
Augusta Vindelicorum
Danuvius Fl.
Ara Fl.
Augusta Rauricorum
Dubis Fl.
Vesontio
Vindonissa
Aenus Fl.
HELVETII
ALLO-
BROGES
G.S. Bernard
Eporedia
Novaria
Vercellae
Mediolanum
Ticinum
Brixia
Cremona
Placentia
Bedriacum
Brixellum
Vicetia
Verona
Alieni Forum
Hostilia
Altinum
Patavium
Ateste
Hadria
Aquileia
Alpes Graiae
Augusta Taurinorum
M. Genevre


Alpes
Genua
Albingaunum
Albintimilium
Monoecus
Antipolis
Foroiuliensis Colonia
Stoechades Insulae
Pisae
Bononia
Ravenna
Ariminum
Fanum Fortunae
Urbinum
Perusia
Interamna
Narnia
Ocriculum
Roma
Anagnia
Bovillae
Aricia
Feronia
Tarracina
Aquinas Colonia
Minturnae
SCALE 0 50 100 ENGLISH MILES

TACITUS
THE HISTORIES

TRANSLATED WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY

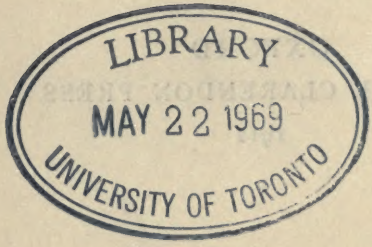
W. HAMILTON FYFE
FELLOW OF MERTON COLLEGE

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOLUME II

OXFORD
AT THE CLARENDON PRESS
1912

HENRY FROWDE
PUBLISHER TO THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD
LONDON, EDINBURGH, NEW YORK
TORONTO AND MELBOURNE



SUMMARY OF CHIEF EVENTS

I. The Fight for the Throne

A.D. 69.

September. Antonius surprises a Vitellian detachment at Forum Alieni.

At Padua the Pannonian legions arrive.

He fortifies Verona. The Moesian legions arrive.

Caecina holds Cremona with Legs. I Italica and XXI Rapax and cavalry.

He encamps with the rest of his force near Hostilia on the Tartaro.

Valens dawdles northward with three praetorian cohorts.

October. The fleet at Ravenna declares for Vespasian.

Caecina attempts treachery and is imprisoned by his army, which starts on a forced march to Cremona.

Antonius starts from Verona to intercept them.

27. Second Battle of Bedriacum. Legs. I Italica and XXI Rapax sally from Cremona and are driven back by Antonius.

The six legions from Hostilia reach Cremona.

The united Vitellian army makes a night sally from Cremona and is defeated.

28. Sack of Cremona.

Surrender of Vitellian army.

A.D. 69.

November. Valens, having reached Ariminum, flies to Monaco, and is captured in the Stoechades Islands.

Spain, Gaul, and Britain declare for Vespasian.

Antonius advances via Ariminum to Fanum Fortunae.

Vitellius holds the Apennines at Mevania with fourteen praetorian cohorts, a new legion of marines, and cavalry.

Mutiny of the fleet at Misenum. Tarracina seized.

Vitellius returns to Rome with seven cohorts and part of the cavalry.

The remaining cohorts are moved back from Mevania to Narnia.

L. Vitellius with six cohorts and cavalry besieges Tarracina.

December. Antonius crosses the Apennines and halts at Carsulae.

Varus wins a cavalry skirmish at Interamna.

Valens beheaded at Urbino: his head flung into camp at Narnia.

Surrender of Vitellians at Narnia.

Antonius marches as far as Ocriculum, sending Cerialis forward to Rome with 1,000 cavalry.

17. Vitellius, wishing to abdicate, is prevented by troops and mob.

18. They besiege Flavius Sabinus in the Capitol.

19. Capitol stormed. Temple of Jupiter burnt. Sabinus caught and killed.

L. Vitellius takes Tarracina.

20. Cerialis defeated outside Rome.

A.D. 69.

20. Antonius makes a forced march along Via Flaminia.

21. Capture of Rome. Murder of Vitellius.
Domitian installed as 'Caesar'.

A.D. 70.

January. L. Vitellius surrenders in Campania.
Mucianus arrives in Rome as regent.

