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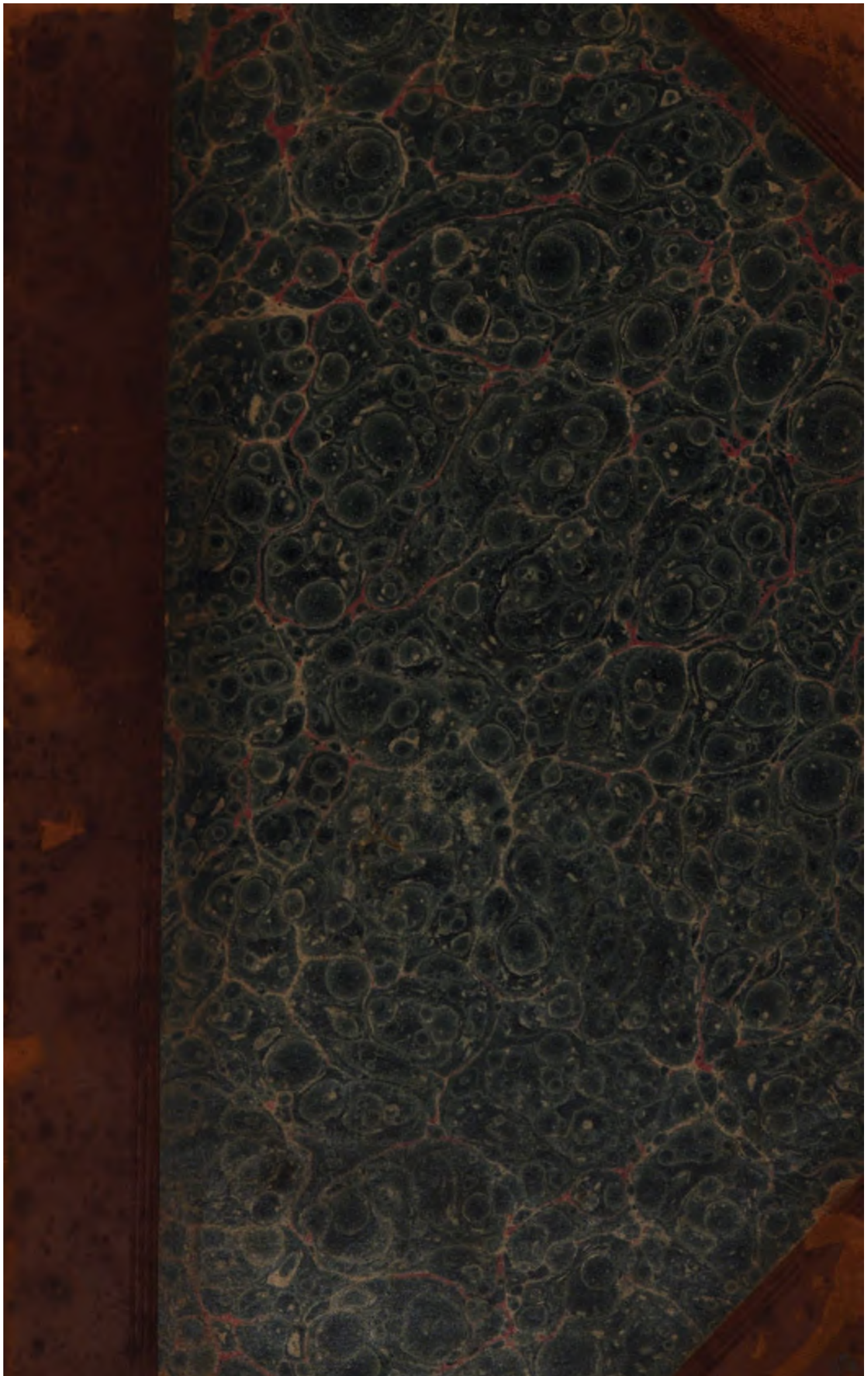
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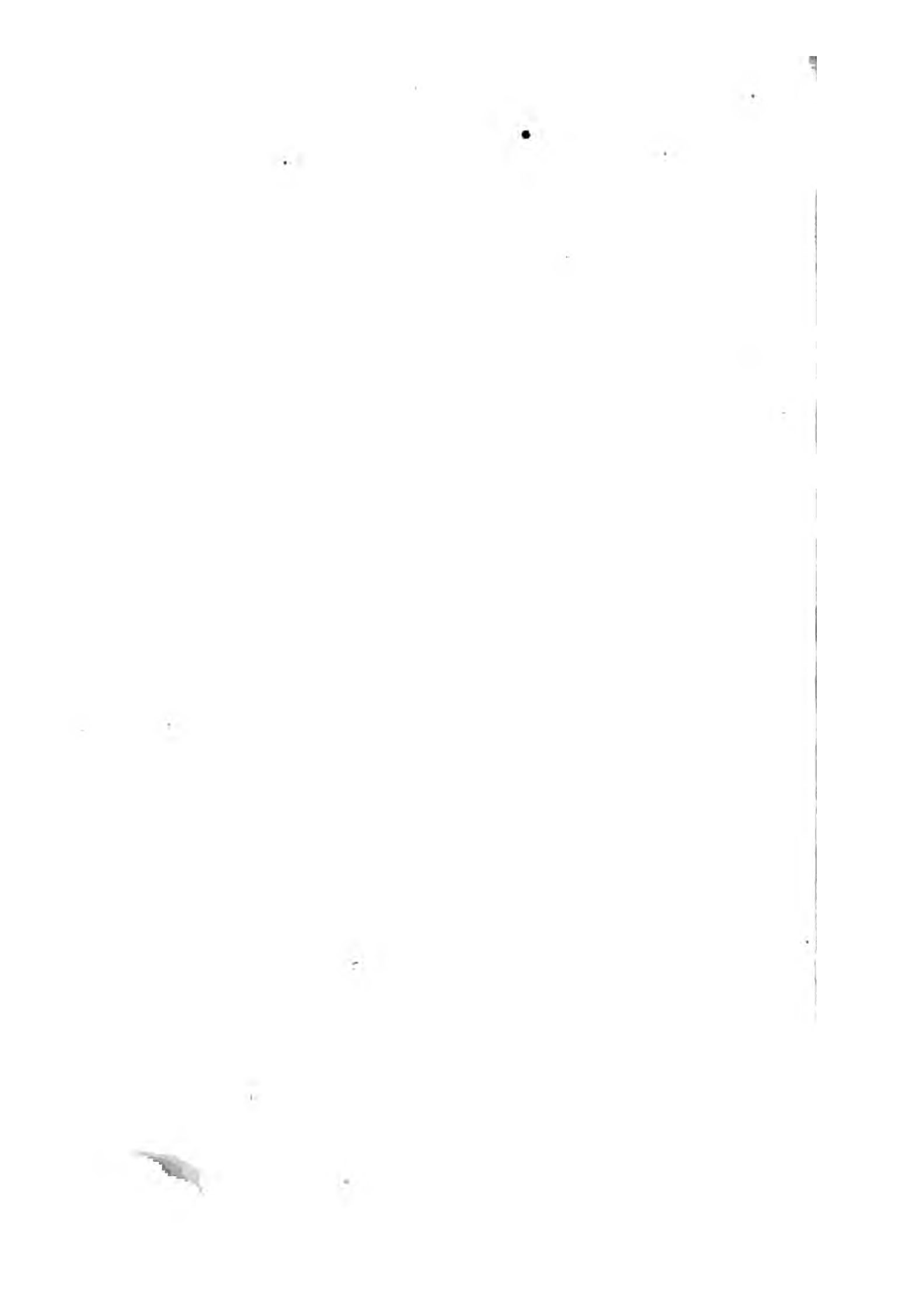
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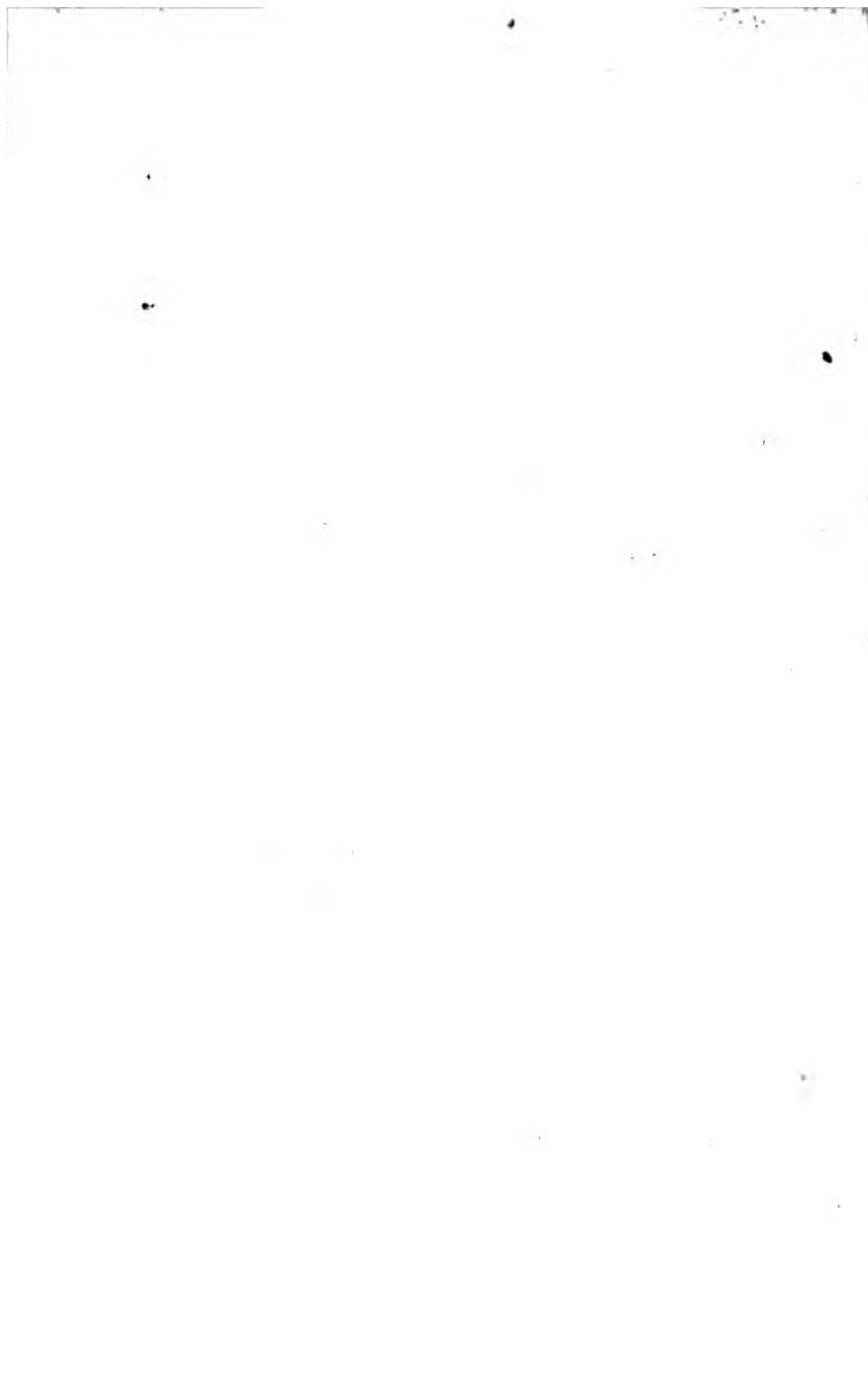
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T A C I T U S.

TRANSLATED BY

ARTHUR MURPHY, ESQ.

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CONTENTS
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Arguments	PAGE v
----------------------------	-------------------------

THE ANNALS.

Book XIV.	1
— XV.	70
— XVI.	149
Appendix	185
Genealogical Table of the Cæsars	252

THE HISTORY.

Book I.	285
-----------------	-----

'This is an excellent work, and supersedes all that has been done on this author. The lost portions of Tacitus are supplied by original compositions [by Brotier], and interstitial books are added to connect and complete the whole.'—

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL MISCELLANY.

ANNALS OF TACITUS.

ARGUMENTS.

BOOK XIV.

SECT. I. Nero's passion for Poppæa, and his hatred of Agrippina his mother, more violent than ever; Agrippina tries to regain his affections, but in vain; Nero approves of a scheme to drown her in the sea; a ship constructed for the purpose; Agrippina escapes from the wreck; Nero enraged sends Anicetus, the commander of the fleet at Misenum, to murder her—XI. Nero's letter to the senate justifying the murder; supplications decreed to the gods; Pætus Thræsea goes out of the senate full of indignation—XIII. Nero rushes into every excess; he drives chariots, plays on the flute, and compels men of family to appear on the stage; he exhibits in public, and turns poet—XVII. A dreadful fray between the inhabitants of Nuceria and Pompeium—XVIII. Complaints preferred to the senate by the Cyrenians; death of Domitius Afer and Marcus Servilius, two famous orators; their characters—XX. Quinquennial games established by Nero; observations on that institution—XXII. A comet portends a change of government; Rubellius Plautus driven into banishment—XXIII. The wise and gallant conduct of Corbulo in Armenia; he takes Artaxata, and afterwards Tigranocerta, and places Tigranes on the throne of Armenia—XXVII. Laodicea, a city in Asia, destroyed by an earthquake; imprudent and impolitic management of the Roman government in regard to the colonies—XXVIII. The election of pretors settled by the prince—XXIX. A general insurrection in Britain; Suetonius Paulinus sent to command the army; he takes the isle of Mona (now Anglesey), and destroys the religious groves; during his absence in those parts a general massacre of the Romans; the province almost lost, but recovered by

Suetonius, who defeats Boadicea with prodigious slaughter—XL. The governor, or prefect of Rome, murdered by one of his slaves; debates in the senate about the punishment of all slaves in the house at the time of a murder committed on the master—XLVI. Tarquitiuſ Priscuſ condemned; death of Memmiuſ Reguluſ; hiſ character; Nero dedicates a ſchool for athletic exerciſes; the law of ma- jeſty revived; Antiftiuſ the pretor proſecuted for a ſati- rical poem on the emperor; the ſenate willing to inflict a capital puniſhment; Pætus Thraſea oppoſes the motion; the majority vote on hiſ ſide—LI. Burrhuſ dieſ univerſally lamented—LII. Attempts againſt Seneca; hiſ enemies un- dermine hiſ with the prince; hiſ interview with Nero; hiſ ſpeech, and the prince’s anſwer—LVII. Tigellinuſ in high favor; by hiſ advice Sylla murdered at Marseilles, and Plautuſ in Aſia—LX. Nero repudiates hiſ wife Octa- via, and marrieſ Poppæa; an inſurrection of the populace; Anicetuſ ſuborned by Nero to confeſſ hiſ guilty of adultery with Octavia; ſhe iſ baniſhed by Nero to the iſle of Pandataria, and ſoon after murdered.

These transactions include near four years.

Years of Rome.	Of Chriſt.	Conſulſ.
812	59	Caiuſ Vipſtanuſ Apronianuſ, Luciuſ Fonteiuſ Capito.
813	60	Nero, fourth time, Coſſuſ Cor- neliuſ Lentuluſ.
814	61	Cæſoniuſ Pætus, Petroniuſ Tur- pilianuſ.
815	62	P. Mariuſ Celuſ, L. Aſiniuſ Galluſ.

BOOK XV.

SECT. I. Armenia invaded by Vologeſeſ, king of Parthia; he iſ repulſed by the ſpirit and good conduct of Corbuluſ—VI. Cæſenniſ Pætus ſent by Nero with a ſpecial commiſ- ſion to take on hiſ the ſole command in Armenia; hiſ raſhneſſ, vanity, and want of military ſkill; he iſ beſieged with hiſ legions; Corbuluſ marcheſ to hiſ relief, but too late; Pætus obliged to ſurrender—XVIII. Trophieſ of

victory decreed at Rome, while the war is still depending—XIX. Debates in the senate concerning fictitious adoptions—XXIII. Nero has a daughter by Poppæa ; his immoderate joy ; public monuments erected, but in vain ; the child dies within four months ; is deified, and a temple is built to her—XXIV. A deputation from the Parthians, claiming a right to retain Armenia ; the ambassadors dismissed without success ; the conduct of the war committed to Corbulo ; he enters Armenia a second time ; the Parthians struck with terror ; a treaty ensues, and the Parthians agree to terms of peace ; Tiridates is to deposit the diadem at the foot of Nero's statue, and never resume it without the consent of Nero—XXXII. The cities on the coast near the Alps admitted to the privileges of Latium ; Nero sings on the public stage at Naples ; his violent excesses in all kinds of riot and debauchery—XXXV. Torquatus Silanus compelled to put an end to his life—XXXVII. Rome set on fire, and Nero suspected of being author of the conflagration ; he seizes the ruins to his own use, and builds a magnificent palace ; the Christians accused of being the incendiaries, and, though innocent, put to death with cruel barbarity—XLVII. A variety of extraordinary omens—XLVIII. A conspiracy against Nero in favor of Caius Piso ; a number of Roman knights and senators engaged in the plot ; the first mover of it unknown ; Subrius Flavius a forward leader ; Epicharis, an enfranchised slave, endeavors to animate the conspirators ; by her imprudence, and the information of Milichus, a freedman, the conspiracy is detected—LVI. The conspirators betray their accomplices ; Lucan the poet accuses his mother—LVII. The fortitude of Epicharis on the rack ; Fenius Rufus, though engaged in the plot, acts with vehemence against the rest of the accomplices ; several illustrious men put to death—LX. Seneca accused, and a tribune sent to him with the particulars of the information ; his answer ; he receives orders to die ; his wife, Pompeia Paulina, saved by order of Nero ; Seneca dies in the bath—LXVI. Fenius Rufus accused by the rest of the conspirators—LXVII. The firm behavior of Subrius Flavius, his intrepid answer to Nero, and his death—LXVIII. Vestinus, the consul, though innocent, commanded by a tribune to open his veins—LXX. Lucan the

poet dies, repeating his own verses—LXXII. Nero distributes a largess among the soldiers; the senate convened; their base and servile flattery; oblations decreed to the gods; the month of April styled by the name Nero.

These transactions passed in little more than three years.

Years of Rome.	Of Christ.	Consuls.
815	62	continued, Marius Celsus, Asinius Gallus.
816	63	Memmius Regulus, Verginius Rufus.
817	64	C. Læcanius Bassus, M. Licinius Crassus.
818	65	Licinius Nerva Silanus, M. Vestinus Atticus.

BOOK XVI.

SECT. I. Nero is amused with hopes of finding great stores of hidden treasure in Africa; one Cesellius Bassus, deluded by his dreams, communicated the secret, and thence the wild prodigality of the prince—IV. The quinquennial games; Nero contends for the victory in song and eloquence; he mounts the public stage; Vespasian (afterwards emperor) in danger from Nero's spies stationed in the playhouse—VI. The death of Poppæa, her funeral; Nero delivers her panegyric—VII. C. Cassius and L. Silanus sent into exile; Lepida left to the judgment of the prince—X. L. Vetus, Sextia, and Pollutia, put to death—XII. The months of May and June called by the names of Claudius and Germanicus—XIII. An uncommon tempest in Campania and epidemic disorders at Rome—XIV. Antei and Ostorius compelled to put an end to their lives—XVII. Annæus Mela (the father of Lucan the poet), and Cerealis Anicius, Rufius Crispinus, and Petronius, ordered to die—XVIII. Character of Petronius—XIX. His behavior in his last moments—XX. Silia banished on suspicion of being the person that discovered Nero's secret vices—XXI. Nero bent on the destruction of Pætus Thræsea, and Bareas Soranus—XXII. Cossutianus accuses Thræsea—XXIII. Ostorius Sabinus undertakes the charge

against Bareas Soranus ; Nero fixes the destruction both of Thræsea and Soranus at the time when Tiridates arrives at Rome to be invested with the crown of Armenia ; Thræsea debates with his friends whether it were best for him to attend the senate ; different opinions on the subject—XXVII. The senate-house surrounded with guards—XXVIII. Bitter speech of Eprius Marcellus against Thræsea—XXX. Servilia, the daughter of Soranus, involved in the same danger with her father ; her noble defence ; both condemned, as also Thræsea ; the choice of their death left to themselves ; Helvidius Priscus banished out of Italy ; Montanus charged with writing a satirical poem against Nero ; he is pardoned, but never to exercise any public office ; the three accusers, Eprius Marcellus, Cossutianus, and Ostorius Sabinus, amply rewarded—XXXIV. A questor sent to see Thræsea finish his days ; the remarkable behavior of Thræsea, and his noble advice to the questor.—[The rest of this book is lost.]

These transactions passed, partly in the former consulship, and in the following year.

Years of Rome.	Of Christ.	Consuls.
818	65	Silius Nerva, Atticus Vestinus.
819	66	Caius Suetonius Paulinus, Caius Lucius Telesinus.

APPENDIX.

SECT. I. The death of Thræsea, Soranus, and Servilia ; the banishment of Paconius and Helvidius—II. Tiridates arrives at Naples, and thence proceeds with Nero to Puteoli ; Nero exposes himself as a singer ; Tiridates kills a wild beast—III. Tiridates and Nero arrive at Rome ; the city illuminated the night before the coronation ; the kingdom of Armenia granted to him—IV. The speech of Tiridates ; Nero, to gain the applause of the eastern prince, turns coachman, player, and minstrel ; he is glad to find a number of the eastern magi in the train of Tiridates, and endeavors to become master of their art, but finds the whole to be an imposture—V. Corbulo meets Tiridates on his way back to Armenia—VI. Nero shuts the temple of Janus,

but proposes to open it again for four different wars ; but amidst his projects, deputies arrive from Greece, offering the prize for song and the guitar ; Nero gives them a favorable reception ; he was on the point of declaring war against the Jews ; but he changes his purpose, and makes great preparations against the Ethiopians and the Albanians ; but changing his mind a second time, he sets out for Greece with a prodigious retinue—VII. Account of Nero's conduct in Greece ; he plays a variety of characters on the public stage ; he gains eighteen hundred laurel crowns for his victories in music ; the senate return thanks to the gods—VIII. He travels round the country, but avoids Athens and Sparta ; he gives a loose to vice, indulges in new pleasures, and marries Sporus the eunuch—IX. The exhausted finances of the prince supplied by draining the people ; the arrogance of Helius, an imperial freedman, who directs every thing at Rome—X. Nero attempts to open a passage for the sea through the isthmus of Corinth ; for that purpose a number of Jew prisoners sent by Vespasian to labor at the work ; Vespasian appointed commander against the Jews—XI. Helius, who governs every thing at Rome in the absence of Nero, insults the senate and the people ; he writes an account to Nero of all that passes, and presses him to return to the capital ; Nero forms a design against the life of Corbulo ; Arrius Varrus, an officer in Asia, sends an accusation against Corbulo ; Corbulo passes into Greece to have an interview with Nero ; Corbulo compelled to despatch himself ; Nero's labors at the isthmus of Corinth ; he embarks for Italy, and arrives at Naples ; he enters Rome in triumph—XII. A conspiracy discovered, and the accomplices put to death ; a revolt in Gaul ; Verginius Rufus defeats the insurrection of Vindex ; Galba in secret favored the cause of Vindex, and is much alarmed at his defeat—XIII. Nero resolves to destroy the whole senate ; his designs discovered by a favorite slave ; the fathers, alarmed for their own safety, prepare to counteract Nero's designs ; Nero adjudged to suffer death, as an enemy to his country—XIV. Nero terrified ; he is driven to despair, laments his sad condition, and at last puts an end to his life ; the last and worst of the house of Cæsar—XV. Prodigies ; the sudden joy, and changeable humors,

of the populace ; Nymphidius favors Galba's party, meaning at the same time to seize the sovereignty ; he is slain—XVI. Proceedings against all the instruments of Nero's cruelty ; Galba informed of the death of Nero ; he marches at the head of his army towards Italy, and begins his reign with cruelty and great effusion of blood.

These transactions passed in three years.

Years of Rome.	Of Christ.	Consuls.
819	66	Suetonius Paulinus, Lucius Telesinus.
820	67	Fonteius Capito, Julius Rufus.
821	68	Silius Italicus, Galerius Trachalus.

HISTORY OF TACITUS.

BOOK I.

SECT. I. Preface to the History—II. Summary view of the whole work ; state of the city, the armies, and the provinces—VI. Galba's court, and the reigning vices—VIII. Condition of Spain, Gaul, the Upper and Lower Germany, Syria, Egypt, and Africa ; the war against the Jews conducted by Vespasian—XII. Revolt of the legions in Upper Germany ; Galba consults about the choice of a successor ; different opinions among his ministers, Vinus, Laco, and Icelus, one of his freedmen ; Otho has hopes of the nomination—XIV. Choice of Piso for the succession—XV. Galba's speech on the occasion ; he declares his adoption of Piso in the camp, and in the senate ; ill-timed severity of Galba ; an embassy to the German legions—XXI. Otho plans a revolution ; he corrupts the pretorian guards ; two common soldiers undertake to dispose of the sovereignty ; Otho proclaimed emperor—XXIX. Galba, in the meantime, employed in a sacrifice in the capitol ; Piso's speech to the soldiers—XXXVII. Otho harangues the pretorians in the camp—XL. The pretorians rush into the city ;

Galba murdered—XLII. Death of Titus Vinius; the constancy of a centurion; Piso put to death; Otho received with adulation by the senate and the people—XLVI. All things directed by the soldiers; numbers executed; Marius Celsus saved by the artifice of Otho—XLVIII. Characters of Piso and Titus Vinius—XLIX. Character of Galba—L. Vitellius, before Galba's death, aims at the sovereignty—LI. Origin of the revolt among the German legions; Vitellius saluted emperor; he sends two armies to invade Italy, one under Fabius Valens, and the other under Cæcina; Vitellius follows with a third army; his excessive luxury and stupidity; the cruelty and rapine of Valens and Cæcina—LXIII. The Gauls, partly through fear and partly from inclination, swear fidelity to Vitellius—LXIV. Valens on his march hears of the death of Galba—LXVII. Cæcina attacks the Helvetians, and lays waste the country; he passes over the Penine mountains into Italy—LXXI. Otho's conduct at Rome; he begins to act with vigor—LXXII. Death of Tigellinus, and his character—LXXIV. Letters between Otho and Vitellius; they endeavor to overreach each other; emissaries employed by both; the people of Sarmatia invade the province of Mœsia, and are put to the rout with great slaughter—LXXX. An insurrection of the soldiers at Rome—LXXXIII. Otho's speech to the soldiers—LXXXVI. Portents and prodigies spread a general alarm at Rome—LXXXVII. Otho consults about the operations of the war; he appoints his generals, and sends his fleet to invade the Narbon Gaul—LXXXIX. Melancholy condition of the people at Rome; Otho proceeds on his expedition against the Vitellian forces, and leaves his brother, Salvius Titianus, chief governor of Rome.

These transactions passed in a few months.

Years of Rome.	Of Christ.	Consuls.
822	69	Servius Galba, second time, Titus Vinius Rufinus.

ANNALS OF TACITUS.

BOOK XIV.

SECT. I. CAIUS VESPSTANUS and Lucius Fonteius succeeded to the consulship. Nero was determined no longer to defer the black design which had lain for some time fostered in his heart. He had gained in four years a taste of power, and was now grown sanguine enough to think that he might hazard a daring stride in guilt. His love for Poppæa kindled every day to high ardor. To be the imperial wife was the ambition of that aspiring beauty; but while Agrippina lived she could not hope to see Octavia divorced from the emperor. She began by whispered calumny to undermine the emperor's mother, and at times, in a vein of pleasantry, to alarm the pride and jealousy of Nero. With an air of raillery she called him a pupil still under tuition; a dependant on the will of others, in fancy guiding the reins of government, but in reality deprived of personal liberty. 'For what other reason was her marriage so long deferred? Had her person already lost the power of pleasing? Were the triumphal honors obtained by her ancestors a bar to

her preferment? Or was it supposed that she was not of a fruitful constitution, capable of bearing children? Perhaps the sincerity of her love was called in question. No; the voice of a wife might be heard, and the pride and avarice with which an imperious mother insulted the senate and oppressed the people might be exposed in open day. If, however, it was a settled point with Agrippina that no one but the bosom plague of the emperor should be her daughter-in-law, Poppæa could return to the embraces of Otho;¹ with him she could retire to some remote corner of the world, where she might hear, indeed, of the emperor's disgrace, but at a distance, with the consolation of neither being a spectatress of the scene, nor a sharer in his afflictions.' By these and such like suggestions, intermixed with tears and female artifice, she ensnared the heart of Nero. No one attempted to weaken her influence. To see the pride of Agrippina humbled was the wish of all; but that the son would renounce the ties of natural affection, and imbrue his hands in the blood of his mother, was what never entered the imagination of any man.

II. In the history of those times transmitted to us by Cluvius, we read that Agrippina, in her rage for power, did not scruple to meet the emperor about the middle of the day, as he rose from table, high in blood, and warm with wine. Against the artifices of one woman Seneca resolved to play off the charms of another, and Acte² was accordingly employed. The jealousy of the concubine was easily alarmed: she saw her own danger, and the infamy that awaited the prince. Being taught her lesson, she

¹ Otho, afterwards emperor. See xiii. 45, 46.

² Acte has been already mentioned; *Annals*, xiii. 12.

gave notice to Nero that he was publicly charged with incest, while his mother gloried in the crime. The army, she said, would revolt from a man plunged in vice of so deep a die. Fabius Rusticus differs from this account. If we believe that author, Agrippina did not seek this vile pollution. It was the natural passion of Nero, and Acte had the address to wean him from it. Cluvius, however, is confirmed by the testimony of other writers. The report of common fame is also on his side. Men were willing to believe the worst of Agrippina. If she was not in fact guilty of a design so detestable, a new inclination, however shocking to nature, seemed probable in a woman of her character; who, in the prime of her youth, from motives of ambition, resigned herself to Lepidus; and who afterwards, with the same view, by allying herself with Pallas, proved her capable of the worst of crimes.

III. From this time Nero shunned the presence of his mother. Whenever she went to her gardens, or to either of her seats at Tusculum or Antium, he commended her taste for the pleasures of retirement. At length, detesting her wherever she was, he determined to despatch her at once. How to execute his purpose, whether by poison, or the poniard, was the only difficulty. The former seemed the most advisable; but to administer it at his own table might be dangerous, since the fate of Britannicus was too well known. To tamper with her domestics was equally unsafe. A woman of her cast, practised in guilt, and inured to evil deeds, would be on her guard; and besides, by the habit of using antidotes, she was fortified against every kind of poison. To assassinate her, and yet conceal the murder, was impracticable. Nero had no settled plan, nor was there among his creatures a single person in whom he could confide.

In this embarrassment Anicetus offered his assistance. This man had a genius for the worst iniquity. From the rank of an enfranchised slave he rose to the command of the fleet that lay at Misenum. He had been tutor to Nero in his infancy, and always at variance with Agrippina. Mutual hostility produced mutual hatred. He proposed the model of a ship on a new construction, formed in such a manner that in the open sea part might give way at once, and plunge Agrippina to the bottom. The ocean, he said, was the element of disasters; and if the vessel foundered, malignity itself could not convert into a crime what would appear to be the effect of adverse winds and boisterous waves. After her decease the prince would have nothing to do but to raise a temple to her memory. Altars and public monuments would be proofs of filial piety.

IV. Nero approved of the stratagem, and the circumstances of the time conspired to favor it. The court was then at Baiæ, to celebrate, during five days, the festival called the Quinquatrua.¹ Agrippina was invited to be of the party. To tempt her thither Nero changed his tone. 'The humors of a parent claimed indulgence; for sudden starts of passion allowance ought to be made, and petty resentments could not be effaced too soon.' By this artifice he hoped to circulate an opinion of his intire reconciliation, and Agrippina, he had no doubt, with the easy credulity of her sex, would be the dupe of a report that flattered her wishes. She sailed from Antium to attend the festival. The prince went to the sea-coast to receive her. He gave her his hand; he embraced her tenderly, and

¹ A feast in honor of Minerva, beginning March 19th, and continued for five days. See Ovid, *Fast.* iii. 713, 810,

conducted her to a villa called Bauli,¹ in a pleasant situation, washed by the sea, where it forms a bay between the cape of Misenum and the gulf of Baiæ. Among the vessels that lay at anchor, one in particular, more superb than the rest, seemed intended by its decorations to do honor to the emperor's mother. Agrippina was fond of sailing parties. She frequently made coasting voyages in a galley with three ranks of oars, and mariners selected from the fleet. The banquet of which she was to partake was fixed at a late hour, that the darkness of night might favor the perpetration of an atrocious deed.

But the secret transpired: on the first intelligence, Agrippina, it is said, could scarce give credit to so black a story. She chose, however, to be conveyed to Baiæ in a land-carriage. Her fears, as soon as she arrived, were dissipated by the polite address of her son. He gave her the most gracious reception, and placed her at table above himself. He talked with frankness, and, by intermixing sallies of youthful vivacity with more sedate conversation, had the skill to blend the gay, the airy, and the serious. He protracted the pleasures of the social meeting to a late hour, when Agrippina thought it time to retire. The prince attended her to the shore; he exchanged a thousand fond endearments, and clasped her with ardent affection, perhaps intending, under the appearance of filial piety, to disguise his purpose; or, it might be, that the sight of a mother doomed to destruction might make even a heart like his yield, for a moment, to the touch of nature.

¹ Bauli, formerly the seat of Hortensius, was famous for great plenty of fish; hence at this day the name of *peschiera d'Ortensio*.

V. That this iniquitous scene should not be wrapped in darkness, the care of Providence seems to have interposed. The night was calm and serene; the stars shot forth their brightest lustre, and the sea presented a smooth expanse. Agrippina went on board, attended by only two of her domestic train. One of them, Crepereius Gallus, took his place near the steerage; the other, a female attendant, by name Acerronia, stretched herself at the foot of the bed where her mistress lay, and in the fulness of her heart expressed her joy to see the son awakened to a sense of his duty, and the mother restored to his good graces. The vessel had made but little way when, on a signal given, the deck over Agrippina's cabin fell in at once. Being loaded with lead Crepereius was crushed under the weight. The props of the bedroom happening to be of a solid structure, bore up the load, and saved both Agrippina and her servant. Nor did the vessel, as was intended, fall to pieces at once. Consternation, hurry, and confusion, followed. The innocent, in a panic, bustled to and fro, embarrassing and confounding such as were in the plot. To heave the ship on one side, and sink her at once, was the design of the accomplices: but not acting in concert, and the rest making contrary efforts, the vessel went down by slow degrees. This gave the passengers an opportunity of escaping from the wreck, and trusting to the mercy of the waves.

Acerronia, in her fright, called herself Agrippina, and with pathetic accents implored the mariners to save the emperor's mother. The assassins fell on her with their oars, with their poles, and with whatever instruments they could seize. She died under repeated blows. Agrippina hushed her fears; not a word escaping from her, she passed undistinguished

by the murderers, without any other damage than a wound on her shoulder. She dashed into the sea, and, by struggling with all her efforts, kept herself above water till the small barks put off from the shore, and, coming in good time to her assistance, conveyed her up the Lucrine lake¹ to her own villa.

VI. She was now at leisure to reflect on the misery of her situation. The treachery of her son's letter, conceived in terms of affection, and his mock civility, were too apparent. Without a gust of wind, and without touching a rock, at a small distance from the shore, the vessel broke down from the upper deck, like a piece of mechanism constructed for the purpose. The death of Acerronia, and the wound which she herself received, were decisive circumstances. But even in that juncture she thought it best to temporise. Against powerful enemies not to see too much is the safest policy. She sent her freedman Agerinus to inform her son that, by the favor of the gods, and the good auspices of the emperor, she had escaped from a shipwreck. The news, she had no doubt, would affect her son; but, for the present, she wished he would forbear to visit her. In her situation, rest was all she wanted. Having despatched her messenger, she assumed an air of courage; she got her wound dressed, and used all proper applications. With an air of ease she called for the last will of Acerronia, and, having ordered an inventory to be made of her effects, secured every thing under her own seal; acting in this single article without dissimulation.

VII. Nero, in the mean time, expected with im-

¹ The Lucrine lake, now Lago Lucrino. Agrippina's villa was at Bauli. There is in the neighborhood a place now called Sepolchro d' Agrippina.

patience an account of his mother's death. Intelligence at last was brought that she still survived, wounded, indeed, and knowing from what quarter the blow was aimed. The prince heard the news with terror and astonishment. In the hurry of his imagination, he saw his mother already at hand, fierce with indignation, calling aloud for vengeance, and rousing her slaves to an insurrection. She might have recourse to the army, and stir up a rebellion; she might open the whole dark transaction to the senate; she might carry her complaints to the ear of the people. Her wound, the wreck, the murder of her friends, every circumstance would inflame resentment, What course remained for him? Where was Seneca? and where was Burrhus? He had sent for them on the first alarm: they came with expedition; but whether strangers to the plot, remains uncertain. They stood for some time fixed in silence. To dissuade the emperor from his fell design they knew was not in their power; and, in the present dilemma, they saw, perhaps, that Agrippina must fall, or Nero perish. Seneca, though on all other occasions ready to take the lead, fixed his eyes on Burrhus. After a pause, he desired to know whether it were advisable to order the soldiers to complete the business. Burrhus was of opinion that the pretorian soldiers, devoted to the house of Cæsar, and still respecting the memory of Germanicus, would not be willing to spill the blood of his daughter. It was for Anicetus to finish the last act of the tragedy.

That bold assassin undertook the business. He desired to have the catastrophe in his own hands. Nero revived at the sound. From that day, he said, the imperial dignity would be his, and that mighty benefit

would be conferred by an enfranchised slave. ‘Haste, fly,’ he cried; ‘take with you men fit for your purpose, and consummate all.’ Anicetus heard that a message was sent by Agrippina, and that Agerinus was actually arrived. His ready invention planned a new scene of villany. While the messenger was in the act of addressing the prince he dropped a poniard between his legs, and instantly, as if he had discovered a treasonable design, seized the man, and loaded him with irons, from that circumstance taking color to charge Agrippina with a plot against the life of her son. When she was disposed of, a report that, in despair, she put an end to her life would be an apt addition to the fable.

VIII. Meanwhile, the news of Agrippina’s danger spread an alarm round the country. The general cry imputed it to accident. The people rushed in crowds to the sea-shore; they went on the piers that projected into the sea; they filled the boats; they waded as far as they could venture; stretching forth their hands, and calling aloud for help: the bay resounded with shrieks and lamentations, with distracting questions, dissonant answers, and a wild confusion of voices. Amidst the uproar, numbers came with lighted torches. Finding that Agrippina was safe, they pressed forward to offer their congratulations, when a body of armed soldiers, threatening violence, obliged the whole crowd to disperse. Anicetus planted a guard round the mansion of Agrippina, and having burst open the gates, he seized the slaves, and forced his way to her apartment.

A few domestics remained at the door to guard the entrance; fear had dispersed the rest. In the room the pale glimmer of a feeble light was seen, and only one in waiting. Before the ruffians broke in Agrippina

pina passed the moments in dreadful agitation: she wondered that no messenger had arrived from her son. What detained Agerinus? She listened, and on the coast where, not long before, the whole was tumult, noise, and confusion, a dismal silence prevailed, broken at intervals by a sudden uproar, that added to the horror of the scene. Agrippina trembled for herself. Her servant was leaving the room: she called to her, 'And do you too desert me?' In that instant she saw Anicetus entering the chamber. Hercules, who had the command of a galley, and Oloaritus, a marine centurion, followed him. 'If you come,' said Agrippina, 'from the prince, tell him I am well: if your intents are murderous, you are not sent by my son; the guilt of parricide is foreign to his heart.' The ruffians surrounded her bed. The centurion of the marines was drawing his sword: at the sight Agrippina presented her person, 'And here,' she said, 'plunge your sword into me.' Hercules, in that moment, gave the first blow with a club, and wounded her on the head. She expired under a number of mortal wounds.

IX. The facts here related stand confirmed by the concurrent testimony of historians. It is added, but not with equal authority, that Nero beheld his mother stretched in death, and praised the elegance of her form. This however is denied by other writers. The body was laid out on a common couch, such as is used at meals, and, without any other ceremony, burnt that very night. During the life of Nero no honor was offered to her remains; no tomb was erected to tell where she lay; nor was there so much as a mound of earth to inclose the place. After some time an humble monument¹ was raised by her domestics on

¹ It is still called, as mentioned above, Sepolchro d' Agrippina.

the road to Misenum, near the villa¹ of Cæsar the Dictator, which, from an eminence, commands a beautiful prospect of the sea and the bays along the coast. Mnester, one of the enfranchised slaves of Agrippina, attended the funeral. As soon as the pile was lighted this man, unwilling to survive his mistress, or perhaps dreading the malice of her enemies, despatched himself with his own sword. Of her own dreadful catastrophe Agrippina had warning many years before, when, consulting the Chaldeans about the future lot of her son, she was told that he would reign at Rome, and kill his mother. ‘Let him,’ she said, ‘let him kill me, but let him reign.’

X. This dreadful parricide was no sooner executed than Nero began to feel the horrors of his guilt. He lay, during the rest of the night, on the rack of his own mind; silent, pensive, starting up with sudden fear, wild and distracted. He lifted his eyes in quest of daylight, yet dreaded its approach. The tribunes and centurions, by the advice of Burrhus, were the first to administer consolation. The flattery of these men raised him from despair. They grasped his hand, congratulating him on his escape from the dark designs of his mother. His friends crowded to the temples to offer up their thanks to the gods. The neighboring cities of Campania followed their example. They offered victims, and sent addresses to the prince. Nero played a different part: he appeared with a dejected mien, weary of life, and inconsolable for the loss of his mother. But the face of a country cannot, like the features of man, assume a new appearance. The

¹ Marius, Pompey, and Cæsar, had their villas in the neighborhood of Baiæ, all built on the ridge of hills, and looking, as Seneca says, more like military works than rural seats; epist. 51.

sea and the adjacent coast presented to his eyes a scene of guilt and horror. It was reported at the time that the sound of trumpets was distinctly heard along the ridge of the hills, and groans and shrieks issued from Agrippina's grave. Nero removed to Naples, and from that place despatched letters to the senate, in substance as follows :

XI. 'Agerinus, the freedman of Agrippina, and of all her creatures the highest in her confidence, was found armed with a poniard ; and the blow being prevented, with the same spirit that planned the murder of her son, she despatched herself.' The letter proceeded to state a number of past transactions : ' Her ambition aimed at a share in the supreme power, and the pretorian bands were obliged to take an oath of fidelity to her. The senate and the people were to submit to the same indignity, and bear the yoke of female tyranny. Seeing her schemes defeated, she became an enemy to the fathers, to the soldiers, and the whole community ; she neither suffered a donative to be distributed to the army, nor a largess to the populace. At her instigation prosecutions were set on foot against the best and most illustrious men in Rome. If she did not enter the senate, and give audience to the ambassadors of foreign nations,¹ all would remember how that disgrace was prevented.' The reign of Claudius did not escape his animadversion ; but whatever were the enormities of that period, ' Agrippina,' he said, ' was the cause of all. Her death was an event in which the good fortune of the empire was signally displayed.' He gave a circumstantial account of the shipwreck : but what man existed, so absurd and stupid, as to believe it the effect of chance ? Was it

¹ See her attempt prevented by Seneca ; Annals, xiii. 5.

probable that a woman, who had just escaped from the fury of the waves, would send a single ruffian to attempt the life of a prince surrounded by his guards and his naval officers? The indignation of the public was not confined to Nero: with regard to him, who had plunged in guilt beyond all example, it was useless to complain. Censure was lost in mute astonishment. The popular odium fell on Seneca: his pen was seen in the prince's letters, and the attempt to gloss and varnish so vile a deed was considered as the avowal of an accomplice.

XII. The voice of the people did not restrain the adulation of the senate. Several decrees were passed in a strain of servile flattery; such as supplications and solemn vows at all the altars throughout the city of Rome: the festival called the Quinquatrua (during which the late conspiracy was detected) was to be celebrated, for the future, with the addition of public games; the statue of Minerva, wrought in gold, to be placed in the senate-house, with that of the emperor near it; and finally, the anniversary of Agrippina's birthday to be unhallowed in the calendar. Pætus Thrasea had been often present when the fathers descended to acts of meanness, and he did not rise in opposition; but on this occasion he left his seat, and walked out of the house, by his virtue provoking future vengeance, yet doing no service to the cause of liberty.

There happened about this time a number of prodigies, all deemed striking prognostics, but no consequences followed. A woman was delivered of a serpent. The sun suffered an eclipse,¹ and the fourteen quarters

1 This eclipse was the day before the kalends of May, that

of Rome were struck with lightning. In these extraordinary appearances the hand of Providence, it is evident, did not interpose; since the vices and tyranny of Nero continued to harass mankind for several years. The policy of the prince had now two objects in view: the first, to blacken the memory of his mother; and the second, to amuse the people with a show of his own clemency, when left, without control, to the bent of his own inclination. To this end he recalled from banishment, to which they had been condemned by the vindictive spirit of Agrippina, two illustrious women, namely, Junia,¹ and Calpurnia, together with Valerius Capito, and Licinius Gabolus, both of pretorian rank. He permitted the ashes of Lollia Paulina² to be brought to Rome, and a mausoleum to be erected to her memory. To Iturius and Calvisius,³ whom his own violence had driven into exile, he granted a free pardon. Silana⁴ had paid her debt to nature. Towards the end of Agrippina's life, when the power of that princess began to decline, or her resentment to be appeased, she had obtained leave to return from her distant exile as far as Tarentum. At that place she closed her days.

XIII. Nero loitered in the towns of Campania, full of doubt and perplexity, unable to determine how he should enter the city of Rome. Would the senate receive him with a submissive and complying spirit?

is, April 30th, A. U. C. 812; of the Christian era 59. See Pliny, ii. 70.

¹ For Junia Calvina, see Annals, xii. 8. For Calpurnia, Annals, xii. 22.

² For Lollia Paulina, see Annals, xii. 22.

³ Iturius and Calvisius banished by Nero; Annals, xiii. 22.

⁴ Silana was also banished by Nero; Annals, xiii. 22.

Could he rely on the temper of the people? These were points that made him anxious and irresolute. The vile advisers of his court (and never court abounded with so pernicious a race) interfered to animate his drooping spirit. They assured him, with confidence, that the name of Agrippina was held in detestation, and since her death the affections of the people for the person of the emperor knew no bounds. He had only to show himself, and it would be seen that he reigned in the hearts of the multitude. To prepare the way, they desired leave to enter the city of Rome before him.

On their arrival they found all things favorable beyond their hopes; they saw the several tribes going forth in procession to meet the prince; the senate in their robes of state; whole crowds of women, with their children, ranged in classes according to their respective ages, in the streets through which Nero was to pass; rows of scaffolding built up, and an amphitheatre of spectators, as if a triumph were to enter the city. Nero made his entry, flushed with the pride of victory over the minds of willing slaves, and proceeded, amidst the acclamations of gazing multitudes, to the capitol, where he offered thanks to the gods. From that moment he threw off all restraint. The authority of his mother, feeble as it was, had hitherto curbed the violence of his passions: but that check being now removed, he broke out at once, and gave a full display of his character.

XIV. To acquire the fame of a charioteer, and to figure in the race with a curricule and four horses, had been long the favorite passion of Nero. He had besides another frivolous talent: he could play on the harp, and sing to his own performance. With this pitiful ambition he had been often the minstrel of con-

vivial parties. He justified his taste by observing, that 'in ancient times, it had been the practice of heroes and of kings. The names of illustrious persons, who consecrated their talents to the honor of the gods, were preserved in immortal verse. Apollo was the tutelar deity of melody and song; and, though invested with the higher attributes of inspiration and prophecy, he was represented, not only in the cities of Greece, but also in the Roman temples, with a lyre in his hand, and the dress of a musical performer.' The rage of Nero for these amusements was not to be controlled. Seneca and Burrhus endeavored to prevent the ridicule to which a prince might expose himself by exhibiting his talents to the multitude. By their direction a wide space in the vale at the foot of the Vatican¹ was inclosed for the use of the emperor, that he might there manage the reins, and practise all his skill, without being a spectacle for the public eye. But his love of fame was not to be confined within those narrow bounds. He invited the multitude. They extolled with raptures the abilities of a prince who gratified their darling passion for public diversions.

The two governors were in hopes that their pupil, as soon as he had his frolic, would be sensible of the disgrace; but the effect was otherwise. The applause of the populace inspired him with fresh ardor. To keep himself in countenance, he conceived, if he could bring the practice into fashion, that his own infamy would be lost in the disgrace of others. With this view, he cast his eye on the descendants of families once illus-

¹ This was a circus begun by Caligula and finished by Nero. The church of St. Peter is built on this spot, and the obelisk which stood there was placed before St. Peter's at a vast expense by Pope Sixtus V.

trious, but at that time fallen to decay. From that class of men he selected the most necessitous, such as would be easily tempted to let themselves out for hire. He retained them as actors, and produced them on the public stage. Their names I forbear to mention: though they are now no more, the honor of their ancestors claims respect. The disgrace recoils on him who chose to employ his treasure, not for the noble end of preventing scandal, but to procure it. Nor was he willing to stop here: by vast rewards he bribed several Roman knights to descend into the arena, and present a show to the people. The situation of these unhappy men deserves our pity; for what are the bribes of an absolute prince but the commands of him who has power to compel?

XV. Nero was not as yet hardy enough to expose his person on a public stage. To gratify his passion for scenic amusements, and at the same time to save appearances, he established an entertainment, called the Juvenile Sports. To promote this institution numbers of the first distinction enrolled their names. Neither rank, nor age, nor civil honors, were an exemption. All degrees embraced the theatrical art, and, with emulation, became the rivals of Greek and Roman mimicry; proud to languish at the soft cadence of effeminate notes, and to catch the graces of wanton deportment. Women of rank¹ studied the most lascivious characters. In the grove planted round the lake, where Augustus gave his naval engagement, booths and places of recreation were erected, to pamper luxury, and inflame desire. By the prince's orders sums of money were distributed. Good men, through

¹ We are told by Dio that Ælia Catella, a woman of fourscore, exposed herself and old age to scorn, by dancing on the stage, among the court sycophants of the time; Dio, lxi.

motives of fear, accepted the donation; and to the profligate, whatever ministered to sensuality was sure to be acceptable. Luxury and corruption triumphed.

The manners, it is true, had long before this time fallen into degeneracy; but in these new assemblies a torrent of vice bore down every thing, beyond the example of former ages. Even in better days, when science and the liberal arts had not intirely lost their influence, virtue and modesty could scarce maintain their post; but in an age that openly professed every species of depravity what stand could be made by truth, by innocence, or by modest merit? The general corruption encouraged Nero to throw off all restraint. He mounted the stage, and became a public performer for the amusement of the people. With his harp in his hand he entered the scene; he tuned the chords with a graceful air, and with delicate florishes gave a prelude to his art. He stood in a circle of his friends, a pretorian cohort on guard, and the tribunes and centurions near his person. Burrhus was also present, pleasure in his countenance, and anguish at his heart. He grieved while he applauded. At this time was instituted a company of Roman knights under the title of The Augustan Society,¹ consisting of young men in the prime of life, some of them libertines from inclination, and others hoping by their profligacy to gain preferment. They attended night and day to applaud the prince: they admired the graces of his person; and in the various notes of that exquisite voice they heard the melody of the gods, who were all excelled by the enchanting talents of the prince. The tribe of sycophants assumed airs of grandeur,

¹ Suetonius says that the leaders of this new society had salaries of forty thousand sesterces allowed them; in Neron. § 20.

swelling with self-importance, as if they were all rising to preferment by their genius and their virtue.

XVI. Theatrical fame was not sufficient for the ambition of Nero: he wished to excel in poetry. All who possessed the art of versification were assembled to assist his studies. In this society of wits, young men, not yet qualified by their years to figure in the world, displayed the first essays of their genius. They met in the dearest intimacy. Scraps of poetry, by different hands,¹ were brought to the meeting, or composed on the spot; and those fragments, however unconnected, they endeavored to weave into a regular poem, taking care to insert the words and phrases of the emperor, as the most brilliant ornaments of the piece. That this was their method appears from a perusal of the several compositions, in which we see rhapsody without genius, verse without poetry, and nothing like the work of one creative fancy. Nor was philosophy disregarded by the emperor. At stated hours, when his convivial joys were finished, the professors of wisdom were admitted. Various systems were dogmatically supported; and to see the followers of different sects quarrel about an hypothesis was the amusement of Nero. He saw besides, among the venerable sages, some with formal mien and looks of austerity, who under an air of coyness plainly showed that they relished the pleasures of a court.

XVII. About this time a dreadful fray broke out between the inhabitants of Nuceria and Pompeii, two Italian colonies. The dispute, slight in the beginning, soon rose to violence, and terminated in

¹ Brotier compares this poetical patchwork to the *bouts-rimés*, which exercised the minor poets of France in the last century.

blood. It happened that Livineius Regulus,¹ who, as already mentioned, had been expelled the senate, gave a spectacle of gladiators. At this meeting jests and raillery, and the rough wit of country towns, flew about among the populace; abuse and scurrility followed; altercation excited anger; anger rose to fury; stones were thrown; and finally they had recourse to arms. The people of Pompeium, where the spectacle was given, were too strong for their adversaries. The Nuceriai suffered in the conflict. Numbers of their friends, covered with wounds, were sent to Rome. Sons wept for their parents, and parents for their children. The senate, to whom the matter was referred by the prince, directed an inquiry before the consuls, and, on their report, passed a decree, prohibiting for the space of ten years the like assemblies at Pompeium; and, moreover, dissolving certain societies established in that city, and incorporated contrary to law. Livineius and others, who appeared to be ring-leaders in the riot, were ordered into banishment.

XVIII. At the suit of the Cyrenians, Pedius Blæsus² was expelled the senate. The charge against him was, that he had pillaged the sacred treasure of Æsculapius, and in the business of listing soldiers had been guilty of receiving bribes, and committing various acts of gross partiality. A complaint was preferred by the same people against Acilius Strabo, a man of pretorian rank, who had been sent a commissioner by the emperor Claudius, with powers to ascertain the boundaries of the lands which formerly be-

¹ It does not appear when this man was expelled the senate. The account of that affair is lost. It is probable that this is the Livineius Regulus who is mentioned *Annals* iii. 11.

² He was afterwards restored to his rank; *Hist.* i. 17.

longed to king Apion,¹ and were by him bequeathed, with the rest of his dominions, to the Roman people. Various intruders had entered on the vacant possession, and from occupancy and length of time hoped to derive a legal title. The people, disappointed in their expectations, appealed from the sentence of Strabo. The senate, professing to know nothing of the commission granted by Claudius, referred the business to the decision of the prince. Nero ratified the award made by Strabo; but, to show a mark of good-will to the allies of Rome, he restored the lands in question to the persons who had been dispossessed.

XIX. In a short time after died Domitius Afer and Marcus Servilius, two illustrious citizens, eminent for the civil honors which they attained, and not less distinguished by their eloquence. Afer had been a shining ornament of the bar: Servilius entered the same career; but having left the forum, gave a signal proof of his genius by a well-digested history of Roman affairs. Elegant in his life and manners, he formed a contrast to the rough character of Afer, to whom in point of genius he was every way equal, in probity and morals his superior.²

XX. Nero entered on his fourth consulship, with Cornelius Cossus for his colleague. On the model of the Greek olympics he instituted public games to be celebrated every fifth year, and for that reason called quinquennial.³ In this, as in all cases of innovation,

¹ This African king, according to Livy, epitome lxx., died A. U. C. 658, and left all his possessions to the Roman people.

² Domitius Afer was a man of ambition, willing to advance his fortune by the worst of crimes; Annals, iv. 52. He is praised by Quintilian as an orator of considerable eloquence. See the Dialogue concerning Oratory.

³ Suetonius informs us that Nero was the first that insti-

the opinions of men were much at variance. By such as disliked the measure it was observed, ' that even Pompey, by building a permanent theatre,¹ gave offence to the thinking men of that day. Before that period an occasional theatre, with scenery and benches to serve the purpose, was deemed sufficient; and, if the inquiry were carried back to ancient times, it would be found that the spectators were obliged to stand during the whole representation. The reason was, that the people, accommodated with seats, might be tempted to waste whole days in idle amusements. Public spectacles were indeed of ancient origin, and, if still left to the direction of the pretor, might be exhibited with good order and propriety. But the new mode of pressing the citizens of Rome into the service of the stage had ruined all decorum. The manners had long since degenerated; and now, to work their total subversion, luxury was called in from every quarter of the globe; foreign nations were ransacked for the incentives of vice; and whatever was in itself corrupt, or capable of diffusing corruption, was to be found at Rome. Exotic customs and a foreign taste infected the young men of the time; dissipation, gymnastic arts, and infamous intrigues, were the fashion, encouraged by the prince and the senate, and not only encouraged, but established by their sanction, enforced by their authority.

' Under color of promoting poetry and eloquence, the patricians of Rome disgraced themselves on the

tuted, in imitation of the Greeks, a trial of skill in the three several arts of music, wrestling, and horse-racing, to be performed every five years, which he called Neronia; in Neron. § 12.

1 This theatre has been mentioned, xiii. 54. It was built A. U. C. 699.

public stage. What farther step remained? Nothing, but to bare their bodies; to anoint their limbs; to come forth naked in the lists; to wield the *cæstus*, and throwing aside their military weapons, fight prizes for the entertainment of the rabble. Will the sanctity of the augur's office, or the judicial character¹ of the Roman knights, edify by the manners now in vogue? Will the former be held in higher reverence because he has been lately taught to thrill with ecstasy at the soft airs of an effeminate song? And will the judge decide with greater ability because he affects to have a taste, and to pronounce on music? Vice goes on increasing; the night is added to the day; and, in mixed assemblies, the profligate libertine, under covert of the dark, may safely gratify the base desires which his imagination formed in the course of the day.'

XXI. Licentious pleasure had a number of advocates; all of them the apologists of vice disguised under specious names. By these men it was argued, 'that the citizens of Rome, in the earliest period, were addicted to public shows, and the expense kept pace with the wealth of the times. Pantomime players² were brought from Tuscany, and horse-races³ from Thurium. When Greece and Asia were reduced to subjection, the public games were exhibited with greater pomp: though it must be acknowledged, that

¹ Among the Roman knights there were four *decuriæ* appointed to exercise jurisdiction. Suetonius says that Caligula, to relieve the judges from the fatigue of business, added a fifth class to the former four; in *Calig.* § 16.

² The pantomime performers were brought to Rome from Tuscany, A. U. C. 390; *Livy*, vii. 2.

³ The people called *Thurii* inhabited part of Lucania. The spectacle of horse-races was invented by them, and exhibited at Rome, A. U. C. 140; *Livy*, i. 35.

in two hundred years (the time that elapsed from the triumph of Lucius Mummius,¹ who first introduced theatrical representations) not one Roman citizen of rank or family was known to degrade himself by listening in a troop of comedians. But it is also true that, by erecting a permanent theatre, a great annual expense was avoided. The magistrate is now no longer obliged to ruin his private fortune for the diversion of the public. The whole expenditure is transferred to the state, and, without encumbering a single individual, the people may enjoy the games of Greece. The contests between poets and orators would raise a spirit of emulation, and promote the cause of literature. Nor will the judge be disgraced if he lends an ear to the productions of genius, and shares the pleasures of a liberal mind. In the quinquennial festival lately instituted, a few nights, every fifth year, would be dedicated, not to criminal gratifications, but to social gaiety, in a place fitted for a large assembly, and illuminated with such a glare of light that clandestine vice would by consequence be excluded.'

Such was the argument of the advocates for dissipation. It is but fair to acknowledge that the celebration of the new festival was conducted without any offence against decency or good manners. Nor did the rage of the people for theatrical entertainments break out into any kind of excess. The pantomime performers, though restored to the theatre, were still excluded from such exhibitions as were held to be of a sacred nature. The prize of eloquence was not adjudged to any of the candidates; but it was thought a fit compliment to the emperor to pronounce him

¹ Lucius Mummius conquered Corinth, A. U. C. 608, and obtained the title of Achaicus; Velleius Paterc. i. 13.

conqueror. The Grecian garb, which was much in vogue during the festival, gave disgust, and from that time fell into disuse.

XXII. A comet having appeared in this juncture, that phenomenon, according to the popular opinion, announced that governments were to be changed, and kings dethroned. In the imaginations of men Nero was already deposed, and who should be his successor was the question. The name of Rubellius Plautus resounded in every quarter. By the maternal line this eminent citizen was of the Julian house. A strict observer of ancient manners, he maintained a rigid austerity of character. Recluse and virtuous in his family, he lived remote from danger, but his fame from the shade of obscurity shone forth with brighter lustre. The report of his elevation was confirmed by an accident, slight in itself, but by vulgar error received as a sure prognostic. While Nero was at table at a villa called Sublaqueum,¹ on the borders of the Simbruine lakes, it happened that the victuals which had been served up received a stroke of lightning, and the banquet was overturned. The place was on the confines of Tivoli, where the ancestors of Plautus by his father's side derived their origin. The omen, for that reason, made a deeper impression, and the current opinion was that Plautus was intended for imperial sway. The men whom bold, but often misguided, ambition leads to take an active part in revolutions of government, were all on his side. To suppress a rumor so important, and big with danger, Nero sent a letter to Plautus, advising him 'to consult the public tranquillity, and withdraw himself

¹ This place received its name from its proximity to the Simbruine lakes, and was thence called Sublaqueum. Brotier says it is now La Badia di Sublaco.

from the reach of calumny. He had patrimonial lands in Asia, where he might pass his youth, remote from enemies, and undisturbed by faction.' Plautus understood the hint, and with his wife Antistia and a few friends embarked for Asia.

In a short time after Nero, by his rage for new gratifications, put his life in danger, and drew on himself a load of obloquy. He chose to bathe at the fountain-head of the Marcian waters,¹ which had been brought to Rome in an aqueduct of ancient structure. By this act of impurity he was thought to have polluted the sacred stream, and to have profaned the sanctity of the place. A fit of illness which followed this frolic left no doubt in the minds of the populace. The gods, they thought, pursued with vengeance the author of so vile a sacrilege.

XXIII. We left Corbulo employed in the demolition of Artaxata. That city being reduced to ashes, he judged it right, while the consternation of the people was still recent, to turn his arms against Tigranocerta. The destruction of that city would spread a general panic; or, if he suffered it to remain unhurt, the fame of his clemency would add new laurels to the conqueror. He began his march, and, that the barbarians might not be driven to despair, preserved every appearance of a pacific disposition, still maintaining discipline with the strictest rigor. He knew by experience that he had to do with a people prone to change: cowards in the hour of danger, but, if occasion offered, prepared by their natural genius for a stroke of perfidy. At the sight of the Roman eagles the Armenians were variously affected. They sub-

¹ The Marcian waters were conveyed to Rome in aqueducts of great labor and expense, by Ancus Marcius, one of the Roman kings. See Pliny, xxxi. 3.

mitted with humble supplications: they fled from their villages; they took shelter in their woods; and numbers, carrying off all that was dear to them, sought a retreat in their dens and caverns. To these different movements the Roman general adapted his measures: to the submissive he behaved with mercy: he ordered the fugitives to be pursued with vigor; but for such as lay hid in subterraneous places he felt no compassion. Having filled the entrances and every vent of the caverns with bushes and faggots, he set fire to the heap. The barbarians perished in the flames. His march lay on the frontier of the Mardians, a race of freebooters, who lived by depredation, secure on their hills and mountains from the assaults of the enemy. They poured down from their fastnesses, and insulted the Roman army. Corbulo sent a detachment of the Iberians to lay waste their country; and thus at the expense of foreign auxiliaries, without spilling a drop of Roman blood, he punished the insolence of the enemy.

XXIV. Corbulo had suffered no loss in the field of battle; but his men, exhausted by continual toil, and forced, for want of grain and vegetables, to subsist altogether on animal food, began to sink under their fatigue. The heat of the summer was intense: no water to allay their thirst: long and laborious marches still remained; and nothing to animate the drooping spirits of the army but the example of their general, who endured more than even the common soldiers. They reached at length a well-cultivated country, and carried off a plentiful crop. The Armenians fled for shelter to two strong castles. One of them was taken by storm; the other, after resisting the first assault, was by a close blockade obliged to surrender. The army marched into the territories of the Tauranitians.

In that country Corbulo narrowly escaped a snare laid for his life. A barbarian, of high distinction among his people was found lurking with a concealed dagger near the general's tent. He was instantly seized; and, being put to the rack, not only confessed himself the author of the plot, but discovered his accomplices. The villains who, under a mask of friendship, meditated a foul assassination, were on examination found guilty of the treachery, and put to death. Ambassadors arrived soon after from Tigranocerta, with intelligence that their gates stood open to receive the Roman army, and the inhabitants were ready to submit at discretion. As an earnest of hospitality and friendship they presented a golden crown. Corbulo received it with all marks of honor. To conciliate the affections of the people he did no damage to their city, and left the natives in full possession of their effects.

XXV. The royal citadel, which was considered as the stronghold of the Armenian kings, did not immediately surrender. A band of stout and resolute young men threw themselves into the place, determined to hold out to the last. They had the spirit to sally out; but, after a battle under the walls, were driven back within their lines, and the Romans entering sword in hand, the garrison laid down their arms. This tide of success, however rapid, was in a great measure forwarded by the war that kept the Parthians engaged in Hyrcania. From the last-mentioned country ambassadors had been sent to Rome, soliciting the alliance of the emperor; and, as an inducement, urging that, in consequence of their rupture with Vologeses, they had made a powerful diversion in favor of the Roman army: the deputies, on their way back to their own country, had an interview with Corbulo. The general received them with marks of friendship; and fearing,

if they passed over the Euphrates, that they might fall in with detached parties of the Parthian army, he ordered them to be escorted under a military guard as far as the margin of the Red sea.¹ From that place their road was at a distance from the Parthian frontier.

XXVI. Meanwhile Tiridates,² after a march through the territory of the Medians, was hovering on the extremities of Armenia, intending from that quarter to invade the country. To counteract his motions Corbulo despatched Verulanus with the auxiliary forces; and, to support him, made a forced march at the head of the legions. Tiridates retired with precipitation, and in despair abandoned the war. The Roman general proceeded with severity against all who were known to be disaffected: he carried fire and sword through their country, and took on himself the government of Armenia. The whole kingdom was reduced to subjection, when Tigranes arrived from Rome, by the appointment of Nero, to assume the regal diadem.

The new monarch was by birth a Cappadocian, of high nobility in that country, and grandson to king Archelaus;³ but the length of time which he had passed at Rome in condition of a hostage broke the vigor of his mind, and sunk him to the meanest servility. He was not received with the consent of the nation. A strong party still retained their old affection for the line of the Arsacides; but an inveterate antipathy to the Parthians, on account of their pride and arrogance,

1 The shortest way to Hyrcania was by the Caspian sea; but, for the reason given by Tacitus, the Red sea was thought more eligible.

2 Tiridates was brother to Vologeses, the Parthian king. See Annals, xii. 51; xiii. 37. 41.

3 Archelaus was king of Cappadocia. See Annals, ii. 42.

inclined the majority to accept a king from Rome. Corbulo placed Tigranes on the throne, and assigned him a body guard, consisting of a thousand legionary soldiers, three cohorts from the allied forces, and two squadrons of horse. That his new kingdom might not prove unwieldy, parts of the country, as they happened to lie contiguous to the neighboring princes, were parcelled out to Pharasmanes,¹ to Polemon, Aristobulus, and Antiochus. Having made these arrangements, Corbulo marched back into Syria, to take on him the administration of that province, vacant by the death of Ummidius Quadratus, the late governor.

XXVII. In the course of the same year Laodicea, a celebrated city in Asia, was destroyed by an earthquake; and though Rome in so great a calamity contributed no kind of aid, it was soon rebuilt, and, by the internal resources of the inhabitants, recovered its former splendor. In Italy, the ancient city of Puteoli received new privileges, with the title of the Neronian colony. The veteran soldiers intitled to their discharge from the service were incorporated with the citizens of Tarentum and Antium; but the measure did not increase population in those deserted places. The soldiers rambled back to the provinces where they had formerly served; and, by the habits of a military life, being little inclined to conjugal cares and the education of children, the greatest part mouldered away without issue. The old system of colonisation was at this time greatly altered. Intire legions were not, as had been the practice, settled together, with their tribunes, their centurions, and soldiers, in one regular body, forming a society of men known to each

¹ Pharasmanes has been often mentioned as king of Iberia; Polemon king of Pontus; Aristobulus king of Armenia Minor; and Antiochus of Comagene.

other, and by sentiments of mutual affection inclined to act with a spirit of union. A colony, at the time we speak of, was no more than a motley mixture, drawn together from different armies, without a chief at their head, without a principle to unite them, and, in fact, no better than a mere conflux of people from distant parts of the globe; a wild heterogeneous multitude, but not a colony.

XXVIII. The election of pretors had been hitherto subject to the discretion of the senate; but the spirit of competition breaking out with unusual violence, Nero interposed his authority. He found three candidates more than usual. By giving to each the command of a legion¹ he allayed the ferment. He also made a considerable addition to the dignity of the senate, by an ordinance requiring that, in all appeals from an inferior judicature to that assembly, a sum equal² to what was customary in like cases before the emperor should be deposited by the appellant, to wait the final determination. Before this rule was established an appeal to the fathers was open to all, without being subject to costs or any kind of penalty. Towards the end of the year Vibius Secundus, a Roman knight, was accused by the Moors³ of rapine and extortion; and, being found guilty of the charge, was banished out of Italy. For so mild a sentence he was indebted to the weight and influence of his brother, Vibius Crispus.⁴

1 Suetonius says Nero struck off the supernumerary candidates, and, to make them some compensation for the delay of their hopes, assigned them posts of honor in the legions; in *Neron.* § 15.

2 The sum, by way of penalty for a frivolous and vexatious appeal, was one-third of the money in dispute between the parties.

3 The people of Mauritania.

4 For an account of Vibius Crispus, an advocate who accu-

XXIX. During the consulship of Cæsonius Pætus and Petronius Turpilianus¹ a dreadful calamity befell the army in Britain. Aulus Didius,² as has been mentioned, aimed at no extension of territory, content with maintaining the conquest already made. Veranius, who succeeded him, did little more: he made a few incursions into the country of the Silures, and was hindered by death from prosecuting the war with vigor. He had been respected during his life for the severity of his manners; in his end the mask fell off; and his last will discovered the low ambition of a servile flatterer, who in those moments could offer incense to Nero; and add, with vain ostentation, that if he lived two years it was his design to make the whole island obedient to the authority of the prince. Paulinus Suetonius succeeded to the command; an officer of distinguished merit. To be compared with Corbulo was his ambition. His military talents gave him pretensions, and the voice of the people, who never leave exalted merit without a rival, raised him to the highest eminence. By subduing the mutinous spirit of the Britons he hoped to equal the brilliant success of Corbulo in Armenia. With this view he resolved to sub-

mulated immense riches, see the Dialogue concerning Oratory, § 8.

¹ Petronius Turpilianus, during his consulship, was the author of a law called *Lex Petronia*, by which the master was no longer at liberty, at his will and pleasure, to compel any of his slaves to fight the wild beasts; but a just ground of complaint appearing before the proper magistrate, that mode of punishment was enforced. He was also the author of a decree, called the Turpilian Decree, by which all who began a prosecution, and either harassed the defendant by delays, or abandoned the cause, were subjected to heavy penalties. Two regulations so just, that it is wonderful, says Brotier, how they escaped the notice of Tacitus.

² For the inactivity and unwarlike spirit of Aulus Didius, see Annals, xii. 40; and life of Agricola, § 14.

due the isle of Mona;¹ a place inhabited by a warlike people, and a common refuge for all the discontented Britons. In order to facilitate his approach to a difficult and deceitful shore he ordered a number of flat-bottomed boats to be constructed. In these he wafted over the infantry; while the cavalry, partly by fording over the shallows, and partly by swimming their horses, advanced to gain a footing on the island.

XXX. On the opposite shore stood the Britons, close embodied, and prepared for action. Women were seen rushing through the ranks in wild disorder: their apparel funereal; their hair loose to the wind; in their hands flaming torches; and their whole appearance resembling the frantic rage of the Furies. The Druids² were ranged in order, with hands uplifted, invoking the gods, and pouring forth horrible imprecations. The novelty of the sight struck the Romans with awe and terror. They stood in stupid amazement, as if their limbs were benumbed, riveted to one spot, a mark for the enemy. The exhortations of the general diffused new vigor through the ranks; and the men, by mutual reproaches, inflamed each other to deeds of valor. They felt the disgrace of yielding to a troop of women and a band of fanatic priests: they advanced their standards, and rushed on to the attack with impetuous fury. The Britons perished in the flames which they themselves had kindled. The island fell, and a garrison was established to retain it in subjection. The religious groves, dedicated to superstition and barbarous rites, were levelled to the ground. In those recesses the natives imbrued their altars with the blood of their prisoners, and in

1 Mona, now Anglesey.

2 For an account of the Druids, see Cæsar's Commentaries.

the entrails of men explored the will of the gods. While Suetonius was employed in making his arrangements to secure the island he received intelligence that Britain had revolted, and that the whole province was up in arms.

