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CLAUDIUS AND THE JEWISH QUESTION AT ALEXANDRIA.

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[For continuation see p. 3 of wrapper

CONTENTS OF VOL. XVI, PART I (1926).

- George Macdonald. Note on some fragments of Imperial statues and of a statuette of Victory.
H. Stuart Jones. Claudius and the Jewish Question at Alexandria.
Felix Oswald. The pottery of a third-century well at Margidunum.
H. M. D. Parker. A note on the promotion of the centurions.
W. H. Buckler, W. M. Calder and C. W. M. Cox. Asia Minor, 1924. III.
A. H. Smith. A military diploma.
W. M. Ramsay. Studies in the Roman Province Galatia.

REVIEWS OF RECENT PUBLICATIONS.

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NOTICES.

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Juno: a study in early Roman religion. By Emily L. Shields.
Velleius Paterculus and Res Gestae Divi Augusti. By Frederick W. Shipley.
Die Distichen des Catull. Von Otto Weinreich.

CLAUDIUS AND THE JEWISH QUESTION AT ALEXANDRIA.

By H. STUART JONES.

Until the discoveries of papyri in Egypt began we were practically dependent for our knowledge of Claudius' dealings with the Jews on the notice of their expulsion from Rome in A.D. 49 contained in the *Acts of the Apostles*, coupled with the mysterious allusion in Suetonius—*Judaeos impulsore Chresto assidue tumultuantes Roma expulit*—which is generally interpreted as containing the earliest reference to the relations of Christianity with the Imperial government, and on certain passages in Josephus, which shew the influence wielded by the two Agrippas, father and son, and Herod, the elder brother of Agrippa I, at the court of Claudius and exerted by them on behalf of their co-religionists.

We now have fresh documents bearing upon the special problem presented to the Imperial government by the bitter and bloody strife which raged at Alexandria between the Jews of that city and the violently anti-Semitic Greek population; one of these, the most recently discovered, is of first-class importance not merely on this account, but because it makes a considerable addition to the growing mass of documentary evidence for the character of Claudius' government, and deserves for that reason a place beside the speech delivered by the Emperor on the admission of Gallic chieftains to the Senate, and the edict confirming the dubious title to Roman citizenship enjoyed by certain tribes in the valley of the Upper Adige.

This document has been admirably edited by Mr. Idris Bell in his book, *Jews and Christians in Egypt*, and has become known to a wide circle of readers through Sir F. Kenyon's lucid and interesting article in the *Edinburgh Review* for July, 1925. A brief description will therefore suffice.

It consists of a roll of papyrus containing on the 'recto' a tax-register of the village of Philadelpheia in the Fayûm and on the 'verso' an ill-spelt copy of an edict in the usual form, issued by L. Aemilius Rectus (who succeeded Vitrasius Pollio as Viceroy of Egypt in A.D. 41), which runs as follows:—

L. Aemilius Rectus gives notice: Since the whole people was unable, by reason of its numbers, to be present at the reading of the most sacred and gracious letter to the city, I have deemed it necessary to display it publicly, in order that reading it individually you may admire the majesty of our god Caesar, and shew your gratitude for his goodwill towards the city. In the second year of Ti. Claudius Caesar Augustus Germanicus Imperator, on the fourteenth day of Neos Sebastos.

Then comes the *Letter* of Claudius, which is a reply to an address of congratulation presented (with certain petitions) by an embassy



from the city of Alexandria. The names of the envoys are given and they appear to number eleven, but it has been pointed out that 'Archibius,' the *cognomen* of one of them, who is mentioned at the close of the letter and spoken of as the Emperor's *ἐταῖρος* (*comes*) has dropped out, and that there were really twelve. Of the twelve, six were Roman citizens, and three of these, as their names shew, had received the Roman *civitas* from the new Emperor, viz. Ti. Claudius Barbillus, Ti. Claudius Phantias, and Ti. Claudius Archibius.

It is worth while to endeavour, if possible, to identify some of these envoys with persons already known to us. The most famous is a non-Roman, Chaeremon, a Stoic philosopher and a man of considerable learning, who wrote on Greek grammar and on Egyptian antiquities (including hieroglyphics): he was President of the Museum at Alexandria and was summoned to Rome by Claudius in A.D. 49 to become the tutor of Nero.

Amongst those who possessed Roman citizenship Ti. Claudius Barbillus, whose name stands at the head of the list, demands our special attention. Βάρβιλλος and Βάλβιλλος are, it may be premised, alternative spellings, and we need therefore feel no hesitation in identifying the Βάρβιλλος of this letter with Ti. Claudius Balbillus, who was, until recent years, known to us chiefly from the inscriptions and documents which show that he was *praefectus Aegypti* from A.D. 55 to 59.¹

Of these inscriptions the most interesting is that set up by the villagers of Busiris in the Letopolite nome,² in which the Prefect is extravagantly belauded, while the cat is let out of the bag by the concluding lines which tell us how he paid a visit to the Sphinx and Pyramids and was highly pleased by what he saw, and forthwith gave orders for the removal of the accumulations of sand which obstructed the view of these monuments, and no doubt reduced the receipts of the local *ciceroni*!

Mr. Bell hesitates to identify the *praefectus Aegypti* with our envoy: but M. Jouguet has pointed out that among the inscriptions published in the third volume of *Forschungen in Ephesos* are two which relate to Balbillus. The first (no. 41) is in Greek and describes him simply as ἐπίτροπος τοῦ Σεβαστοῦ (= *procurator Augusti*), who is honoured on account of his unflinching devotion to the goddess and his services to the city.

The second (no. 42)³ gives his earlier career in full. It appears that he entered the Imperial service and served two *equestres militiae*, as *tribunus militum* of *legio xx* and as *praefectus fabrum* attached to the staff of Claudius in Britain, who presented him

¹ Lesquier, *L'armée romaine d'Égypte*, p. 511.

² *O.G.I.* 666.

³ The inscription names *divus Claudius*, but was set up before Balbillus became *praefectus Aegypti*. It is therefore to be dated A.D. 54-5.

with the decorations appropriate to his rank (the *corona* and *hasta pura*) at the triumph of A.D. 44. He then held a secretarial post which is restored as *ad legationes et responsa Graeca Caesaris Aug.* On this a few words must be said.

