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The Sins of the Roman Fathers (with Pedigree Chart)

RHODA LINDSAY¹

ABSTRACT—The Roman line of emperors, known as the Julian Claudian line, is traced from its ambitious beginnings through all its aberrations to the reluctant suicide of Nero and the end of the line.

The line is called the Julian Claudian line for this reason—# 1 male on the chart is C. Julius Caesar, died 84 B.C., progenitor of the Julian family. Therefore, Emperor Augustus (#13) was known as a Julian Emperor since he was C. Julius Caesar's great grandson. However, you will note that he married a girl named Livia Drusilla (#15) whose father came from one of the oldest and noblest families of Rome—the Claudian family. She, therefore, was the progenitress of the Claudian side of the Julian Claudian line of Roman Emperors. Although Augustus was emperor, and a very excellent, enlightened ruler, his family background left something to be desired since the Julians were of plebeian origin. He married a Claudian girl in order to introduce noble and aristocratic blood into the plebeian, Julian family. Therefore, this marriage, like almost all other marriages throughout the pedigree chart, was a politically expedient union. Unfortunately, this marriage resulted in a struggle between the two lines to gain control of the throne. For two generations, the Julians and Claudians feuded, in spite of many attempts to bring the branches closer together by intermarriages. For instance, Emperor Tiberius (#27) arranged the marriage of Livia (#36), granddaughter of Emperor Augustus, and his own son, Drusus (#37), to strengthen the Julian-Claudian family ties, and again, arranged the marriage of Germanicus (#38) to Agrippina the Elder (#39) for the same reason. And obviously, Tiberius himself (#27), married Julia (#18) under Emperor Augustus' auspices, for the same reason. All other heirs to Augustus' throne had died—Gaius (#34), Lucius (#41), and Drusus (#37), or were mentally incapable of taking over the rule of an empire—Agrippa Posthumous (#40)—and so Augustus forced his only daughter to marry Tiberius and then adopted Tiberius. This certainly would strengthen the Julian-Claudian line, or so thought the poor, old Emperor.

At this point, I must sidetrack for a minute and point out that insanity was introduced into the family from both branches. Emperor Augustus' daughter, Julia (#18), was the first one on the Julian side to show certain traits of insanity, such as gross immorality and excessive desires for luxury. In fact, her behavior was so abhorrent to her husband that she was exiled and died there of a mysterious death, probably arranged by Tiber-

ius who, at the time, was quite mad himself. And so we see, on the Claudian side, that Emperor Tiberius first showed the signs of insanity that developed in his later years. It is most fortunate, genetically speaking, that Tiberius and Julia's marriage resulted in only one child who died in infancy, as so often happens to offspring of mentally unbalanced parents. And since there were no heirs resulting from this marriage, a bitter struggle ensued between the two warring branches to obtain possession of the throne after Tiberius' death. This struggle resulted in many murders, including that of the Emperor himself. Just to mention a few: Emperor Tiberius allowed the assassination of his wife Julia (#18), Germanicus (#38) and Germanicus's two sons, Nero (#59) and Drusus (#61) and arranged to have Agrippina the Elder (#39) exiled, all because he was afraid they would take the throne away from his son Drusus (#37). These murders were all in vain, however, for Sejanus, (#35) the power behind the mad Emperor's throne, had Drusus (#37) assassinated in 23 A.D., which was probably just as well since he was as crazy as his father; historically, however, this was not Sejanus' reason for so doing. At the end of this bloody battle, there remained one poor soul who had been overlooked. He had just as much right to the throne as the rest of them, and certainly had inherited his share, if not more, of the Julian-Claudian madness. It was just a question of how he would get the throne. And the simplest way seemed to be to put an end to old Emperor Tiberius and take over while the time was ripe—and so he did.