XXXI. Prasutagus,¹ the late king of the Icenians, in the course of a long reign had amassed considerable wealth. By his will he left the whole to his two daughters and the emperor in equal shares; conceiving, by that stroke of policy, that he should provide at once for the tranquillity of his kingdom and his family. The event was otherwise. His dominions were ravaged by the centurions: the slaves pillaged his house; and his effects were seized as lawful plunder. His wife, Boadicea, was disgraced with cruel stripes; her daughters were ravished; and the most illustrious of the Icenians were by force deprived of the possessions which had been transmitted to them by their ancestors. The whole country was considered as a legacy bequeathed to the plunderers. The relations of the deceased king were reduced to slavery. Exasperated by these acts of violence, and dreading worse calamities, the Icenians had recourse to arms. The Trinobantians joined in the revolt. The neighboring states, not as yet taught to crouch in bondage, pledged themselves, in secret councils, to stand forth in the cause of liberty. What chiefly fired their indignation was the conduct of the veterans lately planted as a colony at Camalodunum. These men treated the Britons with cruelty and oppression: they drove the natives from their habitations; and, calling them by the opprobrious names of slaves and captives, added in-

1 Prasutagus, king of the Icenians. The outrages committed by the Romans are strongly painted by the late Mr. Glover, after his master Tacitus.

sult to their tyranny. In these acts of oppression the veterans were supported by the common soldiers; a set of men, by their habits of life trained to licentiousness, and, in their turn, expecting to reap the same advantages. The temple built in honor of Claudius was another cause of discontent. In the eye of the Britons it seemed the citadel of eternal slavery. The priests appointed to officiate at the altars, with a pretended zeal for religion, devoured the whole substance of the country. To overrun a colony, which lay quite naked and exposed, without a single fortification to defend it, did not appear to the incensed and angry Britons an enterprise that threatened either danger or difficulty. The fact was, the Roman generals attended to improvements of taste and elegance, but neglected the useful. They embellished the province, and took no care to defend it.

XXXII. While the Britons were preparing to throw off the yoke the statue of Victory, erected at Camalodunum, fell from its base without any apparent cause, and lay extended on the ground with its face averted, as if the goddess yielded to the enemies of Rome. Women, in restless ecstasy, rushed among the people, and with frantic screams denounced impending ruin. In the council chamber of the Romans¹ hideous clamors were heard in a foreign accent; savage howlings filled the theatre, and near the mouth of the Thames the image of a colony² in ruins was seen in the transparent water: the sea was purpled with blood; and at

¹ The world at that time was overcast by the gloom of superstition. The Romans often knew how to avail themselves of it; but the barbarians in this instance had the advantage.

² Houses seemed to be inverted in the water; but the laws of optics were not considered by the Britons. In their minds every thing was a prognostic.

the tide of ebb the figures of human bodies were traced on the sand. By these appearances the Romans were sunk in despair, while the Britons anticipated a glorious victory. Suetonius, in the mean time, was detained in the isle of Mona. In this alarming crisis the veterans sent to Catus Decianus, the procurator of the province, for a reinforcement. Two hundred men, and those not completely armed, were all that officer could spare. The colony had but a handful of soldiers. Their temple was strongly fortified, and there they hoped to make a stand. But even for the defence of that place no measures were concerted. Secret enemies mixed in all their deliberations. No fosse was made; no palisade thrown up; nor were the women, and such as were disabled by age or infirmity, sent out of the garrison. Unguarded and unprepared, they were taken by surprise; and, in the moment of profound peace, overpowered by the barbarians in one general assault. The colony was laid waste with fire and sword.

The temple held out; but, after a siege of two days, was taken by storm. Petilius Cerealis, who commanded the ninth legion, marched to the relief of the place. The Britons, flushed with success, advanced to give him battle. The legion was put to the rout, and the infantry cut to pieces. Cerealis escaped with the cavalry to his intrenchments. Catus Decianus, the procurator of the province, alarmed at the scene of carnage which he beheld on every side, and farther dreading the indignation of a people whom by rapine and oppression he had driven to despair, betook himself to flight, and crossed over into Gaul.

XXXIIL. Suetonius, undismayed by this disaster, marched through the heart of the country as far as

London,¹ a place not dignified with the name of a colony, but the chief residence of merchants, and the great mart of trade and commerce. At that place he meant to fix the seat of war; but reflecting on the scanty numbers of his little army, and the fatal rashness of Cerealis, he resolved to quit that station, and, by giving up one post, secure the rest of the province. Neither supplications nor the tears of the inhabitants could induce him to change his plan. The signal for the march was given. All who chose to follow his banners were taken under his protection. Of all who, on account of their advanced age, the weakness of their sex, or the attractions of the situation, thought proper to remain behind, not one escaped the rage of the barbarians. The inhabitants of Verulamium,² a municipal town, were in like manner put to the sword. The genius of a savage people leads them always in quest of plunder; and, accordingly, the Britons left behind them all places of strength. Wherever they expected feeble resistance and considerable booty, there they were sure to attack with the fiercest rage. Military skill was not the talent of barbarians. The number massacred in the places which have been mentioned amounted to no less than seventy thousand, all citizens or allies of Rome. To make prisoners, and reserve them for slavery, or to exchange them, was not in the idea of a people who despised all the laws of war. The halter and the gibbet, slaughter and de-

1 London even at that time was the seat of trade and commerce. If it has gone on increasing for above 1700 years, till it is now become the greatest city in the world, it is because industry has been protected by a constitution, which has improved during the whole time, and is now the wonder and the envy of surrounding nations.

2 Verulanum, now Verulam, near St. Albans, in Hertfordshire. The great Bacon has made the name immortal.

solation, fire and sword, were the marks of savage valor. Aware that vengeance would overtake them, they were resolved to make sure of their revenge, and glut themselves with the blood of their enemies.

XXXIV. The fourteenth legion, with the veterans of the twentieth, and the auxiliaries from the adjacent stations, having joined Suetonius, his army amounted to little less than ten thousand men. Thus reinforced, he resolved, without loss of time, to bring on a decisive action. For this purpose he chose a spot encircled with woods, narrow at the entrance, and sheltered in the rear by a thick forest. In that situation he had no fear of an ambuscade. The enemy, he knew, had no approach but in front. An open plain lay before him. He drew up his men in the following order: the legions in close array formed the centre; the light-armed troops were stationed at hand to serve as occasion might require: the cavalry took post in the wings. The Britons brought into the field an incredible multitude. They formed no regular line of battle. Detached parties and loose battalions displayed their numbers, in frantic transport bounding with exultation, and so sure of victory, that they placed their wives in waggons at the extremity of the plain, where they might survey the scene of action, and behold the wonders of British valor.

XXXV. Boadicea,¹ in a warlike car, with her two daughters before her, drove through the ranks. She harangued the different nations in their turn: 'This,' she said, 'is not the first time that the Britons have been led to battle by a woman. But now she did not come to boast the pride of a long line of ancestry, nor even to recover her kingdom and the plundered wealth

¹ Dio has put into the mouth of Boadicea a long, a tedious, and enervated speech.

of her family. She took the field, like the meanest among them, to assert the cause of public liberty, and to seek revenge for her body seamed with ignominious stripes, and her two daughters infamously treated. From the pride and arrogance of the Romans nothing is sacred: all are subject to violation: the old endure the scourge, and the virgins are abused. But the vindictive gods are now at hand. A Roman legion dared to face the warlike Britons: with their lives they paid for their rashness: those who survived the carnage of that day lie poorly hid behind their intrenchments, meditating nothing but how to save themselves by an ignominious flight. From the din of preparation, and the shouts of the British army, the Romans, even now, shrink back with terror. What will be their case when the assault begins? Look round, and view your numbers. Behold the proud display of warlike spirits, and consider the motives for which we draw the avenging sword. On this spot we must either conquer or die with glory. There is no alternative. Though a woman, my resolution is fixed; the men, if they please, may survive with infamy, and live in bondage.'

XXXVI. Suetonius, in a moment of such importance, did not remain silent. He expected every thing from the valor of his men, and yet urged every topic that could inspire and animate them to the attack. 'Despise,' he said, 'the savage uproar, the yells and shouts of undisciplined barbarians. In that mixed multitude the women outnumber the men. Void of spirit, unprovided with arms, they are not soldiers who come to offer battle; they are dastards, runaways, the refuse of your swords, who have often fled before you, and will again betake themselves to flight when they see the conqueror flaming in the ranks of war. In all engagements it is the valor of a few that turns

the fortune of the day. It will be your immortal glory, that with a scanty number you can equal the exploits of a great and powerful army. Keep your ranks; discharge your javelins; rush forward to a close attack; bear down all with your bucklers, and hew a passage with your swords. Pursue the vanquished, and never think of spoil and plunder. Conquer, and victory gives you every thing.' This speech was received with warlike acclamations. The soldiers burned with impatience for the onset, the veterans brandished their javelins, and the ranks displayed such an intrepid countenance, that Suetonius, anticipating the victory, gave the signal for the charge.

XXXVII. The engagement began. The Roman legion presented a close embodied line. The narrow defile gave them the shelter of a rampart. The Britons advanced with ferocity, and discharged their darts at random. In that instant the Romans rushed forward in the form of a wedge. The auxiliaries followed with equal ardor. The cavalry, at the same time, bore down on the enemy, and with their pikes overpowered all who dared to make a stand. The Britons betook themselves to flight, but their waggons in the rear obstructed their passage. A dreadful slaughter followed. Neither sex nor age was spared. The cattle, falling in one promiscuous carnage, added to the heaps of slain. The glory of the day was equal to the most splendid victory of ancient times. According to some writers not less than eighty thousand Britons were put to the sword. The Romans lost about four hundred men, and the wounded did not exceed that number. Boadicea, by a dose of poison, put a period to her life. Pænius Posthumus, prefect in the camp¹ of the second legion, as soon as he heard of the brave

¹ According to Camden, the camp of the second legion

exploits of the fourteenth and twentieth legions, felt the disgrace of having, in disobedience to the orders of his general, robbed the soldiers under his command of their share in so complete a victory. Stung with remorse, he fell on his sword, and expired on the spot.

XXXVIII. Suetonius called in all his forces; and having ordered them to pitch their tents, kept the field in readiness for new emergencies; intending not to close the campaign till he put an end to the war. By directions from the emperor a reinforcement of two thousand legionary soldiers, eight auxiliary cohorts,¹ and a thousand horse, arrived from Germany. By this accession of strength the ninth legion was completed. The cohorts and cavalry were sent into new quarters; and the country round, wherever the people had declared open hostility, or were suspected of treachery, was laid waste with fire and sword. Famine was the evil that chiefly distressed the enemy: employed in warlike preparations, they had neglected the cultivation of their lands; depending altogether on the success of their arms, and the booty which they hoped to seize from the Romans. Fierce and determined in the cause of liberty, they were rendered still more obstinate by the misunderstanding that subsisted between the Roman generals. Julius Classicianus had succeeded to the post vacant by the sudden flight of Catus Decianus. Being at variance with Suetonius, he did not scruple to sacrifice the public good to pri-

was in Monmouthshire, at a place called by the Britons *Kaer Lheion*, *Urbs Legionis*, the city of the legion. The place where this battle was fought is not ascertained; but it is evident that Suetonius had collected his forces from all quarters.

¹ There is reason to infer from a passage in the History, i. 59, that the eight auxiliary cohorts were Batavians.

vate animosity. He spread a report that another commander-in-chief might be soon expected ; and in him the Britons would find a man who would bring with him neither ill-will to the natives nor the pride of victory : the vanquished would, by consequence, meet with moderation and humanity. Classicianus did not stop here : in his dispatches to Rome he pressed the necessity of recalling Suetonius : the war would otherwise never be brought to a conclusion by an officer who owed all his disasters to his own want of conduct, and his success to the good fortune of the empire.

XXXIX. In consequence of these complaints Polycletus, one of the emperor's freedmen, was sent from Rome to inquire into the state of Britain. The weight and authority of such a messenger Nero flattered himself would produce a reconciliation between the hostile generals, and dispose the Britons to a more pacific temper. Polycletus set out with a large retinue ; and, on his journey through Italy and Gaul, made his grandeur a burden to the people. On his arrival in Britain he overawed the Roman soldiers ; but his magnificent airs and assumed importance met with nothing from the Britons but contempt and derision. Notwithstanding the misfortunes of the natives, the flame of liberty was not extinguished. The exorbitant power of a manumitted slave was a novelty which those ferocious islanders could not digest. They saw an army that fought with valor, and a general who led them on to victory ; but both were obliged to wait the nod of a wretched bondsman. In the report made by this man the state of affairs was such as gave no jealousy to Nero. Suetonius therefore was continued in his government. It happened, in a short time afterwards, that a few ships were wrecked on the coast, and all on

board perished in the waves. This was considered as a calamity of war, and on that account Suetonius was recalled. Petronius Turpilianus, whose consulship had just then expired, succeeded to the command. Under him a languid state of tranquillity followed. The general saw the passive disposition of the Britons, and not to provoke hostilities was the rule of his conduct. He remained inactive, content to decorate his want of enterprise with the name of peace.

XL. This year was remarkable for two atrocious crimes ; one the act of a senator, and the other perpetrated by the daring spirit of a slave. Domitius Balbus, of pretorian rank, was at that time far advanced in years. His wealth, and his want of issue, made him obnoxious to the arts of ill-designing men. His relation, Valerius Fabianus, a man high in rank, and likely to obtain the first honors of the state, forged his will. To give color to the fraud he drew into his plot Vincius Rufinus and Terentius Lentinus, two Roman knights, who chose to act in concert with Antonius Primus¹ and Asinius Marcellus. Antonius was a prompt and daring spirit, ready for any mischief. Marcellus was grandson to the renowned Asinius Pollio: his character was, till that time, without a stain ; but his favorite maxim was, that poverty is the worst of evils.² In the presence of those conspirators, and other witnesses of inferior note, Fabianus sealed the will. The fraud being brought to light before the senate, the author of it, with three of his accomplices, namely, Antonius, Rufinus, and Terentius, were con-

¹ Antonius Primus will be seen, in the History of Tacitus, acting the part of an able general.

² The man who thinks poverty the worst of evils will not be long before he thinks honesty a ragged virtue. Seneca has left a very different maxim: ' Si vis vacare animo, aut pauper sis oportet, aut pauperi similis ;' Epist. xvii.

demned to suffer the penalties of the Cornelian law.¹ Marcellus found in the favor of the prince, and the dignity of his ancestors, a powerful protection. He was saved from punishment, not from infamy.

XLI. The same day was fatal to two others of rank and distinction. Pompeius Ælianus, a young man who had already passed with honor through the office of questor, was charged as an accessory in the guilt of Fabianus. He was banished, not only from Italy, but from Spain, the place of his birth. Valerius Ponticus met with equal severity. The crime alleged against him was, that, with a design to elude the jurisdiction of the prefect of Rome, he had accused several delinquents before the pretor; intending, in the first instance, under color of a legal process, and afterwards, by abandoning the prosecution, to defeat the ends of justice. The fathers added a clause to their decree, whereby all persons concerned either in procuring or conducting for hire a collusive action, were to be treated as public prevaricators,² and to suffer the pains and penalties inflicted by the law on such as stood convicted of a false and calumnious accusation.

XLII. The second daring crime that marked the year, as mentioned above, was the act of a slave. This man murdered his master, Pedanius Secundus, at that time prefect of the city. His motive for this desperate act was either because his liberty, after a bargain made,³ was still withheld, or, being enamored

1 The Cornelian law was enacted by Cornelius Sylla the dictator, who made banishment to an island the sentence to be passed on all who should suppress a true will, or forge a false one. It appears however in the History, ii. 86, that Antonius was only expelled the senate.

2 That punishment was either exile, relegation to an island, or degradation from the offender's rank.

3 Slaves were in the habit of saving money in order to

of a foreign pathic, he could not endure his master as his rival. Every slave in the family where the murder was committed was by ancient usage subject to capital punishment; but the populace, touched with compassion for so many innocent men, opposed the execution with rage and tumult little short of a seditious insurrection. In the senate many of the fathers embraced the popular side, but the majority declared for the rigor of the law without innovation. In the debate on this occasion Caius Cassius¹ spoke to the following effect:

XLIII. 'I have been often present, conscript fathers, when motions have been made in this assembly for new decrees, repugnant to the laws in being, and utterly subversive of all ancient establishments. To those measures I made no opposition, though well convinced that the regulations made by our ancestors were the best, the wisest, the most conducive to the public good. To change that system is to change for the worse. This has ever been my settled opinion; but I forbore to take a part in your debates, that I might not be thought bigoted either to antiquity or to my own way of thinking. I had another reason for my conduct. The weight and influence which I flattered myself I had acquired in this assembly might, by frequently troubling you, lose its effect. I determined therefore to reserve myself for some important conjuncture, when my feeble voice might be of use. That conjuncture occurs this very day. A man of consular rank, without a friend to assist him, without any one person to oppose the ruffian's blow, no notice given, no discovery made, has been in his own house

purchase their freedom. See the case of Paris the comedian, xiii. 27.

1 Caius Cassius has been mentioned to his honor, xii. 12.

barbarously murdered. The law which dooms every slave under the roof to execution is still in force. Repeal that law, and, if you will, let this horrible deed pass with impunity; but when you have done it, which of us can think himself safe? Who can depend on his rank or dignity, when the first magistrate of your city dies under the assassin's stroke? Who can hope to live in security amongst his slaves, when so large a number as four hundred could not defend **Pedanius Secundus**? Will our domestics assist us in the hour of need, when we see, in the instance before us, that neither their own danger nor the terrors of the law could induce them to protect their master? Will it be said that the murderer struck his blow to revenge a personal injury? What was the injury? The paternal estate of a ruffian, perhaps, was in danger; or the foreign pathic, whom they were going to ravish from him, descended to him from his ancestors. If that be so, the deed was lawful; and, by consequence, we, conscript fathers, ought to pronounce it justifiable homicide.

XLIV. 'But let me ask you, are we, at this time of day, to support by argument what has been long settled by the wisdom of ages? Suppose the point in dispute were a new question, to be now decided for the first time; can we imagine that a ruffian, who had formed a black design to murder his master, kept the whole so closely locked up in his breast, that, in the agitations of a guilty mind, nothing escaped from him? Not a menace, not so much as a rash word to give the alarm? Nothing, we are told, of this sort happened: we are to believe that the assassin brooded over his horrible purpose in sullen silence; that he prepared his dagger unseen by every eye, and that his fellow-slaves knew nothing of it. Be it so: did he pass un-

seen through the train of attendants that guarded the bedchamber? Did he open the door unperceived by all? Did he enter with a light, and strike the mortal blow, without the knowledge of any person whatever?

‘Between the first design and the final execution of evil deeds symptoms of guilt are often seen. If our slaves are faithful, if they give timely intelligence, we may live secure in our houses; or if we must fall by the murderer’s dagger, it is a satisfaction to know that justice will overtake the guilty. The mind and temper of the slave, though born on the master’s estate, or even in his house, imbibing with his first milk affection and gratitude to the family, were always suspected by our ancestors. At present we have in our service whole nations of slaves; the scum of mankind, collected from all quarters of the globe: a race of men who bring with them foreign rites, and the religion of their country, or, probably, no religion at all. In such a conflux, if the laws are silent, what protection remains for the master? But it is said the innocent may suffer with the guilty. To this I answer, when an army, seized with a general panic, turns its back on the enemy, and, to restore military discipline, the men are drawn out and decimated; what distinction is then made between the gallant soldier and the coward who fled from his post? In political justice there is often something not strictly right; but partial evil is counterbalanced by the good of the whole.’

XLV. To this reasoning no reply was made, and yet a murmur of disapprobation ran through the assembly. The number doomed to suffer, their age, their sex, and the undoubted innocence of the greatest part, awakened sentiments of compassion; but the majority

was for letting the law¹ take its course. Their opinion prevailed. The popular cry was still for mercy. The rabble rose in a tumultuous body, and with stones and firebrands stopped the execution. To quell the fury, Nero issued a proclamation, and by his order the streets were lined with soldiers under arms. The unhappy victims suffered death. Cingonius Varro moved, that even the freedmen, who were actually in the house at the time of the murder, should, by a decree of the senate, be banished out of Italy. To this Nero answered, that since mercy was not allowed to mitigate the system of ancient laws, to increase their rigor by new pains and penalties, would be an act of cruelty.

XLVI. During the same consulship, Tarquinius Priscus, at the suit of the people of Bithynia, was convicted of extortion, and condemned to make restitution. The senate remembered the violence of this man in the prosecution against Statilius Taurus, his own proconsul in Africa, and now retaliated with a vindictive spirit. The people in both the Gauls were reviewed and rated by Quintus Volusius, Sextius Africanus, and Trebellius Maximus. The two former, elate with family pride, passed their time in mutual jealousy, thwarting each other, and struggling for pre-eminence. They looked down with contempt on Trebellius; but their petty animosities served only to degrade themselves, and give to their colleague a decided superiority.

XLVII. In the course of this year died Memmius Regulus, distinguished by his virtues, and his unblemished character. Admired for his constancy and

¹ See a decree of the senate on this subject, Annals, xiii. 32.

unshaken firmness, he rose to as high a pitch of credit and authority as can be attained under a government, where the grandeur of the prince throws a shade over the merit of every private citizen. As a proof of this, we have the following anecdote. Nero being confined with a fit of illness, the tribe of sycophants, fluttering about his person, poured forth the anguish of their hearts; and, ‘if any thing happened to the emperor, the day,’ they said, ‘that put a period to his life would be the last of the empire.’—‘No,’ replied the prince, ‘a pillar of the state will still remain.’ The courtiers stood at gaze, wondering who that person could be. Nero told them, ‘Memmius Regulus is the man.’ Strange as it may seem, Regulus survived that opinion of his virtue. In his love of retirement he found a retreat from danger. A man, whose family had lately risen to honors, gave no alarm; and his fortune raised no envy. It was in the same year that Nero dedicated a gymnasium,¹ or public school for athletic exercises, and, with the obliging facility of Greek manners, gave orders that the senators and Roman knights, without any expense on their part, should be provided with oil, to prepare their limbs for that elegant exhibition.

XLVIII. During the consulship of Publius Marius and Lucius Asinius a prosecution was set on foot against Antistius, then invested with the office of pretor. The conduct of this man, when tribune of the people, has been already mentioned. The charge against him was, that being the author of sarcastic verses against the emperor, he produced his poem to a

1 Pliny the elder, xv. 4, says that the Greeks, the inventors of every kind of vice, were the first that made oil subservient to the corruption of manners, by distributing it at their public spectacles.

large company at the table of Ostorius Scapula. For this libel he was arraigned on the law of majesty. The cause was conducted by Cossutianus Capito,¹ who had been lately raised by the interest of Tigellinus, his father-in-law, to the senatorian order. The law of majesty had fallen into disuse, and was now revived for the first time in the reign of Nero, not, as was imagined, to make Antistius feel its severity; but, in fact, to give the emperor an opportunity, after judgment of death was passed, to interpose his tribunitian² authority, and, by preventing the execution, add new lustre to his name. Ostorius Scapula was called as a witness. He remembered nothing of the verses in question. The evidence of others was believed, and thereon Junius Marcellus, consul elect, moved that the criminal, divested in the first instance of his pretorship, should suffer death according to the laws in force,³ and the practice under former emperors. The rest of the senate concurring in the same opinion, Pætus Thrasea rose to oppose the motion. He began with honorable mention of the prince; nor did he take on him to defend the conduct of Antistius. On the contrary, he blamed the licentious spirit of the man in terms of severity; but under a virtuous emperor, and in a senate left to act with independence, the question, he said, was not the magnitude of the crime, nor what

1 Capito was formerly accused by the people of Cilicia, and convicted of oppression and extortion; Annals, xiii. 33.

2 The tribunitian power was assumed by Augustus, as he said, for the purpose of protecting the people; Annals, i. 2. It was in fact the whole executive power of the state vested in one man, who could at his will and pleasure control the senate and all the magistrates.

3 By this judgment Antistius was to suffer *more majorum*; that is, as Suetonius explains it, to be fastened stark naked by the neck within a forked stick, and scourged to death; Suet. in Neron. § 49.

punishment the rigor of the law would warrant. The executioner, the gibbet, and the halter, were, for some time, unknown at Rome. Other pains and penalties were provided by law, and those might be inflicted without branding the judges with cruelty, and the age with infamy. Antistius may be condemned to banishment; his effects may be confiscated. Let him pass the remainder of his days in one of the islands. His life, in that situation, will be protracted misery. He will there continue to languish in exile, a burden to himself, yet a living monument of the equity and moderation of the times.

XLIX. The firmness with which Thræsea delivered his sentiments inspired the senate with the same ardor. The consul put the question, and the fathers divided.¹ The majority voted with Thræsea. The dissentients were but a small number. Amongst them was Aulus Vitellius;² of all the flattering crew, the most corrupt and servile; fluent in invective; eager to attack the most eminent character, and ever sure, with the confusion of a little mind, to shrink from the reply. He heard his adversary with silent patience. The consuls, however, did not presume to close the business by a decree in form: they chose to make their report to the emperor, and wait his pleasure. Nero for some time balanced between shame and resentment. At length his answer was, ‘That Antistius, without provocation, or any cause of complaint, had distilled the venom of his pen on the name and character of his sovereign.

¹ The senate often decided, without calling on each member for his opinion, by dividing the house. Pliny the younger describes the manner of doing it: ‘You who think so, go to that side; as many as are of a contrary opinion, go to this side.’

² This was Vitellius, afterwards emperor.

The matter had been referred to the senate, and justice required a punishment adequate to the crime. Nevertheless, as it had been from the first his resolution to mitigate a rigorous sentence, he would not now control the moderation of the fathers. They might determine, as to their wisdom should seem meet. They were even at liberty to acquit the criminal altogether.' From this answer it was evident that the conduct of the senate had given offence at court. The consuls, however, were not inclined to alter their report. Thrasea maintained his former opinion, and all who had voted with him followed his example. Some were unwilling, by a change of sentiment, to expose the prince to the popular odium; others thought themselves safe in a large majority; and Thrasea, with his usual elevation of mind, would not recede from the dignity of his character.

L. On a charge of the same complexion as the former Fabricius Veiento¹ was involved in similar danger. In certain writings, which he called the last wills of persons deceased, he had inserted strokes of satire reflecting on several members of the senate, and others of the sacerdotal order. Tadius Geminus was the prosecutor. He added another allegation, charging, that the criminal abused his credit at court, and disposed of the favors of the prince, and the honors of the state, by bargain and sale, for his own private emolument. This last article roused the resentment of Nero: he removed the cause to his own tribunal. Veiento was banished out of Italy. His books were condemned to the flames, but eagerly sought, and universally read. Men perused with avidity what was procured with

¹ This man was one of the pernicious race of informers in the reign of Domitian. Juvenal mentions him, sat. iv. 123,

danger. When no longer prohibited, the work sunk into oblivion.

LI. Meanwhile, the public grievances went on with increasing violence, and the means of redress diminished every day. Burrhus died at this time, whether in the course of nature, or by poison, cannot now be known. The general opinion ascribed his death to a fit of illness. He was seized with a disorder in the throat, and the inflammation in the glands swelling to a prodigious size, suffocation followed. There was however a current report that, under a pretence of administering a proper gargle, poison was mixed in the medicine by order of Nero, and that Burrhus, having discovered the villany, as soon as he perceived the prince entering his room, turned from him with aversion, and to all inquiries shortly answered, 'I am well at present.' He died universally lamented. His virtues were long remembered, and long regretted. Nor was the public grief alleviated by the two persons who succeeded to his employments, namely, Fenius Rufus and Sofonius Tigellinus;¹ the former a man of undoubted innocence, but the innocence that proceeds from want of spirit. Tigellinus stood distinguished by a life of debauchery, and the infamy of his character. Rufus owed his advancement to the voice of the people, who were pleased with his upright management of the public stores. Tigellinus was a favorite of the emperor. The early vices of the man recommended him to notice. The command of the pretorian guards, which had been intrusted to Burrhus only, was granted to those two by

¹ Tigellinus rose from obscurity to be in high favor with Nero. He was the grand teacher of debauchery and every vice. Juvenal has recorded him, sat. i. 155. See an account of the prodigious banquet given by this man, Annals, xv. 37.

a joint commission. The impression which they had given of their characters was confirmed by their conduct in office. Tigellinus gained an absolute ascendant over the mind of a debauched and profligate emperor. In all scenes of revelry he was a constant companion. Rufus obtained the good-will of the soldiers and the people, but his merit ruined him with the prince.

LII. By the death of Burrhus Seneca lost the chief support of his power. The friend of upright measures was snatched away, and virtue could no longer make head against the corruption of a court governed altogether by the wild and profligate. By that set of men Seneca was undermined. They blackened his character, and loaded him with various imputations. ' His wealth was exorbitant, above the condition of a private citizen ; and yet his unappeasable avarice went on without intermission, every day grasping at more. His rage for popularity was no less violent. He courted the affections of the people, and by the grandeur of his villas, and the beauty of his gardens, hoped to vie with imperial splendor. In matters of taste and genius he allows no rival. He claims the whole province of eloquence as his own ; and since Nero showed his taste for poetry, from that moment Seneca began to court the muse,¹ and he too has his copy of verses.

' To the other diversions of the prince he is an avowed, an open enemy. The skill of the charioteer provokes his raillery : he sneers at the management of horses ; and the melody of the prince's voice is a subject for his wit and ridicule. In all this what is his drift? Why, truly, that in the whole extent of the empire there should be nothing worthy of praise but

¹ It is not settled among the critics whether Seneca did not write some of the tragedies that bear this name.

what flows from his superior talents. But Nero is no longer the pupil of this subtle philosopher: he has attained the prime season of manhood, and may now discard his tutor. He has before his eyes the brightest model for his conduct, the example of his own illustrious ancestors.'

LIII. These insidious arts were not unknown to Seneca. There were still at court a few in the interest of virtue, and from such men he received intelligence of all that passed. Finding that the prince had withdrawn his friendship, and no longer admitted him to his conversation, he demanded an audience, and spoke to the following effect: 'It is now, Cæsar, the fourteenth year since I was placed near your person; of your reign it is the eighth. In that space of time you have lavished on me both wealth and honors, with so liberal a hand, that to complete my happiness nothing now is necessary but moderation and contentment. In the humble request which I presume to make, I shall take the liberty to cite a few examples, far, indeed, above my condition, but worthy of you. Augustus, your illustrious ancestor, permitted Marcus Agrippa to retire to Mitylene:¹ he allowed Mæcenas to live almost a stranger in Rome, and in the heart of the city² to dwell as it were in solitude. The former of those illustrious men had been the companion of his wars; the latter supported the weight of his administration: both, it is true, received ample rewards, but rewards fairly earned by great and eminent services.

1 Agrippa, in the year of Rome 731, retired to the isle of Lesbos, now Metelin.

2 Mæcenas had a house and magnificent gardens near Mount Esquiline. Pliny says that the practice of having pleasure grounds within the walls of a city was unknown till Epicurus led the way at Athens. The gardens of Epicurus are become proverbial.

For myself, if you except some attainments in literature, the fruit of studies pursued in the shade of retirement, what merit can I assume? My feeble talents are supposed to have seasoned your mind with the first tincture of letters, and that honor is beyond all recompense.

‘ But your liberality knows no bounds. You have loaded me with favors and with riches. When I reflect on your generosity, I say to myself, Shall a man of my level, without family pretensions, the son of a simple knight, born in a distant province,¹ presume to rank with the grandees of Rome? My name, the name of a new man, figures among those who boast a long and splendid line of ancestors. Where is now the mind which long since knew that to be content with little is true happiness? The philosopher is employed in laying out gardens,² and improving pleasure-grounds. He delights in the extent of ample villas; he enjoys a large rent-roll, and has sums of money³ laid out at interest. I have but one apology; your munificence was a command, and it was not for me to resist.

LIV. ‘ But the measure of generosity on your part, and submission on mine, is now complete. What a prince could give you have bestowed; what a friend could take I have received. More will only serve to

¹ Seneca was a native of Spain; born at Corduba, now Cordova.

² Seneca had a number of villas and extensive gardens. Juvenal mentions

Magnos Senecæ prædivitis hortos.—Sat. x. 16.

The name of one of his villas was Nomentanum, as appears, *epist.* 110.

³ This confirms the account given by Dio of his immoderate riches; but perhaps that historian exaggerates when he imputes insurrections in Britain to the exactions of Seneca.

irritate envy, and inflame the malice of my enemies. You indeed tower above the passions of ill-designing men; I am open to their attacks; I stand in need of protection. In a campaign, or on a march, if I found myself fatigued and worn out with toil, I should not hesitate to sue for some indulgence. Life is a state of warfare: it is a long campaign, in which a man in years, sinking under a load of cares, and even by his riches made obnoxious, may crave leave to retire. I am willing to resign my wealth: let the auditors of the imperial revenue take the account, and let the whole return to its fountain-head. By this act of self-denial I shall not be reduced to poverty; I shall part with that superfluity which glitters in the eyes of my enemies: and for the rest, the time which is spent in the improving of gardens and the embellishing of villas, I shall transfer to myself, and for the future lay it out in the cultivation of my mind. You are in the vigor of your days; a long train of years lies before you. In full possession of the sovereign power, you have learnt the art of reigning. Old age may be permitted to seek repose. It will hereafter be your glory that you knew how to choose men of moderation, who could descend from the summit of fortune to dwell with peace and humble content in the vale of life.'

LV. Nero replied as follows: 'If I give an immediate answer to a speech of prepared eloquence, the power of doing it I derive from you. The faculty of speaking, not only when the matter has been premeditated, but also on sudden occasions, I possess (if I do possess it) by your care and instruction. Augustus, it is true, released Agrippa and Mæcenas from the fatigue of business; but he did it at a time when his authority was established on the firmest basis, and his own experience was equal to the cares of govern-

ment. He did not, however, resume the grants which he had made. What those eminent citizens obtained they deserved in war and civil commotions; for in those busy scenes Augustus passed his youth. Had my lot been the same, your sword would not have been idle. What the conjuncture demanded you supplied; you formed my mind to science, and you assisted me with your wisdom and advice. The advantages which I derive from you are not of a perishable nature; they will cleave to me through life. As to the favors which it was in my power to grant, such as houses, gardens, and sums of money, they are precarious gifts, subject to accidents and the caprice of fortune. Presents of that kind may seem magnificent; but they fall short of what I have bestowed on others, who had neither your accomplishments nor your merit. I could mention freedmen who flourish in higher splendor; but I blush to name them. I blush that you, who are the first in my esteem, should not at the same time be the first man in my dominions.

LVI. 'I grant that you are advanced in years, but the vigor of your constitution is still unbroken. You are equal to business, and the fruit of your labors you can still enjoy. My reign is but just begun; and what has been my liberality? Vitellius was three times consul,¹ and Claudius was his friend: are you to be deemed inferior to the former? and must I, in point of munificence, yield to the latter? Volusius,² by a long life of parsimony, raised an immoderate fortune; and shall not my generosity put you on a level

1 In the Annals, xi., we have seen Vitellius consul for the third time.

2 Volusius has been mentioned as an honest man, who acquired his wealth by honorable means, and lived to a great age; Annals, xiii. 30.

with a man of that description? The impetuosity of youth may hurry me beyond the bounds of prudence : it will then be yours to recall my wandering steps, and lead me to the paths of honor. You helped to form my youthful understanding, and to what you polished you still gave life and energy. If you resign your wealth, can you suppose that your moderation will be deemed the cause? If you desert your prince, will your love of quiet be thought the motive? Far otherwise : my avarice will be arraigned ; my cruelty will be the general topic. The praise, indeed, of wisdom may pursue you in your retreat ; but will it be generous to build your fame on the disgrace and ruin of your friend?

To this flattering speech Nero added fond embraces, and all the external marks of affection. Inclined by nature to disguise his sentiments, and by habit exercised in the arts of dissimulation, he knew how to hide under the surface of friendship the secret malice of his heart. Seneca answered in a submissive tone. He returned his best thanks, the usual close of every conference in the cabinet of the prince. He resolved however to change his mode of living: he resigned his power, and retained no appearance of his former splendor : the crowd of visitors no longer frequented his house : he dismissed his train of followers, and but rarely appeared abroad, willing to be considered as an infirm old man, obliged to take care of his health at home ; or a philosopher, absorbed in abstract speculations.

LVII. Seneca's influence was now in its wane. To ruin the credit of Feniſ Rufus was the next object. In this his enemies found no difficulty. The crime of being attached to Agrippina was sufficient. Tigellinus, in the mean time, rose to the highest pitch of

credit and influence at court. Possessing a genius for every mischief, and having no other talents, he resolved to draw the prince into a confederacy in guilt. Congenial vices he had no doubt would render him still more dear to his master. With this view he began to watch the passions of Nero, and to explore the secrets of his heart. He found that the two persons whom the emperor dreaded most were Plautus and Sylla; both lately removed out of Italy; the former into Asia, and the latter to Narbon Gaul. Tigellinus began his secret hostilities against them both. He talked of their rank and high descent. Plautus, he observed, was not far distant from the armies in the east; and Sylla was near the legions in Germany. For himself, he had not, like Burrhus, the art of managing parties for his own private advantage. The welfare of his sovereign was his only object. At Rome, he could insure the safety of the prince. If plots were formed, by vigilance and activity they might be crushed in the bud. But for distant provinces who could answer? The name of Sylla, rendered famous by the celebrated dictator of that name, would rouse and animate the people of Gaul. In Asia the grandson of Drusus¹ would have a number of adherents, and might, by consequence, excite the nations to a revolt. Sylla indeed was indigent and distressed; but his very poverty would be a source of courage, a motive for vigorous enterprise; and though he seemed to languish in repose and indolence, his love of ease was a cloak to cover his ambition. He waited for an opportunity to avow his dark designs.

Plautus, on the other hand, possessed immoderate wealth. To lead a sluggish life was not in his temper

¹ Rubellius Plautus was the son of Rubellius Blandus and Julia.

or his character : he did not even affect it. He copied, with emulation, the manners of the ancient Romans, and to his austerity added the maxims of the stoic sect : a sect at all times fond of public commotions, proud, fierce, and turbulent. By this reasoning Nero was convinced. No delay intervened. Assassins were despatched. On the sixth day they landed at Marseilles, where, without notice, or so much as a hint to alarm him, Sylla was taken by surprise at his own table, and instantly murdered. His head was conveyed to Rome. Nero amused himself at the sight ; he saw that the hairs were grown grey before their time, and in that circumstance found a subject for mirth and brutal raillery.

LVIII. The murder of Plautus could not be executed with equal secrecy. His friends were numerous, and his life was valuable to many. The place lay remote : a voyage was to be performed, and, in the mean time, the plot began to transpire. A report prevailed at Rome that Plautus had put himself under the protection of Corbulo, who was then at the head of powerful armies ; a man, in that evil period, when merit and innocence were capital crimes, likely to fall a devoted victim. The rumor farther added, that in favor of Plautus all Asia was up in arms, and that the ruffians sent from Rome had either failed in their resolution, or, not finding themselves in force, had gone over to the opposite party. The whole story was without foundation ; but, according to custom, credulity swallowed it, and idle men added from their own invention. Plautus, in the mean time, received intelligence of the design against his life by one of his freedmen, who, having the advantage of a fair wind, got the start of the centurions despatched by Nero. This faithful servant was sent by Lucius Antistius, his

master's father-in-law, with advice that no time was to be lost. In such a crisis sloth would ill become a man whose life was in danger. To fall a tame and passive victim were to die an ignominious death. He had but to exert his most strenuous efforts, and good men, touched with compassion, would espouse his cause. The bold and turbulent would be sure to join him. Nothing should be left untried. It was only necessary to defeat sixty men (for that was the number employed in this bloody tragedy). Before Nero could receive intelligence, and despatch another band of ruffians there would be time to concert bold and vigorous measures. The flames of war might be kindled all over Asia, and, by this resolute conduct, he might save his life. At the worst, by daring bravely, his case would not be more desperate. Courage might suffer, but it could not suffer more than cowardice.

LIX. This spirited advice had no effect on Plautus. Banished from his country, without arms, or any means of defence, he saw no gleam of hope, and was therefore unwilling to be the dupe of visionary schemes. Perhaps his affection for his wife and children softened and disarmed his mind. The emperor, if not exasperated by resistance, he imagined, would act with lenity towards his unhappy family. According to some historians, the advice sent by Antistius was of a different tendency, importing that there was no danger to alarm him. We are farther told that, by the exhortations of two philosophers, by name Cœranus,¹ a Greek by birth, and Musonius, of Tuscan origin, he had been taught that, though life is

¹ This philosopher is praised by Pliny as an author of distinguished merit. Musonius has been also much commended for his moral doctrine.

a series of toil and danger and calamity, to wait with patience till the stroke of death delivered him from a scene of misery would be heroic fortitude. Thus much is certain: he was surprised by the assassins in the middle of the day, disarmed and naked, attending to the refreshment and exercise of his body.

In that condition a centurion despatched him, while Pelagon, one of the eunuchs, stood a spectator of the tragic scene. This wretch was sent by Nero to superintend the ruffians, as the minister of a despotic prince, placed over the guards and tools of iniquity to see his master's orders strictly executed. The head of the deceased was carried to Rome. At the sight of the dismal object the emperor cried out (I give his very words), 'Nero, now you may safely marry Poppæa. What obstacle remains to defer a match long intended, and often deferred on account of this very Plautus, and men of his description? Octavia may be divorced without delay: her conduct, it is true, has been blameless, but the imperial name of her father,¹ and the esteem of the people, have made her in my eyes an object of terror and detestation.' Having thus fortified his mind, he despatched a letter to the senate, written in guarded terms, without so much as glancing at the murder of Sylla and Plautus. He mentioned them both, charging them with seditious machinations, by which he himself was kept in a constant alarm, lest some dreadful convulsion should by their means shake the empire to its foundation. The fathers decreed public vows and supplications to the gods. Sylla and Plautus, though no longer in being, were expelled the senate; and with this mockery, to every good mind more grievous than the worst oppression, the people were amused and insulted.

1 Her father, the emperor Claudius.

LX. Nero finding, by the slavish tenor of the decree, that the fathers were willing to transform his vices into virtues, resolved to balance no longer. He repudiated Octavia, alleging her sterility for his reason, and immediately married Poppæa. This woman, some time the concubine of the emperor, and now his wife, continued to govern him with unbounded sway. Not content with her new dignity, she suborned a domestic servant of Octavia to charge his mistress with a dishonorable intrigue with one of her slaves. For this purpose they chose for the pretended adulterer a man of the name of Eucerus, a native of Alexandria, remarkable for his skill on the flute. The female servants were put to the torture. Some of them, overcome by pain and agony, confessed whatever was demanded of them; but the greatest part persevered, with constancy, to vindicate the honor of their mistress. Tigellinus stood near at hand, pressing them with questions. One of them had the spirit to answer, 'The person of Octavia is freer from pollution than your mouth.' Sentence was pronounced against Octavia. With no more ceremony than what is usual among citizens of ordinary rank she was dismissed from the palace. The house of Burrhus, and the estates of Plautus, two fatal presents! were allotted for her separate use. She was soon after banished to Campania, under a military guard. Murmurs of discontent were heard in every quarter of Rome. The common people spoke out without reserve. To rules of caution and political wisdom their rough manners made them strangers, and the meanness of their condition left them nothing to fear. Their clamors were so loud and violent, that Nero gave orders to recall Octavia, but without affection, and without remorse.

LXI. The populace, transported with joy by this event, pressed in crowds to the capitol, to offer up their thanks to the gods. The statues of Poppæa were dashed to the ground, while those of Octavia, adorned with wreaths of flowers, were carried in triumph on men's shoulders, and placed in the forum and in the temples. The multitude went in a tumultuous body to greet the emperor; they surrounded his palace; they desired him to come forth and receive their congratulations. A band of soldiers rushed forth sword in hand, and obliged the crowd to disperse. Whatever was pulled down during the riot was restored to its place, and the statues of Poppæa were once more erected. But her malice to Octavia was not to be appeased. To inveterate hatred she added her dread of a popular insurrection, in consequence of which, Nero might be compelled to renounce his passion for her person.

She threw herself at his feet: 'I am not now,' she said, 'in a situation to contend for our nuptial union, though dearer to me than life itself. But my life is in danger. The slaves and followers of Octavia, calling their own clamor the voice of the people, have committed, in a time of profound peace, public outrages little short of open rebellion. They are in arms against their sovereign. They want nothing but a leader, and in civil commotions that want is soon supplied. What has Octavia now to do, but to leave her retreat in Campania, and show herself to the people of Rome? She, who in her absence can raise a tumult so fierce and violent, will soon discover the extent of her power. But what is my crime? What have I committed? Whom have I offended? The people may see me the mother of legitimate heirs to the house of Cæsar; but perhaps they would fain

reserve the imperial dignity for the issue of an Egyptian minstrel.¹ Submit to Octavia, since your interest will have it so : recall her to your embrace, but do it voluntarily, that the rabble may not give the law to their sovereign. You must either adopt that measure, or, by just vengeance on the guilty, provide for your own safety and the public peace. The first alarm was easily quelled ; a second insurrection may prove fatal. Should the mob have reason to despair of seeing Octavia the partner of Nero's bed, they may in their wisdom find for her another husband.'

LXII. This artful speech, tending at once to inflame the prince with resentment and alarm his fears, had its effect. Nero heard the whole with mixed emotions of rage and terror. That Octavia was guilty with one of her slaves, was a device of which men could be no longer made the dupes. The firmness of her servants on the rack removed even the shadow of suspicion. A new stratagem was now to be tried. A man was to be found who would dare to confess the guilt ; and if the same person could, with some color of probability, be charged with a conspiracy against the state, the plot would lie the deeper. For this dark design no one so fit as Anicetus,² the commander of the fleet at Misenum, and the murderer of the prince's mother. This officer, for some time after that atrocious deed, enjoyed the smiles of the emperor ; but soon experienced the common fate of all pernicious miscreants : he was favored at first and detested afterwards. It is the nature of great men, when their turn is served, to consider their tools as a living re-

¹ This was Eucerus, a native of Alexandria, mentioned in § 60.

² For Anicetus, the murderer of Agrippina, see this book, § 7.

proach, and standing witnesses against themselves. Nero summoned Anicetus to his presence: he thanked him for services already performed. 'By you,' he said, 'I was delivered from the snares of an ambitious mother. A deed of greater moment still remains. Set me free from the furious spirit of an imperious wife. To effect this you need not so much as raise your hand. Neither sword nor dagger will be wanted. Confess yourself guilty of adultery with Octavia; I ask no more.' He concluded with a promise of ample rewards, to be managed indeed with secrecy, but without bound or measure, and in the end a safe retreat in some delightful country. 'And now,' he said, 'accept the offers which I have made, or certain death awaits you.'

Anicetus undertook the business. Practised in guilt, and by the success of his former crimes inspired with courage, he went even beyond his commission. In the presence of certain chosen persons whom Nero summoned to a secret council, he told his story with circumstances that showed he had no need of a prompter. He was banished to the island of Sardinia. At that place he continued to live in affluence, and died at last in the course of nature.

LXIII. Nero issued a proclamation, declaring the guilt of Octavia, and in express terms averring, that to obtain the command of the fleet at Misenum, she had prostituted her person to Anicetus. He added that, by the use of medicines to procure abortion, she had thrown a veil over her adulterous commerce. In this public declaration, the objection on account of sterility, so lately urged, was no more remembered. The facts, however, were said to be clearly proved. She was banished to the isle of Pandataria. The public mind was never so deeply touched with com-

passion. The banishment of Agrippina, by order of Tiberius, was remembered by many; and that of Julia,¹ in the reign of Claudius, was still more fresh in the memory of all: but those two unfortunate exiles had attained the vigor of their days, and were, by consequence, better enabled to endure the stroke of adversity. They had known scenes of happiness, and, in the recollection of better times, could lose, or at least assuage, the sense of present evils. To Octavia the celebration of her nuptials was little different from a funeral ceremony. She was led to a house where she could discover nothing but memorials of affliction; her father carried off by poison,² and her brother in a short time afterwards destroyed by the same detestable machination. She saw herself superseded by the allurements of a female slave; she saw the affections of her husband alienated from herself; and a marriage, by which her ruin was completed, openly celebrated with Poppæa. Above all, she underwent a cruel accusation, to an ingenuous mind worse than death. At the time when the storm burst on her she was only in the twentieth year of her age, and even then, in the bloom of life, delivered to the custody of centurions and soldiers. Her present afflictions, she plainly saw, were a prelude to her impending fate. She was cut off from all the comforts of life; but the tranquillity of the grave was still denied to her.

LXIV. In a few days afterwards she received a mandate, commanding her to end her days. Alarmed and terrified, she descended to supplications; she admitted herself to be a widow; she claimed no higher

1 Julia, the daughter of Germanicus and Agrippina, was banished by the emperor Claudius, A. U. C. 794.

2 The emperor Claudius, her father, and her brother Britannicus, were both poisoned. See Annals, xii. 67. xiii. 16.

title than that of the emperor's sister ;¹ she invoked the race of Germanicus, the common ancestors of Nero and herself ; and, in the anguish of her heart, regretted even Agrippina, ' during whose life,' she said, ' her marriage would have been a state of wretchedness, but would not have brought her to an untimely end.' Amidst these effusions of sorrow the ruffians seized her, and, having bound her limbs, opened her veins. Her blood was chilled with fear, and did not issue at the wound. The assassins carried her to a bath of intense heat, where she was suffocated by the vapor. To complete the horror of this barbarous tragedy, her head was cut off and sent to Rome, to glut the eyes of Poppæa.

Such were the transactions for which the fathers decreed oblations to the gods. I mention the fact in this place, that the reader of this, or any other history of those disastrous times, may know, once for all, that as often as banishment or a bloody execution was ordered, the senate never failed to thank the gods for their bounty. Those solemn acts, which, in the earlier periods of Rome, were the pious gratitude of the people for increasing happiness, were now profanely and abominably converted to memorials of horror and public misery. This may be received as a general truth ; and yet whenever a decree occurs, remarkable either for a new strain of adulation, or the base servility of the times, it is my intention not to pass it by in silence.

LXV. In the course of this year Nero is said to have destroyed by poison the most considerable of his freedmen. Among these Doryphorus had opposed the marriage with Poppæa, and for that crime lost his life.

¹ Nero was adopted by Claudius, her father, and consequently was brother to Octavia.

Pallas was in possession of exorbitant wealth ; but, living to a great age, he delayed the eager avarice of the emperor. He was murdered for his riches.¹ Romanus, another of the freedmen, endeavored, by clandestine calumny, to accomplish the ruin of Seneca. He charged the philosopher with being an accomplice in the machinations of Caius Piso ; but the blow, warded off by Seneca, recoiled on the accuser. By this incident Piso was alarmed for his own safety.² A dark conspiracy followed, big with danger to Nero, but abortive in the end.

BOOK XV.

SECT. I. DURING these transactions Vologeses, king of the Parthians, began to raise new commotions in the east. The success of Corbulo alarmed his jealousy : he saw, with wounded pride, the defeat of his brother Tiridates ; and in his room Tigranes, an alien prince,³ seated on the throne of Armenia. The

1 Doryphorus, according to Dio, was private secretary to Nero. Pallas, the freedman of Claudius, has been often mentioned. He was dismissed from all his employments by Nero. See Annals, xiii. 15. Brotier says that his monument was found near Rome in the year 1720.

2 For more of Piso, see Annals, xv. 48.

3 Tigranes, descended from the nobility of Cappadocia, was sent by Nero to ascend the throne of Armenia. Annals, xiv. 26.

honor of the Arsacides was tarnished by these events, and he was determined to restore its former lustre. But the struggle was to be with a great and powerful empire. Treaties of alliance, long in force and long respected by the two nations, held him in suspense. By nature anxious and irresolute, he formed no settled plan. He was at variance with the Hyrcanians; and, after a long and obstinate conflict, that brave and powerful nation still made head against him. While he continued wavering fresh intelligence fired him with indignation. Tigranes marched his army into the territory of the Adiabeniens, a people bordering on Armenia, and laid waste their country. The enterprise did not resemble the sudden incursion of barbarians roving in quest of prey; a regular war seemed to be declared in form. The chiefs of the Adiabeniens saw, with resentment, their lands made a scene of desolation, not by a Roman army, but by a foreigner; a despicable hostage, who for years had lived at Rome undistinguished from the common slaves.

Monobazus, the sovereign of the province, inflamed the discontents of the people; and at the same time roused the pride of Vologeses by frequent messages, importing that he knew not which way to turn, nor from what quarter to expect relief. Armenia, he said, was lost, and the neighboring states, if not reinforced by the Parthians, must be all involved in the same calamity; perhaps with the consent of the people, as Rome, it was well known, made a distinction between the nations that fell by conquest and those that submitted at discretion. Tiridates, by his behavior, added force to these complaints. Driven from his throne, he appeared with all the silent dignity of distress; or, if he spoke occasionally, his words were few, short, and sententious. 'Mighty kingdoms,' he said, 'are not

supported by inactivity. Men and arms, and warlike preparations, are necessary. The conqueror has always justice on his side. In a private station, to defend their property is the virtue of individuals; but to invade the possessions of others is the prerogative and the glory of kings.'

II. Roused by these incentives, Vologeses summoned a council; and seating Tiridates next himself, spoke in substance as follows: 'You see before you a prince descended from the same father with myself. Acknowledging the right of primogeniture, he ceded to me the diadem of Parthia: in return I placed him on the throne of Armenia, the third kingdom among the eastern nations. Media, in fact, is the second; and Pacorus, at that time, was in possession. By this arrangement I provided for my family; and, by the measure, extinguished for ever those unnatural jealousies which formerly envenomed brothers against brothers. This system, it seems, has given umbrage to the Romans; they declare against it; and though they never broke with Parthia without paying dearly for their temerity, they now are willing to provoke a war, and rush on their own destruction. Thus much I am willing to declare; the possessions which have descended to me from my ancestors shall never be dismembered; but I had rather maintain them by the justice of my cause than by the decision of the sword. I avow the principle; and if, in consequence of it, I have been too much inclined to pacific measures, the vigor of my future conduct shall make atonement. The national honor, in the mean time, has suffered no diminution. Your glory is unimpaired, and I have added to it the virtues of moderation; virtues which the gods approve, and which no sovereign, however great and flourishing, ought to despise.'

Having thus delivered his sentiments, he placed the regal diadem on the head of Tiridates, and at the same time gave to Moneses, an officer of distinguished rank, the command of the cavalry, which by established usage is always appointed to attend the person of the monarch. He added auxiliaries sent by the Adiabeni-ans, and with that force ordered him to march against Tigranes, in order to exterminate the usurper from the throne of Armenia. In the mean time, he proposed to compromise the war with the Hyrcanians, and fall with the whole weight of his kingdom on the Roman provinces.

III. Corbulo was no sooner apprised of these transactions than he despatched, to support Tigranes, two legions, under the command of Verulanus Severus and Vettius Bolanus. In their private instructions those officers had it in command to proceed with caution, and act on the defensive, without pushing on their operations with too much vigor. A decisive campaign was not Corbulo's plan. He wished to protract the war; and, in the mean time, stated in his letters to the emperor the necessity of appointing a commander, with a special commission to protect Armenia, as he foresaw a storm gathering in the province of Syria. If Vologeses made an irruption in that quarter a powerful army would be wanted to repel the invader. With the rest of his legions he formed a chain of posts along the banks of the Euphrates; and, having made a powerful levy of provincial forces, he secured all the passes against the inroads of the enemy. In order to make sure of water in a country not well supplied by nature, he erected strong castles near the springs and fountains; and, where the stations were inconvenient, he choked up a number of rivulets with heaps of sand,

with intent to conceal their source from the Parthian army.

IV. While Corbulo was thus concerting measures for the defence of Syria, Moneses advanced by rapid marches, and with all his forces entered Armenia. He hoped to outstrip the fame that flies before an enterprising general, and to fall on Tigranes by surprise. That prince, aware of the design, had thrown himself into the city of Tigranocerta, a place surrounded by high walls,¹ and defended by a numerous garrison. The river Nicephorius, with a current sufficiently broad, washes a considerable part of the walls. A deep trench inclosed the rest. There was a competent number of soldiers to man the works, and provisions had been laid in with due precaution. Some of the foraging parties, having rashly ventured too far, were surrounded by the enemy. This check, however, instead of disheartening the garrison, served only to inspire them with a spirit of revenge. The operations of a siege are ill suited to the genius of the Parthians, whose courage always fails in a close engagement. A few arrows thrown at random made no impression on men sheltered by their fortifications. The besiegers could only amuse themselves with a feeble attack. An attempt was made by the Adiabeniens to carry the works by assault. They advanced their scaling-ladders and other military engines, but were soon repulsed; and, the garrison sallying out, the whole corps was cut to pieces.

V. Corbulo was not of a temper to be elated with success. He chose to act with moderation in prosperity; and accordingly despatched an embassy to ex-

¹ The walls were fifty cubits high, as we are told by Ap-
pian, in his History of the Mithridatic War.

postulate with Vologeses on the violence with which he had invaded a Roman province, and not only besieged the cohorts of the empire, but also a king in alliance with Rome. If the Parthian prince did not raise the siege, he threatened to advance with the strength of his army, and encamp in the heart of the country. Casperius, a centurion, was charged with this commission. He met the king in the city of Nisibis, distant about seven-and-thirty miles from Tigranocerta, and there delivered his orders in a tone of firmness. To avoid a war with Rome had been for some time the fixed resolution of Vologeses, and the success of the present enterprise gave him no reason to alter his sentiments.

The siege promised no kind of advantage. Tigranes possessed a stronghold, well garrisoned, and provided with ample supplies: the forces that attempted to storm the works met with a total overthrow: the Roman legions were in possession of Armenia, and others were in readiness, not only to cover the province of Syria, but to push the war into the Parthian territories: his cavalry suffered for want of forage; and all vegetation being destroyed by a swarm of locusts, neither grass nor forage could be found. Determined by these considerations, yet disguising his fear, Vologeses, with the specious appearance of a pacific disposition, returned for answer to Casperius, that he should send ambassadors to Rome, with instructions to solicit the cession of Armenia, and the re-establishment of peace between the two nations. Meanwhile, he sent dispatches to Moneses, with orders to abandon the siege of Tigranocerta; and, without farther delay, returned to his capital.

VI. These events, ascribed by the general voice to the conduct of the general, and the terror impressed

on the mind of Vologeses, were extolled in terms of the highest commendation. And yet malignity was at work. Some would have it, 'that there was at the bottom a secret compact to make an end of the war.' According to their sinister interpretation, 'it was stipulated that Vologeses should return to his own dominions, and that Armenia should be evacuated by Tigranes. With what other view were the Roman soldiers withdrawn from Tigranocerta? Why give up, by an ill-judged peace, what had been so well defended in time of war? Could the army find, at the extremity of Cappadocia, in huts suddenly thrown up, better winter-quarters than in the capital of a kingdom which had been preserved by force of arms? Peace is held forth; but it is in fact no more than a truce, a suspension of arms, that Vologeses may have to contend with another general, and that Corbulo should not be obliged to hazard the great renown which he had acquired during a service of so many years.'

The fact was, Corbulo, as we have stated, required a new commander for the special purpose of defending Armenia, and the nomination of Cæsennius Pætus was already announced. That officer arrived in a short time. A division of the forces was allotted to each commander. The fourth and twelfth legions, with the fifth, lately arrived from Mœsia, and a body of auxiliaries from Pontus, from Galatia and Cappadocia, were put under the command of Pætus. The third, the sixth, and tenth legions, with the forces of Syria, were assigned to Corbulo. Both commanders were to act in concert, or to push the war in different quarters, as the occasion might require. But the spirit of Corbulo could not brook a rival; and Pætus, though to be second in command under such a general would

have been his highest glory, began to aspire above himself. He despised the fame acquired by Corbulo, declaring all his best exploits to be no better than boasted victories, without bloodshed and without booty; mere pretended sieges, in which not a single place was carried by assault. For himself, he was resolved to carry on the war for more substantial purposes. By imposing tributes and taxes on the vanquished he meant to reduce them to subjection; and, for the shadow of an oriental king, he would establish the rights of conquest, and the authority of the Roman name.

VII. In this juncture, the ambassadors who had been sent by Vologeses to treat with Nero returned back to their own country. Their negotiation was unsuccessful, and the Parthians declared war. Pætus embraced the opportunity to signalise his valor. He entered Armenia at the head of two legions; the fourth commanded by Funisulanus Vettonianus, and the twelfth by Calavius Sabinus. His first approach was attended with unpropitious omens. In passing over a bridge which lay across the Euphrates the horse that carried the consular ornaments, taking fright without any apparent cause, broke from the ranks, and fled at full speed. A victim, likewise, intended for sacrifice, standing near the unfinished fortifications of the winter camp, escaped out of the intrenchments. Nor was this all: the javelins in the hands of the soldiers emitted sudden flashes of fire; and this prodigy was the more alarming as the Parthians brandished the same weapon.

VIII. Portents and prodigies had no effect on Pætus. Without waiting to fortify his winter encampment, and without providing a sufficient store of grain, he marched his army over Mount Taurus; determined, as he gave out, to recover Tigranocerta, and lay waste

the country through which Corbulo had passed with vain parade. In his progress some forts and castles were stormed; and it is certain that his share of glory and of booty would have been considerable, if to enjoy the former with moderation, and to secure the latter, had been his talent. He overran, by rapid marches, vast tracts of country, where no conquest could be maintained. His provisions, in the mean time, went to decay; and, the winter season approaching fast, he was obliged to return with his army. His dispatches to Nero were in a style as grand as if he had ended the war; high-sounding, pompous, full of vainglory, but without any solid advantage.

IX. In the mean time Corbulo never neglected the banks of the Euphrates. To his former chain of posts he added new stations; and lest the enemy, who showed themselves in detached parties on the opposite plains, should be able to obstruct the building of a bridge over the river, he ordered a number of vessels of large size to be braced together with great beams, and on that foundation raised a superstructure of towers armed with slings and warlike engines. From this floating battery he annoyed the enemy with a discharge of stones and javelins, thrown to such a length that the Parthians could not retaliate with their darts. Under this shelter the bridge was finished. The allied cohorts passed over to the opposite hills. The legions followed and pitched their camp. The whole of these operations was executed with such rapidity, and so formidable a display of strength, that the Parthians abandoned their enterprise, and, without attempting any thing against the Syrians, drew off their forces to the invasion of Armenia.

X. Pætus had fixed his head-quarters in that country, little aware of the storm ready to burst on him,

and so much off his guard that he suffered the fifth legion to remain in Pontus, at a considerable distance, while he still weakened his numbers by granting leave of absence to his soldiers without reserve. In this situation he received intelligence of the approach of Vologeses with a powerful army. He called the twelfth legion to his assistance ; and, by the necessity of that reinforcement, betrayed to the enemy the feeble condition of his army. He was, notwithstanding, sufficiently strong to maintain his post, and baffle all the efforts of the Parthians, had it been in the genius of the man to pursue with firmness either his own idea or the counsel of others. But, in pressing exigences, he no sooner embraced the plan recommended by officers of known experience than his little spirit was stung with jealousy ; and, lest he should be thought to stand in need of advice, he was sure to adopt very different measures, always changing for the worse.

On the first approach of the Parthians he sallied out of his intrenchments, determined to hazard a battle. Ditches and ramparts, he said, were not given to him in commission, nor had he any need of that defence : the soldier and the sword were all he wanted. In this vapore strain he led his legions to the field ; but a centurion and a few soldiers, who had been sent to reconnoitre the enemy, being cut off, his courage failed, and he sounded a retreat. He was no sooner in his camp than, perceiving that Vologeses had not pressed on his rear, he once more grew bold ; and, in a fit of valor, ordered three thousand of his best infantry to take post on the next eminence of Mount Taurus, to dispute the pass with the Parthian king. The Pannonians, who formed the strength of his cavalry, were drawn up on the open plain. He placed his wife and her infant son in a castle called Arsamo-

sata,¹ and left a cohort to defend the place. In this manner he contrived to divide an army which, acting with united force, would have been able to repel the attack of a wild and desultory enemy. When pressed by Vologeses, we are told, it was with difficulty that he could submit to acquaint Corbulo with his situation. That officer did not hurry to his assistance. To augment the glory of delivering him he was willing to let the danger increase. In the mean time he ordered a detachment of a thousand men, drafted from each of his three legions, and a body of eight hundred horse, with an equal number from the cohorts, to hold themselves in readiness for a sudden enterprise.

XI. Vologeses knew from his scouts that his passage over Mount Taurus was obstructed by the Roman infantry, and that the plain was occupied by the Pannonian horse; but the news did not deter him from pursuing his march. He fell with impetuous fury on the cavalry, who fled with precipitation. The legionary soldiers, in like manner, abandoned their post. A tower, commanded by Tarquitius Crescus, a centurion, was the only place that held out. That officer made several sallies with success, routing such of the enemy as dared to approach the walls, and pursuing the runaways with great slaughter; till, by a volley of combustibles thrown in by the besiegers, the works were set on fire. The gallant centurion perished in the flames. Some of the garrison escaped unhurt, and made the best of their way to distant wilds. The wounded returned to the camp, and there related wonders; magnifying, beyond all bounds, the valor of the Parthian king, the number of his troops, and their ferocity in battle. A panic pervaded the army.

¹ Arsamosata, a city of Armenia, near the Euphrates, now Simsat.

Men who feared for themselves swallowed all that was said with easy credulity. Pætus felt the pressure of his misfortunes. He seemed to resign the command, unable to struggle with adversity. He sent again to Corbulo, with earnest prayers intreating him to save the Roman eagles, with the standards of an unfortunate army, and the army itself from impending ruin. In the mean time he and his men would hold out to the last, determined to live or die in the service of their country.

XII. Corbulo, as usual, firm and collected in the moment of danger, prepared for the expedition. Having left a sufficient force to guard his posts on the banks of the Euphrates, he moved forwards towards Armenia, taking the shortest route through Comagena, and next through Cappadocia, both fertile countries, and capable of furnishing supplies for his army. Besides the usual train attending on a march, he took with him a number of camels, loaded with grain, to answer the double purpose of preventing the want of provisions, and of striking the enemy with the terror of an unusual appearance. Pactius, a centurion of principal rank,¹ was the first from the vanquished army that encountered Corbulo on his march. The common men came up soon after, all endeavoring by various excuses to palliate their disgrace. The general ordered them to join their colors, and try to gain their pardon from Pætus. The merciful disposition of that officer might incline him to forgive; but, for himself, he favored none but such as conquered by their valor. He then addressed his own legions, visiting their ranks, and inspiring all with zeal and ardor. He

¹ He is called in the original *primi pili centurio*; that is, first centurion. He has been mentioned, *xiii. 36*, by the name of Pactius Orphitus.

called to mind their past exploits, and opened to their view a new field of glory. 'It is not,' he said, 'the towns and villages of Armenia that now demand our swords; a Roman camp invokes our aid, and two legions look to us for relief. Their delivery from the barbarians will be the reward of victory. If to a private soldier the civic crown,¹ delivered by the hand of his general, is the brightest recompense for the life of a citizen saved, how much greater will be the glory of the present enterprise, in which the number of the distressed is equal to those who bring relief; and, by consequence, every soldier in this army may save his man!' By this discourse one general spirit was diffused through the ranks. The men had private motives to inflame their courage; they felt for their brothers; they wished to succor their relations; and, without halting night or day, pursued their march with alacrity and vigor.

XIII. Meanwhile Vologeses pressed on the siege. He assaulted the intrenchments: he endeavored to storm a castle, where the weaker sex, the aged and infirm, were lodged for security. In these several attacks he came to a closer engagement than usually consists with the military genius of his country. By a show of temerity he hoped to bring on a decisive action. The Romans remained close in their tents, content with a safe post within their intrenchments; some, in deference to the orders of their general; others, through want of spirit, tamely waiting to be relieved by Corbulo. If in the mean time the enemy overpowered them, they called to mind, by way of consolation, the example of two Roman armies that

¹ The civic crown, for saving the life of a citizen, was often granted by the emperor: but the consular commanders had the same power at the head of their armies.

passed under the yoke; one at Caudium,¹ and the other at Numantia. By those two events submission, in their present distress, would be fully justified; since neither the Samnites nor the Carthaginians, those famous rivals of the Roman republic, could be compared with the extensive power of the Parthian empire: and moreover, the boasted virtue of the ancient Romans, however decorated by the praises of posterity, was always pliant in misfortune, and willing to make terms with the conqueror. By this unwarlike spirit of his army Pætus was driven to despair. He wrote to Vologeses. His letter was more in the style of reproach than the language of a suppliant. ‘Hostilities,’ he said, ‘were commenced by the Parthians to wrest the kingdom of Armenia from the Romans; a kingdom always in the power of the emperor, or governed by kings invested by him with the regal diadem. Peace is equally the interest of both nations. From the present juncture no conclusion can be drawn, since the whole weight of Parthia is employed against two legions, and Rome has it still in her power to arm in her cause the remaining nations of the world.’

XIV. Vologeses, without entering into the question of right, returned for answer, ‘that he must wait for his two brothers, Pacorus and Tiridates: when they arrived a convention might be held, and there the rights of Armenia would be adjusted. The gods would then decide the fate of the Roman legions.’ Pætus sent another embassy, requesting an interview. The king sent Vasaces, his general of the cavalry, to act in

1 The Roman army defeated by the Samnites passed under the yoke at the Caudinæ Furcæ, now Förchie, A. U. C. 183. A more terrible defeat happened afterwards at Numantia, A. U. C. 617. The place is now called Numantia, and the ruins of antiquity are still to be seen.

the royal name. At that meeting Pætus cited a number of ancient precedents. He talked of Lucullus, Pompey, and the emperors of Rome, who had dealt out the sceptre of Armenia. Vasaces coolly answered, that some shadow of right must be allowed to have been claimed by the Romans; but the substantial power was always vested in the Parthian kings. After much debate it was agreed, that on the next day Monobazus, the Adiabeanian, should attend as a witness to the compact. In his presence it was agreed that, the siege being raised, the Roman legions should forthwith evacuate Armenia; that the strongholds, with their stores and magazines, should be delivered up to the Parthians: and, these conditions duly performed, Vologeses was to be at liberty by his ambassadors to negotiate with Nero.

XV. These preliminaries being settled, Pætus ordered a bridge to be built over the Arsanias, a river that flowed by the side of his camp. For this work his pretext was, that it would be convenient to his army when the march began: but the fact was, the Parthians, knowing the utility of a bridge, had made it an article of the treaty; intending, at the same time, that it should remain a monument of their victory. The Roman troops, instead of using the bridge, filed off another way. A report¹ was spread abroad that the legions had passed under the yoke, and, in addition to that disgrace, suffered all the humiliating circumstances which usually attend the overthrow of an army. The Armenians gave some color to the report. Before the Romans marched out they entered the intrenchments, and formed a line on each side, in order to fix on the slaves and beasts of burden that formerly

¹ Suetonius says expressly that the legions passed under the yoke; in Neron. § 39.

belonged to themselves. Not content with seizing what they called their own property, they laid violent hands on the apparel of the soldiers, who yielded, with fear and trembling, to avoid a new cause of quarrel.

Vologeses, as a monument of his victory, raised a pile of dead bodies, and arms taken from the enemy; but declined to be a spectator of the legions in their flight. He first indulged his pride, and then sought the fame of moderation. He waded across the Arsarnias, mounted on an elephant, while his train and his near relations followed him on horseback. The reason was, a report prevailed that, by the fraudulent contrivance of the builders, the whole fabric of the bridge would give way at once; but by those who made the experiment it was found to be a firm and solid structure.