II. The Rebellion on the Rhine

A.D. 69.

Autumn. Revolt of Civilis and Batavians, at first ostensibly in support of Vespasian.
Revolt supported by Canninefates, Frisii, Marsaci, Cugerni.
Civilis routs Gallic auxiliaries and captures the Rhine flotilla in 'The Island'.
Munius Lupercus advances from Vetera with remnant of Legs. V Alaudae and XV Primigenia, supported by Ubian, Treviran, and Batavian auxiliaries.
Civilis drives him back into Vetera.
The eight Batavian cohorts at Mainz march off to join Civilis, and defeat Leg. I Germanica at Bonn.
Bructeri and Tencteri join revolt.
Civilis blockades Vetera.
Vocula advances to relieve Vetera with detachments of Legs. IV Macedonica, XXII Primigenia, and I Germanica.
Vocula encamps at Gelduba. Flaccus makes head-quarters at Novaesium.
Civilis' assault on Vetera repulsed.

A.D. 69.

Vocula with difficulty repulses attack on Gelduba.

Relief of Vetera. Vocula then retires to Novaesium.

Civilis takes Gelduba and wins skirmish outside Novaesium.

Mutiny in Novaesium. Flaccus murdered.

Civilis renews blockade of Vetera.

Chatti, Mattiaci, and Usipi threaten Mainz.

Vocula relieves Mainz and winters there.

A.D. 70.

January (?) Revolt of Gallic tribes, Ubii, Tungri, Treviri, Lingones, headed by Classicus, Tutor, and Sabinus.

Vocula advances to save Vetera, but is driven back to Novaesium by mutiny of Gallic auxiliaries, and there murdered.

His army swears allegiance to 'Empire of Gaul'.

Tutor takes Cologne and Mainz.

Vetera surrenders to Classicus. Garrison massacred.

The Baetasii, Nervii, and Tungri join revolt.

Spring. Mucianus and Domitian start from Rome with reinforcements.

Cerialis, with Legs. XXI Rapax and II Adjutrix, is to operate on Lower Rhine.

Annius Gallus, with Legs. VII Claudia, VIII Augusta, XI Claudia, is to operate on Upper Rhine.

The Sequani, still loyal, defeat Sabinus and Lingones.

A.D. 70.

The Remi, also loyal, summon a Gallic Council, which votes for peace, but the Treviri and Lingones hold out under Classicus, Tutor, and Valentinus.

The Roman mutineers return to their allegiance.

Summer. Sextilius Felix routs Tutor near Bingen.

Cerialis defeats Valentinus and occupies Trier.

The Germans surprise the Romans in Trier, but Cerialis drives them out and storms their camp.

Massacre of Germans at Cologne. Cohort of Chauci and Frisii entrapped and burnt.

Leg. XIV Gemina arrives from Britain and receives submission of Nervii and Tungri.

Legs. I Adjutrix and VI Victrix arrive from Spain.

Autumn. Civilis defeats Cerialis near Vetera, but is routed on the next day and retires into The Island.

Hard fighting on the Waal.

Germans capture Roman flotilla.

Civilis retires northwards over the Rhine.

Cerialis occupies The Island.

Civilis makes overtures of peace.

NOTE

The text followed is that of C. D. Fisher (*Oxford Classical Texts*). Departures from it are mentioned in the notes.

BOOK III

Antonius' Advance

On the Flavian side the generals concerted their 1
plans for the war with greater loyalty and greater success. They had met at Poetovio[1] at the headquarters of the Third legion, where they debated whether they should block the passage of the Pannonian Alps and wait until their whole strength came up to reinforce them, or whether they should take a bolder line, assume the offensive, and strike for Italy. Those who were in favour of waiting for reinforcements and prolonging the war dwelt on the strength and reputation of the German legions, and pointed out that the flower of the British army had lately arrived in Rome with Vitellius;[2] their own forces were numerically inferior and had recently suffered defeat; moreover, conquered troops, however bold their language, never show the same courage. On the other hand, if they occupied the Alps, Mucianus would soon arrive with the forces from the East. Besides, Vespasian still[3] commanded the sea, and could count on the support of the fleets[4] and of the provinces,

[1] Petau.

[2] i. e. the detachments 8,000 strong from the army in Britain (see ii. 57).