The *epistula* is enumerated by the lawyers among the forms assumed by the legislative 'Constitutions' of the Emperors; it was, in fact, the normal form in which grants of rights and privileges were made to individuals or communities. But our letter belongs to a special class—the *responsa* (ἀποκριμάτα in Greek) returned by the Emperor to addresses presented by *legationes*. In later times, when the Secretariat was divided into a Latin and a Greek department, each had its head, the *ab epistulis Latinis* and the *ab epistulis Graecis*, the latter post being a prize for the itinerant rhetoricians or 'sophists' of the day. But in the first century we find an official described by the title *ad responsa Graeca* (ἐπὶ τῶν Ἑλληνικῶν ἀποκριμάτων) given in the inscription of Ephesus to Balbillus, and he no doubt was in charge of a section of the department of the *ab epistulis*. This office was also held by a famous doctor, C. Stertinius Xenophon, Physician-in-Ordinary to the Emperor, and a member of a well-known medical family in Cos, whose career is given in a Greek inscription from that island (*S.I.G.* 804). In its early stages it corresponds precisely with that of Balbillus, since Xenophon too was *tribunus militum* and *praefectus fabrum*; he received the same decorations in the British triumph, and held the post of ἐπὶ τῶν Ἑλληνικῶν ἀποκριμάτων, from which he was promoted to ἀρχίατρος Θεῶν Σεβαστῶν. In what order the two, Balbillus and Xenophon, held the secretaryship we cannot say, but Balbillus must have been shortly posted to Egypt. Here he combined a number of offices connected with religion and learning.

He was (1) [prov. sacrarum a]edium divi Augusti et [magni Sarapidis?] et lucorum sacro[rumque omnium qu]ae sunt Alexan[dreae et in tota Aegypt]o.

(2) Librarian at Alexandria.

(3) President of the Museum.

(4) *Archiereus* 'ad Hermen Ἀλεξανδρέων.'

This was just the position for a man whom Seneca calls *uir optimus perfectusque in omni genere rarissime*.¹ The high-priesthood (i.e. the position of 'Minister of Cults,' as European governments term it) and the librarianship were held together in Hadrian's time by a scholar of some repute, L. Julius Vestinus, and the list of temples and groves, etc. recurs in a Rainer papyrus of A.D. 148–50, where they are under the control of an ἀρχιερεὺς (no doubt a *proc. Aug.* in the official hierarchy), Flavius Melas.²

¹ *Quaest. Nat.* 4, 2, 13.

² *Pap. Rainer*, 24922; cf. *Wiener Denkschriften*, xlvii (1902), 66, etc.

The inscription of Ephesus, when complete, gave the term of years during which Balbillus held his offices, but the figure is lost. By the end of the reign he was back in Rome, and when sent out by Nero as Viceroy in 55, he made a record passage from the Straits of Messina to Alexandria, as is recorded by Pliny the Elder in his famous encomium on flax, 'the plant which has brought Egypt so close to Italy that Balbillus arrived in Alexandria on the sixth day from the Straits.'¹

The inscriptions of Ephesus point to a connexion of Balbillus with that city, which the editors explain by attributing to him the office of *procurator Asiae*. But it is hard to find a place in his career for the tenure of this post, and the restoration [*proc. sacrarum a*]edium seems preferable to [*proc. Asiae et a*]edium. It is therefore simpler to assume that Balbillus was a native of Ephesus, in which case we might venture to identify him with 'Barbillus,' the astrologer, who advised Nero about the significance of a comet² and retained sufficient influence with Vespasian (who expelled the astrologers from Rome) to induce him, as Cassius Dio tells us,³ to permit the people of Ephesus to establish a *ἱερός ἀγών*, 'a privilege granted to no other city.'⁴ The Βαρβύλλεια were in fact still celebrated at Ephesus in the second half of the following century.⁵

Another name in the list of envoys may again point in the direction of the Museum and its common room. It has been pointed out that the name of 'Archibius,' who at the close of the letter is spoken of by Claudius as 'my *comes*' (ἑταῖρος) has dropped out towards the end of the list of envoys, where we should read Τιβέριος Κλαύδιος <ο>ς <Ἀρχιβίος>, Ἀπολλώνιος Ἀρίστωνος. Now the name Archibius is known to us as that of the father of Apollonius, the teacher of Apion (of whom more presently), and the reputed author of a Lexicon to the Homeric poems which we possess (though it can hardly be the original work in the form in which we have it). Apollonius' son was also called Archibius and was the author of a Commentary on the Epigrams of Callimachus. One of these, Archibii, I venture to think the younger, must be the friend of Claudius.

It would be tempting to identify C. Julius Dionysius with Dionysius of Alexandria, a scholar of whom Suidas gives a short biography. It is at any rate noteworthy that he was the pupil and successor of Chaeremon, that he was Librarian at Alexandria, and that he held the same secretarial post as Balbillus and Xenophon, described by Suidas in the words ἐπὶ τῶν ἐπιστολῶν καὶ πρεσβειῶν καὶ ἀποκριμάτων. But in the body of the document (l. 76) Διονύσιος ὁ Θεώνος is said to have taken a prominent part in pleading the cause

¹ *Hist. Nat.* xix. *Præf.* § 3.

² *Suet. Ner.* 36.

³ *lxx.* 9.

⁴ This was part of Vespasian's campaign on behalf of economy.

⁵ *Forschungen in Ephesos* ii, no. 73, l. 3.

of the Alexandrians; and, though the absence of the Roman names is singular, the form may have been chosen to distinguish him from another member of the embassy, Διονύσιος ὁ Σαββίωνος. In that case the proposed identification falls to the ground, since, according to Suidas, the father of 'Dionysius of Alexandria' was called Glaucus.¹

One name is conspicuous by its absence in the list of Alexandrian scholars taking part in the embassy—that of the famous charlatan, Apion, who had already acted as the spokesman of the Alexandrians in their dispute with the Jews in the reign of Caligula. Like Chaeremon, he belonged to the elder generation, since his Ἐλῶσσαι Ὀμηρικάι were used by Apollonius; like Chaeremon, too, he wrote on Egyptian antiquities, and both made their works the vehicle of anti-Semitic propaganda, to which Josephus replied in his two books, *Contra Apionem*. We see, in fact, that no love was lost between the Museum and the Synagogue, and the Alexandrians no doubt felt that a professorial leaven would gain for their embassy a favourable hearing from a learned Emperor.