Caligula (#64) surpassed his predecessor in madness, cruelty, and number of wives, but his ability to produce offspring was practically nil. He succeeded in murdering, during his short reign of four years, Tiberius (#27), Emperor Tiberius' grandson (#55), and exiled his two sisters, Julia Livilla (#69) and Agrippina, Jr. (#29), both of whom he suspected of threatening his position on the throne, and undoubtedly rightly so. His only hope for a successor was his one daughter (#79) who was killed, along with him (#64) and his mad wife (#66), by the Praetorian guards. The Senate had ordered the death of this Emperor since his reign had become so depraved it could no longer be allowed to continue, and had intended to elect a sane, intelligent leader for its country. But, by mistake, one of the guards saw Caligula's poor, demented, paralytic uncle hiding behind a curtain in the palace, and either facetiously or by mistake, saluted him as Emperor. So once again, Rome had

¹Mrs. Lindsay, a Wayzata housewife, prepared this paper for the seminar in genetics held under the auspices of the Minnesota Plan for the Continuing Education of Women.

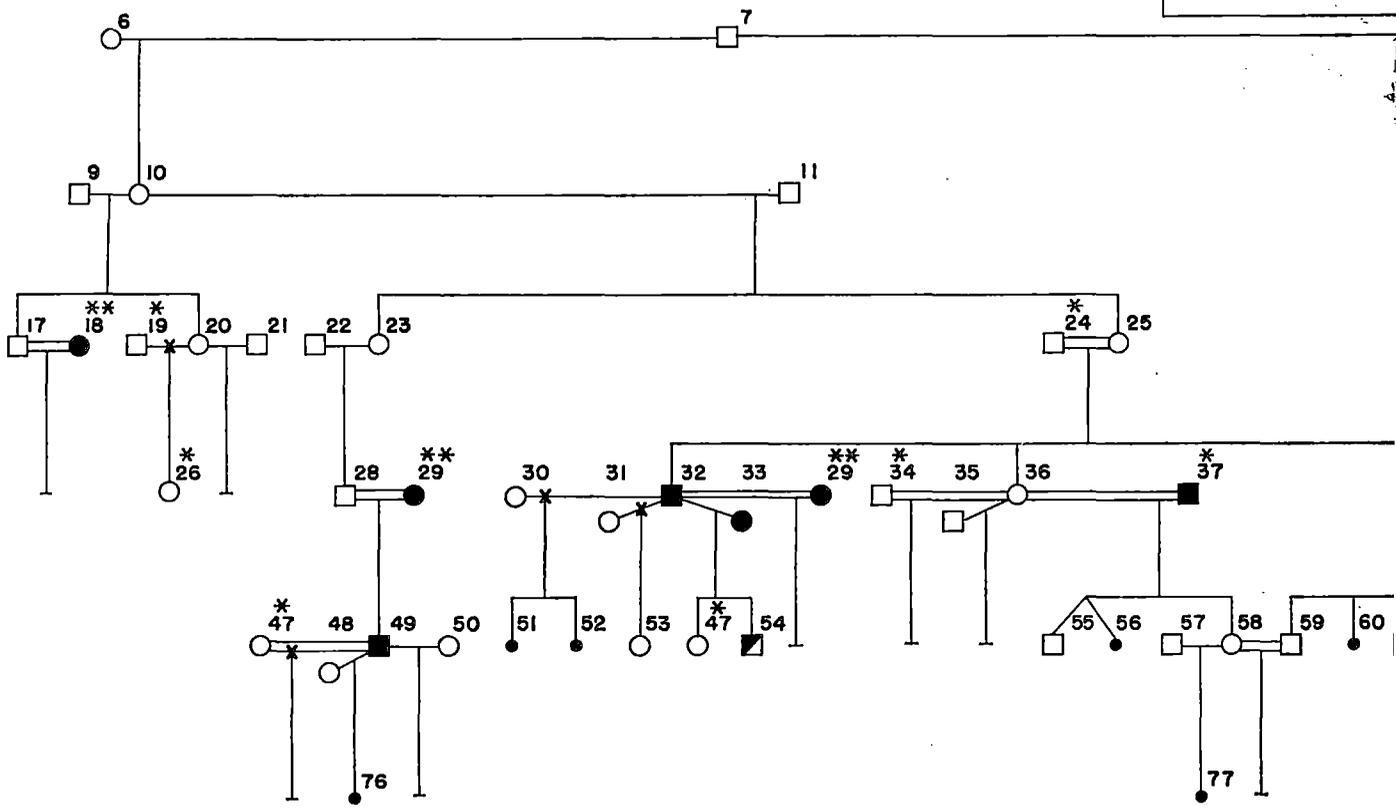
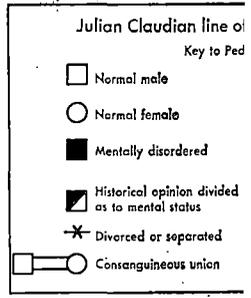
thrust upon her a Julian Claudian ruler even madder than the one before.

