere,
anxius et vigilis praesumere gaudia cura,
Phoebei nemoris remum fudisse putavit.
o sopor indicium veri : nil certius umquam
cornea porta tulit. facta est interprete lauro
certa parens onerisque sui cognoverat artem."  

Another type of his superstition is shown in the faith

1. Nero, 46.
2. Otho, 7 ex.
5. Reif., op. cit., p. 69, 10 ff.
which he had in sacrificial omens and in the significance which he attached to various characteristics of the victims of sacrifice. He often attributes misfortunes or disasters to a failure to get good omens, or, on the other hand, shows how success in certain undertakings was foretold by some strange happening at the time of sacrifice, that had been given a favorable interpretation, or else by some striking characteristic of the victim. This alone would indicate to us that he believed in such omens, but he gives us still further proof by expressing his opinion about the way in which certain emperors regarded or disregarded such portents. An instance of the latter kind is found in his biography of Julius Caesar. He has just stated his intention to tell of Caesar's misdeeds, and among these we find, "Ecque arrogantiae progressus est, ut haruspice tristia et sine corde exta quondam nuntiante, futura diceret laetiora, cum vellet; nec pro ostento ducendum, si pecudi cor defuisset." 2 In another place in the same biography he calls attention to Caesar's disregard of portents attending on the sacrifices. He says, "ne religione quidem ulla a quoquam incepto absterritus umquam vel retardatus est. cum immolanti aufugisset hostia, profactionem adversus Scipionem et Jubam non distulit." 3 In the case of Caligula, he lists the following among the prodigies foretelling his approaching murder, "sacrificans respersus est phoenicopteris sanguine," 4 which seems

1. Jul., 71 in.
2. Jul., 77 ex.
4. Cal., 57 ex.
to indicate that at least in this case, he believed that the omens attending sacrifice could be trusted. His general belief in such predictions is rather clearly evidenced in his comment on Otho's expedition. He says, "Expeditionem autem inpigre atque etiam praepropere incovavit, nulla ne religionum quidem cura, ..., et die, quo cultores deum Matris lamentari et plangere incipiunt, praeterea adversissimis auspiciis. Nam et victima Diti patri caesa litavit, cum tali sacrificio contraria exta potiora sint." ¹ In the preceding chapter he mentions or rather suggests an omen that was considered bad, without making any comment upon it whatsoever. The passage in question reads, "postridie quoque in augurando tempestate orta graviter prolapsum identidem obmurmurasse: ri y ᾱρ ι μοι καὶ μακροίς αὐλοῖς." ² In the biography of Augustus we find two instances where he tells about unusual happenings when the auspices were being taken, and the interpretation by the soothsayers of such happenings, altho he makes no personal comment upon them. However, the fact that he relates them in such detail and in each case gives the soothsayer's interpretation, would seem to indicate that he believed in them, especially after we have noted the other instances where his belief is obvious. The first passage is as follows, "primo autem consulatu et augurium capienti duodecim sē vultures ut Romulo ostenderunt et immolanti omnium victimarum iocinera replicata intrinsecus ab ima fibra paruerunt, nemine peritorum aliter coniectante quam laeta per haec et magna portendi." ³ The second one is a little more

1. Otho, 8 ex.
2. Otho, 7 ex.
3. Aug., 95.
significant than the first because the paragraph in which it is contained has the opening sentence, "Quin et bello omnium eventus ante praesensit" which, together with the closing of the passage, "neque aliter evenit" signifies that Suetonius believed that the soothsayer's prediction in this case was correct. The event is told in this manner, "Circa Perusiam sacrificio non litanti cum augeri hostias imperasset ac subita eruptione hostes omnem rei divinae apparatum abstulissent, constitit inter haruspices, quae periculosa et adversa sacrificiandi denuntiata essent, cuncta in ipsos recasura qui exta haberent; neque aliter evenit." 1 In the same biography we find another significant passage. After making this statement, "Et quoniam ad haec ventum est, non ab re fuerit subtexere, quae ei prius quam nasceretur et ipso natali die ac deinceps evenerint, quibus futuro magnitudo eius et perpetua felicitas sperari animadvertique posset," 2 he lists such omens and among them includes the following, "Octavia postea, cum per secretas Thraciae exercitum duceret, in Liberi patris luco barbara caerimonia de filio consulenti, idem affirmatum est a sacerdotibus, quod infuso super alteria mero tantum flammae emicuisset, ut supergressa fastigium templi ad caelum usque ferretur, unique omnino Magno Alexandro apud easdem aras sacrificiandi simile provenisset ostentum." 3

It is obvious that Suetonius shared the superstitions of his countrymen connected with the actions of certain animals.

The flight and actions of birds seem to have been especially significant and among these we find the most numerous references to the eagle. In the life of Augustus, he says, "Mors quoque eius, de qua dehinc dicem, divinitasque post mortem evidentissimis ostentis praecognita est. Cum lustrum in campo Martio magnum populi frequentia conderet, aquila eum saepius circumvolavit transgressaque in vicinam aedem super nomen Agrippae ad primam litteram sedid." ¹ Other instances which he cites showing how eagles foretold future events are:

"Rediit octavo post secessum anno, magna nec incerta spe futurorum, quem et ostentis et praedictionibus in initio aestatis conceperat ... ante pluros vero quam revocaretur dies aquila numquam antea Rhodi conspecta in culmine domus eius assedit." ²

"Progenies Caesarum in Nerone defecit: quod futurum compluribus quidem signis, sed vel evidentissimis duobus apparuit. Liviae olim post Augusti statim nuptias Veientanum suum revisenti praetervolans aquila gallinam albam ramulum lauri rostro tenentem, ita ut rapuerat, demisit in gremium; cumque nutriri alitem, pangi ramulum placuisset, tanta pullorum suboles provenit, ut hodieque ea villa ad Gallinas vocaretur, tale vero lauretum, ut triumphaturi Caesares inde laureas decerperent." ³

"praemisso agmine laetum evenit auspicium, si quidem a parte dextra repente aquila advolavit lustratisque signis ingressos viam sensim antecessit." ⁴

3. Cal. 1.
"Post Neronem Galbaque Othone ac Vitellio de principatu certantibus in spem imperii venit iam pridem sibi per haec ostenta conceptam...., acieque Betriacensi, prius quam committeretur, duas aquilas in conspectu omnium conflixisse victaque altera supervenisse tertiam ab solis exortu ac victricem abegisse... " 1

"de qua victoria praesagiis prius quam nuntiis comperit, siquidem ipso quo dimicatum erat die statuam eius Romae insignis aquila circumplexa pinnis clangores laetissimos edidit." 2

In these cases Suetonius shows that he himself believed in such predictions by stating them as admitted facts, and, as in the first passage cited, by using such expressions as"evidentissimis ostentis." 3 In his life of Julius Caesar he shows how the actions of the king bird and certain horses were significant."Sed Caesari futura caedes evidentibus prodigiis denuntiata est ... proximis diebus aquorum greges, quos in traiiciendo Rubiconi flumini consecrarat ac vagos et sine custode dimiserat, comperit pertinacissime pabulo abstinerre ubertimque flere ... pridie autem easdem Idus avem regaliolum cum laureo ramulo Pompeianae curiae se inferentem volucres varii generis ex proximo nemore persecutae ibidem discerpsaret." 3 Here again as before, his own feeling is betrayed by the expression "evidentibus prodigiis." Birds appear again as the objects of superstition in the biography of Augustus where the actions of