The reply of Claudius to the address presented by the city of Alexandria deals in the first instance with the honours, divine or semi-divine, voted to him by the Alexandrians, and also with certain requests made by them in connexion with municipal affairs. These sections raise several interesting and difficult problems with which it is not the province of this paper to deal. Claudius then turns to the question with which we are immediately concerned, and writes as follows:—

As to the question which of you were responsible for the riot and feud (or rather, if the truth must be told, the war) against the Jews, I refused to commit myself to a definite decision, although your ambassadors, and especially Dionysius the son of Theon, pleaded your cause with much zeal in confrontation with their opponents, and I must reserve for myself an implacable wrath against those (whoever they may be) who caused this renewed outbreak; but I tell you plainly that if you do not desist from this baneful and obstinate mutual hostility I shall perforce be constrained to show what a kindly Emperor can be when turned to just wrath. Wherefore I conjure you once again that, on the one side, the Alexandrians show themselves forbearing and kindly towards the Jews who for many years have dwelt in the same city, and offer no outrage to them in the exercise of their traditional worship, but permit them to observe their customs as in the time of the Divine Augustus, which customs I, too, after hearing both sides, have confirmed; and, on the other side, I command the Jews not to agitate for anything beyond that which they have hitherto enjoyed, and not from henceforth, as if they lived in two cities, to send two embassies—a thing which never occurred before now—nor to intrude themselves into ἀγῶνες γυμνασιαρχικοί ἢ κοσμητικοί,² but to profit by what they possess and to enjoy in a city not their own an abundance of all good things, and not to introduce or invite Jews who make voyages to Alexandria from Syria or Egypt, thus compelling me to conceive the worst suspicions; otherwise I will by all means take vengeance on them, as fomenting a general plague for the whole world.

¹ It would be tempting to identify Theon, the father of Dionysius, with the famous grammarian, pupil of Didymus, and predecessor of Apion;

cf. Suid. s.v. Ἀπίων and the letter to Eulogius prefixed by Hesychius to his Lexicon.

² On these words see below, p. 26.

If, desisting on both sides from these proceedings, you are willing to live with mutual forbearance and amity, I on my side will continue to display the time-honoured solicitude for the interests of the city, with which my family has a traditional friendship.¹

In order to understand the situation with which Claudius is here dealing, we must make a brief retrospect.

The hostile sentiment provoked by the Jewish communities of the Dispersion throughout the Roman world,² into the causes of which it is difficult to enter (even in the twentieth century) without incurring the suspicion of racial bias, was nowhere stronger than in Alexandria, where it was accentuated by the fact that, as Mr. Bell has succinctly put it,

The Jews had deserted the national dynasty on the arrival of the Romans, and they received their reward in the confirmation of their privileges and in the special favour of the Emperors. But the Alexandrians, who saw their city degraded from a royal capital to a subordinate position under Imperial Rome, were constantly hostile to the Emperors, and consequently hated their Jewish *protégés* the more bitterly.

That puts the case in a nutshell. We must remember two things : *firstly*, that the financial ability of the Jews was quickly recognised and turned to account by the Roman government, especially in Egypt, where the office of Controller of Customs (Alabarch or Arabarch) was held successively by Tiberius Julius Alexander, who was one of the ablest, if not the ablest, of the administrators of the first century A.D. and by another Jew, Demetrius ; *secondly*, that several descendants of Herod the Great were brought up at Rome together with the Imperial princes, and formed part of the *côterie* of which the centre was Antonia, the widow of Drusus, grandmother of Caligula and mother of Claudius.³ Such were the two Agrippas, father and son, and Herod of Chalcis, the elder brother of the elder Agrippa.⁴ The Jews therefore had powerful friends at court, and the result will be seen as the narrative develops.

The acute phase of the Jewish question at Alexandria dates from the year A.D. 38, and so far as it falls within the reign of Caligula it is graphically described in two works of Philo, the *Invective against Flaccus* and the *Embassy to Gaius*, which are evidently chapters taken from a comprehensive work dealing with the relations of the Jews with the Roman government—perhaps under the title of 'Ἀρεταὶ in the very special sense of the 'Mercies of God.' For the remaining chapters of this work we would gladly have sacrificed some of the voluminous treatises in which Philo reduces the Pentateuch to an allegorisation of the popular, more-or-less-Stoic, philosophy of his

¹ Claudius here refers especially to the relations of Germanicus with the Alexandrians, illustrated by the two edicts published in *Berliner Sitzungsberichte*, 1911, 794 f., on which see Cichorius, *Römische Studien*, p. 376 ff.

² Strabo is quoted by Josephus (*Ant. Jud.* xiv. 7, 2) as saying: *τόσον οὐκ ἔστι παθίως εὐφραίν*

της οἰκουμένης δεοῦ παραδέδεκται τοῦτο τὸ φῶλον μηδ' ἐπικρατεῖται ὑπ' αὐτοῦ.

³ Antonia employed 'Ti. Julius Alexander as her principal 'man of business.'

⁴ It may be suggested that Claudius was helped to overcome any scruples which he may have felt about marrying his niece by a consideration of the frequency of such marriages in the house of Herod !

time. We have also a much briefer narrative in Josephus on which we have to rely for the events which took place after Claudius' accession.

On his accession Gaius released Agrippa the Elder, who had been a *protégé* of Antonia, and after a chequered career, ending with imprisonment under Tiberius, now emerged from the chilly shade and took his place in the sun as king of certain districts bordering on Judaea, with the honorary *insignia* of a Roman *praetor*. On his way to his kingdom in the following year (A.D. 38) he touched at Alexandria, which he had last visited a dozen or more years earlier as a bankrupt exile. The Jews of Alexandria made his arrival (according to Philo he tried to travel *incognito*, but in vain) the occasion for a public demonstration, which the Alexandrians were not slow to parody by marching a well-known imbecile through the streets in the garb of a mock king. Fearing the consequences of this insult to the Emperor's friend, they tried to forestall his wrath by an exaggerated demonstration of loyalty: they demanded that images of Caligula should be placed in the synagogues and, when the Jews naturally refused to comply, they induced the Viceroy, Avillius Flaccus (whose position in relation to Caligula was, for private reasons, very precarious), to issue an edict declaring the Jews to be aliens and interlopers in the city. A *pogrom* followed in due course. The wealthy Jews were driven into the Ghetto, four hundred of their houses were sacked and many Jews suffered outrage—even death. Flaccus, so far from protecting them from their assailants, laid the blame on their shoulders and had a number of their elders publicly scourged. This took place on the Emperor's birthday (Aug. 31). Flaccus then caused the Jewish quarter to be searched for arms, but (if we may believe Philo) not only did no hidden stores of weapons come to light, but it was found that even carving-knives were deficient in number! The Jews determined to lay their grievances before the Emperor, and knowing that Flaccus would not permit them to send an embassy, passed a loyal resolution and begged Flaccus to present it. He promised to do so, but pigeon-holed the document; and the Jews took the wise precaution of forwarding their resolution (or, as Philo blurts out in the *Legatio*, a statement of their grievances) to Agrippa, who happened to be in Alexandria.