[3] i. e. still, after parting with the force which he had sent forward under Mucianus (see ii. 82, 83).

[4] Of Pontus, Syria, and Egypt.

where he could still raise material for a sort of second war. A salutary delay would bring them fresh forces without in any way prejudicing their present position.

2 In answer to these arguments Antonius Primus,[1] who had done more than any one else to stir up the war, stoutly maintained that prompt action would save them and ruin Vitellius. 'Their victory,' he said, 'has not served to inspirit but to enervate them. The men are not held in readiness in camp, but are loitering in towns all over Italy. No one but their hosts has any call to fear them. The more unruly and ferocious they showed themselves before, the greater the greed with which they now indulge in unwonted draughts of pleasure. The circus, the theatre, and the charms of the capital have ruined their hardness and their health. But if we give them time to train for war they will regain their energy. It is not far to Germany, whence they draw their main strength. Britain is only separated by a narrow channel. Close at hand they have Gaul and Spain, from the provinces of which they can get men, horses, and subsidies. Then again, they can rely on Italy itself and all the resources of the capital, while, if they want to take the offensive, they have two fleets[2] and full command of the Illyrian Sea.[3] Besides, what good to us are the ramparts of the mountains? Why should we drag on the war into another summer? Where can we get funds and supplies in the meanwhile? No, let us seize our opportunity. The Pannonian legions are

[1] See ii. 86. [2] Of Misenum and Ravenna. [3] Adriatic.

burning to rise in revenge. They were not defeated but deceived.[1] The Moesian army has not yet lost a man. If you count not legions but men, our forces are superior both in numbers and in character. The very shame of our defeat[2] makes for good discipline. And even then our cavalry was not beaten. For though we lost the day, they shattered the enemy's line.[3] And what was the force that broke through the Vitellians? Two regiments of cavalry from Pannonia and Moesia. What have we now? Sixteen regiments. Will not their combined forces, as they roar and thunder down upon the enemy, burying them in clouds of dust, overwhelm these horses and horsemen that have forgotten how to fight? I have given you my plan, and, unless I am stopped, I will put it in operation. Some of you have not yet burnt your boats.[4] Well, you can keep back the legions. Give me the auxiliaries in light marching order. They will be enough for me. You will soon hear that the door of Italy is open and the power of Vitellius shaken. You will be glad enough to follow in the footsteps of my victory.'

All this and much else of the same tenor Antonius 3
poured out with flashing eyes, raising his voice so as to reach the centurions and some of the soldiers, who had gathered round to share in their deliberations.[5] His truculent tone carried away even the more cautious

[1] See ii. 42. [2] At Bedriacum. [3] See ii. 41.
[4] i. e. not yet declared finally against Vitellius.
[5] These were usually confined to the legates, camp-prefects, tribunes, and senior centurions.

and far-seeing, while the rest of the crowd were filled with contempt for the cowardice of the other generals, and cheered their one and only leader to the echo. He had already established his reputation at the original meeting, when Vespasian's letter[1] was read. Most of the generals had then taken an ambiguous line, intending to interpret their language in the light of subsequent events. But Antonius seemed to have taken the field without any disguise, and this carried more weight with the men, who saw that he must share their disgrace or their glory.

4 Next to Antonius in influence stood Cornelius Fuscus, the imperial agent.[2] He, too, always attacked Vitellius in no mild terms, and had left himself no hope in case of failure. Tampius Flavianus[3] was a man whose disposition and advanced years inclined him to dilatory measures, and he soon began to earn the dislike and suspicion of the soldiers, who felt he had not forgotten his kinship with Vitellius. Besides this, when the legions first rose, he had fled to Italy and subsequently returned of his own free will, which looked like meditating treachery.[4] Having once given up his province and returned to Italy, he was out of the reach of danger, but the passion for revolution had induced him to resume his title and meddle in the civil war. It was Cornelius Fuscus who had persuaded him to

[1] See ii. 82.
[2] In Pannonia (see ii. 86).
[3] Military governor of Pannonia (see ii. 86).
[4] i.e. they suspected that he wanted to alienate the troops from Vespasian.

this—not that he needed his assistance, but because he felt that, especially at the outset of the rising, the prestige of an ex-consul would be a valuable asset to the party.