1. Vesp., 5.
2. Dom., 6 m.
two ravens and an eagle are commented upon. "Quin et bellorum omnium eventus ante praesensit. contractis ad Bononiam triumvirorum copiis aquila tentorio eius supersedens duos corvos hinc et inde infestantis affixit et ad terram dedit, notante omni exercitu futurum quandoque inter collegas discordiam telem qualis secuta est, at (que) exitium praesagiente." 1 Two other instances are found where horses are regarded with superstition, although in these Suetonius does not express his own opinion in any way, but merely states the attitude of the emperor in each case. They are, "utebatur autem quo insigni, pedibus prope humanis et in modum digitorum ungulis fissis, quem natum apud se, cum haruspices imperium orbis terrae significare domino pronuntiassent, magna cura aluit nec patiendam sessoris alterius primus ascendit," 2 and "Terrebatur ad hoc evidentibus portentis somniorum et auspiciorum et ominum, cum veteribus tum novis. Numquam antea somniare solitus ... vidit per quietem ...; asturconem, quo maxime laetabatur, posteriore corporis parte in simiae speciem transfiguratum ac tantum capite integro hinnitus edere canoros". 3 Chickens are frequently mentioned in connection with portents. The case of the eagle's dropping a white hen into the lap of Livia, told in the life of Galba, has already been mentioned. 4 In the life of Vitellius we find, "mox Viennae pro tribunali iura reddenti gallinaceus supra umerum ac deinde in capite astitit. quibus

3. Nero, 46.
4. See page 23
ostentis per respondit exitus."  

Suetonius' last remark in this instance is indicative of his own feelings about the matter. The sacred chickens used in taking certain auspices are mentioned also. "Magna et assidua monstra iam inde a principio exitum ei, qualis evanit, portenderant.... secuta sunt aliquanto manifestiora.... observatum etiam est Kal. Ian. sacrificanti coronam de capite excidisse, auspicianti pullos avolasse."  

In the same paragraph he gives this instance, "cum per omne iter dextra sinistraque oppidatim victimae caederentur, taurus securis ictu consternatus rupto vinculo essedum eius invasit elatisque pedibus totum crucre perfudit."  

Here it is the ox which is regarded as an object of superstition and there can be no doubt as to the author's feeling from his opening sentence. The ox is mentioned again in this connection in Vespasian's biography. The section opens with this sentence, "Post Neronem Calumque Cthone ac Vitellio de principatu certantibus in spera imperii venit iam pridem sibi per hae ostenta conceptam" and among the portents listed, we find this one, "cenante rursus bos arator accusso iugo triclinium irrupit ac fugatis ministris quasi repente defessus procedit ad ipsos accubentis pedes cervicesque summisit."  

Still another instance is found in the fragments: "inter cetera portenta quae toto orbe facta sunt bos in suburbano Romae ad arantem locatus est, frustra se ingeri: non enim frumento sed homines brevi defuturos."  

In the life of Vespasian a dog is mentioned as

1. Vit., 9 ex.  
2. Galba, 18.  
3. Vesp., 5 m.  
bringing in a human hand, "Frondente eo quendam canis extrarius e trivio manus humana intulit mensaeque subiecit." 1 However, we have no particular reason to believe that the dog was an object of superstition but it would seem rather that the hand was the significant thing in symbolizing future power. This view is perhaps strengthened by the fact that we find no other instances in our author of a dog's actions being regarded as significant or ominous. We find fish mentioned as portending the future outcome of a battle in the biography of Augustus. "Quin et bellorum omnium eventus ante prescendit...Ridio quae Siciliiensem pugnam classe omnibus, in faucili in litore piscis e mari excili vit et ad pedes iacuit." 2 Our author notes that for a serpent to be devoured by ants was considered a portent by Tiberius, but he does not indicate his own feeling: "sed prospectis modo nec editas arbis nocibilis rediti, primo..., postea ostento territus. Erat ei in oblectaneos serpentem draco quem ex consuetudine mors suum bibaturum cum consumptum a formicis invenisset, monitus est ut vim multitudinis caveret." 3

Suetonius cites numerous instances when such natural phenomena as comets, lightning and earthquakes predicted future events. Though he does not show in every case how he himself considered them, yet in the relation of some of the incidents, he does show a personal belief, and because of his direct manner of telling about others we feel justified in stating that he had a superstitious regard for all such happenings. We find

1. Vesp., 5 m.
3. Tib., 72.
a comet mentioned in such passages as:

"Periit sexto et quinquagesimo sextis anno atque in
decem numerum relatus est, non ore modo decernentium sed et
persuasione volgi. Siquidem ludis, quos primos consecrato ei
heres Augustus edebat, stella crinita per septem continuos dies
fulsit exoriens circa undecimam horam, creditumque est animam
esse Caesaris in caelum recepti; et hac de causa simulacro
eius in vertice additur stella," 1

"Praesagia mortis eius praecipua fuerunt: exortus
criinitae stellae, quam comem vocant, tactumque de caelo mon-
umentum Drusi patris,..." 2

"Stella crinita, quae summis potestatibus exitium porten-
dere vulgo putatur, per continuas noctes orire coeperat." 3

"Ac ne in metu quidem ac periculo mortis extremo abstínuit
iocis. Nam cum inter cetera prodigia Mausoleum de repente
patuisset et stella crinita in caelo apparuisset etc." 4

"Cometes stella est quae velut comas luminis ex se fundit.
haec cum nascitur aut regni mutationem fertur 5 ostendere aut
bella et pestilentias surgere." 6

In somewhat the same way the moon is mentioned as having
certain effects upon the growth of plants, just as today we find
some few people who believe that potatoes will grow better if
planted in the light of the moon. Suetonius' conception of it

2. Claud., 46 in.
3. Nero, 36 in.
5. The "fertur" is probably due to the form of expression
selected by Isidore from whom (De Nativis Rerum, 26, 15) this
fragment comes.
is expressed thus: "Luna larga est roris et aqua humentium substantiarum. Luna crescente omnes fructus crescent adque ea minuente minuuntur." ¹ This, however, is more probably a bad scientific hypothesis rather than superstition. The context shows that he believed that the moon gave dew, whereas it is merely on clear nights that more dew falls and the moon is then visible. Believing that the moon gave dew and since dew is a valuable aid to growth, it is only a natural step to the belief that the moon is connected with the growth of plants and that a growing moon would naturally help growing plants.

Among the omens of Claudius' death, the striking of his father's tomb by lightning has already been noted.² In two other instances we find conclusive evidence for his belief in the ominous nature of lightning. They are:

"Et quoniam ad haec ventum est, non ab re fuerit subtexere, quae ei priusquam nascertur et ipso natali die ad deincps evenerint, quibus futura magnitudo sua et perpetua felicitas sperari animadvertique posset. Velitris antiquitus tacta de caelo parte muri responsa est eius oppidi sive quandoque rerum potiturum;...; sero tandem documentis apparuit ostentum illud Augusti potentiam portendisse" ³

"Futurae caedis multa prodigia extiterunt.... Capitolium Capuae Id. Hor〈t.〉 de caelo tactum est, item Romae cella Palatini atriensis." ⁴

In each case he plainly states that by such a portent the

2. Claud., 46.
3. Aug., 94 in.
4. Cal., 57 in.
future could be foretold. In addition to these instances, we find still others where lightning plays an important part in revealing coming events.