The vengeance of Heaven (as the Jews regarded it) was not long delayed. In the autumn of A.D. 38 Flaccus was arrested, brought to Rome for trial, condemned and deported to the island of Andros, where he was soon afterwards put to death. We do not know precisely what were the charges against him but, as his principal accusers were Isidorus and Lampon, two of the leading anti-Semites in the Alexandrian community, upon whom Philo never tires of pouring out the vials of his invective, we may be fairly

sure that his treatment of the Jews was not the main count in the indictment, though it is likely that Agrippa exerted what influence he could on the Emperor's decision. The successor of Flaccus, Vitrasius Pollio, permitted both Jews and Alexandrians to send embassies to Gaius and present their respective cases. The Alexandrian delegation had at its head Apion, the Jews were represented by Philo, whose graphic account of his experiences with the insane Emperor is too well known to need repetition. Philo's narrative breaks off with the dismissal of the envoys by Caligula with the words 'after all, those who don't believe in my divinity are more foolish than wicked'; and it is evident from an allusion in Josephus¹ that no satisfaction was obtained.

On January 24, A.D. 41, Caligula was murdered, and in the negotiations with the Praetorian Guards which set Claudius on the throne an important part was played by Agrippa, who had continued to enjoy the somewhat uncertain favour of Caligula, having, on the death of Herod Antipas in A.D. 40, acquired the reversion of his territories (including Galilee) and had come post-haste to Rome in order to implore Caligula not to set up his statue in the Temple at Jerusalem. He had his reward: Claudius made him king of Judaea, while his elder brother Herod received the principality of Chalcis on Mount Lebanon, also with the title of King and the *insignia* of the Roman praetorship, voted by the Senate, for which he thanked that body in a neatly-turned Greek oration. The brothers then went eastwards, but not until they had secured for their co-religionists the promulgation of two edicts, the text of which is given in full by Josephus;² the first of these concerns Alexandria alone, and confirms the privileges enjoyed by the Jews there resident, while laying the blame for the occurrences under Gaius (to whose insanity Claudius makes a characteristic allusion) at the door of the Alexandrians, while the second extends the same liberty of worship to the Jews throughout the empire. This, Claudius tells us, he issued at the request of 'his dear friends Agrippa and Herod.'

According to Josephus the Jews of Alexandria, who had ever since the failure of their petition to Caligula been preparing for an appeal to force, had been, in the most literal sense, 'up in arms' (*ἐν ὅπλοις*) on hearing of Caligula's murder, and Claudius instructed his Viceroy to quell the disturbance, while at the same time despatching the edicts above-mentioned. Josephus now lets the curtain drop on Alexandria, and for what follows we must draw such inferences as we can from the letter edited by Mr. Bell.

It has already been explained that the letter was sent in reply to a congratulatory address from the city of Alexandria on the occasion of Claudius' accession, which we may presume to have

¹ *Ant. Jud.* xviii, 8, 1.

² *Ant. Jud.* xix, 5, 2 and 3.

become known at Alexandria by the middle of February, A.D. 41. The edict of Aemilius Rectus, who had (we do not know exactly on what date) succeeded Vitrasius Pollio as Viceroy of Egypt, ordering the publication, is dated November 10 in the same year. We cannot suppose that the Alexandrians were backward in forwarding their congratulations to Claudius, and the lapse of about six months between the probable date of his receipt of their address and his answer is remarkable. Now it is evident from the letter that one, if not two, Jewish embassies had also been received by Claudius, and that the question of the responsibility for the disturbances had been argued before the Emperor ἐξ ἀντιματαστάσεως, i.e. by both parties in confrontation with each other; and Claudius had no doubt postponed his reply to the Alexandrians until he had examined the case. He says, in fact, that after hearing both sides he had confirmed the religious liberties of the Jews; and several scholars take the view that this refers to the edicts of which the text is given by Josephus; but these edicts were issued at the request of Agrippa and Herod, and not as the result of an enquiry into the charges and counter-charges of Jews and Alexandrians, which probably took place after the restoration of order in Alexandria.

The Emperor's final decisions, taken in order, are as follows:—

- (a) The Alexandrians are to live in amity with the Jews who have for so long dwelt in the same city with them, and are to concede to them the liberty of worship granted by Augustus and now confirmed.

From this it would seem a fair inference that the Jews formed a community distinct from that of the Alexandrians in the proper sense of that term.

- (b) The Jews are expressly enjoined
- i. to be content with their existing privileges and not to agitate for an extension thereof;
 - ii. not to send two embassies in future, as though they lived in two cities, 'a thing never done in past times.' The editor of the papyrus (and several of those who have discussed it) take this to be a clumsy and illogical method of saying that Claudius wished to receive only *one* embassy at a time in future from Alexandria. But as the Jewish community (as we have seen) was separate from the Alexandrian this would have precluded the Jews from bringing their wishes to the Emperor's notice or demonstrating their loyalty; while to say that the Jews had never sent separate embassies before is obviously contrary to fact. Hence Willrich¹ and Otto² (rightly, as I believe) think that two *Jewish* embassies had pre-

¹ *Hermes*, lx, pp. 482 ff.

² *Phil. Wochenschr.* xlv, 12 f.

- sented themselves before Claudius. We shall presently consider the reasons for this.
- iii. They are not to 'intrude themselves into' the athletic contests (*ἀγῶνες*) organised by gymnasiarchs and kosmetae, or (as it is possible to translate the words) the electoral contests (which might also be called *ἀγῶνες*) for the offices of gymnasiarch and kosmetes, but are to rest content with the enjoyment of peace and plenty in a city *not their own* (*ἐν ἀλλοτρίᾳ πόλει*).
 - iv. They are not to bring in Jews from Syria or Egypt, a practice which arouses suspicion in the Emperor's mind. If they disobey these orders, he will punish them as persons 'fomenting a general plague for the whole world.'