Emperor Claudius (#32) was nothing but a pawn in the hands of his wives, two of whom were conniving, vicious, power-hungry women. Valeria Messalina (#33) and Agrippina, Jr. (#29). Messalina, quite mad herself, and Claudius succeeded somehow in having two children; she then prevailed upon her husband to kill Julia Livilla (#69) who was still in exile and somewhat of a threat to her power, but overlooked her more dangerous adversary, Agrippina, Jr. (#29). This was a great mistake because Agrippina had a son, who for some reason or another, Nero (#49), was still alive. Being as power hungry as Messalina, she hoped to get him upon the throne. Since Claudius had two offspring who were closer to the line of succession than her own son, this would take some doing. However, she managed to talk Claudius into killing his adulterous wife, Messalina (#33), and marrying her. After this, it was but a simple matter to get him to adopt her son, Nero (#49). Feeling sure that she and her son would rule the Roman world as she saw fit, she murdered her husband and put her insane son upon the throne. How wrong she was about his malleability! In his 14 years of reign, he managed to murder any and all who might by some remote possibility lay claim to the Julian-Claudian throne. These included Britannicus (#54), great-grandson of Emperor Augustus, his poor disillusioned mother, Agrippina, Jr. (#29), and two of his three wives, Octavia (#47), and Poppaea (#48) whom he kicked in the stomach, thus killing her and their unborn child (#76). Then, lest any of the Silanus family (#80, 81, 82, 83, 84 and 85) attempt to take advantage of their rightful claims to his kingdom, he had them all killed, one by one, including Junius Silanus Torquatus (#86), last of the Julian line. This was particularly unfortunate since this branch of the family showed none of the hereditary madness and might have become great leaders. Then, Nero, great, great-grandson of Emperor Augustus, as well as great-grandson of Mark Antony, realizing that he must either kill himself or be killed, reluctantly committed suicide in 68 A.D. And so ended the Julian-Claudian line of Roman Emperors.