"Templum Apollinis in ea parte Palatinae domus excitavit, quam fulmine ictum desiderari a deo haruspices pronuntierant." ¹

"Post necem Caesaris ... repente liquido ac purc seren circulus ad speciem caelestis arcus orbem solis ambit, ac subinde Iuliae Caesaris filiae monumentum fulmine ictum est." ²

"Progenies Caesarum in Merone defect: quod futurum compluribus quidem signis, sed vel evidentissimis duabus apparuit.... Ac subinde tacta de caelo Caesarum sede capita omnibus simul statuis deciderunt, Augusti etiam sceptrum et manibus excussum est." ³

"Non multo post in Cantabria locum fulmen decidi reper-taque sunt duodecin haven, hunc ambiguum esse imperii signum." ⁴

"Continuis octo mensibus tot fulgur: facta nuntiataque sunt, ut exclamaverit: "Feriat iam, quern volet." Tactam de caelo Capitolium templumque Flaviae gentis, Item domas Palatina et cubiculum ipsius...." ⁵

In the last mentioned reference, a little farther on in the section, we note that the emperor's attitude toward astrology is shown. "Nulla tamen re perinde commotus est quam responso casaque Asclepiades mathematici." Then follows an account

1. Aug., 29 m.
3. Gal., 1 in et ex.
4. Gal., 8 ex.
5. Dom., 15 in.
of the astrologer's prediction of his own death and how his prediction was fulfilled in spite of Domitian's attempt to prevent it. The fact that Suetonius shows that the astrologer was correct in his prophecy is evidence enough to show his own belief; other passages give additional evidence. In the biography of the same emperor we find, "Annnum diemque ultimum vitae iam pridem suspectum habebat, horum etiam nec non et genus mortis. Adolescentulo Chaldæi canete praedixerant." He mentions the fact that Nero consulted an astrologer on a certain occasion, and in the life of Tiberius he tells the following anecdote illustrating how Tiberius was convinced of the powers of a certain astrologer. "Thrasyllum quoque mathematicum, quem ut sapientiae professorem contubernio admoverat, tum maxime expertus est affirmantem move provisa gaudium afferri; cum quidem illum durius et contra praedicta cadentibus rebus ut falsum et secretorum temere consciam, eo ipso momento, dum spatiatur una, praecepitare in mare destinasset." Another interesting example of the power of astrology is given in the life of Augustus. "In recessu Apolloniiæ Theogenis mathematici pergulam comite Agrippa ascenderat; cum Agrippae, qui prior consulebat, magna et paene incredibilis praedicerentur, reticere ipse geniturem suam nec velle edere perseverabat, metu ac pudore ne minor inveniretur. Qua tamen post multis adhortationes vix et cunctanter edita exsilivit Theogenes adoravitque eum." The occurrences of earthquakes were regarded as portents of

2. Nero, 36 in.
3. Tib., 14 ex.
disasters and Suetonius seems to have connected them with death. In his life of Tiberius he says, in telling of the omens foretelling the death of the emperor, "Et ante paucos quam obiret dies turris Phari terrae motu Capreis concidit," 1 which is merely a statement as to the occurrence, with no personal remark added, but in the life of Galba, he says, "Magna et assiua monstra iam inde a principio exitium ei, qualis evavit, portenderant... Urbem quoque et deinde Palatium ingressum excipit terrae tremor ...," 2 which clearly shows that he considered them trustworthy.

Another natural phenomenon which is recorded as being ominous but about which Suetonius makes no personal observation is the excessive growth or withering of trees. The palm tree is mentioned in the life of Augustus. "Arud Mundam Livas Iulius castris locum capiens cum silvam caederet, arborem palmae repertam conservari ut omen victoriae iussit; ex ea continuo enata suboles adeo in pacis diebus adolevit, ut non aequiperaret modo matricem, verum et obtegeret frequentareturque columbarum nidos, quamvis id avium genus durum et speram frondem maxime vitet. Illo et præcipue ostento motum Caesarem ferunt, ne quem alium sibi succedere quam sororis nepotem vellet."

In speaking of the various good omens that were vouchsafed Vespasian, he mentions both the oak and the cypress tree. He relates the following incident about the oak, "In suburbano Flaviorum quercus antique, quae erat Marti sacra per tres

1. Tib., 74 m.
2. Gal., 18 in.
3. Aug., 94 ex.
Vespasiae partus singulos repente ramos a frutice dedit, haud dubia signa futuri cuiusque fati: primum exilem et cito a crefactum, ideoque puella nata non perannavit, secundum praevaliдум ac prolixum et qui magnum felicitatem portenderet, tertium vero instar arboris. Quare patrem Sabinum ferunt, haruspicio insuper confirmatum, renuntiasse matri, nepotem ei Caesarem genitum; nec illam quicquam aliud quam cachinnasse, mirantem quod aeduc se mentis compote deliraret iam filius suus."1 In the same passage he speaks of the cypress, "Arbor quoque cupressus in agro avito sine ulla vi tempestatis evulsa radicitus atque prostrata insequenti die viridior ac firmior resurrexit." The same tree is mentioned again in the biography of Domitian, "Arbor, quae privato adhuc Vespasiano eversa surrexerat, tunc rursus repente corruit."2 The poplar tree seems to have been significant in portending the destiny of Vergil: "accessit aliud praesagium: si quidem virga populea more regionis in puerperis eodem statim loco depacta ita brevi evaluít tempore, ut multo ante satas populos adaequavisset, ...."3

Such happenings as the opening of doors from no visible cause was considered a most portentous thing, and we find that Suetonius characterised these omens with such an adjective as "evidens." For instance, "Sed Caesari futura caedes evidentiibus prodigiis denunciata est.... ac subito cubiculi fores sponte patuerunt,"4 and "Terrebatur ad hoc evidentibus portentis somniorum et auspiciorum et ominum, ... De Mausoleo, sponte

1. Vesp., 5 in.
2. Dom., 15 m.
3. Reif., op. cit., p. 55, 11. 8 ff.
4. Jul., 61
foribus patefactis, exaudita vox est nomine eum cienis."

For anything strange or unusual to happen to statues with no apparent cause seems to have been regarded by Suetonius as a most unmistakable prediction of the future. He says about Augustus, "Mors quoque eius, de qua debine dicam, divinitasque post mortem evidentissimis ostentis praecognita est.... Sub idem tempus ictu fulminis ex inscriptione statuae eius prima nominis littera effluxit; responsum est, centum solos dies posthac victurum, quem numerum C littera notaret, futurumque ut inter deos referretur, quod aesar, id est reliqua pars Caesaris nomine, Etrusca lingua deus vocaretur." In the case of Caligula he states that the laughing of Jupiter's statue at Olympia portended the emperor's death. "Futurae caedis multa prodigia extiterunt. Olympiae simulacrum Iovis, quod dissolvi transferririque Romam placuerat, tantum cachinnum repente edidit ut machinis labefactis opifices diffugerint; supernavitque ilico quidam Cassius nomine, iussum se sonnic affirmanc immolare taurum Iovi." The falling of statues is listed as a bad omen in two different instances. "Terrebatur ad hoc evidentibus portentis somniorum et auspiciorum et ominum ... Kal. Ian. exornati Lares in ipso sacrificii apparatu conciderunt," and "Praemisso agmine laetum event auspicium, ... at contra ipso movente statuae equestres, cum plurifariam ei ponerentur, fractis repente cruribus pariter corruerunt, ... Quibus ostentis per respondit exitus." Among the portents of Domitian's death he

1. Nero, 46 m.
3. Cal., 57 in.
4. Nero, 46 m.
includes the tearing away of an inscription from a triumphal statue of the emperor and in the life of Vespasian the turning of a statue is recorded. "ae non multo post comitia secundi consulatus inuente Galba statuam Livi Iuli ad Orientem sponte conversam." 2