What light, we may now ask, do the Emperor's words throw on the position and aims of the Jewish community in Alexandria. Before the discovery of the letter of Claudius much ink had been spilt in the controversy whether—as it was usually put—the Jews were or were not citizens of Alexandria. Before considering the correct formulation of this question it may be well to pass in review the statements of Josephus, who, as an avowed controversialist, may be taken to indicate the high-water mark of Jewish claims. In *Bell. Jud.* ii, 18, 7, where he is telling the story of an anti-Semitic disturbance under Nero, he informs us that the feud between Jews and οἱ ἐπιχώριοι ('the natives') had been chronic ever since Alexander the Great, in reward for their support, had granted the Jews the right *μετοικεῖν κατὰ τὴν πόλιν ἐξ ἰσοτιμίας* (v.l. ἐξ ἴσου μοίρας (sic)) πρὸς Ἕλληνας.

In *Ant. Jud.* xii, 3, 1, he mentions the favour shewn to the Jews by the successors of Alexander, telling us that Seleucus Nicator thought them worthy of citizenship (*πολιτεία*) in the cities of his foundation and especially in Antioch, where they had equal rights with Macedonians and Greeks, which *πολιτεία*, he says, still subsists; and goes on to say that Vespasian and Titus refused to deprive the Jews of τὰ δίκαια τὰ τῆς πολιτείας at the request of the people of Alexandria and Antioch, clearly implying that their position in both cities was the same. In the fourteenth book (10, 1) Josephus gives the text of a number of documents (letters, *senatus consulta*, etc.) belonging to the dictatorship of Julius Caesar, in order to display the traditional ties of friendship between Rome and the Jews, and in introducing this series of documents he says 'and for that matter (οὐ μὴν ἀλλά) Julius Caesar set up a bronze *stèle* for the Jews in Alexandria and made it clear that they are Ἀλεξανδρέων πολῖται' (i.e. fellow-citizens with the Alexandrians). Now he refers to this *stèle* again in his controversial work against Apion (ii, 37), where it

behaved him to be careful of his statements, and there he says that it recorded τὰ δικαιώματα, 'the rights' which Julius Caesar gave the Jews, an altogether different matter. In neither case does he set out the words of the inscription.

Next we come to the Edicts issued by Claudius under the influence of Agrippa and Herod, which have already been mentioned. In the first, addressed to Alexandria, he says :—

Having ascertained that the Jews in Alexandria, styled Ἀλεξανδρεῖς, were settled there at the very beginning together with the Alexandrians and received ἰση πολιτεία from the kings, as was made plain by their records and by the edicts (i.e. of the Ptolemies), and that after Alexandria was made subject to our Empire by Augustus, their rights were upheld by the Prefects sent out at various times and no question was raised concerning them . . . and that the Alexandrians rose against the Jews living amongst them in the time of Gaius Caesar, . . . it is my will that no loss of rights shall accrue to the Jewish race by reason of the insanity of Gaius, but that privileges previously enjoyed by them shall be maintained while they abide by their own customs, and I enjoin on both parties to take every care that no disturbance shall arise after the publication of my edict.

In the following Edict he grants to all the Jewish communities throughout the Roman Empire, including those residing in colonies and *municipia* within and without Italy (i.e. all towns of Roman right), the same privileges as are enjoyed by the Jews of Alexandria—not, therefore the citizenship of those towns.

Finally, *Contr. Ap.* 2, 35 ff, Josephus says that Alexander the Great assigned to the Jews a quarter in Alexandria, and gave them equal privileges with the Macedonians, 'and to the present day their tribe bears the name Μακεδόνες.' He goes on to say that the Jews of Alexandria were called Ἀλεξανδρεῖς, just as the Jews of Antioch were called Ἀντιοχεῖς.

So far Josephus. Philo more than once speaks of the Jews of Alexandria as Ἀλεξανδρεῖς, but (as Mr. Bell says) this may mean no more than 'inhabitants of Alexandria.' In *Flacc.* 8, he says that Flaccus aimed at 'the ἀναίρεσις of our πολιτεία, thus depriving us of our sheet-anchor, μετουσία πολιτικῶν δικαίων.' And in the *Legatio*, §44, speaking of his own embassy, he says that he was sent to fight 'for the πολιτεία.' Philo, we may be quite sure, is using the word πολιτεία in a sense which his readers would understand and, what is more, which they would admit to be applicable to the rights possessed by the Jews and threatened by Flaccus.

But what does πολιτεία really imply? It is suggested—not without probability—that in this context it might mean 'the rights of those who form a πολίτευμα.' This word, a concrete formation meaning in classical Greek 'citizen-body,' was frequently used in Hellenistic times to mean 'a corporation formed by the members of a race or community domiciled in a foreign state'; and such πολιτεύματα enjoyed, no doubt, certain privileges in the cities which harboured them. The Caunians resident in Sidon, for example, formed a πολίτευμα, and (it is important to note) its

members were called *πολιῖται*.¹ Some foreigners of uncertain origin formed such a corporation in the Island of Cos,² and the Jews had a *πολίτευμα* at Berenice in Cyrenaica.³ In Alexandria itself the resident Phrygians formed a *πολίτευμα*,⁴ and that this was the form of organisation adopted by the Jews in that city is shewn by the use of the phrase *οἱ ἀπὸ τοῦ πολιτεύματος* in the letter of Pseudo-Aristeas (§ 310). This body had as its president, up to the time of Augustus, an official called *ἐθνάρχης*, whose place was afterwards taken by a Council of Elders.⁵

It would be hard to deny that the word *πολιτεία* might be used in the sense of the 'rights appertaining to members of a *πολίτευμα*.' But is this the true explanation in the case before us? Not quite, I think. The members of a *πολίτευμα* no doubt called each other *πολιῖται*, and when they admitted a member they bestowed on him their *πολιτεία*. But the city of their domicile did not recognise them as *ἴτις πολιῖται*, nor as possessing *ἴτις πολιτεία*. At Alexandria, however, there was evidently some colourable ground for attributing *πολιτεία* to the Jews in more than the domestic sense, as between members of the Jewish *πολίτευμα*. What was it?