XVI. The besieged, it is now clear, were provided with grain in such abundance, that on their departure they burned their magazines; and, on the other hand, by the account given by Corbulo, it appears that the Parthians, having consumed their whole stock of provisions, were on the point of raising the siege at the very time when he was within three days' march of the place. On the same authority it may be averred as a fact, that Pætus, under the sanction of a solemn oath, sworn under the eagles, and in the presence of witnesses sent by Vologeses, took on him to engage that no Roman should set his foot within the territories of Armenia till Nero's pleasure touching the terms of the treaty should arrive from Rome. These assertions, it may be said, were suggested by malignity, to aggravate the infamy of an unwarlike officer; but it is now known, beyond the possibility of a doubt, that Pætus made a forced march of no less than forty miles

in one day; leaving behind him the sick and wounded, and flying with as much disorder and confusion as if he had been routed in the field of battle. Corbulo met the fugitives on the banks of the Euphrates. He received them without parade, and without that display of military pomp which might seem a triumph over the fate of the vanquished. His men beheld with regret the disgrace of their fellow-soldiers, and tears gushed from every eye. The usual forms of military salutation were suppressed by the general condolence. The pride of courage and the sense of glory, which, in the day of prosperity, are natural passions, were now converted into grief and sympathy. The lower the condition of the soldier the more sincere his sorrow. In that class of men the honest emotions of the heart appeared without disguise.

XVII. The conference between the two commanders was short and without ceremony. Corbulo complained that all his labors were rendered abortive, whereas the war might have been terminated by the total overthrow of the Parthians. Pætus observed in reply, that all things were still in the same condition. He proposed to turn the eagles against the enemy; and, since Vologeses had withdrawn his forces, by their joint force Armenia would be easily reduced. Corbulo rejected the offer. He had no such orders from the emperor. It was the danger in which the legions were involved that drew him out of his province, and since it was uncertain where the Parthians would make their next attempt, he was determined to return into Syria with his army; and if his infantry, harassed out with fatiguing marches, could keep pace with the Parthian cavalry, who with their usual velocity could traverse the open plains, he should hold himself indebted to his own good fortune for so signal an event. Pætus fixed

his winter-quarters in Cappadocia. Vologeses sent dispatches to Corbulo, requiring that the strongholds and fortresses on the banks of the Euphrates should be rased to the ground, and the river left, as heretofore, the common boundary of the two empires. Corbulo had no objection, provided both parties withdrew their garrisons, and left Armenia a free and independent country. The Parthian monarch, after some hesitation, acceded to the terms. The castles erected by Corbulo's order on the banks of the Euphrates were all demolished, and the Armenians were left to their natural liberty.

XVIII. Meanwhile trophies of victory were erected at Rome, and triumphal arches on the mount of the capitol. This was ordered by the senate while the war was still depending; nor was the work discontinued when the event was known. The public eye was amused at the expense of truth. To add to the imposition, and to appear free from all solicitude about foreign affairs, Nero ordered all the damaged grain that lay in the public stores to be thrown into the Tiber. By this act of ostentation an idea of great abundance was to be impressed on the minds of the people. Nor did he suffer the price of corn to be raised, though near two hundred vessels loaded with grain were lost in the harbor by the violence of a storm; and a hundred more, working their way up the Tiber, were destroyed by the accident of fire. At the same time Nero committed the care of the public imposts to three men of consular rank; namely, Lucius Piso, Ducennius Geminus, and Pompeius Paullinus. In making this arrangement he animadverted with severity on the conduct of former emperors, whose extravagance made heavy anticipations of the revenue; whereas he himself, by his frugality, paid annually

into the treasury, for the exigences of the state, six millions of sesterces.

XIX. A custom, highly unjust and prejudicial to the rights of others, was at this time in general vogue. When the time drew near for the election of magistrates, or the allotment of provinces, it was the practice of men who had no issue¹ to become fathers by adoption. Having served their turn in a contest with real parents for the pretorship, and the administration of provinces, they emancipated their pretended sons, and resumed their former state. Against this abuse warm remonstrances were made to the senate. The complainants urged the rights of nature, the care and expense of rearing children, while the compensation by law established² was wrested from them by fraud, by artifice, and the facility of feigned adoptions. It was surely a sufficient advantage to such as had no children that they could live free from all charge and solicitude, without leaving the road to favor, to preferment, and honors open to them, in common with men who are of service to the community. Real parents are taught by the laws to expect the reward due to useful members of the community; but the laws are eluded, and the promised reward is snatched away, if such as have raised no heirs to themselves are allowed to become parents without paternal affection, and childless again without regret. The deception of a moment serves to counterbalance whole years of ex-

1 It was a settled rule of law, that in all elections for the magistracy, or the government of provinces, the preference should be given to the candidate who had the greatest number of children. See *Annals*, ii. 51.

2 By the law *Papia Poppæa*, the estates of those who did not intitle themselves to the privileges annexed to the paternal state were to devolve to the public, as the common parent of all; *Annals*, iii. 28.

pectation, and the true father sees all his hopes defeated. The senate passed a decree, by which it was provided, that in all cases, either of election to the magistracy or succession by testament, no regard should be paid to adoptions merely colorable.

XX. Claudius Timarchus, a native of Crete, was cited to answer a prosecution commenced against him. Besides the allegations usually laid to the charge of such as rise in the provinces to overgrown wealth, and become the oppressors of their inferior neighbors, an expression that fell from him excited the indignation of the senate. This man, it seems, had made it his boast that addresses of public thanks to the proconsular governors of Crete depended intirely on his weight and influence. Pætus Thræsea seized this opportunity to convert the incident to the public good. He gave his opinion that the offender ought to be banished from the isle of Crete, and proceeded as follows: ‘ Experience has taught us, conscript fathers, that the wisest laws and the best examples of virtue owe their origin to the actual commission of crimes and misdemeanors. Men of integrity make it their study on such occasions to deduce good from evil. To the corrupt practices of public orators we are indebted for the Cincian law,¹ and for the Julian to the intrigues and open bribery of the candidates for public honors. The Calpurnian regulations² were produced by the avarice and rapacity

1 The Cincian law against venal advocates has been mentioned, Annals, xi. 5. Laws were also established by Augustus, called *leges Juliae*, to prevent bribery at elections; Suet. in Aug. § 34 and 40.

2 The Calpurnian law was introduced by Lucius Calpurnius Piso, *de pecuniis repetundis*, to compel restitution from such as were convicted of extortion, A. U. C. 605, in the beginning of the third Punic war. It was followed from time to time by new decrees; but all proved ineffectual.

of the magistrates. Guilt must precede the punishment, and reformation grows out of abuse. We have now before us the pride and insolence of petty tyrants in the provinces. To check the mischief, let us come to a resolution, consistent with good faith, and worthy of the Roman name. Protection is due to our allies; but let us remember that, to adorn our names, we are not to depend on the voice of foreign nations. Our fellow-citizens are the best judges of our conduct.

XXI. 'The old republic was not content with sending pretors and consuls to administer the provinces. Men who sustained no public character were often commissioned to visit the remotest colonies, in order to report the condition of each, and the temper with which the people submitted to the authority of government. By the judgment of individuals whole nations were kept in awe. What is our practice now? We pay court to the colonies; we flatter the provinces, and, by the influence of some powerful leader, we receive public thanks for our administration. In like manner, accusations are framed at the will and pleasure of some overgrown provincial. Let the right of complaining still remain; and, by exercising that right, let the provinces show their importance; but let them not, by false encomiums, impose on our judgment. The praise that springs from cabal and faction is more pernicious than even malice or cruelty. Let both be suppressed. More mischief is done by the governor who wishes to oblige than by him who shows himself not afraid of offending. It is the misfortune of certain virtues to provoke ill-will. In that class may be reckoned inflexible severity, and the firmness that never yields to intrigue, or the arts of designing men. Hence it happens that every new governor opens a promising scene; but the last act seldom corresponds

with the outset. In the end we see an humble candidate for the suffrages of the province. Remove the evil, and government, in every quarter, will be more upright, more just, more uniform. By prosecutions avarice and rapine have received a check. Abolish the custom of giving public thanks, and you suppress the pitiful ambition which, for vain applause, can stoop to mean compliances.'

XXII. This speech was received with the unanimous assent of the fathers. The proposition, notwithstanding, could not be formed into a decree, the consuls refusing to make their report. The prince interposed in the business, and, with his authority, a law was passed, forbidding any person whatever to move in a provincial assembly¹ for a vote of thanks to the proconsul or pretor, or to send a deputation to Rome for that purpose. During the same consulship the gymnasium, or place of athletic exercises, was struck with lightning, and burnt to the ground. The statue of Nero was found in the ruins, melted down to a shapeless mass. The celebrated city of Pompeii² in Campania was overthrown by an earthquake, and well-nigh demolished. Lælia, the vestal virgin, departed this life; and Cornelia, descended from the family of the Cossi, succeeded to the vacant office.

¹ It was a frequent practice of the provinces to send a deputation to the senate, with an address of thanks to the proconsuls or pretors who were returned to Rome, for the blessings enjoyed by the people under their administration; and this contrivance served to advance the fame of the men who condescended to intrigue for applause, and thereby open the road to the highest honors of the state.

² Seneca gives an account of this earthquake, but he places it in the following year. See Quæst. Natural. quæst. vi. 1. Pompeii is now called Torre dell' Annunciata. It was afterwards totally overwhelmed by the eruption of Mount Vesuvius, A. U. C. 832.

XXIII. During the consulship of Memmius Regulus and Verginius Rufus Poppæa was delivered of a daughter. The exultation of Nero was beyond all mortal joy. He called the new-born infant Augusta, and gave the same title to her mother. The child was brought into the world at Antium, where Nero himself was born. The senate, before the birth, had offered vows to the gods for the safe delivery of Poppæa. They fulfilled their obligations, and voted additional honors. Days of supplication were appointed: a temple was voted to the goddess of fecundity; athletic sports were instituted on the model of the religious games practised at Antium; golden statues of the two goddesses of fortune¹ were to be erected on the throne of Jupiter Capitolinus; and in the honor of the Claudian and Domitian families,² Circensian games were to be celebrated at Antium, in imitation of the public spectacles exhibited at Bovillæ to commemorate the Julian race. But these honors were of short duration: the infant died in less than four months, and the monuments of human vanity faded away. But new modes of flattery were soon displayed: the child was canonised for a goddess: a temple was decreed to her, with an altar, a bed of state, a priest, and religious ceremonies. Nero's grief, like his joy at the birth, was without bounds or measure. At the time when the senate went in crowds to Antium, to congratulate the prince on the delivery of Poppæa, a circumstance occurred worthy of notice. Pætus Thræsea was ordered by Nero not to appear on the occasion. The

1 The worship paid to Fortune as a goddess is well known from Horace. There were two goddesses of fortune adored in that city: one, the Happy; the other, the Equestrian.

2 Nero, by his father, was of the Domitian family; and, by adoption, of the Claudian.

affront was deemed a prelude to the ruin of that eminent citizen. He received the mandate with his usual firmness, calm and undismayed. A report prevailed soon after that Nero, in conversation with Seneca, made it his boast that he was reconciled to Thræsea, and in return the philosopher wished him joy. In consequence of this incident the glory of those excellent men rose to the highest pitch; but their danger kept pace with their glory.

XXIV. In the beginning of the spring ambassadors from Vologeses arrived at Rome, with letters from the king, their master, in substance declaring, ‘that he would not revive the question of right, so often urged and fully discussed, since the gods, the sovereign arbiters of nations, had delivered Armenia into the hands of the Parthians, not without disgrace to the Roman name. Tigranes had been hemmed in by a close blockade; Pætus and his legions were enveloped in the like distress, and, in the moment when destruction hung over them, the whole army was suffered to decamp. The Parthians displayed at once their superior valor and their moderation. But even in the present juncture Tiridates had no objection to a long journey to Rome, in order to be there invested with the sovereignty; but, being of the order of the Magi, the duties of the sacerdotal function¹ required his personal attendance. He was willing however to proceed to the Roman camp, and there receive the regal diadem under the eagles, and the image of the emperor, in the presence of the legions.’

XXV. The style of this letter differed essentially from the account transmitted by Pætus, who represented the affairs of the east in a flourishing situation.

¹ For more of the Parthian superstition, and the scruples of Tiridates, see the Appendix to the Annals, xvi.

To ascertain the truth, a centurion, who had travelled with the ambassadors, was interrogated concerning the state of Armenia. The Romans, he replied, have evacuated the country. Nero felt the insulting mockery of being asked to yield what the barbarians had seized by force. He summoned a council of the leading men at Rome, to determine, by their advice, which was most eligible, a difficult and laborious war, or an ignominious peace. All declared for war. The conduct of it was committed to Corbulo, who, by the experience of so many years, knew both the temper of the Roman army and the genius of the enemy. The misconduct of Pæ-tus had brought disgrace on the Roman name; and to hazard the same calamities from the incapacity of another officer was not advisable.

The Parthian deputies received their answer, but were dismissed with handsome presents, leaving them room to infer from the mild behavior of the emperor, that Tiridates, if he made the request in person, might succeed to the extent of his wishes. The civil administration of Syria was committed to Cestius; but the whole military authority was assigned to Corbulo. The fifteenth legion, then in Pannonia under the command of Marius Celsus, was ordered to join the army. Directions were also given to the kings and tetrarchs of the east, as also to the governors and imperial procurators of the several provinces in those parts, to submit in every thing to the commander-in-chief. Corbulo was now invested with powers little short of what the Roman people committed to Pompey¹ in the war

¹ Pompey was employed as a commander-in-chief in the piratic war; with a commission, giving to him supreme authority in every province to the extent of fifty miles from the sea-coast. By the decree of the senate on that occasion, Velleius Paterculus observes, almost the whole Roman world was subjected to the will of one man.

against the pirates. Pætus, in the mean time, returned to Rome, not without apprehensions of being called to a severe account. Nero appeased his fears, content with a few sallies of mirth and ridicule. His words were: ‘I make haste to pardon you, lest a state of suspense should injure a man of your sensibility. Since you are so apt to take fright, delay on my part might hurt your nerves, and bring on a fit of illness.’

XXVI. Corbulo expected no advantage to the service from the fourth and twelfth legions, the bravest of their men being all cut off, and the survivors still remaining covered with consternation. He removed them into Syria; and, in exchange, reinforced himself with the sixth legion and the third; both in full vigor, inured to hardship, and no less distinguished by their success than by their valor. To these he added the fifth legion, which happened to be quartered in Pontus, and, by consequence, had not suffered in the late defeats. The fifteenth legion had lately joined the army, as also a body of select troops from Illyricum and Egypt, with the cavalry, the cohorts, and auxiliaries sent by the confederate kings. The whole force assembled at Melitene, where Corbulo proposed to cross the Euphrates. His first care was to purify his army by a solemn lustration.¹ Those rites performed, he called his men to a meeting, and in a spirited harangue painted forth the auspicious government of the reigning prince: he mentioned his own exploits, and imputed to the imbecility of Pætus all the disasters that happened. The whole of his discourse was delivered

¹ This superstitious ceremony is described by Livy. The soldiers were drawn out on an open plain, and crowned with laurel wreaths, while victims were sacrificed to the god of war. The general harangued his men on the occasion. Livy, i. 28.

in style of authority, the true eloquence of a soldier.

XXVII. He began his march without delay, and chose the road formerly traversed by Lucullus,¹ having first given orders to his men to open the passes, and remove the obstructions with which time and long disuse had choked up part of the way. He heard that ambassadors from Tiridates and Vologeses were advancing with overtures of peace, and having no inclination to treat them with disdain, he sent forward some chosen centurions, with instructions neither harsh nor arrogant, in substance stating, 'that the misunderstanding between the two nations might still be compromised, without proceeding to the decision of the sword. Both armies had fought with alternate vicissitudes of fortune, in some instances favorable to the Romans, in others to the Parthians; and from those events both sides might derive a lesson against the pride and insolence of victory. It was the interest of Tiridates to receive, at the hands of the Roman emperor, a kingdom in a flourishing state, before hostile armies laid a scene of desolation; and Vologeses would consult his own advantage, as well as that of his people, by preferring the friendship of Rome to wild ambition and the havoc of a destructive war. The internal dissensions that distract the kingdom of Parthia are too well known. It is also known that Vologeses has for his subjects fierce and barbarous nations, whom no law can check, no government can control. Nero, on the contrary, sees a settled calm throughout the Roman world, and, except the rupture with Parthia, has no other war on his hands.' Such was Corbulo's answer. To give it weight, he added the terrors of the sword.

¹ Lucullus commanded the legions in Armenia, A. U. C. 685. See Plutarch, life of Lucullus.

The grandees of Armenia, who had been the first to revolt, were driven out of their possessions, and their castles were levelled to the ground. Between the weak who made no resistance, and the brave and resolute, no distinction was made. All were involved in one common danger; no place was safe; hills and mountains no less than the open plain were filled with consternation.

XXVIII. The name of Corbulo was not, as is usual among adverse nations, hated by the enemy. He was on the contrary held in high esteem, and by consequence his advice had great weight with the barbarians. Vologeses did not wish for a general war. He desired a truce in favor of some particular provinces. Tiridates proposed an interview with the Roman general. An early day was appointed. The place for the congress was chosen by the prince on the very spot where Pætus and his legions were invested. The scene of their late victory flattered the pride of the barbarians. Corbulo did not decline the meeting. The face of things he knew was changed, and the reverse of fortune was glorious to himself. The disgrace of Pætus gave him no anxiety. Having resolved to pay the last funeral rites to the slaughtered soldiers, whose bodies lay weltering on the field, he chose for that purpose the son of the vanquished general, then a military tribune, and ordered him to march at the head of the companies appointed to perform that melancholy duty. On the day fixed for the convention Tiberius Alexander,¹ a Roman knight, who had been sent

¹ Tiberius Alexander was by birth one of the Jewish nation, but an apostate from the religion of his country. Joseph. Jewish Antiq. xx. 5. The emperors frequently sent their chosen favorites to attend the general; but, in fact, to be spies on his conduct.

by Nero to superintend the operations of the campaign, and with him Vivianus Annius, son-in-law to Corbulo, but not yet of senatorian age,¹ though, in the absence of his superior officer, he was appointed to command the fifth legion, arrived in the camp of Tiridates in the character of hostages, chosen not only to remove from the mind of the prince all suspicion, but at the same time to do him honor. The Parthian and the Roman general proceeded to the interview, each attended by twenty horsemen. As soon as they drew near Tiridates leaped from his horse. Corbulo returned the compliment. They advanced on foot, and took each other by the hand.

XXIX. The Roman general addressed the prince. He praised the judgment of a young man, who had the moderation to prefer pacific measures to the calamities of war. Tiridates expatiated on the splendor of his illustrious line, and then taking a milder tone, agreed to set out on a journey to Rome. In a juncture when the affairs of Parthia were in a flourishing state, a prince descended from the Arsacides, humbling himself before the emperor, would present to the Roman people a new scene of glory. It was then settled as a preliminary article that Tiridates should lay down the regal diadem at the foot of Nero's statue, and never again resume it till delivered to him by the hands of the emperor. The parties embraced each other, and the convention ended.

In a few days afterwards the two armies were drawn out with great military pomp. On one side stood the Parthian cavalry, ranged in battalions, with all the pride of eastern magnificence. The Roman legions appeared on the opposite ground, the eagles glittering to

1 Not yet five-and-twenty.

the eye, the banners displayed, and the images of the gods, in regular order, forming a kind of temple. In the centre stood a tribunal, and on it a curule chair supporting the statue of Nero. Tiridates approached. Having immolated the victims with the usual rites, he took the diadem from his brow, and laid it at the foot of the statue. The spectators gazed with earnest ardor, and every bosom heaved with mixed emotions. The place where the legions were besieged and forced to capitulate was before the eye, and the same spot exhibited a reverse of fortune. They saw Tiridates on the point of setting out for Rome, a spectacle to the nations through which he was to pass, and to exhibit, in the presence of Nero, the humble condition of a suppliant prince;—how little better than a captive!

XXX. To the glory resulting from these events Corbulo added the graceful qualities of affability and condescension. He invited Tiridates to a banquet. The prince was struck with the novelty of Roman manners. Every object awakened his curiosity. He desired to know the reason of all that he observed. When the watch¹ was stationed, why was it announced by the centurion? Why did the company, when the banquet closed, rise from table at the sound of a trumpet? And why was the fire on the augural altar lighted with a torch? The Roman general answered all inquiries, not without partiality for his country. He aggrandised every thing, and gave the Parthian the noblest idea of the manners and institutions of the ancient Romans. On the following day Tiridates desired reasonable time to prepare for so long a journey,

¹ The night in a Roman camp was divided into four watches, each for the space of three hours. When the sentinels were changed notice was given by the sound of trumpet. See Hist. ii. 29.

and, before he undertook it, desired that he might be at liberty to visit his mother and his brothers. His request was granted. The prince delivered up his daughter as a hostage, and despatched letters to Nero in terms of submission.

XXXI. He met his two brothers, Pacorus in Media, and Vologeses at Ecbatana.¹ The Parthian king was not inattentive to the interest of Tiridates. He had already sent dispatches to Corbulo, requesting that his brother should not be disgraced by any circumstance that looked like a badge of slavery; that he should not be obliged to surrender his sword; that the honor of embracing the governors² of the several provinces should not be denied to him; that he should not undergo the humiliating affront of waiting at their gates, or in their antechambers; and that at Rome he should be treated with all the marks of distinction usually paid to the consuls. The truth is, the Parthian king, trained up in all the pride of despotism, knew but little of the Romans. He was not informed that it is the character and policy of that people to maintain, with zeal, the substantial interests of the empire, without any regard to petty formalities, the mere shadow of dominion.

XXXII. In the course of the year Nero granted the rights and privileges of Latium to the maritime nations³ at the foot of the Alps. He likewise assigned

¹ Vologeses, king of Parthia, and Pacorus, king of Media, were brothers to Tiridates.

² None but persons of high rank were admitted to embrace the governors of provinces. According to the ideas of that age, the honor was so high, that the Parthian king thought proper to make it a preliminary article.

³ The capital of the maritime Alps was called Ebrodunum, now Embrun. See an account of the territories of the Duke of Savoy. The rights and privileges of Latium have been already mentioned, *Annals*, xv. 32.

to the Roman knights distinct seats in the circus, advancing them before the space allotted to the populace. Till this regulation took place the knights were mixed indiscriminately with the multitude, the Roscian law¹ extending to no more than fourteen rows of the theatre. A spectacle of gladiators was exhibited this year, in nothing inferior to the magnificence displayed on former occasions; but a number of senators and women of illustrious rank descended into the arena,² and by exhibiting their persons in the lists, brought disgrace on themselves and their families.

XXXIII. In the consulship of Caius Lecanius and Marcus Licinius Nero's passion for theatrical fame broke out with a degree of vehemence not to be resisted. He had hitherto performed in private only, during the sports of the Roman youth, called the Juvenalia; but on those occasions he was confined to his own palace or his gardens; a sphere too limited for such bright ambition, and so fine a voice. He glowed with impatience to present himself before the

¹ The Roscian law, so called after L. Roscius Otho, was established A. U. C. 685. It assigned fourteen rows in the theatre to the Roman knights; but was silent as to the circus, where the senators, the knights, and the commonalty, were mixed in a promiscuous concourse. Afterwards, in the consulship of Cinna and Messala, A. U. C. 757, the senators and knights had a place assigned at the spectacle of the circus, where they sat apart from the plebeians, but without any distinction between their own two orders. Claudius allotted proper places for the senators; Suet. in Claud. § 21. It remained for Nero to take care of the equestrian order; Suet. in Neron. § 11.

² Suetonius says Nero engaged four hundred senators and six hundred Roman knights, some of them of fair fortune and character, to enter the lists as gladiators, and encounter the wild beasts. He also invited the vestal virgins to see the wrestlers; because, as he said, at Olympia the priestesses of Ceres were allowed the privilege of seeing that diversion.

public eye, but had not yet the courage to make his first appearance at Rome. Naples was deemed a Greek city, and, for that reason, a proper place to begin his career of glory. With the laurels which he was there to acquire he might pass over into Greece, and after gaining, by victory in song, the glorious crown which antiquity considered as a sacred prize, he might return to Rome with his honors blooming round him, and by his celebrity inflame the curiosity of the populace. With this idea he pursued his plan. The theatre at Naples was crowded with spectators. Not only the inhabitants of the city, but a prodigious multitude from all the municipal towns and colonies in the neighborhood, flocked together, attracted by the novelty of a spectacle so very extraordinary. All who followed the prince to pay their court, or as persons belonging to his train, attended on the occasion. The menial servants, and even the common soldiers, were admitted to enjoy the pleasures of the day.

XXXIV. The theatre of course was crowded. An accident happened, which men in general considered as an evil omen: with the emperor it passed for a certain sign of the favor and protection of the gods. As soon as the audience dispersed the theatre tumbled to pieces. No other mischief followed. Nero seized the opportunity to compose hymns of gratitude. He sung them himself, celebrating with melodious airs his happy escape from the ruin. Being now determined to cross the Adriatic, he stopped at Beneventum. At that place Vatinius entertained him with a show of gladiators. Of all the detestable characters that disgraced the court of Nero, this man was the most pernicious. He was bred up in a shoemaker's stall. Deformed in his person, he possessed a vein of ribaldry and vulgar humor which qualified him to succeed as buffoon. In

the character of a jester he recommended himself to notice, but soon forsook his scurrility for the trade of an informer; and having by the ruin of the worthiest citizens arrived at an eminence in guilt, he rose to wealth and power, the most dangerous miscreant of that evil period!

XXXV. Nero was a constant spectator of the sports exhibited at Beneventum; but even amidst this diversion his heart knew no pause from cruelty. He compelled Torquatus Silanus to put an end to his life, for no other reason than because he united to the splendor of the Junian family the honor of being great-grandson to Augustus. The prosecutors, suborned for the business, alleged against him, that having prodigally wasted his fortune in gifts and largesses, he had no resource left but war and civil commotion. With that design he retained about his person men of rank and distinction, employed in various offices: he had his secretaries, his treasurers, his paymasters, all in the style of imperial dignity, even then anticipating what his ambition aimed at. This charge being made in form, such of his freedmen as were known to be in the confidence of their master were seized and loaded with fetters. Silanus saw that his doom was impending, and to prevent the sentence of condemnation, opened the veins of both his arms. Nero, according to his custom, expressed himself in terms of lenity. 'The guilt of Silanus,' he said, 'was manifest; and though, by an act of despair, he showed that his crimes admitted no defence, his life would have been spared had he thought proper to trust to the clemency of his judge.'

XXXVI. In a short time after Nero, for reasons not sufficiently explained, resolved to defer his expedition into Greece. He returned to Rome, cherishing

in imagination a new design to visit the eastern nations, and Egypt in particular. This project had for some time been settled in his mind. He announced it by a proclamation, in which he assured the people that his absence would be of short duration, and, in the interval, the peace and good order of the commonwealth would be in no kind of danger. For the success of his voyage he went to offer up prayers in the capitol. He proceeded thence to the temple of Vesta. Being there seized with a sudden tremor in every joint, arising either from a superstitious fear of the goddess, or from a troubled conscience, which never ceased to goad and persecute him, he renounced his enterprise altogether, artfully pretending that the love of his country, which he felt warm at his heart, was dearer to him than all other considerations. 'I have seen,' he said, 'the dejected looks of the people; I have heard the murmurs of complaint: the idea of so long a voyage afflicts the citizens; and, indeed, how should it be otherwise, when the shortest excursion I could make was always sure to depress their spirits? The sight of their prince has at all times been their comfort and their best support. In private families the pledges of natural affection can soften the resolutions of a father, and mould him to their purpose: the people of Rome have the same ascendant over the mind of their sovereign. I feel their influence; I yield to their wishes.' With these and such like expressions he amused the multitude. Their love of public spectacles made them eager for his presence, and, above all, they dreaded, if he left the capital, a dearth of provisions. The senate and the leading men looked on with indifference, unable to decide which was most to be dreaded, his presence in the city, or his tyranny at a distance. They agreed at length (as in alarming cases

fear is always in haste to conclude), that what happened was the worst evil that could befall them.

XXXVII. Nero wished it to be believed that Rome was the place in which he most delighted. To diffuse this opinion, he established convivial meetings in all the squares and public places.¹ The whole city seemed to be his house. Of the various feasts given on this occasion, that which was prepared for the prince by Tigellinus exceeded in profusion and luxury every thing of the kind. I shall here give a description of this celebrated entertainment, that the reader, from one example, may form his idea of the prodigality of the times, and that history may not be incumbered with a repetition of the same enormities. Tigellinus gave his banquet on the lake of Agrippa,² on a platform of prodigious size,³ built for the reception of the guests.

To move this magnificent edifice to and fro on the water, he prepared a number of boats superbly decorated with gold and ivory. The rowers were a band of pathics. Each had his station according to his age, or his skill in the science of debauchery. The country round was ransacked for game and animals of the chase. Fish was brought from every sea, and even

1 Suetonius tells us that Nero frequently supped in public, either in the Field of Mars or the Circus, attended at table by the common women of the city, or from Syria. When he went down the Tiber to Ostia, or coasted along the bay of Baiæ, booths, with all conveniences for drinking and debauchery were ranged on the margin of the sea, while ladies of pleasure stood like sirens, to invite the passengers from their ships.

2 The lake of Agrippa was in the gardens adjoining to his house, near the Pantheon.

3 This platform was constructed by a great number of timbers fastened together, and left to float on the water. Lucan has described such a platform with a tower on it.

from the ocean. On the borders of the lake brothels were erected, and filled with women of illustrious rank. On the opposite bank was seen a band of abandoned women, who made no secret of their vices. In dance and lascivious attitudes they displayed their nakedness. When night came on a sudden illumination from the adjacent groves and buildings blazed over the lake. A concert of music, vocal and instrumental, enlivened the scene. Nero rioted in all kinds of lascivious pleasure. Between lawful and unlawful gratifications he made no distinction. Corruption seemed to be at a stand, if, at the end of a few days, he had not devised a new abomination to fill the measure of his crimes. He personated a woman, and in that character was given in marriage to one of his infamous herd, a pathic named Pythagoras. The emperor of Rome, with the affected airs of female delicacy, put on the nuptial veil. The augurs assisted at the ceremony; the portion of the bride was openly paid; the genial bed was displayed to view; nuptial torches were lighted up; the whole ceremony was public.

XXXVIII. A dreadful calamity followed in a short time after, by some ascribed to chance, and by others¹ to the execrable wickedness of Nero. The authority of historians is on both sides, and which preponderates it is not easy to determine. It is however certain,

¹ Suetonius relates the fire of Rome, and has no doubt of Nero's guilt. He tells us, that somebody repeating in conversation, 'When I am dead let fire devour the world;' 'Let it be,' said Nero, 'whilst I am living.' And accordingly, pretending to dislike the old buildings, and the narrow winding of the streets, he set fire to the city in so barefaced a manner, that several men of consular rank met Nero's domestic servants with torches and combustibles, but did not dare to apprehend them.

that of all the disasters that ever befell the city of Rome from the rage of fire, this was the worst, the most violent, and destructive. The flame broke out in that part of the circus which adjoins on one side to Mount Palatine, and, on the other, to Mount Cælius. It caught a number of shops stored with combustible goods, and, gathering force from the winds, spread with rapidity from one end of the circus to the other. Neither the thick walls of houses, nor the inclosure of temples, nor any other building, could check the rapid progress of the flames. A dreadful conflagration followed. The level parts of the city were destroyed. The fire communicated to the higher buildings, and, again laying hold of inferior places, spread with a degree of velocity that nothing could resist. The form of the streets, long and narrow, with frequent windings, and no regular opening, according to the plan of ancient Rome,¹ contributed to increase the mischief. The shrieks and lamentations of women, the infirmities of age, and the weakness of the young and tender, added misery to the dreadful scene. Some endeavored to provide for themselves, others to save their friends, in one part dragging along the lame and impotent, in another waiting to receive the tardy; or expecting relief themselves; they hurried, they lingered, they obstructed one another; they looked behind, and the fire broke out in front; they escaped from the flames, and in their place of refuge found no safety; the fire raged in every quarter; all were involved in one general conflagration.

The unhappy wretches fled to places remote, and thought themselves secure, but soon perceived the

¹ Livy observes that, after the city was fired by the Gauls, it was rebuilt in close, narrow, winding streets.

flames raging round them. Which way to turn, what to avoid or what to seek, no one could tell. They crowded the streets; they fell prostrate on the ground; they lay stretched in the fields, in consternation and dismay resigned to their fate. Numbers lost their whole substance, even the tools and implements by which they gained their livelihood, and, in that distress, did not wish to survive. Others, wild with affliction for their friends and relations whom they could not save, embraced a voluntary death and perished in the flames. During the whole of this dismal scene no man dared to attempt any thing that might check the violence of the dreadful calamity. A crew of incendiaries stood near at hand denouncing vengeance on all who offered to interfere. Some were so abandoned as to heap fuel on the flames. They threw in firebrands and flaming torches, proclaiming aloud that they had authority for what they did. Whether in fact they had received such horrible orders, or, under that device, meant to plunder with greater licentiousness, cannot now be known.

XXXIX. During the whole of this terrible conflagration Nero remained at Antium, without a thought of returning to the city, till the fire approached the building by which he had communicated the gardens of Mæcenas¹ with the imperial palace. All help however was too late. The palace, the contiguous edifices, and every house adjoining, were laid in ruins. To relieve the unhappy people, wandering in distress without a place of shelter, he opened the Field of Mars, as also the magnificent buildings raised by Agrippa;²

1 The gardens of Mæcenas were near Mount Esquiline.

2 The monuments of Agrippa were, his house, his gardens, his baths, and the Pantheon. The last remains at this day.

and even his own imperial gardens.¹ He ordered a number of sheds to be thrown up with all possible despatch, for the use of the populace. Household utensils and all kinds of necessary implements were brought from Ostia, and other cities in the neighborhood. The price of grain was reduced to three sesterces. For acts like these, munificent and well-timed, Nero might hope for a return of popular favor; but his expectations were in vain; no man was touched with gratitude. A report prevailed² that, while the city was in a blaze, Nero went to his own theatre, and there, mounting the stage, sung the destruction of Troy, as a happy allusion to the present misfortune.

XL. On the sixth day the fire was subdued at the foot of Mount Esquiline. This was effected by demolishing a number of buildings, and thereby leaving a wide space, where for want of materials the flame expired. The minds of men had scarce begun to recover from their consternation when the fire broke out a second time with no less fury than before. This happened however in a more open quarter, where fewer lives were lost; but the temples of the gods, the porticos and buildings raised for the decoration of the city were levelled to the ground. The popular odium was now more inflamed than ever, as this second alarm began in the house of Tigellinus, formerly the mansion of Æmilius. A suspicion prevailed that, to build a new city, and give it his own name, was the ambition of Nero. Of the fourteen quarters into which Rome was

1 Nero's gardens joined to the Vatican.

2 Suetonius says, in express terms, that Nero beheld the conflagration from a tower on the top of Mæcenas' house, and, being highly pleased with so grand a sight, went to his own theatre, and in his scenic dress tuned his harp, and sung the destruction of Troy.

divided, four only were left intire, three were reduced to ashes, and the remaining seven presented nothing better than a heap of shattered houses half in ruins.

XLI. The number of houses, temples and insulated mansions destroyed by the fire cannot be ascertained. But the most venerable monuments of antiquity, which the worship of ages had rendered sacred, were laid in ruins; amongst these were the temple dedicated to the moon by Servius Tullius; the fane and the great altar consecrated by Evander, the Arcadian, to Hercules, his visitor and his guest;¹ the chapel of Jupiter Stator,² built by Romulus; the palace of Numa, and the temple of Vesta,³ with the tutelar gods of Rome. With these were consumed the trophies of so many victories, the inimitable works of the Grecian artists, with the precious monuments of literature and ancient genius, all at present remembered by men advanced in years, but irrecoverably lost. Not even the splendor with which the new city rose out of the ruins of the old could compensate for that lamented disaster. It did not escape observation that the fire broke out on the fourteenth before the calends of July,⁴ a day remarkable for the conflagration kindled by the Senones, when those barbarians took the city of Rome

1 Evander was originally a native of Arcadia in Greece. The visit of Hercules forms a beautiful episode in Virgil's *Æneid*, viii.

2 For the temple of Jupiter Stator, see Livy, i. 12.

3 The palace of Numa was on Mount Palatine, afterwards the mansion of Augustus, near the temple of Vesta, where the vestal virgins watched the perpetual fire. See Horace, i. 2.

4 The fourteenth of the calends of July, or the eighteenth of June. This is confirmed by Livy, who says, vi. 1, that the battle at Allia was fought on the fifteenth of the calends; and v. 41, he says the victorious Gauls entered Rome on the following day.

by storm, and burnt it to the ground. Men of reflection, who refined on every thing with minute curiosity, calculated the number of years, months, and days, from the foundation of Rome to the firing of it by the Gauls; and from that calamity to the present they found the interval of time precisely the same.

XLII. Nero did not blush to convert to his own use the public ruins of his country. He built a magnificent palace,¹ in which the objects that excited admiration were neither gold nor precious stones. Those decorations, long since introduced by luxury, were grown stale and hackneyed to the eye. A different species of magnificence was now consulted: expansive lakes and fields of vast extent were intermixed with pleasing variety; woods and forests stretched to an immeasurable length, presenting gloom and solitude amidst scenes of open space, where the eye wandered with surprise over an unbounded prospect. This prodigious plan was carried on under the direction of two surveyors, whose names were Severus and Celer. Bold and original in their projects, these men undertook to conquer nature, and to perform wonders even beyond the imagination and the riches of the prince. They promised to form a navigable canal from the lake Avernus² to the mouth of the Tiber. The experiment, like the genius of the men, was bold and grand; but it was to be carried over a long tract of

1 According to Suetonius Nero turned the public calamity to his own private advantage. He promised to remove the bodies that lay amidst the ruins, and to clear the ground at his own expense. By that artifice he secured all the remaining property of the unhappy sufferers for his own use. To add to his ill-gotten store, he levied contributions in the provinces, and by those means collected an immense sum.

2 The lake Avernus was in the neighborhood of Baia, now Lago Averno.

barren land, and in some places through opposing mountains. The country round was parched and dry, without one humid spot, except the Pomptinian marsh,¹ from which water could be expected. A scheme so vast could not be accomplished without immoderate labor, and, if practicable, the end was in no proportion to the expense and labor. But the prodigious and almost impossible had charms for the enterprising spirit of Nero. He began to hew a passage through the hills that surround the lake Avernus, and some traces of his deluded hopes are visible at this day.

XLIII. The ground, which, after marking out his own domain, Nero left to the public, was not laid out for the new city in a hurry and without judgment, as was the case after the irruption of the Gauls. A regular plan was formed; the streets were made wide and long; the elevation² of the houses was defined, with an open area before the doors, and porticos³ to secure and adorn the front. The expense of the porticos Nero undertook to defray out of his own revenue. He promised, besides, as soon as the work was finished, to clear the ground, and leave a clear space to every house, without any charge to the occupier. In order to excite a spirit of industry and emulation, he held forth rewards proportioned to the rank of each individual, provided the buildings were finished

1 Now Paludi Pontine, in the territory of Rome.

2 Strabo says that by an ordinance of Augustus, no new-built house was to be more than seventy feet high. Trajan afterwards, according to Aurelius Victor, fixed the elevation at sixty feet. The rule prescribed by Nero cannot now be known.

3 We are told by Suetonius that Nero introduced a new model for building in the city, and, by porticos and piazzas before the front, contrived, in case of fire, to hinder the flames from spreading.

in a limited time. The rubbish by his order was removed to the marshes of Ostia, and the ships that brought corn up the river were to return loaded with the refuse of the workmen. Add to all this, the several houses built on a new principle were to be raised to a certain elevation, without beams or wood-work, on arches of stone from the quarries of Alba or Gabii;¹ those materials being impervious, and of a nature to resist the force of fire. The springs of water, which had been before that time intercepted by individuals for their separate use, were no longer suffered to be diverted from their channel, but left to the care of commissioners, that the public might be properly supplied, and in case of fire have a reservoir at hand to stop the progress of the mischief.

It was also settled, that the houses should no longer be contiguous, with slight party-walls to divide them;² but every house was to stand detached, surrounded and insulated by its own inclosure. These regulations, it must be admitted, were of public utility, and added much to the embellishment of the new city. But still the old plan of Rome was not without its advocates. It was thought more conducive to the health³ of the inhabitants. The narrowness of the streets and the elevation of the buildings served to exclude the rays

1 Vitruvius says that the Alban and Gabian stone was not the hardest, but resisted fire; while the stone from other quarries was apt, when heated, to crack, and fly off in fragments.

2 Brotier observes that by a law of the Twelve Tables a space of something more than two feet was to be left between all new-built houses.

3 It is known, says Brotier, from the experience of medical people, that at Rome there are more patients during the summer in the wide parts of the city, which lie open to the sun, than in the narrow places, where the inhabitants are shaded from the intense heat.

of the sun; whereas the more open space, having neither shade nor shelter, left men exposed to the intense heat of the day.

XLIV. These several regulations were, no doubt, the best that human wisdom could suggest. The next care was to propitiate the gods. The sibylline books were consulted, and the consequence was that supplications were decreed to Vulcan, to Ceres, and Proserpine. A band of matrons offered their prayers and sacrifices to Juno, first in the capitol, and next on the nearest margin of the sea, where they supplied themselves with water to sprinkle the temple and the statue of the goddess. A select number of women, who had husbands actually living, laid the deities on their sacred beds,¹ and kept midnight vigils with the usual solemnity. But neither these religious ceremonies, nor the liberal donations of the prince, could efface from the minds of men the prevailing opinion that Rome was set on fire by his own orders. The infamy of that horrible transaction still adhered to him. In order if possible to remove the imputation, he determined to transfer the guilt to others. For this purpose he punished with exquisite torture a race of men detested for their evil practices,² by vulgar appellation commonly called Christians.

The name was derived from Christ, who in the reign of Tiberius suffered under Pontius Pilate, the procurator of Judea. By that event the sect of which he was the founder received a blow which for a time

1 The beds on which the gods and goddesses were extended at all public festivals were called lectisternia. See Livy, v. 13.

2 Brotier observes that the Jews, in that period of time, were guilty of great enormities; and the distinction between them and the Christians not being understood, all were considered in the same light, despised and hated by the Romans.

checked the growth of a dangerous superstition ;¹ but it revived soon after, and spread with recruited vigor,

1 This was the first persecution of the Christians. Nero, the declared enemy of humankind, waged war against a religion which has since diffused the light of truth, and humanised the savages of Europe. It is true, as Suetonius relates, that Claudius banished the Jews, who were raising seditious tumults at the instigation of one Chrestus. That name, it is almost needless to observe, cannot, at least ought not to be confounded with Jesus Christ ; who, it was well known at Rome, had suffered under Pontius Pilate in the reign of Tiberius. Chrestus, Brotier observes, was not an uncommon name among the Greeks and Romans. When the Jews were ordered by Claudius to depart from Rome, all of that nation who professed themselves followers of Christ were, without distinction, included in the number. The edict of the emperor was not pointed against the Christians. Nero appears to be the first that attacked them as the professors of a new religion ; and when such a man as Tacitus calls it a dangerous superstition, it must be allowed that indirectly an apology is made for Nero. But for Tacitus, who had opportunities for a fair inquiry, and ability to know and decide, what excuse can be offered ? The vices of the Jews were imputed to the Christians without discrimination, and Tacitus suffered himself to be hurried away by the torrent of popular prejudice. And yet we find that his friend Pliny, during his administration in the province of Bithynia, thought and acted with moderation. The Christians were under a prosecution : Pliny, in his character of proconsular governor, was in doubt how to proceed. He wrote to the emperor Trajan on the subject ; and after stating that the real Christians were not to be forced by any means whatever to renounce the articles of their belief, he proceeds to the sum total of their guilt, which he found to be as follows : ‘ They met on a stated day before it was light, and addressed themselves in a prayer or hymn to Christ, as to a god, binding themselves by a solemn oath, not for any wicked purpose, but never to commit any fraud, theft, or adultery ; never to falsify their word, nor deny a trust reposed in them : after which it was their custom to separate, and then re-assemble to eat their meal together, in a manner perfectly harmless and inoffensive. They desisted,’ says Pliny, ‘ from this custom after my edict, issued according to your order, against the holding of any assemblies whatever.’ Such is the account of the religion which Tacitus calls a pernicious superstition. Pliny adds, in the same letter, that in order to come at the real truth he ordered two female

not only in Judea, the soil that gave it birth, but even in the city of Rome, the common sink into which every thing infamous and abominable flows like a torrent from all quarters of the world. Nero proceeded with his usual artifice. He found a set of profligate and abandoned wretches, who were induced to confess themselves guilty, and on the evidence of such men a number of Christians were convicted, not indeed on clear evidence of their having set the city on fire, but rather on account of their sullen hatred of the whole human race.¹ They were put to death with exquisite cruelty, and to their sufferings Nero added mockery and derision. Some were covered with the skins of wild beasts, and left to be devoured by dogs; others were nailed to the cross; numbers were burnt alive; and many, covered over with inflammable mat-

slaves to be put to the torture, but he could discover nothing more than a rooted and excessive superstition. Trajan, in his answer to this letter, determines, that if Christians are brought before the governor, and proved to be guilty, they must be punished, unless they renounce their errors and invoke the gods of Rome. In that case they were to be pardoned, notwithstanding any former suspicion. But the emperor says to his minister, 'I would not have you officiously enter into any inquiries concerning them.' Pliny's letter, Mr. Melmoth observes, is esteemed as almost the only genuine monument of ecclesiastical antiquity relating to the times immediately succeeding the apostles, being written not above forty years after the death of Paul. It was preserved by the Christians themselves, as a clear and unsuspecting evidence of the purity of their doctrines. It is therefore with good reason, says Brotier, that Tertullian, in a strain of exultation, declares that the Christians, 'for their innocence, their probity, justice, truth, and for the living God, were burnt alive. The cruelty, ye persecutors, is all your own; the glory is ours.'

¹ The Jews, as will be seen in the History, v. 5, were charged with harboring a sullen aversion towards all mankind. It is unnecessary to vindicate the Christian religion from that imputation.

ter, were lighted up, when the day declined, to serve as torches during the night.¹

For the convenience of seeing this tragic spectacle the emperor lent his own gardens. He added the sports of the circus, and assisted in person, sometimes driving a curricule, and occasionally mixing with the rabble in his coachman's dress. At length the cruelty of these proceedings filled every breast with compassion. Humanity relented in favor of the Christians. The manners of that people were, no doubt, of a pernicious tendency, and their crimes called for the hand of justice: but it was evident that they fell a sacrifice, not for the public good, but to glut the rage and cruelty of one man only.

XLV. Meanwhile, to supply the unbounded prodigality of the prince, all Italy was ravaged; the provinces were plundered; and the allies of Rome, with the several places that enjoyed the title of free cities, were put under contribution. The very gods were taxed. Their temples in the city were rifled of their treasures, and heaps of massy gold, which, through a series of ages, the virtue of the Roman people, either returning thanks for victories, or performing their vows made in the hour of distress, had dedicated to religious uses, were now produced to answer the demands of riot and extravagance. In Greece and Asia rapacity was not content with seizing the votive offerings that adorned the temples, but even the very statues of the gods were deemed lawful pray. To carry this impious robbery into execution Acratus and Secundus Carinas were sent with a special commission: the former, one of Nero's freedmen, of a genius ready for any black design: the latter, a man of literature, with the Greek philosophy fluent in his

¹ Juvenal alludes, with his usual indignation, to the barbarous cruelties described by Tacitus.

mouth, and not one virtue at his heart. It was a report current at the time that Seneca, wishing to throw from himself all responsibility for these impious acts, desired leave to retire to some part of Italy. Not being able to succeed in his request, he feigned a nervous disorder, and never stirred out of his room. If credit be due to some writers, a dose of poison was prepared for him by Cleonicus, one of his freedmen, by the instigation of Nero. The philosopher, however, warned by the same servant, whose courage failed him, or perhaps shielded from danger by his own wary disposition, escaped the snare. He lived at that very time on the most simple diet: wild apples that grew in the woods were his food; and water from the clear purling stream served to quench his thirst.

XLVI. About the same time a body of gladiators, detained in custody at Præneste, made an attempt to recover their liberty. The military guard was called out, and the tumult died away. The incident, notwithstanding, revived the memory of Spartacus.¹ The calamities that followed the daring enterprise of that adventurer became the general topic, and filled the minds of all with dreadful apprehension. Such is the genius of the populace, ever prone to sudden innovations, yet terrified at the approach of danger. In a few days after advice was received that the fleet had suffered by a violent storm. This was not an event of war, for there never was a period of such profound tranquillity; but Nero had ordered the ships on a stated day to assemble on the coast of Campania. The dangers of the sea never entered into his consideration. His orders were peremptory. The pilots, to mark their zeal, set sail in tempestuous weather from the port of Formia. While they were endea-

¹ Spartacus, a gladiator, kindled up the Servile War, A. U. C. 681.

voring to double the cape of Misenum a squall of wind from the south threw them on the coast of Cuma, where a number of the larger galleys, and almost all the smaller vessels, were dashed to pieces.

XLVII. Towards the close of the year omens and prodigies filled the minds of the people with apprehensions of impending mischief. Such dreadful peals of thunder were never known. A comet appeared, and that phenomenon was a certain prelude to some bloody act to be committed by Nero. Monstrous births, such as men and beasts with double heads, were seen in the streets and public ways; and in the midst of sacrifices which required victims big with young, the light conceptions fell from the entrails of animals slain at the altar. In the territory of Placentia a calf was dropped with its head growing at the extreme part of the leg. The construction of the soothsayers was, that another head was preparing for the government of the world, but would prove weak, insufficient, and be soon detected, like the monstrous productions, which did not rest concealed in the womb, but came before their time, and lay exposed to public view near the high road.

XLVIII. Silius Nerva and Atticus Vestinus entered on their consulship. In that juncture a deep conspiracy was formed, and carried on with such a spirit of enterprise, that in the moment of its birth it was almost ripe for execution. Senators, Roman knights, military men, and even women, gave in their names with emulation, all incited by their zeal for Caius Piso and their detestation of Nero. Piso was descended from the house of Calpurnius, by his paternal line related to the first families in Rome. His virtues, or his amiable qualities that resembled virtues, made him the idol of the people. An orator of high distinction, he

employed his eloquence in the defence of his fellow-citizens: possessed of great wealth, he was generous to his friends: by nature courteous, he was affable and polite to all. To these accomplishments he united a graceful figure and an engaging countenance. In his moral conduct neither strict nor regular, he led a life of voluptuous ease, fond of pomp and splendor, and at times free and luxurious in his pleasures. His irregularities served to grace his character. At a time when vice had charms for all orders of men it was not expected that the sovereign should lead a life of austerity and self-denial.

XLIX. The conspiracy did not originate from the ambition of Piso. Among so many bold and generous spirits, it is not easy to name the person who first set the whole in motion. Subrius Flavius, a tribune of the pretorian guards, and Sulpicius Asper, were the active leaders. The firmness with which they afterwards met their fate sufficiently marks their characters. Annæus Lucan, the celebrated poet, and Plautius Lateranus, consul elect, entered into the plot with ardor and inflamed resentment. Lucan had personal provocations: Nero was an enemy to his rising fame: not being able to vie with that eminent genius, he ordered him not to make his verses public, determined to silence what he vainly strove to emulate. Lateranus brought with him no private animosity: he acted on nobler principles: the love of his country inspired him, and he knew no other motive. Flavius Scevinus and Afranius Quintianus, both of senatorian rank, stood forth to guide the enterprise with a degree of spirit little expected from the tenor of their lives. Scevinus, addicted to his pleasures, passed his days in luxury, sloth, and languor. Quintianus was decried for the effeminacy of his manners. Nero had

lampooned him in a copy of defamatory verses, and to revenge the injury Quintianus became a patriot.

L. The conspirators had frequent meetings. They inveighed against the vices of Nero: they painted forth, in glaring colors, all his atrocious deeds by which the empire was brought to the brink of ruin: they urged the necessity of choosing a successor equal to the task of restoring a distressed and tottering state, and in the interval enlisted in their confederacy several Roman knights, namely, Tullius Senecio, Cervarius Proculus, Vulcatius Araricus, Julius Tugurinus, Munatius Gratus, Antonius Natalis, and Martius Festus. Senecio, the first in the list, had lived in the closest intimacy with the prince, and, being still obliged to wear the mask, he found the interval big with anxiety, mistrust, and danger. Antonius Natalis was the bosom friend and confidential agent of Piso: the rest had their separate views, and in a revolution hoped to find their private advantage. There were, besides Subrius Flavius and Sulpicius Asper, already mentioned, a number of military men ready to draw their swords in the cause. In this class were Granius Silvanus and Staius Proximus, both tribunes of the pretorian bands; Maximus Scaurus and Venetus Paullus, two centurions. But the main strength and pillar of the party was Feni¹ Rufus, commander-in-chief of the pretorian guards; a man of principle, and for the integrity of his conduct esteemed and honored by the people. But Tigellinus stood in higher favor with the prince, and by his cruel devices no less than by his taste for riot and debauchery, so ingratiated himself, that he was able to supplant the pretorian prefect, and by secret accusations to endanger his life. He repre-

¹ Feni¹ Rufus has been mentioned to his honor, Annals, xiv. 51.

sented him to Nero as the favored lover of Agrippina,¹ still cherishing a regard for her memory, and lying in wait for an opportunity to revenge her wrongs.

Rufus inclined to the discontented party, and at length declared himself willing to assist their enterprise. Encouraged by this accession of strength, the conspirators began to think of the decisive blow, and to deliberate about the time and place. We are told that Subrius Flavius resolved to take to himself the glory of the deed. Two different schemes occurred to him. One was, while the prince was singing on the stage, to despatch him in sight of the whole theatre. His second project was, while Nero was rambling abroad in his midnight frolics to set fire to the palace, and in the tumult to take him by surprise unattended by his guards. The last seemed to be the safest measure. The tyrant, unseen and unassisted, would fall a devoted victim, and die in solitude. On the other hand, the idea of a brave exploit, performed in the presence of applauding numbers, fired the generous ardor of that heroic mind. But prudential considerations had too much weight. He wished to gain immortal fame, and he thought of his own personal safety; a tame reflection, always adverse to every great and noble enterprise.

.LI. While the conspirators lingered in suspense, prolonging the awful period of their hopes and fears, a woman of the name of Epicharis, apprised of the plot (by what means is still a mystery), began to animate their drooping spirit, and to blame their cold delay. What made her conduct singular on this occasion was, that before this time not one great or honorable sentiment was ever known to have entered her

1 Agrippina, Nero's murdered mother.

heart. Seeing the business languish, she retired in disgust, and went into Campania. But a spirit like hers could not be at rest. She endeavored to seduce the officers of the fleet then lying at Misenum. She began her approaches to Volusius Proculus, an officer who had under his command a thousand marines. He was one of the assassins employed in the tragic catastrophe of Nero's mother. His reward, he thought, was in no proportion to the magnitude of the crime. Being known to Epicharis, or having then contracted a recent friendship, he began to disclose the secrets of his heart. He enumerated his exploits in Nero's service, and complained of the ingratitude with which he was ill requited; avowing at the same time a fixed resolution to revenge himself whenever an opportunity offered. The woman from this discourse conceived hopes of gaining a proselyte, and by his means a number of others. She saw that a revolt in the fleet would be of the greatest moment. Nero was fond of sailing parties on the coast of Misenum and Puteoli, and would by consequence put himself in the power of the mariners.

Epicharis entered into close conference with Proculus: she recapitulated the various acts of cruelty committed by Nero. 'The fathers,' she said, 'had no doubt remaining; they were of one mind; all agreed, that a tyrant, who overturned the laws and constitution of his country, ought to fall a sacrifice to an injured people.' She added, that Proculus would do well to co-operate with the friends of liberty. If he kindled the same spirit in the minds of the soldiers, a sure reward would wait him. In the fervor of her zeal, she had the prudence to conceal the names of the conspirators. That precaution served to screen her

afterwards, when the marine officer turned informer, and betrayed the whole to Nero. She was cited to answer, and confronted with her accuser; but the charge resting intirely on the evidence of one man, without a circumstance to support it, was easily eluded. Epicharis, notwithstanding, was detained in custody. Nero's suspicions were not to be removed. The accusation was destitute of proof, but he was not the less inclined to believe the worst.

LII. The undaunted firmness of Epicharis did not quiet the apprehensions of the conspirators. Dreading a discovery, they determined to execute their purpose without delay. The place they fixed on was a villa belonging to Piso, in the neighborhood of Baiæ, where the emperor, attracted by the beauties of that delightful spot, was used to enjoy the pleasure of bathing, and his convivial parties, divested of his guards, and unincumbered by the parade of state. Piso objected to the measure. 'What would the world say, if his table were imbrued with blood, and the gods of hospitality violated by the murder of a prince, however detested for his atrocious deeds? Rome was the proper theatre for such a catastrophe. The scene should be in his own palace, that haughty mansion built with the spoils of plundered citizens. The blow for liberty would be still more noble before an assembly of the people. The actions of men who dared nobly for the public should be seen by the public eye.'

Such were the objections advanced by Piso in the presence of the conspirators: in his heart he had other reasons. He dreaded Lucius Silanus,¹ knowing his

¹ Lucius Silanus, the son of Marcus Junius Silanus.

high descent, and the rare accomplishments which he had acquired under the care of Caius Cassius,¹ who had trained him from his youth, and formed his mind to every thing great and honorable. A man thus distinguished might aspire to the imperial dignity. All who stood aloof from the conspiracy would be ready to second his ambition; and most probably would be joined by others, whom the fate of a devoted prince, cut off by treachery, might touch with compassion. Piso was supposed to have another secret motive: he knew the genius and the ardent spirit of Vestinus the consul. A man of his character might think of restoring the old republic, or be for choosing another emperor, to show mankind that the sovereign power was a gift to be disposed of according to his will and pleasure. Vestinus, in fact, had no share in the conspiracy, though he was afterwards charged as an accomplice; and under that pretence doomed to death by the unappeasable malice and the cruelty of Nero.

LIII. At length the conspirators fixed their day. They chose the time of the public games, which were soon to be performed in the circus, according to established usage, in honor of Ceres. During that festival the emperor, who rarely showed himself to the people, but remained sequestered in his palace or his gardens, would not fail to attend his favorite diversions; and in that scene of gaiety access to his person would not be difficult. The assault was to be made in the following manner: Lateranus, a man of undaunted resolution and an athletic form, was to approach the prince, with an humble air of supplication, as if to intreat relief for himself and family; and in the act of falling at his feet, to overthrow him by some sudden exer-

¹ Caius Cassius, banished to Sardinia, A. U. C. 818. See Annals, xii. 11 and 12.

tion, and by his weight keep him stretched on the ground. In that condition the tribunes, the centurions, and the rest of the conspirators, as the opportunity offered, and as courage prompted, were to fall on, and sacrifice their victim to the just resentments of the people.

Scevinus claimed the honor of being the first to strike. For this purpose he had taken a dagger from the temple of Health in Etruria; or, as some writers will have it, from the temple of Fortune, in the city of Ferentum. This instrument he carried constantly about him, as a sacred weapon, dedicated to the cause of liberty. It was farther settled, that during the tumult Piso was to take his post in the temple of Ceres, and there remain till such time as Fenius and his confederates should call him forth and conduct him to the camp. To conciliate the favor of the people Antonia, the daughter of the late emperor, was to appear in the cavalcade. This last circumstance, since it is related by Pliny, must rest on his authority. If it came from a less respectable quarter I should think myself at liberty to suppress it; but it may be proper to ask, is it probable that Antonia would hazard her reputation, and even her life, in a project so uncertain, and so big with danger? Is it probable that Piso, distinguished by his conjugal affection, could agree at once to abandon a wife whom he loved, and marry another to gratify his own wild ambition? But it may be said, of all the passions that inflame the human mind, ambition is the most fierce and ardent, of power to extinguish every other sentiment.

LIV. In a conspiracy like the present, so widely diffused among persons of different ages, rank, sex, and condition, some of them poor, and others rich, it may well be matter of wonder that nothing transpired

till the discovery burst out at once from the house of Scevinus. This active partisan, on the day preceding the intended execution of the plot, had a long conference with Antonius Natalis ; after which he returned home, and having sealed his will, unsheathed his sacred dagger, already mentioned. Finding it blunted by long disuse he gave it to Milichus, his freedman, to be well whetted, and sharpened at the point. In the mean time he went to his meal, more sumptuously served than had been his custom. To his favorite slaves he granted their freedom, and among the rest distributed sums of money. He affected an air of gaiety ; he talked of indifferent things with counterfeited cheerfulness ; but a cloud hung over him, and too plainly showed that some grand design was laboring in his breast. He desired the same Milichus to prepare bandages for the bracing of wounds, and applications to stop the effusion of blood. If this man was before that time apprised of the plot he had till then acted with integrity ; but the more probable opinion is that he was never trusted, and now from all the circumstances drew his own conclusion.

The reward of treachery no sooner presented itself to the servile mind of an enfranchised slave than he saw wealth and power inviting him to betray his master. The temptation was bright and dazzling : every principle gave way ; the life of his patron was set at nought ; and for the gift of freedom no sense of gratitude remained. He advised with his wife, and female advice was the worst he could take. The woman, with all the art and malice of her sex, alarmed his fears. Other slaves, she said, and other freedmen, had an eye on all that passed. The silence of one could be of no use. The whole would be brought to

light; and he who first made the discovery would be intitled to the reward.

LV. At the dawn of day Milichus made the best of his way to the gardens of Servilius. Being refused admittance, he declared that he had business of the first importance; nothing less than the discovery of a dark and dangerous conspiracy. The porter conducted him to Epaphroditus, one of Nero's freedmen, who introduced him to the presence of his master. Milichus informed the emperor of his danger, and laid open the machinations of his enemies with all that he knew and all that he conjectured. He produced the dagger destined to give the mortal stab, and desired to be confronted with the criminal.

Scevinus was seized by the soldiers, and dragged in custody to answer the charge. 'The dagger,' he said, 'was a sacred relic, left to him by his ancestors. He had preserved it with veneration, and kept it safe in his chamber till the perfidy of a slave surreptitiously conveyed it away. As to his will, he had often changed it, often signed and sealed a new one, without any distinction of days. He had been always generous to his domestics: nor was it now for the first time that he had given freedom to some, and to others liberal donations. If in the last instance his bounty exceeded the former measure the reason was, that being reduced in his circumstances, and pressed by his debts, he was afraid that his will would be declared void in favor of his creditors. With regard to his table, it was well known that his style of living had ever been elegant, and even profuse, to a degree that drew on him the censure of rigid moralists. To the preparations of bandages and styptics he was an utter stranger. None were made by his order. The whole was the invention

of a vile informer, who found himself destitute of proof, and, to prop his infamous calumny, dared to fabricate a new charge, at once the author and the witness of a lie.' This defence was uttered by Scevinus in a tone of firmness, and the intrepidity of his manner gave it strength and credit. He pronounced the informer a notorious profligate, and by consequence an incompetent witness. This he urged with such an air of confidence, and with so much energy, that the information would have fallen to the ground, if the wife of Milichus had not observed, in the presence of her husband, that a long and secret interview had taken place between the prisoner and Natalis, both connected in the closest friendship with Caius Piso.

LVI. Natalis was cited to appear. Scevinus and he were examined apart touching their late meeting. What was their business? and what was the conversation that passed between them? Their answers did not agree. Fresh suspicions arose, and both were loaded with irons. At the sight of the rack their resolution failed. Natalis was the first to confess the guilt. He knew all the particulars of the conspiracy, and was by consequence able to support his information. He named Caius Piso, and proceeded next to Seneca. He had probably been employed as a messenger between Seneca and Piso; or knowing the inveterate rancor with which Nero sought the destruction of his tutor, he intended by that charge, however false, to make terms for himself. Scevinus, as soon as he heard that Natalis had made a discovery, saw the inutility of remaining silent. Thinking the whole conspiracy detected, he yielded to his fears; and, following a mean example of pusillanimity, discovered his accomplices. Three of the number, namely, Lu-

can, Quintianus, and Senecio, persisted for some time to deny the whole with undaunted firmness, till induced at length by a promise of pardon, they thought they could not do enough to atone for their obstinacy. Lucan did not scruple to impeach¹ his own mother,

1 The weakness here imputed to Lucan cannot be read by any man who has a respect for genius, and the true dignity of the human character, without emotions of pity and regret. But, perhaps, without any studied comment, the case admits a plain and obvious apology. Two eminent men (Natalis and Scevinus) had been taken into custody. At the sight of the rack their resolution failed, and they discovered their accomplices. Lucan knew that the same engine of cruelty was ready for himself and his two friends, Quintianus and Senecio. All three were tempted by a promise of pardon, and they endeavored to earn it by making discoveries. Lucan might think that his mother, a woman who boasted neither rank nor fortune, would not, among a great number of daring conspirators, be deemed an object worthy of notice; and, besides, the terrors of the rack may conquer the most heroic mind. When the executioner appears with his torturing engines it is no longer a moment of courage. He who in the ranks of war is ready to face every danger may shrink from the pangs prepared for him in a dungeon, where he must suffer under a villain's hand, unseen, unpitied, unapplauded. When Felton, who stabbed the duke of Buckingham at Portsmouth, was examined before the privy council, the bishop of London said to him, 'If you will not confess you must go to the rack.' The man replied: 'If it must be so, I know not whom I may accuse; perhaps some lord at this board.' 'Sound sense,' says Judge Foster, 'in the mouth of an enthusiast and a ruffian!' In the same distress, the same hurry and perturbation of spirit, Lucan mentioned his mother. He might think that she was not of consequence to provoke resentment; and the event showed, if he thought so, that his conclusion was right. Nero affected to forget her. She and Seneca's wife were suffered to live. For these reasons the conduct of Lucan may admit of some extenuation; more especially, when he had before his eyes the example of senators, and men of consular rank. But a late writer thinks he has discovered a better ground of defence. He denies the fact, and says Tacitus has adopted a gross calumny, invented by Nero to vilify the object of his envious abhorrence. But it may be asked, if Nero framed the story, is it probable that

whose name was Acilia. Quintianus gave information against Glicius Gallus, his dearest friend ; and Senecio, in like manner, betrayed Annius Pollio.

LVII. Nero did not forget that Epicharis was still detained in custody on the evidence of Volusius Proculus. The weakness of a female frame, he imagined, would not be able to endure the pangs of the rack. He therefore ordered her to be put to the most exquisite torture. But neither stripes, nor fire, nor the brutal rage of the executioners, who were determined not to be baffled by a woman, could subdue a mind like hers, firm, constant, and undaunted to the last. Not a word was extorted from her. Her misery ended for that day. On the next the same cruelty was prepared ; Epicharis had no strength left. Her limbs were rent and dislocated. The executioners provided

a writer, who wages an incessant war against evil men and evil deeds, would have descended to be the accomplice of a tyrant? Tacitus, through the whole of his narrative, has done ample justice to all who died with glory ; to Epicharis, the enfranchised slave, who displayed her constancy in defiance of the keenest torture ; to Seneca, who left an example of unshaken virtue ; to Subrius Flavius, whose last words to Nero were, ' I hated you when you became a coachman, a comedian, and an incendiary ;' to Sulpicius Asper, the centurion ; and above all, to Lucan himself, who died with undaunted courage, repeating a passage from his own poem. Let it also be remembered that when Lucan's father suffered death in the following year, Tacitus says that the son reflected the highest honor on the father. The writer who has treated Lucan with so much candor would neither adopt nor invent a calumny to brand his name in the page of history. But to conclude this long note : it is by no means probable that Tacitus, who wrote in the reign of Trajan, not much more than thirty years after the death of Lucan, would hazard a glaring falsehood in the face of his contemporaries ; and it is less probable that Mr. Hayley, at the distance of more than 1730 years, should be better informed than the great historian who lived at the very time of the transaction. See *Poems*, by William Hayley, Esq., iii. 206.

a chair to convey her to the place of torture. While they were conducting her she took from her breast the girdle that braced her garments ; and, having fastened one end of it to the top of the chair, made a noose for her neck, and, throwing herself from her seat, hung suspended with the whole weight of her body. In her mangled condition the remains of life were soon extinguished.

Such was the fate of this magnanimous woman. She left behind her a glorious example of truth and constancy ; the more striking, as this generous part was acted by an enfranchised slave, to save the lives of men in no degree related to her, and almost unknown. With heroic fortitude she endured the worst that malice could inflict, at a time when men of illustrious birth, when officers, Roman knights and senators, untried by the pangs of torture, betrayed, with a kind of emulation, their friends, their relations, and all that was dear to them. Quintianus, Senecio, and even Lucan, continued to give in the names of the conspirators. Every new discovery filled Nero with consternation, though he had doubled his guard, and taken every precaution to secure his person.

LVIII. Parties of soldiers under arms were stationed in every quarter ; on the walls of Rome, on the sea-coast, and along the banks of the Tiber. The city presented the appearance of a garrisoned town. The forum and the open squares were filled with cohorts of horse and foot. The neighboring villages and the country round were invested. Even private houses were secured. The German soldiers, ordered out on duty, mixed with the rest of the army. Being foreigners, Nero depended on their fidelity. The conspirators were led forth, in a long procession, to the tribunal of the prince. They stood in crowds at his

garden-gate, waiting their turn to be summoned before him. In regular succession they were admitted to an audience, and every trifle was magnified into a crime. A smile, a look, a whisper, a casual meeting at a convivial party or a public show, was evidence of treason. Nor was it sufficient that Nero and Tigellinus were keen and vehement in their inquiries; Fenius Rufus took an active part. Having hitherto escaped detection, he thought that violence against his accomplices would be the best way to screen himself. While he was eagerly pressing them with questions Subrius Flavius, the pretorian tribune, by signs and tokens signified to him his intention to cut off the tyrant in the midst of the examination. He had his hand on the hilt of his sword, when Rufus checked the brave design.

LIX. On the first detection of the plot, while Milichus was giving his evidence, and Scevinus was still wavering and irresolute, some of the conspirators exhorted Piso to show himself in the camp, or to mount the public rostra, in order to gain the affections of the army and the people. 'Let your friends,' they said, 'assemble in a body; let them stand forth in your cause, and they will be joined by numbers. The fame of an impending revolution would excite a general spirit; and fame in great undertakings has been often known to decide the event. Nero will be taken by surprise; on his part no measures are concerted. In sudden commotions the bravest are often struck with terror; and if courage may be thus overpowered, what will be the case of a theatrical emperor, a scenic performer, a vile comedian, assisted by Tigellinus and his band of harlots? In all great enterprises the attempt appears impracticable to little minds; but the brave and valiant know that to dare is to conquer.

In a plot in which numbers were embarked the silence of all could not be expected. The mind will waver, and the body will shrink from pain. There is no secret so deeply laid but bribery will draw it forth, or cruelty can extort it. The guards, in a short time, might seize Piso himself, and drag him to an ignominious death. How much more glorious to fall bravely in the cause of liberty! to die sword in hand, vindicating the rights of freeborn men, and rousing the army and the people to their own just defence! The soldiers may refuse to join, and the people may be guilty of treachery to themselves; but, even in that case, how noble to close the scene with a spirit worthy of your ancestors, blessed with the wishes of the present age, and the applause of all posterity!

These exhortations made no impression on Piso. He retired to his own house, and there fortified his mind against the worst that could happen. A band of soldiers broke in on him, all selected from the recruits lately raised, undisciplined, and new to the service, but preferred by Nero to the veterans, whom he suspected of disaffection. Piso ordered the veins of both his arms to be opened, and expired: his will was a disgrace to his memory. It was written in a strain of fulsome flattery to the prince. He was betrayed into that act of meanness by his affection for his wife, a woman destitute of merit, who had great elegance of form, and nothing else to recommend her. Her name was Arria Galla. She had been married to Domitius Silius, and from him seduced by Piso. The passive spirit of the injured husband, and the wanton character of the wife, conspired to fix an indelible stain on the name of Piso.

LX. Plautius Lateranus, consul elect, was the next victim. He was seized, and dragged to instant death;

no time allowed to take the last farewell of his children, nor even the usual liberty of choosing his own mode of dying. He was hurried to the place of execution usually allotted to slaves, and there despatched by the hand of Statius, a military tribune. He met his fate with a noble and determined silence, not so much as condescending to tax the executioner with his share in the conspiracy.