Another type of superstitious belief which Suetonius shared in is the appearance of ghosts or apparitions. When he tells of such appearances he does not state that some people say, or a certain man says, that so and so happened, but he speaks of them in a perfectly direct manner as though there could be no doubt as to their truth. He tells an incident preceding Caesar's passage of the Rubicon, thus: "Cunctanti ostentum tale factum est. Quodam eximiae magnitudine et formae in proximo sedens repente apparuit harundine canens; ad quem audiendum cum praeter pastores plurimi etiam ex stationibus milites concurrissent interque eos et aeneatores, rapta ab uno tuba prosilivit ad flumen et ingenti spiritu classicum exorsus pertendit ad alteram ripam. Tunc Caesar: 'Satur,' inquit, 'quo deorum ostenta et inimicorum iniquitas vocat. Iacta alea est,' inquit."3 To be sure all he says is that the appearance was sudden, and that the form and size were remarkable, and we do not have a clear case of apparition, although it is told so as to suggest it. Concerning the burial of Caesar he says, "Lectum pro rostris in Forum magistratus et honoribus functi detulerunt. Quem cum pars in Capitolini Iovis cella cremare

1. Dom., 15.
2. Vesp., 5 ex.
pars in curia Pompei destinaret, repente duo quidem gladiis succincti ac bina iacula gestantes ardentibus cereis succenderunt...." In another place, he tells of the appearance of ghosts, and he introduces his narrative by the words, "satis constat" which show that he believed that such was actually the case. He is telling of the things that happened while Caligula's body was buried in the gardens of the Lemian family: "Satis constat, priusquam id fieret, hortorum custodes umbris inquietatos; in ea quoque domo, in qua occubuerit, nullam noctem sine aliquo terrore transactam, donec ipsa domus incendio consumpta sit." On still another occasion, he tells of an apparition appearing in the form of a barbarian woman: "non prius desstitit insequi, quam species barbarae mulieris humana amplior victorem tendere ultra sermone Latino prohibuisset."  

In several places we find among the various omens listed, such things as the tearing or burning of clothing or other unusual or uncustomary happenings in the every day life of the person concerned. The account of the omens by which Augustus' good fortune could be anticipated, "quibus futura magnitudo cius et perpetua felicitas sperari animadvertique possit," contains the following, "Sumenti virilem toram tunica lati clavi resuta ex utraque parte ad pedes decidit. Fuerunt qui interpretantur, non alius significare, quam ut is ordo cuius insigne id esset quandoque ei subiceretur."  

1. Jul., 84 m.  
2. Cal., 59.  
3. Claud., 1 m.  
the last statement, "Fuerunt qui interpretantur" makes his own personal opinion about the value as a portent of this particular occurrence a little doubtful and yet it is significant that he includes it among the other happenings which he has said are trustworthy. In about the same way he tells of a similar happening in the life of Tiberius: "et pridie quam de redition certior fieret, vestimenta mutanti tunica ardere visa est." Here again he merely lists the event among the omens without comment being added. Again, he says that Nero gave up a visit to Alexandria because he was "turbatus religione simul ac periculo." He tells about this portent in this way, "Nam cum circumitus templis in aeae Vestae resedisset, consurgenti ei primum lacinia obhaesit, dein tanta oborta caligo est ut dispicere non posset." So in none of these cases can we be at all sure that he believed in this kind of omens although it is not unlikely that he did.

In about the same way he says that Augustus considered it a bad sign if he put his shoe on the wrong foot in the morning. "Auspicia et omia quaedam pro certissimis observabat: si mane sibi calceus perperam ac sinister pro dextro induceretur, ut durum." We find evidence to show that he must have believed in the significance of accidents and inconcinainties in the everyday life of a person; the passage in question is a paragraph in the biography of Galba which begins, "Magna et assidua monstria iam inde a principio exitum ei, qualis evenit, portenderant," and proceeds to list among such "monstra" "adoptionis die neque

1. Tib., 14 ex.
3. Aug., 92 in.
milites adlocuturo castrensem sellam de more positam pro tribunali oblitis ministris et in senatu curulum perverse collocatam."¹

One statement of Suetonius about Augustus seems to indicate that he believed in death-bed premonitions; however we find them mentioned only once. That statement is, "unum omnino ante efflatam animam signum alienatae mentis ostendit, quod subito pavefactus a quadraginta se invenibus abripi questus est. Id quoque magis præsagium quam mentis diminutio fuit, siquidem totidem milites praetoriani extulerunt eum in publicum."²

Another type of superstition which Suetonius evidently favored is the drawing of lots. In one passage he not only includes it in his list of omen signs signifying Tiberius' imperial destiny, but he also tells how the outcome proved the truth of the prediction: "et mox, cum Illyricum petens iuxta Patavium adisset Geryonis oraculum, sortes tractæ, quæ monebatur ut de consultationibus in Aponi fontem talos aureos iaceret, evenit ut summum numerum iacti ab eo ostenderent; hodieque sub aqua visuntur hi tali."³ The drawing of lots is mentioned again when he tells of the predictions that Vespasian would some day be the emperor. "Apud Iudaem Carmeli dei oraculum consulentem ita confirmavere sortes, ut quidquid cogitaret volueretque animo quamlibet magnum, id esse proventurum pollicerentur."⁴

It is interesting to note that Suetonius believed that some people had the power of divine healing, a belief that is

1. Galba, 16 ex.
3. Tib., 14 m.
4. Vesp., 5 ex.
not altogether obsolete at the present day. He says of Vespasian, "Auctoritas et quasi maiestas quaedam ut scilicet inopinato et adhuc novo principi deerat; haeque quoque accessit. E plebe quidem luminibus orbatus, item alius debili crure sedentem pro tribunali pariter adierant orantes opem valitudini demonstratam a Serapide per quietan: restituturum oculos, si inspuiisset; confirmaturum crus, si digne retur calce contingere. Cum vix fides esset ullo modo rem successuram idque ne experiri quidem auideret, extremo hortantibus amicis palam pro contione utrumque temptavit; nec eventus defuit." ¹ This is the only evidence that we have of his belief in charms, yet, it is quite probable that he believed in them quite strongly. At least, it is clear from his statement "auctoritas et quasi maiestas quaedam ut scilicet inopinato et adhuc novo principi deerat" that he believed that rulers or emperors had the ability to charm and to heal.

Thus conclusive evidence has been furnished for several different types of Suetonius' superstitious beliefs. These however have been revealed only as the character of the work offered occasion and constitute very likely only an incomplete catalogue. We can feel certain that his personal conduct must have been greatly affected by such beliefs. Whether or not they influenced him to pervert or modify a strict account of facts I have not been able to determine, and such a question properly belongs in an examination of his general credibility as a historian. That this superstition was strong enough and extensive

¹ Vesp., 7 ex.
enough to constitute a real temptation to a conscious or un-
conscious distortion of events in the interest of some pet
belief I think can be fairly asserted; it would thus constitute
an a priori ground of suspicion against the accuracy of his
narration of occurrences which are in any way connected with
events he regarded as miraculous, and such events constitute,
of course, a large fraction of his extant works.