Summary of Individuals on the Pedigree Chart

1. *C. Julius Caesar*, progenitor of the Julian line, freedman or plebeian, ropemaker by trade. Died of apoplexy, 84 B. C.
2. *Marcia Aurelia*, wife of (1). Her family was of a higher class than her husband's (1). Died 54 B.C.
3. *Marcus Atius Balbus*, husband of (4). Related to Pompey the Great. Many senators in family.
4. *Julia Balbus*, one daughter (8). Died 51 B.C.
5. *Julius Caesar*, born 101 B.C., murdered 44 B.C. Epileptic, married three times, had one child by Cleopatra (spouses and child not on chart).
6. *Ancharia*, first wife of (7). One child (10).
7. *Gaius Octavius*, husband of (6) and (8). Died 59 B.C. Family came from simple equestrian line. Married (8) after death of (6).
8. *Accia or Atia Balbus*, second wife of (7). Only child (13) became Emperor Augustus.
9. *Claudius Marcellus*, first husband of (10). A consul in 50 B.C.
10. *Octavia the Elder*, born 64 B.C., died 11 B.C. After death of (9) married (11). Reared the three illegitimate children of (11) by Cleopatra (not on chart).
11. *Mark Anthony*, second husband of (10). Born 83 B.C., committed suicide in Egypt, 30 B.C. Was known for good looks and attraction for women. Had many mistresses but Cleopatra was most famous.
12. *Scribonia*, first wife of (13). Divorced by (13) the day (18) was born.
13. Octavius or Octavian — *Emperor Augustus*. Born 63 B.C., died 14 A.D. Enlightened leader and first emperor. Was made son and heir of great-uncle (5) in 45 B.C.
14. *Clodia*, divorced second wife of (13).
15. *Livia Drusilla*, third wife of (13) and wife of (16). Born 57 B.C., died 29 A.D. Progenitress of the Claudian line and descended from one of the most ancient and glorious families of Rome. Had (24) three months after marriage to (13); (24) probably was (13's) son. Had devoted married life for 50 years, influenced husband (13) toward moderation; tried to dominate empire after his death.
16. *Tiberius Nero*, divorced first husband of (15). Forced to divorce (15) so she could marry (13). From aristocratic family.
17. *Marcus Marcellus*, born 43 B.C., died 23 B.C. Made heir to Augustus' (13) throne but died too young to inherit.
18. *Julia*, wife of (17) and his half-cousin, also wife of (19) and of (27). Born 39 B.C., assassinated in exile, 14 A.D., by order of (27). Only child of Emperor Augustus (13), mentally unstable and banished from Rome for adulterous conduct.
19. *Marcus Agrippa*, first husband of (20). Born 63 B.C., of plebeian origin. Divorced (20) at request of Emperor Augustus (13) and married (18).
20. *Marcella Minor*, whose second husband (21) was the son of Mark Anthony (11).
21. *Anthony*, second husband of (20) and son of (11) by a different spouse.
22. *Lucius Domitius Ahenobarbus*, husband of (23). Important political figure.
23. *Antonia Maior*.
24. *Nero Claudius Drusus*, husband of (25). Born 38 B.C., died 9 B.C., and carried to his grave the hopes of Rome. Intelligent, handsome and well educated. Probably the son of Augustus (13) who married his mother three months before his birth.
25. *Antonia Minor*, born 36 B.C. Half-cousin to her husband (24).
26. *Vispania Agrippina*, divorced first wife of (27). Died 20 A.D.
27. *Tiberius*, born 42 B.C., murdered 37 A.D. by arrangement of Caligula (64). Became emperor 14