The next exploit of Nero was the death of Seneca. Against that eminent man no proof of guilt appeared; but the emperor thirsted for his blood, and what poison had not accomplished he was determined to finish by the sword. Natalis was the only person who had mentioned his name. The chief head of his accusation was, 'That he himself had been sent on a visit to Seneca, then confined by illness, with instructions to mention to him that Piso often called at his house, but never could gain admittance, though it was the interest of both to live on terms of mutual friendship.' To this Seneca made answer, 'That private interviews could be of no service to either; but still his happiness was grafted on the safety of Piso.' Granius Silvanus, a tribune of the pretorian guards, was despatched to Seneca, with directions to let him know what was alleged against him, and to inquire whether he admitted the conversation stated by Natalis, with the answers given by himself. Seneca, by design or accident, was that very day on his return from Campania. He stopped at a villa of his own, about four miles from Rome. Towards the close of the day the tribune arrived, and beset the house with a band of soldiers. Seneca was at supper with his wife Pompeia Paulina, and two of his friends, when Silvanus entered the room, and reported the orders of the emperor.

LXI. Seneca did not hesitate to acknowledge that

Natalis had been at his house with a complaint that Piso's visits were not received. His apology, he said, imported no more than want of health, the love of ease, and the necessity of attending to a weak and crazy constitution. 'That he should prefer the interest of a private citizen to his own safety was too absurd to be believed. He had no motives to induce him to pay such a compliment to any man; adulation was no part of his character. This is a truth well known to Nero himself: he can tell you that, on various occasions, he found in Seneca a man who spoke his mind with freedom, and disdained the arts of servile flattery.' Silvanus returned to Rome. He found the prince in company with Poppæa and Tigellinus, who, as often as cruelty was in agitation, formed the cabinet council. In their presence the messenger reported his answer. Nero asked, 'Does Seneca prepare to end his days by a voluntary death?'—'He showed,' said the tribune, 'no symptom of fear, no token of sorrow, no dejected passion: his words and looks bespoke a mind serene, erect, and firm.'—'Return,' said Nero, 'and tell him he must resolve to die.' Silvanus, according to the account of Fabius Rusticus, chose to go back by a different road. He went through a private way to Fenius Rufus, to advise with that officer whether he should execute the emperor's orders. Rufus told him that he must obey. Such was the degenerate spirit of the times. A general panic took possession of every mind. This very Silvanus was one of the conspirators, and yet was base enough to be an instrument of the cruelty which he had combined to revenge. He had, however, the decency to avoid the shock of seeing Seneca, and of delivering in person the fatal message. He sent a centurion to perform that office for him.

LXII. Seneca heard the message with calm composure. He called for his will, and being deprived of that right of a Roman citizen by the centurion, he turned to his friends, and, ‘You see,’ he said, ‘that I am not at liberty to requite your services with the last marks of my esteem. One thing, however, still remains. I leave you the example of my life, the best and most precious legacy now in my power. Cherish it in your memory, and you will gain at once the applause due to virtue, and the fame of a sincere and generous friendship.’ All who were present melted into tears. He endeavored to assuage their sorrows: he offered his advice with mild persuasion; he used the tone of authority. ‘Where,’ he said, ‘are the precepts of philosophy, and where the words of wisdom, which for years have taught us to meet the calamities of life with firmness and a well-prepared spirit? Was the cruelty of Nero unknown to any of us? He murdered his mother; he destroyed his brother; and, after those deeds of horror, what remains to fill the measure of his guilt but the death of his guardian and his tutor?’

LXIII. Having delivered himself in these pathetic terms he directed his attention to his wife. He clasped her in his arms, and in that fond embrace yielded for a while to the tenderness of his nature. Recovering his resolution, he intreated her to appease her grief, and bear in mind that his life was spent in a constant course of honor and of virtue. That consideration would serve to heal affliction, and sweeten all her sorrows. Paulina was still inconsolable. She was determined to die with her husband: she invoked the aid of the executioners, and begged to end her wretched being. Seneca saw that she was animated by the love of glory, and that generous principle, he thought,

ought not to be restrained. The idea of leaving a beloved object exposed to the insults of the world, and the malice of her enemies, pierced him to the quick. 'It has been my care,' he said, 'to instruct you in that best philosophy, the art of mitigating the ills of life; but you prefer an honorable death. I will not envy you the vast renown that must attend your fall. Since you will have it so, we will die together. We will leave behind us an example of equal constancy; but the glory will be all your own.'

These words were no sooner uttered than the veins of both their arms were opened. At Seneca's time of life the blood was slow and languid. The decay of nature, and the impoverishing diet to which he had used himself, left him in a feeble condition. He ordered the vessels of his legs and joints to be punctured. After that operation he began to labor with excruciating pains. Lest his sufferings should overpower the constancy of his wife, or the sight of her afflictions prove too much for his own sensibility, he persuaded her to retire into another room. His eloquence still continued to flow with its usual purity. He called for his secretaries, and dictated, while life was ebbing away, that farewell discourse which has been published, and is in every body's hands. I will not injure his last words by giving the substance in another form.

LXIV. Nero had conceived no antipathy to Paulina. If she perished with her husband he began to dread the public execration. That he might not multiply the horrors of his present cruelty, he sent orders to exempt Paulina from the stroke of death. The slaves and freedmen, by the direction of the soldiers, bound up her arm, and stopped the effusion of blood. This, it is said, was done without her knowlege, as she lay

n a state of languor. The fact however cannot be known with certainty. Vulgar malignity, which is ever ready to detract from exalted virtue, spread a report that, as long as she had reason to think that the rage of Nero was implacable, she had the ambition to share the glory of her husband's fate; but a milder prospect being unexpectedly presented, the charms of life gained admission to her heart, and triumphed over her constancy. She lived a few years longer, in fond regret, to the end of her days revering the memory of her husband. The weakness of her whole frame, and the sickly languor of her countenance, plainly showed that she had been reduced to the last extremity.

Seneca lingered in pain. The approach of death was slow, and he wished for his dissolution. Fatigued with pain, worn out and exhausted, he requested his friend Statius Annæus, whose fidelity and medical skill he had often experienced, to administer a draught of that swift-speeding poison¹ usually given at Athens to the criminals adjudged to death. He swallowed the potion, but without any immediate effect. His limbs were chilled: the vessels of his body were closed, and the ingredients, though keen and subtle, could not arrest the principles of life. He desired to be placed in a warm bath. Being conveyed according to his desire, he sprinkled his slaves with the water, and, 'Thus,' he said, 'I make libation to Jupiter the Deliverer.' The vapor soon overpowered him, and he breathed his last. His body, without any funeral pomp, was committed to the flames. He had given directions for that purpose in his last will, made at a time when he was in the zenith of power, and even then looked forward to the close of his days.

¹ This poison was called *cicuta*. Seneca says it made Socrates a great man; Epist. xiii.

LXV. A report was at that time current at Rome that Subrius Flavius and several centurions held a private meeting, with the knowlege and consent of Seneca, and there resolved to open a new and unexpected scene. The blow for liberty was to be struck in the name of Piso; and as soon as the world was freed from the tyranny of Nero, Piso was to be the next victim, in order to make way for Seneca; who, for his virtues, was to be raised to the highest elevation, with an air of innocence, and of a man unconscious of the plot. The very words of Flavius were reported among the people. He is supposed to have said, 'What good end will it answer to depose a minstrel, if we place a tragedian in his room?' The fact was, Nero played on his guitar, and Piso trod the stage in the buskin of tragedy.

LXVI. The part which the military men had taken in the conspiracy did not long remain a secret. The double game played by Fenius Rufus, at first a confederate in the plot, and then a judge pronouncing sentence on his accomplices, provoked the indignation of all. In the examination of Scevinus, that officer pressed his interrogatories with over-acted zeal, and by menaces endeavored to extort a confession. Scevinus answered, with a smile, 'No man knows the particulars better than yourself. You may now show your gratitude to so good a prince.' Rufus was covered with confusion. To speak was not in his power, and to remain silent was dangerous. He trembled, faltered, and hesitated an answer. His embarrassment betrayed his guilt. The rest of the conspirators, with Cervarius Proculus, a Roman knight, at their head, were eager to depose against him. At length a soldier of the name of Cassius, remarkable for his robust stature, and for that reason ordered to attend, laid hold

of Rufus by the emperor's order, and loaded him with irons.

LXVII. The same witnesses gave evidence against Subrius Flavius. In answer to the charge he relied much on his course of life, and the dissimilitude of manners between himself and his accusers. 'Was it probable that a soldier, inured to the profession of arms, would associate with an effeminate set of men, strangers to danger and to manly enterprise?' Finding himself pressed by the weight of evidence, he changed his tone, and with heroic fortitude avowed the part he had acted. Being asked by Nero, what could induce him to forget the solemn obligation of his oath? 'Because,' he said, 'I hated, I detested you. There was a time when no soldier in your army was more devoted to your service, and that was as long as you deserved the esteem of mankind. I began to hate you when you were guilty of parricide; when you murdered your mother, and destroyed your wife; when you became a coachman, a comedian, and an incendiary.' I have given the very words of this intrepid conspirator, because they were not, like those of Seneca, published to the world: and the rough sentiments of a soldier, in his own plain but vigorous language, merit the attention of posterity.

In the whole discovery of the plot nothing made so deep an impression on the mind of Nero. Though his heart never knew remorse for the worst of crimes, his ear, unaccustomed to the voice of truth, shrunk from the sound of freedom, and startled at reproach. Flavius was ordered for execution. Veianus Niger, one of the tribunes, led him to the next field, and there directed a trench to be opened. The prisoner surveyed the spot, and finding it neither wide nor deep enough, turned with a smile to the soldiers, and,

‘This,’ he said, ‘shows no military skill.’ Niger desired him to extend his neck with courage. ‘Strike,’ said Flavius, ‘and prove your courage equal to mine!’ The tribune was seized with a tremor in every joint. He severed the head at two blows, and made a merit of it with Nero, giving the name of cruelty to his want of firmness. He made it his boast that, by repeating the stroke, he made him die twice.

LXVIII. Sulpicius Asper, the centurion, gave the next example of magnanimity. Being asked by Nero why he conspired against his life? he answered shortly, ‘I knew no other relief from your flagitious deeds.’ He was instantly put to death. The rest of the centurions underwent their fate, and all died worthy of their characters. Fenius Rufus had not equal constancy. He betrayed an abject spirit, and even in his will was weak enough to bewail his unhappy fate. Nero lived in hopes of seeing Vestinus, the consul, charged as a criminal. He knew the character of the man; an intrepid daring spirit, ambitious, and suspected of disaffection. The conspirators, however, had no communication of counsels with that active magistrate. Some declined him on account of former animosities, and others because they thought him rash and impetuous. Nero’s rancor grew out of a close and intimate friendship. In that familiar intercourse Vestinus saw into the very heart of the prince, and despised him for his vices. Nero shrunk from a man who had the spirit to speak his mind with freedom, and, in his sarcastic vein, had often made the prince the subject of his raillery; and raillery, when seasoned with truth, never fails to leave a sting that festers in the memory. A recent incident gave an edge to Nero’s resentment. Vestinus married Statilia Messalina, though he knew that the prince was one of her lovers.

LXIX. No witness appeared against Vestinus; no crime was laid to his charge; and by consequence no proceeding could be had in due form of law. But the will of the tyrant still remained. He sent Gerganius, one of the tribunes, at the head of a cohort, with orders so to take his measures, that the consul might not be able to stand on the defensive, and for that purpose to invest his house, which, like a proud citadel, overlooked the forum, and contained a numerous train of young and hardy slaves, in the nature of a garrison. Vestinus had that very day discharged all the functions of his consular office. He was at table with his friends, free from apprehension, or, it may be, affecting an air of gaiety, when the soldiers entered, and informed him that the tribune had important business with him. He rose and left the room. The scene of death was instantly laid. He was shut up in a chamber: a physician attended; his veins were opened; he was conducted to a warm bath, and, being put into the water, expired without a complaint, and without a groan. His guests, in the mean time, remained in the banqueting room, imprisoned by the guards. It was late at night before they were released. Nero heard the account with pleasure. He saw, in the sport of his imagination, a set of men assembled at a convivial party, and every moment expecting their final doom. He laughed at their distress, and said facetiously, 'They have paid for their consular supper.'

LXX. Lucan, the famous poet, was the next sacrifice to the vengeance of Nero. His blood flowed freely from him; and being soon well-nigh exhausted, he perceived that the vital heat had left the extremities of his limbs. His hands and feet were chilled; but the warmth retiring to his heart, he still retained his senses and the vigor of his mind. The lines in his poem

which describe a soldier dying in the same condition¹ occurred to his memory. He repeated the passage and expired. His own verses were the last words he uttered. Senecio, Quintianus, and Scevinus, suffered in a short time after. The dissolute softness of their lives did not disgrace them in their end. They met their fate with resolution. The rest of the conspirators were led to execution. In their deaths there was nothing that merits particular notice.

LXXI. While the city presented a scene of blood, and funerals darkened all the streets, the altars of the capitol smoked with the victims slaughtered on the occasion. One had lost a son; another was deprived of his brother, his friend, or his near relation; and yet, stifling every sentiment of the heart, all concurred in offering thanks to the gods: they adorned the prince's house with laurel;² they fell at the tyrant's feet; they clasped his knees, and printed kisses on his hand. Nero received this vile adulation as the token of real joy. In order to make sure of the people, he showed his clemency to Antonius Natalis and Cervarius Proculus, whose merit consisted altogether in their treachery to their friends. To Milichus he granted a rich and ample recompense, and moreover added the honorable appellation of a Greek name, importing the conservator. Granius Silvanus, one of the tribunes engaged in the conspiracy, received a free pardon; but disdaining to enjoy it, he died by his own hand. Statius Proximus had the vanity to follow his example. Pompeius, Cor-

¹ The commentators point out different passages in the Pharsalia, but all depend on mere conjecture. Lipsius thinks the description of Lycidas, at the point of death, most probable.

² Laurel is called by Pliny the elder the doorkeeper of the Cæsars; xv. 30.

nelius Martialis, Flavius Nepos, and Statius Domitius, were all degraded from their tribunitian rank, not as men condemned, but suspected of disaffection. Novius Priscus, Glitius Gallus, and Annius Pollio, were ordered into exile; the first on account of his known intimacy with Seneca; and the two last to disgrace them, though not convicted of any crime. Antonia Flacilla, the wife of Novius Priscus, followed her husband into banishment. Egnatia Maximilla, at that time possessed of great wealth, had the spirit in like manner to adhere to Glitius Gallus. Her fortune was soon after taken from her by the hand of power. Her conduct, both in affluence and poverty, did honor to her character.

Rufus Crispinus was likewise banished. The conspiracy furnished a pretext; but his having been married to Poppæa was the crime that brought on his ruin. Verginius¹ and Musonius Rufus² owed their banishment to the celebrity of their names: the former trained the Roman youth to eloquence, and the latter formed their minds by his lectures on wisdom and philosophy. At one sweep Cluidienus Quietus, Julius Agrippa, Blitius Catulinus, Petronius Priscus, and Julius Altinus, like a colony of criminals, were sent to islands in the Ægean sea. Cadicia, the wife of Scævinius, and Cæsonius Maximus, were ordered out of Italy, without being heard in their defence. The sentence of condemnation was the first notice of any crime alleged against them. Acilia, the mother of Lucan, was neither pardoned nor condemned. She was suffered to live in silent obscurity.

¹ Verginius was a rhetorician, and the preceptor of Persius the satirist, as may be seen in the life of Persius.

² Musonius Rufus was a teacher of philosophy. See Annals, xiv. 59.

LXXII. Having performed these dreadful exploits, Nero called an assembly of the soldiers, and after a specious harangue, ordered a largess of a thousand sesterces to be paid to each man, and the corn which they had been used to purchase at the market price to be distributed as the bounty of the prince. He then ordered the senate to be convened, with as much importance as if the events of war and splendid victories occasioned the meeting. He granted triumphal ornaments to Petronius Turpilianus,¹ of consular rank, to Cocceius Nerva,² pretor elect, and Tigellinus, commander of the pretorian guards. The two last were mentioned by him in strains of the highest commendation. Not content with erecting their statues in the forum, adorned with triumphal decorations, he placed them also in the imperial palace. Nymphidius³ was honored with the ensigns of consular dignity. Of this man, who now occurs for the first time, since he is to figure hereafter on the stage of public business, it may be proper in this place to say a few words.

He was the son of an enfranchised female slave, distinguished by her beauty, and the ease with which she granted her favors to the slaves as well as to the freedmen about the court. Nymphidius, however, pretended to be of higher origin. He called himself the son of Caligula. His large stature, and the stern cast of his countenance, bore some resemblance to that emperor; and, in fact, as Caligula was never delicate in the choice of his mistresses, but was known to share the embraces of common women, it is possible that he

1 Petronius Turpilianus was consul, as mentioned, xiv. 29.

2 Cocceius Nerva, afterwards emperor.

3 For Nymphidius, see Appendix to Annals, xvi. 13; and see History, i. 5.

might on some occasion indulge his passion with the mother of Nymphidius.

LXXIII. The senate being assembled, Nero delivered a speech on the subject of the late transactions, and, for the information of the people, issued a proclamation, with a statement of the evidence against the conspirators, and their own confession. The clamors of the public made this expedient necessary. While the executions were going on the public voice was loud and violent against Nero, the insatiate tyrant, who was daily sacrificing to his cruelty, or his fears, the lives of innocent and illustrious men. That a plot was actually formed; that it was conducted with resolution, and in the end was totally defeated, no man who made it his business to investigate the truth entertained a doubt at the time; and, since the death of Nero, the acknowledgement of all who returned from banishment established the fact beyond a controversy. Nero was received by the senate with the basest flattery. In that assembly the men who had the greatest reason to be overwhelmed with grief were the most forward to offer incense to the emperor. Junius Gallio,¹ the brother of Seneca, was, by the loss of that excellent man, so struck with terror, that to save his own life he descended to humble supplications. Salienus Clemens rose to oppose him, as a parricide and an enemy to the state. He continued his invective till the fathers checked his violence. It was not now, they said, a time to gratify personal animosity, under an appearance of zeal for the public good; nor would it become any man to open again the wounds which the clemency of the prince had closed for ever.

¹ Seneca the philosopher had two brothers; namely, Annæus Mela, the father of Lucan, and Annæus Novatus, who was afterwards adopted by Gallio, and took that name. For the death of Mela see Annals, xvi. 17.

LXXIV. Oblations and public thanksgivings were decreed to all the gods, and particularly to the Sun, in whose temple, situated in the forum, the murder was to have been perpetrated, if that god had not dispelled the clouds that hung over the machinations of evil-minded men, and brought their dark proceedings into open daylight. It was farther ordered, that the sports of the circus, in honor of Ceres, should be celebrated with an additional number of chariot races; that the month of April¹ should be styled after the name of Nero; and that on the spot where Scevinus furnished himself with a dagger a temple should be erected to the goddess of safety. The dagger itself was dedicated in the capitol, with an inscription to the avenging god, called Jupiter Vindex. The inscription at that time had no equivocal meaning; but soon after, when Julius Vindex excited a revolt in Gaul, it was considered as an omen of impending vengeance.

In the journals of the senate I find an entry, by which it appears that Cerealis Anicius, consul elect, moved in his place, that a temple should be raised at the public expense, to the deified Nero, who, in his opinion, had risen above the condition of human nature, and was therefore intitled to religious worship. This motion was afterwards understood to portend nothing less than the death of Nero; since it was a settled rule that divine honors should never be paid to the emperor till he ceased to be mortal.²

1 The month of April was called Neronius, May Claudius, and June Germanicus; *Annals*, xvi. 12.

2 Augustus was deified by the poets, and in the provinces; but no altars were erected at Rome during his life.

BOOK XVI.

SECT. I. NERO, in consequence of his own credulity, became in a short time afterward the sport of fortune, and a subject of public derision. He believed the visionary schemes of Cesellius Bassus, a native of Carthage, of a crazed imagination, who relied on whatever occurred to him in his distempered dreams. This man arrived at Rome, and, by the influence of money well applied, gained admission to the presence of the emperor. The secret which he had to communicate was, that on his own estate he had found a cavern of astonishing depth, in which were contained immense stores of gold, not wrought into the form of coin, but in rude and shapeless ingots, such as were in use in the early ages of the world. In one part of the cave were to be seen vast massy heaps, and in other places columns of gold towering to a prodigious height; the whole, an immense treasure, reserved in obscurity to add to the splendor of Nero's reign. To give probability to his story, he pretended that Dido, the Phœnician,¹ when she fled from Tyre, and founded the city of Carthage, deposited her whole stock in the bowels of the earth, that so much wealth might neither prove the bane of a new colony, nor excite the avarice of the Numidian princes,² of themselves already hostile to her infant state.

1 The account of Dido's flight from Tyre with the treasures of her husband Sichæus, to avoid the fury of Pygmalion, who had basely murdered his brother for the sake of his riches, is finely given by Virgil, *Æneid*, i. 347.

2 The kings of Numidia, and the African princes in the

II. Nero neither weighed the character of the man, nor the circumstances of so wild a report. He had not even the precaution to send commissioners to inform themselves on the spot. He helped to spread the report; he began to count his riches, and despatched his agents to transport the treasure to Rome. The light galleys were equipped with expedition, and a chosen band of mariners sent on board. Rome, in the mean time, was distracted with hope and fear, with doubt and expectation. No other subject was talked of. The common people, with their usual facility, believed every thing; while men of reflection argued in a different manner. It happened that the quinquennial games were to close the second lustre of five years. During that festival the expected treasure was the subject on which the orators expatiated, and the poets exhausted their invention. In their flights of fancy, the earth was no longer content with pouring forth fruit and grain, and producing metals intermixed with veins of precious ore; the present fecundity showed that the gods were working miracles to bless the reign of Nero. These were the bright conceits which flattery displayed with rapture, and eloquence adorned with her richest coloring. While the passions of Nero stood ready to receive every new device, fiction passed for truth, and nothing was too hyperbolic for the credulity of the prince.

III. With such immoderate riches in view, no wonder that Nero launched out into greater profusion than ever. Deluded by his hopes, and sure of a supply for years to come, he exhausted his treasury,¹ and began

neighborhood of Carthage, were enemies to the infant state founded by Dido.

¹ Suetonius relates the whole of this impostor's deception, and the chimerical projects of Nero in consequence of it.

to anticipate his imaginary funds. He made assignments on the property, and granted with generosity what was not in his possession. The expectation of enormous wealth made him the bubble of a madman, and impoverished the public. In the mean time Bassus, the grand projector, arrived at Carthage. In the presence of a number of soldiers, and a large body of peasants employed as laborers, he dug up his grounds, and made his experiment in the adjacent fields, disappointed in one place, sure of success in another, still confident, and still miscarrying; till at length, finding no subterraneous cave, and weary of the fruitless search, he abandoned his chimerical hopes, coming gradually to his senses, yet wondering that, of all his dreams, the last should be the only one that deceived him. Covered with shame, and dreading the resentment of the emperor, he delivered himself from all his troubles by a voluntary death. According to some writers, he was instantly seized and loaded with irons, till Nero ordered him to be released; but seized his effects, determined to enjoy the fortunes of a wild adventurer, since he could not obtain the wealth of Dido.

IV. The time of contending for the prizes, in the quinquennial games being near at hand, the senate, with intent to ward off from the emperor¹ the disgrace

¹ Nero did not scruple to appear on the stage amongst other performers, even in the spectacles presented by the magistrates. He sung tragedies masked, the vizors of the gods and goddesses being formed into a resemblance of his own face. Among the rest, he acted, Canace in Labor, Orestes the Murderer of his Mother, Œdipus blinded, and Hercules mad. In the last tragedy a soldier, at his post in the theatre, seeing the emperor bound with chains as the play required, ran to his assistance; Suet. in Neron. § 21. See also the same, § 22, 23, 24. This ridiculous display of talents, beneath the dignity of a prince, is well described by Racine in his play of Britannicus, which was performed be-

of being a candidate, offered to adjudge in his favor the victory in song, and the crown of eloquence. The fathers hoped that honors freely granted would satisfy the prince, and prevent a ridiculous display of theatrical talents. Nero returned for answer that he stood in no need of favor or protection. He depended on himself alone, and would fairly enter the list with his competitors. The equity of the judges was to decide, and by that test he was willing to stand or fall. With that spirit he entered the scene, and recited a poem of his own composition. The people with earnest intreaty prayed that he would let them taste the supreme delight of hearing and enjoying all his divine accomplishments. Such was the language of the populace. In compliance with their wishes he mounted the public stage, conforming in all things to the rules of the orchestra, where no performer was to sit down, nor to wipe the sweat from his face with any thing but his own garment, and never to spit or clear his nostrils in sight of the audience. Having exhibited his skill, he went down on his knee, and stretching forth his hands with pretended agitations of hope and fear, waited in that humble posture for the decision of the judges. The populace, accustomed to applaud the notes and gesticulations of the common players, paid their tribute of admiration to the prince, with measured cadence, in one regular chorus of applause. You would have thought their joy sincere; and perhaps it was so in fact: the rabble wished to be diverted at any rate, and for the disgrace that befell the state vulgar minds felt no concern.

fore Louis XIV., who had before that time mixed in the dance on the public stage. The picture of Nero's folly made the monarch see himself, and from that time he resolved never to degrade the royal character.

V. Thinking men were affected in a very different manner. All who came from the municipal towns, or the more remote parts of Italy, where some tincture of ancient manners still remained; and a considerable number, besides, who arrived from the provinces on public business, or their own private affairs, as yet strangers to vice, and undebauched by luxury, beheld the scene with heaviness of heart. A spectacle, in which the prince exposed his frivolous talents, gave them the highest disgust. They thought the applause dishonest, but they were obliged to concur with the rest. They acted their part with warm but awkward zeal. Their unpractised hands were easily tired: they were not able to keep time in the grand concert, and exerting themselves without skill, they disturbed the general harmony. For every blunder they were chastised by the soldiers, who were stationed at their posts with orders to take care that the applause should be kept up with spirit, without an interval of rest or silence. It is a certain fact that several Roman knights endeavoring to make their way through the crowd, were crushed to death in the narrow passes; and that others, who kept their seats in the theatre day and night, fell dangerously ill. The dread of being absent from such a performance was more alarming than the worst sickness that could happen. Besides the soldiers stationed in the theatre to superintend the audience, it is well known that a number of spies lay in ambush, to take down the names of the spectators, to watch their countenances, and note every symptom of disgust or pleasure. Offenders of mean condition were punished on the spot. Men of distinction were overlooked with an air of calm neglect, but resentment was only smothered for a time, to break out afterwards with deadly hate. We are told

that Vespasian, for the crime of being ready to fall asleep, was obliged to endure the insulting language of one Phœbus, an imperial freedman, and was saved from harsher treatment by the intercession of men of rank and influence. The offence however was not entirely forgotten ; it remained in store for future vengeance ; but Vespasian was reserved by his superior destiny for the highest elevation.

VI. The public games were followed by the death of Poppæa.¹ She died of a kick on her womb, which Nero gave her in a sudden passion, though she was then advanced in her pregnancy. Some writers will have it that she was carried off by a dose of poison ; but they assert it with more spleen than truth. Nero was desirous of having issue, and he loved his wife with sincere affection. Her body was not, according to the Roman custom,² committed to the funeral pile, but,

1 Suetonius says he married Poppæa twelve days after his divorce from Octavia, and, notwithstanding the vehemence of his love, killed her with a kick when she was pregnant, only because she took the liberty to chide him for returning late from the chariot race. He had by her a daughter, called Claudia Augusta, who died in her infancy ; Suet. in Neron. § 35.

2 The first Romans did not burn their dead, but interred them, according to the custom of other nations. Pliny the elder says that the practice of committing the dead to the funeral pile was not introduced till it was known that the bodies of soldiers, who died in foreign wars, were dug up by the enemy, and exposed to public view. And yet Plutarch, in his life of Numa, observes that Numa was buried, pursuant to his own express injunction, directing that his body should not be committed to the flames ; which shows that burning was known at Rome in that early period. The custom of burning the dead was held in abhorrence by several nations, and, according to Herodotus, by the Persians as well as the Egyptians. Notwithstanding what Plutarch has said, Pliny assures us that, before Sylla the dictator, the bodies of the deceased were always interred by the Romans, and that the reason for burning that extraordinary man was, because,

after the manner of the eastern kings, embalmed with precious spices,¹ and deposited in the monument of the Julian family. The ceremony was performed with great pomp, and Nero pronounced the funeral oration. He was lavish in praise of her beauty; and the peculiar happiness of being the mother of an infant enrolled among the gods was a topic on which he dwelt with pleasure. By enlarging on that and other accidental circumstances, he made a panegyric, in which not one virtue could find a place.

VII. The death of Poppæa occasioned a general face of mourning, but no real grief. Men remembered her loose incontinence, and, having felt her cruelty, rejoiced in secret at an event that freed the world of a woman of a detested character. Nero labored under a load of reproach; and the public resentment rose still higher when it was known that, by his orders, Cassius did not attend the funeral. That illustrious Roman understood the imperial mandate as the signal of his approaching ruin. In fact, his doom was fixed in a short time after, and Silanus was devoted with him. The crime of Cassius² was the splendid fortune which he inherited from his ancestors, and the austerity of his manners. Silanus offended by the nobility of his birth, and his modest merit. Nero sent a letter to the

having dug up the body of Marius, he was afraid of being treated in the same way himself, and therefore ordered his remains to be consumed to ashes; Pliny, vii. 54. The custom of burning at Rome ceased under the Antonines.

1 Besides the spices with which the body of Poppæa was embalmed, a prodigious quantity was burnt on the occasion, insomuch that Pliny says all Arabia did not produce in an entire year as much as was consumed at the funeral of Poppæa.

2 The name of this person was Cassius Longinus, a lawyer far advanced in years, and blind. His crime, according to Suetonius, was, that among the busts of his ancestors he kept that of the famous Cassius who stabbed Julius Cæsar.

senate, stating in strong terms the necessity of removing them both from all civil offices. To Cassius he objected, that, among the images of his ancestors he preserved, with great veneration, the picture of the famous Caius Cassius, with this inscription: 'The Leader of the Party.' That circumstance plainly showed the sullen spirit of a man brooding mischief; a fierce republican, who meditated another civil war, and a revolt from the house of Cæsar. But to revive the name of a daring factious chief was not sufficient for the purposes of a turbulent incendiary: he was charged with seducing Lucius Silanus, a youth descended from an illustrious line, bold, ambitious, enterprising, and, in the hands of ill-designing men, a fit tool to spread the flame of rebellion.

VIII. Silanus¹ was no less an object of Nero's hatred. It was urged against him, as had been formerly done in the case of his uncle Torquatus, that he affected the style of imperial dignity, and had in his household train his mock treasurers, his auditors of accounts, and his secretaries of state. Nothing could be more destitute of all foundation. Silanus saw the tyranny of those disastrous times, and from the fate of his uncle received a lesson of prudence. Lepida, the wife of Cassius, and aunt of Silanus, was also doomed to fall a sacrifice to the unrelenting fury of the prince. Informers were suborned to accuse her of incest with her nephew; and, to swell the charge, they imputed to her impious sacrifices, magic rites, and horrible incantations. Vulcatius Tullinus, and Marcellus Cornelius, of senatorian rank, with Calpurnius Fabatus, a Roman knight, were involved in the prosecution. They appealed to the tribunal of the emperor, and

¹ Lucius Silanus was son to Marcus Junius Silanus, who was great-grandson to Augustus.

by removing the cause prevented a final sentence. Nero was, at that time, brooding over crimes of the deepest dye, and having nobler game in view, he disdained to stoop to an inferior quarry. The three last were saved by their want of importance.

IX. Cassius and Silanus were banished by a decree of the senate. The case of Lepida was referred to the prince. Cassius, in a short time after, was transported to the island of Sardinia, where Nero was content to leave him to old age and the decay of nature. Silanus was conveyed to Ostia, there, as was pretended, to embark for the isle of Naxos. He never reached that place. Barium, a municipal city of Apulia, was the last stage of his journey. He there supported life with a temper that gave dignity to undeserved misfortune, till a centurion, employed to commit the murder, rushed on him abruptly. That officer advised him to open his veins. 'Death,' said Silanus, 'has been familiar to my thoughts, but the honor of prescribing to me I shall not allow to a ruffian and a murderer.' The centurion, seeing that he had to do with a man, unarmed indeed, but robust and vigorous, not a symptom of fear in his countenance, but on the contrary an eye that sparkled with indignation, gave orders to his soldiers to seize their prisoner. Silanus stood on the defensive: what man could do without a weapon he bravely dared, struggling, and dealing his blows about him, till he fell by the sword of the centurion, like a gallant officer, receiving honorable wounds, and facing his enemy to the last.

X. Lucius Vetus, and Sextia his mother-in-law, with Pollutia his daughter, died with equal fortitude. Nero thought them a living reproach to himself for the murder of Rubellius Plautus, the son-in-law of

Lucius Vetus. The root of bitterness rankled in Nero's heart, till Fortunatus, one of the manumitted slaves of Vetus, gave him an opportunity to wreak his vengeance on the whole family. The freedman had been employed by Vetus in the management of his affairs, and having defrauded his master, he thought it time to add treachery to peculation, and gave evidence against his patron. In this black design he associated with himself one Claudius Demianus, a fellow of an abandoned character, who had been charged in Asia, while Vetus was proconsul of the province, with various crimes, and sent to Rome in fetters. To forward this prosecution Nero set him at liberty.

Vetus heard with indignation that the evidence of a freedman was received against the life of his patron, and retired to his country seat in the neighborhood of Formiæ. A band of soldiers followed him, and beset his house. His daughter was then with him. A sense of former injuries was still fresh in her mind. She had seen her husband, Rubellius Plautus, massacred by a band of ruffians. On that occasion she opposed her person to the assassin's stroke: she clung to her husband's bleeding neck, and preserved the garment stained with his blood. From that time nothing could assuage her sorrows: she remained a widow, a prey to grief, inconsolable, loathing all food, except what was necessary for the support of nature. In the present distress, by her father's advice, she set off for Naples, where Nero then resided. Not being admitted to his presence, she watched the palace gates, and as soon as he came forth she cried aloud, 'Hear my father, hear an innocent man: he was your colleague in the consulship: extend your mercy, nor let him fall a sacrifice to the pernicious arts of a vile abandoned slave.' She persisted, as often as Nero passed, to renew her

application, sometimes in tears and misery of heart ; often in a tone of vehemence, roused by her sufferings above the weakness of her sex. But neither tears nor reproaches had any effect on the cruelty of Nero : insensible to both, and heedless to the popular hatred, he remained obdurate and implacable.

XI. Pollutia returned to her father, and since not a ray of hope was left, exhorted him to meet his fate with becoming spirit. Intelligence arrived at the same time that preparations for the trial were going on with rapidity, and that the senate showed a disposition to pronounce the severest sentence. Among the friends of Cassius some were of opinion that the surest way to secure part of his fortune for his grandchildren would be by making the emperor heir in chief. He rejected that advice as unworthy of his character. Having lived his days with a spirit of independence, he resolved to die with honor. He distributed the money then in his possession among his slaves, and ordered them to remove for their own use all the effects that could be carried off, with the exception of three couches to serve as funeral beds for himself and his family.

They retired to die together. In the same chamber, and with the same instrument, the father, the mother-in-law, and the daughter, opened their veins, and without any other covering than such as decency required, were conducted to a warm bath ; the father with his eyes fixed on his daughter ; the grandmother gazing on the same object ; and she, in return, looking with tender affection on both her parents ; each of them wishing to avoid the pain of seeing the others in the pangs of death, and praying to be released. Nature pursued her own course. They died in order of their respective ages, the oldest first.

After their decease a prosecution was carried on in due form of law, and all three were adjudged to capital punishment. Nero so far opposed the sentence as to give them the liberty of choosing their mode of dying. When the tragedy was already performed such was the farce that followed.

XII. Publius Gallus, a Roman knight, for no other crime than his intimacy with Fenius Rufus, and some connexion with Vetus, was interdicted from fire and water. The freedman of Vetus, who betrayed his master, and the accuser, who undertook the conduct of the prosecution, obtained, to reward their villany, a seat in the theatre among the officers who follow in the train of the tribunes. The month of April was already styled by the name of Nero, and, in like manner, May was changed to that of Claudius, and June to Germanicus. Cornelius Orfitus was the author of this innovation. His reason for the last was, because the two Torquati suffered in the month of June, and that inauspicious name ought therefore to be abolished from the calendar.

XIII. To the blood and horror that made this year for ever memorable we may add the vengeance of Heaven, declared in storms and tempests, and epidemic disorders. A violent hurricane made the country of Campania a scene of desolation; whole villages were overthrown; plantations were torn up by the roots, and the hopes of the year destroyed. The fury of the storm was felt in the neighborhood of Rome, where, without any apparent cause in the atmosphere, a contagious distemper broke out, and swept away a vast number of the inhabitants. The houses were filled with dead bodies, and the streets with funeral processions. Neither sex nor age escaped. Slaves and men of ingenuous birth were carried off, without

distinction, amidst the shrieks and lamentations of their wives and children. Numbers, while they assisted their expiring friends, or bewailed their loss, were suddenly seized, and burnt on the same funeral pile. The Roman knights and senators suffered the common lot of mortality; but death delivered them from the power of the tyrant, and for that reason they were not regretted.

In the course of the year new levies were made in Narbon Gaul, and likewise in Asia and Africa, in order to recruit the legions in Illyricum, at that time much reduced by the discharge of such as by age or infirmity were rendered unfit for service. The city of Lyons having before this time suffered a dreadful disaster,¹ Nero, to relieve the inhabitants, ordered a remittance of forty thousand sesterces, being the amount of what that city granted² to the treasury of Rome in a period of distraction and public distress.

XIV. Caius Suetonius and Lucius Telesinus entered on the consulship. During their administration Antistius Sosianus, formerly banished,³ as has been mentioned, for a satirical poem against Nero, began to think of regaining his liberty. He heard of the high estimation in which informers were held at Rome, and the bias of Nero's nature to acts of cruelty. A bold and restless spirit like his was ready for any project, and he possessed a promptitude of mind that quickly saw how to seize his opportunity. There was at that time an exile in the same place, famous for his

¹ This was a dreadful fire, by which in one night Lugdunum (now the city of Lyons) was reduced to ashes.

² The time when the people of Lyons granted a supply to the Romans cannot be ascertained. It was probably in the reign of Caligula.

³ Antistius Sosianus was banished on account of his satirical verses, A. U. C. 815.

skill in the arts of Chaldean astrology, and on that account intimate with several families. His name was Pammenes. Antistius entered into a league of friendship with him. Their mutual sufferings endeared them to each other. The astrologer had frequent consultations, and messengers were every day crowding to his house. Antistius judged that such a concourse could not be without reasons of important consequence. He found that Pammenes received an annual pension from Anteius; a man, on account of his attachment to Agrippina, obnoxious to the emperor, and by his riches likely to tempt the avarice of a prince who had already cut off some of the most opulent and illustrious men in Rome.

Antistius kept a watchful eye on his new friend. He intercepted letters from Anteius, and gained access to other secret papers, in which was contained a calculation of the nativity of Anteius, with many particulars relating to the birth and future fortune of Ostorius Scapula.¹ Armed with these materials, he represented, by letters to Nero, that he had discoveries of the first importance, involving even the safety of the prince, and if he might revisit Rome for a few days, the whole should be brought to light, with all the machinations of Anteius and Ostorius Scapula, who beyond all doubt were engaged in treasonable design, and had been prying into their own destiny and that of the imperial house. In consequence of these letters a light galley was despatched, and Antistius was conveyed to Rome. His arrival, and the business on which he came, were no sooner known than Anteius and Ostorius were considered as devoted victims; in-somuch, that the former could not find a friend bold

¹ For Ostorius Scapula, see Annals, xii. 31; xiv. 48. He had commanded in Britain with great reputation.

enough to be a witness to his will,¹ till Tigellinus advised him to settle his affairs without loss of time. Anteius swallowed a dose of poison ; but finding the operation slow and tedious, he opened his veins and put a period to his existence.

XV. Ostorius at this time was at a distance from Rome, amusing himself on his own estate near the confines of Liguria. A centurion was sent with orders to despatch him. Nero had his reasons for desiring this business to be done with expedition. He knew the military character of Ostorius, and the high reputation with which he had gained the civic crown in Britain. He dreaded a man renowned in arms, remarkable for his bodily vigor, and a thorough master of the art of war. From a general of his experience he lived in fear of a sudden attack, and the late conspiracy kept him in a constant alarm. The centurion obeyed his orders, and having first secured all the avenues round the house, communicated the emperor's orders. Ostorius turned against himself that courage which had often made the enemy fly before him. He opened his veins ; but, though the incision was large, the blood flowed with languor. He called a slave to his assistance, and having directed him to hold a poniard with a firm and steady hand, he laid hold of the man's arm, and applying his throat to the point, rushed on certain death.

XVI. If the narrative in which I am engaged presented a detail of foreign wars, and a register of men who died with honor in the service of their country, even in that case a continued train of disasters, crowding fast on one another, would fatigue the writer, and make the reader turn with disgust from so many

¹ To give validity to a will seven witnesses were necessary.

tragic issues, honorable indeed, but dark, melancholy, and too much of a color. How much more must the uniformity of the present subject be found irksome, and even repulsive! We have nothing before us but tame servility, and a deluge of blood spilt by a tyrant in the hour of peace. The heart recoils from the dismal story. But let it be remembered by those who may hereafter think these events worthy of their notice, that I have discharged the duty of an historian, and if, in relating the fate of so many eminent citizens, who resigned their lives to the will of one man, I mingle tears with indignation, let me be allowed to feel for the unhappy. The truth is, the wrath of Heaven was bent against the Roman state. The calamities that followed cannot, like the slaughter of an army, or the sacking of a city, be painted forth in one general draught. Repeated murders must be given in succession; and if the remains of illustrious men are distinguished by their funeral obsequies from the mass of the people, may it not be considered as a tribute due to their memory, that in like manner their deaths should be snatched from oblivion, and that history, in describing the last act of their lives, should give to each his distinct and proper character, for the information of posterity?

XVII. I proceed to add to the list of murdered citizens Annæus Mela, Cerealis Anicius, Rufius Crispinus, and Petronius. In the compass of a few days they were all cut off, as it were at one blow. Mela and Crispinus were no higher than Roman knights; but in fame and dignity of character equal to the most distinguished senators. Crispinus at one time commanded the pretorian bands; he was afterwards invested with the consular ornaments, but lately charged as an accomplice in the conspiracy, and banished to

the island of Sardinia. At that place he received the emperor's mandate, and died by his own hand. Mela was brother to Seneca and Gallio. He abstained through life from the pursuit of civil honors, vainly flattering himself that a simple knight could rise to the highest splendor, and tower above the consular dignity. By remaining in his rank he was qualified to act in the administration of the imperial revenue, and that employment he thought the shortest road to immoderate riches. He was the father of Lucan the poet, and from such a son¹ derived additional lustre. When Lucan was no more, Mela endeavored to recover the whole of his property;² but proceeding with too much eagerness, he provoked the enmity of Fabius Romanus, one of the poet's intimate friends. This man framed a charge against the father. He accused him of being engaged with his son in the late conspiracy, and for that purpose forged several letters in the name of Lucan.

Nero was eager to seize his prey: he panted for his riches, and with that view sent the letters as evidence of his guilt. Mela had recourse to the mode of death at that time deemed the easiest, and for that reason most in vogue. He opened his veins and expired. By his will he bequeathed a large sum to Tigellinus,

¹ Brotier exclaims in this place, ' Let the detractors from the merit of Lucan hear what Tacitus says of him, and let them blush for their malignity. That a young poet, who ended his career in the twenty-seventh year of his age, should aim in many passages of his work at ambitious ornaments, and the false glitter which the example of his uncle Seneca and the taste of the age encouraged, cannot be matter of wonder; but, to atone for his faults, his poem is a treasure of sentiments worthy of a Roman. Lucan taught Corneille to think, and to express his thoughts with force and dignity.

² Juvenal gives us to understand that Lucan was possessed of great riches, and might therefore seek no reward but fame.

and to his son-in-law, Cossutianus Capito, hoping by that bequest to secure the remainder for his family. A clause, it has been said, was added to the will, asserting the innocence of the deceased, and the flagrant injustice of cutting him off, while such men as Rufius Crispinus and Anicius Cerealis were suffered to live in security, though they were both envenomed enemies of the prince. The clause however was thought to be fabricated, with a view to justify the murder of Crispinus, which was already perpetrated, and to hasten the sentence then in agitation against Cerealis, who in a few days afterwards despatched himself. He fell unlamented. The public remembered that he formerly discovered a conspiracy¹ to Caligula, and for that reason no man regretted him in his end.

XVIII. With regard to Caius Petronius,² his character, his course of life, and the singularity of his manners, seem to merit particular attention. He passed his days in sleep, and his nights in business, or in joy and revelry. Indolence was at once his passion and his road to fame. What others did by vigor and industry, he accomplished by his love of pleasure and luxurious ease. Unlike the men who profess to understand social enjoyment, and ruin their

1 The plot to which Tacitus refers is not related with perspicuity by any historian. All that is now known is, that Cerealis was the informer, and that Sextus Passienus, the chief of the conspiracy, with several men of rank, was put to death by order of Caligula.

2 This is the writer whom Pope has celebrated in the Essay on Criticism :

Fancy and art in gay Petronius please,
The scholar's learning, with the courtier's ease.

The account here given of him by Tacitus is elegant and interesting. See Plutarch on the Difference between a Friend and a Sycophant ; and see Pliny, xxxvii. 7.

fortunes, he led a life of expense without profusion ; an epicure, yet not a prodigal ; addicted to his appetites, but with taste and judgment ; a refined and elegant voluptuary. Gay and airy in his conversation, he charmed by a certain graceful negligence, the more engaging as it flowed from the natural frankness of his disposition. With all his delicacy and careless ease, he showed, when he was governor of Bithynia, and afterwards in the year of his consulship, that vigor of mind and softness of manners may well unite in the same person. With his love of sensuality he possessed talents for business. From his public station he returned to his usual gratifications, fond of vice, or of pleasures that bordered on it. His gaiety recommended him to the notice of the prince. Being in favor at court, and cherished as the companion of Nero in all his select parties, he was allowed to be the arbiter of taste and elegance. Without the sanction of Petronius nothing was exquisite, nothing rare or delicious.

Hence the jealousy of Tigellinus, who dreaded a rival in the good graces of the emperor almost his equal ; in the science of luxury his superior. Tigellinus determined to work his downfall ; and accordingly addressed himself to the cruelty of the prince ; that master-passion, to which all other affections and every motive were sure to give way. He charged Petronius with having lived in close intimacy with Scevinus,¹ the conspirator ; and to give color to that assertion, he bribed a slave to turn informer against his master. The rest of the domestics were loaded with irons. Nor was Petronius suffered to make his defence.

¹ This was Scevinus the conspirator, for whom see Annals, xv. 49. 54. 56.

XIX. Nero at that time happened to be on one of his excursions into Campania. Petronius had followed him as far as Cuma, but was not allowed to proceed farther than that place. He scorned to linger in doubt and fear, and yet was not in a hurry to leave a world which he loved. He opened his veins, and closed them again, at intervals losing a small quantity of blood, then binding up the orifice, as his own inclination prompted. He conversed during the whole time with his usual gaiety, never changing from his habitual manner, nor talking sentences to show his contempt of death. He listened to his friends, who endeavored to entertain him, not with grave discourses on the immortality of the soul, or the moral wisdom of philosophers, but with strains of poetry and verses of a gay and natural turn. He distributed presents to some of his servants, and ordered others to be chastised. He walked out for his amusement, and even lay down to sleep. In this last scene of his life he acted with such calm tranquillity, that his death, though an act of necessity, seemed no more than the decline of nature. In his will he scorned to follow the example of others, who, like himself, died under the tyrant's stroke: he neither flattered the emperor, nor Tigellinus, nor any of the creatures of the court; but having written, under the fictitious names of profligate men and women, a narrative of Nero's debauchery, and his new modes of vice,¹ he had the spirit to send to

¹ This description of Nero and his flagitious court has been supposed by some critics to be the work called *Petronii Arbitri Satiricon*; but this it is evident must be a gross mistake. The *Satiricon* is a long work, and must have been written at leisure. It contains nothing that relates to the new modes of vice, or the secret practices of Nero's court. It glances often at the imbecility of Claudius, and presents a variety of miscellaneous matter, palpably the composition of a

the emperor that satirical romance, sealed with his own seal, which he took care to break, that after his death it might not be used for the destruction of any person whatever.

XX. Nero saw, with surprise, his clandestine passions, and the secrets of his midnight revels, laid open to the world. To whom the discovery was to be imputed still remained a doubt. Amidst his conjectures, Silia, who by her marriage with a senator had risen into notice, occurred to his memory. This woman had often procured for the libidinous pleasures of the prince, and lived, besides, in close intimacy with Petronius. Nero concluded that she had betrayed him, and for that offence ordered her into banishment. Having made that sacrifice to his own resentment, he gave another victim to glut the rage of Tigellinus, namely, Numicius Thermus, a man of pretorian rank. An accusation preferred against the favorite by a slave enfranchised by Thermus was the cause that provoked the vengeance of Tigellinus. For that daring attempt against a man in power the informer suffered on the rack, and his patron, who had no concern in the business, was put to death.

XXI. Nero had not yet satiated his vindictive fury. He had spilt the best blood in Rome, and now, in the persons of Pætus Thrasea and Bareas Soranus, he hoped to destroy virtue itself. His rancor to those two illustrious citizens had been long working in his heart. Thrasea, in particular, was the devoted object, and various motives conspired against him. When

mind at ease. What was sent to Nero must have been a short performance, such as a man of genius might despatch in a few hours. How should the passages which have intitled Petronius to be ranked with the critics of antiquity find a place in the narrative of a dying man?

the business of Agrippina¹ was brought before the senate it will be in the memory of the reader that Thræsea withdrew from the debate. Afterwards, in the youthful sports called *Juvenales*, he seldom attended, and never with the alacrity which was expected. This cold indifference was the more grating to the prince as Thræsea, at Padua, his native city, not only assisted at the games of the cestus, originally instituted by Antenor, the fugitive from Troy, but also performed in the habit of a tragedian. It was farther remembered, that when Antistius, the pretor, was in danger of being capitally condemned for his verses levelled at Nero, Thræsea was the author of a milder sentence. There was still another circumstance: when divine honors were decreed to Poppæa he wilfully absented himself, nor did he afterwards attend her funeral. These offences were not suffered to sink into oblivion. The whole was treasured up by Cossutianus Capito, a man who to a bad heart and talents for every species of iniquity united motives of personal ill-will to Thræsea, which he nourished in secret, ever since the victory obtained over him in a charge of extortion conducted by the deputies from Cilicia, and supported with all the credit and eloquence of Thræsea.

XXII. The fertile genius of the prosecutor was not at a loss for new allegations. The heads of his charge were: ‘That Thræsea made it a point to avoid renewing the oath of fidelity usual at the beginning of the year;² and, though a member of the quindecimviral

1 When the death of Agrippina, Nero’s mother, was announced to the senate, and the fathers, with their usual spirit of adulation, were preparing their decrees on that occasion, Thræsea rose from his seat and left the house; *Annals*, xiv. 12.

2 The oath of fidelity was changed at different times. At first it was a solemn obligation to preserve the laws. Dio

college, he never assisted at the ceremony of offering vows for the safety of the prince and the preservation of that melodious voice. A magistrate formerly of unremitting assiduity, he took a part in every debate, supporting or opposing the most trifling motions; and now what is his conduct? For three years together he has not so much as entered the senate. Even on a late occasion, when the business relating to Silanus and Vetus drew the fathers to a crowded meeting, Thræsea was not at leisure: the affairs of his clients engrossed his attention, and the patriot was detained from the senate by his own petty concerns. What is this but a public secession? He is at the head of a faction; and if his partisans take fire from his example, a civil war must be the consequence. Cæsar and Cato were the names that formerly kept the world awake; at present, in a city ever rent by discord, Nero and Thræsea engage the public mind.

‘The popular demagogue has his sectaries and his followers; a set of men not yet, like their master, ambitiously sententious, but, in imitation of his mien and manners, sullen, gloomy, and discontented. By the formalities of their rigid discipline they hope to throw disgrace on the gay and elegant manners of their sovereign. Your preservation, Nero, is of no moment to Thræsea; he disregards your safety: he despises your accomplishments. Are your affairs in a train of prosperity, he is still dejected. Has any untoward event disturbed your peace of mind, he enjoys your distress, and in secret pampers himself with your

relates that on the kalends of January, A. U. C. 712, the magistrates swore on the Acts of Julius Cæsar. In process of time, to swear on the Acts of the Emperors grew into use; though we have seen Tiberius refusing to admit that form of oath.

affliction. The same spirit that refused to swear on the acts of Julius Cæsar and Augustus denies the divinity of Poppæa. He turns religion to a jest, and sets the laws at defiance. The journals of the Roman people¹ were never read by the provinces and the armies with so much avidity as in the present juncture; and the reason is, the history of the times is the history of Thræsea's contumacy.

'If the system of this wise philosopher and profound politician merit attention, let us at once embrace his doctrine; if otherwise, let us take from the friends of innovation their leader and their oracle. The sect whose precepts he affects to admire has ever been proud and dogmatical, busy, bold, and turbulent. It was that stoic school that formed the Tuberos² and the

1 The Journals of the Roman People, called in the original *Diurna Populi Romani*. These were the Roman newspapers. It is to be regretted that no collection of those fugitive pieces has come down to us. We should have the pleasure of seeing minutely and distinctly the private life of the Romans, and the opportunity would be fair to make a comparison between a Roman journalist and the *doer* of a modern newspaper.

2 Cicero, in the Oration for Muræna, gives a sketch of Tubero's character: 'He was a man of illustrious birth, a scholar, and a professor of the stoic philosophy. Being desired, at the funeral of Scipio Africanus, to lay out the couches for the farewell supper, he chose the vilest sort, such as were used at Carthage, and, having covered them with goat-skins, arranged in proper order a number of Samian vases, which were earthenware; as if he were preparing for the funeral of Diogenes the cynic, and not for that of the divine Africanus, to whose honor Quintus Maximus, in a panegyric from the rostrum, said, he thanked the immortal gods that such a man was born a Roman citizen; for wherever Scipio lived, there by consequence would be fixed the empire of the world.' Cicero adds that Tubero, a good and upright citizen, the grandson of Paulus Æmilius, and nephew to the deceased Scipio, gave umbrage to the people by his perverse wisdom, and for his goat-skins lost his election when candidate for the

Favonii; names detested even by the old republic. And what is now the principle of the whole faction? To subvert the fabric of a great empire, they hold forth the name of liberty; if they succeed they will destroy even liberty itself. Of what use can it be to Nero that he has banished a Cassius, if the followers of Brutus are still allowed to flourish and multiply their numbers? On the whole, you have no occasion, Cæsar, to write to the senate; you need not mention Thræsea to that assembly: leave him to our management, and the judgment of the fathers.' Nero praised the zeal of Cossutianus, and added fury to a mind already bent on mischief. To forward his villany he gave him for a coadjutor Eprius Marcellus, an orator of a turbulent spirit and overbearing eloquence.

XXIII. The prosecution against Bareas Soranus was already in the hands of Ostorius Sabinus, a Roman knight. Soranus was returned from his proconsular government of Asia. His conduct in the province stood distinguished by justice and the rectitude of his measures; but by the jealousy of Nero the virtues of the minister were converted into crimes. He had opened the port of Ephesus, and left unpunished the obstinate resistance of the people of Pergamus, who refused to let Acratus, one of the emperor's freedmen, carry off the statues and pictures that adorned their city. This meritorious conduct was an offence not to be forgiven; but constructive crimes were to be held forth to the public. The heads of the accusation were, that Soranus had contracted a close and intimate friendship with Plautus, and had endeavored by popular

pretorship. Seneca, who was a professed stoic, says of that school, that there was no sect more benevolent, none more affectionate, and none more zealous to promote the good of society.

arts to incite the eastern provinces to a revolt. To decide the fate of two upright citizens Nero chose a juncture favorable to his dark design. Tiridates was on his way to Rome to receive the diadem of Armenia from the hands of the emperor. He thought it probable that, in the splendor of that magnificent scene, the horrors of domestic cruelty would be lost; perhaps it seemed a fair opportunity to display to a foreign prince the grandeur of a Roman emperor, and convince him, by the murder of two eminent citizens, that the imperial power was nothing short of oriental despotism.

XXIV. The city went forth in crowds to meet the emperor, and gaze at the eastern monarch. Thrasea received orders not to appear on the occasion. A mind like his was not to be disconcerted. With his usual fortitude he sent a memorial to the prince, requesting to know by what act of his life he had deserved such a mark of displeasure. He pledged himself, if a fair hearing were granted, to confute his enemies, and place his innocence in the clearest light. Nero received the memorial with eager curiosity, expecting to find that Thræsea, under the operation of fear, had descended to the language of flattery, and tarnish his own honor by magnifying the glory of the prince. Stung by disappointment, he refused to grant an audience. The sight of that illustrious citizen, the countenance, the spirit, and the virtue of the man, were too much to encounter. He ordered the senate to be convened. Thræsea in the mean time consulted with his friends which would be most advisable, to enter at large into his defence, or to behave with silent indignation. They were divided in their opinions.

XXV. Some advised him to enter the senate, and

confront his enemies in the presence of that assembly. 'Of his constancy no doubt could be entertained: they knew that nothing could fall from him unworthy of himself. Every word from his lips would tend to augment his glory. When danger threatened, to take shelter in the shade of obscurity were the act of a degenerate spirit. For him, he ought to have the people round him to behold the scene; a great man advancing bravely to meet his fate would be a spectacle worthy of their applause. The senate would hear with astonishment the energy of truth, and the sublime of virtue. Every sentiment from the mouth of Thræsea would rise superior to humanity, and sound to the fathers as if some god addressed them. Even the heart of Nero might for once relent. Should it happen otherwise; should his obdurate nature still persist; posterity would crown with immortal glory the undaunted citizen who distinguished himself from those unhappy victims who bowed their necks to the tyrant's stroke, and crept in silence to their graves.'

XXVI. Others were of a different opinion, convinced that his best plan would be to wait the issue at his own house. They spoke of Thræsea himself and the dignity of his character in the highest terms, but they dreaded that his adversaries would pour forth a torrent of insolence and opprobrious language. 'They desired that he would not suffer his ear to be wounded with scurrility and vile abuse. Cossutianus and Eprius Marcellus were not the only enemies of virtue: there were others whose brutal rage might incite them to outrage, and even violence to his person. The cruelty of Nero left none at liberty. In a general panic good men might follow the worst example. It would become the character of Thræsea to rescue from

infamy that august assembly which his presence had so long adorned. If he did not attend the meeting, the part which, after hearing Thrasea in his own defence, the fathers might have acted, will remain problematical; and by that uncertainty the honor of the senate may be saved. To hope that Nero would blush for his crimes were to misunderstand his character. His unrelenting cruelty would most probably fall on Thrasea's wife, on his whole family, and all that were dear to him. For these reasons an eminent citizen, who had ever supported the honor of his name, and still flourished with unblemished integrity, would do well to remember who were the teachers of wisdom that furnished the principles and the model of his conduct. Since he had crowded into his life all their virtues, it would become him to emulate their glory in his fall.'

Arulenus Rusticus assisted at this consultation. He was at that time a tribune of the people; a young man of sentiment, eager to be in action, and warm with the love of glory. He offered to interpose, by his tribunitian authority, to prevent a decree of the senate. 'Forbear,' said Thrasea; 'and learn, young man, to restrain this impetuous ardor. By a rash opposition you cannot save your friend, and you may bring down ruin on yourself. For me, I have lived my days; my course is well-nigh finished; it now remains that I reach the goal with undiminished honor. As to you, my friend, you have but lately entered the career of civil dignities. Life is before you, and you have not as yet pledged yourself to the public. Ere you take a decided part, it will behove you to consider well the times on which you are fallen, and the principles which you mean to avow.' Having thus de-

clared his sentiments, he gave no opinion concerning the propriety of appearing in the senate, but reserved the question for his own private meditation.

XXVII. On the following day two pretorian cohorts, under arms, surrounded the temple of Venus. A body of citizens, with swords ill concealed beneath their gowns, invested all the avenues. In the forum, the open squares, and round the adjoining temples, bands of soldiers took their station; and through that military array the senators were obliged to pass, surrounded by soldiers and pretorian guards. The assembly was opened by Nero's questor,¹ with a speech in the name of the prince, complaining 'that the fathers' (no particular name was mentioned) 'deserted the public interest, and by their example taught the Roman knights to loiter away their time in sloth, and inattention to the welfare of the state. Nor could it be matter of wonder that the senators from the distant provinces no longer attended their duty, when men of consular rank, and even of sacerdotal dignity, thought of nothing but the embellishment of their villas, and the beauty of their gardens and pleasure-grounds.' This message was intended to be a weapon in the hands of the accusers, and their malice knew how to use it.

XXVIII. Cossutianus took the lead. Eprius Marcellus followed him, with more force and acrimony. 'The commonwealth,' he said, 'is on the brink of ruin. Certain turbulent spirits rear their crest so high that no room is left for the milder virtues of the prince.'

¹ The emperors had their own special questors for the conduct of their affairs. Augustus was the first that established such an office. Suetonius says he acquainted the senate with the scandalous behavior of his daughter Julia by a narrative in writing, which was read to the fathers by the questor.

The senate for some time past has been negligent, tame, and passive. Your lenity, conscript fathers, your lenity has given encouragement to sedition. It is in consequence of your indulgence that Thræsea presumes to trample on the laws; that his son-in-law, Helvidius Priscus, adopts the same pernicious principles; that Paconius Agrippinus, with the inveterate hatred towards the house of Cæsar which he inherits from his father, declares open hostility; and that Curtius Montanus, in seditious verses, spreads abroad the venom of his pen. Where is Thræsea now? I want to see the man of consular rank in his place; I want to see the sacerdotal dignity offering up vows for the emperor; I want to see the citizen taking the oaths of fidelity. Perhaps that haughty spirit towers above the laws and the religion of our ancestors; perhaps he means to throw off the mask, and own himself a traitor and an enemy to his country. Let him appear in this assembly; let the patriot come; let the leader of faction show himself; the man who so often played the orator in this assembly, and took under his patronage the inveterate enemies of the prince. Let us hear his plan of government. What does he wish to change? What abuse does he mean to reform? If he came every day with objections, the cavilling spirit of the man might tease, perplex, and embarrass us; but now his sullen silence is worse; it condemns every thing in the gross. And why all this discontent? A settled peace prevails in every quarter of the empire: does that afflict him? Our armies, without the effusion of Roman blood, have been victorious: is that the cause of his disaffection? He sickens in the midst of prosperity; he repines at the flourishing state of his country: he deserts the forum; he avoids the theatre, and the temples of the city; he threatens to abjure his

country, and retire into voluntary banishment; he acknowledges none of your laws; your decrees are to him no better than mockery; he owns no magistrates, and Rome to him is no longer Rome. Let him therefore be cut off at once from a city where he has long lived an alien; the love of his country banished from his heart, and the people odious to his sight.'

XXIX. Marcellus delivered this invective in a strain of vehemence that gave additional terror to the natural ferocity of a stern and savage countenance. His voice grew louder, his features more enlarged, and his eyes flashed with fire. The senate heard him, but with emotions unfelt before; the settled melancholy, which that black period made habitual, gave way to stronger feelings. They saw a band of soldiers round them, and they debated in the midst of swords and javelins. Thræsea was absent; but the venerable figure of the man presented itself to every imagination. They felt for Helvidius Priscus, who was doomed to suffer, not for imputed guilt, but because he was allied to an innocent and virtuous citizen. What was the crime of Agrippinus? The misfortunes of his father, cut off by the cruelty of Tiberius, rose in judgment against the son. The case of Montanus¹ was thought hard and oppressive. His poetry was a proof of genius, not of malice; and yet, for a pretended libel on the prince, a youth of expectation was to be driven from his country.

XXX. Amidst the tumult and distraction which this business excited Ostorius Sabinus, the accuser of Bareas Soranus, entered the senate. He opened at

¹ It is supposed by some of the commentators that the Montanus mentioned in this place is the person introduced by Juvenal in the deep consultation held by Domitian about the manner of dressing a fish of enormous size.

once, and charged as a crime the friendship that subsisted between Soranus and Rubellius Plautus. He added, that the whole tenor of his administration in Asia was directed, not for the public good, but to promote his own popularity, and to spread a spirit of sedition through the provinces. These accusations had been long since fabricated, and were then grown threadbare; but the prosecutor was ready with a new allegation, which involved Servilia, the daughter of Soranus, in her father's danger. The charge against her was, that she had distributed sums of money among men skilled in judicial astrology. The fact was, Servilia, with no other motives than those of filial piety, had the imprudence, natural at her time of life, to apply to a set of fortune-tellers in order to satisfy her mind about the fate of her family, and to learn whether Nero's resentment was by any possibility to be appeased, and what would be the issue of the business in the senate.

She was cited to appear in the senate before the tribunal of the consuls. On one side stood the aged father; on the other his daughter, in the bloom of life, not having yet completed her twentieth year, but even then in a state of destitution, still lamenting the fate of her husband, Annius Pollio, lately torn from her, and condemned to banishment. She stood in silent sorrow, not daring to lift her eyes to her father, whom by her imprudent zeal she had involved in new misfortunes.

XXXI. The accuser pressed her with questions. He desired to know whether she had not sold her bridal ornaments, her jewels, and her necklace, to supply herself with money for magic sacrifices? She fell prostrate on the ground, and wept in bitterness of heart. Her sorrows were too big for utterance. She

embraced the altars, and rising suddenly, exclaimed with vehemence, ‘I have invoked no infernal gods; I have used no unhallowed rites, no magic, no incantations. My unhappy prayers asked no more than that you, Cæsar, and you, conscript fathers, would extend your protection to this best of men, this most affectionate parent. For him I sold my jewels; for him I disposed of my bridal ornaments, and for him I gave up the garments suited to my rank. In the same cause I was willing to sacrifice my life: the blood in my veins was at his service. The men whom I consulted were all strangers to me; I had no knowlege of them. They best can tell who they are, and what they profess. The name of the prince was never mentioned by me but with that respect which I pay to the gods. What I did was my own act: that miserable man, my unhappy father, knew nothing of it. If any crime has been committed, he is innocent: I, and I alone, am guilty!’

XXXII. Soranus could no longer restrain himself. He interrupted his daughter, crying aloud, ‘She was not with me in Asia; she is too young to have any knowlege of Rubellius Plautus. In the accusation against her husband she was not involved; her filial piety is her only crime. Distinguish her case from mine; respect the cause of innocence, and on my head let your worst vengeance fall. I am ready to meet my fate.’ With these words he rushed to embrace his child: she advanced to meet him, but the lictors interposed to prevent the pathetic scene. The witnesses were called in. The fathers had hitherto listened to all that passed with emotions of pity; but pity was soon converted into a stronger passion. The appearance of Publius Egnatius,¹ the client of Soranus,

¹ Egnatius, the professor of the stoic philosophy, who ap-

hired to give evidence against his patron and his friend, kindled a general indignation. This man professed himself a follower of the stoic sect. He had learned in that school to detail the maxims of virtue, and could teach his features to assume an air of simplicity, while fraud, and perfidy, and avarice, lay lurking at his heart. The temptation of money drew forth his hidden character, and the hypocrite stood detected. His treachery gave a standing lesson to mankind, that, in the commerce of the world, it is not sufficient to guard against open and avowed iniquity, since the professors of friendship can, under a counterfeit resemblance of virtue, nourish the worst of vices, and prove in the end the most pernicious enemies.

XXXIII. The same day produced a splendid example of truth and honor in the person of Cassius Asclepiodotus; a man distinguished by his wealth, and ranked with the most eminent inhabitants of Bithynia. Having loved and followed Soranus in his prosperity, he did not desert him in the hour of distress. He still adhered to him with unaltered friendship, and for his constancy was deprived of his all, and sent into banishment; the gods, in their just dispensations, permitting an example of virtue, even in ruin, to stand in contrast to successful villany. Thrasea, Soranus, and Servilia, were allowed to choose their mode of dying. Helvidius Priscus and Paconius Agrippinus were banished out of Italy. Montanus owed his pardon to the influence of his father, but was declared incapable of holding any public office. The prosecutors were amply rewarded. Eprius Marcellus and Cossutianus received each of them fifty thousand

pears as a witness against Bareas Soranus, is mentioned by Juvenal. See the History, iv. 10.

sesterces. Ostorius Sabinus obtained a grant of twelve thousand, with the ornaments of the questorship.

XXXIV. Towards the close of day the consular questor¹ was sent to Thræsea, who was then amusing himself in his garden, attended by a number of friends, the most illustrious of both sexes. Demetrius,² a philosopher of the cynic school, was the person who chiefly engaged his attention. Their conversation, as was inferred from looks of earnest meaning, and from some expressions distinctly heard, turned on the immortality of the soul, and its separation from the body. Thræsea had not heard of the decree that had passed the senate, when his intimate friend Domitius Cæcilianus arrived with the unhappy tidings. The company melted into tears. Thræsea saw their generous sympathy: he heard their lamentations: but, fearing that the interest which they took in the lot of a man doomed to destruction might involve them in future danger, he conjured them to retire. Arria,³ his wife, inspired by the memorable example of her mother, resolved to share her husband's fate. Thræsea intreated her to continue longer in life, and not deprive their daughter of the only comfort and support of her tender years.

1 Notice has been taken, § 27, note 1, of the imperial questors. The consuls also had their questors, as we read in Dio, *xlvi.*, where it is said that Appius Claudius and Caius Norbanus, consuls A. U. C. 716, had each of them two questors under their own immediate direction.

2 Demetrius is praised by Seneca, not merely as a philosopher, but as a man of consummate virtue. *De Beneficiis*, vii. 8. In another place he calls him emphatically, not the teacher, but the witness of truth.

3 Arria, his wife, was the daughter of the celebrated Arria, who, in the reign of Claudius, A. U. C. 795, plunged a dagger in her own breast, to give her husband Cæcina Pætus an example of undaunted courage.

XXXV. He then walked his portico, and there received the consular questor. An air of satisfaction was visible in his countenance. He had been informed that Helvidius, his son-in-law, had met with nothing harsher than a sentence of banishment out of Italy. The decree of the senate, drawn up in form, being delivered to him, he withdrew to his chamber attended by Helvidius and Demetrius. He there presented both his arms; and the veins being opened, as soon as the blood began to flow he desired the questor to draw nearer, and sprinkling the floor with his vital drops, 'Thus,' he said, 'let us make libation to Jupiter the Deliverer! Behold, young man, a mind undaunted and resigned; and may the gods avert from you so severe a trial of your virtue! But you are fallen on evil times, in which you will find it expedient to fortify your soul by examples of unshaken constancy.' The approach of death was slow and lingering. As his pains increased he raised his eyes, and turning to Demetrius, * * * * *

[The rest of this book is lost.]

APPENDIX.

SECT. I. IT is not without regret that we lose the words of a great man at the point of death. All we know is, that Thræsea fixed his eyes on his friend Demetrius, and there Tacitus fails us. What the philosopher said cannot now be collected from any contemporary historian. It is probable that he expired in a short time after. Seeing the vices of the age, and the savage cruelty of the reigning prince, it cannot be matter of wonder that a man of virtue, fortified by the doctrines of the stoic school, did not think it awful to die. He was often heard to say that he had rather lay down his life to-day, than be to-morrow banished to an island. That sentiment was applauded by the philosophers¹ of the age. With the same spirit he was used to declare his mind in conversation with his friends. ‘If,’ he said, ‘Nero intended to destroy no one but me, I could excuse his flatterers; but flattery will not save their lives. Since death is a debt that all must pay, it is better to die in freedom than live an ignominious slave. All that Nero can do is to shorten my days: my memory will still subsist, and men will continue to talk of me. But for the tribe of abject sycophants, they will perish, and be mentioned no more.’ Thræsea was not more distinguished by his unshaken fortitude than by the virtues of humanity. Pliny the consul celebrates him for an apophthegm, which shows in the fairest light the amiable tenderness

¹ Epictetus, as we are told by Arrian, recorded the apophthegms of Thræsea, and in particular the sentiment here ascribed to him.

of his nature. An unforgiving disposition was in his eyes not only ungenerous, but immoral ; it was therefore his maxim,¹ that he who suffers himself to hate vice, will hate mankind. It were superfluous to add any farther particulars of a man so truly eminent. Tacitus says, that by destroying him, Nero intended, by the same blow, to destroy virtue itself. All praise is summed up in that short encomium.