In our examination of the works of Suetonius for evidence
of his thriftiness, we find much to substantiate our inferences
from the incident told by Pliny regarding his desire to buy a
small estate at so reasonable a price that he would never there-
after have occasion to repent of it. Extravagance to him seems to
have been a very great fault and he takes every occasion to con-
demn it as such. In his life of Hero he lists it with such vices
as lust and cruelty. He says, "Petulantiam, libidinem, luxuriam,
avaritiam, crudelitatem sensim quidem primo et occulte et relut
juvenili errore exercuit, sed ut tunc quoque dubium nemini foret
naturae illa vitia, non aetatis esse." 1 The last part of his
statement, that no one doubted that they were, "naturae vitia",
shows clearly the class in which he puts such a characteristic.
He indicates his own opinion still further in remarking that
"luxuria" was one of Vitellius' besetting sins: "Sed vel
praecipe luxuriae saevitiaeque deditus egulas trifariam semper,
...dispertiebat..." 2 Again, in the biography of Nero, he
classes excessive expenditures under the general head of abuses.
His statement is "Multa sub eo et animadversa severe et coercita

1. Nero, 25 in.
2. Vit., 13 in.
However, while he condemned extravagance so harshly, still he speaks of greed or miserliness in almost as severe terms. He says of Vespasian, "Sola est, in qua merito culpetur, pecuniae cupiditas ...." and then relates various incidents in which the emperor showed himself to be unduly avaricious. This clearly indicates that while he believed that one should be careful in the expenditure of money, still excessive love of it and its consequences were also to be avoided. In another place he shows that he looks down upon avarice by saying, "Cupiditatis quoque atque avaritiae vix suspicionem ullam aut privatus unquam aut princeps aliquamdui dedit, immo e diverso magno saepse non abstinentiae modo sed etiam liberalitatis experimenta." So we may conclude that, although he was thrifty, he was not niggardly or miserly.

In considering the subject of extravagance, people differ greatly in their classification of luxuries, necessities and conveniences. It will be interesting to note the way in which the author under discussion makes such classifications and the things which he considers as useless extravagances.

One thing which Suetonius brands as intemperate and wasteful and one about which there could be little difference of opinion either then or now, is the practice of gambling. He speaks of Augustus in this way, "Aleae rumor im nullo modo expavit lusitque simpliciter et saltem obiectamenti causa etiam alius senex ac propterquam Decembri mensae quoque festis et profestis

1. Nero, 16 m.
2. Vesp., 16 in.
3. Dom., 9 in.
diebus.... In ceteris partibus vitae continentissimum constat ac sine suspicione ullius vitii."

The fact that he calls him in other respects most temperate, indicates that he considered him intemperate in this one. Again, in the life of Nero, he lists among his riotous extravagances, playing at dice.

"Quadringenis in punctum sestertiis aleam lusit". Here however the size of the stakes has probably as much to do in calling forth the criticism as the gambling itself.

We find however, that Suetonius reveals his own attitude more often about thriftiness observed in every day private life. Several times he takes occasion to censure people who spend great sums of money on houses and buildings in general, and to express his opinion that it is a mark of extravagance. In the biography of Julius Caesar, he says, "Altiora iam meditans et spei plenus nullum largitionis aut officiorum in quemquam genus publice privatisque omisit. Forum de manubiis incohavit, cuius area super sestertium milies constitit." In this instance he does little more than to suggest that the expenditure was lavish and to state the actual amount. In telling about Augustus' house and manner of living he says: "In ceteris partibus vitae continentissimum constat ac sine suspicione ullius vitii. Habitavit primo iuxta Romanum Forum supra Scalas anularias in domo quae Calvi cratere fuerat; postea in Palatio, sed nihilo minus aedibus modicis Hortensianis, et neque laxitate neque cultu conspicuis, ut in quibus porticus

1. Aug., 51.
2. Nero, 30 ex.
3. Jul., 26 m.
breves essent Albanarum columnarum et sine marmore allo aut insigni pavimento conclavia. Ac per annos amplius quadraginta eodem cubiculo heime et aestate mansit, quamvis parum salubrem valitudini sue urbem heime experiretur assiduaque in urbe hiemaret.... Amplae et operosa praetoria gravabatur. Et neitis quider suea Iuliae, profuse ab ea exstructa, ctiam diruit ad solum...." In this passage, Suetonius does not actually say that he himself preferred a modest dwelling, or that it was wasteful to have a different bedroom for summer and for winter, still a reader feels that he is heartily in sympathy with Augustus' moderate manner of living. At any rate, we know that he calls one who observed such a style of life, "continentiissimum", not "sordidum" or "avarum." Nero he condemns for being ruinously prodigal in his building. The passage reads, "Non in alia re tamen damnosior quam in aedificando domum a Palatio Esquilias usque fecit quem primo transitoriam, mox incendio absumptam restitutamque auream nominavit. De cuius spatio atque cultu suffecerit haec rettulisse. Vestibulum eius fuit, in quo colossus CXX pedum staret ipsius effigie; tanta laxitas ut porticus triplices miliarias haberet;... " Eius modi domum cum absolutam dedicaret, hactenus comprobavit, ut se dicaret quasi hominem tandem habitare coepisse." The same house is mentioned again, together with the cost of its completion in Otho's biography: "nec quicquam prius pro potestate subscripsit quam quingentesesestertium ad peragendas Auream

2. Nero, 31 in.
Domum." This is significant in that it shows how much the enormous cost of the house impressed him. In telling about Julius Caesar's building he remarks, "Munditiarum lautitiarumque studiosissimum multi prodiderunt; villam in Nemorensi a fundamentis incohatum magnoque sumptu absolutam, quia non tota ad animum ei responderat, totam diruisse, quamquam tenuem adhuc et obaeratum." The thing that seems to impress Suetonius most about Caesar's extravagance in tearing down a new and expensive house was that he did it although he was poor and heavily in debt, suggesting that he held the commonly accepted principle that one's income should govern one's expenses. As to household furnishings, he seems to have regarded them in much the same way as he did the houses. He speaks of the simplicity of Augustus' furnishings in detail after the introductory sentence, as we noticed before, "in ceteris partibus vitae continmentissimum constat ac sine suspicious eullius vitii." He says, "Instrumenti eius et supellectilis parsimonia apparet etiam hunc residuis lectis atque mensis quorum pleraque vix private elegantiae sint. Ne toro quidem cubuisse aiunt nisi humili et modesto instrato." In the life of Tiberius he says, "atque etiam, si qua in publicis moribus desidia aut mala consuetudine labarent, corrigenda suscepit..., adhibendum supellectili modum censuit." Here it is quite evident that he puts extravagance in household furniture in the class of "malae consuetudines."

1. Otho, 7 m.  
2. Jul., 46.  
3. Aug., 72 in.  
5. Tib., 33 ex et 34 in.
It is quite clear that Suetonius considered lavish feasts and banquets as extravagances and approved plain and simple food. In the case of Vitellius he regards a passion for excessive feasting as a sin. He says, "Sed vel praecipue luxuriae saevitiaeque deditus epulas trifarium semper, interdum quodrifarium dispertiebat, in ientacula et prandia et cenas comisationesque, facile omnibus sufficiens vomitandi consuetudine. Indicebat autem alii alii eadem die, nec cuiquam minus singuli apparatus quadringenis milibus nummum constiterunt..."¹

In connection with the moderation of Augustus he mentions in an approving way his custom of eating little and that plain food: "Cibi - nam ne haec quidem oniserim - minimi erat atque vulgaris fere,"² and in speaking of the same emperor's dinner parties, he says, "Cenam ternis ferculis aut cum abundantissime senis praebat, ut non nimio sumptu, ita summa comitate."³ He speaks of good fellowship at banquets, rather than excessive expense, once more in the biography of Titus, observing: "At illi ea fama pro bono cessit conversaque est in maximas laudes neque vitio ullo reperto et contra virtutibus summis. Convivia instituit iucunda magis quam profusa."⁴ It is significant here that in his list of "summae virtutes" he first mentions that his feasts were "iucunda magis quam profusa", showing that this characteristic especially appealed to him as praiseworthy. It appears that he was quite interested in any attempts of the

1. Vit., 13 (entire).
2. Aug., 76.
3. Aug., 74 ex.
4. Tit., 7 m.
emperors to control or lessen extravagance in the matter of food. Among the reforms of Tiberius he includes the following, "adhibendum supellectili modum censuit annonemque macelli senatus arbitratu quotannis temperandam, dato aedilibus negotio popinas ganeasque usque eo inhibendi, ut ne opera quidem pistoria proponi venalia sinerent. Et ut parsimoniam publicam exemplo quoque iuvaret, sollemnibus ipse cenis pridiana saepe ac semesa obsonia apposuit dimidiatumque aprum, affirmans omnia eadem habere, quae totum."  