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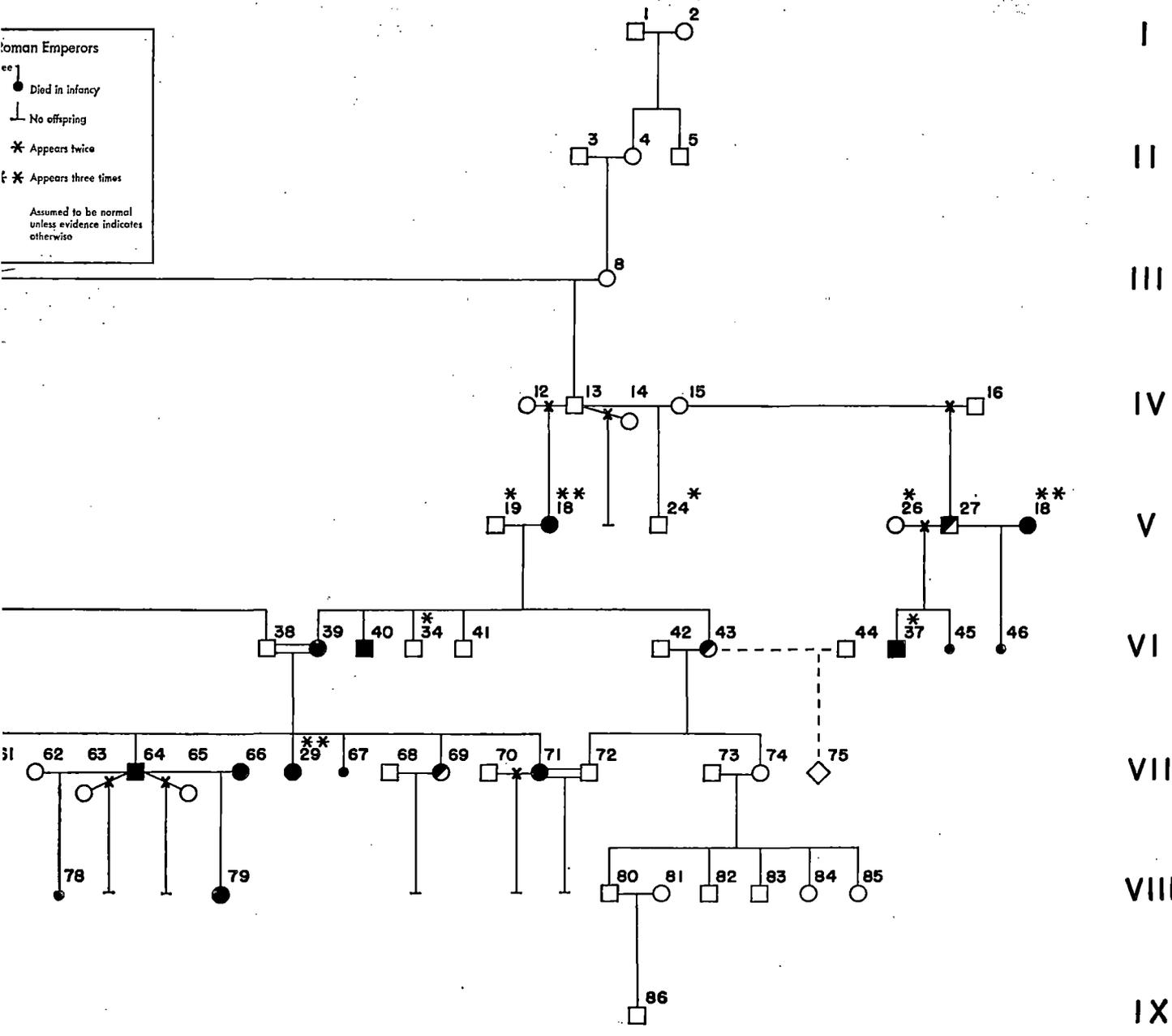
- A.D. Was forced to divorce Vispania (26) and marry (18). Became mentally deranged later in life, arranged for the deaths of (35), (38), (40), (55), (57) and his own wife (18).
- 28. *Gnaeus Domitius Ahenobarbus*, father of Emperor Nero (49).
- 29. *Agrippina the Younger*, wife of (28) and his first cousin once removed and fourth wife of (32) and his niece. Born 15 A.D., exiled by brother Caligula (64) 39 A.D., murdered by son (49) 55 A.D. One of the most ambitious, cruel women in history; mentally unbalanced.
- 30. *Plantia Urganilla*, divorced first wife of (32).
- 31. *Aelia Potina*, divorced second wife of (32).
- 32. *Tiberius Claudius Drusus*, born 10 B.C. Became emperor at age 51, poisoned 54 A.D. by (29). Had

- (33) executed and married niece (29). Mentally unbalanced.
- 33. *Valeria Messalina*, "one of the worst women in history." Assassinated Julia Livilla (not on chart), executed 48 A.D. by husband (32). Mentally unbalanced.
- 34. *Gaius Caesar*, first husband of (36) and her half-second cousin. Born 20 B.C., adopted by (13) to become emperor but died 4 A.D.
- 35. *Sejanus*, third husband of (36) and the power behind Tiberius' (27) throne. His assassination was arranged for by (27).
- 36. *Livia*, died 31 A.D. Was accused of murdering her second husband (37) in order to marry (35) but not convicted.
- 37. *Drusus*, second husband and half-cousin to (36).