Soranus and his daughter Servilia died with equal virtue and equal glory. Helvidius Priscus,² as already mentioned, was condemned to exile. Paconius Agrippinus met with the same severity. Like his friend Helvidius, he was a man of distinguished virtue, and undaunted resolution. Being informed that his trial, though he was not cited to appear, was actually depending before the senate, ‘ May the gods grant me their protection!’ said he ; ‘ but it is now the fifth hour, and that is the time when I usually bathe. His cause was not long in suspense. Being informed that judgment was pronounced against him, he calmly asked, ‘ What is the sentence ? death or banishment?’

1 Pliny the consul observes that many, who are themselves slaves to every vice, are notwithstanding malicious declaimers against the errors of others : yet surely a lenity of disposition is of all other virtues the most becoming. The rule which ought to be most religiously observed is, ‘ Let us be inexorable to our own failings, while we treat those of the rest of the world with tenderness, not excepting even such as forgive none but themselves, remembering always what the humane, and therefore the great, Thræsea used to say : ‘ He who hates vice, hates mankind.’’ Mr. Melmoth, the elegant translator of Pliny, says : ‘ The meaning of this maxim seems to be, that as it is difficult to separate the action from the man, we should not suffer the errors of the world to raise in us that acrimony of indignation, which, if well examined, will perhaps be oftener found to proceed from some secret principle of malice, than a just abhorrence of vice.

2 Helvidius Priscus was recalled from exile, and afterwards put to death in the reign of Vespasian.

Being told that it was the latter, 'And what have they done with my effects?'—'You are left in possession of them.'—'Well, then,' said he, 'I can dine at Aricia.' He accepted his life, and, by his calm indifference, gained as much glory as others by the fortitude with which they met their fate. Demetrius, the friend of Thræsea, did not escape the notice of Nero. The tyrant threatened instant execution. 'You may command it,' said Demetrius; 'you threaten me with death, and nature threatens you.'¹ The intrepid firmness of a poor philosopher, or perhaps the meanness of his condition, saved his life.

II. Cornutus, another philosopher, who professed the doctrines of the Platonic school, had the misfortune to be consulted on the subject of a poem which Nero had projected.² He spoke his mind with honest freedom, and for that offence was immediately banished. Nor was the cruelty of the prince appeased by the number that fell a sacrifice; he still thirsted for blood; but happily a scene of splendor, then ready to be displayed, engaged his attention, and gave the people some respite from the rage of an insatiate tyrant. Tiridates, who with the consent of his brother Vologeses, the Parthian king, had agreed with Corbulo to

¹ Arrian has recorded this fact. Seneca has mentioned Demetrius with the highest applause, and chiefly for the following sentiment: 'Nothing can be more unfortunate than the man who has never felt the stroke of adversity: he has had no experience of himself.'

² Cornutus was the friend and preceptor of Persius the poet. Crevier, in the Lives of the Emperors, tells us that Nero intended to write the Roman history in verse, and in four hundred books. 'That will be too many,' said Cornutus; 'nobody will read them.' In answer, he was told that Chrysippus had written a great many more. 'Yes,' replied Cornutus, 'but the difference between the authors is very great.' He escaped with his life, but was banished. Crevier's Roman Emperors, iv. 295.

undertake a journey to Rome, in order there to receive the regal diadem from the hand of the emperor, was arrived in Italy. Nero was then at Naples, and in that city the eastern prince was admitted to his presence. The spectacle was magnificent. It served at once to gratify the pride of a Roman emperor, and for a time to soothe the afflictions of the people. Tiridates was attended by a long procession of officers and a military band appointed by Corbulo. He had, besides, not less than three thousand of the Parthian nobility in his train, with his wife, and the sons of Vologeses, of Pacorus, and Monobazus. His march through the provinces had no appearance of a prince subdued, and forced to submit to the will of a conqueror. Till he entered the city of Naples all was grandeur and royal magnificence. The act of humiliation still remained. He was to pay homage to the emperor on his knees. Mortifying as that circumstance was to an oriental king, Tiridates submitted to prostrate himself at Nero's feet. Vologeses had stipulated with Corbulo that his brother should not be compelled to deliver up his sword; and Tiridates called it an ignominious act, beneath the dignity of the Arsacidæ. Nothing could extort his sword. He is said to have nailed it to the scabbard. The magnanimity with which he refused to comply obtained the applause of all who beheld a scene so new and magnificent.

The court set out for Rome. Nero thought proper to make some stay at Puteoli, in order to entertain his royal visitor with a show of gladiators. The spectacle was exhibited by Patrobius, one of the emperor's freedmen, with great expense and prodigious pomp. The genius of Nero could not lie still on such an occasion. In his opinion it was fit that a foreign prince,

and his Parthian courtiers, should know how well the emperor of Rome could sing. Tiridates beheld the whole with mixed emotions of wonder, admiration, and contempt. The example of Nero did not tempt him to exhibit his person as a show to the people. He scorned to descend into the arena, but did not think it beneath his dignity to call for his bow and arrow, and from the throne, where he was seated, to give a specimen of his dexterity. He aimed at the wild beasts, and the spectators admired his address and the vigor of his arm. Historians relate as a fact that two bulls were transfixed by one arrow, and died on the spot.¹

III. Nero proceeded with a grand cavalcade on his way to Rome, where the most splendid preparations were made for his reception. The whole city was illuminated, and the houses decorated with garlands and laurel-wreaths. The people crowded together from all quarters, and rent the air with shouts and acclamations, while the emperor, with Tiridates and the Parthian nobility in his train, made his triumphal entry. A day was fixed for Tiridates to receive the diadem from the hands of Nero. Nothing could equal the pomp and splendor with which that ceremony was performed.² On the preceding evening the city was again illuminated, and the streets adorned with flowers. At the dawn of day an incredible multitude repaired to the forum; the tops of houses were crowded with spectators, and a splendid, but theatrical pomp was exhibited with lavish expense. The people, dressed in white robes, crowned with laurels, and ranked in their several tribes,

¹ The skill in archery, which Tiridates displayed on the occasion, is related by Dio.

² The appearance of Tiridates before the Roman people, and the prodigious magnificence of that public spectacle, are described by Suetonius, in *Neron*. § 13.

walked in procession to their respective seats. The pretorian guards, with their standards ranged in order, and their colors flying, displayed their glittering arms. Nero entered the forum in his triumphal habit. The whole body of the senate followed in his train. He took his seat on a curule chair, amidst the standards and the eagles. In a short time after Tiridates made his appearance. The soldiers opened their lines: he advanced through the ranks, with his eastern nobility in his train. He approached the rostrum, and on his knees offered homage to Nero. The people were not able to contain their joy. They saw the pride of an oriental king humbled at the feet of the emperor. The majesty of Rome filled every imagination. A shout burst forth from the enraptured multitude. Tiridates was astonished at the sound: he stood at gaze, and his heart shrunk within him. Nero raised him from the ground, and, having clasped him in his arms, placed the diadem on his head, amidst the repeated shouts and acclamations of the people.

IV. The Parthian prince, not yet recovered from his surprise, in the hurry and agitation of his spirits, addressed himself to Nero, in substance as follows: ‘ You see before you a prince descended from the line of the Arsacidæ; you behold the brother of two kings, Vologesēs and Pacorus; and yet I own myself your slave. You, no less than Mithra,¹ are to me a god. I pay you the same veneration as I do the sun. Without your protection I have no kingdom: my rights must flow from you. You are the author of my fortune; and your will is fate.’ An ancient pretor undertook to be interpreter on the occasion. The peo-

¹ The sun, under the name of Mithra, was worshipped by the Persians, and almost all the eastern nations. See Hyde, *History of the Persian Religion*.

ple, well convinced that Nero by his vices had forfeited all kind of claim to such respectful language, received it as the homage of a king to the majesty of the Roman name. The speech was sufficiently mean and abject, but the arrogance and ferocity of Nero's answer exceeded every thing. 'I congratulate you on the wisdom that brought you thus far to enjoy the sunshine of my presence, and my protection. The diadem, which your father could not leave you, nor your brothers confirm in your hand, is the gift which I bestow. The kingdom of Armenia is yours: I place you on the vacant throne. From this day you and your brothers may learn that it is mine to raise or depose the monarchs of the earth, as my wisdom shall direct.'

Such was the haughty style in which Nero spoke of himself; but he did not long support his grandeur. The coronation being over, he adjourned to Pompey's theatre, where the scene was prepared at an enormous expense, with the most superb decorations. The stage, and the whole inside of that noble structure, were cased¹ with gold. Such a profusion of wealth and magnificence had never been displayed to view. To screen the spectators from the rays of the sun, a purple canopy, inlaid with golden stars, was spread over their heads. In the centre was seen, richly embroidered, the figure of Nero, in the act of driving a curricule. To the exhibitions of the theatre the pleasures of the table succeeded. The banquet² was the most sumptuous that taste and luxury could contrive. When the appetite of the guests was satisfied, the public diversions

¹ Pliny mentions the decorations of the theatre, and the vast display of gold for the reception of Tiridates. See also Dio Cassius, lxiii.

² Dio says this feast was given in Nero's golden palace; for which, see Pliny, xxxiii. 3.

were once more resumed. Nero seized the opportunity to display his talents ; and he, who a little before was master of the universe, appeared in the characters of charioteer, comedian, singer, and buffoon. He sung on the stage, and drove round the circus in his green livery.¹ The king of Armenia saw the prince, who talked of dealing out crowns and sceptres, warbling a tune, and managing the reins for the entertainment of his subjects. Such despicable talents, he knew, could neither form a warrior nor a legislator. His glory, it now was evident, depended on the virtue and the genius of men very different from himself. How he found a people tame enough to obey, and general officers willing to command his armies, was matter of wonder to the Parthian prince. Struck with that idea, he could not refrain from saying to Nero, in the simplicity of his heart, ‘ You have in Corbulo a most valuable slave.’ The drift and good sense of the observation made no impression on a frivolous mind like that of Nero. An emperor, who placed his glory in being a scenic performer, paid no attention to the merit of Corbulo. If he understood the reflection of the eastern prince, he showed afterwards that the only use he made of it was, to nourish a secret jealousy, and plan the ruin of an officer whose fame in arms was too great for a tyrant to endure.

As soon as the diversions of the theatre and the circus ended, Nero thought fit to open a more important scene. He proceeded with a grand retinue to

1 Rome, under the emperors, was often disturbed by the violent spirit of theatrical factions, the leaders of which were distinguished by the color of their dress, such as white, blue, green, and yellow. This is what Tacitus, in another place, has called ‘ *Histrionalis Favor.*’ Montesquieu has considered it as one of the causes of the declension of the Roman empire.

the capitol, where he entered with a branch of laurel in his hand ; and, as if he had subdued Armenia, the charioteer and player of interludes was saluted emperor. His vanity was now amply gratified ; but vanity was not the only spring of his actions. To be an adept in magic arts had been for some time his predominant passion ; and, as Tiridates brought with him in his train a number of the Parthian magi, he thought the opportunity fair to learn all the secrets of an occult science, which he believed was not the mere illusion of mathematicians and pretended philosophers. Tiridates studied to ingratiate himself, and was proud to have the emperor of Rome for his pupil.¹ By his desire, the magi opened all their stores of knowledge, and Nero, with the anxiety of a guilty mind, was eager to pry into futurity. He was master of the Roman world, and, with the assistance of his oriental teachers, flattered himself that he should soon be able to control the ways of Providence, and give the law to the gods. With this view he passed his time in close conference with a set of Chaldean impostors ; but Tiridates was not able, in return for the kingdom of Armenia, to teach his benefactor the art of holding commerce with evil spirits. Nero found the whole to be a system of fraud. Instead of being enabled to hold a council with infernal powers, he was left to the suggestions of his own heart, and the advice of a pernicious crew of abandoned men and women, who were the emperor's confidential ministers, and the instruments of every villany.

V. It is certain that Nero's passion for the guitar and stage music was not greater than his passion to excel in magic incantations ; but though his hopes were

¹ Pliny the elder has given an account of Nero's passion for the occult sciences, xxx. 2.

frustrated, he did not cease to entertain Tiridates with the most lavish profusion. An enormous sum¹ was issued every day to the Armenian king for the support of his own grandeur and the courtiers in his train. At his departure a still larger sum was ordered as a present from the emperor; and that he might rebuild the city of Artaxata,² which had been levelled to the ground, a number of artificers were added at a vast expense to the retinue of the Parthian prince, who also engaged a number of others to attend him, for stipulated wages, to his own country. The consequence of Nero's generosity was, that the fixing of a king on the throne of Armenia was a heavier burden to the Romans than any of their most expensive wars.

There is reason to think that the want of success in the attempt to make Nero believe in the religion of the magi, served in some degree to open the eyes of Tiridates, and remove the errors of eastern superstition. In order to visit Rome, he had taken a wide compass over an immense tract of country, and travelled all the way by land. The cause of this circuitous and laborious journey must be referred to the superstition of his native country. In the creed of the Parthian magi the sea was said to be a sacred element;³ and to spit in it, or defile the purity of the waters by the superfluities of the human body, was held to be profane and impious. The design probably was, by that doctrine

1 Suetonius says Nero spent, in treating Tiridates with unparalleled magnificence, eight hundred thousand sesterces a day; a sum almost incredible! and at his departure presented him with above a million; Suet. in Nero, § 30.

2 The destruction of Artaxata has been mentioned; Annals, xiii. 41.

3 The superstitious veneration with which the Parthians considered the sea has been already mentioned.

to prevent migration ; and what at first was policy received in time the sanction of religion. But Tiridates, during his stay at Rome, so far weeded out the prejudices of education, that he made no scruple to return by sea. He embarked at Brundisium, and, having crossed the Adriatic, arrived at the port of Dyrrachium. From that place he pursued his voyage along the coast of Asia, and, being safely landed, visited the Roman provinces, and the most splendid cities on the continent. Before he entered the confines of Armenia Corbulo advanced to a meeting. In his interview with the Armenian monarch he still maintained that superior character which he had fairly earned by his talents and his virtues. Finding an extraordinary number of artificers in the prince's train, he resolved to act with due attention to the interest as well as the dignity of the Roman name ; and with that view, having separated such as were hired, he suffered none but those who were a donation from Nero to migrate to a foreign country. This behavior gave no offence to Tiridates. He took leave of Corbulo with the highest esteem for his many virtues ; and, though he entertained no kind of personal respect for Nero, he thought the regal diadem claimed a return of gratitude ; and on that principle, as soon as the capital of Armenia was rebuilt, instead of calling it Artaxata, he gave it the flattering name of Neronia.

VI. Rome having no war on her hands, Nero, with airs of self-congratulation, as if his valor had subdued the nations, thought fit to shut the temple of Janus.¹ But that pacific disposition did not last long. Intoxicated by the homage which he had received from

¹ Suetonius says Nero, having placed his laurel crown in the capitol, and being complimented with the title of emperor, closed the temple of Janus ; in Nero, § 13.

Tiridates, he wanted to renew the same scene of splendor and vainglory, by the humiliation of Vologeses, the Parthian king. For that purpose he endeavored, by pressing invitations, to induce that prince to undertake a journey to Rome. At length the eastern monarch gave a decisive answer: 'You can cross the sea, which I hold to be a forbidden element: come to Asia, and we will then settle the ceremony of our meeting.' Fired with indignation by that peremptory refusal, and the tone of grandeur with which it was delivered, Nero was on the point of declaring war, if other projects had not dazzled his imagination. He concerted his measures, and laid plans of vast ambition; but the caprice that dictated them yielded to the first novelty that occurred. He intended to open the temple of Janus for four wars at once.¹ The first against the Jews, who felt themselves oppressed by the avarice and rapacity of Gessius Florus, the governor of the province, and were at that time in open revolt. The second enterprise was intended against the Ethiopians; the third against the Albanians on the borders of the Caspian sea; the fourth to revenge the insult offered to him by the haughty spirit of Vologeses. The love of fame, whatever he did, was the inspiring motive: whether he sent forth his armies, or drove a chariot, or sung a song, praise was still the ultimate end. If by his victorious arms the Ethiopians and Albanians could be reduced to subjection, the glory of enlarging the boundaries of the empire was to be the bright reward. His exertions were therefore made against the two last-mentioned states. He sent detachments forward to survey the country; he formed flying camps in those distant re-

¹ Suetonius mentions his intended expedition to the Caspian sea, § 19.

gions; he began to collect the forces of the empire; and not content with drawing from Britain, from Germany, and Illyricum, the flower of his armies, he formed a new legion, composed of men six feet high, and this he called the phalanx¹ of Alexander the Great.

Amidst this din of arms, and all this mighty tumult of warlike preparations, an incident occurred of more moment to Nero than the glory of the Roman name. A deputation arrived at Rome from the cities of Greece, where the theatre, and poetry, and music flourished, with orders to present to the emperor, from the several places, the victor's crown for minstrelsy and song. An opportunity so bright and unexpected was not to be neglected. Nero was transported with joy: he towered above himself and all competition. The deputies were admitted to his presence: they were caressed, invited to his table, and all other business, however important, gave way to the elegant arts. The Greeks were skilled in the trade of adulation. They beseeched the prince to honor them with a specimen of his talents. Nero sung to his guests: they heard, they applauded, they were thrown into ecstasies. He, in his turn, admired their taste; they were the only people who had music in their souls; they, and they only, had an ear for finer sound; the true masters of harmony; the judges who deserved to hear his exquisite powers. From that moment all his warlike projects vanished from his mind. He thought no more of humbling the Parthian king; the Ethiopians and Albanians might enjoy their independent state, and Vespasian might take the field against the Jews. The fame of a coachman, a min-

¹ These levies of men six feet high, to be called the Alexandrian phalanx, are stated by Suetonius in Nero, § 19.

strel, and a singer, was of greater moment. He resolved, without delay, to set out for Greece. How the administration was to be conducted during his absence was the first consideration. That did not embarrass him long. The whole authority, and all the functions of the prince were committed to Helius, one of his freedmen. That upstart minister, with Polycletus, his associate, had already enriched himself with the plunder of the public, and was now, with the whole power in his hands, to give a full display of his character. That point being settled, a weightier care still remained. An imperial charioteer, and a comedian of illustrious rank, who was to be nobly covered with Olympic dust, and to bring back laurel crowns for his victories in song and pantomime, could not undertake such an expedition without the greatest pomp. Preparations were accordingly made. The emperor seemed to be going to an important war. Tigellinus put himself at the head of the companions of the Augustan order, in number not less than five thousand. To these were added an incredible multitude of abandoned women, and the most debauched young men of the time. The whole train went forth, not in warlike array, with swords, and pikes, and javelins, but with softer instruments; with the sock and buskin; with music, lutes and guitars. The retinue was suited to the dignity of the enterprise. An idea of the splendor and magnificence displayed on this occasion may be easily formed, when we are told that Nero never travelled with less than a thousand baggage-waggons; the mules all shod with silver, and the drivers dressed in scarlet; his African slaves adorned with bracelets on their arms, and the horses decorated with the richest trappings.

VII. The consuls for this year were Fonteius Capito

and Julius Rufus; but their authority was superseded by Helius, the freedman,¹ who exercised all the powers of the imperial prerogative. This man broke loose at once, and was soon felt as a public calamity. Pride and insolence, avarice and cruelty, the never-failing vices of those detestable miscreants, who from the dregs of the people rise above their fellow-citizens, marked the conduct of this favorite freedman, and debased the people who submitted to so vile a master. All degrees and ranks of men, the senate, and the Roman knights, groaned under the iron rod of an ignoble tyrant, who confiscated their estates, sent them into banishment, or took away their lives, at his will and pleasure. The people, who shuddered at the presence of the emperor, were obliged in misery of heart to lament his absence.

Nero, in the mean time, arrived at Cassiopœa in the isle of Corcyra, and there, in the temple of Jupiter Cassius, he tuned his harp, and sung in the presence of the people. From that place he set sail for Greece. Being safely landed, his first care was, like a great officer, before he marched farther into the country, to settle the plan of his operations, in order not only to gain, but to secure his victory. With this view, he issued his public orders, requiring that all the games which were celebrated throughout Greece at stated periods, and in different years, should be performed at their respective places during his stay in the country; and not only so, but that each city

1 Helius, the freedman, is mentioned by Dio Cassius in the character of a prime minister during Nero's absence from Rome. Corneille has described a slave rising to preferment with the sententious brevity of Tacitus:

Jamais un affranchi n'est qu'un esclave infame;
 Bien qu'il change d'état, il ne change point d'âme.

CINNA, act iv. s. 6.



should wait for his arrival. Nor was this all: the fame of such as had proved victorious, and were then no more, was to be obliterated from the memory of man, that all preceding merit might be eclipsed by the lustre of a new performer. The statues of the deceased were all demolished. The living artists were treated with less rigor; they were required to enter the lists with their imperial rival, and on that condition their statues were exempted from the general destruction. Nero's love of fame was not a generous emulation; it was an impatience of a rival, that turned to envy, rancor and malice. To be pronounced the first musician, and the best tragedian, was not enough for his vast ambition; he was likewise to be the most skilful driver of a curricule. With that bright object in view, he had for some years before meditated an expedition into Greece; and finding that the Olympic games were, in their regular course, to be celebrated in the summer, in the year of Rome eight hundred and sixteen, he even then had the precaution, by a positive command, to defer the exhibition of that great national spectacle till his arrival in Greece. The law, or which was equivalent, his will and pleasure, being announced, the people prepared for his reception. He began his tour through the country: he visited the several cities, and gave himself a spectacle on the public stage. Greece had been reduced to subjection by Flaminius, Mummius, Agrippa, and Augustus Cæsar; and now in her turn she triumphed over the conqueror. She saw the emperor of Rome running from place to place in the character of a strolling player, a travelling musician, and a famous coachman. He did not, however, depend altogether on his merit, but practised the underhand arts by which success is often insured. He hired a nu-

merous party to applaud, and distributed bribes among the judges who were to decide. Wherever he performed, a legion of Roman knights was stationed in the theatre, by their own example to excite and animate the admiration of the multitude, and teach the Greeks what was excellent in the arts which they themselves had invented, and carried to perfection. By these and such like preconcerted measures Nero secured his triumph in all quarters. Competition was invited, and at the same time intimidated. In one of the cities a man well skilled in music, but a bad politician, experienced the danger of contending with a powerful rival. Zealous for the honor of his art, and proud of his own talent, he persisted to dispute the prize, till the lictors drove him to the wall, and there despatched him in the sight of the audience. Vespasian had found it necessary to pass from Syria into Greece, in order to appear among the band of courtiers, and pay his homage to the emperor. But unfortunately he either had no ear for music, or he did not reckon it among the accomplishments of a prince. He heard that divine voice in a sullen mood, or, as happened to him at Rome on a former occasion, he fell asleep. For this offence he was ordered to appear no more in the presence of the emperor. He retired to a small village, and there, in an obscure lurking-place, hoped to find a shelter from resentment. He remained for some time in that state of anxious suspense, when the Fates called him forth to scenes of future glory. The Jews were in the field with a powerful army: they had defeated Cestius Gallus with great slaughter, and taken an eagle from one of the legions. The crisis was big with danger, and called for vigorous measures. But Nero did not think that Judea was the field of glory. He gave the command to Vespasian, apprehending no

danger from a man of obscure descent and austere manners, whom he was no longer willing to retain near his person. Vespasian departed to take on him the command in Syria, and Nero continued his progress through Greece. He was received every where with public demonstrations of respect; but the people could scarcely refrain from laughter when they heard the sound of a voice neither loud nor clear, and saw the singer rising on his toes, in a vain endeavor to expand the notes, and straining his organs till a face, naturally red, was so inflamed as to vie with the deepest scarlet. Not content with the fame of an enchanting singer, he resolved to prove himself a great tragedian. The parts in which he chose to distinguish himself,¹ were Hercules Furens; Œdipus, who murdered his father, and tore out his own eyes: Orestes poniarding his mother; and sometimes a ravished Sabine, or a matron in labor, on the point of being delivered. When he arrived at Olympia, he found that the celebrated games of that place consisted altogether of chariot races and athletic exercises, and by consequence that no theatre had been erected. Was his darling music to be excluded? Rather than suffer such an indignity he ordered preparations to be made for interludes and other dramatic performances. Not content with being blinded on the stage; with raving like a madman, and being brought to bed like a woman, he was still to figure on the race-ground, and astonish the multitude with his dexterity in whirling round the course. Determined to perform wonders, and surpass all ancient fame, he mounted a car drawn

¹ Dio Cassius tells us that when Nero performed the part of Canace one of the spectators asked, 'What is he doing now?' A man answered, 'He is in labor.' For a list of the characters acted by Nero, see Suet. in Nero, § 21.

by six horses; but had the misfortune, in the heat of his career, to be thrown from his seat. He mounted again; but either hurt by his fall, or not able to bear the velocity of the motion, he was obliged to descend before he reached the goal. He was, notwithstanding, declared conqueror. He contended afterwards for the prizes at the Pythian, the Nemean, and all the other games of Greece, with equal success at every place. He was proclaimed victor in all the trials of skill, and gained no less than eighteen hundred different crowns. The honor so obtained was always understood to reflect a lustre on the conqueror's native country. With a view to that custom, the form of the proclamation in favor of Nero was as follows: 'Nero Cæsar is victor in the combat (naming it), and has won the crown for the Roman people, and the universe, of which he is master.' Care was taken to transmit to Rome a regular account of all his victories. Such a career of rapid success made the people stand at gaze. The senate passed a vote of thanks to the gods for such signal events, and by their decrees so loaded the calendar, that the year could scarce find room for so many rejoicing days.

VIII. Nero now conceived that he had triumphed over the arts, and, in the pride of his heart, resolved to make a progress through the conquered country. He took care, however, not to visit Athens or Lacedæmon. In the former, he dreaded to approach the temple of the Eumenidæ. A mind lashed and goaded by the whips and stings of a guilty conscience wished to avoid those avenging deities.¹ He was deterred

¹ Suetonius says Nero, after the murder of his mother, was not able to bear the reproaches of his own conscience, though he had received the congratulatory addresses of the army, the senate, and the people; he frequently confessed

from Lacedæmon by the form of government, and the sanctity of the laws established by Lycurgus. The place where the Eleusinian mysteries¹ were celebrated was also forbidden ground. Murderers and parricides were excluded from those religious ceremonies. Nero was seized with a fit of remorse. Busy reflection brought to light the iniquities of his conduct: in the agitation of his spirits, he reviewed those deeds of horror, which forbore to goad him while his mind was becalmed by vanity and pleasure. Conscience may grant a truce to the guilty, but never makes a lasting peace. Distracted by his fears, and sunk in the gloom of superstition,² he resolved to consult the oracle at Delphi. The Pythian priestess warned him to beware of seventy-three years. He received the admonition as a certain promise of long life, not then thinking of Galba, who had reached his seventy-third year, and in a short time after succeeded to the imperial dignity. The oracle pleased him at first by agreeable bodings, but did not continue long in his good graces. The parricide, he was told, which he had committed, placed him in the same rank with Alcmeon and Orestes, who had murdered their mothers. Nero kindled with indignation. He resolved that the god should feel his resentment, and, in his fury, disfranchised the territory of Cirrha,³ which had

that he was haunted by his mother's ghost following him with the whips and burning torches of the Furies.

1 When Nero made the tour of Greece he did not dare to attend the Eleusinian mysteries, having heard the crier warning all impious and nefarious villains not to approach the place; Suet. in Nero, § 34.

2 Suetonius says he attempted to call up his mother's ghost, in order to appease and mollify her wrath; in Nero, § 34.

3 The territory of Cirrha was for many years annexed to the temple of Delphi.

been appropriated to the temple, and was held to be consecrated ground. Nor did his frenzy end here. The oracle was to be silenced ; or so profaned as to lose its credit. With this intent he ordered a number of men to be massacred on the spot ; and having poured libations of their blood into the opening of the ground, from which the exhalations issued that were supposed to inspire the priestess with enthusiastic fury, he closed the orifice, and with pride and insolence left a place which had been revered for ages. After this exploit he returned to his former luxury, and in the gratifications of vice hoped to find some respite from his anxious thoughts. But even vice required variety. Repetition might pall the sated appetite, and if he did not show an inventive genius, the flattery of the Greeks was in danger of being exhausted. He had made himself at Rome the wife of Pythagoras ; but that was become an obsolete story, and no longer excited wonder. He was determined therefore to resume his sex, and marry Sporus the eunuch. The ceremony was performed ¹ with great pomp and splendor. Calvia Crispinilla was appointed mistress of the wardrobe to the emperor's wife. She adorned the bride with all the decorations of female elegance ; and Tigellinus, amidst the applause of the astonished Greeks, who, with arch sneers of ridicule, had still the address to pay their adulation, gave away Sporus in marriage to the emperor of Rome. It was said on the occasion that it would have been well for mankind if Nero's father had been married to such a wife.

IX. Nero could not, in this unbounded manner,

¹ Chrysostomus says, Oration xxi., Nero offered a great reward to the person who should change Sporus into a woman ; and there were not wanting empirics who promised to accomplish that metamorphosis !

riot in vice and folly without vast expense, and a prodigious waste of the public treasure. To supply his prodigality, Helius the freedman, who conducted the administration at Rome, labored hard, by every iniquitous measure, by extortion, and cruelty, to raise enormous sums of money. A tame and complying senate was easily induced by the arts of the prime minister to vote an immense annual sum to be remitted to the emperor during his absence from the capital. The rapacity of Helius was not to be appeased. The companions of the Augustan society had bound themselves by a vow to erect a statue to Nero, not less than a thousand pounds weight. By that voluntary obligation they were said to have incurred a debt, and were compelled to advance an equivalent sum of money. No rank or station was safe from plunder and oppression. Roman knights and senators fell a sacrifice, and their estates were confiscated. Sulpicius Camerinus, a man descended from an illustrious family, was put to death for an extraordinary reason. The surname of Pythicus had been for ages annexed to his ancestors, and was consequently an hereditary honor. By the fertile invention of Helius this was construed into a crime. The name might imply a victor in the Pythian games; and when Nero, with the consenting voice of Greece, was declared universal conqueror, to usurp that title was a crime of violated majesty, and an impious sacrilege. Sulpicius and his son were put to death, and their effects were forfeited to the state. Wealth, in whatever rank, was sure to provoke the hand of rapacity, and Rome, under the government of a presuming and arrogant freedman, was a scene of plunder, blood, and cruelty. And yet all that could be amassed by those iniquitous means was not sufficient for the prodi-

gality of Nero. The Greeks had flattered his vanity, and, in return, were doomed to feel the hand of oppression. The cities which had revered him as a god had reason in the end to execrate him as a tyrant. They saw their best and most distinguished citizens put to death, or sent into banishment, that the emperor might enjoy the spoils of their plundered property.¹

X. The fame of a divine voice, and an exquisite hand on the guitar, was not sufficient for the ambition of Nero. He wished to distinguish himself by some unheard-of enterprise. The grand, the vast, and almost impossible, fired his imagination. He arrived at Corinth, and was there surprised to see by what a narrow isthmus the two seas were separated. Like the hero of Statius the poet, he heard the murmur of the billows, on the Ionian and the Ægean shores; ‘*in mediis audit duo littora campis.*’ The project of piercing through the land, and forming a navigable canal to communicate the two seas, and render it unnecessary for mariners to sail round the Peloponnesus, struck his fancy, and fired him with ideas of immortal fame.² The Greeks opposed the design, and endeavored to dissuade him from undertaking it. The language of superstition was, that to attempt to join what had been severed for ages, would be an impious violation of the laws of nature. Nero was not to be deterred from his purpose: religious principles were urged in vain: to conquer nature were an imperial work, and what the gods ordained might be new-modelled by his superior

1 Nero's dislike of every great man at Rome, joined to his rapacity, induced him, by means of his satellites, to kill, or force to despatch themselves, the richest and most illustrious of those who till then had escaped his cruelty; Crevier, iv. 311.

2 For this attempt to penetrate the isthmus of Corinth, see Suet. in Nero, § 19; and Dio, lxxiii.

judgment. He knew, besides, that the attempt had been made by Demetrius Polycrates, an eastern king, by Julius Cæsar and Caligula; and to accomplish an arduous work, which those three princes had undertaken without effect, appeared to him the height of human glory. He resolved therefore to begin the work without delay. Having harangued the pretorian soldiers and urged every topic that could inflame their ardor, he provided himself with a golden pick-axe (for such hands were not to be sullied by baser metal), and, advancing on the shore, sung in melodious strains a hymn of Neptune, Amphitrite, and all the inferior gods and goddesses, who allay or heave the waters of the deep. After this ceremony he struck the first stroke into the ground, and with a basket of sand on his shoulder marched away in triumph, proud of his Herculean labor. The natives of the country saw the frantic enterprise with mixed emotions of fear, astonishment, and religious horror. They observed to Nero, that of the three princes, who had conceived the same design, not one died a natural death. They told him farther, that in some places as soon as the axe pierced the ground a stream of blood gushed from the wound; hollow groans were heard from subterraneous caverns; and various spectres, emitting a feeble murmur, were seen to glide along the coast. These remonstrances made no impression. Nero ordered his soldiers to exert their utmost vigor: money was levied in every quarter: cruelty and extortion went hand-in-hand. In order to procure a sufficient number of workmen, the jails in all parts of the empire were ransacked, and the armies in Syria and Palestine had it in command to send to Corinth all the prisoners taken in battle.

The conduct of the war against the Jewish nation

had been, as mentioned above, committed to Vespasian, who had already carried his victorious arms through the province of Galilee. The enemy, as soon as they had intelligence that he was advancing at the head of a powerful army, endeavored to surprise a Roman garrison in the city of Ascalon, but were repulsed with prodigious slaughter. Not less than eighteen thousand were put to the sword by the legions, who had orders to give no quarter. Vespasian found it necessary, against a fierce and obstinate race, at that time for their manifold crimes devoted to destruction, to forget the maxims of Roman clemency. It is certain that those merciful conquerors never spilled so much hostile blood in any of their wars from the first foundation of Rome. The city of Gadara was taken by storm, and reduced to ashes. The garrison and the whole body of the inhabitants perished in the flames. In the mean time Trajan, whose son was afterwards emperor of Rome, was sent at the head of the tenth legion to spread terror and destruction through the country. He laid siege to the city of Japha, and meeting with an obstinate resistance, carried the works by assault. All who were capable of bearing arms, in number not less than fifteen thousand, were put to the sword. The Samaritans, who had collected their forces on Mount Garizim, were treated with the same severity. Cerealis, who afterwards commanded against Civilis, the Batavian chieftain, and also in Britain, had orders to march with three thousand foot and six hundred horse to attack the fastnesses on the hills, and dislodge the enemy. He formed lines of circumvallation round the hill, and by a close blockade cut off all communication with the adjacent country. The Samaritans were reduced by famine to the last distress; yet even in that condition held out to the last with

determined obstinacy. Cerealis ordered his men to advance up the hill. The soldiers forced their way up the steep ascent, and with resistless valor soon gained the summit. A dreadful carnage followed. Twelve thousand of the Samaritans perished on the spot. The city of Gamala was taken by assault, and the garrison, with all the inhabitants, put to the sword.

Vespasian, during these operations, carried on the siege of Jotapata, the strongest place in Galilee. Josephus, the historian, had been appointed governor of the province, and he now commanded the garrison, determined to make a vigorous defence, and hold out to the last extremity. The particulars of the siege are related by himself, and therefore need not to be here repeated. It will be sufficient to say that he discharged all the duties of an able officer, by his own example, no less than by his spirited exhortations, animating the soldiers, and in every part of the works exciting them to deeds of valor. The siege lasted seven-and-forty days. In one of the approaches to the walls Vespasian was wounded by a lance aimed at him from the works; but he bore the pain with such silent fortitude, that no ill consequence followed. On the forty-seventh day of the siege, the inhabitants still refusing to capitulate, the signal was given for a general assault. Titus, at the head of a chosen band, scaled the walls, and was the first that entered the town. In that dreadful crisis it does not appear that Josephus either faced the danger, or discharged the functions of a general officer. Except the women and children, and about twelve hundred prisoners, all who were found in the town died in one general carnage. Josephus was afterwards found concealed in a cave. Vespasian spared his life, and the historian survived to write an account of the siege, intermixed indeed with some romantic circum-

stances, but containing various matter for the information of posterity. The city of Tarichæa, which had been the receptacle of a turbulent and seditious rabble from all sides of the country, was compelled, after an obstinate resistance, to open her gates to Titus. Vespasian ordered twelve hundred of the most fierce incendiaries to be put to death, as a public example, and, in compliance with Nero's letters, sent six thousand prisoners¹ to work at the isthmus of Corinth.

XI. While Vespasian pursued his conquests, and in one campaign overran the province of Galilee, Rome was a scene of tumult and distraction. Helius reigned like a second emperor: the people called him the worst of the two. Each day produced new proofs of avarice, cruelty, and all the vices of an upstart slave. The senators began to awake from their lethargy: the clamors of the populace were loud and fierce; rage and indignation glowed in every breast; and the flame was ready to mount into a blaze. The freedman saw his danger. He despatched letters to inform the emperor that the urgency of his affairs required his presence at Rome. But Nero's vast designs were of too much importance. His answer to his favorite was: 'You advise me to return to Rome; but whatever your reasons are, you ought rather to recommend a longer absence; that I may finish my grand undertaking, and then revisit the capital, crowned with immortal glory.' He saw the number of laborers sent by Vespasian, and in consideration of that timely succor, forgave the merit of that victorious general. Corbulo had not the good fortune to be remembered with equal moderation. Tiridates had mentioned him with the praise due to his

¹ Josephus says Vespasian supplied Nero with six thousand Jews, all strong young men, chosen out of a vast number of prisoners.

virtue and his fame in arms. That commendation was sufficient to provoke the ingratitude of a tyrant who beheld distinguished talents with a jealous eye, and suffered no man to be great and virtuous with impunity. Being at length determined to execute the bloody purpose which he had for some time harbored in secret, he wrote to Corbulo in terms of great esteem and kindness, calling him his friend and benefactor, and expressing his ardent wish to have an interview with a general who had rendered such signal services to the empire. Having sent that insidious invitation, he held a private correspondence with Arrius Varus, who served in Asia; a young man of a daring spirit, in haste to rise by his crimes. To fabricate a charge against his commanding officer he knew would be the way to ingratiate himself with Nero. He sent a formal accusation, loaded with every crime that calumny could suggest. Corbulo fell into the snare. A mind like his, impregnated with honor and heroic fortitude, could admit no suspicion of intended treachery. He embarked without any retinue, and landed at Cenchreæ, a Corinthian harbor in the Ægean sea. Nero was there at the time, dressed in his pantomime garb, and ready to mount the stage, when the arrival of his general officer was announced. He felt the indecency of giving an audience in his comedian's dress to a man whom he respected while he hated him. To free himself from all embarrassment, he took the shortest way, and sent a death warrant. Corbulo saw too late that honesty is too often the dupe of an ignoble mind. He scorned to expostulate. 'I have deserved this,' he said, and fell on his sword.¹

¹ The tame submission with which so many brave and eminent men received orders to die fills the mind with astonishment and indignation.

The blood of one great man could not appease the cruelty of Nero. Whoever was eminent for talents, riches, or nobility of birth, was considered as a state criminal. In that number were the two Scribonii, Rufus and Proculus, who had lived in perfect harmony, with mutual esteem and true brotherly affection. Their fortunes were a joint stock. They assisted each other in the road to honors, and both together rose to stations of high authority; the one on the Upper the other on the Lower Rhine. While they discharged their respective duties with integrity and unwearied zeal for the public service, Pactius Africanus was their secret enemy. This man had the ear of Nero, and knew how to transfuse his own malignity into the heart of a prince too fatally prone to evil deeds. The virtues of the Scribonii were, by his artful misrepresentation, converted into crimes; the happy concord in which they lived was a conspiracy against the state; and their fame and credit in the German armies were the means of two ambitious politicians, not the end of their actions. By conciliating the good-will of the soldiers, they hoped to overturn the government. Nero took the alarm, and, under the specious pretence of doing honor to the two brothers, invited them to his court. They obeyed his orders. As soon as they arrived in Greece a new scene was opened. An audience was refused: they were forbid to appear in the emperor's presence; suborned accusations were presented in form; and the unhappy brothers found themselves in the sad condition of state criminals. They desired to be heard in their defence. That act of justice was denied. They knew that under a despotic prince the interval between the opening of an accusation and the catastrophe is always short. They resolved not to wait the tyrant's pleasure, but to deliver

themselves with Roman fortitude from an ignominious death. They opened their veins, and expired together.

The fate of Crassus, who derived an illustrious lineage from Pompey the Great, and Crassus the triumvir, may be mentioned in this place. Historians have not fixed the time of his death with precision; but it is certain that he fell a victim to the cruelty of Nero. Crassus, his father, with Scribonia, his mother, and a brother, who was named Cneius Pompeius Magnus, had been cut off by the emperor Claudius. But the family, in the opinion of Aquileius Regulus, had not shed blood enough. That pernicious informer knew that to be accused was to be condemned. He invented a charge of an atrocious nature, and Crassus shared the fate of his murdered family. He left two brothers; the eldest, Crassus Scribonianus; the youngest, the unfortunate Piso, at that time a banished man, but afterwards adopted by Galba, too soon to fall from that dangerous eminence.

During these bloody tragedies the great business of piercing the isthmus was not neglected. The work began at a place called Lechæum, a sea-port on the Ionian sea. It went on with the most strenuous exertion for a number of days. A trench was dug four stadia in length, which was computed to be a tenth part of the isthmus. But the flame of discord was lighted up at Rome. A storm was gathering in Gaul, and commotions shook every part of the empire. In that crisis, Helius thought fit to leave his associate Polycletus as his vicegerent at Rome, and he himself passed over into Greece. He met Nero at Corinth, and, by giving him, in striking colors, a dreadful picture of the state of affairs, enforced the necessity of returning to the capital. The grand enterprise was

abandoned, and the Ionian and Ægean seas were left to flow in the direction which nature had appointed. But still there was an object that attracted Nero's fond regard. The time of celebrating the Isthmian games was near at hand. His favorite passion hurried him to the place. The pugilist and the charioteer banished from his mind all fear of plots and insurrections. He thought of the crowns of victory which he had obtained in every quarter. His heart expanded with joy, with self-congratulation, and gratitude towards a people who had declared him matchless and unrivalled in all the games and exercises throughout the country. It behoved so great a conqueror to leave a lasting monument of munificence and imperial grandeur. Elate with pride, and touched with generous sentiments, he resolved to give Greece her liberty. With that design he repaired to the forum. Nor did he suffer his gracious intention to be uttered by the public crier. Such a gift required the accents of his own heavenly voice. He ascended the tribunal of harangues, and, having declared Greece a free country, set sail for Italy.

XII. The consuls next in office were Galerius Trachalus and Silius Italicus. They were both men of genius; both addicted to study, and distinguished by their extensive literature. Trachalus¹ was an orator in great celebrity, always copious, and often sublime. Silius Italicus² had also distinguished himself at the

¹ Trachalus was an orator of eminence, commended by Quintilian.

² In the list of Roman poets, whom Quintilian has criticised, no mention is made of Silius Italicus. It is therefore probable that his work had not appeared when Quintilian published his Institutes in the reign of Domitian. Silius (like Lucan before him) undertook to make a great historical event the subject of an epic poem; but departing from the precedent left by Lucan, he has interwoven with the truth

bar, but not with unblemished reputation. He knew that, under Nero, to be the accuser of innocence was the road to preferment; but he returned to the paths of virtue, and by his poetry, which he published afterwards, transmitted his name to posterity. During his consulship Nero returned from Greece, to close the scene of vice and folly. After a tempestuous voyage he arrived at Naples, where the first displays of his genius had been seen in their dawn. His fame was now in its meridian lustre. The conqueror in the Olympic, the Pythian, and the Isthmian games, was to enter the city in triumph; and for this purpose the

too much of fable, and what the critics call machinery. The poem however has many beautiful passages. The author raised a considerable fortune, and was possessed of two villas: one that had been the property of Cicero, and the other of Virgil. He lived to the age of seventy-five, and then put an end to his days by abstinence; being instructed in the stoic school, and by the practice of the age, that suicide was not against the law of nature. Seneca, the admired philosopher, has, among many others, the following maxim: 'Live so as to welcome death; and even, if you think fit, to seek it. Whether it comes to you, or you go to it, is immaterial.' It was not understood by Seneca, nor was the light of nature strong enough to inform the stoic school that the life into which we are called ought to be preserved during the pleasure of the Supreme Being that gave it. Pliny the consul gives an account of the death of Silius Italicus. Towards the end of a long life he had contracted an incurable disease, and therefore resolved to close the scene. He had practised at the bar in the beginning of life, and in Nero's time incurred the disgrace of being a voluntary accuser. But he afterwards, in a more retired life, retrieved his reputation. He was a poet, but he wrote with more care than genius. He possessed a number of villas, and had a large collection of books, statues, and pictures. He celebrated Virgil's birthday, and visited his tomb near Naples, as if it were a temple. It was his glory that Nero perished in his consulship, and by that event the world was delivered from a monster; Pliny, iii. 7. Martial has left several epigrams in praise of Silius Italicus, whom as it seems he esteemed and loved.

usual avenues were not sufficient. The occasion required something new and extraordinary. The custom in Greece was to throw down part of the city wall, that the conqueror in the sacred games might enter through the breach. Nero ordered an opening to be made for himself, and entered the city in a triumphal car, drawn by six milk-white horses. The splendor of the day exceeded the triumph of Flaminius or Mummius. They had obtained victories and subdued a nation; but what Roman triumphed over the arts of Greece? Who before Nero was declared the best charioteer, and the finest player on the guitar? From Naples he went to Antium, his native city, and there displayed the same pomp and ceremony. But Rome was the place where his pride was to appear in all its grandeur. A long procession led the way. His crowns of victory in the various games glittered to the eye, and inscriptions, in glaring letters, blazoned forth the fame of Nero, the first Roman who gained the prize of theatrical talents. Festive songs and thanksgiving hymns were sung, not to Jupiter, the guardian god of Rome, but to Apollo, the deity of singers and harpers. The triumphal car in which Augustus had been seen was brought forth on the occasion. That emperor, after all his victories, entered the city in triumph. Nero sat in the same carriage, a coachman and a player. Augustus was attended by Agrippa; Nero had by his side Diodorus, the musician. The streets resounded with acclamations: 'Io! victory! victory in the Olympic, the Pythian, and the Isthmian games! Io! the conqueror of Greece! Happy the people who heard that melodious voice!' Victims were slain, incense rose to heaven, and flowers covered all the way.

Nero returned to his palace. Pomp and splendor were at an end; the scenes of vanity passed away, and he was left at leisure to think and to be wretched.

Helius had told him that the conjuncture was big with danger. Plots, insurrections, and conspiracies, filled his mind with dreadful apprehensions. A conspiracy, beyond all question, was actually formed, and ready to break out, had it not been discovered by a trifling accident. It happened that one of the conspirators, towards the close of day passed by the theatre. He saw in one of the porticos a man loaded with fetters, and in bitterness of heart bewailing his unhappy lot. On inquiry it was found that he was to be led into the presence of Nero, which he considered as sure destruction. The conspirator was touched with compassion. He drew nearer to the prisoner, and, to assuage his fears, whispered in his ear, 'Have a good heart; live till to-morrow, and you will have reason to thank me as your deliverer.' These were words of comfort to a wretch who expected instant death. His hopes revived: such welcome tidings filled him with delight and wonder; but wonder was the strongest emotion. The novelty of an incident so unexpected fixed his attention. By what means was he to be delivered from impending ruin? Nothing but a dark conspiracy could bring about such an event. He resolved to reveal all he knew. The merit of a discovery, made in time, would not only secure his life, but lead on to fortune. He desired to be conducted to the prince. The conspirator was immediately seized and put to the torture. His courage was for some time undaunted, unsubdued. He denied the whole of the charge. But protracted misery was too much to bear. His resolution failed. The names of his accomplices were extorted by the violence of pain, and all were condemned to suffer. A scene of blood was laid, and Nero's superstition ascribed the discovery of the plot to the miraculous interposition of the gods.

Having conquered his enemies, and secured the fu-

ture tranquillity of his reign, he thought it time to give a loose to his libidinous passions, and pursue his theatrical amusements. For this purpose he removed to Naples, the place of perfect security, and the seat of pleasure. His halcyon days were soon interrupted. A storm had been for some time gathering in Gaul, and threatened at length to shake the empire to its foundation. There was in that part of the empire a native of the country, descended from the kings of Aquitain, by name Julius Vindex. His father had been raised by Claudius to the dignity of a senator, and the son was made governor of a province, with the rank and powers of a Roman propretor. This man, without an army under his command, and without any resources, except what he found in his own personal courage, and the generous ardor of an independent spirit, undertook to free the world from bondage. He knew that an enterprise so bold and daring required the co-operation of the provinces of Gaul and the Roman legions. With that view he sent dispatches to Galba,¹ at that time governor of the nethermost Spain, and made him a tender of the imperial dignity. Galba deduced his pedigree from the ancient family of the Sulpicii: his mother, by her paternal line, was descended from Mummius, the conqueror of Corinth; and by her mother's side, from Quintus Catulus, the pride and ornament of the old republic. He was consul under Tiberius, in the year of Rome seven hundred and eighty. He commanded in Germany in the reign of Caligula; and afterwards, under Claudius, was proconsul of Africa. His illustrious birth, his military

1 The Hither Spain was called *Hispania Tarraconensis*. In that province Galba received letters from Vindex, requesting him to put himself at the head of mankind, the assertor of public liberty; Suet. in Galba, § 9.

fame, and high credit with the legions in every army, pointed him out as the proper person to depose a prince whose cruelty made him detestable, and whose folly rendered even tyranny itself ridiculous. Galba received the dispatches sent by Vindex with the frigid caution of a man far advanced in life. He was more than seventy years old, and that age is not the season of ambition. To slide in quiet through the remainder of his days seemed to be all that he desired from fortune; but, under that outward calm, the sparks of a dying passion were rekindled. And yet the enterprise proposed to him was big with danger, and the issue doubtful. Prudence conspired with indolence, and he remained silent and inactive. The governors of all the other provinces had been, in like manner, solicited to enter into the Gallic league: they hated Nero; but instead of declaring open hostility, they thought it more advisable to provide for their own safety, by sending to Rome the letters which they had received from Vindex. Galba suppressed his in silence. Nero received the news with joy and exultation. His finances, he said, were well-nigh exhausted, and the forfeited estates of the insurgents would be ways and means by which he intended to fill his treasury. He considered Galba's silence as a proof of guilt. Without farther inquiry he confiscated all his property at Rome, and despatched assassins, with orders to put him to death.

Vindex, in the mean time, exerted himself with unremitting vigor to rouse the people of Gaul. He went to the various cities, and lighted up the flame of war in every quarter. He called a public convention of the states, and harangued the assembly, in substance as follows: 'We live,' he said, 'not under laws, and civil government, but under the will of a single tyrant,

Vice and cruelty lord it over mankind. The provinces groan under the yoke of oppression: our houses are pillaged; our wives and daughters are violated, and our relations basely murdered. Of all our misery Nero is the author. What crime so great that he has not dared to perpetrate? His mother died by his murderous hand. That horrible parricide makes the heart recoil; but Agrippina deserved her fate. She brought a monster into the world. At length the measure of his guilt is full. The east is up in arms; Britain in commotion; and the legions in Spain and Germany are on the eve of a revolt; and shall the nations of Gaul stand lingering in suspense? What consideration is there to restrain your ardor? Shall the titles of Cæsar, of Augustus, of Prince, and Imperator, throw a false lustre round a man who has disgraced his rank, and made majesty ridiculous? These eyes, my friends, these eyes have seen him a fiddler, a mountebank, and a pantomime actor. Instead of his imperial titles, call him Thyestes, Œdipus, Alcmeon, and Orestes. Those names are suited to his crimes. How long are we to submit to such a master? Our forefathers took the city of Rome by storm; and what was their motive? In those days the love of plunder was sufficient to provoke a war. We have a nobler cause; the cause of public liberty. It is that, my friends, it is that glorious cause that now invites us. Let us obey the call, and draw the avenging sword. The nations round us, fired with indignation, are ready to assert their rights. Let them not be the first to prove themselves men. The enterprise has in it all that is dear to man, all that is great in human nature; and shall we not be the first to seize the glorious opportunity? Let us go forth at once, and be the deliverers of the world.'

This speech was received with shouts of applause. The deputies, inflamed with ardor in the cause of liberty, returned to their respective cities; a warlike spirit was kindled in the mass of the people; a league was formed, and the din of arms was heard in every part of the country. Galba was informed of all that passed. He also knew that he was proscribed by Nero, and that his effects were sold by public auction. The tide of affairs rushed on with a swell that overpowered a mind by nature indolent, and enfeebled by age. In the number of Galba's friends Titus Vinius was the only person that endeavored to rouse his drooping spirit. To hesitate in such a juncture appeared to him a privation of mind nothing short of madness. The only question, he said, was, which was most eligible, to act in conjunction with Vindex, or to wage war against him; against a man who wished to depose a tyrant, and call to the succession a prince who possessed the virtues of humanity? Galba saw the necessity of taking a decided part; but his natural irresolution was not easily conquered. He wished to sound the inclinations of the people, and for that purpose summoned a grand council to meet him at New Carthage, in order, as he pretended, to settle the manumission of slaves. His friends knew that greater matters were in agitation, and accordingly spread a general alarm. On the day appointed an incredible multitude assembled from all parts of the country. Galba ascended the tribunal, prepared by a well-imagined artifice to speak at once to the eye and the ear. The images of the most illustrious of both sexes who had fallen a sacrifice to Nero's cruelty were ranged in regular order round the council-chamber. The silent eloquence of that pathetic scene he knew would assist the orator, and inflame the passions of his audience.

He began his harangue without the usual approaches of a studied introduction. The business was of the first importance, and he rushed into it at once with warmth and vehemence. He painted forth the horrors of Nero's reign, the acts of oppression that laid waste the provinces, and the murders that thinned the noblest families. If proofs were necessary, he looked round the hall, 'and behold,' he said, 'behold there, in glaring colors, the evidence of the worst iniquity. Judge not of Nero by my words: view him with your own eyes. Those images inform against him. Lo! there the ghastly features of the murdered Cæsars! You see Nero's mother, brother, and sister! his wife, his aunt, his nearest relations! his wretched friends! all butchered, all destroyed, by the sword, by famine, by poison, by every villany! Direct your eyes to yonder wall: you there behold Burrhus, Lateranus, Vestinus, Cassius, and Lucius Vetus, with a long train of the first men in Rome! They suffered for their talents and their virtues. Nor is this all: think of your native genius: call to mind the men born in Spain who were the ornaments of Roman literature, and an honor to their country. There lies Seneca,¹ the enlightened philosopher: he bleeds in a bath, and with his last breath teaches the precepts of wisdom! Your great poet, Lucan, whose bosom glowed with the love of freedom, repeats his own immortal verses, and expires. His father, Annæus Mela, falls a victim because he was the brother of your great philosopher, and the father of such a son. Survey that group: you have there Pætus Thræsea, and Bareas Soranus, who were virtue itself. See that train of illustrious women:

¹ Seneca and his brother Annæus Mela were born at Corduba in Spain. Lucan the poet was a native of the same country.

Sextia, Pollutia, and Servilia, all led to execution. That boy is Rufinus Crispinus,¹ the son of Poppæa by her first husband; and notwithstanding his tender age and innocence, they dash him from a rock into the sea. Behold this youth,² whom I have brought before you from one of the Balearic islands, where he was condemned to live in exile. He is too young to know the nature of a crime or his own wretched lot. Not yet a citizen, and, behold! he is banished from his country. These are the exploits of Nero. Vindex has undertaken to be the deliverer of his country. For you, and all Spain, I am willing to brave every danger. My commission is from the senate and the Roman people. I disclaim the authority of Nero: to me he is no longer emperor. I know that by him I am adjudged to death; but, if you resolve to assert your rights, if you make a common cause with me in that glorious struggle, I am willing to close my days in your service.' This speech inflamed the multitude with uncommon ardor. The place resounded with acclamations, and Galba was saluted emperor of Rome. His modesty, or his prudence, made him decline that title. He desired to be called the general of the senate and the Roman people.

1 Rufinus Crispinus, the son of Poppæa by her first husband. He was used, among his playfellows, to act the part of a general, or an emperor, and for that boyish amusement was ordered to be drowned in the sea; Suet. in Nero, § 35.

2 Suetonius says Galba, holding a general convention at New Carthage in Spain, under pretence of presiding at the manumission of slaves, placed around the court the statues or images of several who had fallen victims to Nero's cruelty; and in the midst of his harangue presented to the assembly a noble youth, who had been banished to the next Balearic island (now Majorca), and was brought from his place of exile to be exhibited as an object of compassion; Suet. in Galba, § 10.

During these transactions Nero remained at Naples, still addicted to his favorite amusements; enchanting himself and the public with his harp, and chiefly intent on bringing to perfection an hydraulic organ¹ on a new construction, which he promised to produce on the stage. But that gay serenity was soon overcast. Advices arrived from Spain and Gaul. In the former, Galba had thrown off the mask; in the latter, Vindex was at the head of a powerful army. Nero shuddered at the news: indignation soon succeeded: he threatened to punish the rebels with death. His frivolous passions took their turn: he went to see the athletic exercises, and tuned his guitar. In that manner he passed eight or ten days: no orders given; no letter to the senate; not a word escaped from him: he smothered all in sullen silence. Fresh tidings arrived from Gaul: the proclamations which Vindex published in every quarter were delivered to him. He found himself called, in a style of contempt, *Ænobarbus*,² and a vile comedian. Enraged at the indignity offered to his talents, he started up in a sudden fury, overturned the banqueting-table, wrote to the senate to exert the strength of the empire, and, to fire them with indignation, added in pathetic terms, ‘Judge yourselves, conscript fathers, judge of the insolence of Vindex: in his own words see the malignity of that

1 Nero called a council of his favorites, and, after a short conference on the state of affairs, passed the rest of the day in showing some musical instruments which, on a new construction, were kept in play by the operation of water. He explained the principles of that ingenious piece of mechanism, declaring his resolution to exhibit it on the stage, if Vindex would give him leave.

2 Nero was the son of Domitius *Ænobarbus*. He thought it a disparagement to be called by his paternal name; but nothing enraged him so much as to find himself railed at as a comedian and harper.

audacious rebel. He has dared impiously to say that I have a bad voice, and play ill on the guitar.' A complaint of that importance could not fail to make an impression on the fathers. They passed a decree, declaring Galba a public enemy, and promising a reward of ten millions of sesterces for the head of Vindex. The Gaul, with superior magnanimity, offered his own head to whoever should bring him that of Nero. If he freed the world from a monster he set no value on his own life: he then would die content.

Virginus Rufus, who at that time commanded on the Upper Rhine, had received orders to take the field against the rebels in Gaul. Whether that officer aspired to the imperial dignity seems to be a problem not solved by any of the historians. It is certain that the legions, seeing the miseries occasioned by Nero's tyranny, and at length disgusted by the contemptible frolics of an emperor, who rendered it ridiculous to obey him, made a tender of the empire to their own general, whom they respected for his military talents and the virtues of moderation. Virginus declined the offer. If he nourished ambition in his heart he thought it best to suppress it in that juncture, and wait for future events. It belonged, he said, to the senate, and the senate only, not to the legions, to dispose of the sovereignty. Whatever were his views he still retained a true Roman spirit, and with indignation saw a rebel chieftain and his conquered countrymen joined in a league to give an emperor to the mistress of the world. He resolved to collect his forces and march in quest of the enemy. Gaul was far from acting with a spirit of union. Internal dissensions divided the states into contending factions. The Sequani, the Ædui, and Arverni, followed the banners of Vindex. The Lingones and the people of Rheims, accustomed to sla-

very, and hating the opposite party, declared for Nero. The cities of Vienne and Lyons, which lay contiguous, renewed their ancient animosity: the former enlisting on the side of Vindex; the latter, with a pretended regard for their oath of fidelity, espousing the cause of Nero. In that disposition of the public mind Virginius entered Gaul at the head of his legions, with a strong reinforcement of Belgic auxiliaries, and the Batavian cohorts. He proceeded by rapid marches to Vesontium, a city in league with Vindex. The inhabitants refused to open their gates. Virginius pitched his camp, determined to lay siege to the place. Vindex advanced to the relief of his confederates. The two armies were in sight of each other. The Gallic chieftain, little doubting that the Roman general's opinion of Nero coincided with his own, thought it prudent before he tried the issue of a battle to negotiate by his deputies. He accordingly made his overtures. Various messengers passed between the two commanders, and an interview at last took place. The result was an agreement of some kind, but what were the terms it is fruitless now to inquire. History has left us in the dark. All that can be related with certainty is, that Virginius began to withdraw his forces, and Vindex with his army made his approach to the walls of the town. The legions saw the motions of the enemy, and, imagining that they meant to offer battle, resolved to begin the attack. The armies of the Upper and the Lower Rhine were not inured to discipline. Fierce, and disdaining all control, they wanted no orders from their general. A desperate engagement followed. The Gauls were unprepared, but their courage braved every danger. Both sides fought with impetuous fury; the Gauls resenting the treachery of their enemies, the Romans stimulated by their inve-

terate animosity. Blood and carnage covered all the plain. The legions cut their way with dreadful slaughter, till the Gauls, having lost no less than twenty thousand of their bravest troops, and seeing inevitable destruction on every side, betook themselves to flight. Vindex exerted himself in every quarter of the field to prevent the massacre: but his efforts were in vain. He saw the slaughter of his people, and concluded that Virginius had betrayed him and the cause of liberty. His enterprise defeated, and no hopes of conquest left, he resolved not to survive a calamity so unexpected. He fell on his sword, and died on the field of battle.

Meanwhile all Spain was in commotion. Galba was employed in schemes of future grandeur. He raised a new legion, mustered forces in all quarters, and with his utmost art and industry allured the different states to his interest. Cornelius Fuscus, a young man of illustrious birth, went over to Galba, and drew with him the province of which he was governor. But the great accession of strength was from Lusitania. Otho, who had been the favorite of Nero, and his constant companion in all his scenes of riot and debauchery, had been for some years at the head of that province. He was appointed to that station, as the reader may remember, under color of doing him honor, but in fact to remove a rival whom Nero dreaded, and to leave him at a distance from Rome in a state of honorable banishment. Otho considered himself as no better than a state prisoner in a remote part of the empire. Resentment prompted him to revenge; and ambition like his was eager to come forth from obscurity, and act a principal part on the great stage of public business. He melted down all his massy gold and silver; and having converted it into coin, went with his whole

treasure and the forces of his province to support the enterprise of an old man, who he knew, in the course of nature, could not long enjoy the supreme authority. The other governors and proprietors followed his example. The Roman empire seemed to be transferred to Spain. Nero was at last sensible of his danger. He ordered the legions in Illyricum to advance by rapid marches into Italy: he recalled the troops that had been sent against the Albanians to the borders of the Caspian sea; and he expected the fourteenth legion, then in Britain, to come without loss of time to his assistance. Distracted by the news that filled all Italy, he forgot his hydraulic organ, and returned to Rome covered with consternation. His fears were soon dispersed. Letters from Virginius Rufus arrived at Rome. The death of Vindex, and the total overthrow of his army, transported Nero beyond all bounds of joy. He called for his musical instruments: he tuned his harp, and warbled songs of triumph.

In Spain the minds of men were affected in a very different manner. Galba saw an unexpected reverse of fortune. He blamed his own imprudence, and accused the folly of an old man who, at the close of life, was weak enough to listen to the call of ambition. To try if possible to retrieve his affairs, he sent dispatches to Virginius Rufus, inviting him to a participation of counsels and of future grandeur. The offer was rejected. It was a maxim with Rufus that the senate and people had the sole right of creating an emperor. The civil power, he said, in every well-constituted government ought to be supreme: to obey is the virtue of a soldier. Galba had no resource left. Half his cavalry showed themselves alienated from his service, and were retained with difficulty. Dejected, hopeless, and expecting certain destruction from the

assassins employed by Nero, he retired to the city of Clunia, and there relapsed into his former indolence.

XIII. Nero was now at the summit of his wishes. He triumphed in the pride of his imagination over all his enemies. He had seen on his way from Naples a monumental sculpture, representing a Gaul overcome by a Roman soldier, and dragged along the ground by the hair of his head. The gods, he said, presented that object to him as an omen of victory, and their decree was happily fulfilled. Amidst all his frantic joy, his worst enemies were in his own breast. His vices were undermining him with the army as well as the people. He raised immoderate supplies of money, and squandered the whole with wild profusion. An occurrence happened by which the city was thrown into a violent ferment. A ship arrived from Alexandria, supposed to be loaded with corn, and therefore matter of joy to the populace, who dreaded a dearth of provisions. It may be easily imagined what a turn their passions took when it was known that the vessel brought a freight of sand from the banks of the Nile, to smooth the arena for wrestlers and gladiators. The disappointment excited at first a laugh of scorn and indignation; vulgar wit and scurrilous jests made Nero an object of contempt; and from contempt the transition to hatred, rage, and fury, is always sure, and often instantaneous. The public clamor was loud and violent: the people with one voice wished to be delivered from a monster: they lamented the loss of Vindex; and the pretorian guards, who had been the support of a pernicious reign, began to murmur discontent, and to show manifest symptoms of disaffection.

Nymphidius and Tigellinus, who had often figured

in scenes of public iniquity, were joint prefects of the pretorian camp. The former, as has been mentioned, was the son of a woman who prostituted herself to the slaves and freedmen of the emperor Claudius. Having recommended himself by his vices to the favor of Nero, he had the ambition to be thought the issue of an intrigue between his mother Nymphidia and Caligula. Nymphidius and his colleague Tigellinus acted in concert, and jointly exerted their pernicious talents. They saw the disposition of the soldiers, and with the ingratitude of men who had raised themselves by their crimes, thought the opportunity fair to strike a stroke of perfidy. They began by bribes to insinuate themselves into the affections of the pretorian guards, and when they had sufficiently prepared them for a revolt, whispered to the senate, that Nero was deserted on every side; that he had not a friend left; and that, by consequence, the whole legislative authority was in the hands of the fathers. That assembly remained for some time in suspense; timid, wavering, and irresolute. The conjuncture was dark and gloomy. Nero was alarmed: he paused from his pleasures, and saw that some deep design was in agitation. To prevent it by one bold effort, he formed a resolution to massacre the senate, and after setting fire to the city a second time, to let loose his whole collection of wild beasts, to devour the people in the general consternation, and save himself by flying into Egypt. This horrible scheme was no sooner conceived than brought to light by one of his favorite eunuchs. This miscreant had been for some time subservient to the vices of his master, and lived with him in the dearest intimacy. From a person so beloved nothing was concealed. He was the confidential friend of the emperor, not only in scenes of riot, but also in the

most important counsels. But the jealousy of an upstart, raised above his base condition, is easily alarmed. The favorite¹ thought himself slighted. His pride was roused, and, to revenge the injury, he discovered the particulars of the intended massacre.

A design so black and horrible raised the general indignation. The fathers trembled for themselves; but the habit of slavery had debased their faculties. They saw that no time was to be lost, and yet could not resolve to act with vigor. Nymphidius tried by every means to inspire them with zeal and courage. He had seduced the pretorian guards, and to secure their affections, promised in Galba's name, but without his authority, a reward of thirty thousand sesterces to each pretorian, and five thousand to each legionary soldier throughout the armies of the empire; a sum so prodigious, that, as Plutarch observes, it could not be raised without worse tyranny, and more violent rapine, than had been felt during the whole reign of Nero. The promise proved afterwards fatal to Galba, but served the purposes of a man who was bent on the ruin of Nero, and by raising the military above the civil authority, intended to introduce into the political system two pernicious maxims: the first, that emperors were to be created in the camp, not in the senate; and, secondly, that the imperial dignity was venal, to be for the future set up to sale, and disposed of by the soldiers to the highest bidder.

Having settled his measures, and laid the plan of a revolution, he did not as yet think it time to throw off the mask; but to complete his work, chose to proceed by fraud and dissimulation. He went with Tigellinus

¹ The wild and desperate projects conceived by Nero in his frantic moments, and brought to light by a favorite eunuch, are recorded by Suetonius, in Nero, § 43.

to the palace, and, with an air of deep affliction, informed Nero of his danger. 'All,' he said, 'is lost: the people, assembled in seditious tumults, call aloud for vengeance: the pretorian guards abandon your cause; and the senate is ready to pronounce a dreadful judgment. You have only one expedient left, and that is, to make your escape, and seek a retreat in Egypt.' In this manner the two men who had been raised from the dregs of the people left their benefactor. In all his scenes of vice and cruelty they had been his chief abettors, and they now abandoned him at his utmost need.

Nero saw the sad reverse of his affairs. From his armies he could expect no support. The troops on their march towards the Caspian sea had been recalled, but a long repose was necessary to revive the spirits of men well-nigh exhausted by incessant fatigue. The legions from Illyricum returned with alienated minds. Scorning to disguise their sentiments, they sent a deputation to Virginius on the Upper Rhine, expressing their ardent desire that he would yield to the request of the legions under his command, and accept the imperial dignity. Eight Batavian cohorts had shown a spirit of disaffection, and the pretorian guards were under the influence of Nymphidius. In this desperate situation Nero looked round for assistance; but he looked in vain. He wandered through the apartments of his palace, and all was solitude. He, who but a few days before was the god of the senate and the people, was now in dread of being their victim. Conscience began to exercise her rights. Her voice was heard. Nero reviewed his crimes, and shuddered with horror and remorse. He repeated in despair and anguish of heart a line which, when personating *Œdipus*, he had often declaimed on the

public stage: 'My wife, my father, and my mother, doom me dead.' Of all his courtier-fry, and all his instruments of guilt, not one adhered to him in the hour of distress; except Sporus the eunuch; Phaon, an enfranchised slave; and Epaphroditus, his secretary. He gave orders to the soldiers on duty to proceed with all expedition to Ostia, and prepare a ship, that he might embark for Egypt. The men were not willing to obey. One of them asked him in half a line from Virgil, 'Is it then so wretched a thing to die?' He went to the Servilian gardens, carrying with him a phial of swift-speeding poison, which had been prepared by the well-known Locusta:¹ but his resolution failed. He returned to his chamber, and threw himself on his bed. The agitations of his mind allowed no rest. He started up, and called for some friendly hand to end his wretched being. That office no one was willing to perform, and he himself wanted fortitude. Driven to the last despair, and frantic with remorse and fear, he cried out in doleful accents, 'My friends desert me, and I cannot find an enemy.' He rushed forth from his palace, as if with intent to throw himself into the Tiber. He changed his mind, and thought of flying into Spain, there to surrender at discretion to the mercy of Galba. But no ship was ready at Ostia. Various projects presented themselves to his mind in quick succession, increasing the tumult of his passions, and serving only to distract him more. To try his powers of eloquence was another expedient that occurred to him. For that pur-

¹ Locusta has been mentioned, *Annals*, xiii. 15. Suetonius says that Nero received a dose of poison from Locusta, which he carried with him into the Servilian gardens. Not having courage to use it, he endeavored to find Spicillus, the gladiator, or some person, to kill him.

pose he proposed to go forth in a mourning garb to the forum, and there, by a pathetic speech, obtain his pardon from the people. Should their obdurate hearts remain impenetrable to the soft influence of persuasive oratory, and refuse to reinstate their emperor in the full enjoyment of his prerogative, he had no doubt but he could, at the worst, wring from them the government of Egypt, where, in the character of prefect, he might give free scope to his inordinate passions. This project seemed to promise success; but a ray of reflection struck him with sudden horror. The populace, without waiting to hear the divine accents of that harmonious voice, might break out into open sedition, and in their fury tear their prince limb from limb. What course could he pursue? Where could he hide himself? He looked round in wild despair, and asked his remaining companions, 'Is there no lurking-place? no safe recess, where I may have time to consider what is to be done?' Phaon, his freedman, proposed to conduct him to an obscure villa, which he held in his possession, at the distance of about four miles from Rome.

Nero embraced the offer. There was no time to be lost. He went forth in all his wretchedness; without a shoe to his feet; nothing on him but his close tunic; no outside garment; and no imperial robe. In order to disguise himself, he snatched an old rusty cloak, and, throwing it over his shoulders, covered his head, and held a handkerchief before his face. In that condition he mounted his horse, submitting with a dastard spirit to an ignominious flight, without any attendants except Phaon the freedman; Epaphroditus, the secretary; and Sporus, the eunuch; with another, whose name Aurelius Victor says was Neophytus. In this manner Nero passed the last of his nights. At the

dawn of day the pretorian guards deserted their station at the palace, and joined their comrades in the camp, where, by the influence and direction of Nymphidius, Galba was proclaimed emperor. The senate met, and after a short debate confirmed the nomination of the pretorian guards. The time was at length arrived when that assembly could act with authority. They resolved to mark the day by a decree worthy of a Roman senate. With one voice they declared the tyrant who had trampled on all laws human and divine a public enemy,¹ and by their sentence condemned him to suffer death according to the rigor of ancient laws and the practice of the old republic.