The city of Alexandria was a Greek *πόλις*. It may not have had its Senate, but at any rate it had its Assembly. It had its magistrates. It had its public religious worships. It had its athletic (if not military) training, the *ephebia*, and, as the letter of Claudius shews, this was the necessary avenue to full citizen rights. These rights belonged to the *Ἀλεξανδρεῖς* of the old foundation, to their descendants, and to those to whom the freedom of Alexandria had been granted—*οἱ πεπολιτογραφημένοι* (as they are called in the famous Halle papyrus known as the *Δικαιώματα*). Under the Roman Empire this Alexandrian citizenship acquired a new and special value, since it was the practice of the Emperors not to bestow the Roman *civitas* directly upon an Egyptian, unless he was first admitted to citizen-rights in Alexandria.⁶ It may be added that the city of Alexandria was properly called *ἄστυ* (no doubt on the analogy of Athens) as opposed to *ἡ χώρα*, that its citizens were *ἄστοι* (as is shewn by several passages in the *Γνώμων τοῦ ἰδίου λόγου*) and its laws were known as *ἀστικοὶ νόμοι*.⁷

Outside this privileged body stood the mass of the native Egyptian population; but between the two came various categories of persons designated by ethnic names, some of which apparently in course of time lost their original signification. The question is too complicated to be discussed here, but it is at least worthy of note that

¹ *O.G.I.* 592.

² *O.G.I.* 197.

³ *I.J.G.* 5302.

⁴ *O.G.I.* 638 (found at Pompeii, but certainly referring to Alexandria).

⁵ Strab. ap. Joseph. *Ant. Jud.* xiv, 7, 2, Phil. in *Flacc.* 17, 74.

⁶ Plin. *Ep. ad Traj.* 6, 7.

⁷ *P. Oxy.* 706, 9.

Alexandrian papyri of the Augustan period shew that Jews might be described as 'Persians' or 'Macedonians.'¹

That members of the Jewish *πολίτευμα* as such possessed the full Alexandrian citizenship cannot, I think, be admitted, though of course it might be acquired by individuals. They certainly kept their own register.² What rights then did they possess? They were, of course, like the Macedonians, Persians and other ethnic groups, raised above the *λαοί*, or native Egyptians, always a depressed class, the badge of which was the *λαογραφία* or poll-tax. In III *Maccabees*, 2, 30, we are definitely told that Ptolemy Philadelphus persecuted the Jews and proposed to reduce them to this status. In *Contr. Ap.* 2, 51 ff, Josephus tells a story of a persecution by Ptolemy Physcon with similar details (though the *λαογραφία* is not mentioned). If there is any truth in the legend, the date given by Josephus is more probable; but it has been suggested that III *Maccabees* actually belongs to the end of Caligula's reign and reflects the attempt of Flaccus to deprive the Jews of their *πολιτεία*, which would, of course, imply their subjection to the *λαογραφία*.

The Jews then were one of the privileged orders in that racial hierarchy which the Romans so strictly maintained in Egypt. Now in two documents, one of the third and the other of the second century B.C., relating to law-suits there is mention of the *πολιτικοὶ νόμοι*. The later (Mitteis, *Chrest.* 31) is from an advocate's speech and we need not, perhaps, discuss at length its implications. The earlier document, however (Mitteis, *Chrest.* 21), is significant. It relates to the suit brought in 226-5 B.C. by Dositheus, an Ἰουδαῖος τῆς ἐπιγονῆς, against Heraclea, a Jewish lady who was so far lacking in good breeding that she had, among other attentions, spat in his face; and the papyrus shews that the suit was tried according to the *πολιτικοὶ νόμοι*. The 'πολιτικὸς νόμος' is also mentioned in the *Δικαιώματα* as laying down restrictions on building in Alexandria and regulating such matters as ancient lights, servitudes and the like. There, of course, it may mean simply the 'city-law,' binding on all persons of Alexandrian domicile. But in the case of our Jew and Jewess it must mean the law applying to *πολιῖται*, i.e. those possessing full civil rights in a sense which the *λαοί* did not. I imagine that in Alexandria there were (i) *ἀστοί*, full citizens of Alexandria, (ii) *πολιῖται*, entitled to the benefit of the *πολιτικοὶ νόμοι*, (iii) *λαοί*, 'the natives'; and that *πολιτεία* could be used to denote the sum of the rights belonging to the intermediate class. We can easily see how an able and not over-scrupulous controversialist, such as Josephus, could twist his documents so as to make it appear that the Jews were citizens of Alexandria.

¹ B.G.U. 1134, 1151.

² ἄρχειον (B.G.U. 1151, 1151).

Were the Jews content with this position? Evidently not, since Claudius strictly forbids them to agitate for an extension of the rights which they possess. This leads us to consider the meaning of the expression ἐπισπάρειν (or, as Schwartz ingeniously suggests, ἐπεισπάειν) 'to intrude into' the ἀγῶνες γυμνασιαρχικοὶ καὶ κοσμητικοί. It was, as the *Gnomon* of the Ἴδιος λόγος and the papyri show, a common dodge for the natives of the νομοί in Egypt to procure admission to the ephobic training of the γυμνάσια and thus to plant their feet on the lowest rung of the ladder by which they might rise from their semi-servile condition. Thus the *Gnomon* (§ 44) provides that an Egyptian who falsely registers his son as having passed through the ephobic training shall be punished by the confiscation of one-sixth of his property: and that such abuses were regarded in a specially serious light at Alexandria is shown by another provision of the *Gnomon* to the effect that the wrongful introduction of a stranger into the citizen-register of Alexandria (the *ephebia* is not mentioned, but this was no doubt the avenue of approach) has now become an offence directly indictable in the Viceroy's courts (νῦν ἡγεμονικῆς γέγονεν διαγνώσεως). In the earlier part of the letter Claudius announces his decision (in reply to a request from the Alexandrian embassy) to confirm the title to Alexandrian citizenship of all who have passed through the *ephebia* down to his principate except such persons as, being the sons of servile mothers, have intruded themselves into the ephobic lists. It seems natural to treat this as an act of amnesty, and to interpret the threat to the Jews as a warning against future attempts to acquire Alexandrian citizenship through the *ephebia*.