Roman Emperors

- Died in infancy
- ⊥ No offspring
- * Appears twice
- ⊥* Appears three times

Assumed to be normal unless evidence indicates otherwise



- 38. *Germanicus*, born 15 B.C. Adopted by Tiberius (27) but poisoned by his order 19 A.D.
- 39. *Agrippina the Elder*, wife of (38) and his half-second cousin. Exiled by Tiberius (27) 29 A.D. Starved herself to death 33 A.D. Mentally unbalanced.
- 40. *Agrippa Posthumous*, adopted by Augustus (13) but disinherited and exiled and died 33 A.D., probably murdered by Tiberius (27).
- 41. *Lucius Caesar*, adopted by Augustus (13) but died 2 A.D.
- 42. *L. Aemelius Paulus*, son of great Roman family.
- 43. *Julia the Younger*, exiled by Augustus (13) because of adulterous behavior.
- 44. *Ovid*, the poet, probable father of illegitimate child of (43).
- 45, 46. Infant deaths.
- 47. *Octavia*, first wife and second cousin of (49). Divorced for barrenness, exiled and murdered by Nero (49) 62 A.D.
- 48. *Poppaea*, second wife of (49). Noted beauty who had (47) murdered. Died 59 A.D. when pregnant, "kicked in the stomach" by husband Nero (49).
- 49. *Lucius Domitius Nero*, born 37 A.D. Committed suicide 68 A.D. to avoid assassination. Adopted by Claudius (32), became emperor 54 A.D., assassinated (53), (54), (29), and all of the family of (73) and (74).

50. *Statilia Messalina*, third wife of (49) who murdered her first husband.
- 51, 52. Infant deaths.
53. *Claudia Antonia*, died 66 A.D., assassinated by Nero (49).
54. *Tiberius Claudius Britannicus*, epileptic and probably mentally unbalanced. Assassinated by Nero (49) 55 A.D.
55. *Tiberius*, assassinated by Caligula (64) 12 A.D.
56. Twin to 55 who died in infancy.
57. *Rubelius Blandus*, first husband of (58).
58. Julia.
59. *Nero*, second husband of (58) and her first cousin. Died in exile 30 A.D., probably poisoned by (35).
60. Infant death.
61. *Drusus*, died in exile 33 A.D., probably poisoned.
62. *Junia Claudilla*, first wife of (64) and daughter of distinguished Senator Marcus Silanus. Died in childbirth.
63. *Livia Orestilla*, second wife of (64) and divorced after a few days of marriage.
64. *Gaius Caesar*, Emperor Caligula. Born 12 A.D., murdered by Praetorian Guard 41 A.D. Sick both physically and mentally.
65. *Lollia Paulinus*, divorced third wife of (64).
66. *Caesonia*, fourth wife of (64), murdered by Praetorian Guard 41 A.D. Mentally unbalanced.
67. Infant death.
68. *Venicius*, husband of (69).
69. *Julia Livilla*, born 18 A.D., exiled by Caligula (64) and assassinated by (33). Probably mentally unbalanced.
70. *Lucius Caius Longinus*, divorced first husband of (71).
71. *Drusilla*, born 17 A.D., died 38 A.D. Morally and mentally unbalanced. Caligula's (64) favorite sister; had incestuous relations with him and was deified by him after her death.
72. *Lepidus*, second husband of (71) and her first cousin.
73. *M. Julius Silanus*.
74. *Amelia Lepida*.
75. Unknown child of poet Ovid (44).
76. Murdered unborn child of Nero (49).
77. and 78. Infant deaths.
79. *Julia Drusilla*, killed 41 A.D. by Praetorian Guard. Mentally unbalanced.
80. through 86. Silanus family all murdered by Nero (49) because of their claims to the throne. All apparently normal.

Learned Societies Around the World

Denmark

Royal Danish Society of Sciences and Arts (Det Kgl. Danske Videnskabernes Selskab). Founded 1742. Promotes research in history, philosophy, mathematics, and physics.

Danish Society for National History (Det Kgl. Danske Selskab for Faedrelandets Historie). Founded 1745.

Royal Society for Old Nordic Culture (Det Kgl. Nordiske Oldskriftselskab). Founded 1745.

Danish Society of Language and Literature (Det Danske Sprog- og Litteraturselskab). Founded 1911.

Royal Library (Det Kgl. Bibliotek) in Copenhagen. Founded 1657. Largest library in Scandinavia.

Both Universities of Copenhagen and Aarhus have astronomical observatories which put out individual publications.

Most important scientific periodicals are the *Acta*, which are published by the various institutes and which also appear in Norway and Sweden. A number of professional journals is also published.