1 See Suetonius in Nero, § 49: 'Hostem a senatu judicatum, et quæri ut puniatur more majorum.' It is impossible to read this passage without feeling a thousand mixed emotions. We acknowledge the justice of the sentence; we know that vengeance was due to the perpetrator of so many horrible crimes; and we rejoice to find that the senate could resume its long-forgotten dignity, and act even for a day with a becoming spirit. The interests of humanity required that the world should be delivered from such a monster.

The case is very different when Louis XVI. is cited to appear before a French Convention. We see the most benevolent of men tried by an assembly of assassins, plunderers, levellers, and atheists; by the scum and dregs of France, mixed with the refuse of other nations. When a good and virtuous, an upright and blameless monarch is sentenced, contrary to every principle of truth and justice, to suffer as a criminal; indignation is for the moment lost in astonishment at the daring guilt of men, who have emerged from obscurity to be the tyrants of their country; a Pandemonium of regicides! France was then left without church or king; without law or morals; without a constitution, and without humanity. The nations of Europe shudder with horror at the bloody tragedy that has been acted. The virtues which the murdered king displayed, with wonderful meekness, on the throne, in prison, and on the scaffold, are now known to the world. They will be transmitted to the latest posterity, and

Will plead, like angels trumpet-tongued, against
The deep damnation of his taking off.

XIV. Nero, in the mean time, made the best of his way towards the freedman's villa. He heard the pretorian camp ring with acclamations, and the name of Galba sounded in his ear. A man at work in a field adjoining to the road started up at the sound of horsemen pressing forward with expedition, and, 'Behold!' he said, 'those people are hot in pursuit of Nero.' Another asked, 'What do they say of Nero in the city?' As they drew near to Phaon's house Nero was alarmed by a sudden accident. His horse started at a dead carcass that lay on the side of the road; and the veil, in consequence of the violent motion, falling from his face, a veteran, who had been dismissed from the service, knew his master, and saluted him by his name. The fear of being detected made the fugitive prince and his followers push forward with their utmost speed. Being arrived at a small distance from the house, they did not think it safe to enter it in a public manner. Nero dismounted and crossed a field overgrown with reeds. Phaon advised him to lie concealed in a sand-pit till he prepared a subterraneous passage into the house. 'That,' said Nero, 'were to bury myself alive.' He scooped up some water out of a muddy ditch, and, having allayed his thirst, asked in a doleful tone, 'Is that the beverage to which Nero has been used?' An opening was made in the wall on one side of the mansion, and Nero crept through it. He was conducted to a chamber, where he saw nothing but wretchedness. In that mean room he threw himself on a meaner bed,¹ and asked for some nourish-

¹ He took some water out of a ditch and drank it, saying, 'Hæc est Neronis decocta.' Being taken into the house, creeping on his hands and knees through a hole that was made for him, he lay on a mean bed, with a tattered coverlet thrown over it, and being both hungry and thirsty, he refused

ment. They offered him bread ; but it was so black, that his stomach sickened at the sight. The water was foul ; but thirst obliged him to swallow the nauseous draught. His friends saw that no hope was left: they dreaded his impending ruin, and advised him to rescue himself by one manly deed from an ignominious death. Nero signified his assent ; but he studied delay, fond to linger still in life. Preparations for his funeral were necessary. He ordered a trench to be dug, suited to the dimensions of his body ; a quantity of wood to be collected for the funeral pile ; and pieces of marble to be brought to form a decent covering for his grave. He bewailed his unhappy lot: tears gushed at intervals: he heaved a piteous sigh, and said to his friends, ‘ What a musician the world will lose !’

During this scene of delay and cowardice a messenger, according to Phaon’s orders, arrived with papers from Rome. Nero seized the packet. He read with eagerness, and found himself not only declared a public enemy, but condemned to suffer death with the rigor of ancient usage. He asked, ‘ What kind of death is that ? and what is ancient usage ?’ He was told, that by the law of the old republic, every traitor, with his head fastened between two stakes, and his body intirely naked, suffered the pains of a slow death under the lictor’s rod. The fear of that ignominious punishment inspired Nero with a short-lived passion, which for the moment had the appearance of courage. He drew two daggers which he had brought with him, and, as if meditating some prodigious deed, tried the points of both ; then calmly replaced them in their scabbards, saying, ‘ The fatal moment is not yet
some coarse bread that was brought to him, but drank a little water.

come.' He turned to Sporus, and requested him to begin the funeral lamentation. 'Sing the melancholy dirge; and offer the last obsequies to your friend.' He cast his eyes around him: 'And why,' he said, 'why will not some one despatch himself, and teach me how to die?' He paused for a moment, and shed a flood of tears. He started up, and cried out, in a tone of wild despair, 'Nero, this is infamy; you linger in disgrace: this is no time for dejected passions; the moment calls for manly fortitude.'

Those words were no sooner uttered than he heard the sound of horses advancing with speed towards the house. This he signified by repeating a line from Homer. The fact was, the senate had given orders that he should be brought back to Rome to undergo the judgment which they had pronounced; and the officers charged with that commission were near at hand. Nero seized his dagger, and stabbed himself in the throat. The stroke was too feeble. Epaphroditus lent his assistance, and the next blow was a mortal wound. A centurion entered the room, and seeing Nero in a mangled condition, ran immediately to his assistance, pretending that he came with a friendly hand to bind the wound, and save the emperor's life. Nero had not breathed his last. He raised his languid eyes, and faintly said, 'You come too late: is this your fidelity?' He spoke and expired. The ferocity of his nature was still visible in his countenance. His eyes fixed and glaring, and every feature swelled with warring passions; he looked more stern, more grim and terrible than ever.

Nero died in the thirty-second year of his age, on the eleventh day of June, after a reign of thirteen years, seven months, and twenty-eight days. The news was received at Rome with all demonstrations of joy. The populace ran wild about the streets, with

the cap of liberty on their heads.¹ The forum sounded with acclamations. Icelus, a freedman, who managed Galba's affairs at Rome, had been thrown into prison by Nero ; but, on the sudden accession of his master, he was now become a man in power and high authority. He consented that Nero's body should be committed to the flames at the place where he died. The funeral rites were performed without delay and without pomp. His remains were conveyed to the monumental vault of the Domitian family, his paternal ancestors. The urn was carried by two female servants, and Acte, the famous concubine. The secrecy with which the obsequies were performed was the cause of some untoward consequences that afterwards disturbed the commonwealth. A doubt remained in the minds of many whether Nero had not made his escape into Asia or Egypt. The men who, under a corrupt and profligate reign, had led a life of pleasure, and were by consequence enamored of Nero's vices, paid every mark of respect to his memory, willing at the same time to believe that he still survived. They raised a tomb, and for several years dressed it with the flowers of spring and summer. The Parthians honored his memory ; and being afterwards deluded by an impostor who assumed the name of Nero, were ready, with the strength of their nation, to espouse his cause. The race of Cæsars ended with Nero : he was the last and perhaps the worst of that illustrious house.

XV. In that age, when the public mind was overcast with gloomy apprehensions and religious fear, superstition saw portents and prodigies in the most common accidents, and no great event was suffered to

¹ The public joy was so great that the people ran to and fro, with caps on their heads.

pass without a train of awful prognostics. Rivers were said to have changed their course, and to have flowed in a new direction to their fountain-head: a tree that had stood for ages, coeval with the foundation of Rome, fell suddenly to the ground: the laurel planted by Livia, which had spread with such prodigious increase, that in every triumph it supplied the Cæsars with their victorious wreaths, withered at the root: the temple of the Cæsars being struck with lightning, the heads of all the statues tumbled down at once; and the marble sceptre fell from the hands of Augustus. By these and such like denunciations the will of the gods was supposed to be revealed, and the populace with frantic joy hailed the auspicious era of returning liberty. But no public spirit remained; every virtue was extinguished. A people who had been taught to crouch under the yoke of bondage thought no more of a free constitution. With the usual inconstancy of a fickle multitude they relapsed into their habitual servitude, and in a strain of frantic rapture began to roar for a new master. The name of Galba echoed through the streets of Rome, and filled the pretorian camp with shouts of joy, and the warmest expressions of zeal and ardor for his service. The pretorian guards thought of nothing but the donative promised in his name; and Nymphidius, the author of that measure, had no doubt but the soldiers, in due time, would show themselves devoted to the man who filled their minds with the dazzling prospect of reward so truly great and magnificent. The liberality was his, and the difficulty of carrying it into execution would fall on Galba.

Icelus, the favorite freedman of Galba, made it his business to see Nero's dead body, and having enabled himself to be an eye-witness of the fact, set out for

Clunia in Spain, to inform his master that he was raised to the imperial seat by the voice of the pretorians and the concurrent decree of the senate. Nymphidius seized the opportunity to figure as the principal actor on the theatre of public business. He had accomplished a great and sudden revolution, and, being high in favor with the pretorian guards, found it easy to overawe the senate, and make that tame and pliant assembly bend to his will and pleasure. The consuls, without consulting the arrogant minister, sent their dispatches to Galba, with the decree by which he was declared emperor. This was considered by this new man as a mark of disrespect, and it was with difficulty that the magistrates appeased his indignation. Flushed with success, and proud of his exploits, he began to enlarge his views, and preposterously to form schemes of vast ambition. Under an emperor of the age of seventy-three, worn out with cares, and weary of public business, he flattered himself that he should be able, under the appearance of being the second in the state, to wrest into his own hands the supreme authority; and should Galba's infirmities sink under the fatigue of a long journey, he had the hardiness to aspire to the succession. Having conceived this mad project, he resolved to remove every obstacle, and with that view compelled Tigellinus to resign his commission of pretorian prefect. A colleague, acting with himself in joint authority, might retard the execution of his designs. Men of consular rank, who had commanded armies and governed provinces, did not blush to pay their court to him. The senate acted with the same servile adulation. They crowded to his levee, and suffered him to prescribe the form and substance of every decree that passed. The populace broke out with licentious

fury, and Nymphidius, effectually to seduce the vulgar mind, encouraged the madness of the times. The images and statues of Nero were dragged through the streets and dashed to pieces. A crew of vile incendiaries spread consternation through the city : a scene of blood and massacre followed, and the innocent fell in one promiscuous carnage with the guilty. Mauricus beheld the frenzy of the multitude with such inward horror, that he could not help saying in the senate, ‘ Let us take care that we have not reason to regret the loss of Nero.’

Nymphidius soon perceived that his hopes of being the only statesman in power, and of governing the Roman world in the emperor’s name, could not be entertained with any prospect of success. He knew by certain intelligence that Vinius, Laco, and Icelus, were the men¹ who stood highest in the esteem of Galba. The scheme of supplanting them was therefore abandoned : but it made way for a project of the most daring ambition. He was resolved to depose the emperor whom he himself had created, and by another revolution to seize the imperial dignity. To forward this design he sent dispatches to Galba, stating the danger of entering the city at a time when the whole empire was in convulsions. Rome, he said, was in a

¹ We read in Suetonius that Galba was governed by three favorites ; Titus Vinius, his lieutenant in Spain ; Cornelius Laco, who was advanced to the command of the pretorian guards ; and his freedman Icelus, who was dignified with the privilege of wearing a ring, and the name of Martianus. To these men Galba resigned himself with such implicit confidence, that his conduct was never consistent ; at one time frugal and rigorous ; at another remiss, complying, and more lavish than became a prince of his advanced age, who had been raised to the imperial dignity by the voice of the people ; Suet. in Galba, § 14. For more of the three favorites, see the History, i. 6. 13.

ferment: Clodius Macer excited a rebellion in Africa: the German armies were disaffected, and the legions in Syria and Judea prepared to dispute with the pretorian guards the right of creating an emperor. In the mean time a dark conspiracy was formed. Nymphidius planned his measures with dispatch and vigor, determined to seize the supreme power. He drew into his league a number of both sexes, all of great consideration and extensive influence. Claudius Celsus was his intimate friend: but he saw the folly of the enterprise, and with freedom and sincerity advised Nymphidius to desist from a wild attempt, in which he could not expect the support of the people or the senate. 'There is not,' he said, 'a single family in Rome willing to give the name of Cæsar to the son of Nymphidia.' That remonstrance had no effect on a mind inflamed with the fever of wild ambition. Nymphidius called a meeting of his party. All agreed that no time was to be lost. They resolved to strike the blow that very night, and to conduct Nymphidius to the pretorian camp, where they had no doubt but with one voice he would be declared emperor of Rome. On such an occasion it was necessary that the person raised to that elevation should be prepared to address the soldiers in a suitable style. Cingonius Varro, a corrupt and venal orator, composed a speech for that purpose, and the illiterate emperor was to grace himself with borrowed eloquence.

The design of the conspirators was not so well concealed, but it reached the ear of Antonius Honoratus, a tribune in the camp, who had acquired a great military character, and was besides respected for his unblemished honor and unshaken fidelity. Towards the close of day he called a meeting of the pretorians, and after laying open in detail all the circumstances of

the plot, delivered a speech in substance as follows :
‘ How long, my fellow-soldiers, shall our folly, our madness, or our evil genius, hurry us on from one treason to another? A few days only have elapsed since you deposed Nero. In that business you behaved like men who felt for the public good. You had every provocation, and the crimes of that flagitious tyrant justified the act. You are recent from that revolution, and wherefore do you want another? You declared for Galba, and why now abandon him? Why, with unheard-of treachery, betray the emperor whom you yourselves created? Has he been guilty of parricide? Has he murdered his mother and destroyed his wife? Has he exposed the imperial dignity to contempt and ridicule? Has he tuned his harp on the stage, or driven the curricule in the race? And yet, notwithstanding all the flagitious deeds of that hardened monster, in spite of all his vices, we supported him, blushing indeed for his follies, and smarting under his tyranny. We adhered to him with fidelity; and if in the end we thought fit to create another emperor, Nymphidius was the author of that measure. By his artifices we were taught to believe that Nero deserted us first, and fled to Egypt. We concluded that he had abdicated, and by consequence what we did was an act of necessity. And what is our design at present? What do we wish? What do we aim at? Must Galba fall a sacrifice to appease the manes of Nero? Shall a descendant from the family of the Servii; a relation of Quintus Catulus, and by ties of affinity connected with Livia, the wife of Augustus; say, my fellow-soldiers, shall such a man be deposed and murdered, to make way for the son of Nymphidia? It was his treachery, his base ingratitude, that occasioned the death of Nero: let him suffer the justice due to his crime; and let us

give proof of our fidelity. Let us deserve the esteem of Galba, by delivering him from a traitor.'

This speech made an impression on the soldiers. One mind, one sentiment, pervaded the whole camp: Galba was their emperor, and they would acknowledge no other. This was followed by a general shout. Nymphidius heard the sound, and proceeded to the camp. Whether he thought that the acclamations of the men were in his favor, or that his presence was necessary to quell an insurrection, cannot now be known. He went attended by a numerous train, and a blaze of torches, with the speech composed for him by Cingonius Varro, ready in his hand to be read aloud to the soldiers. The gates of the camp were shut, and guards were stationed on the ramparts. Nymphidius desired to know by whose order they were under arms? The men answered with one voice, 'We are armed in the cause of Galba, and we know no other emperor.' Nymphidius had not the prudence to retire from the walls. Dissimulation he thought would cloak his design. He commended the zeal of the pretorians, and assured them that he and his followers were the avowed friends of Galba. The sentinels opened the gates. Nymphidius entered with some of his friends: the pass was immediately secured; and the soldiers attacked him sword in hand. He endeavored to save himself in a tent, but was pursued, and massacred on the spot. His body on the following day was dragged through the camp, a spectacle for public view. Such was the end of a low-born base incendiary, who saw that, in the general profligacy of the times, the weak were the willing dupes of the wicked. By forming a league with the most abandoned, he flattered himself that the lowest of mankind, who in better times could not hope to be intrusted with the rank of a common

centurion, might boldly aspire to make himself master of the Roman empire.

XVI. An account of all that passed was conveyed to Galba with incredible speed. By his order, all who were suspected of taking a part in the mad projects of Nymphidius were seized, and, without farther inquiry, or any form of trial, put to death. Cingonius Varro, at that time consul elect, was in the number; and, what was very extraordinary, Mithridates the dethroned king of Pontus, who had surrendered to Claudius, and from that time lived at Rome, was hurried to execution without being heard in his defence. Petronius Turpilianus was another unhappy victim. He had been chosen by Nero to command his armies; and, though he never went from Rome to execute his commission, the very appointment was deemed a sufficient crime. These bloody executions were inauspicious in the opening of a new reign. The cruelty of Nero seemed to be renewed, when the people expected a milder government, and a regular administration of law and justice. The fate of Turpilianus filled the city with murmurs of discontent. It was known that Tigellinus presided at the execution; and that a man of worth and honor should bleed under the eye of a detested miscreant appeared to be a continuation of the late reign, and the triumph of vice over every virtue.

Galba set out from Spain, proceeding by slow marches, and still wearing the military robe of a general officer, with a dagger hanging from his neck down to his breast. Strong suspicion, a sense of injuries, and dark mistrust, with other passions unworthy of a prince, lay lurking in his heart. Before he began his journey Obultronius Sabinus and Cornelius Marcellus, two governors of provinces in Spain, who had shown no inclination to his party, were put to death

by his order. Betuus Chilo met with the same fate in Gaul. Dispatches were also sent to Garrucianus in Africa, commanding the immediate execution of Clodius Macer, the propretor of the province, who was known to have concerted measures for a revolt. It happened however that Calvia Crispinilla, the famous manager of Nero's pleasures, arrived in Africa, and insinuated herself into the secret counsels of the governor. By her advice he formed a resolution to establish for himself a new province independent of Rome. Their scheme for that purpose was to lay an embargo on all ships loaded with corn, in order to afflict the city of Rome with all the miseries of famine. A legion was also raised; and Macer, at the head of a considerable army, was on the eve of renouncing all subjection to Rome, when Papirius, a centurion sent by order of Galba, gained access to his presence, and stabbed him to the heart.

Fonteius Capito, who commanded the legions on the Lower Rhine, was put to death about the same time. It was this officer that sent Julius Civilis a prisoner to Rome during the reign of Nero. The charge was without foundation, and in time was the fatal cause of the destructive war in which Rome was involved by the fierce resentment of that warlike chief. Avarice was the vice of Capito. He was in haste to grow rich, and felt no scruple about the means. Ambition was laid to his charge; but an unguarded expression was the only evidence against him. It happened that he sat in judgment on a soldier accused of a capital crime, and condemned him to suffer death. 'Know,' said the prisoner, 'that I appeal to Cæsar.' Capito rose, and placing himself on a higher seat, told the man, 'Now appeal to Cæsar: make your defence in his presence.' The soldier obeyed, and was

sent to execution. This transaction was reported to Fabius Valens, who commanded a legion in Lower Germany; an officer of acknowledged ability, intrepid, active, and ambitious; eager in the pursuit of honors, and panting to signalise himself by some bold exploit. The opportunity now occurred, and he resolved to seize it. Crispinus, a centurion, was devoted to his service. In that man he found a ready assassin, and Fonteius Capito fell a victim. The death of that commander, Valens concluded, would be considerable merit with the new emperor. He lost no time, but sent an express to inform Galba of what he had done, with zeal for the service of his sovereign. He added, in the same letter, that the legions on the Upper Rhine had made a tender of the empire to Virginius Rufus, who remained in suspense, and with affected delays hesitated about his final answer. Galba received the news of Capito's death with secret satisfaction; but he thought it more prudent to connive than openly to approve. Virginius was still a dangerous rival. In order to draw him away from the army, and free himself from all danger in that quarter, he invited him to an amicable interview, having secretly appointed Hordeonius Flaccus to succeed to the command of the legions. The stratagem succeeded. The conqueror of Vindex went to the meeting, and found himself the dupe of pretended friendship. He met with a cold reception, very different from what was due to the man who wished to establish the civil authority, and to place the legislative power of the state in the senate only. He lived to be a spectator of the distractions and calamities that followed; and that he was not an actor in those scenes of blood and horror, was the recompense of uncommon virtue.

Galba had no farther reason to be alarmed. He saw the armies of Rome willing to acquiesce, and peace in

every part of the empire. He therefore changed his military robe for the Roman gown, and assumed the name of Cæsar. But even in that tide of his affairs the simplicity of his manners suffered no alteration. The same frugality, the same contempt of pomp and luxury, and the same austerity, still remained. Vinus covered his table with a profusion of luxury; and Otho, who attended the cavalcade into Italy, displayed all the magnificence of Nero's court. Galba still preserved his rules of ancient frugality, and condemned the vain parade¹ with inflexible rigor. He showed himself ready to punish, and slow to reward. In his manners no affability, no engaging courtesy. During the whole of his march he never once endeavored, by an act of condescension, to gain the affections of the people. The army in Italy consisted at that time of four different classes of men; namely, the legions, both foot and cavalry, composed chiefly of Roman citizens; the auxiliary forces, drafted from the states in alliance with Rome; the body of marines, levied in the tributary cities, and considered as slaves in the service of Rome; and fourthly, the gladiators who were to shed their blood in battle, if the occasion required, or in the circus, for the diversion of the populace. The marines, classed as above, in the third division, were called forth by Nero, when he projected a war on the borders

1 After a reign of luxury and dissipation, the rigid parsimony of Galba was unseasonable, and by consequence rendered him unpopular. Suetonius relates several instances of his avarice beneath the dignity of a prince. He adds, that soon after Galba's arrival in Rome, when he attended the performance of an Attelane fable, as soon as the actor began the first verse of a favorite song,

Venit, io! Simus a villa,

'Here's farmer Flatnose come from his villa,' the whole audience, with one voice, sang the song, repeating the first verse several times; Suet. in Galb. § 13.

of the Caspian sea, to be formed into a new legion. The men collected on that occasion amounted to a prodigious number, and all were quartered in the city. Being informed that Galba was near at hand, they rushed forth in a tumultuous body to the Milvian bridge, about three miles from Rome, where they beset the road, obstructed the emperor's train, and with violent clamor demanded a confirmation of their military rank, with an eagle to distinguish their legion, and an allotment of winter-quarters. Their application, they were told, was out of season, but might be renewed at a more convenient time and place. The answer was deemed evasive, and nothing short of an absolute refusal. The men were fired with indignation: a mutiny ensued: they advanced sword in hand, determined to extort by force what they considered as a legal right. Galba was not of a temper to yield to sudden emergencies. He ordered his soldiers to disperse an insolent rabble. The cavalry rushed on to the charge with impetuous fury, and meeting with a feeble resistance, cut their way with dreadful slaughter. It is said that no less than seven thousand were put to the sword. The rest submitted at discretion, and were afterwards ordered to be decimated.

This tragic catastrophe spread a general consternation. Galba entered the city of Rome through a scene of blood, and men expected nothing less than a renewal of all the cruelties of Nero's reign. He carried with him many virtues; but he had in his train Titus Vinius, Cornelius Laco, and Icelus, his freedman; three pernicious ministers, who gained an intire ascendant over a venerable, but indolent, old man, and by their vices occasioned the dreadful calamities which in the following year overwhelmed themselves, their master, and the public.

GENEALOGICAL TABLE

OF THE

CÆSARS.

1. **CAIUS JULIUS CÆSAR**, descended from the illustrious line of the Julian family, and father of Cæsar the dictator. He served the office of pretor. He, and his brother Lucius Cæsar, died A. U. C. 670. Julia their sister married C. Marius, who was seven times consul.—Suetonius, life of Jul. Cæs. § 1. 6. Pliny the elder, vii. 53. Plutarch, life of Marius.

2. Aurelia, the wife of C. J. Cæsar, and mother of the dictator; a woman of extraordinary talents and virtue.—Plut. life of Jul. Cæs. Tacitus, Dialogue of Oratory, § 28.

3. Caius Julius Cæsar, the dictator; born in the sixth consulship of Marius, A. U. C. 654, B. C. 100. He gained a complete victory at Pharsalia, and became emperor of Rome, A. U. C. 706. He was killed in the capitol by Brutus, Cassius, and other conspirators, A. U. C. 710. The number slain in his wars is computed at 1,192,000 men. Plutarch says that Cæsar, in his various battles, engaged no less than 3,000,000; that he killed 1,000,000, and took another million prisoners.—Velleius Paterculus, ii. 41. Pliny, vii. 25.

He was called after his death the Divine Julius, 'Divus Julius.'

4. Cossutia, Julius Cæsar's first wife, of an equestrian family, and immoderately rich. Cæsar married

her when she was young, and was soon divorced.—Suet. life of Cæsar, § 1.

5. Cornelia, Cæsar's second wife. She was the daughter of Cinna, four times consul. Sylla tried in vain to compel J. Cæsar to repudiate her. He spoke her funeral panegyric.—Suet. life of Cæsar, § 1. 6. Plut. life of J. Cæsar.

6. Julia, daughter of Julius Cæsar by Cornelia. She married Servilius Cæpio, and, being divorced from him, became the wife of Pompey the Great, A. U. C. 695. She died A. U. C. 700. Her funeral oration was spoken by Octavius. Honors were instituted to her memory by Julius Cæsar.—Suet. life of Cæsar, § 21.

7. Cneius Pompeius Magnus, born A. U. C. 648. He married Julia, Cæsar's daughter. He entered on the public magistracy at the age of eighteen. He was defeated by Julius Cæsar in the battle of Pharsalia, and put to death in Egypt, A. U. C. 706.—Vell. Pat. ii. 29. Plut. life of Pompey.

8. A son of Pompey the Great, by Julia, the daughter of J. Cæsar. Died A. U. C. 701.—Vell. Pater. ii. 47.

9. A daughter of Pompey, by Julia, Cæsar's daughter. Died A. U. C. 701.—Plut. life of J. Cæsar.

10. Pompeia, daughter of Quintus Pompeius, granddaughter of Lucius Sylla, and third wife of Julius Cæsar, who repudiated her on account of a supposed intrigue with Publius Clodius. Being asked what was his reason, he made answer, 'Cæsar's wife must not only be free from guilt, but also from suspicion.'—Suet. life of Cæsar, § 6. Plut. life of Cæsar.

11. Calpurnia, daughter of L. Calpurnius Piso, married to J. Cæsar, A. U. C. 695. After the death of

her husband she fled for protection to Marc Antony.—Suet. life of Cæs. § 81.

12. Julia, sister of Julius Cæsar, being the daughter of C. J. Cæsar the pretor, and Aurelia his wife. She was married to M. Atius Balbus.—Suet. life of Augustus, § 4.

13. Marcus Atius Balbus, married Julia, the sister of Julius Cæsar. He was grandfather to Augustus.—Suet. life of Aug. § 4.

14. Atia, daughter of M. Atius Balbus, by his wife Julia, the sister of J. Cæsar. She married Caius Octavius, and by him was mother of Augustus.—Suet. life of Aug. § 4. Tacit. Dialogue of Oratory, § 28.

15. Caius Octavius, husband of Atia, the daughter of M. Atius Balbus, by Julia, sister of Julius Cæsar. Octavius, afterwards the emperor Augustus, was of course grand-nephew to Julius Cæsar.—Suet. life of Aug. § 3, 4, 5.

16. Octavia, daughter of Atia and Caius Octavius, and sister of Augustus. She was promised in marriage to Faustus Sylla, but married Claudius Marcellus. After his death she married Marc Antony. She was a woman of exemplary virtue and great literary accomplishments. She died A. U. C. 743. Augustus delivered her funeral panegyric.—Suet. life of J. Cæsar, § 27.

17. Claudius Marcellus, husband of Octavia, and brother-in-law to Augustus. He was consul A. U. C. 704. Though nearly related to Cæsar the dictator he was always an enemy to his cause.—Suet. life of J. Cæsar, § 27.

18. Marcus Marcellus, son of Octavia, the sister of Augustus, and consequently nephew to Augustus. A youth of great expectations, highly esteemed by his

uncle, and by him intended to be next in succession to the imperial dignity. He died prematurely, A. U. C. 731. Augustus paid distinguished honors to his memory, and Virgil has made him immortal.—Tacit. Annals, ii. 41; iii. 64. Virgil, *Æneid*, vi. 883.

19. Pompeia, daughter of Sextus Pompeius, promised in marriage to Marcus Marcellus, A. U. C. 715.

Julia, daughter of Augustus by his wife Scribonia, married Marcus Marcellus, A. U. C. 729, two years before his death.—Dio Cassius, *xlviii*.

20. Marcella the elder, daughter of Claudius Marcellus by his wife Octavia, and sister to the last-mentioned Marcellus. She was first married to Apuleius, and afterwards to Valerius Messala.—Suet. life of Aug. § 53.

21. Apuleius, husband of Marcella the elder. He is thought to have been the son of Sextus Apuleius, who was consul A. U. C. 725.—Dio Cassius, *liv*.

22. Apuleia Varilla, daughter of Marcella the elder, by her husband Apuleius. She was also grand-niece to Augustus. Being condemned for adultery A. U. C. 770, she was banished two hundred miles from Rome.—Tacit. Annals, ii. 50.

23. M. Valerius Messala Barbatus, second husband of Marcella the elder. He was consul A. U. C. 742.—Suet. life of Aug. § 63; life of Claudius, § 26.

24. M. Valerius Messala, son of Valerius Messala Barbatus and of Marcella the elder. He was father of the famous Messalina.—Suet. life of Claudius, § 26.

25. Domitia Lepida, daughter of Antonia the younger, by her husband Lucius Domitius *Ænobarbus*. She was the wife of the last-mentioned Valerius Messala, and mother of Messalina; a woman of debauched and profligate manners, and a violent impetuous spirit: in point of beauty, riches, and vice, the rival of Agrip-

pina, Nero's mother. She was condemned to death A. U. C. 807.—Tacit. Annals, xi. 37; xii. 64. See Suet. life of Claudius, § 26; life of Nero, § 7.

26. Valeria Messalina, daughter of Valerius Messala and Domitia Lepida. She was wife to the emperor Claudius; a woman of furious and till then unheard-of lewdness. While Claudius was at Ostia she had the hardiness openly to celebrate her nuptials with Silius, and for that unparalleled crime was put to death, A. U. C. 801.—Tacit. Annals, xi. 26. Suet. life of Claudius, § 26.

27. Marcella the younger, daughter of Claudius Marcellus and Octavia, sister to Augustus. She was first married to M. Vipsanius Agrippa, and afterwards to M. Julius Antonius.—Suet. life of Augustus, § 63. Plut. life of Marc Antony.

For M. Vipsanius Agrippa, see No. 47.

28. The issue of Vipsanius Agrippa, by his first wife Marcella, before he was married to Julia, the daughter of Augustus by his wife Scribonia.—Suet. life of Aug. § 63.

29. Marcus Julius Antonius, son of Marc Antony the triumvir and Fulvia his wife. He married Marcella the younger, when repudiated by Agrippa. He was consul A. U. C. 744; a man of libidinous passions. He was put to death for his adulterous commerce with Julia, the daughter of Augustus. The ode of Horace, 'Pindarum quisquis studet æmulari,' is addressed to him.—Tacit. Annals, iii. 18; iv. 44. Horace, iv. 2.

30. Lucius Antonius, son of M. Julius Antonius, by Marcella the younger. On account of his father's guilt with Julia he was sent in his infancy to Marseilles, under a pretence of education, but in fact to a place of exile. He died A. U. C. 778.—Tacit. Annals, iv. 44.

31. Marc Antony, the triumvir, son of Marcus Antonius the celebrated orator. He was the second husband of Octavia, sister to Augustus, A. U. C. 714; but being in love with Cleopatra, he repudiated Octavia, A. U. C. 723. After the assassination of Julius Cæsar he seized the public treasure, which was deposited in the temple of Ops. He was at all times a turbulent and dangerous citizen; during the triumvirate, headlong, furious, and oppressive. The rage with which he pushed on the proscription rendered him detestable. The supreme power was often within his reach, but all his actions proved him unworthy of that elevation. He was defeated at Actium A. U. C. 724. The murder of Cicero consigned his name to eternal infamy. By the manner of his death he effaced much of the shame that branded his former conduct.—See Velleius Paterculus, ii. 60 and 87. Pliny the elder, vii. 45. Plut. life of Antony. Cicero, Philippic Orations.

The inscriptions of him on medals are, ‘Marcus Antonius, Marci Filius, Marci Nepos, Augur, Imperator, Consul designatus iterum et tertium, Triumvir Reipublicæ constituendæ.’

32. Antonia the elder, daughter of Antony the triumvir, by Octavia, sister to Augustus. She married L. Domitius Ænobarbus. She is called by Tacitus Antonia the younger, which makes it probable that Marc Antony had a former daughter, called Antonia, by his wife Fulvia.—See Tacit. Annals, iv. 44. Suet. life of Nero, § 5. Plut. life of Marc Antony.

33. Lucius Domitius Ænobarbus, son of Cneius Domitius, one of the conspirators against Julius Cæsar, and husband of Antonia the elder; a man of an impetuous temper, violent, proud, extravagant, and cruel. He commanded in Germany, and marched his army beyond the Elbe (Albis); and having penetrated

farther than any Roman had done before him, he obtained the honors of a triumph. He died A. U. C. 778. Suet. life of Nero, § 4. Tacit. Annals, iv. 44.

34. Cneius Domitius Ænobarbus, son of the last-mentioned L. D. Ænobarbus, by Antonia the elder. He married Agrippina, the daughter of Germanicus, A. U. C. 781; was consul A. U. C. 785. His life was a series of evil deeds. He was the father of Nero, and was used to say that from himself and Agrippina nothing good or valuable could be born.—Suet. life of Nero, § 4. Tacit. Annals, iv. 75.

For Agrippina, his wife, see No. 93.

35. Lucius Domitius Nero, the sixth Roman emperor, son of Cneius Domitius Ænobarbus, by Agrippina the daughter of Germanicus. She was granddaughter to the famous Agrippa, by Julia the daughter of Augustus. Nero was born 15th December, A. U. C. 790, the detestable offspring of two pernicious parents. He was called simply Domitius, till by the adoption of Claudius, A. U. C. 803, he passed into the Claudian family, and took the name of Nero. He began his reign A. U. C. 807, with such favorable circumstances, as for a time gave promise of a virtuous prince. His enormities afterwards delivered him down to the execration of posterity. The burning of Rome was imputed to him. The Christian religion has to boast that the foe of humankind was the enemy of her moral doctrine. He was a burden to himself, and detested by all orders of men. He was condemned to die ‘more majorum,’ by a decree of the senate. He escaped a public execution, and died in a dastardly manner by his own hand, A. U. C. 821, A. D. 68. By his death the race of the Cæsars became extinct.—Suet. life of Nero, § 6. Tacit. Annals, xii. 25; and see Appendix to Annals, xvi. Pliny, xxii. 22. 46.

The inscriptions on medals are, ‘Nero Claudius,

Divi Claudii Filius, Cæsar, Augustus, Germanicus, Pontifex Maximus, Imperator, Tribunitia Potestate Pater Patriæ.'

36. Octavia, daughter of the emperor Claudius by Messalina. She was born A. U. C. 795. Britannicus was her brother. She was contracted to Lucius Silanus, but married to Nero A. U. C. 806; worthy of better times, and a better husband. Nero repudiated her for the sake of Poppæa. She was banished to the island of Pandataria, and there put to death, A. U. C. 815.—Tacit. Annals, xii. 3. 25; xiv. 60. 64. Dio Cassius, lxi.

For Britannicus, her brother, see No. 108.

37. Poppæa Sabina, daughter of Titus Ollius by Poppæa Sabina. She was married first to Rufius Crispinus: secondly, to Marcus Salvius Otho, afterwards emperor; and at length to Nero, A. U. C. 815. The vices of her character resembled those of the emperor. He loved her tenderly, yet killed her by a kick when she was with child, A. U. C. 813. Her body was not burnt, but filled with spices, and deposited in the monument of the Cæsars. Three years after her death Nero dedicated a temple to her memory, with an inscription, 'To Sabina the Goddess Venus—Sabinæ Deæ Veneri.'—Tacit. Annals, xiii. 45; xvi. 6. Suet. life of Nero, § 35. Dio Cassius, lxxiii.

38. Claudia Augusta, daughter of Nero and Poppæa, born at Antium, A. U. C. 816. She was soon after her birth dignified with the title of Augusta. She died within four months, to the great grief of Nero. She was canonised a goddess by a decree of the senate. Tacit. Annals, xv. 23. Suet. life of Nero, § 35.

Her inscription on medals is, Diva Claudia Neronis Filia; 'The Goddess Claudia, Daughter of Nero.'

39. Statilia Messalina, who drew her lineage through several descents from Statilius Taurus. She was the third wife of Nero, who, to possess her person, murdered her first husband Atticus Vestinus, A. U. C. 818.—Suet. life of Nero, § 35. Tacit. Annals, xv. 68.

40. Domitia, daughter of Antonia the elder, by Lucius Ænobarbus; aunt to Nero, and the wife of Passienus Crispus. Nero destroyed her by poison A. U. C. 812.—Tacit. Annals, xiii. 19. 21. Quintilian, vi. 1.

For Passienus Crispus, see No. 94.

41. Caius Appius Junius Silanus. He was governor of Spain. By the desire of Claudius he married Domitia Lepida, the mother of Messalina, and was soon after put to death by order of that emperor, A. U. C. 795.—Dio Cassius, book lx.

42. Antonia the younger, second daughter of Antony the triumvir, by Octavia sister of Augustus. She married Nero Drusus, the brother of Tiberius, and was the mother of Germanicus; a woman distinguished by her beauty, and no less by her virtue. She survived Drusus, her husband, many years, leading an exemplary life in a state of widowhood, and by the whole tenor of her conduct almost eclipsing the lustre of her ancestors.—Pliny, vii. 19. Suet. life of Caligula, § 1. Tacit. Annals, iii. 3; xi. 3. Plut. life of Marc Antony. Valerius Maximus, iv. 3.

43. Caius Octavius Cæsar, Augustus, emperor of Rome. He was the son of Caius Octavius by his wife Atia, who was niece to Julius Cæsar. He was born 23d September, A. U. C. 691. At the age of nineteen he took the lead in the civil wars; and in three years after not one of the conspirators against Julius Cæsar (who had adopted him for his son) survived the fury of the destructive sword. Sextus Pompeius was totally defeated in a naval engagement off the coast of

Sicily. Lepidus, one of the triumvirate, was dismantled of his power; and Marc Antony was overthrown at the battle of Actium. After those events Octavius was the only surviving chief of the Julian party. He became an emperor of Rome A. U. C. 724.

During the whole course of his reign pacific measures were the object of his policy. Letters flourished, and men of genius met with encouragement. By his popular acts he gained the affections of the people, with the title of Augustus, the Father of his Country. Scythia, Sarmatia, the Garamantes and Bactrians, India, and the people called the Seres, submitted to his authority, and sent their ambassadors to settle the terms of a general peace. At Rome, and the capital cities of the provinces, temples, orders of priesthood, sacerdotal colleges, were dedicated to him, not only after his death, but in many places during his life. He died at Nola on the 18th of August, A. U. C. 767. His character, strictly examined, was more splendid for his policy than his virtues. He owed his elevation to the vices of Lepidus and Antony, and the abilities of Vipsanius Agrippa; but it redounds to his praise, that what he gained by the prudence and valor of others he was able to support, by a well-judged system of policy, during a space of four-and-forty years. It was said of him, that he found the city of Rome made with brick, and he changed it to marble. Though deified even during his life in some parts of the empire, he was taught by various incidents that he was no more than man.—See Suet. life of Augustus. Tacit. Annals, i.; xiii. 6. Florus, iv. 12. Aurelius Victor, chap. 1. Pliny, vii. 45. Seneca, De Consolatione, 34.

Inscriptions on ancient medals :

Before his elevation to the supreme power, ‘Octa-

vius Cæsar, son of the deified Julius, imperator, triumvir for the purpose of restoring the commonwealth, consul, the assertor of public liberty.'

After his accession to the empire, 'Cæsar, Augustus, son of the deified Julius Cæsar, imperator, consul, chief pontiff, and, with the tribunitian power, father of his country.'

After his death, Divus Augustus, 'The deified Augustus.'

44. Clodia, daughter of Publius Clodius by his wife Fulvia, and daughter-in-law to Antony the triumvir. In order to conciliate terms of peace Augustus married her, when she was yet of tender years; but a quarrel taking place with Fulvia, her mother, Augustus repudiated her in her virgin state.—Suet. life of Aug. § 62.

45. Scribonia, sister of Lucius Scribonius Libo, and wife of Augustus. She had been married twice before to two men of consular rank, and by one of them, whose name was Scipio, she had a daughter named Cornelia. Augustus repudiated Scribonia A. U. C. 715, and Livia, in a few years afterwards, succeeded to the embraces of the emperor of Rome.—Suet. life of Aug. § 63. 69. Dio, xlviii. Propertius, iv. 2.

46. Julia, daughter of Augustus, by his wife Scribonia, born A. U. C. 715. She was married, first to Marcellus; secondly, to Agrippa; and thirdly, to Tiberius; a woman of dissolute conduct, libidinous passions, and abandoned infamy. On account of her adulterous intrigues she was banished by Augustus to the island of Pandataria, A. U. C. 752. She was left there by Tiberius to pine in want and misery. She died A. U. C. 767.—Pliny, vii. 45. Dio, lv. Tacit. Annals, i. 53. Vell. Paterculus, ii. 100.

For her first husband, Marcus Marcellus, see No. 18.

47 Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa; a man of low ex-

traction, in his manners unpolished, even to a degree of rusticity. For those defects he made ample atonement by superior qualities; in war, a great commander; and through life a man of unblemished integrity. He gained signal victories both by land and sea, and by his brilliant success established Augustus on the imperial throne. A stranger to letters and the fine arts, he was notwithstanding the friend of science. At a time when geographical knowledge had made little or no progress, he framed a map of the world, and presented it to the public. Not only Rome but Italy was adorned, under his direction, with public buildings no less useful than magnificent. Augustus, to show a grateful sense of his services and his merit, raised him to three several consulships, and even made him his associate in the tribunitian power. On the death of Marcus Marcellus (see No. 18), Augustus chose him for his son-in-law, and gave him in marriage his daughter Julia, then a widow, A. U. C. 733. Agrippa, though a new man, had the art of rising in the world with superior dignity. He died A. U. C. 742, in the fifty-first year of his age. Augustus spoke his funeral panegyric.—Tacit. Annals, i. 3. Pliny, iii. 2; vii. 8; xxxv. 4. Dio, liv. Vell. Paterculus, ii. 96.

He was called in ancient medals, ‘ Marcus Agrippa, son of Lucius, consul three times, commander of the fleet, and prefect of the sea-coast.’

48. Caius Cæsar, son of Agrippa and Julia, born A. U. C. 734; adopted by Augustus as his son, prince of the Roman youth, and consul elect. He was prematurely cut off on his return from Armenia, A. U. C. 757.—Tacit. Annals, i. 3. Dio, liv.

He was married to Livia, the sister of Germanicus, —Tacit. Annals, iv. 40.

For Livia, his wife, see No. 71.

49. Lucius Cæsar, son of Agrippa and Julia, brother to Caius Cæsar, born A. U. C. 737; adopted by Augustus into the Cæsarean family; styled prince of the Roman youth; and declared consul elect. He died at Marseilles, on his way to join the army in Spain, in the month of August, A. U. C. 754. Tacit. Annals, i. 3.

In ancient medals both brothers are called 'Caius and Lucius Cæsar, sons of Augustus, consuls elect, princes of the Roman youth.'

50. Marcus Agrippa Posthumus, son of Agrippa and Julia, brother to Caius and Lucius, born after his father's death, A. U. C. 742. He was adopted by Augustus A. U. C. 757, and soon after, on account of his uncouth manners and stupid ferocity, banished to the island of Planasia. No kind of guilt could be imputed to him; no disgraceful or flagitious action was laid to his charge; and for that reason Augustus, towards the end of his life, began to relent. He intended to restore him to his rank, and it is said made a voyage to the isle of Planasia for the purpose of a reconciliation. Augustus however did not live to carry his design into execution. Agrippa Posthumus was cut off by order of Tiberius, who made that murder the first act of his reign, A. U. C. 767.—Dio, liv. Vell. Pater. ii. 104. Tacit. Annals, i. 3. 6. Pliny, vii. 45.

51. Agrippina, daughter of Agrippa and Julia, granddaughter to Augustus, and wife of Germanicus; a woman of noble qualities, an exalted spirit, and unconquerable chastity. Elate with the pride of virtue, and conscious of her illustrious birth, she scorned to bend to the arrogance of Livia, the mother of Tiberius. She was banished to the isle of Pandataria; and, after suffering every barbarous outrage from the cruelty of Tiberius, died in misery, A. U. C. 786.—Tacit. Annals,

iv. 12; vi. 25; xiv. 63. See supplement to book v. of the Annals, § 5.

For Germanicus, her husband, see No 81.

52. Julia, daughter of Agrippa and Julia, sister to Agrippina, and grand-daughter to Augustus. She married Lucius Æmilius Paulus, and in all kinds of excess and vicious debauchery distinguished herself as the rival of her mother. In the reign of Augustus she was condemned for her adulterous practices, and banished to the isle of Trimetus, A. U. C. 761. She died in exile, A. U. C. 781.—Tacit. Annals, iv. 71.

53. Lucius Æmilius Paulus, son of Paulus Æmilius Lepidus and his wife Cornelia. The father was censor A. U. C. 732. Lucius the son married Julia, the daughter of Agrippa and Julia.—Suet. life of Augustus, § 64. Dio, liv.

54. Marcus Æmilius Lepidus, son of Lucius Æmilius Lepidus and Julia the daughter of Agrippa. He married Drusilla, and committed adultery and incest with her sisters. His vices endeared him to Caligula. He was condemned for treasonable practices, and put to death A. U. C. 792. Caligula, on that occasion, gave a donative to the soldiers, and dedicated to Mars the Avenger three swords, which had been prepared by the conspirators.—Dio, lix. Suet. life of Caligula, § 24. 36. Tacit. Annals, xiv. 2.

55. Æmilia Lepida, the daughter of Lucius Æmilius Paulus and Julia, the daughter of Agrippa and Julia, consequently grand-daughter to Augustus. She was contracted to Claudius, afterwards emperor, when he was extremely young; and afterwards married to Junius Silanus.—Suet. life of Claud. § 26. Pliny, vii. 13.

56. Junius Silanus, the husband of the last-men-

tioned *Æmilia Lepida*. Nothing of him can be said with certainty; but it is probable that he was the *Marcus Silanus* who was joint consul with *Lucius Norbanus Flaccus*, A. U. C. 772.—*Tacit. Annals*, ii. 59.

57. *Marcus Junius Silanus*, son of *Junius Silanus* and *Æmilia Lepida*, born in the year in which *Augustus* died, A. U. C. 767.—*Pliny*, vii. 13. He was a man of an unblemished character, but so inactive, that *Caligula* called him ‘the golden calf.’ He was proconsul of *Asia*, and, by *Nero’s* order, taken off by poison, A. U. C. 807.—*Tacit. Annals*, xiii. 1.

58. The wife of *Marcus Junius Silanus*, and the mother of *Lucius Silanus Torquatus*. The name is not to be found in any historian.

59. *Lucius Silanus Torquatus*, son of *Marcus Junius Silanus*, who was great-grandson to *Augustus*. Without being charged with any crime, obnoxious only on account of his illustrious birth and the modesty of his youth, he was put to death by *Nero*, A. U. C. 818.—*Tacit. Annals*, xvi. 7, 8, 9.

60. *Lucius Junius Silanus*, son of *Junius Silanus* and *Æmilia Lepida* (see No. 55 and 56). The emperor *Claudius* had promised him his daughter *Octavia* in marriage, A. U. C. 794, but soon after broke off the match, and left *Silanus* to choose his mode of death, A. U. C. 802.—*Dio*, ix. *Tacit. Annals*, xii. 3. 8.

61. *Junius Silanus Torquatus*, son of *Junius Silanus* and *Æmilia Lepida*, who was great-grand-daughter to *Augustus*. A pedigree derived from the *Junian* family, and rendered still more illustrious by his relation to *Augustus*, made him obnoxious to the jealousy of *Nero*. He died by that emperor’s order, A. U. C. 817. Both he and *Lucius Silanus Torquatus* were cut

off in the month of June, for which reason the name was changed to that of Germanicus.—Tacit. Annals, xv. 35; xvi. 8. 12. Dio, lxii.

62. Junia Calvina, daughter of Junius Silanus and Æmilia Lepida. She was married to Vitellius, who was afterwards emperor. Distinguished by her beauty and illustrious birth, she preserved an unblemished character, but provoked her enemies by a fierce and uncomplying spirit. By the malice and insidious arts of Agrippina the younger she was banished out of Italy, but recalled by Nero A. U. C. 812. She lived to the time of Vespasian.—Tacit. Annals, xiii. 4. 8; xiv. 12. Suet. life of Vesp. § 23.

63. Vitellius, son of Lucius Vitellius the censor and his wife Sextilia. He married Junia Calvina, and was consul A. U. C. 801. On some dissension between him and his wife, a divorce took place some time before A. U. C. 802.—Tacit. Annals, xi. 23; xii. 4. Suet. life of Vitellius, § 3. 18.

64. Lepida, daughter of Junius Silanus and Æmilia Lepida. She was married to Caius Cassius, governor of Syria. An accusation alleging various crimes was suborned against her, but referred to the judgment of Nero, A. U. C. 818.—Tacit. Annals, xvi. 8, 9.

65. Caius Cassius, governor of Syria, and husband of Lepida. He was celebrated for his superior knowledge of the laws; but being charged with having, among the images of his ancestors, the picture or statue of the famous Cassius, with an inscription, 'To the chief of party,' he was banished to the island of Sardinia, A. U. C. 818.—Tacit. Annals, xii. 11, 12; xvi. 8, 9.

66. Livia, called also Livia Drusilla, and, after the death of Augustus, Julia Augusta. She was the daughter of Livius Drusus Claudianus. Her first husband was Tiberius Claudius Nero: being divorced

from him, she married Augustus, A. U. C. 716. A woman of illustrious birth, elegant in her form and manners, of high ambition, and an overbearing spirit. She had the skill to manage the gentle arts of Augustus, and the dark dissimulation of Tiberius; a complying and obliging wife, and afterwards an imperious mother. Her enmity to Germanicus and his wife Agrippina was subtle, close, and unrelenting. She died A. U. C. 782, at the age of eighty-six.—Vell. Pat. ii. 75. Suet. life of Tiberius, § 3, 4. Dio, xlviii. Tacit. Annals, v. 1.

Her inscriptions on ancient medals: 'Livia Augusta, Julia, Augusta, mother of her country.'

After her death: 'The deified Livia, wife of the deified Augustus, the deified Julia Augusta.'

67. Tiberius Claudius Nero, the first husband of Livia, and by her the father of Tiberius, afterwards emperor, and of Nero Claudius Drusus (for whom see No. 79). He obtained the dignities of pretor and pontiff; a man of brilliant talents and extensive learning. He attached himself to Antony the triumvir; and after the defeat of that party he withdrew with his wife Livia and Tiberius, then an infant about two years old, into Sicily, A. U. C. 714. Livia fled from Augustus, her destined husband, and Tiberius from his future father by adoption. Tiberius Claudius Nero made his peace with Augustus, and resigned his wife A. U. C. 716. He died three years after, A. U. C. 719.—Vell. Pat. ii. 75. Suet. life of Tiberius, § 4. 6. Dio, xlvii.

68. Tiberius Nero, son of Tiberius Claudius Nero by Livia his wife, born 16th November, A. U. C. 712; adopted by Augustus A. U. C. 757, and emperor of Rome A. U. C. 767. He died on the 17th of March, A. U. C. 790, after a reign of three-and-twenty years.

Julius Cæsar subdued his country; Augustus cherished the conquered; and Tiberius made them crouch in bondage. He established slavery, and despised the servile spirit of the men that submitted with passive obedience. He hated eminent virtue, and was at the same time the enemy of vice. Such jarring elements have been rarely mixed in the composition of one man: fluctuating between good and evil, and by turns inclined to each, he did every thing by fits and sudden starts of passion. Before he rose to the supreme power he distinguished himself by his warlike spirit. When master of the Roman world dissimulation was the prominent feature of his character. When he had waded far in guilt and flagitious deeds he lay 'on the torture of the mind in restless ecstasy.' Goaded by his conscience, and alarmed by constant suspicions, he fled from danger to the isle of Capreæ, but could not fly from himself. He was often heard to utter a most horrible wish, expressed in a Greek verse:

Ἐμου θανόντος, γαῖα μιχθήτω πυρι.
Me mortuo, terra misceatur igni.

'At my death let the earth be involved in flames.' He called Priam the happiest of men, because his kingdom perished with him.—Vell. Pat. ii. 75. Tacit. in the six first Annals, *passim*. Pliny, xxviii. 2.

Inscriptions on ancient medals: 'Tiberius Cæsar, Augustus, son of the deified Augustus, imperator, augur, chief pontiff, vested with the tribunitian power.'

69. Vipsania Agrippina, daughter of Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa by his first wife Pomponia, who was the grand-daughter of Atticus, to whom Cicero addressed the well-known collection of letters. Vipsania Agrippina was first married to Tiberius, the emperor, but by him unwillingly repudiated during her pregnancy

to make way for a match with Julia, the daughter of Augustus.—Tacit. Annals, i. 12. Suetonius, life of Tiberius, § 7. Dio, liv. After her divorce she married Asinius Gallus, the son of Asinius Pollio, the consul and celebrated orator, the favorite of Augustus, and, what is now of more consequence, celebrated by Horace and Virgil. Of all the children of Agrippa she is the only one that died a natural death, A. U. C. 773. Tacit. Annals, iii. 19.

For Asinius Gallus, see Tacit. Annals, i. 8.

70. Drusus Cæsar, son of Tiberius by Vipsania Agrippina, who was repudiated in her pregnancy. He was born A. U. C. 739; a youth of a towering spirit, impatient of an equal, addicted to liquor, and in that vice the rival of his father. He married Livia, otherwise called Livilla, who was debauched by Sejanus, and drawn into a plot against her husband's life. Drusus had been three times consul, and was every day rising to eminence in the state, when Sejanus put an end to his days by poison, A. U. C. 776.—Tacit. Annals, i. 55; iii. 56; iv. 3. 8. Pliny, xiv. 22.

Inscriptions on ancient medals: 'Drusus Cæsar, son of Tiberius, grandson to the deified Augustus, pontiff, consul, vested with tribunitian power.'

71. Livia, or Livilla, daughter of Nero Claudius Drusus (see No. 79) by his wife Antonia the younger (see No. 42). She was sister to Germanicus, and also Claudius the emperor. Her first husband was Caius, the son of Agrippa; after his death she married Drusus the son of Tiberius. Sejanus seduced her affections from her husband. Engaged in a course of adultery with that flagitious minister, she hoped to rise with her paramour to the imperial dignity, and with that ambitious view conspired against her husband. Her guilt being afterwards fully detected, she was put to

death by order of Tiberius (see Supplement to Annals, v. 38, 39); and by a decree of the senate her pictures and statues were all destroyed, and her memory branded with infamy.—Suet. life of Claudius, § 1; life of Tiberius, § 62. Tacit. Annals, iv. 3. 40; vi. 2. Dio, lviii.

72. Tiberius, son of Drusus Cæsar (see No. 70) and Livilla (No. 71), grandson to Tiberius the emperor, born with a twin-brother A. U. C. 772. Tiberius was so elated with joy on that occasion that he boasted of the birth of twins as an event which had never happened to any Roman of equal rank. Caligula deprived him of the succession and his life, A. U. C. 790.—Tacit. Annals, ii. 84. Dio, lix.

73. The twin-brother of Tiberius (No. 72), the son of Drusus and Livia, or Livilla, died when about four years old, A. U. C. 776.—Tacit. Annals, ii. 84; iv. 15. His name is nowhere mentioned.

74. Julia, daughter of Drusus Cæsar (No. 70) and Livia (No. 71), married first to Nero Cæsar, son of Germanicus and Agrippina, and afterwards to Rubellius Blandus. She was cut off by the malice of Messalina A. U. C. 796.—Tacit. Annals, iii. 29; vi. 27; xiii. 19. 32. Dio, lx.

For Nero Cæsar, son of Germanicus and Agrippina, the husband of Julia, see No. 82.

75. Rubellius Blandus, son of a Roman knight, and the second husband of Julia, the daughter of Drusus (see No. 70). He was married to her A. U. C. 786.—Tacit. Annals, vi. 27. Dio, lviii.

76. Rubellius Plautus, son of Rubellius Blandus and his wife Julia. The popular voice marked him out a proper person to succeed to the imperial dignity, and for that reason he was put to death by Nero

A. U. C. 815.—Tacit. Annals, xiii. 19 ; xiv. 22. 58.

77. Antistia Pollutia, daughter of Lucius Antistius Vetus, and wife of Rubellius Plautus (No. 76). She was put to death with her father and Sextia, her mother-in-law, A. U. C. 818. Her crime was, that while she lived Nero considered her and her family as a living reproach for the murder of her husband Rubellius Plautus.—Tacit. Annals, xvi. 10, 11.

78. A son of Tiberius the emperor by Julia, the daughter of Augustus (see No. 46). He was born at Aquileia, and died in his infancy, A. U. C. 747. His name is nowhere mentioned.—Suet. life of Tiberius, § 7. Dio, lv.

79. Nero Claudius Drusus, son of Tiberius Claudius Nero (see No. 67) and Livia, afterwards married to Augustus. Tiberius the emperor was his elder brother. He was born A. U. C. 716. A youth, says Velleius Paterculus, of as many virtues as prudence can acquire, or human nature can admit. The fine ode of Horace, ‘*Qualem ministrum fulminis alitem,*’ iv. 4, written A. U. C. 743, displays his military character in the brightest colors. He rose to the highest civil offices, such as pretor, edile, and consul. He commanded the Roman army in Germany, and for his victories obtained the name of Germanicus. He was father of the famous Germanicus by Antonia the younger (see No. 42). He died A. U. C. 745 ; the pride of the Claudian family, and the favorite of the Roman people. Augustus spoke his funeral panegyric, and in his speech offered up a fervent prayer to the gods, that all future Cæsars might resemble him, and that his own death, whenever it should happen, might be equally honorable and as sincerely lamented.

—Suet. life of Claudius, § 1; life of Tiberius, § 4.
Dio, lv. Valerius Maximus, iv. 3, No. 3.

Inscription on ancient coins: ‘Nero Claudius Drusus, Germanicus, imperator.’

For Antonia the younger, the wife of Drusus, see No. 42.

80. Sons of Drusus and Antonia. They died before A. U. C. 745, and their names are now unknown.—Suet. life of Claudius, § 1.

81. Germanicus Cæsar, son of Nero Claudius Drusus (No. 79) by Antonia the younger (No. 42), the worthiest son of the worthiest parents. Tiberius, by the command of Augustus, adopted him A. U. C. 757, but afterwards, when possessed of the supreme power, beheld him with a malignant eye. He died on his return from a tour in Egypt, not without strong suspicions of being poisoned by the contrivance of Livia, the mother of Tiberius, and the villany of Piso and Plancina, A. U. C. 772, in the thirty-first year of his age. The funeral ceremony was performed at Antioch. Germanicus succeeded to his father in the affections of the Roman people. Of gentle manners, mild and gracious to all, he was beheld with pleasure, and heard with applause. Ambition, if we except the fair desire of being distinguished by his virtues, had no influence on his conduct. Undebauched by pleasure, he discharged all the duties of an upright citizen and an able officer. He commanded the Roman legions in Germany; in war victorious, and in peace moderate to the vanquished. Possessed of great accomplishments, he was in nothing inferior to Alexander, and free from the vices of that warlike chief. He was, on the side of virtue, greatly his superior. Rome deplored his death, and with him lost all hopes of seeing the old constitution restored. Foreign na-

tions paid their tribute of respect to his memory.—Tacit. Annals, i. 3. 33, 34. 42, &c. ; ii. 72, 73. Dio, iv.

Inscriptions on ancient coins : ‘ Germanicus Cæsar, son of Tiberius Augustus, grandson to the deified Augustus, consul.’

After his death, in the reign of his son Caligula : ‘ Germanicus Cæsar, father of Cæsar Augustus, the deified Germanicus.’

For Agrippina, his wife, see No. 51.

82. Nero Cæsar, son of Germanicus and Agrippina. He married Julia, daughter of Drusus the son of Tiberius (see No. 70), A. U. C. 773. By the wicked arts of Sejanus he was banished to the isle of Pontia, and there put to death A. U. C. 784.—Tacit. Annals, iv. 59, 60 ; v. 3, 4. Suet. life of Tiberius, § 54. Dio, lviii.

For Julia, the wife of Nero Cæsar, see No. 74.

83. Drusus Cæsar, son of Germanicus and Agrippina, brother to Nero Cæsar and Caligula, afterwards emperor. He married Æmilia Lepida, who was induced by Sejanus to betray her husband. Deluded himself by the arts of that evil minister, he conspired against the life of his brother Nero Cæsar. He was imprisoned at Rome by order of Tiberius, and died in confinement A. U. C. 786.—Tacit. Annals, iv. 60 ; vi. 23, 24. Dio, lviii.

Inscriptions on ancient coins : ‘ Nero Cæsar, Drusus Cæsar, Duumviri.’

84. Æmilia Lepida, daughter of Manius Lepidus, and wife of Drusus Cæsar (No. 83). She was engaged in an adulterous commerce with Sejanus, and suborned by that ambitious upstart to carry a clandestine charge against her husband to the ear of Tiberius. Notwithstanding her crimes she was protected during her fa-

ther's life ; -but being afterwards prosecuted by the race of informers, she put an end to her days A. U. C. 789.—Tacit. Annals, iv. 20 ; vi. 27. 40.

85. Caius Cæsar, son of Germanicus and Agrippina ; a youth of engaging manners, and a promising disposition. He died prematurely in the bloom of life, much regretted by Augustus.—Suet. life of Caligula, § 7, 8.

86. Calus Cæsar, better known by the name of Caligula, fourth emperor of Rome, the son of Germanicus and Agrippina. He was born at Antium 31st August, in the consulship of Germanicus and Fonteius Capito, A. U. C. 765. He practised the arts of dissimulation during the life of Tiberius, and had the skill to conceal his real character. Having obtained the sovereign power he threw off the mask, and showed himself a monster of vice and cruelty. He wished with impious arrogance to be worshipped as a god, and was at the same time a tyrant of savage ferocity, the scourge of humankind. His delight in blood was so keen and ardent that he was often heard to express his wish, ' that the Roman people had but one neck, that he might at a blow destroy the whole race.' He dissipated in less than a year the whole treasure left by Tiberius, computed to be an immense sum. Nor can this be wondered at in a man who spent for one dinner a hundred thousand sesterces. Costly and effeminate in his dress, he was so extravagant as to appear in shoes composed of pearl. He was slain by Cassius Cherea, tribune of a pretorian cohort, on the fourth day of the Palatine games, A. U. C. 794 ; a man, says Seneca, designed by nature to show what the worst vices can do in the height of power.—Seneca de Consolat. c. ix. Suet. life of Caligula, § 8. 37. 58. Pliny, vii. 8 ; xxxvii. 2. Tacit. Annals, vi. 20.

Inscriptions on ancient coins: 'Caius Cæsar Augustus Germanicus, son of Tiberius Augustus, grandson to Augustus, great-grandson to the deified Augustus, Caius Cæsar, a god and emperor.'

As adopted son of Tiberius he was grandson to Augustus: as the son of Germanicus he was great-grandson.

87. Claudia, daughter of M. Silanus, married to Caligula A. U. C. 786. She died in childbed. Suetonius calls her Junia Claudilla.—Tacit. Annals, vi. 20. Suet. life of Caligula, § 12.

88. Livia Oristilla, called by Dio Cornelia Orestia. She was on the point of marrying Caius Calpurnius Piso when Caligula, enamored of her beauty, carried her off by force, and in a few days after repudiated her.—Suet. life of Caligula, § 25. Dio, lix.

89. Lollia Paulina, grand-daughter of Marcus Lollius, who was tutor to Caius Cæsar, the son of Agrippa (No. 48), and drew on himself a load of disgrace and obloquy on account of the prodigious presents which he received with a rapacious hand from the oriental princes. His daughter Lollia Paulina was married to Caligula. The emperor ravished her from Caius Memmius Regulus, and in a short time after dismissed her from his embraces. Pliny assures us that he saw her, not at a time of public festivity, but at a moderate entertainment, placed at the banqueting table, in a dress overcharged with jewels and pearls, artfully intermixed and blended, tangled in her hair, shining on her head, at her ears, round her neck, with rich bracelets on her arms, and her fingers loaded with rings; the whole of this labored magnificence was not worth less than four hundred thousand sesterces. Pliny adds, that this enormous display was not a present from the emperor, but all of it the wealth of her grand-

father Marcus Lollius, accumulated from the spoil of plundered provinces.—Pliny, ix. xxxv. 57. Suet. life of Caligula, § 25. Dio, lix.

90. Milonia Cæsonia, daughter of Vestilia, whom Caligula married when she was advanced in her pregnancy, A. U. C. 792. In thirty days after she was delivered of her child. She was the wife of the worst of men, and her own vices made her worthy of such a connexion. Caligula was killed A. U. C. 794; and in a few days after Cherea, who despatched the tyrant, ordered Cæsonia and her daughter to be put to death, that no remains of the tyrant's family should be suffered to exist. She died with a degree of fortitude that would have done honor to a better character.—Suet. life of Caligula, § 25. 59. Dio, lix. Pliny, vii. 5.

91. Julia Drusilla, daughter of Caligula and Milonia Cæsonia. Her frantic father carried her to the temples of all the goddesses, and dedicated her to Minerva, as to the patroness of her education. She discovered in her infancy strong indications of the cruelty that branded both her parents. She suffered death with her mother (see No. 93).—Suet. life of Caligula, § 25. 59. Dio, lix.

92. Two sons of Germanicus and Agrippina, who died in their infancy. Their names not recorded.—Suet. life of Caligula, § 7, 8.

93. Agrippina, daughter of Germanicus and Agrippina, born A. U. C. 769. She was married three times; first, to Cneius Domitius Ænobarbus, A. U. C. 781; secondly, to Passienus Crispus; thirdly, to the emperor Claudius, A. U. C. 801. She was a woman of violent passions, unbounded ambition, and at the same time distinguished by her literary accomplishments. By Ænobarbus, her first husband, she was the mother

of Nero, whose name is now another word for the most savage cruelty. Nero was born A. U. C. 790 (No. 35). By that execrable parricide Agrippina was barbarously murdered A. U. C. 812.—Tacit. Annals, ii. 54; iv. 53; xii. 64; xiv. 6, 7, 8. Suet. life of Caligula, § 7; Dio, x.

For Cneius Domitius Ænobarbus, her first husband, and the father of Nero, see No. 34.

94. Passienus Crispus, a celebrated orator, and twice consul. He was first married to Domitia (see No. 40), and secondly to Agrippina. A shrewd saying of his concerning Caligula is well known: 'There never was a better servant nor a worse master.' On other occasions he was used to observe, 'We all oppose the door to flattery, but none of us shut it.'—Pliny, xvi. xxxiv. 91. Tacit. Annals, vi. 20. Seneca, Quæst. Natural. iv. Preface.

For Claudius, the third husband of Agrippina, see No. 100.

95. Drusilla, daughter of Germanicus and Agrippina, born A. U. C. 770. She was first married to Lucius Cassius Longinus, A. U. C. 786, and afterwards to Marcus Æmilius Lepidus. Caligula, her brother, had an incestuous intrigue with her; and after her death, which happened A. U. C. 791, he canonised her for a goddess by the name of Panthea. On that occasion Livius Geminius declared on his oath that he had seen her in her ascent to heaven. For this extraordinary testimony he was amply rewarded by Caligula.—Tacit. Annals, vi. 15. Suet. life of Caligula, § 7. 24. Dio, ix.

On ancient coins; 'Drusilla Augusta.'

96. Lucius Cassius Longinus, married to Drusilla (No. 95). He was raised to the consulship A. U. C. 783, and afterwards stood forth the accuser of Drusus,

his wife's brother (see No. 83).—Suet. life of Caligula, § 24. Tacit. Annals, vi. 15. Dio, lviii.

For M. Æmilius Lepidus, the second husband of Drusilla, see No. 54.

97. Julia, daughter of Germanicus and Agrippina, called by Suetonius Livilla. She was born A. U. C. 771. Caligula, on account of her debaucheries, ordered her to be conveyed to the isle of Pontia, A. U. C. 792. She was recalled in the reign of Claudius; but Messalina, without any crime alleged, contrived to drive her into banishment, and afterwards put her to death, A. U. C. 796.—Suet. life of Caligula, § 7. 24. Life of Claudius, § 29. Dio, lix.

98. Quintilius Varus, son of Claudia Pulchra, who was cousin to Agrippina. He married Julia (No. 97). An accusation was framed against him by Domitius Afer and Dolabella, A. U. C. 780.—Seneca, Controv. i. 3. Tacit. Annals, iv. 52. 66.

99. Marcus Vinicius. He married Julia (No. 97) A. U. C. 786; was twice consul, but by a wicked stratagem of Messalina was destroyed by poison A. U. C. 799. It was to this man, in the year of his consulship, that Velleius Paterculus dedicated his elegant compendium of the Roman history; a work admired for the beauty of the style, but debased by the fulsome praise of Tiberius and Sejanus.—Tacit. Annals, vi. 15. See Supplement to Annals, v. 11. Dio, lx.

100. Tiberius Claudius Drusus Germanicus, fifth emperor of Rome. He was son to Nero Claudius Drusus (No. 79) and Antonia the younger (No. 42): he was brother to Germanicus; born at Lyons (Lugduni) A. U. C. 744. He discovered in the first dawn of infancy a degree of dulness that bordered on stupidity. He grew up so sluggish in body and mind, that Antonia his mother often declared that he was an im-

perfect production, sent into the world unfinished by the hand of Nature. He succeeded to the supreme power A. U. C. 794, during the whole of his reign governed altogether by his wives or his freedmen. He was poisoned by the contrivance of Agrippina his wife, and died on the 13th of October, in the sixty-fourth year of his age, and the fourteenth of his reign, A. U. C. 807. After his death he was numbered among the gods. His deification was treated with contempt and ridicule by Seneca, in a tract still extant, intitled, 'Claudii Cæsaris Apocolokintosis.' The general design of this piece is not ill imagined; but the humor is often coarse, and on the whole inferior to what might have been expected from the lively genius of that entertaining writer. Claudius, with all the appearance of inert faculties and an impassive mind, devoted his time in repose and indolence to literature and the polite arts. He was not intirely void of taste. His compositions in Greek, as well as Latin, were written with purity and even elegance. Two pieces of a brass table have been found at Lyons, on which is engraved a speech of Claudius, in characters so plainly legible, that Dotteville (in his edition of Tacitus) has given an exact copy, faithfully compared with the original (see at the end of his Notes to Annals, xii.).—Suet. life of Claudius, § 2. 10. 41, 42. Tacit. Annals, xii. 69. Seneca, Apocolokintosis. Pliny, xxxvi. xv. 24.

101. Plautia Urgulanilla, daughter of Aulus Plautius, who had enjoyed the splendor of a triumph. She was the first wife of the emperor Claudius, and by him repudiated on account of her licentious manners, and a suspicion of homicide that blackened her character.—Suet. life of Claudius, § 26. Dio, lx.

102. Drusus, son of the emperor Claudius and Ur-

gulanilla. A match between him and the daughter of Sejanus was projected by that ambitious favorite A. U. C. 773; but Drusus, as yet of tender years, lost his life by an accident. A pear, which in a playful manner he had tossed up in the air, fell into his mouth and choked him.—Suet. life of Claudius, § 27. Tacit. Annals, iii. 29.

103. Claudia, daughter of Urgulanilla. She was born in less than five months after her mother's divorce from Claudius; and yet the emperor thought proper to disown her as his child, alleging that she was begot by one of his freedmen, and as such he ordered her to be left naked at her mother's door.—Suet. life of Claudius, § 27.

104. Ælia Petina, daughter of Quintus Ælius Tubero, who was consul A. U. C. 743. She was the second wife of Claudius, but on some frivolous occasion soon repudiated.—Suet. life of Claudius, § 26.