But it is pertinent to ask at this point whether an orthodox Jew would not have felt scruples about taking part in a course of training such as was to be had in the Greek γυμνάσια, involving, as it did, both an exhibition of the nude male form, which was repellent to the Jews, and also some recognition, if not actual worship, of the gods of the *palaestra*. The anti-athletic attitude of the orthodox Jews may be illustrated by Josephus' account of the action of Herod the Great in introducing such contests at Jerusalem (*Ant. Jud.* xv, 8, 1) which was regarded as an impious violation of the national traditions, and by the unsparing condemnation in II *Maccabees*, 4 of the high priest Jason for establishing a gymnasium in the Holy City, and encouraging the priests to neglect the temple sacrifices in order to take part in the unlawful displays of the *palaestra*.¹

Mr. Max Radin² has collected some interesting passages from the Talmud bearing on the discussion of this question by the Rabbis. The Babylonian Talmud says :—³ it is forbidden to go to the stadium,

¹ Cf. I *Macc.* 1, 14.

² *Classical Philology*, 1925, p. 371.

for it is a "seat of the scornful"; but Rabbi Nathan permits it, since if one cries out he may be saved.' Willrich¹ has pointed out that Philo, who may be taken to represent Liberal Judaism, speaks in the tract *Quod omnis probus liber sit*² of witnessing the struggles of pancratiasts; and his suggestion that the two Jewish embassies to Claudius, which (on the face of the words) are mentioned in the letter, represented the orthodox and the modernist Jews respectively, is worthy of consideration. Philo would, of course, belong to the latter party; his nephew, Ti. Julius Alexander, in fact, became a renegade and entered the Imperial service.

Before we leave the letter of Claudius a word must be said as to the theory propounded independently by Mr. Salomon Reinach and by Professor De Sanctis, that the 'general plague of the whole world,' which the Jews are accused of stirring up, is to be explained by the internal strife aroused in the Jewish communities of the Dispersion by the spread of Christianity and its reactions. Claudius warns the Alexandrian Jews, as we saw, against bringing in reinforcements from Syria and Egypt; and from Syria (e.g. from Antioch) it is conceivable that Christians *might* have come. The words of Suetonius, quoted on p. 17 (which, be it remembered, refer to a date eight years later), *may* mean that Claudius (without understanding the facts of the case) heard of the ferment caused in the synagogues by the appearance of the new sect, and scented a danger to public order. But this is a gratuitous supposition, which has really nothing to commend it. It is perfectly evident from the context that the reinforcements introduced by the Jews were brought in for the purpose of renewing their struggle with the Alexandrians; and, as Sir F. Kenyon has pointed out, Christians (who certainly would have had no desire to take part in the Greek athletic training) would have been a source of weakness rather than strength. It is an interesting coincidence (pointed out by Cumont), but no more, that in *Acts* xxiv. 5 St. Paul is called 'a pestilence, and a stirrer-up of strife throughout the world.'

In Rome the case was different. Cassius Dio,³ in his account of the events of A.D. 41, tells us that Claudius forbore from expelling the Jews from Rome on account of their numbers, but forbade them *συναθροίζεσθαι*—that is to say that (acting, no doubt, on the advice of the *praefectus urbi*) he enforced strict regulations in accordance with the law concerning *collegia*. The *praefectus urbi*, apart from his general duty of preserving order in the capital, was specially charged with the supervision of foreign religious associations, and must have been responsible for the expulsion of the Jews which took place in A.D. 49.⁴

¹ *Hermes*, lx. p. 486.

² §§ 26, 141 (ii), pp. 449, 467M, = vi, pp. 5, 27 (Cohn-Wendland).

³ lx. 6.

⁴ The date given by Orosius (vii. 6, 15) is con-

The letter of Claudius is not the only papyrus document which throws light on anti-Semitic agitation in Alexandria. The name 'Acts of the Heathen Martyrs' has been given to a series of papyri—mostly very fragmentary—which contain what purport to be reports of trials in the Emperor's court, sometimes ending in the condemnation of prominent Alexandrians. These trials took place in the reigns of Claudius, Trajan, Hadrian and Commodus; the papyri which describe them were nearly all written or copied in the early part of the third century (except a parallel and slightly different version of the trial before Trajan which was written not much later than the date of that event), and the reports have evidently been composed with a view to literary effect, so that it is possible to regard them as fragments of a single work; in this context it is noteworthy that Appianus, the 'martyr' whose 'Acts' are dated under Commodus, refers to his predecessors in martyrdom, Isidorus and Lampon and Theon; the two former took part, as we saw, in an embassy to Gaius, and Theon might be the father of Dionysius ὁ Θεῶνος, mentioned in the letter of Claudius. The tone of this work (or works) is violently anti-Semitic. In the so-called Acts of Hermaiscus (*P. Oxy.* 1242), in which Alexandrian and Jewish embassies appear before Trajan, the Empress Plotina is represented as having privately espoused the cause of the Jews—'godless' Jews (ἄνόσιοι Ἰουδαῖοι) as they are called by Hermaiscus, the Alexandrian—and having won over the Emperor and the Senatorial members of his *consilium*. Bearing these facts in mind we may glance at the earlier documents.

In *P. Oxy.* 1089, we have scraps of a narrative in which Flaccus, Isidorus, Dionysius and certain 'elders' (probably Jewish elders) are named. Von Premerstein has recently¹ proposed certain restorations of this document which, if accepted, would bring it into relation with the anti-Semitic disturbances in A.D. 38 mentioned above, and show that secret negotiations took place with Flaccus, in the course of which he demanded a bribe of five talents in gold in return for the issue of the necessary passports for the embassy of Isidorus. But some of his supplements are impossible and all are uncertain, and we can only conclude with regret that the Alexandrian version of the events recorded by Philo in the *Invective against Flaccus* has been lost to us. Much more interest attaches to the so-called 'Acts of Isidorus and Lampon,' preserved partly in *B.G.U.* 511, and partly in *P. Cair.* 10448. The Berlin fragment, of which only the ends of the lines are preserved, gives scraps of a debate in the Emperor's Privy Council at which the speakers are Tarquinius (the name must be emended to Tarquitiuſ, i.e. Tarquitiuſ Priscus, according to

firmed by the evidence of *Acts* xviii., 2, where S. Luke speaks of Aquila and Priscilla as having recently arrived in Corinth about a year before

Gallio's proconsulship, now fixed to A.D. 51-2 by an inscription from Delphi (*S.I.G.* 801 D).