Again in the case of Julius Caesar he says, "Iuc laboriosissime ac severissime dixit.... Legem praecipue sumptuariam exercuit dispositis circa macellum custodibus, qui obsonia contra vetitum proposita retinerent deportarentque ad se, submissis nonnumquam lictoribus atque militibus, qui, si qua custodes fefellissent iam adposita et triclinio auferrent."  

In this same connection we find an interesting passage in the fragments of his "De Viris Inlustribus" where he says, "Domitius Afer Nemausenis clarus orator habetur: qui postea Nerone regnante ex cibi redundantia in cena moritur."  

Extravagance in the matter of slaves is mentioned in the life of Julius Caesar where he says "servitia rectiora politior-que inmenso pretio, et cuius ipsum etiam puderet, sic ut rationibus veteret inferri," while he relates of the poet Ennius, "parco admodum sumptu contentus et unius ancillae

1. Tib., 34.  
2. Jul., 43 in et ex.  
3. Reif., op. cit., pp. 89 and 90.  
ministerio."\(^1\)

The Roman customs of bathing gave considerable occasion to the exhibition of any natural tendencies toward extravagance, and Suetonius notes two instances of this sort of thing. He says of Quintus Remmius Palaemon, "luxuriae ita induisit, ut saepius in die lavaret, nec sufficeret sumptibus, quamquam ex schola quadringena annua caperet ac non multo minus ex re familiaris", \(^2\) and again he refers to Caligula's extravagance in the same matter. He says, "Nepotatus sumptibus omnium prodigorum ingenia superavit, commentus novum balnearum usum, portentosissima genera ciborum atque cenarum, ut calidis frigidisque unguentis lavaretur,..."\(^3\)

In the matter of clothing we find two passages where he seems to approve of simplicity and economy. In that passage of his life of Augustus concerning his moderation, mentioned in several other instances under this same topic, he tells of the emperor's simplicity in dress. He writes, "Veste non temere alia quam domestica usus est, ab sorore et uxore et filia neptibusque confecta; togis neque restrictis neque fusis clavo nec lato nec angusto, calciamentis altiuscalis, ut procerior quam erat videretur."\(^4\) Finally, in his account of Nero, he says, "Divitiarum et pecuniae fructum non alium putabat quam profusionem,... nullam vestem bis induit."\(^5\)

The use of gold and silver in a common way, or when a

\(^{1}\) Reif., op. cit., p. 24, l. 7.
\(^{2}\) Reif., op. cit., p. 117, ll. 14, ff.
\(^{3}\) Cal., 37 in.
\(^{4}\) Aug., 75 ex.
\(^{5}\) Nero, 30.
cheaper material would have served just as well, seems to have been greatly disapproved of by Suetonius. In the passage just quoted on the subject of Nero's extravagance we find the following, "Piscatus est rete aurato et purpureo coccoque funibus nexit. Numquam minus mille carrucis fecisse iter traditur, soleis mullarum argenteis canusinatis mulionibus, armillata phalerataque maza cum turba atque cursorum."¹ Again in the life of Augustus he says, "Ex quibus sive criminibus sive maldictis infamiam impudicitiae facillime refutavit et praesentis et posterae vitae castitate; item lautitiae et invidiam, cum et Alexandria capta nihil sibi praeter unum murrinum calicem ex instrumento regio retinuerit et mox vasa aurea assiduissimi usus conflaverit omnia."² An instance of a similar nature is found in his life of Claudius, altho there is some doubt as to the real meaning of the passage. It is found in the paragraph beginning, "Gessit et censuram intermissam diu post Plancum Paulumque censores, sed hanc quoque inaequabilitatem varioque et animo et eventu", and the passage itself is: "Fuerunt et illa in censura eius notabilia, quod essedum argenteum sumptuose fabricatum ac venale ad Sigillaria redimi concidique coram imperovit."³ Now "notabilia" signifies nothing as to the character of the acts except that they were noteworthy. However, in considering his general attitude in such matters we might infer that Suetonius considered it a creditable act because it would be in repression of useless extravagances.

¹. Nero, 30.
². Aug., 71 in.
³. Claud., 16 ex.
In the matter of salaries, we find no instance where Suetonius says that anyone received too high a salary. However, we do find a passage where he calls the emperor "parcus ac tenax" because he failed to pay a salary. His statement is, "Pecuniae parcus ac tenax comites peregrinationum expeditionumque numquam salaric, cibariis tantum sustentavit, una modo liberalitate ex indulgentia vitrici prosecutus, cum tribus classibus factis pro dignitate cuiusque, prime sesenta sestertia, secundae quattuorcenta distribuit, ducenta tertiae quam non amicorum sed Graecorum appellabat."\(^1\) He says of Vespasian, "In omne hominum genus liberalissimus ... Primus e fisco Latinis Graecisque rhetoribus annua centena constituit."\(^2\) Some might have regarded such salaries as being not merely a novel form of expenditure, but exceedingly high for the services rendered. Suetonius however, the "scholasticus homo" would naturally approve of liberality in this direction.

Gifts to worthy people and worthy causes seem to have met with Suetonius' approval. For example, he says of Caligula, "Quoque magis nullius non boni exempli fautor viicretur, mulieri libertinae octingenta donavit, quod excruciata graviissimis tormentis de scelere patroni reticisset."\(^3\) Then in his "De Viris Inlustribus" we find this statement regarding Eros "Sunt qui tradant tanta eum honestate praeditum, ut temporibus Sullanis proscriptorum liberos gratias et sine mercede ulla in disciplinam receperit,"\(^4\) where the words "praeditum honestate"

1. Tib., 46.
2. Vesp., 17 in. et 18 in.
3. Cal., 16 ex.
show clearly his opinion of the action.

In addition to the instances mentioned, we find great numbers of others where he tells the cost of things, the money a certain man had, the way certain people acquired wealth, or, in other cases, the extreme poverty of people, all of which goes to show that Suetonius was greatly interested in money, the way in which it was gained or spent, in property, and possessions of all kinds. To be sure, the character of his work demands this to a certain extent, but still hardly all of these examples can be so explained. Of course the proportional number of references to money and the use of property is very much larger in Suetonius than in such historians as Livy or Tacitus, and a fair comparison can be made only perhaps with Cornelius Nepos and Plutarch. Without having made any elaborate statistical comparison with these authors, I get the decided impression that these matters bulk larger in the eyes of Suetonius.