105. Antonia, daughter of the emperor Claudius and Ælia Petina. Claudius gave her away in marriage to Cneius Pompeius (see No. 106), and afterwards to Cornelius Sylla (see No. 107). Nero, after the death of Poppæa, proposed to marry her; and his offer being rejected, he condemned her to suffer death, on a pretended charge of plotting against the state.—Suet. life of Claudius, § 27. Life of Nero, § 35. Tacit. Annals, xii. 68.

106. Cneius Pompeius, a youth of noble descent, married to Antonia (No. 105) A. U. C. 794. He was some time after put to death by order of Claudius.—Suet. life of Claudius, § 27. 29.

107. Faustus Cornelius Sylla, of illustrious birth, the second husband of Antonia (No. 105). He was banished by Nero into Narbon Gaul, and there put to death by assassins despatched from Rome, A. U. C.

815.—Suet. life of Claudius, § 27. Tacit. Annals, xiii. 23; xiv. 57.

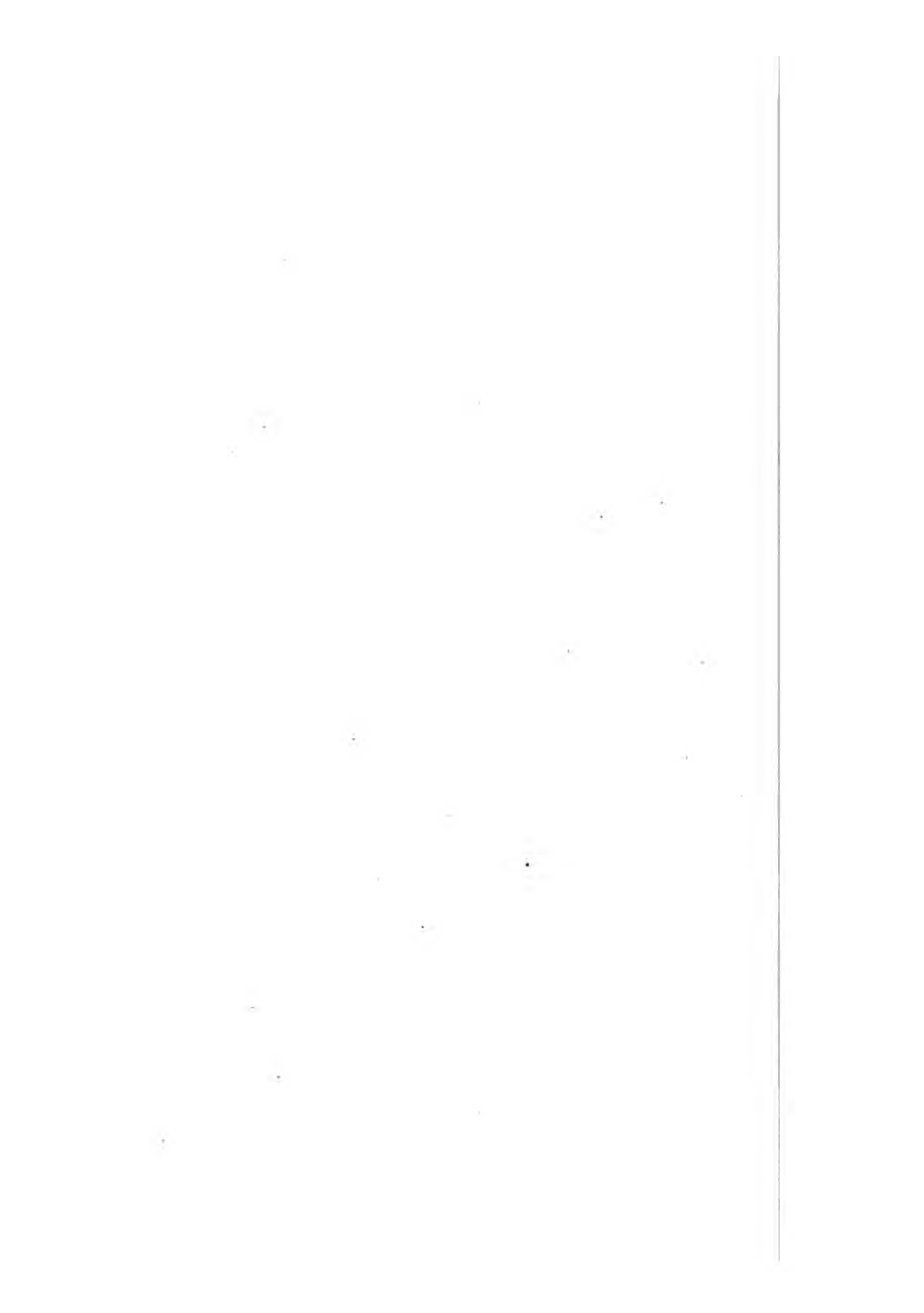
For Messalina, the third wife of Claudius, see No. 26.

108. Britannicus, son of Claudius and Messalina, born 12th of February, A. U. C. 794. By his birth, and his father's intention, who carried him in his arms and recommended him as heir-apparent to the affections of the army, he was next in succession to the sovereignty; but by the artful policy of Agrippina, the fourth wife of Claudius, he was postponed to Nero, and afterwards destroyed by poison in the fourteenth year of his age, A. U. C. 808.—Suet. life of Claudius, § 27. Tacit. Annals, xii. 25; xiii. 15, 16.

For Octavia, the sister of Britannicus, see No. 39.

For Agrippina, the mother of Nero by Domitius Ænobarbus, and afterwards the wife of Claudius, see No. 93.

THE HISTORY OF TACITUS.



HISTORY OF TACITUS.

BOOK I.

SECT. I. THE era from which it is my intention to deduce the following narration is the second consulship of Servius Galba, when Titus Vinius was his colleague in office. Of the antecedent period, including a space of eight hundred and twenty years¹ from the foundation of Rome, the history has been composed by various authors, who, as long as they had before them the transactions² of the Roman people, dignified their work with eloquence equal to the subject, and a spirit of freedom worthy of the old republic. After the battle of Actium, when, to close the scene of civil distraction, all power and authority were surrendered to a single ruler, the historic character disappeared, and genius died by the same blow that ended public liberty. Truth was reduced to the last gasp, and various circumstances conspired against her. A new

¹ Tacitus computes 820 years from the foundation of Rome to the end of Nero, when the following History begins. The battle of Actium was in the year of Rome 723; from that time the reigns of Augustus and the succeeding emperors form a period of ninety-eight years to the end of Nero, who died A. U. C. 821.

² The history of Rome to the end of the republic is emphatically called by Tacitus the history of the Roman people. From the battle of Actium it is properly the history of the emperors.

Romans ; the Dacian name ennobled by alternate victory and defeat ; and, finally, the Parthians taking the field under the banners of a pretended Nero.¹ In the course of the work we shall see Italy overwhelmed with calamities ; new wounds inflicted, and the old, which time had closed, opened again and bleeding afresh ; cities sacked by the enemy, or swallowed up by earthquakes,² and the fertile country of Campania made a scene of desolation ; Rome laid waste by fire ; her ancient and most venerable temples smoking on the ground ; the capitol³ wrapt in flames by the hands of frantic citizens ; the holy ceremonies of religion violated ; adultery reigning without control ; the adjacent islands filled with exiles ; rocks and desert places stained with clandestine murder, and Rome itself a theatre of horror ; where nobility of descent, and splendor of fortune, marked men out for destruction ; where the vigor of mind that aimed at civil dignities, and the modesty that declined them, were offences without distinction ; where virtue was a crime that led to certain ruin ; where the guilt of informers, and the wages of their iniquity, were alike detestable ; where the sacerdotal order, the consular dignity, the government of provinces,⁴ and even the cabinet of the prince, were

1 For more of the pretended Nero, see Hist. ii. 8. The Parthians were on the point of declaring war in favor of another impostor, who took the name of Nero, in the reign of Titus, A. U. C. 834, and afterwards in the reign of Domitian, A. U. C. 841.

2 The cities of Herculaneum and Pompeii were destroyed by an eruption of the lava of Mount Vesuvius, in the beginning of Titus' reign, A. U. C. 832.

3 See the conflagration of the capitol, Hist. iii. 67. 71.

4 Collectors of the imperial revenue were instituted by the emperors, in order to intrench on the power of the proconsuls, who were the proper officers in all the provinces that remained under the authority of the senate. Informers were

seized by that execrable race, as their lawful prey ; where nothing was sacred, nothing safe, from the hand of rapacity ; where slaves were suborned, or, by their own malevolence, excited against their masters ; where freedmen betrayed their patrons ; and he who had lived without an enemy¹ died by the treachery of a friend.

III. And yet this melancholy period, barren as it was of public virtue, produced some examples of truth and honor. Mothers went with their sons into voluntary exile ; wives followed the fortune of their husbands ; relations stood forth in the cause of their unhappy kindred ; sons appeared in defence of their fathers ; slaves on the rack gave proofs of their fidelity ; eminent citizens, under the hard hand of oppression, were reduced to want and misery, and, even in that distress, retained an unconquered spirit. We shall see others firm to the last, and, in their deaths, nothing inferior to the applauded characters of antiquity. In addition to the misfortunes usual in the course of human transactions, we shall see the earth teeming with prodigies, the sky overcast with omens, thunder rolling with dreadful denunciation, and a variety of prognostics, sometimes auspicious, often big with terror, occasionally uncertain, dark, equivocal ; frequently direct and manifest. In a word, the gods never gave such terrible instructions, nor, by the slaughter of armies, made it so clear and evident that, instead of extending protection² to the empire, it was their awful

raised to the office of imperial procurators, and obtained weight and influence in the cabinet.

¹ The treachery of friends was the scourge and pest of society for several years. Trajan repressed the mischief. See his praise for that public benefit in Pliny's Panegyric, § 42.

² Some of the commentators have objected to the sentiment

pleasure to let fall their vengeance on the crimes of an offending people.

IV. Before we take up the thread of our narrative it will not be useless to inquire what, in that period, was the state of affairs at Rome, and what the spirit that went forth among her armies; how the provinces stood affected, and wherein consisted the strength or weakness of the empire. By proceeding in this manner, we shall not content ourselves with a bare recital of facts, which are often ascribed to chance: we shall see the spring of each transaction, and a regular chain of causes and effects will be laid open to our view.

The death of Nero, in the first tumult of emotion, was considered as a public blessing; but the senate, the people of Rome, the pretorian guards, and the legions, wherever stationed, were variously affected by that event. A new political secret was then for the first time discovered. It was perceived that elsewhere than at Rome an emperor might be invested with the sovereign power. The fathers seized the opportunity during the absence of a prince yet new¹ to the reins of government to exercise their ancient rights, pleased with the novelty of freedom, and the resumption of their legislative authority. The Roman knights caught the flame of liberty. Honest men began to entertain hopes of the constitution. Such as stood connected with families of credit, and the various clients and freedmen of illustrious men driven into exile, were all

expressed by Tacitus in this place. Brotier calls it 'atrox sententia.' But what is the fair construction? It is this: The crimes of the Roman people were such that they could no longer expect the protection of the gods. They had drawn down the vengeance of heaven. Lucan has a similar sentiment. See Cicero to the same effect, *De Nat. Deorum*, iii. 32.

¹ Galba, who was not arrived from Spain.

erect with expectation of better times. The inferior populace, who loitered away their time in the theatre and the circus; the slaves of abandoned characters, and the sycophant crew, who, without substance of their own, had been pampered by the vices of Nero; all of that description stood covered with astonishment, yet panting for news, and eagerly swallowing the rumor of the day.

V. The pretorian guards¹ had been, by habit and the obligation of their oath, always devoted to the imperial family. Their revolt from Nero was not so much their own inclination as the management of their leaders. Acting without principle, they now were ready for new commotions. The promise of a donative in the name of Galba was still to be performed. They knew that war is the soldier's harvest. Peace affords no opportunity to gain the recompense due to valor; and the favors of the new prince would be engrossed by the legions, to whom he owed his elevation. Fired by these reflections, and farther instigated by the arts of Nymphidius Sabinus,² their commanding officer, whose ambition aimed at the imperial dignity, they began to meditate a second revolution.

The conspiracy was crushed in the bud, and Nymphidius perished in the attempt. But the soldiers had thrown off the mask, and the sense of guilt served only to goad and spur their resolution. They talked of Galba with contempt and ridicule; they laughed at his advanced age; they inveighed against his avarice: and his rigorous discipline³ by which he had acquired his

1 The pretorian guards had shown themselves at all times firmly attached to the Cæsarean family.

2 For an account of Nymphidius and his rash ambition, see the Appendix to the sixteenth book of the Annals.

3 The rigor with which Galba supported and enforced military discipline is stated by Suetonius.

military character, inflamed the prejudices of men who had been enervated by a long peace of fourteen years. During that time the dissolute manners of Nero diffused a general corruption, insomuch that the virtues, which formerly gained the affection of the army, were fallen into contempt. Nero was endeared to the soldiers by his vices. Galba, on the contrary, was rendered unpopular by the austerity of his manners. He was used to say, that he chose his soldiers, but he never bought them. The maxim was worthy of the old republic, but no man thought it an effusion from the heart. His conduct and his words were too much at variance.

VI. Galba, being now in the decline of life, resigned himself altogether to Titus Vinius and Cornelius Laco; the former the most profligate of men, and the latter despised for his sluggish inactivity. By those pernicious ministers he was involved in the popular hatred due to their own flagitious deeds. The wickedness of Vinius, and the incapacity of Laco, proved his ruin in the end. He made his approach to Rome by slow journeys, in his progress marking his way with blood and cruelty. Cingonius Varro, consul elect, and Petronius Turpilianus, of consular rank, were by his orders put to death; the former, as an accomplice in the enterprise of Nymphidius, and the latter, because he had been appointed to command the army under Nero. They were condemned unheard, and for that reason thought the innocent victims of a barbarous policy.

Galba's entry into the city of Rome, after the massacre of several thousands of unarmed and defenceless soldiers, struck a general panic. The people at large were thrown into consternation, and even the men who executed the orders of their general stood

astonished at the horrors of the scene. Rome at that time was filled with a prodigious body of troops, assembled from various parts of the empire. Besides the forces drawn from the fleet, and left as a garrison by Nero, Galba, when he entered the city, brought with him a legion from Spain. To these must be added the several companies from Germany,¹ from Britain, and Illyricum, which had been sent forward towards the Caspian straits, to serve in the war then intended against the Albanians. In a short time afterwards, on the first notice of the revolt excited in Gaul by the turbulent genius of Vindex, they were all recalled; and the consequence was, that Rome saw within her walls the unusual spectacle of a vast military force. In so large a number of soldiers, not yet devoted to the interest of a single leader, the seed-plots of a new rebellion were prepared, and ready to break out on the first alarm.

VII. It happened at this point of time that an account arrived of two murders, committed at a distance from Rome; one of Clodius Macer in Africa, and the other of Fonteius Capito in Germany. Macer, beyond all doubt, was engaged in schemes of ambition, and in the midst of his projects was cut off by Trebonius Garrucianus, the procurator of the province, who had received his orders from Galba. Capito was put to death by Cornelius Aquinus and Fabius Valens, on a like suspicion of plotting innovations in the state. But the charge against him was by no means clear, nor had the emperor issued his orders. The general opinion was, that Capito, however branded with avarice, rapacity, and other vices, had not added to his crimes

1 The forces from Britain and Germany, which Nero had sent forward on a wild expedition to the straits of the Caspian sea, were all recalled to quell the insurrection of Vindex in Gaul.

the guilt of rebellion ; but that the authors of his destruction, having first endeavored to draw him into their own designs, combined to execute on an innocent victim the vengeance due to their own iniquity.

Galba, with his usual facility, or perhaps wishing to avoid the danger of an inquiry into what could not be recalled, thought it prudent to give his sanction to the acts of his officers, however unjust and cruel. Both executions were, notwithstanding, the subject of public clamor ; the usual fate of all unpopular princes : their actions, when the current of the times is set against them, are taken in the gross, and whether good or evil, condemned without distinction. Venality and corruption were now fully established. The emperor's freedmen engrossed the whole power of the state, and every thing was put up to sale. Even the slaves, in haste to grow rich, and fearing the uncertainty of an old man's life, began to seize their share of the plunder. The new court opened with all the vices of Nero's reign, but without the same apology. The advanced age¹ of Galba was a subject of ridicule. Dissipation, at his time of life, excited laughter and contempt. Appearances are the reasons of the populace : they were accustomed to the youthful frolics of Nero, and in their comparison of princes, elegance of figure and the graces of deportment are decisive qualities.

VIII. Such was the posture of affairs at Rome, and such the sentiments that pervaded the mass of the people. With regard to the provinces, Spain was governed by Cluvius Rufus,² a man distinguished by

¹ Galba, at his elevation to the imperial dignity, was seventy-three years old. See the Appendix to Annals, xvi.

² Cluvius Rufus was a writer of history. Pliny the younger says he told his friend Verginius, ' If you meet with any

his eloquence, and well accomplished in the arts of peace, but of no reputation in war. In both the Gauls the name of Vindex was still held in veneration; and the people, pleased with their recent admission to the freedom¹ of Rome, and the diminution of their tribute, showed no symptoms of disaffection. In those parts, however, which lay contiguous to the German armies the inhabitants of the several cities saw with discontent that they were not thought worthy of the like indulgence. Some of them complained that their territories were circumscribed within narrow limits; and in vulgar minds the good extended to others was an aggravation of the injury done to themselves.

The legions in Germany did not show a countenance that promised a perfect calm. The restless temper of the soldiers, by their late victory² flushed with pride, yet dreading the imputation of having conquered Galba's party, was thrown into violent agitations, by turns inflamed with rage and overwhelmed with fear. From such a number of soldiers, who had the power of the sword in their own hands, nothing but danger was to be apprehended. They balanced for some time before they detached themselves from Nero: nor did Verginius, their commanding officer, declare immediately for Galba. Whether that tardy movement was occasioned by his own ambitious projects cannot now be known.

thing in my history that gives you offence, you will be so good as to remember that history must not betray the cause of truth.'—'You know,' replied Verginius, 'that whatever I have done, it has been ever my wish to have all my actions faithfully related by such a writer as yourself.'

1 The people of Gaul who stood for Vindex were the Sequani, the Ædui, and the Arverni. The states that lay near the legions on the Upper and Lower Rhine were the Lingones and the Remi.

2 The German armies obtained a complete victory over Vindex at Vesontium.

The soldiers, it is certain, made him a tender of the imperial dignity. The death of Fonteius Capito was another cause of discontent. Even such as could not deny the justice of the measure exclaimed against it with indignation. While the minds of men were thus distracted with contending passions Galba thought fit, under a show of friendship, to recall Verginius¹ from his post. The legions had now no chief at their head, and if the conduct of their general was arraigned, they considered themselves as men involved in the same accusation.

IX. The legions on the Upper Rhine were ill retained in their duty by Hordeonius Flaccus, an officer far advanced in years, without vigor of mind, disabled in his limbs, and by his infirmities exposing himself and old age to scorn. Unequal to the command even in quiet times, he was now in a camp full of bold and turbulent spirits, unable to support his authority. His endeavors to enforce obedience served only to irritate the minds of men disposed to mutiny. On the Lower Rhine the army had been for some time without a general of consular rank, till Aulus Vitellius,² son of the person of that name who had been censor, and three times consul, was sent by Galba to take on him the command. This to Galba seemed sufficient, and the Fates³ ordained it.

1 Verginius commanded the legions on the Upper Rhine. For an account of him and his conduct, see the Appendix to the Annals, xvi. 12. When he was recalled by Galba Hordeonius Flaccus succeeded to the command.

2 This was Vitellius, whom in the sequel we shall see emperor of Rome. Galba sent him to command on the Lower Rhine, while Hordeonius Flaccus, a man in years, and greatly afflicted with the gout, was likely to remain inactive in the province of Upper Germany. See Suet. in Vitellio, § 7.

3 The short reflection of Tacitus on the appointment of Vitellius is understood two different ways by the comments.

In Britain every thing was quiet. The legions stationed in that island had no party divisions to distract them. During the civil wars that followed they took no part in the contest. Situated at a distance, and divided by the ocean from the rest of the world, they did not catch the epidemic frenzy of the times. They knew no enemies but those of their country, and were not taught by civil disorder to hate one another. Illyricum remained in a state of tranquillity, though the legions drawn by Nero from that country found the means, while they loitered in Italy, of tampering with Verginius. But the armies were at distant stations, separated by a long tract of sea or land; and that circumstance proved the best expedient to prevent a combination of the military. They could neither act with a spirit of union, nor by communicating their vices spread a general infection through the legions that lay remote from each other.

X. The east was hitherto free from commotion. Licinius Mucianus governed the province of Syria with four legions under his command. He was an officer of experience, distinguished, in the early part of his life, by alternate vicissitudes of good and evil fortune. In his youth the favor of the great was the object of his ambition, and in that pursuit he wasted his fortune. His circumstances growing desperate, and a storm impending from the displeasure of Claudius, he retired into Asia, and there lived in obscurity, as little removed from the state and condition of a real exile, as he was afterwards from the splendor of imperial for-

tors. According to some the true reading is, 'id satis videbatur, that by Galba was thought sufficient;' according to others, 'id fatis videbatur, the fates ordained it.' The last is in the manner of Tacitus, and therefore adopted in the translation.

tune. He united in his character a rare and wonderful mixture of repugnant qualities. He was affable and arrogant: addicted to pleasure, and by fits and starts a man of business. When at leisure from affairs he gave a loose to his luxurious passions: if his interest required it, he came on mankind with superior talents. The minister was praised, and the private man detested. The art of conciliating the good-will of others was his in an eminent degree. With his inferiors he knew how to soften authority; to his friends and equals his address was courtly; and yet, with these attractive arts, a man so various was fitter to raise others to the imperial dignity than to obtain it for himself.

The war against the Jews had been committed by Nero to Flavius Vespasian, who was then in Judea at the head of three legions. That commander had formed no design, nor even a wish, against the interest of Galba. He sent his son Titus to Rome, as will be seen hereafter, with congratulations to Galba, and assurances of fidelity. It was not then perceived that the sovereign power was destined by the decrees of Heaven for Vespasian and his two sons. After his accession, portents and prodigies, and the responses of oracles, were better understood.

XI. Egypt, and the forces stationed there to bridle the several provinces, were, according to the system established by Augustus, confided to the Roman knights, who exercised all the powers of the ancient kings. In order to keep in subjection a country difficult of access, and at the same time a granary of corn; where the genius of the people,¹ deeply tinged with

¹ It has been mentioned in former notes that it was the policy of Augustus to keep the management of Egypt, the great corn market of Rome, in his own hands. The expres-

superstition, was ever wavering, and prone to change ; where there was no plan of regular government, and by consequence no respect paid to the civil magistrate ; it was the policy of Augustus to retain the administration, like a mystery of state, in his own hands, and under his own cabinet council. In the present juncture,¹ Tiberius Alexander, a native of the country, was intrusted with the government of the province.

Africa, and the legions quartered there, were, since the murder of Clodius Macer, grown indifferent to all modes of government. Having experienced the authority of an inferior master, they were willing to submit to any prince. The two Mauritaniae, Rhætia, Noricum, and Thrace, with the places committed to the care of imperial procurators, had no fixed principle, no hatred, and no affection, but what was inspired by the force nearest at hand. They were always united in opinion with the strongest. The provinces, which were left naked and defenceless, and Italy in particular, were open to the first invader, the ready prey of any conqueror. Such was the situation of the Roman world when Servius Galba, in his second consulship, and Titus Vinius, his colleague, began their year ; a fatal year, which brought them both to a tragic catastrophe, and the commonwealth to the brink of ruin.

XII. In a few days after the calends of January letters arrived at Rome from Pompeius Propinquus, the procurator of Belgic Gaul,² with intelligence of a

sion of Tacitus is remarkable ; to reserve the administration for his own cabinet council. See *Annals*, ii. 59.

¹ Tiberius Alexander is said to be a native of Egypt ; but, to qualify him for the office of governor, he was made a Roman knight. He was probably the same person who is mentioned *Annals* xv. 28.

² Belgic Gaul began from the Scheld (L'Escaut), and ex-

revolt in Upper Germany. The legions in that quarter, disregarding the obligation of their oath, shook off all obedience, and demanded another emperor; willing, however, to soften the violence of their proceedings, and for that purpose to leave the choice to the judgment of the senate and the Roman people. The use that Galba made of this intelligence was to hasten the adoption of a successor; a point which he had for some time revolved in his mind, and often discussed with his secret advisers. During the few months of his reign no subject had so much engrossed the public conversation. The people, always politicians, and fond of settling state affairs, gave a loose to their usual freedom of speech; and besides, an emperor on the verge of life made it natural to advert to the succession. Few were able to think with judgment, and fewer had the virtue to feel for the public good. Private views and party connexions suggested various candidates. Different factions were formed, and all intrigued, caballed, and clamored, as their hopes or fears directed. Titus Vinius did not escape the notice of the public. He grew in power every day, and the hatred of the people kept pace with his rising grandeur. In the sudden elevation of Galba, this man and his adherents, with all the creatures of the court, saw their opportunity to enrich themselves with the spoils of their country; and encouraged as they were by the facility of a weak, a credulous, and superannuated prince, they were resolved to lose no time. In such a period the temptation was great, and guilt might hope to plunder with impunity.

XIII. The whole sovereign power was in the hands

tended to the river Sequana (the Seine). The revolt of the legions on the Upper Rhine is related by Suetonius, in Galba, § 16.

of Titus Vinius, the consul, and Cornelius Laco, the prefect of the pretorian guards. A third favorite soon appeared on the political stage, with a degree of influence not inferior to either of the former. The name of this man was Icelus, one of the emperor's freedmen, lately created a Roman knight, and, to suit his new dignity, honored with the name of Martianus. The three confidential ministers were soon at variance. They clashed in interest, and in all inferior transactions drew different ways; but in the choice of a successor they were divided into two factions. Vinius declared for Marcus Otho; Laco and Icelus joined in opposition to that measure, not so much to favor a friend of their own, as to thwart the designs of a rival. Galba was not to learn the close connexion that subsisted between Vinius and Otho. The busy politicians, who love to pry into every thing, and divulge all they know and all they think, had circulated a report that reached the ear of the emperor. Vinius had a daughter, at that time a widow; Otho was unmarried, and a match between them would make the minister the father-in-law of his future emperor.

Galba resolved to act with caution, and with due regard to the public welfare. He saw the sovereign power wrested out of the hands of Nero, but wrested in vain, if transferred to a man like Otho; a stranger, from his earliest days, to every fair pursuit, and in the prime of manhood distinguished by nothing but riot and debauchery. It was his taste for luxury and vicious pleasures that first recommended him to the notice of Nero. He vied with his master in all kinds of dissipation, and in consequence of that connexion became the worthy depository to whom the prince intrusted the care of his dearly beloved Poppæa till such time as Octavia was by a divorce removed out

of the way. But Otho's fidelity soon became suspected. Nero's jealousy could not bear a rival. He sent his favorite companion to govern the province of Lusitania, and under that pretext banished him from Rome. It is true that Otho, in the course of his administration, gained by his mild and courtly manners no small degree of popularity. In the late revolution he was the first to espouse the interest of Galba. While the war lasted he continued an active partisan, and by his splendid appearance did no small credit to the cause. Hence his hopes of being called to the succession. The soldiers favored his pretensions; and the creatures of Nero's court promised themselves, under a sovereign so nearly resembling their master, a return of the same vices.

XIV. Galba saw with deep anxiety a storm gathering in Germany, and where it would burst he could not foresee. Of Vitellius and his designs no certain account arrived. The revolt of the legions filled him with apprehensions, and he reposed no confidence in the pretorian guards. The nomination of a successor seemed, in such a crisis, to be the best expedient; and for that purpose he held a cabinet council. Besides Vinius and Laco, he thought proper to summon Marius Celsus, consul elect, and Ducennius Geminus, the prefect of the city. Having prefaced the business in a short speech concerning his age and infirmities, he sent for Piso Licinianus; whether of his own free choice, or at the instigation of Laco, remains uncertain. That minister had lived in friendship with Piso. He contracted an intimacy with him at the house of Rubellius Plautus, though he had now the address to conceal that connexion, affecting, with public motives, to recommend a stranger. To this conduct the fair esteem in which Piso was held gave an appearance of sin-

cerity. Piso was the son of Marcus Crassus and Scribonia, both of illustrious descent. His aspect was grave and his deportment formal; such as gave an idea of primitive manners. By the candid and impartial he was called strict and severe; by his enemies morose and sullen. With great excellencies, he had a mixture of those qualities that are often the shades of eminent virtue; but those very shades, which seemed to others too dark and gloomy, in the eyes of Galba were the strokes of character that gave Piso a cast of antiquity, and made him worthy to be the adopted heir to the empire.

XV. Galba, we are told, taking Piso by the hand, addressed him in the following manner: ‘If the adoption which I am now to make were, like the act of a private citizen, to be acknowledged, as the law *Curiata*¹ directs, in the presence of the pontiffs, I should derive honor to myself from an alliance with a person descended from the great Pompey and Marcus Crassus; and, in return, you would add to the nobility of your own family the lustre of the Sulpician and Lutatian name. I now address you in a more exalted character. It is the emperor of Rome that speaks. Called by the consent of the gods and men to that high station, I am now determined in my choice by your rare accomplishments, and the love I feel for my country. I invite you to the imperial dignity; that dignity for which our ancestors led armies to the field, and which I myself obtained in battle. Without your stir I now make to you a voluntary offer. For this proceeding I have before me the example of Augustus, who asso-

¹ Romulus classed the citizens of Rome in thirty curias, and from that circumstance the *Lex Curiata* took its name. The law was enacted by the people assembled in their several curias. See *Annals*, xi. 22.

ciated to himself, first his sister's son Marcellus, and then Agrippa his son-in-law, his grandsons afterwards, and finally Tiberius, the son of his wife. Augustus indeed looked for an heir in his own family; I choose in the bosom of the commonwealth. If on such an occasion I could listen to private affection, I have a numerous train of relations, and I have companions in war. But it was not from motives of pride that I accepted the sovereignty of the state: ambition had no share in my conduct. I brought with me to the seat of government an upright intention; and that I now act on the same principle may be fairly seen, when in my present choice I postpone not only my own relations, but even those of your own family. You have a brother, in point of nobility your equal; by priority of birth your superior; and, if your merit did not supersede him, a man worthy of the highest elevation.

‘ You are now at the time of life at which the passions subside. Your former conduct requires no apology. Fortune has hitherto¹ frowned on you: you must now beware of her smiles. Prosperity tries the human heart with the deepest probe, and draws forth the hidden character. We struggle with adversity, but success disarms us. I trust however that you will carry with you to the highest station the candor of your mind, your good faith, your independent spirit, and your constancy in friendship; virtues that exalt and dignify the human character: but the arts of insidious men will lay siege to your best qualities, and undermine them all. Dissimulation will deceive you:

¹ Piso's father, mother, and brother, were put to death by Claudius. Another brother (the conspiracy against Nero being detected) opened his veins and bled to death. See *Annals*, xv. 59.

flattery will find admission to your heart; and self-interest, the bane of all true affection, will lay snares to seduce your integrity. To-day you and I converse without disguise, in terms of plain simplicity: how will others deal with us? Their respect will be paid to our fortunes, not to ourselves. To talk the language of sincerity to a prince, and guide him by honest counsels, is a laborious task: to play the hypocrite requires no more than to humor his inclinations, whatever they are. It is the grimace of friendship: the heart has no share in the business.

XVI. ‘ If the mighty fabric of this great empire could subsist on any other foundation than that of a monarchy, the glory of restoring the old republic should this day be mine. But at my age all that remains for me is to bequeath to the people an able successor: your youth may give them a virtuous prince. Under Tiberius, Caligula, and Claudius, we were all the property of one family. By hereditary right the Roman world was theirs. The prince is now elective, and the freedom of choice is liberty. The Julian and the Claudian race are both extinct, and virtue may now succeed by adoption. To be born the son of a prince is the result of chance; mankind consider it in no higher light. The method of adoption allows time to deliberate, and the public voice will serve as a guide to direct the judgment of the emperor. Let Nero be for ever before your eyes: proud of his long line of ancestors, and warm with the blood of the Cæsars, he did not fall by the revolt of Vindex, at the head of a province naked and disarmed; nor was he deposed by me, who had only one legion under my command: his own vices, his own cruelty, hurled him from his throne, no more to trample on the necks of mankind. Of a

prince condemned by a public sentence there was till then no example.

‘ As to myself, raised as I was by the events of war, and called to the sovereignty by the voice of a willing people, I know what I have to expect: envy and malice may pursue me, but the glory of doing good shall still be mine. After the storm that lately shook the empire, you will not wonder that a perfect calm has not succeeded; and if two legions waver in their duty, your courage must not be disconcerted. My reign did not begin in the halcyon days of peace. Old age, at present, is the objection urged against me: but when it is known whom I have adopted I shall appear young in my successor. Nero is still regretted by the vile and profligate: that good men may not regret him, it will be ours to provide by our future conduct. More than I have said the time will not admit: if I have made a proper choice, I have discharged my duty. One rule however there is worthy of your consideration. In all questions of good and evil, ask yourself, when you were a subject, what did you expect from the prince, and what did you wish him to avoid? It is not at Rome as in despotic governments, where one family towers above mankind, and their subjects groan in bondage. You are to reign over the Roman people; a people whom no extreme will suit: when in full possession of liberty, enemies to their own happiness; when reduced to slavery, impatient of the yoke.’ To this effect Galba delivered himself, little doubting but that he was then creating a prince: the courtiers considered it as a complete legal act, and paid their homage to their future sovereign.

XVII. During the whole of this solemn transaction

Piso, we are told, never lost the even tenor of his mind. From the first moment all eyes were fixed on him; yet, on his part, no emotion was seen, no symptom of joy, no surprise, no confusion. He addressed the emperor, now his father, in terms of profound respect, and spoke of himself with reserve and modesty. His mien and countenance never betrayed the smallest inward alteration. He behaved with the apathy of a man who deserved to reign, but did not desire it. The next consideration was, in what place the adoption should be announced; in the forum before an assembly of the people, in the senate, or in the camp. The latter was thought most eligible: the army would feel the compliment; the affections of the soldiers, though of little value if purchased by bribery and low intrigue, are, notwithstanding, when they are gained by fair and honorable means, always of moment, and never to be neglected. Meanwhile, the populace rushing in crowds from every quarter, surrounded the palace, burning with impatience for the important news, and growing still more eager in proportion to the delay of the profound politicians, who affected an air of mystery, when the secret had already transpired.

XVIII. On the fourth of the ides of January the weather was uncommonly tempestuous, accompanied with heavy rains, thunder and lightning, and all the uproar of the elements, which usually alarms the superstition of the multitude. In ancient times this phenomenon would have been sufficient¹ to dissolve all public assemblies: but Galba was not to be deterred from his purpose. He proceeded to the camp, regard-

¹ Thunder and lightning were always considered by the Romans as a warning not to transact public business; Cicero *De Divinatione*, ii. 18.

less of prodigies, which he considered as the effect of natural causes; or, it may be, that what is fixed by fate cannot by human prudence be avoided. A vast conflux of soldiers assembled in the camp. Galba addressed them in a short speech, such as becomes the imperial dignity. He told them that, in conformity to the example of Augustus, and the practice of the army, where each soldier chooses his companion in war,¹ he had adopted Piso for his son. Fearing that his silence on the subject of the German revolt might tend to magnify the danger, he added, that the fourth and eighteenth legions were, by the artifice of a few factious leaders, incited to tumult and disorder: but their violence went no farther than words, and he had no doubt but they would soon be sensible of their error. Such was his plain and manly language. He added no flattering expressions, no soothing hopes of a donative. The tribunes, notwithstanding, and the centurions and soldiers who stood nearest to his person, raised a shout of approbation. Through the rest of the lines a deep and sullen silence prevailed. The men saw, with discontent, that on the eve of a war they were deprived of those gratuities which had been granted in time of peace, and were now become the soldier's right. The emperor, beyond all doubt, had it in his power to secure the affections of the soldiers. From a parsimonious old man the smallest mark of liberality would have made an impression. But in an age that could no longer bear the

1 According to a military custom, established in an early period of the commonwealth, every Roman soldier chose his favorite comrade, and by that tie of friendship all were mutually bound to share every danger with their fellows. The consequence was that a warlike spirit pervaded the whole army. See Livy, ix. 39.

virtues of the old republic rigid economy was out of season, and by consequence the worst of policy.

XIX. From the camp Galba proceeded to the senate. His speech, like that to the soldiers, was short, unadorned, and simple. Piso delivered himself with grace and eloquence. The fathers heard him with attention; some with real affection, and others who in their hearts opposed his interest with overacted zeal; while the neutral and indifferent (by far the greatest number) made a tender of their services, all with private views, regardless of their country. This was the only public act in which Piso appeared. In the time that followed between his adoption and his death (an interval of four days) he neither said nor did any thing that merits the attention of history.

Affairs in Germany began to wear a gloomy aspect. Messengers on the heels of one another came posting to Rome; and in a city where men stood athirst for news, and swallowed the worst with avidity, nothing was seen but hurry and confusion. The fathers resolved to treat by their deputies with the German legions. In a secret council it was proposed that Piso should set out at the head of the embassy, that the army might have before their eyes the authority of the senate, and the majesty of the empire. It was farther thought advisable that Laco, the prefect of the pretorian guards, should accompany the deputation; but he declined the office. Nor was the choice of the ambassadors easily arranged. The whole was left to Galba's judgment, and he executed it with caprice and shameful indecision. Men were appointed, and removed; others were substituted, and changed again; some excused themselves; numbers, as fear or ambition prompted, made interest for the preference, or for permission to remain at home.

XX. The means of raising money came next under consideration. Various expedients were proposed, but none appeared so just as that of making reprisals on such as by their rapacity impoverished the commonwealth. Nero had lavished in pensions and donations above two-and-twenty millions of sesterces. The men who had enriched themselves by this wild profusion were allowed to retain a tenth part of the plunder, and condemned to refund the rest. But their tenth part was no longer in their possession. Prodigal no less of the public money than of their own, they had squandered all in riot and debauchery. They had neither lands nor funds of any kind. The wreck of their fortunes consisted of little more than the utensils of luxury, vice, and folly. To enforce a resumption of all enormous grants, a court of commissioners was established, consisting of thirty Roman knights. This tribunal, odious on account of its novelty, and still more so for its number of officers, and the spirit of cabal that prevailed in every part of the business, was found vexatious and oppressive. The auctioneer planted his staff in every street; the public crier was heard; sales and confiscations were seen; a general ferment spread through the city. And yet this scene of distress was beheld with pleasure. The men who had been pillaged by Nero saw the minions of that emperor reduced to a level with themselves. About the same time several tribunes were discharged from the service. In that number were Antonius Taurus and Antonius Naso, both of the pretorian guards; Æmilius Pacensis, from the city cohorts, and Julius Fronto, from the night-watch. But this, so far from being a remedy, served only to alarm and irritate the rest of the officers. They concluded that all were equally suspected, and that a timid court, not daring

at once to go the length of its resentment, would proceed to cull them out man by man.

XXI. Otho, in the mean time, felt every motive that could inflame ambition. In quiet times he had nothing before him but despair; trouble and confusion were his only source of hope. His luxury was too great for the revenue of a prince,¹ and his fortune was sunk to the lowest ebb, below the condition of a private man. He hated Galba, and he saw Piso with an eye of envy. To these incentives he added real or imaginary fears for his own personal safety, and in those fears he found new motives for rebellion. ‘He had felt the weight of Nero’s displeasure; and must he now wait for a second Lusitania? Was he to expect, under color of friendship, another honorable banishment? The man whom the public voice has named for the succession is sure to be suspected by the reigning prince. It was that jealousy that ruined his interest with a superannuated emperor; and the same narrow motive would act with greater force on the mind of a young man,² by nature harsh, and in his exile grown fierce and savage. Otho was perhaps already doomed to destruction. But the authority of Galba was on the decline, and that of Piso not yet established. This was therefore the time to strike a sudden blow. The convulsions of states, and the change of masters, afford the true season for courage

1 See in Suetonius an account of Otho’s circumstances, and his expensive luxury. Otho did not scruple to say that nothing short of the imperial power could save him from utter ruin; and whether he died in battle, or fell a victim to his creditors, was immaterial.

2 Piso had been by Nero ordered into exile, and might probably return with a mind exasperated, and deep-smothered resentment, according to the verses made against Tiberius during his retreat to the isle of Rhodes.

and vigorous enterprise. In such a period, when inactivity is certain ruin, and bold temerity may be crowned with success, to linger in doubt might be the ruin of his cause. To die is the common lot of humanity. In the grave, the only distinction lies between those who leave no trace behind, and the heroic spirits who transmit their names to posterity. And since the same end awaits alike the guilty and the innocent, the man of enterprise will provoke his fate, and close the scene with glory.'

XXII. The mind of Otho was not like his body,¹ soft and effeminate. His slaves and freedmen lived in a course of luxury unknown to private families. They flattered their master's taste; they painted to him in lively colors the joys of Nero's court, and the perpetual round of gay delights in which he had passed his days; they represented to him adultery without control, the choice of wives and concubines, and scenes of revelry scarcely known to Asiatic princes. These, if he dared nobly, they represented to him as his own: if he remained inactive, as the prize of others. The judicial astrologers added a spur to inflame his ardor. They announced great events, and to Otho a year of glory. Society has perhaps never known a more dangerous pest than this

1 The character of Otho, as here delineated by the unerring pencil of Tacitus, is finely copied by Corneille in his tragedy intitled Otho. A review of the various passages which are transplanted into the French play would be an agreeable amusement to every reader of taste, but cannot be comprised within the limits of a note. It will be sufficient to state what Corneille himself has said in the preface to his tragedy. He makes it his boast that he translated as much as he possibly could; and it does not appear that the malignant critics of that day charged him with petty larceny, or railed at him with virulence for the use which he thought proper to make of a great historian.

race of impostors, who had been ever ready with vile infusions to poison the hearts of princes, and to stimulate ambition to its ruin; a set of perfidious men, proscribed by law, and yet, in defiance of all law, cherished in such a city as Rome.

It was with this crew of fortune-tellers that Poppæa held consultations when she aspired to the imperial bed. It happened that one of these pretenders to preternatural knowledge, a man of the name of Ptolemy, accompanied Otho into Spain. He had there foretold that Otho would survive the reign of Nero; and the event giving credit to his art, he took on him to promise greater things. He saw Galba on the verge of life, and Otho in the vigor of his days. From that circumstance, and the currents of popular rumor that filled the city of Rome, this man drew his conjectures, and ventured to announce Otho's elevation to the imperial dignity. These bodings were welcome to the ear of Otho: he considered them as the effect of science, and believed the whole with that credulity which, in a mind inflamed with ambition, stands ready to receive the marvellous for reality. From this time Ptolemy was the chief actor in the dark scenes that followed. He inspired the plan of treason, and Otho embraced it with impetuous ardor. The heart that has formed the wish, and conceived the project, has seldom any scruple about the means.

· XXIII. Whether this bold conspiracy was then first imagined, or prepared and settled long before, cannot now be known. It is however certain that Otho had been in the habit of courting the affections of the army, and this, either with a view of being called to the succession, or if not, with a design to seize it by force. He omitted no opportunity to ingratiate himself with the common men; on their march, in the lines, at their

quarters, he made it his business to converse freely with all; he accosted the veterans by name, and remembering their services under Nero, called them his brother-soldiers; he renewed his acquaintance with some; he inquired after others, and with his interest and his purse was ready to be their friend. In these discourses he took care to mingle complaints, and, with half-hinted malignity, to glance at Galba. He omitted nothing that could fill the vulgar mind with discontent. The soldiers were prepared to receive the worst impressions. Fatiguing marches, provisions ill supplied, and a plan of rigorous discipline lately revived, turned their hearts against the reigning prince. They had known gentler times, when, at their ease, they traversed the lakes of Campania, and went on sailing parties to the cities of Achaia: but now the scene was changed to the Alps, the Pyrenees, and long tracts of country, where they were to march under a load of armor scarce supportable.

XXIV. While the minds of the soldiers were, by these means, thrown into violent agitations, Mævius Pudens, a near relation of Tigellinus, added fuel to the flame. Whoever was known to be of a light and versatile disposition, in distress for money, or fond of public commotions, this man attracted to his party. He sapped his way with a degree of dexterity, as unperceived as it was successful. As often as Galba was entertained at Otho's house he distributed to the cohort on duty a hundred sesterces for every man, under color of an allowance for their usual convivial party. This generosity, which passed under the name of a largess, was increased by the secret but well applied bribery of Otho; who became at last a corrupter so bold and open, that when Cocceius Proculus, a soldier of the body-guard, was engaged in a litigation

with one of his neighbors about the boundaries of their respective grounds, Otho bought the whole estate of the adverse party, and conveyed it to the soldier as a present. And yet these practices gave no jealousy to the commander of the pretorian bands. To penetrate dark transactions was so far from being his talent, that he could not see what escaped no eye but his own.

XXV. Otho took into his councils one of his freedmen, by name Onomastus. This man was chosen to conduct the enterprise. He selected for his accomplices Barbius Proculus, whose duty it was to bear the watchword to the night-guard, and one Veturius, his chosen assistant. Otho sounded them apart; and finding them fit instruments for his purposes, subtle, dark, and resolute, he loaded them both with presents, and dismissed them with a sum of money, to be employed in bribing the rest of the guards. In this manner, two soldiers undertook to dispose of the Roman empire, and what they undertook they dared to execute. A few only were conscious of the plot. The rest, though held in suspense, were managed with such dexterity, that they stood in readiness, as soon as the blow was struck, to second the conspirators. The soldiers of note were told, that having been distinguished by Nymphidius, they lived in danger, suspected, and exposed to the resentment of Galba. The loss of the donative so often promised, and still withheld, was the topic enforced to irritate the minds of the common men. Numbers lamented the loss of Nero, and the agreeable vices of that dissolute reign. All were averse from the new plan of discipline, and the idea of a farther reform diffused a general terror.

XXVI. The spirit of disaffection spread, as it were by contagion, to the legions and the auxiliary troops, all

sufficiently agitated by the revolt in Germany. The vile and profligate were ready for any mischief; and among the few of sober conduct inactivity was no better than treason in disguise. The conspirators saw their advantage; insomuch that, on the day ensuing the ides of January, they formed a resolution to take Otho under their care, as he returned from supper, and without farther delay proclaim him emperor. This project however did not take effect. In the darkness of the night, and the confusion inseparable from it, no man could answer for the consequences. The city was full of soldiers; and among men inflamed with liquor, no union, no concerted measure could be expected. The traitors desisted from their purpose, but with no public motive. The general welfare made no impression on men who had conspired to imbrue their hands in the blood of their sovereign. What they chiefly feared was, that the first who offered himself to the troops from Germany and Pannonia, might by those strangers, and in the tumult of the dark, be mistaken for Otho, and saluted by the title of emperor. The plot, checked for the present, began to transpire, and must have been by various circumstances brought to light, had not the chief conspirators labored to suppress all appearances of lurking treason. Some facts however reached the ears of Galba; but the folly of Laco explained every thing away, and by consequence the emperor was lulled into security. The prefect of the guards had no knowledge of the military character. Nothing could open the eyes of a man who opposed every measure, however excellent, which did not originate with himself. By the perversity of his nature, he was always at variance with talents and superior judgment.

XXVII. On the eighteenth day before the calends

of February Galba assisted at a sacrifice in the temple of Apollo. In the midst of the ceremony Umbricius the augur, after inspecting the entrails of the victims, announced impending treason, and a lurking enemy within the walls of Rome. Otho, who stood near the emperor, heard this prediction, but interpreted it in his own favor, pleased with omens that promised so well to his cause. In that moment Onomastus came to inform him that his builders and surveyors were waiting to talk with him on business. This, as had been concerted, was a signal that the conspirators were ready to throw off the mask, and strike the decisive blow. Otho quitted the temple, having first told such as wondered at his sudden departure that, being on the point of purchasing certain farm-houses, not in good repair, he had appointed workmen to examine the buildings before he concluded his bargain. Having made that feigned excuse he walked off arm-in-arm with his freedman; and passing through the palace formerly belonging to Tiberius, went directly to the great market-place, called the Velabrum, and thence to the golden mile-pillar near the temple of Saturn. At that place a small party of the pretorian soldiers, in number not exceeding three-and-twenty, saluted him emperor. The sight of such an insignificant handful of men struck him with dismay; but his partisans drew their swords, and placing him in a litter, carried him off in triumph. They were joined in their way by an equal number, some of them accomplices in the treason: others, in wonder and astonishment, hurried along by the current. The conspirators, brandishing their swords, and rending the air with acclamations, pursued their course, while numbers followed in profound silence, determined to see the issue before they took a decided part.

XXVIII. Julius Martialis, a military tribune, was at that time commanding officer in the camp. Amazed at a treason so bold and daring, and perhaps imagining that it extended wider, he made no attempt to oppose the torrent. His inactivity had the appearance of a confederacy in guilt. The rest of the tribunes and centurions followed the same line of caution, in their solicitude for their own safety losing all sense of honor and of every public principle. Such, in that alarming crisis, was the disposition of the camp: a few seditious incendiaries dared to attempt a revolution; more wished to see it, and all were willing to acquiesce.

XXIX. Galba, in the mean time, ignorant of all that passed, continued in the temple, attentive to the sacred rites, and with his prayers fatiguing the gods of an empire now no longer his. Intelligence at length arrived, that a senator (who by name no man could tell) was carried in triumph to the camp. Otho was soon after announced. The people in crowds rushed forward from every quarter, some representing the danger greater than it was, others lessening it, and, even in ruin, still retaining their habitual flattery. A council was called. After due deliberation, it was thought advisable to sound the dispositions of the cohort then on duty before the palace, but without the interposition of Galba. His authority was to be reserved for the last extremity. Piso called the men together, and from the steps of the palace addressed them to the following purport: 'It is now, my fellow-soldiers, the sixth day since I was made by adoption presumptive heir to this great empire. Whether I was called to a post of honor, or of danger, was more than I could then foresee. The offer was honorable, and I accepted it; with what advantage to my own family in particular, or to the commonwealth at large,

it will be yours to determine. For myself, I have nothing to fear. Trained in the school of adversity, I now perceive that the smiles are no less dreadful than the frowns of fortune. But for myself I feel no concern: I feel for the situation of an aged father; I feel for the senate; I feel for my country. The lot of all three will be grievous, whether we fall this day by the hands of assassins, or, which to a generous mind is no less afflicting, find ourselves obliged to shed the blood of our fellow-citizens. In the late revolution, it was matter of joy to all good men that the city was not discolored with Roman blood, and that without civil discord the reins of government passed into other hands. To secure the same tranquillity was the object of the late adoption. By that measure Galba had reason to think that he closed the scene of war and civil commotion.

XXX. 'I will neither mention the nobility of my birth, nor claim the merit of moderation. I arrogate nothing to myself. In opposition to Otho there is no necessity to call our virtues to our aid. The vices of the man, even then, when he was the friend, or rather the pandar of Nero, were the ruin of his country. In those vices he places all his glory. And shall a life of debauchery, shall that effeminate air, and that soft solicitude for gay apparel, give an emperor to the Roman world? They who suffer profusion to pass for liberality will in time perceive their error. Otho may squander, but to bestow is not in his character. What think you are the objects that now engross his thoughts? What are his views? What does he aim at? Scenes of luxury, lawless gratifications, carousing festivals, and the embraces of lascivious women, are the imaginations of his heart. These with him are imperial pleasures, the rights of sovereignty. The joy

will be his; it will be yours to blush for your new master. In the whole catalogue of those daring usurpers, who by their crimes have risen to power, is there an instance of one who made atonement by his virtues? Is there a man who gained an empire by iniquity, and governed it with moderation?

‘Galba was raised by the voice of a willing people to his present situation: his inclination, and your consent, have added me to the line of the Cæsars. But after all, if the commonwealth, the senate, and the people, are no better than mere empty names, yet let me ask you, my fellow-soldiers, will you suffer a lawless crew to overturn the government? From the worst and most abandoned of all mankind will you receive an emperor? The legions, it is true, have at different times mutinied against their generals; but your fidelity has never been questioned. Nero abdicated; you did not desert him. He fell without your treachery. And shall thirty ruffians—thirty did I say? their number is less—shall a wretched handful of vile conspirators, whom no man would suffer to vote in the choice of a tribune or centurion, dispose of the Roman empire at their will and pleasure? Will you establish such a precedent? and by establishing it, will you become accomplices in the guilt? The example will pass into the provinces; confusion and anarchy will be the fatal consequence. Galba may fall, and I may perish with him; but the calamities of a civil war must remain for you. By murdering your prince you may earn the wages of iniquity; but the reward of virtue will not be less. Judge which is best, a donative for your innocence, or a largess for murder and rebellion.’

XXXI. During this harangue the soldiers belonging to the guard withdrew from the place. The rest

of the cohort showed no sign of discontent. Without noise or tumult, the usual incidents of sedition, they displayed their colors according to the military custom, and not, as was imagined afterwards, with a design to cover by false appearances a settled plan of treachery and revolt. Celsus Marius was sent to use his influence with the forces from Illyricum, at that time encamped under the portico of Vipsanius. Orders were likewise given to Amulius Serenus and Domitius Sabinus, two centurions of the first rank, to draw from the temple of Liberty the German soldiers quartered in that place. The legion draughted from the marines was not to be trusted. They had seen, on Galba's entry into Rome, a cruel massacre of their comrades; and the survivors, with minds exasperated, panted for revenge. At the same time Cetrius Severus, Subrius Dexter, and Pompeius Longinus, three military tribunes, made the best of their way to the pretorian camp, with an intention, while the ferment was still recent, and before a general flame was kindled, to mould the minds of men to a pacific temper. Subrius and Cetrius were repulsed with menaces. Longinus was roughly handled. The soldiers took away his weapons, unwilling to listen to a man whom they considered as an officer promoted out of his turn, by the favor of Galba, and for that reason faithful to his prince. The marine legion, without hesitation, joined the pretorian malecontents. The detachment from the Illyrian army caught the infection, and obliged Celsus to retire under a shower of darts. The veterans from Germany remained for some time in suspense. They had been sent by Nero to Alexandria; but, being recalled in a short time afterwards, they returned to Rome in a distressed condition, worn out with toil, and weakened by sickness

during their voyage. Galba attended to their wants, and, in order to recruit their strength, administered seasonable relief. The soldiers felt the generosity of the prince, and gratitude was not yet effaced from their minds.

XXXII. The populace, in the mean time, with a crowd of slaves intermixed, rushed into the palace, demanding vengeance on the head of Otho and his partisans. The clamor was loud and dissonant, like that of a rabble in the circus or amphitheatre roaring for the public sports, or some new spectacle. The whole was conducted without principle, without judgment, or sincerity; and before the close of day the same mouths were open to bawl for the reverse of what they desired in the morning. To be ready with shouts and vociferation, let who will be the reigning prince, has been in all ages the zeal of the vulgar. Galba, in the mean time, balanced between two opposite opinions. Titus Vinius was for his remaining in the palace. 'The slaves,' he said, 'might be armed, and all the avenues secured. The prince should by no means expose himself to a frantic mob. Due time should be allowed for the seditious to repent, and for good men to form a plan of union, and concert their measures. Crimes succeeded by hurry and sudden dispatch: honest counsels gain vigor by delay. Should it be hereafter proper to sally forth, that expedient would be still in reserve; but if once hazarded, the error would be seen too late. The prince in that case would be in the power of his enemies.'

XXXIII. It was argued on the other hand, 'that the exigence called for vigorous measures. Before the conspiracy of a few traitors gained an accession of strength one brave exertion might prove decisive. Confront the danger, and Otho will shrink back with

terror and dismay. It is not long since he went forth by stealth. He has been joined by a few incendiaries, and hurried away to a camp, where no plan is settled ; but now, while Galba's friends remain inactive, he assumes the sovereignty, and has time to learn how to play his part. And shall we linger here in cold debate, till the usurper, having mastered the camp, comes forth to invade the forum, and under the eye of a lawful prince ascends the capitol? In the mean time, must our valiant emperor remain trembling in his palace, while his warlike friends barricade the doors, preparing with heroic resolution to stand a siege? But it seems the slaves are to be armed ; and they no doubt will render effectual service, especially if we neglect the people now ready to support our cause, and suffer their indignation to evaporate without striking a blow. What is dishonorable is always dangerous. If we must fall, let us bravely meet our fate. Mankind will applaud our valor, and Otho, the author of our ruin, will be the object of public detestation.' Vinius maintained his former opinion. Laco opposed him with warmth, and even with violent menaces. In this Icelus was the secret prompter. That favorite hated the consul, and, in a moment big with danger, chose to gratify a little and narrow spirit at the expense of the emperor and the public.

XXXIV. Galba adopted what appeared to him the most specious and most prudent advice. Piso notwithstanding was sent forward to the camp. The presence of a young man of high expectation, and lately called to the first honors of the state, might give a turn to the passions of the army. He was besides considered as the enemy of Vinius. If, in fact, he did not hate him, the enemies of the minister wished it ; and malice, imputed to the mind of man, is easily

believed to be a natural passion. Piso was hardly gone forth when a rumor prevailed that Otho was slain in the camp. The report at first was vague and uncertain, but like all important lies, gathered as it went, and grew into credit. It was confirmed by men who averred that they were eye-witnesses on the spot, and saw the blow given. The tale was welcome to a great many, and the credulous swallowed it without farther inquiry. It was afterwards thought to be a political lie, framed by Otho's friends, who mingled in the crowd in order to entice Galba from his palace.

XXXV. The city resounded with acclamations. Not only the vulgar and ignorant multitude were transported beyond all bounds, but the knights and senators were hurried away with the torrent: they forgot their fears; they rushed to the emperor's presence; they complained that the punishment of treason was taken out of their hands. The men who, as it appeared soon after, were the most likely to shrink from danger, displayed their zeal with ostentation; lavish of words, yet cowards in their hearts. No man knew that Otho was slain, yet all averred it as a fact. In this situation, wanting certain intelligence, but deceived by his courtiers, Galba determined to go forth from his palace. He called for his armor. The weight was too much for his feeble frame; and in the throng that gathered round him, finding himself overpowered, he desired to be placed in a litter. Before he left the palace Julius Atticus, a soldier of the body-guard, accosted him with a bloody sword in hand, crying aloud, 'In me you see the slayer of Otho: it was I that killed him.' Galba calmly answered,¹ 'Who gave you orders?' Such was the spirit

¹ Suetonius says Galba put on his breastplate, observing

of the man even in the last extremity, still determined to repress the licentiousness of the soldiers; by their insolence undismayed, by their flattery never softened.

XXXVI. Meanwhile, the pretorian guards threw off the mask, and with one voice declared for Otho. They ranged themselves in a body round his person, and in the ardor of their zeal placed him amidst the standards and eagles, on the very tribunal where, a little before, stood the golden statue of Galba.¹ The tribunes and centurions were not suffered to approach. The common soldiers having no kind of confidence in their officers, gave the word to watch the motions of all in any rank or command. The camp resounded with shouts and mutual exhortations, not with that faint-hearted zeal which draws from the mob of Rome their feeble acclamations, but with one mind, one general impulse, all concurred in support of their new emperor. The pretorians were almost frantic with joy: they embraced their comrades as they saw them advancing forward; they clasped their hands; they led them to the tribunal; they repeated the military oath, and administered it to all. They recommended the prince of their own choice to the affections of the men, and the men, in their turn, to the favor of the prince. Otho, on his part, omitted nothing that could conciliate the affections of the multitude. He paid his court to the rabble with his hands outstretched, bowing lowly down, and in order to be emperor, crouching like a slave. The marine legion did not hesitate to

at the same time, that it would be a poor defence against so many swords; *Life of Galba*, § 19. Plutarch relates that the soldier, being asked by Galba who gave him orders, had the spirit to answer, 'My oath and my duty.'

1 In every Roman camp the statue of the emperor was placed in the tribunal, at the head-quarters of the general; See *Annals*, xv. 29.

take the oath of fidelity. By that event Otho felt himself inspired with uncommon ardor. Having hitherto tampered with the soldiers man by man, he judged right to address them in a body. He took his station on the rampart of the camp, and spoke to the following effect :

XXXVII. ‘ In what light, my fellow-soldiers, shall I now consider myself? In what character must I address you? A private man I cannot call myself, for you have bestowed on me the title of prince: but can I assume that title while another is still in possession of the sovereign power? In what description you yourselves are to be classed is to me matter of doubt; and must remain so till the question is decided, whether you have in your camp the emperor of Rome or a public enemy? You have heard the cry that has gone forth: the same voice that demands vengeance on me calls aloud for your destruction. With my life your fate is interwoven. We must live or perish together. There is no alternative. The humanity of Galba is well known to us all. Perhaps even while I speak he has pronounced our doom. To yield to the advice of his friends will be an easy task to him, who without a request, of his own free-will, in cold blood, could give to the edge of the sword so many thousand innocent soldiers, all destroyed in one inhuman massacre. My heart recoils with horror when I reflect on the disastrous day when he made his public entry into the city. After receiving the submission of the soldiers, with unheard-of treachery he ordered the whole body to be decimated; and in the view of the people exhibited a scene of blood and horror. These are the exploits of Galba, and this his only victory. With these inauspicious omens he entered the city of Rome; and what has been since the glory of his reign?

Obultronus Sabinus and Cornelius Marcellus have been murdered in Spain ; Betuus Chilo in Gaul ; Fonteius Capito in Germany ; and Clodius Macer in Africa. Add to these Cingonius Varro, butchered on his march, Turpilianus in the heart of the city, and Nymphidius in the camp. Is there a province, is there in any part of the empire a single camp which he has not defiled with blood ? This he will tell you is a reform of the army. In his language, murder is a legal remedy : what all good men agree to call a deed of barbarity passes with him for a correction of abuses. Under specious names he confounds the nature of things : cruelty is justice, avarice is economy, and massacre is military discipline. Since the death of Nero not more than seven months have elapsed ; and in that time Icelus his freedman has amassed by plunder more enormous wealth than the Polycleti, the Vatinii, the Elii, and the Haloti were able to do in the whole course of that emperor's reign. Even Titus Vinus, if he himself had seized the empire, would have had the grace to blush at such enormities ; nor should we have groaned under such a load of oppression. Though no higher than a private citizen, he plunders without remorse : he seizes our property, as if we were his slaves ; and he despises us as the servants of another master. His house alone contains wealth sufficient to discharge the donative every day promised, but promised merely to insult you.

XXXVIII. ' That your hopes of better times may never succeed, Galba has taken care, by his choice of a successor, to entail on you endless misery. He has adopted a man from whom you can have nothing to expect ; a man recalled from banishment, in his temper dark and gloomy, hardened in avarice, the counterpart of the emperor himself. You remember, my fellow-

soldiers, the day on which that adoption was made ; a day deformed with storms and tempests, when the warring elements announced the awful displeasure of the gods. The senate and the people are now of one mind. They depend on your valor. It is your generous ardor that must give vigor and energy to our present enterprise. Without your aid the best designs must prove abortive. It is not to a war, nor even to danger, that I am now to conduct you : the armies of Rome are on our side. The single cohort remaining with Galba is composed of citizens, not of soldiers : they are gowned, not armed : they do not stand forth in his defence : they detain him as their prisoner. When they see you advancing in firm array, and when my signal is given, the only struggle will be, who shall espouse my cause with the greatest ardor. The time forbids all dull delay : we have undertaken bravely : but it is the issue that must justify the measure, and crown us with applause.' Having closed his harangue, he ordered the magazine of arms to be thrown open. The soldiers seized their weapons : they paid no regard to military rules ; no distinction was observed ; the pretorians, the legions, and the auxiliaries, crowded together, and shields and helmets were snatched up in a tumultuous manner. No tribune, no centurion was allowed to give orders. Each man was his own commanding officer. While the friends of discipline stood astonished at the scene of wild confusion, the evil-minded saw with pleasure that the regulars were offended, and in that sentiment found a new motive to increase the disorder.

XXXIX. The number of the rebels increased every moment, and their noise and clamor reached the city of Rome. Piso did not think it advisable to proceed to the camp. He met Galba, who had left the palace

on his way to the forum. Marius Celsus had already brought alarming tidings. Some advised the emperor to return to his palace; others were for taking possession of the capitol, and the major part for proceeding directly to the tribunal of public harangues: numbers gave their advice, for no better reason than to clash with the opinions of others; and, in the distraction of jarring counsels, the misfortune was, that what ought to have occurred first, was seen too late. They decided when the opportunity was lost. We are told that Laco, without the privity of Galba, formed a design against the life of Vinius. The murder of that minister, he thought, would appease the fury of the soldiers, or it may be that he suspected treachery, and thought him joined in a secret league with Otho; perhaps his own malice was the motive. But for this dark purpose neither the time nor the place was convenient: the sword once drawn, there was no knowing where the scene of blood would end. Messengers arriving every moment increased the consternation: the spirit of Galba's friends began to droop: numbers deserted him; and of all that zeal which a little before blazed out with so much ardor, every spark was now extinguished.

XL. Galba, in the midst of a prodigious conflux of people, had not strength to support himself; and, as the waving multitude was impelled different ways, he was hurried on by the torrent. The temples, the porticos, and great halls round the forum, were filled with crowds of gazing spectators. The whole presented an awful spectacle. A deep and sullen silence prevailed. The very rabble was hushed. Amazement sat on every face. Their eyes watched every motion, and their ears caught every sound. The interval was big with terror: it was neither a tumult nor a settled calm; but

rather the stillness of fear, or smothered rage, such as often precedes some dreadful calamity. Otho was still in the camp. He received intelligence that the populace had recourse to arms, and thereon ordered his troops to push forward with rapidity, and prevent the impending danger. At his command the Roman soldiers, as if marching to dethrone an eastern monarch, a Vologeses, or a Pacorus, and not their own lawful sovereign, advanced with impetuous fury to imbrue their hands in the blood of an old man, naked and disarmed. They entered the city: they dispersed the common people: they spurred their horses at full speed, and rushing into the forum sword in hand, trampled the senators under foot. The sight of the capitol made no impression: the temples sanctified by the religion of ages could not restrain their fury; for the majesty of former princes they had no respect, and of those who were to succeed, no kind of dread. They rushed forward to commit a detestable parricide, forgetting, in their frantic rage, that crimes of that atrocious nature are sure to be punished by the prince that succeeds to the sovereign power.

XLI. The pretorians no sooner appeared in sight than the standard-bearer of the cohort still remaining with Galba (his name we are told was Attilius Vergilio) tore from the colors the image of Galba, and dashed it on the ground. That signal given, the soldiers, with one voice, declared for Otho. The people fled in consternation. Such as lingered behind were attacked sword in hand. The men who carried Galba in a litter were struck with terror. In their fright they let him fall to the ground near the Curtian lake.¹

¹ This was in the forum, near the rostra. It has been observed in a former note that the pulpit of harangues was

His last words, according as men admired or hated him, have been variously reported. According to some, he asked, in a suppliant tone, what harm he had done? and prayed for a few days that he might discharge the donative due to the soldiers. Others assure us that he presented his neck to the assassin's stroke, and said with a firm tone of voice, 'Strike, if the good of the commonwealth requires it.' To ruffians thirsting for blood, no matter what he said. By what hand the blow was given cannot now be known. Some impute it to Terentius, a resumed veteran; others to a fellow of the name of Lecanius. A report still more general has transmitted down to us the name of Camurius, a common soldier of the fifteenth legion. This man, it is said, cut Galba's throat. The rest fell on with brutal rage, and finding his breast covered with armor, dissevered his legs and arms. Nor did the barbarians desist till the emperor lay a headless trunk, deformed with wounds, and weltering in his blood.

XLII. Titus Vinius was the next victim. The manner in which he met his fate is likewise left uncertain. Whether on the first assault his utterance was suppressed by fear, or whether he had power to call out that Otho had given no orders against his life, we have now no means of knowing. Those words, if really spoken, might be an effort of pusillanimity to save his life, or they were the confession of a man who was actually an accomplice in the conspiracy. His life and manners leave no room to doubt but he was capable of joining in a parricide, of which his own administration¹ was the principal cause. He fell by a

adorned with the beaks of ships, and thence called *rostra*. For Galba's death and funeral, see Suet. in Galba, § 20.

¹ Galba labored under the weight of crimes committed by

wound that shattered the joint of his knee, and as he lay stretched in that condition he was run through the body by Julius Carus, a legionary soldier. He expired before the temple of Julius Cæsar.

XLIII. While the rebels were acting their horrible tragedy the age beheld, in the conduct of one man, a splendid example of courage and fidelity. Sempronius Densus was the person; a centurion of the pretorian cohort. Having been ordered by Galba to join the guard that escorted Piso, he no sooner saw a band of armed assassins than he advanced to oppose their fury, brandishing his poniard, and exclaiming against the horrible deed. With his voice, with his hand, with every effort in the power of man, he made a brave resistance, and gave Piso, wounded as he was, an opportunity of making his escape. Piso reached the temple of Vesta, where a slave of the state, touched with compassion, conducted him to his own private apartment. Piso lay concealed for some time, not indebted to the sanctity of the temple, nor to the rites of religion, but sheltered by the obscurity of the place. At length Sulpicius Florus, who belonged to a British cohort, and had been made by Galba a citizen of Rome, and Staius Murcus, a pretorian soldier, arrived in quest of him by Otho's special order. By these two men Piso was dragged to the vestibule of the temple, where, under repeated blows, he breathed his last.

XLIV. In the midst of a general massacre, no murder, we are told, gave so much satisfaction to Otho, nor was there among the heads cut off¹ one at which

his minister, Titus Vinius, who is said to have been an accomplice in the plot which was occasioned by his own iniquity.

¹ On seeing the head of Galba, Otho cried out, 'This is nothing, my fellow-soldiers: bring me the head of Piso.' See Plutarch, life of Galba.

he gazed with such ardent eyes. By this event he felt himself relieved from all apprehensions. The fate of Galba and of Titus Vinius affected him in a different manner. The former brought to his mind an idea of majesty fallen from a state of elevation; and the death of the latter awakened the memory of an early friendship, and even into a heart like his, fierce, cruel, and ambitious, infused a tincture of melancholy. When Piso fell an enemy expired. Feeling for him neither regret nor compunction, he gave a loose to joy. The three heads were fixed on poles, and carried, amidst the ensigns of the cohorts, with the eagle of the legion, through the streets of Rome. A band of soldiers followed, stretching forth their hands reeking with blood, and boasting aloud that they gave the mortal wounds, or that they were present aiding and abetting; all, with truth or falsehood, claiming the honor of an atrocious deed. No less than one hundred and twenty memorials, presented on this occasion by persons who claimed the reward of crimes committed on that dreadful day, were afterwards found by Vitellius; and the several authors, after diligent search made by his orders, were punished with death, not from motives of regard for the memory of Galba, but with the usual policy of princes, who think, by punishing the malefactors of a former reign, that they establish a precedent, and by the terrors of future vengeance effectually secure themselves.

XLV. Another senate and another people seemed now to be in possession of Rome. All pressed forward to the camp. You would have thought it a race of servility, in which every man endeavored to outstrip his fellow-citizens, and be the first to pay his court. They joined in reviling the name of Galba, and all ap-

plauded the conduct of the soldiers. They thronged round Otho, fawning to kiss his hand, and in proportion to their want of sincerity, playing the farce with overacted zeal. Otho was not deficient in the mummery of thanks and gratitude. Attentive to all, and gracious to individuals, he took care at the same time, by his looks and actions, to restrain the soldiers, who, by the ferocity of their looks, seemed to threaten farther mischief. Marius Celsus, the consul elect, was the object of their vengeance. He had been the friend of Galba, and in the last extremity continued faithful to that unhappy prince. His talents and integrity gave offence to a lawless crew, with whom every virtue was a crime. They demanded his immediate execution. But their views were too apparent. The best and ablest men in Rome were doomed to destruction by a set of men who panted to let loose their rage, and lay a scene of blood, of plunder, and devastation. Otho was not yet in fulness of power. His authority was sufficient to command the perpetration of crimes; to prohibit them was still beyond him. The part he assumed was that of a man enraged and bent on some atrocious deed. In that pretended fury he ordered Celsus to be loaded with irons, as a man reserved for heavier punishment, and by that stratagem saved him from destruction.