¹ *Philologus, Supplementband*, xvi, Heft ii, 4-14.

Tacitus¹ a creature of Agrippina, who in A.D. 53 accused Statilius Taurus, on whose staff he had served, of maladministration in the province of Africa) and Aviola, no doubt M'. Acilius Aviola, the consul of A.D. 54.²

The debate takes place on 'Pachon ε' (= April 30). The Egyptian dating shews that we are dealing with the work of an Alexandrian writer, and not with an official report of the proceedings. The Emperor adjourned the case till the next day, and the narrative proceeds as follows:—'Claudius Caesar Augustus hears the case of Isidorus, gymnasiarch of the city of Alexandria against King Agrippa in the . . . Gardens.'³ With him as assessors were twenty odd Senators, including sixteen *consulares*, and 'the Empress with her ladies.' Isidorus asks for a hearing, and Claudius allows him the day to present his case; the assessors consent.

In the fragments which follow, the Emperor seems to refer to Isidorus' action directed against his 'friends,' and we read the name of Theon the *exegetes*. Here there is a long lacuna; and when we resume the narrative in the next column Isidorus and Lampon are under sentence of death. Claudius says to Isidorus 'You slew many of my friends.' Isidorus replies, 'I obeyed the commands of the reigning Emperor (βασιλεύς), and I will do the same for you. Name whom you will and I will accuse him.' Claudius: 'You certainly are the child of a chorus-girl, Isidorus.' Isidorus: 'I am not a slave or the child of a chorus-girl, but you are ἐκ Σαλώμης τῆς Ἰουδαίας . . . βλητος.' We may either read [ὑπό]βλητος, 'you are the supposititious child of Salome the Jewess,' or [διὰ]βλητος, 'you are prejudiced against us by Salome the Jewess.' In the first case the reference could only be to the eldest of the three Salomes, sister of Herod the Great and friend of Livia, who might just conceivably have been represented as the real mother of Claudius. In the second and more likely case the allusion is to the famous Salome of the New Testament, who was married to Aristobulus, younger son of Claudius' friend, Herod of Chalcis, and might well have been at court with her husband.

What then was the date of this trial? Before the discovery of the letter of Claudius it was maintained by Mr. Théodore Reinach that it took place in A.D. 41, the year of Claudius' accession; the fact that the Emperor refers to *delationes* by Isidorus in the reign of Caligula would point in this direction. 'King Agrippa' would then be Agrippa I. But, as Mr. Bell points out, it is difficult to believe that, after ordering the execution of two of the most prominent citizens of Alexandria on May 1, Claudius would be found writing as he does without the slightest allusion to the trial.

¹ *Ann.* xii, 59.

² *Tac. Ann.* xii, 64.

³ Various restorations of the name are possible.

Horti [Lol]liani, [Lucul]liani, [Servi]liani, or [Stati]liani afford a wide choice.

Moreover, while it seems unlikely that Isidorus would be found accusing or opposing Agrippa I in May, A.D. 41, when Agrippa had only just left Rome for Judaea after securing the signature of Claudius to the charters of Jewish religious liberty, we happen to know from Josephus¹ that his son, Agrippa II (whom Claudius had not indeed permitted to succeed his father as king of Judaea in A.D. 44, but had invested in A.D. 48 with the vassal-principality of Chalcis on the death of his uncle Herod) was required in A.D. 53 to exchange his fief for certain other districts and that in the same year, *being present in Rome*, he espoused the cause of the Jews in their quarrel with the *procurator* Cumanus (who was strongly supported by the Imperial freedmen) and prevailed on Claudius through the influence of Agrippina.²

This is likely to have been Agrippa's only visit to Rome *as king*, and we can feel little doubt in assigning the trial of Isidorus and Lampon to A.D. 53, a date which accords well with the important part played by Tarquinius Priscus and Acilius Aviola. It may further be added that Philo certainly gives us the impression that Isidorus and Lampon were still alive when he wrote; we do not, of course, know the date at which his work was composed, but it can hardly have been at the very beginning of Claudius' reign; and, while he says nothing of the fate of Isidorus and Lampon, he is careful to record the fall of Helicon, one of Caligula's minions, who had poured his 'Egyptian venom' into the Emperor's ear.

In the year following the trial Claudius ate the mushroom 'after which he ate nothing else,' and the unsolved problem of Jew and Gentile was left to his successor. What are we to say of his handling of the situation?

Mr. Bell (p. 22) says that his decisions 'betray no trace whatever of any weakness of intellect,' but are 'reasonable and well-grounded; in regard to the senate in particular he shows a statesmanlike caution, neither acceding to the request nor rebuffing the petitioners by a definite refusal.' 'On the question of the Jews he holds the scales even between the two parties and preserves throughout a perfectly judicial attitude. From this letter one would never suspect that Claudius was weak-minded.' Other scholars take a very different view and think it apposite to quote the judgment of Tacitus,³ *cui non iudicium, non odium erat nisi indita et iussa*. Engers in particular⁴ makes the most of the differences in tone and substance between the edict issued by Claudius at the instance of Agrippa and Herod and the decisions conveyed in the letter. 'It is character-

¹ *Ant. Jud.* xx, 6, 3.

² The narrative of Josephus, which is here followed, differs widely from the account given by Tacitus in the twelfth book of the *Annals*. Josephus would naturally be better informed than Tacitus with regard to events in Judaea; and the Roman

historian destroys our confidence in his accuracy by his strange blunder in making Drusilla, the wife of Felix, a grand-daughter of Antony and Cleopatra.

³ *Ann.* xii, 3.

⁴ *Klio*, xx, p. 176.

istic,' he writes, 'of the weakness and lack of independence of Claudius that within so short a space of time he should take such an entirely changed view of an important matter.' This does Claudius something less than justice. In the edict Claudius naturally and properly emphasises the rights of the Jews to liberty of worship (citing the precedent of Augustus), but he gives them no encouragement to agitate for further privileges, and he lays strict injunctions on both parties at Alexandria that there are to be no further disturbances of the peace after the promulgation of the edict. In the letter he speaks as a judge who has now heard both sides of a case ably presented and has come to a decision according to his lights.

In the 'Αποκλογόντωνσις Seneca wrote :

Deflete virum, quo non alius
potuit citius discere causas,
una tantum parte audita,
saepe nec utra.

Our letter shews that in one important instance the sneer of Seneca was unjustified.



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