1. I have listed here only the most obvious examples.

Gifts:
Public shows and games:
Aug., 43; Tib., 7 med.; Dom., 4.
Estates:
Reif., op. cit., p. 33, l. 5.; p. 89, l. 4.
Poverty:
Vit., 7 m.; Reif., op. cit., p. 106, l. 12; p. 109, l.20; p. 118, l. 9; p. 107, l.1; p. 28, l. 1; p. 87, l. 1; p. 24, l. 2.
Miscellaneous:
Jul., 50. "sed ante alius dilexit...", Jul., 29 m. "inseri mercede...peravit."
Cal., 37 ex. "ae ne singula enumerem, ...absumpsit." Claud., 9. "Postremo..."
Nero, 20 ex, "quorum duces...merabant." Otho, 4 and 5.
Reif., p. 29, l. 7 ff.
As might be expected, the examples under this head are almost all to be found in the biographies of the rhetoricians, grammarians, and men of letters.
than with any other biographer of antiquity. At all events they are so numerous as to constitute a marked feature of his choice of subject matter.

We can conclude then, as regards the thriftiness of our author, that, while he was not miserly, he believed strongly that care and moderation should be used in the expenditure of money; that gifts to worthy causes might be counted as generosity, but that useless expense was extravagance; that comfort and simplicity are not irreconcilable, and that above all, people should live within their means.

That Suetonius' attitude toward women was one of disrespect is very evident to even a hasty reader of his works. As we noted before, we find just one instance where he speaks well of any woman, or of women in general. This is found in the life of Vitellius, and he says, "Decessit paralysi altero die quam correptus est, duobus filiis susperstitibus, quos ex Sestilia probatissima nec ignobili femina editos consules vidit, et quaedam eodem ambos totoque anno, cum maior minor in sex menses successisset."\(^1\) Even in this passage, his purpose seems not to be to compliment the woman so much as to show the inheritance of the two sons. As for derogatory remarks that he makes concerning different women, we find a very great number. Sometimes our author makes direct statements as to their bad characters, and at other times he suggests or supposes evil things about them, showing that he was ready and willing to believe defamatory things about them. On the other hand we can hardly

\(^1\) Vit., 3.
believe that he was naturally evil minded, and had never had high ideals for womankind, when we consider his statements about Augustus' grief over the misconduct of his daughter. He says, "Sed lactum eum atque fidemet et subole et disciplina domus Fortuna destituit. Iulias, filiam et neptem, omnibus probris contaminatas relegavit;...aliquanto autem patientius mortem quam dedecora suorum. Nam C. Lucique casu non adeo fractus, de filia absens se libello per quaestorem recitato notum senatui fecit abstinuitque congressu hominum diu praecutore, etiam de necanda deliberavit. Certe cum sub idem tempus una ex consciis liberta Phoebe suspendit vitam finisset maluisse se sit Phoebes patremuisse..."¹ It hardly seems that if he had no respect at all for women and thought they were thoroughly bad, that the grief of Augustus over his daughter's fall would have impressed him so much or that he would have gone into it in such detail. The passage seems rather almost to suggest that he might have had some sort of a similar experience and knew what such disappointment could mean. However, this is merely a conjecture. At any rate, we find Suetonius mentioning any number of disreputable women as though there were no other kind. It be sure most cases appear in the general course of the narrative, and only incidentally reflect upon women, their main purpose being quite clearly to depict the character of the men whom he is describing. But we do find some instances where he seems to go quite out of his way in order to speak ill of women. For example, he attributes Caligula's love of Caesonia to her reckless extravagance and wantonness rather than to any good traits which

¹ Aug., 65.
she might have possessed. He says, "Caesonism neque facie insigni neque setate integra matremque in eum ex ilio viro tria filiarum, sed luxuriae ac lasciviae perdita, et ardentius at constantius amavit."¹ In the case of Vespasian he attributes his mother's influence to her sneers rather than to any parental authority or entreaties. The passage reads, "Sumpta virili toga latum,.quanquam fratre adepto, aliu avertatus est, nec at tandem appeteret compelli nisi a matre potuit. Ex demum extudit magis convicio quam precibus vel auctoritate, dum eam identidem per contemptulum antea ambulat "fratre appellavit."² On still another occasion he seems to go out of his way to slander the character of a woman. This passage is in the life of Titus and runs as follows: "Quidam opinantur consuetudinem recordatum, quam cum fratre uxore habuerit; sed nullum habuisse personae Domitia iuravit, haud negatur, si qua omnino fuisse, immo etiam gloriam, quod illi promptissimum erat in omnibus probris."³ Here, too, I feel that the personal remark is unnecessary and adds little if any weight to the context. Added to this evidence is the fact that in the case of almost every emperor he has several paragraphs dealing with infamous

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1. Cal., 25 m.
2. Vesp., 2 m.
3. Titus, 10 ex.
women. These are supplemented by numerous passages in the fragments, in which he shows a fondness for collecting such material and casting reflections upon the characters of as many women as possible. These passages indicate clearly not only that he could not have had any great amount of veneration for womankind, but in general he viewed them with the utmost indifference which sometimes amounted to a thorough disrespect.

As to the changeableness or indecision of Suetonius we find little if any evidence in his works. Perhaps the most significant thing is his treatment of certain emperors. There are a few toward whom he shows a definite attitude, either of approbation or disapproval, but his opinion about the most of

1. Julius, 6 ex. In Corneliam antem...
   Julius, 48 ex. libertum gratissimum ob adulteratum...
   Julius, 50; 51; 52.
   Aug., 62 ex. Cum hac quoque divorciis fecit, "perteeus" ut scribit, "morum perversitatem eius,"...
   Aug., 65. Iulias, filiam...
   Aug., 71 in. Circa libidines habet...
   Tib., 35 in. Matronas prostratse audicite...
   Tib., 43; 44; 45.-7 m. et Iulias morem impertinet,...
   Cal., 24, 25.
   Cal., 36, Audicite neque sané neque silene perecst...
   Claud., 26 in. Cum utraque divorciis fecit...
   Ner., 5 ex. Maiestatis quoque et adulterorum,...
   Ner., 28; 29. Super ingeniiurum paedagogia et nuptarum concubinitus...
   Ner., 35 in.
   Cal., 3 ex. Uxores habuit...; item Liviam Cæolinam ditem admodum et pulchram, a qua tamen nobilitatis causa appetitus ulito existimatur...
   Otho, 3 (entire).
   Vit., 3 ex. Fueritiam primamque...
   Vesp., 11, (entire).
   Vesp., 22 ex. Expugnatus autem a quadam...
   Tit., 7 in. Fraeter saevitiam suscet...
   Dom., 1 ex. Ne exsequar singula...
   Dom., 3 m. eandem Paridis histrionis amore...
   Lom., 22 (entire). Libidinis nimiae...

2. Reif., op. cit.. p. 41, ill. 11, ff.; p.47, ill.12, ff.; p. 69, ill. 7, ff.; p. 95, ill. 6, ff.; p. 111, ill. 6, ff.; p.112, ill. 16, ff.; p. 118, ill. 1, ff.; p. 273, ill. 3, ff.; p. 328, ill. 6, ff.
them is hard to discover. At one time we find him telling of an emperor's good qualities, and at another, showing his bad traits. He seems to have been on the whole favorably inclined toward Augustus, nevertheless he reports no small number of vices and failings in such passages as, "In eadem hac potestate multiplici flagravit invidia..." and "Adulterie quidem exercivisse ne amici quidam negant..." and "circa libidines haesit, postea quoque, ut ferunt, ad vitianas virgines promipt, quae sibi undique etiam ab uxore conquirerentur", so that we can not be quite sure as to what he really thought about him. He treats Tiberius as a libertine in his private life, saying of him in one place, "Ceterum secreti licentiam nanctus et quasi civitatis oculis remotis, cuncta simul vitia male diu dissimulata tendem profudit; de quibus singillatim ab exordio referam"; and yet he praises his public acts thus: "Paulatim principem exseruit praestititque ete varium diu, commodiorum taken aequos et ad utilitates publicas proriorem." He praises Claudius in such passages as: "At in semet augendo pareus atque civilis prae-nomine Imperatoris abstinuit, nimium honores, focusavit, sponsalia