XLVI. The pretorians from this time knew no control. They chose their own prefects; namely, Plotius Firmus, formerly a common soldier, raised afterwards to the command of the night-guard, and, even during the life of Galba, a partisan in favor of Otho. To him they added Licinius Proculus, a man who lived in intimacy with Otho, and was supposed to be an accomplice in all his dark designs. For the office of governor of

Rome they named Flavius Sabinus,¹ influenced in their choice by their respect for the memory of Nero, who had committed to him the same important charge. The majority had another motive: by concurring in this nomination, they meant to pay a compliment to Vespasian, the brother of Sabinus. Their next object was to abolish the fees exacted by the centurions for occasional exemptions from duty, and for leave of absence. These fees in fact were an annual tribute out of the pockets of the common men. In consequence of this abuse a fourth part of every company was seen rambling about the country, or idly loitering in the very camp. The centurion received his perquisite, and had no other care. Nor was the soldier solicitous about the price: he purchased a right to be idle, and the means by which he enabled himself to defray the expense gave him no kind of scruple. By theft, by robbery, and by servile employments, he gained enough to enrich his officer; and the officer, in return, sold a dispensation from labor and the duties of the service. Whoever had hoarded up a little money was, for that reason, harassed with discipline and oppressed with labor, till he purchased the usual indulgence. By these extortions the soldier was impoverished, his stock was exhausted; and after a vagabond life, his industry relaxed, and his vigor wasted, he returned to the camp without courage, strength, or money. By these pernicious practices corruption grew into a system. The common men forgot all discipline; their morals went to ruin; and, in the natural progress of vice, all became ripe for tumult, insurrections, and civil war. To remedy the mischief, and at the same time not to

¹ Flavius Sabinus had been appointed prefect of the city by Nero. The soldiers loved the vices of the former reign, and for that reason continued Sabinus in the same office.

alienate the minds of the centurions, Otho undertook to pay an annual equivalent to the officers out of his own revenue. This reform was no doubt both wise and just. Good princes adopted it afterwards, and it is now a settled rule in the military system. Laco, the late commander of the pretorians, was condemned to an island, there, as was given out, to pass the remainder of his days; but a veteran soldier, whom Otho had despatched for the purpose, put an end to his life. Martianus Icelus, being of no higher rank than that of a manumitted slave, died by the hand of the executioner.

XLVII. After the horrors of a day spent in guilt, and blood, and carnage, if any thing could add to the public misery, it was the joy that succeeded to that dismal scene. The pretor of the city summoned a meeting of the senate. The other magistrates strove to distinguish themselves by the vilest adulation. The fathers assembled without delay. The tribunitian power, the name of Augustus, and all imperial honors enjoyed by former princes, were by a decree granted to Otho. Several members of that assembly were conscious of having thrown odious colors on the name and character of their new emperor, and hoped to expiate, by present flattery, the bitterness of former invectives. Whether Otho despised those injurious reflections, or stored them in his memory for future occasions, is uncertain. The shortness of his reign has left that matter undecided. He was conveyed in triumph to the capitol, and thence to the imperial palace. In his way he saw the forum discolored with blood, and heaps of slaughtered citizens lying round him. He granted leave to remove the dead bodies, and to perform the rites of sepulture. The remains of Piso were buried by his wife Verania and Scribonianus his

brother. The last duty to Titus Vinius was performed by his daughter Crispina. Their heads, which the murderers had reserved for sale, were found, and redeemed at a stipulated price.

XLVIII. Piso had well-nigh completed the thirty-first year of his age; always high in the esteem of the public, yet never happy. Two of his brothers suffered a violent death; Magnus, by the command of Claudius, and Crassus, by the cruelty of Nero. He himself had passed a considerable part of his time in banishment; an outlaw for some years, and four days a prince. By the adoption of Galba he was raised above his elder brother; but by that preference all he gained was to be murdered first.

Titus Vinius had reached the age of fifty-seven; a man of unsettled principle and various manners. His father was of a pretorian family; his grandfather by the maternal line was in the number proscribed by the triumvirate. His first campaign, under Calvisius Sabinus,¹ began with disgrace. The wife of his commanding officer, prompted by wanton curiosity, went by night, in the disguise of a common soldier, to view the site and disposition of the camp. In her frolic she went round to visit the sentinels, and the posts and stations of the army. Arriving at length at the place where the eagles were deposited, she did not scruple to commit the act of adultery on that sacred spot.

¹ Calvisius Sabinus, mentioned in this place, was probably the person who in Caligula's reign commanded in Pannonia, and on his return to Rome was compelled to end his days, A. U. C. 792. His wife Cornelia, whom we find abandoned to her passions, almost redeemed her character in the last act of her life. She perished with her husband. Seneca talks of a person of the name of Calvisius Sabinus, who he says did not know how to enjoy his success in the world with moderation; but whether that was the Sabinus of Tacitus is uncertain.

Vinius was charged as her accomplice, and by order of Caligula loaded with irons. By the revolution which soon after happened he regained his liberty, and from that time rose to honors. He discharged the office of pretor, and afterwards commanded a legion, free from reproach. His name however was soon after branded with a crime which a common slave would have blushed to commit. Being a guest at the table of Claudius, he was charged with pilfering a golden goblet. On the following day that emperor, to distinguish Vinius from the rest of his company, gave orders that he should be trusted with nothing better than a cup of earthenware. Notwithstanding this disgrace he became proconsul of Narbon Gaul, and acquitted himself in his administration with distinguished firmness and equal integrity. The friendship of Galba placed him on the brink of a precipice. Bold and prompt in action, of an enterprising genius and undaunted courage, he was at the same time dark, subtle, and deceitful. Qualified to succeed in whatever he undertook, and by nature ready for good or evil deeds, he practised vice and virtue with alternate success and equal ardor. His last will, on account of his immoderate wealth, was declared null and void. That of Piso was confirmed by his poverty.

XLIX. Galba's body during the night that followed the murder lay exposed to numberless indignities. It was at length conveyed by Argius, an ancient slave and steward of that unfortunate emperor, to the private gardens of his master, and there deposited in an humble manner, without honor or distinction. His head, in a mangled condition, was fixed on a pole by the rabble of the camp, and set up to public view near the tomb of Patrobius, a slave manumitted by Nero, and by order of Galba put to death. In that situation

it was found on the following day, and added to the ashes of the body, which had been already committed to the flames. Such was the end of Servius Galba, in the seventy-third year of his age. He had seen the reign of five princes, and enjoyed during that whole period a series of prosperity; happy as a private citizen, as a prince unfortunate. He was descended from a long line of ancestors. His wealth was great: his talents not above mediocrity. Free from vice, he cannot be celebrated for his virtues. He knew the value of fame, yet was neither arrogant nor vainglorious. Having no rapacity, he was an economist of his own, and of the public treasure careful to a degree of avarice. To his friends and freedmen he was open, generous, and even resigned to their will. When his choice was happily made, his indulgence, however excessive, was at worst an amiable weakness; when bad men surrounded him, his good-nature bordered on folly. The splendor of his rank, and the felicity with which he steered through the dangers of a black and evil period, helped to raise the value of his character: his indolence passed for wisdom, and inactivity took the name of prudence. In the vigor of his days he served with honor in Germany: as proconsul of Africa, he governed with moderation; and the Nethermost Spain, when he was advanced in years, felt the mildness of his administration. While no higher than a private citizen, his merit was thought superior to his rank; and the suffrages of mankind would have pronounced him worthy of empire had he never made the experiment.

L. In this disastrous juncture, while Rome was shuddering with horror at the late dreadful carnage, and from the well-known vices of Otho's nature men were in dread of worse evils still to come, dispatches

from Germany brought an account of a new storm ready to burst in that quarter. The revolt of Vitellius and the armies under his command was no longer a secret. The intelligence arrived before the death of Galba, but was suppressed by that emperor, that the sedition on the Upper Rhine might be thought the only mischief that disturbed the tranquillity of the empire. At length the true state of affairs was known, and a general panic spread through the city. Not only the senators and Roman knights, who had still some shadow of authority, but the meaner populace, mourned over the distractions of their country. All were grieved to see two men of the most pernicious characters, enervated by luxury, and abandoned to every vice, chosen by some fatality to be the bane and ruin of the commonwealth. The crimes and miseries, which under the late emperors were one continued pestilence, were no longer the objects that employed the public mind. The civil wars were fresh in the memory of all: they talked of Rome besieged and taken by her own armies; they remembered Italy laid waste, the provinces plundered, the battles of Pharsalia and Philippi, and the siege of Modena and Perusia, two places well known in history, and each of them the scene of public calamity.

‘ In those tempestuous times the struggle, it was observed, lay between men of illustrious character, and by their contentions the state was brought to the brink of ruin. But even then, under Julius Cæsar, the empire still survived and flourished. It survived under Augustus, and gained additional lustre. Under Pompey and Brutus, had their arms prevailed, the republic would have been once more established. But those men have passed away. Otho and Vitellius are now the competitors: and for them, or either of them,

shall the people crowd to the temples? must they pray for a tyrant to reign over them? Vows, in such a cause, were impious, since, in a war between two detestable rivals, he who conquers will be armed with power to commit still greater crimes, and prove himself the worst.' Such were the reasonings of the people. Some who saw at a distance, fixed their eyes on Vespasian, and the crimes in the east. They foresaw new commotions in that part of the world, and dreaded the calamities of another war. Vespasian, they agreed, was in every respect superior to the two chiefs who now convulsed the state; but even his character was rather problematical. The truth is, of all the princes who to his time reigned at Rome, he was the only one whom power reformed and made a better man.

LI. That the revolt under Vitellius may be seen in its true light, it will be necessary to state the causes that produced it. I therefore go back to the origin of that event. After the defeat of Julius Vindex, and the total rout of his armies, the victorious legions, enriched with booty, grew wanton with success. To men, who without fatigue or danger had closed a lucrative war, the love of enterprise became a natural passion. They preferred hostilities to a state of inaction, and plunder to the soldier's pay. They had, till the late commotions called them forth, endured the hardships of a rigorous service, in a bleak climate and a desolate country, where, even in time of peace, discipline was enforced with strict severity. But discipline, they knew, would be relaxed by civil discord. In the distractions of parties, both sides encourage licentiousness, and by consequence fraud, corruption, and treachery, triumph with impunity. The mutinous soldiers were abundantly provided with arms and horses, both for parade and service. Before the late

war in Gaul they saw no more than the company, or the troop of horse, to which they belonged. Stationed at different quarters, they never went beyond their limits, and the boundaries of the provinces kept the armies distinct and separate. Being at length drawn together to make head against Vindex, they felt their own strength; and having tasted the sweets of victory, they wanted to renew the troubles by which their rapacity had been so amply gratified. They no longer treated the Gauls as their allies and friends; they considered them as enemies, and a vanquished people.

In these hostile sentiments they were confirmed by such of the Gallic nation as dwelt on the borders of the Rhine. The people on that side of the country had taken up arms against Vindex and his allies, whom, since the death of that chief, they chose to call the Galbian faction; and now, by every artifice, by infusions of their own malice, they endeavored to kindle a war between the Romans and their countrymen. The animosity of the legions was easily excited. The Sequanians, the Æduans, and other states, according to their opulence, were the chief objects of resentment. The soldiers thought of nothing but towns assaulted and carried by storm, the plunder of houses, and the desolation of the country. In the heat of imagination every man anticipated the booty that was to fall to his share. To their arrogance and avarice, the never-failing vices of the strongest, they united the indignation of men who felt themselves insulted by the vainglory with which the Æduans and the rest of the obnoxious states made it their boast that, in despite of the legions, they had extorted from Galba a remission of one fourth of their tribute, and an extension of their territory. To these incentives was added a report, artfully thrown out and readily believed, that

the legions were to be decimated, and the best and bravest of the centurions to be dismissed from the service. To increase the ferment, tidings of an alarming nature arrived from every quarter, and in particular, a storm was said to be gathering over the city of Rome. The people of Lyons, still faithful to the memory of Nero, and the avowed enemies of Galba, took care to disseminate the worst reports. From that place, as from the centre of intelligence, rumors constantly issued: but the camp was the magazine of news, where invention framed the lie of the day, and credulity stood ready to receive it. The passions of the soldiers were in constant agitation; malice embittered their minds, and fear held them in suspense. But they viewed their numbers, and their courage revived. They found themselves in force, and in full security laughed at the idea of danger.

LII. It was near the calends of December in the preceding year when Aulus Vitellius first appeared in the Lower Germany. He made it his business to review the legions in their winter-quarters: he restored several officers who had been degraded, and relieved others from the disgrace of an ignominious sentence. In these proceedings he acted, in some instances, with justice, in others with a view to his own ambition. He condemned the sordid avarice with which Fonteius Capito granted or refused rank in the army. He established a fair and regular system of military promotion, and in the eyes of the soldiers appeared to exceed the powers usually vested in consular generals. He seemed to be an officer of superior weight and grandeur. Reflecting men saw the baseness of his motives, while his creatures extolled every part of his conduct. The profusion which, without judgment or economy, lavished away in bounties all his own

property, and squandered that of others, was by his sycophants called benevolence and generosity. Even the vices that sprung from lust of dominion were by his creatures transformed into so many virtues.

In the two armies on the Upper and Lower Rhine there were no doubt men well disposed, and of sober conduct; but at the same time both camps were infested by a set of desperate incendiaries. At the head of the factious and the turbulent stood Alienus Cæcina and Fabius Valens, each the commander of a legion, both remarkable for their avarice, and both of a daring spirit, ready for any desperate enterprise. Valens had served the interest of Galba, by detecting Verginius, as soon as the conduct of that officer seemed to be equivocal: he had also crushed the machinations of Capito, and for those services thought himself ill requited. Stung with resentment, he now endeavored to rouse the ambition of Vitellius. 'The soldiers,' he said, 'were zealous in his service, and the name of Vitellius stood in high esteem throughout the Roman world. From Hordeonius Flaccus no opposition was to be apprehended. Britain was ready to declare against Galba, and the German auxiliaries would follow their example. The provinces wavered in their duty, and by consequence the precarious authority of a feeble old man would be soon transferred to other hands. Fortune courted Vitellius: he had nothing to do but to open his arms and receive her favors. Verginius, indeed, had every thing to chill his hopes and damp his resolution. He had no splendid line of ancestors to recommend him. He was of an equestrian family; but his father lived and died in obscurity. A man of his cast would have proved unequal to the weight of empire. A private station was to him a post of safety. The case of Vitellius was very different.

Sprung from a father who had been three times consul, once in conjunction with the emperor Claudius, and who, moreover, had discharged the office of censor, he might well aspire to the highest elevation. The honors of his family marked him out for the imperial dignity. Too great for a private station, he must reach the summit of power, or be utterly lost.' Notwithstanding this inflammatory speech, the phlegmatic temper of Vitellius was not to be roused. A few faint wishes fluttered at his heart, but hope could find no admission.

LIII. Meanwhile Cæcina, who served in the army on the Upper Rhine, had drawn to himself the affections of the army. Young, and of a comely figure, tall and well proportioned, with an air of dignity in his deportment, a flow of eloquence, and an aspiring genius, he had all the qualities that make an impression on the military mind. Though a young man, he discharged the office of questor in the province of Bætica in Spain, and was among the first that went over to Galba's interest. The emperor, to reward his zeal, gave him the command of a legion in Germany; but finding afterwards that he had been guilty of embezzling the public money, he ordered him to be called to a strict account. Cæcina was not of a temper to submit with patience. He resolved to embroil the state, and in the general confusion hoped to find a remedy for his own private afflictions. The seed-plots of rebellion were already laid in the army. In the war against Vindex they had taken the field, and, till they heard that Nero was no more, never declared in favor of Galba. Even in that act of submission they showed no forward zeal, but suffered the legions on the Lower Rhine to take the lead. There was still another circumstance that helped to sharpen their discontent. The Treveri, the

Lingones, and other states, which had felt the severity of Galba's edicts, or had seen their territory reduced to narrow limits, lay contiguous to the winter-quarters of the legions. Hence frequent intercourse, cabals, and seditious meetings, in which the soldiers grew more corrupt, envenomed as they were by the politics of discontented peasants. Hence their zeal to promote the interest of Verginius, and when that project failed, their readiness to enlist under any other chief.

LIV. The Lingones, in token of friendship, had sent presents to the legions, and, in conformity to their ancient usage, the symbolical figure of two right hands clasping one another. Their deputies appeared with the mien and garb of affliction. They went round the camp, and in every quarter disburdened their complaints. In the tents, and in the place for the standards and eagles, they painted forth their own private injuries, while other states enjoyed the favor and the protection of Galba. Finding that they made an impression, they represented to the soldiers the dangers that hung over their own heads, and the hardships under which they labored. The Romans caught the infection. A general frenzy spread through the camp; the flame of sedition was ready to break out, and some dreadful mischief seemed to be impending, when Hordeonius Flaccus, in the dead of night, ordered the deputies to depart without farther delay. A report soon prevailed that they were all treacherously murdered; and that, if the soldiers did not instantly provide for their own safety, the best and bravest of the army would be cruelly butchered, under covert of the night, far from their comrades, and without the knowledge of their friends. A secret combination was immediately formed. The soldiers joined in a bond of union. The auxiliary cohorts, at first suspected of a

design to rise against the legions, and put the whole body to the sword, entered into the league with eager ardor. Such is the nature of profligate and abandoned minds; in peace and profound tranquillity they seldom agree; but for seditious purposes a coalition is easily formed.

LV. The legions on the Lower Rhine, on the calends of January, went through the usual form of swearing fidelity to Galba; but the form only was observed. No man was seen to act with alacrity. In the foremost ranks a feeble sound was heard; the words of the oath were repeated with an unwilling murmur, while the rest remained in sullen silence; each man, as usual in dangerous enterprises, expecting the bold example of his comrades, ready to second the insurrection, yet not daring to begin it. A leaven of discordant humors pervaded the whole mass of the army. The first and fifth legion were the most outrageous: some of them pelted the images of Galba with a volley of stones. The fifteenth and sixteenth abstained from acts of violence, but were loud and clamorous: they bawled sedition, but waited for ring-leaders to begin the fray.

In the Upper Germany the tumult was still more violent. On the same calends of January the fourth and eighteenth legions, quartered together in one winter camp, dashed the images of Galba into fragments. In this outrage the fourth legion led the way; and the eighteenth, after balancing for some time, followed their example. Unwilling however to incur the imputation of a rebellion against their country, they agreed to revive the antiquated names of the senate and Roman people, and in that republican form took the oath of fidelity. Not one commander of a legion, nor even so much as a tribune, appeared in favor of

Galba: on the contrary, many of them, as often happens in cases of public confusion, not only connived, but helped to increase the tumult. The mutineers were still without a leader. No man took on him to harangue the multitude; no orator ascended the tribunal; nor could the incendiaries tell in whose service their eloquence was to be employed.

LVI. Hordeonius Flaccus beheld this scene of confusion; and, though a consular commander, never once interposed with his authority to restrain the violent, to secure the wavering, or to animate the well-affected. He looked on, a calm spectator, tame and passive; it may be added, innocent, but innocent through sluggish indolence. Four centurions of the eighteenth legion, namely, Nonius Receptus, Donatius Valens, Romilius Marcellus, and Calpurnius Repentinus, attempted to defend the images of Galba. The soldiers attacked them with impetuous violence, and all four were loaded with fetters. From that moment all fidelity was at an end. The obligation of the former oath was no longer binding. It happened in this as in all seditions; one set appeared to be most numerous, the rest followed the leaders, and the whole herd was of one party. In the course of the night that followed the calends of January the eagle-bearer of the fourth legion arrived at the Agrippinian colony, where Vitellius was engaged at a banquet, with intelligence that the fourth and eighteenth legions, having destroyed the images of Galba, took a new form of oath to the senate and Roman people. As that government existed no longer, the oath was deemed a nullity. In this crisis it was judged proper to seize the opportunity that fortune offered, and, by the nomination of an emperor, fix the wavering temper of the legions. Dispatches were accordingly sent to in-

form the army in the Lower Germany that the soldiers on the Upper Rhine had revolted from Galba, and that by consequence it remained for them either to march against the rebels, or, for the sake of peace and mutual concord, to create another emperor. In choosing for themselves they would hazard little; but indecision might be dangerous.

LVII. The winter-quarters of the first legion were nearest to the residence of Vitellius. Fabius Valens was the commanding officer; a prompt and daring leader of sedition. On the following day he put himself at the head of the cavalry belonging to his own legion, and with a party of the auxiliaries proceeded by a rapid march to the Agrippinian colony. He no sooner entered the city than he saluted Vitellius by the title of emperor. The legions of the province, with zeal and ardor, followed his example; and three days before the nones of January the legions in Upper Germany declared for Vitellius, losing all memory of the senate and the Roman people. Those specious words, which a few days before resounded with so much energy, were dropped at once; and the men, it now was plain, were never in their hearts the soldiers of a republic. The Agrippinian people, the Treveri, and Lingones, were determined not to be behindhand in demonstrations of zeal. They offered a supply of arms and horses, of men and money, in proportion to their respective abilities. The strong and valiant were willing to serve in person: the rich opened their treasure; and the skilful gave their advice. The leading chiefs, as well in the colonies as in the camp, who had already enriched themselves by the spoils of war, wished for another victory that might bring with it an accumulation of wealth. The zeal with which they entered into the league was what might be expected;

but the alacrity of the common men was beheld with wonder. Poor and destitute, they made a tender of their travelling subsistence, their belts, their accoutrements, and the silver ornaments of their armor; all excited by one general impulse, a sudden fit of blind enthusiasm. In their motives there was no doubt a mingle of avarice; and plunder, they hoped, would be the reward of valor.

LVIII. Vitellius, after bestowing the highest praise on the spirit with which the soldiers embraced his cause, proceeded to regulate the various departments of public business. He transferred the offices hitherto granted to the imperial freedmen to the Roman knights; and the fees claimed by the centurions for exemptions from duty were for the future to be defrayed out of the revenue of the prince. The fury of the soldiers, demanding vengeance on particular persons, was not to be repressed. He yielded in some instances, and in others eluded their resentment under color of reserving the obnoxious for heavier punishment. Pompeius Propinquus, the governor of Belgic Gaul, was put to death on the spot; but Julius Burdo, who commanded the German fleet, was saved by an artful stratagem. The army considered that officer as the accuser first, and afterwards as the murderer of Fonteius Capito, whose memory was still held in respect. To pardon openly was not in the power of Vitellius: he could execute in open day; but to be merciful, he was obliged to deceive. Burdo remained in prison till the victory obtained by Vitellius appeased the wrath of the soldiers. He then was set at liberty. In the mean time Centurio Crispinus, who with his own hand had shed the blood of Capito, suffered as a victim to expiate that atrocious deed. His guilt was manifest: the soldiers demanded his blood, and Vi-

tellius thought a man of that description no kind of loss.

LIX. Julius Civilis was the next whom the army doomed to destruction; but being of high rank and consequence among the Batavians, fear of a rupture with that fierce and warlike people saved his life. There were at that time in the territory of the Lingones no less than eight Batavian cohorts, annexed as auxiliaries to the fourteenth legion, but separated in the distraction of the times; a body of men in that juncture of the greatest moment. It was in their power to turn the scale in favor of whatever party they espoused. Nonius, Donatius, Romilius, and Calpurnius, the four centurions already mentioned, were by order of Vitellius hurried to execution. They had remained steady in their duty to their prince; and fidelity is a crime which men in open rebellion never pardon. Valerius Asiaticus, the governor of Belgic Gaul, to whom in a short time after Vitellius gave his daughter in marriage, and Junius Blæsus, who presided in the province of Lyons, and had under his command the Italic legion, and the body of horse called the Taurinian cavalry, went over to the party of the new emperor. The forces in Rhætia were not long in suspense; and the legions in Britain declared without hesitation in favor of Vitellius.

LX. Britain was at that time governed by Trebellius Maximus; a man, for his avarice and sordid practices, despised and hated by the army. Between him and Roscius Cælius, who commanded the twentieth legion, there had been a long-subsisting quarrel, renewed of late with keener acrimony, and embittered by the distractions of a civil war. Cælius was charged by his superior officer with being the fomentor of sedition, and an enemy to discipline and good order: in

return he recriminated ; alleging that the commander-in-chief plundered the legions, and left the soldiers to languish in distress and poverty. From this dissension between their officers the common men caught the infection. All discipline was at an end. Licentiousness prevailed ; and the tumult rose at length to such a height that Trebellius, insulted openly by the auxiliaries, deserted by the cavalry, and betrayed by the cohorts, was obliged to fly for refuge to Vitellius. The province, however, notwithstanding the flight of a consular governor, remained in a perfect state of tranquillity. The commanders of the legions held the reins of government, by their commissions equal in authority, but eclipsed by the enterprising genius and the daring spirit of Cælius.

LXI. The arrival of the forces from Britain was an accession of strength ; and thereon Vitellius, flushed with hope, abounding in resources, and strong in numbers, resolved to carry the war into Italy by two different routes, under the conduct of two commanders. Fabius Valens was sent forward, with instructions to draw to his interest the people of Gaul ; and, if he found them obstinate, to lay waste their country with fire and sword. He was afterwards to pass over the Cottian Alps, and make an irruption into Italy. Cæcina, the other general, was ordered to take a nearer way, over the Penine mountains, and make his descent on that side. The flower of the army from the Lower Rhine, with the eagle of the fifth legion, and the cohorts and cavalry, amounting to forty thousand men, were put under the command of Valens. Cæcina advanced from the Upper Germany with no less than thirty thousand, of which the one-and-twentieth legion was the main strength. Each commander had a reinforcement of German auxiliaries. Vitellius fol-

lowed them with a third army, to crush whatever resisted, and bring up the whole weight of the war.

LXII. The new emperor and his army presented a striking contrast: the soldiers burned with impatience, and with one voice demanded to be led against the enemy. 'It was time,' they said, 'to push on the war with vigor, while the two Gauls are in commotion, and Spain is yet undecided. The winter season is far from being an obstacle: nor were the men to be amused with idle negotiations to bring on a compromise. Italy, in all events, must be invaded, and Rome taken by storm. In civil dissensions it is expedition that gives life and energy to all military operations. The crisis called for vigor, and debate was out of season.' Vitellius, in the mean time, loitered away his time in dull repose; lifeless, torpid, drunk at noon-day, and overwhelmed with gluttony. The imperial dignity, he thought, consisted in riot and profusion; and he resolved to enjoy the prerogative of a prince. The spirit of the soldiers supplied the defects of their prince. They neither wanted him in the ranks to animate the brave, nor to rouse the tardy and inactive. Each man was his own general. With one consent they formed the ranks, and demanded the signal for the march. They saluted Vitellius by the name of Germanicus; that of Cæsar he chose to decline, and even after his victory always rejected it. Valens began his march. On that very day his army beheld a joyful omen. An eagle appeared at the head of the lines, measuring his flight by the movement of the soldiers, as if to guide them on their way. The air resounded with shouts of joy, while the bird proceeded in the same regular course, undismayed by the uproar, and still seeming to direct their march. A

phenomenon so unusual was considered as a sure prognostic of a signal victory.

LXIII. The army advanced in good order towards the state of the Treveri, whom they considered as their friends and allies. At Divodurum (a city of the Mediomatrici) they received every mark of kindness, but were seized unaccountably with a sudden panic, in its effect so extraordinary, that the soldiers grasped their arms, and fell on the innocent inhabitants sword in hand. In this dreadful outrage the love of plunder had no share; a sudden frenzy possessed every mind; and, as the cause was unknown, no remedy could be applied. No less than four thousand men were massacred; and, if the intreaties of the general had not at length prevailed, the whole city had been laid in blood. The rest of Gaul was alarmed by this horrible catastrophe to such a degree that, wherever the army approached, whole cities, with the magistrates at their head, went forth in a suppliant manner to sue for mercy. Mothers with their children lay prostrate on the ground, as if a conquering enemy advanced against them; and though nothing like hostility subsisted, the wretched people were obliged in profound peace to deprecate all the horrors of war.

LXIV. Valens arrived with his army at the capital city of the Leucians. At that place he received intelligence of the murder of Galba and the accession of Otho. The news made no impression on the soldiers. Unmoved by joy or fear, they thought of nothing but the spoils of war. The Gauls, released by this event from their attachment to Galba, were now at liberty to choose their party. Otho and Vitellius were objects of their detestation; but they feared the latter. The army proceeded on their march to the territory of the Lingones, a people well disposed towards Vitellius.

They met with a friendly reception, and passed their time in acts of mutual kindness. But this amicable intercourse was interrupted by the intemperance of the cohort which had been separated, as already mentioned, from the fourteenth legion, and by Valens incorporated with his army. Being of the Batavian nation, and by nature fierce and warlike, they lived on bad terms with the legions. Opprobrious words passed between them; from words contention arose: the legionary soldiers entered into the dispute, and joined the different parties as judgment or inclination prompted. The quarrel rose to such a pitch that, if Valens had not interposed, and by making a few examples recalled the Batavians to a sense of their duty, a bloody battle must have been the consequence.

A colorable pretext for falling on the Æduans was the ardent wish of the army; but that people not only complied with the demand of money and arms, but added a voluntary supply of provisions. What was thus done by the Æduans through motives of fear, the people of Lyons performed with inclination and zeal to serve the cause of Vitellius. From that city the Italic legion and the Taurinian cavalry were ordered to join the army. The eighteenth cohort, which had been used to winter there, was left in garrison. Manlius Valens at that time commanded the Italic legion. This officer had rendered good service to the cause; but his services were repaid with ingratitude by Vitellius. The fact was, Fabius Valens, the commander-in-chief, had given a secret stab to his reputation, and, to cover his malice, played an artful game, with all the plausible appearance of sly hypocrisy. In public he praised the person whom he wounded in the dark.

LXV. The late war had kindled afresh the deadly

feud which had long subsisted between the people of Lyons and the inhabitants of Vienne. In the various battles, which they had fought with alternate success and prodigious slaughter, it was visible that so much animosity was not merely the effect of party rage in a contest between Nero and Galba. The people of Lyons had felt the weight of Galba's displeasure: they saw their revenues wrested out of their hands and confiscated to the imperial treasury, while their inveterate enemies enjoyed the favors of the emperor. Hence a new source of jealousy. The two cities were separated by a river; but they were hostile neighbors, and they saw each other with inflamed resentment. Revenge and malice were not to be appeased. The citizens of Lyons omitted nothing that could excite the legions against their rivals: they talked with the soldiers, man by man, and nothing less than the utter destruction of Vienne could satisfy their indignation. 'Lyons,' they said, 'had been besieged by their mortal enemies, who had taken up arms in the cause of Vindex, and lately raised recruits to complete the legions in the service of Galba.' To these incentives they added the temptation of plunder in a rich and opulent city. Finding that they had infused their rancor into the minds of the soldiers, they no longer depended on secret practices, but openly and in a body preferred their petition, imploring the army to march forth the redressers of wrong, and rase to the ground a city that had been the nursery of war and a hive of enemies; a foreign race, who hated the Roman name. Lyons, they said, was a confederate colony, a portion of the army willing at all times to share in the good or evil fortune of the empire. The issue of the present war might be disastrous to their party. They therefore

implored the legions not to leave them, in the event of a defeat, at the mercy of a furious and implacable enemy.

LXVI. These intreaties had their effect. The legions were roused to vengeance; and the flame rose to such a height, that the commanders and other officers despaired of being able to extinguish it. The inhabitants of Vienne had notice of their danger. They came forth in solemn procession, bearing in their hands¹ the sacred vestments, and all the usual tokens of peace and humble supplication. They met the Romans on their march, and falling prostrate on the ground, clasped their knees, and in a pathetic strain deprecated the vengeance ready to burst on them. Fabius Valens judged it expedient to order a distribution of three hundred sesterces to each man. The soldiers began to relent, and the colony was respected for its worth and ancient dignity. The general pleaded in behalf of the inhabitants, and was heard with attention. The state however was obliged to furnish a supply of arms and warlike stores. Individuals, with emulation, contributed from their private stock. The report however was, that the people in good time applied a large sum of money, and purchased the protection of the commander-in-chief. Thus much is certain, that after being for a long time depressed with poverty, he grew suddenly rich, but took no pains to conceal his affluence. The art of rising in the world with moderation was not the talent of Valens. His passions had been restrained by indigence; and now, when fortune smiled, the sudden taste of pleasure

1 Olive branches and sacred vestments were usually displayed in cases of distress, when the conquered sued for mercy. So we read in Livy, xxiv. 30.

hurried him into excess. A beggar in his youth, he was in old age a voluptuous prodigal.

The army proceeded by slow marches through the territory of the Allobrogians, and thence to the Vocontians; the general, during the whole progress, making his market at every place, and selling his favors for a sum of money. For a bribe he fixed the length of each day's march, and shifted his camp for a price agreed on between him and the owners of the lands. In all these exactions Valens enforced his orders with unrelenting cruelty; nor did he blush to drive open bargains with the magistrates of the several cities. Torches and firebrands were prepared to fire the town of Lucus, situate in the territory of the Vocontians; and the place would infallibly have been burnt to the ground if the people had not ransomed themselves with a considerable sum. Where pecuniary bribes were not to be had women were obliged to resign their persons, and prostitution became the price of common humanity. In this manner, gratifying his avarice, or his brutal passions, Valens arrived at the foot of the Alps.

LXVII. Cæcina, who commanded the second army, marked his way with greater rapine and more horrible cruelty. He found in the territory of the Helvetians abundant cause to provoke a man of his ferocious temper. The people of that district, originally a Gallic nation,¹ were renowned in former times for their valor and their exploits in war. Of late years the history of their ancestors was their only glory. Not having heard of the death of Galba, they were unwil-

¹ The territory of the Helvetii was a part of Celtic Gaul, more extensive than what is now called Switzerland. The people are celebrated by Julius Cæsar for their military virtue and constant warfare with the Germans.

ling to acknowledge Vitellius. In this disposition of their minds they had soon a cause of quarrel, occasioned by the rapacity of the twenty-first legion. That body of men fell in with a party who were escorting a sum of money to a strong fort, where the Helvetians had immemorably maintained a garrison. The Romans seized the whole as lawful plunder. An act of violence so unwarranted raised the indignation of the people. Determined to make reprisals, they intercepted a small party on their way to Pannonia, with letters from the German army to the legions stationed in that country. They seized the papers, and detained in custody a centurion with some of his soldiers. This to such a man as Cæcina was ample provocation. He wished for nothing so much as a pretence for open hostility. Whenever he took umbrage he struck his blow without delay. To defer the punishment were to leave time for repentance. He marched against the Helvetians; and having laid waste the country, sacked a place, built during the leisure of a long peace, in the form of a municipal town, remarkable for the beauty of the situation, and by reason of its salubrious waters¹ much frequented. Not content with this act of revenge, he sent dispatches into Rhætia, with orders to the auxiliaries of that country to hang on the rear of the Helvetians, while he advanced to attack them in front.

LXVIII. The spirit of the Helvetians, fierce and intrepid while the danger was at a distance, began to droop as soon as the war drew nearer. In the beginning of these hostilities they had chosen Claudius Severus to command their forces; but terror and confu-

¹ Brotier says this place was called in ancient inscriptions *Respublica Aquensis*, on account of the salubrity of the waters. He supposes it to be what is now called Baden, in Switzerland.

sion followed. They neither knew the use of their arms nor the advantage of discipline. To keep their ranks in battle was not their practice, nor were they able to act in concert with their united force. The contest, they now perceived, must be unequal with a veteran army; and their fortifications being every where in decay, to stand a siege was not advisable. Cæcina advanced at the head of a numerous army; the cavalry and auxiliary forces from Rhætia, with the youth of that country, inured to arms, and trained to the art of war, were ready to attack them in the rear. The country was laid waste, and a dreadful carnage followed. The Helvetians betook themselves to flight; and after wandering about in a general panic, wounded, maimed, and unable to resist, they threw down their arms, and fled for refuge to the mountain known by the name of Vocetius. A band of Thracians was sent to dislodge them. Driven from their fastness, they betook themselves to the woods, or fled to their lurking-places, while the Germans and Rhætians hung on them in their flight. Several thousands were put to the sword or sold to slavery. Having ravaged the country, and laid a scene of desolation, the army marched to the siege of Aventicum, the capital city of the Helvetians. The inhabitants sent their deputies, offering to surrender at discretion. Their submission was accepted. Julius Alpinus, one of the leading chiefs, charged with being the author of the war, was by order of Cæcina publicly executed. The rest were left to the mercy or resentment of Vitellius.

LXIX. The Helvetians sent their ambassadors to the new emperor; but which was most implacable, he or his army, it is difficult to decide. The soldiers clamored for the utter destruction of the whole race. They brandished their arms in the face of the ambas-

sadors, and threatened blows and brutal violence. Vitellius showed no less ferocity. He gave vent to a torrent of abuse, and threw out violent menaces. At length Claudius Cossus, one of the deputies, who possessed an uncommon share of eloquence, but had the skill, under an appearance of well-acted terror, to conceal his power over the passions of his audience, had the address to soothe the minds of the soldiers: Their rage subsided, and compassion took its turn. Such is the nature of the multitude; easily inflamed, and with a sudden transition shifting to the opposite extreme. They melted into tears, and never ceased their supplications till they prevailed on Vitellius, and saved the people from destruction.

LXX. Cæcina, wanting farther instructions from Vitellius, and at the same time making all proper arrangements for his passage over the Alps, halted for a few days in the territory of the Helvetians. In that situation he received intelligence that the squadron of horse called Sylla's squadron, at that time quartered on the banks of the Po, had sworn fidelity to Vitellius. They had formerly served under Vitellius, when he was the proconsular governor of Africa. Nero, when he projected an expedition into Egypt, ordered them to sail for that country; but being soon after alarmed by the commotions stirred up by Vindex, he called them back to Italy, where they remained from that time. Their officers, unacquainted with Otho, and closely connected with Vitellius, espoused the interest of the latter. By representing to the men the strength of the legions then on their march to the invasion of Italy, and by extolling the valor of the German armies, they drew the whole squadron into their party. As a farther proof of their zeal for their new prince, they attracted to his interest the chief municipal towns on

the side of the Po; namely, Mediolanum, Novaria, Eporedia, and Vercelles. Of this fact Cæcina was apprised by dispatches from the officers. But a single squadron, he knew, was not sufficient to defend so large a tract of country. In order to reinforce them he sent forward the cohorts of Gaul, of Lusitania, and Britain, with the succors from Germany, and the squadron of horse called the 'ala petrina.' How he himself should pass into Italy was his next consideration. His first plan was to march over the Rhætian mountains, in order to make a descent into Noricum, where Petronius Urbicus, the governor of the province, supposed to be a partisan in Otho's service, was busy in collecting forces, and destroying the bridges over the rivers. But this enterprise was soon relinquished. The detachment already sent forward might be cut off, and after all, the secure possession of Italy was the important object. The issue of the war, wherever decided, would draw after it all inferior places, and Noricum would fall by consequence into the hands of the conqueror. He resolved therefore to proceed by the shortest way into Italy. For this purpose he ordered the troops lightly armed to proceed on their journey; and, with the legions heavily armed, he marched himself over the Penine Alps, through a waste of snow and all the rigors of the winter season.

LXXI. Otho, in the mean time, displayed a new and unexpected character. He renounced his love of pleasure, or at least dissembled for the present. Scorning to loiter in luxury and inglorious ease, he assumed a spirit becoming the majesty of empire. And yet the change diffused a general terror: men knew that his virtues were false, and they dreaded a return of his former vices. He ordered Marius Celsus, the consul elect, whom he had put in irons in order to rescue

him from the hands of the soldiers, to appear before him in the capitol. To acquire the fame of clemency, by releasing a man of illustrious character, and well known to be an enemy to Otho and his party, was the object of his ambition. Celsus appeared with unshaken constancy. He confessed the crime of adhering faithfully to the unfortunate Galba, and by that firmness gave the emperor a fair opportunity to grace his character. Otho did not assume the tone of a sovereign granting pardon to a criminal; but, to show that he could think generously of an enemy, and to remove all doubt of the sincerity of his reconciliation, he received Celsus among his intimate friends, and in a short time afterwards appointed him one of his generals to conduct the war. Celsus accepted the commission, and remained steady to his trust. His fidelity was honorable, but unfortunate. The clemency of the prince gave great satisfaction to the leading men at Rome; the populace applauded, and even the soldiers admired the virtue which they had condemned.

LXXII. The joy excited on this occasion was followed by an event no less acceptable, but for reasons of a different nature. The public voice was loud against Sophonius Tigellinus, and accordingly his doom was fixed. From low beginnings this man had raised himself to eminence in the state. His birth was obscure. Stained in his youth with the worst impurities, he retained in his advanced years all his early habits, and closed with disgrace a life begun in infamy. By his vices, the surest road to preferment, he obtained the command, first of the city cohorts, and afterwards of the pretorian guards. The rewards which were due to virtue only he obtained by his crimes. To his effeminate qualities he united some of those rougher evils which may be called manly pas-

sions, such as avarice and cruelty. Having gained an entire ascendant over the affections of Nero, he was in some instances the adviser of the horrors committed by that prince, and in others the chief actor, without the knowledge of his master. He corrupted Nero at first, and in the end deserted him. Hence it was that the blood of a criminal was never demanded with such violent clamor. The men who detested the memory of Nero, and those who still regretted him, concurred in one opinion. They all joined in the cry for public justice. During the short reign of Galba he lived secure under the protection of Titus Vinius. In fact, he had some merit with that minister, having saved the life of his daughter; but in that very act humanity was not his motive. A man who had shed so much innocent blood could not be suspected of a single virtue. His design was, by a new connexion to screen himself from future danger.

Such at all times is the policy of the worst of men: they dread a reverse of fortune, and in the hour of need hope to shelter themselves under the protection of some pernicious favorite. Innocence is no part of their care; they know that the guilty are ever ready to defend each other. But the friendship of Vinius, who was still remembered with detestation, was an additional spur to the populace. They crowded together from all quarters; they surrounded the palace; they filled the forum; and in the circus and the theatre where licentiousness is most apt to show itself, they clamored with a degree of violence little short of sedition for the punishment of a vile malefactor. Tigellinus was then at the baths of Sinuessa. Orders were sent to him to put a period to his life. He received the fatal news in a circle of his concubines: he took leave with tenderness; and after mutual embraces,

and other trifling delays, he cut his throat with a razor; by the pusillanimity of his last moments disgracing even the infamy of his former life.

LXXIII. About the same time the execution of Calvia Crispinilla was demanded by the public voice: but by various artifices, in which the duplicity of the prince covered him with dishonor, she was saved from danger. She had been, in the reign of Nero, the professed teacher of lascivious pleasures, and in the various scenes of that emperor the caterer for his appetite. She passed afterwards into Africa, and having instigated Clodius Macer to revolt, became an accomplice in the plot to cause a famine in the city of Rome. She was married soon after to a man of consular rank, and by that connexion gained a powerful interest; insomuch that, during the reigns of Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, she lived in perfect security. Even in the following reign she was high in credit. Her riches and her want of children placed her in a flourishing state; and those two circumstances in good as well as evil times, are sure to be of weight.

LXXIV. Otho, in the mean time, endeavored by frequent letters to divert Vitellius from his purpose. His proposals were in the soft style of female persuasion; he offered money, and a retreat for voluptuous enjoyments, with all that the prince's favor could bestow. Vitellius answered in the same delicate strain. Both parties corresponded in dainty terms, with dissembled hatred and frivolous negotiation, till exasperated by want of success, they changed their tone, and with unguarded invective charged each other with criminal pleasures and flagitious deeds. Both had truth on their side. Weary of altercation, Otho recalled the deputies who had been sent by Galba, and in their room despatched others to the German army, to the

Italic legion, and the troops quartered at Lyons, with instructions to negotiate in the name of the senate. The men employed in this embassy tarried with Vitellius, and by their cheerful compliance left no room to think that they were detained by force. Under pretence of doing honor to the embassy, Otho had sent a detachment of the pretorian guards. Without suffering them to mix with the soldiers, Vitellius ordered them to return without delay. Fabius Valens took the opportunity to write in the name of the German army to the pretorian guards. His letters, in a style of magnificence, set forth the strength of the legions, and at the same time offered terms of mutual concord. He condemned the forward zeal with which they presumed to transfer to Otho an empire which had been vested in Vitellius. He mingled promises with expressions of anger, and after treating the pretorians as men unequal to an important war, gave them assurances that they would lose nothing by peace and unanimity. These letters however were without effect. The pretorians continued firm in their duty.

LXXV. The rival chiefs began to lay snares for each other. They waged a war of treachery. Emissaries were sent by Otho into Germany, and others by Vitellius to Rome. Both parties missed their aim. The agents of Vitellius passed undetected. Amidst a concourse of people, in so vast a city as Rome, they could lurk with impunity; while, on the other hand, in a camp where all were known to each other, the men employed by Otho were soon discovered by the novelty of their faces. Vitellius, anxious for his family, then residing at Rome, sent letters to Titianus, the brother of Otho, threatening, if any violence was offered to his mother or his children, to make reprisals, and put both him and his son to death. Both

families remained unhurt. As long as Otho lived, fear might be the motive: Vitellius, after his victory, added to his laurels the palm of clemency.

LXXVI. The first occurrence that inspired Otho with confidence in his cause was an account from Illyricum that the legions of Dalmatia, of Pannonia, and Mœsia, had declared in his favor. Advices from Spain brought the like intelligence; and in a public edict honorable mention was made of Cluvius Rufus, the governor of the province. That compliment however was found to be premature. Spain went over to the interest of Vitellius. The people of Aquitaine, under the influence of Julius Cordus, had sworn obedience to Otho; but a little time showed that the obligation of an oath was no longer binding. All principle, all affection, and all truth were banished. Fear, and the necessity of the times, governed in every quarter. Narbon Gaul acceded to Vitellius. A party in force, and near at hand, found no difficulty in drawing their neighbors into a league with themselves. The distant provinces, and all places separated by the Mediterranean, adhered to Otho, not from motives of regard for him or his party, but because the name of Rome and the senate were still respected by foreign nations. Besides this, Otho, being the first announced in foreign parts, had already made his impression. The army in Judea under the conduct of Vespasian, and that in Syria, under Mucianus, swore fidelity to Otho. Egypt, and the provinces in the East, acknowledged his authority. The same disposition prevailed in Africa. That whole country was willing to follow the example set by the people of Carthage. In that city, without any order or authority from Vipsanius Apronianus, then proconsular governor of the province, a public treat was given by a pragmatial fel-

low, of the name of Crescens, one of Nero's freedmen, who had the ambition to distinguish himself as an active partisan in the interest of Otho. Such, in times of public distraction, is the presumption of the lowest men in the state. They think it time to emerge from their obscurity, and act their part as if they had an interest in the commonwealth. The mob of Carthage expressed their zeal with all demonstrations of joy, and the rest of Africa followed their example.

LXXVII. In this posture of affairs, while the armies and the several provinces embraced opposite interests, it was evident that Vitellius, to secure his title, had nothing left but the decision of the sword. Otho, in the mean time, remained at Rome, discharging all the functions of the sovereign power, as if he was established in profound tranquillity. His conduct, in some instances, was such as became the dignity of the state; but his measures, for the most part, were hastily adopted, the mere expedients of the day. He named himself and his brother Titianus joint consuls,¹

¹ The number of consuls in the course of this eventful year was so great that it will not be useless to place the list in one view before the eye of the reader.

A. U. C. 822.	Consuls.
On the calends of January, Hist. i. 1.	{ Galba, { Vinus.
Calends of March, Hist. i. 77.	{ Salvius Otho, { Titianus Otho.
Calends of May, Hist. i. 77.	{ Verginius Rufus, { Pompeius Vopiscus.
Calends of July, Hist. i. 77.	{ Cælius Sabinus, { Flavius Sabinus.
Calends of September, Hist. i. 77.	{ Arrius Antoninus, { Marius Celsus.
Calends of November, Hist. ii. 1.	{ Fabius Valens, { Alienus Cæcina.

Cæcina being pronounced a traitor by the senate on the day

to continue in office till the calends of March. For the two following months, with a view to curry favor with the German army, he appointed Verginius, and gave him for his colleague Poppæus Vopiscus. For the nomination of the latter he pretended motives of friendship; but, as men of penetration thought, his real view was to pay court to the people of Vienne. With regard to future consuls, no alteration was made in the arrangement settled by Nero or by Galba. Cælius Sabinus and his brother Flavius were to succeed for the months of May and June. From the first of July to September, Arrius Antoninus¹ and Marius Celsus were to be in office. Nor did Vitellius, after his victory, disturb this order of succession. Otho at the same time thought proper to grant the augural and pontifical dignities, as the summit of civil honors, to such of the senators as were grown grey in public stations; nor was he unmindful of the young patri- cians lately recalled from banishment. To soothe the remembrance of their sufferings, he bestowed on them the sacerdotal honors which had been enjoyed by their ancestors. Cadius Rufus, Pedius Blæsus, and Sæ- vinus Pomtinus, who under Claudius or Nero had been charged with extortion, and expelled the senate, were restored to their rank. To varnish this proceed- ing, the real offence was suppressed, and what was in fact public rapine, in the style of the pardon took the name of violated majesty: a charge held in such gene-

before the calends of January, A. U. C. 823, the consul for a single day, being the last of the year, was Roscius Regulus; Hist. iii. 37.

¹ Arrius Antoninus, who appears in the foregoing list of consuls, was grandfather to Antoninus Pius, the upright and virtuous emperor.

ral detestation, that to elude it the best and wisest laws were set aside.

LXXVIII. In order to extend his popularity, Otho in the next place turned his thoughts to the cities and provinces, little doubting but by acts of munificence he should be able to strengthen his interest. To the colonies of Hispalis and Emerita, then on the decline, he transplanted a number of families: the Lingones were honored with the privileges of Roman citizens, and to the province of Bætica all the Moorish cities were annexed. He gave a new code of laws to Cappadocia and another to Africa; all popular grants, and splendid for the present, but soon to fade away and sink into oblivion. Amidst these innovations, all of them temporising acts, occasioned by the pressure of his affairs, and perhaps on that account excusable, he did not forget his tender passions. Even in the moment when the sovereign power was still at stake, his love of Poppæa was not extinguished. With fond remembrance of that connexion, he caused her statues to be restored by a decree of the senate. There is reason to think that, with a view to popularity, he intended to celebrate the memory of Nero with public honors. Many were for erecting the statues of that emperor, and even proposed it as a public measure. The populace and the soldiers, as if they meant to decorate their emperor with additional splendor, saluted him by the title of Nero Otho. He heard their acclamations but remained silent; perhaps unwilling to reject the compliment, perhaps ashamed to accept it.

LXXIX. The public mind being now intent on the great scene that began to open, no wonder if foreign affairs fell into neglect. Encouraged by the inattention

that prevailed at Rome, the Rhoxolanians, a people of Sarmatia, who in the preceding winter had cut off two intire cohorts, made an irruption into the province of Moesia with nine thousand horse; a band of freebooters, determined to ravage the country. Plunder, and not war, was their passion. They prowled about in quest of prey, without order or apprehension of an enemy, when on a sudden they found themselves hemmed in by the third legion and their auxiliaries. The Romans advanced in order of battle. The Sarmatians, overloaded with booty, were taken by surprise. On a damp and slippery soil the swiftness of their horses was of no use. Unable to retreat, they were cut to pieces, more like men bound in fetters, than soldiers armed for the field of battle. It may seem strange, but it is not less true, that the courage of the Sarmatians has no inward principle, but depends altogether on external circumstances; a kind of courage that has no source in the mind, but may be said to be out of the man. In an engagement with the infantry, nothing can be more dastardly; in an onset of the cavalry, they are impetuous, fierce, and irresistible. Their weapons are long spears or sabres of an enormous size, which they wield with both hands. The chiefs wear coats of mail, formed with plates of iron, or the tough hides of animals, impenetrable to the enemy, but to themselves an incumbrance so unwieldy, that he who falls in battle is never able to rise again.

In their encounter with the Romans, a heavy fall of rain and a sudden thaw deprived them of all advantage from the velocity of their horses: the consequence was, that they were overwhelmed in a deep waste of snow. The light breastplates of the Romans were no impediment. With their missive weapons,

and their swords of a moderate length, they were able to rush into the thickest ranks; while the Sarmatians, who wear neither shield nor buckler, were a mark at a distance, or in close engagement cut to pieces. The few who escaped from the slaughter fled for refuge to their fens and marshes, and there died of their wounds, or perished under the inclemency of the season. An account of this transaction being received at Rome, a triumphal statue was decreed to Marcus Aponius, then governor of Mœsia. Fulvius Aurelius, Julianus Titius, and Nimisius Lupus, all three commanders of legions, obtained the consular ornaments. The joy expressed by Otho was beyond all bounds. He assumed the merit of the victory, boasting with vainglory, that by his own auspicious fortune, and the valor of his officers and his armies, he had aggrandised the Roman name.

LXXX. From a cause altogether contemptible, and in its origin threatening no kind of danger, a violent sedition well-nigh involved the city in ruin. The seventeenth cohort, then quartered at Ostia, had orders to remove to Rome. The care of providing them with arms was committed to Varius Crispinus, a tribune of the pretorian bands. That officer, intending to execute his orders without noise or bustle, chose his time towards the close of day, when the camp was quiet. He opened the magazine of arms, and ordered the waggons to be loaded. The lateness of the hour filled the men with suspicion; the intention seemed dark and dangerous, and the affectation of secrecy produced a general tumult. The soldiers were in liquor, and at the sight of their arms, reasoning like drunken men, they thought it their business to seize them without delay. They murmured, they complained; they charged the tribunes and centurions with treachery, declaring aloud that a dark con-

spiracy was formed, with intention to arm the slaves and domestics of the senators against the life of Otho. A scene of uproar and confusion followed. Some were stupified with liquor, and comprehended nothing: the profligate liked the opportunity to commit midnight plunder; and the multitude, as usual, were ready to mix in any sudden commotion. Those who regarded discipline and good order were undistinguished in the dark. The tribune who attempted to restrain their fury was murdered on the spot. The centurions, who exerted themselves on the occasion, suffered in like manner. The soldiers seized their arms; they mounted their horses, and entering the city sword in hand, rushed in a body to the imperial palace.

LXXXI. Otho was engaged at a grand entertainment, to which he had invited the most distinguished of both sexes. A sudden terror seized the whole company. The cause was unknown. Was it an accidental fray among the soldiers, or the perfidy of the emperor? What was to be done? Should they stay and perish together? or was it more advisable to disperse, and fly different ways? In the hurry and agitation no one could decide. They made a show of resolution: their courage failed; they stood covered with consternation, and with their eyes fixed on Otho, endeavored to peruse his countenance. The usual fate of suspicious minds attended them all. They were afraid of Otho, and he stood trembling for himself. He trembled also for the senate, and thought of their danger no less than of his own. He ordered the two pretorian commanders to go forth in order to appease the tumult, and in the mean time advised his company to depart. They fled with precipitation. The magistrates threw aside the ensigns of their office, and dispersed without their friends, without their train of

attendants. Old men and women of distinction wandered about in the dark they knew not whither. Few dared to venture towards their own habitations. The greatest part took shelter with their friends; and where the meanest of their dependants lived, that place they thought the safest place of refuge.

LXXXII. The madness of the soldiers was not to be controlled. They burst the palace gates, and rushed forward to the banqueting-room, with outrageous clamor demanding a sight of Otho. Julius Martialis, one of the tribunes, and Vitellius Saturninus, the prefect of the legion, endeavored to oppose the torrent, and were both wounded in the fray. Nothing was to be seen but the flash of arms, and nothing heard but threats and denunciations of vengeance, now against the centurions, and at times against the whole body of the senate. The soldiers neither knew the cause nor the object of their frenzy, and having no particular victim in view, they resolved to lay a scene of general slaughter. They forced their way into the apartment of the prince. Otho, forgetting his own rank, and the majesty of empire, stood on his couch, with tears and supplications imploring the soldiers to desist. He prevailed at length. The men retired to the camp, with a sullen spirit, and guilt at their hearts. On the following day Rome had the appearance of a city taken by assault. The houses were shut, the streets deserted, the populace in a general panic. The soldiers wandered about in a sullen mood, with looks of discontent rather than repentance. The two prefects, Licinius Proculus and Plotius Firmus, went round to the several companies, and harangued the men, each according to his own peculiar temper, in soothing terms, or in a style of reproach. A distribution of five thousand sesterces to each man con-

cluded the business. The tumult over, Otho ventured to enter the camp. The tribunes and centurions gathered round him, but without the military ornaments of their rank, praying to be dismissed from the service, that they might retire to live in ease and safety. The soldiers felt the request as a reproach for their own conduct. Remorse and sorrow took possession of every mind. They expressed their willingness to return to their duty, and of their own motion desired to see the authors of the insurrection brought to punishment.

LXXXIII. In this delicate conjuncture, when the times were big with danger, and a discordant soldiery heightened the distraction, Otho felt that he had a difficult game to play. All who wished well to the service called for an immediate reform of the army; while on the other hand the loose and profligate, always the greatest number, liked nothing so well as tumult and insurrections, under the conduct of an ambitious leader. To such minds, Otho knew that the strongest motives to a civil war are the hopes of growing rich by the spoils of the public; nor was he to learn that power obtained by guilt is incompatible with a new system of laws and the rigor of ancient manners. But still the danger that hung over the city and the Roman senate filled him with anxiety. In this alarming situation he spoke to the following effect:—

‘ I come not now, my fellow-soldiers, to excite your zeal for me and the cause in which we are engaged; much less do I come to add new ardor to your courage. Both are too well known; they need no incentive. Perhaps some restraint may be necessary; perhaps the zeal that pervades you all requires a degree

of moderation. In the late tumult, it was not the love of plunder, nor ill-will to any man, or any set of men, that urged you on. From those motives discord and mutiny have often broke out in various armies; but on your conduct they had no effect. Nor was there in that transaction any fear of danger, or so much as a wish to renounce your duty. It was your regard for me, sincere indeed, but generous to excess, that hurried you on to acts of intemperance and even violence. You listened to your passions, but not to your judgment; and where judgment does not direct and guide, the best counsels and the best cause are often ruined. We are going forth to a great and important war: and must all intelligence be communicated to the army? must every secret be disclosed? and must counsels of war be held in a public assembly of the soldiers? The reason of things, and the opportunity which must be seized at once or lost for ever, will not allow a mode of proceeding so slow and dangerous to the service. To know some things is the duty of the soldier; in others, not to be informed is his happiness, and submission is his virtue. Even the tribunes and centurions must often receive their orders without a reason assigned: to know the motives that weigh with the general, is not their province; to obey is the duty of the inferior officer. If every subaltern may discuss the operations of war, and cavil with the commander-in-chief, subordination ceases, discipline is at an end, and the best concerted enterprise may be defeated. And are we now to imagine that the soldier, when the enemy is at hand, may seize his arms, and as caprice or fancy prompts, sally forth in the dead of night? Shall two or three drunken men (in the last night's fray I do not believe there were more) imbrue their

hands in the blood of their officers? Shall they murder the centurions, and in a fit of frensy rush to the pavilion of their general?

LXXXIV. ‘ You, my fellow-soldiers, have transgressed the bounds of your duty; the fact must be admitted; but your zeal for me was the cause. And yet reflect for a moment, what might have been the consequence. Amidst that general uproar, in the gloom of midnight darkness, the assassin’s blow might have been aimed at me, whom you wished to defend. Give Vitellius his option; let him and his rebel soldiers have the power of choosing, and what greater cause could they invoke? what calamity could they call down on us, so much to be dreaded, as a turbulent and factious spirit, and all the evils of discord and sedition? Let the soldier refuse to obey his centurion; let the centurion shake off the authority of the tribune; let cavalry and the foot soldiers be intermixed, without order or distinction; and let us all in one promiscuous body go forward to the war. Need our enemies wish for more? We should rush on sure destruction. It is obedience, my fellow-soldiers, implicit, prompt obedience,¹ without pausing to wrangle with our superior officer, that gives to military operations all their energy. The army that shows itself in time of peace attentive to discipline and good order is sure to be the most formidable in the day of battle. It is yours to arm in the cause of your country, and to face the enemy with heroic valor: be it mine to form the plan of operations, and in the execution to

1 This rule of military subordination stands confirmed by experience in every age and country. We read in Livy a speech of Paulus Æmilius to the same effect.

direct and guide the courage of the army. The guilt of last night extends to a few only ; and of those few two only shall expiate the offence. That done, let us bury in oblivion the horrors of that shameful tumult ; and may no other army hear those dreadful imprecations uttered against a Roman senate ! Against that venerable body, the head of the empire, and the fountain from which justice flows through the provinces, not even Vitellius, nor his rash-levied crew of Germans, would dare to meditate so vile a deed.

‘ And can there be in Italy a race of men, the genuine offspring of Roman citizens, who are capable of so foul a parricide ? who can lift their impious hands against the sacred order, from whom our cause derives so much lustre, to the confusion of Vitellius and the scum of nations that follows him to the field ? Some states, it is true, have been induced to join his standard : he has the appearance of an army ; but the senate is on our side. The commonwealth is with us ; our enemies are the enemies of Rome. And when I mention Rome, when you yourselves behold that magnificent city, do you imagine that it consists in walls, and buildings, and a pile of stones ? Inanimate structures and mute and senseless edifices may moulder away, and rise again out of their ruins ; but the stability of empire depends on the senate : on the safety of that august assembly, the welfare of the community, the peace of nations, your fate and mine, are grafted. It was Romulus the founder of the city, and the father of the Roman state, who instituted with solemn auspices that sacred order. It has subsisted in vigor from that time ; from the expulsion of Tarquin to the establishment of the Cæsars it has been preserved inviolate. We received it from our an-

cestors; let us transmit it to our posterity, unshaken, unimpaired, immortal. From your order, from the people at large, the senate is supplied with its brightest ornaments; and from the senate you derive a succession of princes.'

LXXXV. This speech, seasoned with reproof, yet tempered with conciliating language, was favorably received: and the moderation of the prince, who punished only two of the mutineers, gave general satisfaction. By that lenient measure the soldiers, too fierce to be controlled, were quieted for the present. Rome however was not in a state of tranquillity. A constant din of arms was heard, and warlike preparations were seen in every quarter. The soldiers did not, as before, riot in tumultuous bodies; but being dispersed throughout the city, they found means in various shapes to insinuate themselves into houses, where they watched, with sufficient malignity, the motions and words of all, who by their nobility, their wealth, or their talents, were eminent enough to be objects of calumny. A report prevailed at the same time that Vitellius had a number of emissaries dispersed among the populace to act as spies and watch the state of parties. Hence jealousy, mistrust, and fear. No man thought himself safe under his own roof. Abroad and under the eye of the public the alarm was still greater. Whatever was the rumor of the day, all degrees and ranks were obliged to set their faces for the occasion: if bad, they were afraid of seeming to despond; and if propitious, unwilling to be thought backward in demonstrations of joy. With events of either kind their features were taught to comply.

The fathers had the hardest task. Silence in the senate might be thought sullen discontent, and liberty

of speech might be deemed a crime. Adulation itself was at a stand. Who could deceive a prince who was but lately a private man, and in that station practised flattery till he became a perfect master of that insidious art? The fathers were driven to little stratagems; they tortured every sentence into a thousand forms, and to diversify one and the same thought, all the colors of rhetoric were exhausted. All agreed to call Vitellius a public enemy and a parricide. This was the burden of every speech. Cautious men, who looked forward to their own security, avoided entering into particulars, content with hackneyed declamation: others, without reserve or management, poured out a torrent of virulent invective, but generally chose to rise in the midst of noise and clamor, when nothing could be distinctly heard, and the speaker could mouth and bellow without the danger of being understood or remembered.

LXXXVI. A number of prodigies, announced from different quarters, diffused a general panic. The goddess of victory, in the vestibule of the capitol, let the reins of two horses harnessed to her chariot fall from her hand. A form of more than human size was seen to issue from the chapel of Juno. In an island in the Tiber,¹ the statue of Julius Cæsar, without any apparent cause, on a day perfectly serene and calm, turned round from the west to the east. In Etruria an ox was said to have spoken: animals brought forth monstrous births: and to these was added a variety of preternatural appearances, such as in rude and barbarous ages were the coinage of superstition; and even in profound peace made an impression on vulgar

¹ The isle in the Tiber, now called Isola di St. Bartolomeo.

credulity, though of late years they have so far lost their effect, that unless it be a time of public distress, they pass away unheeded and forgotten. Amidst the omens, which seemed to threaten impending danger, an inundation of the Tiber was the most alarming. The waters swelled above their banks, and overflowed the adjacent country. The Sublician bridge was carried away by the flood; and the ruins that fell in, obstructing the course of the river, the torrent was driven back with such impetuous violence, that not only the level parts of the city, but even the higher grounds were covered with a general deluge.¹ The people in the streets were swallowed up, and numbers were drowned in their shops and in their beds. The corn in the public granaries was destroyed; a famine ensued, and the common people were reduced to the last distress. The waters that lay for some time in the streets of Rome sapped the foundation of several insulated houses; and when the flood fell back into its channel, the superstructure tumbled to the ground. This disaster was no sooner over than a new occurrence spread a general terror. Otho was preparing to set out on his expedition. His way was over the field of Mars and the Flaminian road; but both places were impassable. This circumstance, though accidental, or the effect of natural causes, was magnified into a prodigy, by which the gods denounced the slaughter of armies and a train of public calamities.

LXXXVII. The emperor ordered a lustration, and having purified the city, turned his thoughts to

¹ The Sublician bridge, so called, because built with wood. A foundation of solid marble was laid afterwards, but nothing remains at present but the ruins.

the conduct of the war. The Penine and the Cottian Alps, with all the passes into Italy, were in the possession of Vitellius and his armies. Otho resolved therefore to make a descent on the coast of Narbon Gaul with a fleet well manned, and in force to keep the command of those seas. All who survived the massacre at the Milvian bridge, and had been by Galba's orders thrown into prison, were released by Otho, and incorporated with the legions. He depended on the fidelity of those men; and by giving to others the like hopes of preferment, he inspired the whole body with zeal and ardor. In order to strengthen his fleet he embarked the city cohorts, and a considerable detachment from the pretorian guards; a body of men capable of defending their generals by their courage, and of assisting with their advice. The conduct of the marine was committed to three officers; namely, Antonius Novellus and Suedius Clemens, both centurions of principal rank, and Æmilius Pacensis, a tribune degraded by Galba, but since the death of that emperor restored to his rank. A freedman of the name of Oscus was appointed to direct the operations of the fleet, and act as a spy on better men than himself. The land forces, both horse and infantry, were put under the command of Suetonius Paulinus, Marius Celsus, and Annius Gallus. To them was added Licinius Proculus, the prefect of the pretorians, and in him Otho reposed his whole confidence. This officer, in time of peace, discharged the functions of his station with sufficient ability; but he had seen no service, and had therefore no skill in military affairs. He had talents for mischief, and knew how to obstruct the authority of Paulinus, to check the ardor of Celsus, and to thwart the judgment of Gallus. An

enemy to every excellence of those three officers, he found, as usually happens, that worth and modest merit were no match for malice and left-handed policy.

LXXXVIII. Before Otho set out from Rome Cornelius Dolabella was by his order conveyed under a guard to the Aquinian colony, there to be kept out of the way, but not in close confinement. His only crime was the antiquity of his family and his affinity to Galba. Several magistrates, and others of consular rank, had it in command to attend Otho on his expedition, not to assist in the war by their counsels or their valor, but to swell the pomp of the emperor's retinue. In the number was Lucius Vitellius, who was suffered to mix with the rest of the train, undistinguished either as the brother of one emperor or the enemy of another. During these preparations Rome presented a scene of hurry and confusion. No order of men was exempt from fear or danger. The principal senators, enfeebled by age, or softened by a long peace; the nobility sunk in sloth; and the Roman knights, who had lost their warlike spirit, were all obliged to put themselves in readiness. They assumed an air of courage, but their fears were seen through the vain disguise. Some affected to make a display of their alacrity. They bought with vain ostentation the most splendid armor, horses for parade, and all the conveniences of a luxurious table, as if such implements were a necessary part of their camp-equipage. The wise and moderate thought of nothing but their own safety and the public welfare: while the vain and senseless, whose views did not extend to remote consequences, filled their minds with chimerical expectations; and all who were bankrupts both

in fame and fortune, hoped to find in the distractions of their country that security which in quiet times they had never known.

LXXXIX. The people at large, unacquainted with the secrets of state, and of course free from solicitude, began however to feel the ill effects of the impending war. They saw the public revenue exhausted in the service of the army; they labored under a scarcity of provisions, and the price was rising every day; whereas, in the troubles stirred up by Vindex, none of those inconveniences affected the city of Rome. That commotion was at a distance, a war in the remote parts of Gaul, decided between the legions and the provincial insurgents. The Roman citizens looked on in perfect tranquillity, as if it were no more than a foreign quarrel. From the reign of Augustus, when that emperor established the power of the Cæsars, this had constantly been the case. The issue of every war affected the sovereign only. Under Tiberius and Caligula, the evils of peace were the worst calamities. The attempt of Scribonianus¹ to shake the authority of Claudius was crushed as soon as discovered. Nero was undone by rumors and vague intelligence, not by force of arms. In the present juncture, the face of

¹ **Furius Camillus Scribonianus** commanded in Dalmatia, A. U. C. 795. Being a man of enterprise and bold ambition, he induced the soldiers to swear fidelity to himself, and went into open rebellion. His letters to the emperor Claudius were written in a tone of menace, requiring him to abdicate and live a private citizen. In the mean time the rebel legions, with the versatility common to the military mind, returned to their duty; Scribonianus fled to a small island of the Adriatic, on the coast of Illyricum, and there was seized and put to death by Volaginius, a common soldier, on the fifth day of his revolt; Suet. in Claudio, § 35. See Tacitus, Hist. ii. 75.

things was changed. The pressure was felt at home. The fleets and legions were in motion, and, beyond all example, the pretorian bands and city cohorts were obliged to take the field. The east and west were engaged in the contest; the several provinces which the leading chiefs left behind them were up in arms; and, under better generals, there were ample materials for a long and difficult war. Otho was now on the point of beginning his march. A scruple was started to deter him from proceeding till the ceremony of depositing the sacred shields called the *ancilia*¹ was performed with due rites and ceremonies. He rejected the advice. Delay had been the ruin of Nero, and Cæcina by this time had passed the Alps. The time called for vigor and expedition.

XC. On the day preceding the ides of March Otho called a meeting of the senate. He recommended the care of the commonwealth to the wisdom of that assembly, and ordered the property of such as had been recalled from banishment since the death of Nero to be restored to the respective owners. To this liberality nothing could be objected; it was an act of justice, in appearance magnificent, but of little use, as the public officers had already seized the whole into their own hands. From the senate Otho proceeded to harangue the people: he talked in a pompous style of the fathers, and the majesty of the Roman citizens.

¹ Numa, the founder of religious ceremonies, made the Romans believe, that as long as they preserved the celestial arms, called *ancilia*, which, he said, were sent down by the gods, Rome would prove invincible, and triumph over all her enemies. Accordingly we read in Livy the procession of the Salian priests, on stated days, attending the *Ancilia* with song and dance through the streets of Rome; Livy, i. 20. This institution was neglected by Otho; Suetonius, life of Otho, § 8.

He mentioned the adverse party in managed terms, imputing to the legions error in judgment rather than a turbulent and factious spirit. Of Vitellius he made no mention; perhaps from motives of delicacy, or more probably, because the writer of the speech, looking forward to his own safety, thought it prudent to exclude all personal invective. For the last opinion there seems to be some foundation. In all military operations, Suetonius Paulinus and Marius Celsus were Otho's confidential advisers; but in matters that concerned the civil administration, Galerius Trachalus¹ was the person on whose talents he relied. That minister had gained reputation at the bar; and those who were best acquainted with his mode of eloquence, and the harmony of his copious periods, discovered in the composition of the speech the style and manner of that celebrated orator. Otho was received with acclamations: the populace, according to custom, yielded to the impulse of the moment, full of sound and servile adulation, but nothing from the heart. You would have thought that it was Cæsar the dictator, or Augustus the emperor, for whom they contended with so much emulation. And yet, in all this show of zeal, there was at the bottom neither love nor fear: servility was the motive; all courted the yoke, and all rushed headlong into slavery. The public at this time presented no better spectacle than what is seen every day in a family of domestic slaves: each individual had his own private views; and for the public interest, or the honor of the state, no care remained. Otho was now ready to depart: he left the government of Rome, and the whole weight of empire,

¹ M. Valerius Trachalus was joint consul with Silius Italicus, A. U. C. 821.

to his brother Salvius Titianus,¹ and proceeded on his expedition.

1 Otho left the city of Rome on the 24th day of March, as appears from Suetonius, who mentions his neglect of the institutions relating to the Ancilia, as an inauspicious beginning of the war. Suetonius adds that he set out on the day when all who paid their worship to the mother of the gods began the usual ceremonies. Now that day was the 9th of the calends of April, which answers to the 24th of March. See Suetonius, life of Otho, § 8.

END OF VOL. III.