In order to make their march across into Italy safe 5
and effective, letters were sent to Aponius Saturninus [1] to bring the Moesian army up as quickly as possible. To prevent the exposure of the defenceless provinces to the attacks of foreign tribes, the chiefs of the Sarmatian Iazyges,[2] who formed the government of the tribe, were enlisted in the service. They also offered their tribal force, consisting entirely of cavalry, but were excused from this contribution for fear that the civil war might give opportunity for a foreign invasion, or that an offer of higher pay from the enemy might tempt them to sacrifice their duty and their honour.[3] Sido and Italicus, two princes of the Suebi,[4] were allowed to join Vespasian's side. They had long acknowledged Roman sovereignty, and companionship in arms [5] was likely to strengthen the loyalty of the tribe. Some auxiliaries were stationed on the flank towards Raetia, where hostilities were expected, since

[1] Military governor of Moesia (see i. 79, &c.).

[2] They occupied part of Hungary between the Danube and the Theiss.

[3] They took the chiefs as a pledge of peace and kept them safely apart from their tribal force.

[4] Tiberius' son, Drusus, had in A.D. 19 settled the Suebi north of the Danube between the rivers March and Waag.

[5] Reading *commilitio* (Meiser). The word *commissior* in the Medicean manuscript gives no sense.

the imperial agent Porcius Septiminus,[1] remained incorruptibly loyal to Vitellius. Sextilius Felix was therefore dispatched with Aurius' Horse[2] and eight cohorts of auxiliary infantry, together with the native levies of Noricum, to hold the line of the river Aenus,[3] which forms the frontier of Raetia and Noricum. Neither side provoked a battle: the fortune of the rival parties was decided elsewhere.

6 Meanwhile, at the head of a picked band of auxiliaries and part of the cavalry, Antonius hurried off to invade Italy. He took with him an energetic soldier named Arrius Varus, who had made his reputation while serving under Corbulo in his Armenian victories. He was supposed to have sought a private interview with Nero, at which he maligned Corbulo's character. His infamous treachery brought him the emperor's favour and a post as senior centurion. This ill-gotten prize delighted him now, but ultimately proved his ruin.[4]

After occupying Aquileia,[5] Antonius and Varus found a ready welcome at Opitergium and Altinum[6] and all the other towns in the neighbourhood. At Altinum a garrison was left behind to guard their communications against the fleet at Ravenna, for the news of its desertion had not as yet arrived. Pressing forward, they won Patavium and Ateste[1] for the party.

[1] This being a small province the procurator was sole governor.

[2] A squadron of Spanish horse, called after some governor of the province where it was raised. [3] The Inn.

[4] Probably under Domitian, who married Corbulo's daughter.

[5] See ii. 46. [6] Oderzo and Altino.

At the latter place they learnt that three cohorts of Vitellius' auxiliary infantry and a regiment of cavalry, known as Sebosus' Horse,[2] were established at Forum Alieni,[3] where they had constructed a bridge.[4] The report added that they were off their guard, so this seemed a good opportunity to attack them. They accordingly rushed the position at dawn, and cut down many of the men without their weapons. Orders had been given that, after a few had been killed, the rest should be terrorized into desertion. Some surrendered at once, but the majority succeeded in destroying the bridge, and thus checked the enemy's pursuit. The first bout had gone in the Flavians' favour.

When the news spread to Poetovio, the Seventh 7
Galbian and the Thirteenth Gemina hurried in high spirits to Patavium under the command of Vedius Aquila. At Patavium they were given a few days' rest, during which Minicius Justus, the camp-prefect of the Seventh legion, who endeavoured to enforce a standard of discipline too severe for civil war, had to be rescued from the fury of his troops and sent to Vespasian. Antonius conceived that his party would gain in prestige, if they showed approval of Galba's government, and stood for the revival of his cause. So he gave orders that all the statues of Galba, which had been thrown down during the civil war, should be replaced for worship throughout the country towns.

[1] Este.
[2] A Gallic troop called after some unknown governor.
[3] (?) Legnago, [4] Over the Adige.

This was a thing that had long been desired, and in their ambitious imaginations it assumed an undue importance.