1. Aug., 33 in. Lixit autem ius non diligentia modo summa sed et lenitate,...
2. Aug., 42 in. Sed ut salubrem magis quam ambitio principem scires,...
3. Aug., 67 in. Patronus dominusque non minus severus quam facilis et clemens...habuit.
filiae nataliumque geniti nepotis silentio ac tantum domestica religione transegit", "Urbis annonaque curam sollicitissime semper egit", "Opera magna potius et necessaria quam multa perfecit", "Quaedam circa caerimonias civilemque et militarem morem, item circa omnium ordinum statum domi forisque aut cor-rexit aut exoleta revocavit aut etiam nova instituit", and yet on the other hand he criticizes him in this way: "In cognoscendo autem ac decernendo mira varietate animi fuit, modo circumspectus et sagax, interdum inconsultus ac praeeeps, nonnamquam frivolus amentique similipes", "His, ut dixi, uxoribusque addictus, non principem, sed ministrum egit,..." "Saevum et sanguinarium natura fuisse, magnis minimisque apparit rebus", "Sermonis vero rerumque tantum saepse negligebat, ut nee quis nec inter quos, quae tempore ac loco verba foderat, scire aut cogitare existimaret retur." In the same way, he speaks approvingly of different actions and characteristics of Lomitian in such passages as, "Ius diligentiam et industria dixit...", "Inter initia usque adeo ab omni caede abhorret,... Capitata tiquesque atque avaritiae vix suspicionem illum aut privatus aquam aut princeps aliquandiu dedit, imo e diverso aequae saepse non in abstinentia modo sed etiam liberalitatis experimenta"; and then almost in the same breath he adds, "Sei negas in Clementiae neque in abstinentiae tenore perversit,..." Erat autem non.

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From these references, it seems that Suetonius either had little ardor or partisanship or else he was undecided. In the works of a historian like Tacitus, we can always catch the personal feeling of the author but this is not true in the case of Suetonius and it seems rather clear that he had no vigorous opinion, but was afflicted rather with a weakness of will, which made it difficult for him to reach a decision or to maintain a consistent attitude. It is so much easier to collect and observe and classify than to think through to a sound and courageous conviction. In this respect also the characteristic of indecision which Pliny noted of his friend seems to have influenced the general character of his historical work.

That he was thoroughly honest, and that Pliny's recommendation which styled him "probissimum honestissimum virum" was not unfounded, is evidenced in many ways. Because most of his characters were not contemporary, and it required no special courage in speaking truthfully about them, the fact that he dared to criticize the actions of people who had been in power does not signify much. On the other hand, we do find one reference to conditions in his own times and it is significant that upon this occasion he does not hesitate to criticize the

1. Dom., 11 in.
2. Dom., 14 in.
officials, and incidentally the whole imperial administration which tolerated them, very frankly. His statement is: "Magistratibus quoque urbicis provinciarumque praesidibus coercendis tantum curae addhibuit, ut neque modestiores unquam neque iustiores extitierint; e quibus plerisque post illum reo omnium criminum victimas."¹ Evidence of another sort may perhaps be found in the way in which he quotes his authorities upon more important or disputed points.² While this doubtless reveals more about his scholarship than his truthfulness, still it is significant that he seems to prefer to state his sources rather than to make statements upon his own authority. Evidence of greater import however is found in the way in which he treats those characters about whom he shows clearly that he has a definite opinion of one sort or another. For instance, from one passage we can be quite sure that he was on the whole adversely disposed towards Julius Caesar in which he says, "praesegrant

¹ Dom., 8 in.
temen cetera facta dictaque eis, ut et abbasu dominione et iure causus existimetur"; and yet he is fair enough and honest enough to write several paragraphs about his good qualities: "Ius laboriosissime ac severissime dixit...", "Bueno militarique re aut aestivat praestantissimorum gloriam aut excessit...". "Armorum et equitandi peritissimus, laboris altra fidem patiens erat...", "Moderationem vero elenciantiue cur in administratione tum in victoria belii civilis admirabilem exhibuit...". He says of Nero, "Talem principem paulo minus quattuordecim annos perpessus terrarum orbis tendem restituit, initium facientibus Gallis duce Iulio Vindice, qui tum eam provinciam pro praetore optinebat," and yet that opinion does not keep him from saying that some of his acts were praiseworthy. He says, in conclusion to some paragraphs in which he tells of some of his better deeds, "Haec partim nulla reprehensione, partim etiam non mediocri laude digna in unum contuli, ut secernerem a probris ac seeleribus eius, de quibus dehinc dicam." On the other hand, his biography of Titus, which is the only one that is so constantly laudatory as to be, in fact, almost an encomium where, for example, he says, "Inter hsec morte praeventus est maiore hominum damno quam suo" contains a passage about his misdeeds. He says "Praeter saevitiam suspectem in eo etiam luxuriae erat, quod ad medium noctem commissationes cum profusissimo quoque familiarium extenderat; nec

1. Jul., 76.
2. Jul., 45 in.
5. Jul., 75 in.
6. Nero, 40 in.
7. Nero, 19 ex.
8. Titus, 10 in.
minus libido propter exoletorum et epidorum greges propterque
insignem reginae Berenices amorem, cui etiam nupties pollicitas
ferbatur; suspecta rapacitas, quod constabat in cognitionibus
patris nundinari praemierique solitum; denique propem aliun
Neronem et opinabantur et praedicabant."¹ This is the more
significant in that he is perhaps the only historian who speaks
of Titus in such a way, or mentions an evil side of his character.
So, it seems that a man who portrayed his characters in such de-
tail and yet with such impartiality must have possessed the
qualities of honesty and sincerity. Of course, any elaborate
treatment of his trustworthiness as a historical source would
require an examination into the general credibility of the
accounts which he gives, compared with the reports of other his-
torians, as tested by general probabilities to be determined
according to the consensus of authorities. That is, however,
no part of this present paper, which concerns itself only with
the subjective or internal evidence for openmindedness and fair-
mindedness as inferred from the attitude he shows towards his
work.

Summing up the effects upon Suetonius' literary work of
these last two closely related qualities, one might observe that
a sort of disinterestedness and aloofness, perhaps even an uncer-
tainty in his own general opinions, does indeed as history pro-
duce a work of much less literary effectiveness than those of
Herodotus, Thucydides, Sallust, or Tacitus, whose purpose and
point of view is usually plain enough. On the other hand he is

¹. Tit., 7 in.
saved from the low levels which history for the most part after
his time struck, in not feeling compelled to extol or to vilify
an emperor or a period, because one was wearing the blinders of
a bigoted prejudice. His inherent honesty moreover kept his
work from becoming a mere rhetorical exercise, that ancient
historians were under such strong temptations to produce, the
most wretched surviving specimen of which genus is the work of
his own contemporary, L. Annaeus Florus. The "Caesars" of
Suetonius are not a work of the highest historical or biographi-
al art; they do appear to be however the work of a careful, and
honest man who reported upon what he believed to be facts with
a high degree of objectivity, and who, alone in a world of
floundering in the banalities of rhetoric, told a plain un-
varnished tale.
The following is a list of the principal books and texts used:

Leo, Friedrich, Die Griechisch-Römische Biographie, Leipzig, 1901
Keil, Henricus, C. Iliini Caecili secundi Epistularum, Leipzig, 1870
Ihm, Maximilianus, C. Suetoni Tranquilli De Vita Caesarum, Leipzig, 1907.