8 The question then arose where they should choose their seat of war. The best place seemed to be Verona. The open country round it was suited for the manœuvres of the cavalry, in which their strength lay: and they would gain both prestige and profit by wresting from Vitellius a strongly garrisoned town. On the road they occupied Vicetia.[1] In itself this was a very small matter, since there was only a moderate force in the town, but it gained considerable importance from the reflection that it was Caecina's birthplace: the enemy's general had thus lost his native town. But Verona was well worth while. The inhabitants could aid the party with encouragement and funds: the army was thrust midway between Raetia and the Julian Alps,[2] and had thus blocked all passages by that route for the German armies.

This move had been made either without the knowledge or against the orders of Vespasian. His instructions were to suspend operations at Aquileia and wait for the arrival of Mucianus. He had further added this consideration, that so long as he held Egypt and the key to the corn-supply,[3] as well as the revenue of the richest provinces,[4] he could reduce Vitellius' army to submission from sheer lack of money and provisions. Mucianus had sent letter after letter

[1] Vicenza.
[2] The Brenner.
[3] i.e. Alexandria.
[4] i.e. Egypt, Syria, Asia.

with the same advice, pointing to the prospect of a victory without bloodshed or bereavement, and using other similar pretexts to conceal his real motive. This was ambition. He wanted to keep all the glory of the war to himself. However, the distance was so great that events outran his instructions.

Antonius accordingly made a sudden sally against 9
the enemy's outposts, and after a slight skirmish, in which they tested each other's temper, both sides withdrew without advantage. Soon after, Caecina entrenched a strong position between a Veronese village called Hostilia[1] and the marshes of the river Tartaro. Here he was safe, with the river in his rear and the marsh to guard his flanks. Had he added loyalty to his other advantages, he might have employed the full strength of the Vitellian forces to crush the enemy's two legions, before they were reinforced by the Moesian army, or, at least, have forced them to retire in ignominious flight and abandon Italy. But Caecina used various pretexts for delay, and at the outset of the war treacherously yielded all his advantages to the enemy. While it was open to him to rout them by force of arms, he preferred to pester them with letters and to wait until his intermediaries had settled the terms of his treason. In the meantime, Aponius Saturninus arrived with the Seventh Claudian legion,[2] commanded by the tribune[3] Vipstanus Messala, a distinguished member

[1] Ostiglia. [2] From Moesia (cp. chap. 5).
[3] The legate Tettius Julianus had fled (see ii. 85).

of a famous family, and the only man who brought any honesty to this war.[1] To these forces, still only three legions and no match for the Vitellians, Caecina addressed his letters. He criticized their rash attempt to sustain a lost cause, and at the same time praised the courage of the German army in the highest terms. His allusions to Vitellius were few and casual, and he refrained from insulting Vespasian. In fact he used no language calculated either to seduce or to terrorize the enemy. The Flavian generals made no attempt to explain away their former defeat. They proudly championed Vespasian, showing their loyalty to the cause, their confidence in the army, and their hostile prejudice[2] against Vitellius. To the tribunes and centurions they held out the hope of retaining all the favours they had won from Vitellius, and they urged Caecina himself in plain terms to desert. These letters

[1] He also wrote a history of the period, which Tacitus found useful (see ii. 101, note 1). He is one of the characters in the *Dialogue on Oratory*, and many passages show that Tacitus admired him greatly, both for his character and his eloquence.

[2] The text here is doubtful. There seems to be no exact parallel to the absolute use of *praesumpsere*. In the Medicean MS. the whole passage, from *revirescere* at the end of chap. 7 down to *inimici* here, has been transposed to the beginning of chap. 5, where it stands between the second and third syllables of the word *Saturnino*. Thus in M *praesumpsere* stands immediately after *partes*. It is possible that the word *partes* may belong to this passage as well as to the end of chap. 7. *Praesumpsere partes* would mean 'they took their own cause for granted' (cp. Quintilian xi. 1. 27). The addition of *ut inimici* would add the sense of 'hostile prejudice'.

were both read before a meeting of the Flavian army, and served to increase their confidence, for while Caecina wrote mildly and seemed afraid of offending Vespasian, their own generals had answered contemptuously and scoffed at Vitellius.

When the two other legions arrived, the Third[1] 10
commanded by Dillius Aponianus, and the Eighth by Numisius Lupus, Antonius decided to entrench Verona and make a demonstration in force. It so happened that the Galbian legion, who had been told off to work in the trenches facing the enemy, catching sight of some of their allies' cavalry in the distance, took them for the enemy, and fell into a groundless panic. Suspecting treachery, they seized their arms and visited their fury on Tampius Flavianus.[2] They could prove no charge against him, but he had long been unpopular, and a blind impulse made them clamour for his head. He was Vitellius' kinsman, they howled; he had betrayed Otho; he had embezzled their donative. They would listen to no defence, although he implored them with outstretched hands, grovelling for the most part flat upon the ground, his clothes all torn, his face and chest shaken with sobs. This only served to inflame the soldiers' anger. His very excess of terror seemed to prove his guilt. Aponius[3] tried to address them, but his voice was drowned in their shouts. The others, too, were contemptuously howled down. They would give no one a hearing except Antonius, who had the power of

[1] Gallica. [2] See chap. 4, note 3. [3] Saturninus.

authority as well as the arts of eloquence necessary to quiet a mob. When the riot grew worse, and they began to pass from insulting speeches to murderous violence, he gave orders that Flavianus should be put in chains. Feeling that this was a farce,[1] the soldiers broke through the guards round the general's quarters, prepared to resort to extremities. Whereupon Antonius, drawing his sword, bared his breast and vowed that he would die either by their hands or his own. Whenever he saw a soldier whom he knew or could recognize by his decorations, he called on him by name to come to the rescue. At last he turned towards the standards and the gods of war,[2] and prayed incessantly that they would rather inspire the enemy's army with this mad spirit of mutiny. At last the riot died away and at nightfall they all dispersed to their tents. Flavianus left that same night, and on his way met letters from Vespasian, which delivered him from danger.

II The infection seemed to spread among the legions. They next attacked Aponius Saturninus, who was in command of the Moesian army. This fresh disturbance was caused by the circulation of a letter, which Saturninus was supposed to have written to Vitellius, and it was the more alarming since it broke out not when they were tired by their labours but in the

[1] We have seen this trick before (cp. i. 45).

[2] Mars, Bellona, Victoria, Pavor, &c., whose images were wrought in medallion on the shafts of the standards, which themselves too were held sacred.

middle of the day. Once the soldiers had vied with each other in courage and discipline: now they were rivals in ribaldry and riot. They were determined that the fury with which they denounced Aponius should not fall short of their outcry against Flavianus. The Moesian legions remembered that they had helped the Pannonian army to take their revenge; while the Pannonian troops, feeling that their comrades' mutiny acquitted them of blame, were glad enough to repeat the crime. They invaded the country house in which Saturninus was living. He escaped, however, aided not so much by the efforts of Antonius, Aponianus, and Messala, who did everything in their power to rescue him, but rather by the security of his hiding-place, for he concealed himself in the furnace of some disused baths. Eventually he gave up his lictors and retired to Patavium. The departure of both the consular governors left Antonius in supreme command of the two armies. His colleagues[1] deferred to him and the men gave him enthusiastic support. It was even supposed by some that he had cunningly promoted both outbreaks, to secure for himself the full profit of the war.

Dissension in Vitellius' Camp

[2] Vitellius' party was equally a prey to disquiet, and 12
there the dissension was the more fatal, since it was aroused not by the men's suspicions but by the

[1] i.e. Vedius, Dillius, Numisius, Vipstanus Messala.

[2] The narrative is now resumed from the end of Book II.

treachery of the generals. The sailors of the fleet at Ravenna were mostly drawn from the provinces of Dalmatia and Pannonia, which were both held for Vespasian, and while they were still wavering, the admiral, Lucilius Bassus, decided them in favour of the Flavian party. Choosing the night-time for their treason, the conspirators assembled at head-quarters without the knowledge of the other sailors. Bassus, who was either ashamed or uncertain of their success, awaited developments in his house. Amid great disturbance the ships' captains attacked the images of Vitellius and cut down the few men who offered any resistance. The rest of the fleet were glad enough of a change, and their sympathies soon came round to Vespasian. Then Lucilius appeared and publicly claimed responsibility. The fleet appointed Cornelius Fuscus[1] as their admiral, and he came hurrying on to the scene. Bassus was put under honourable arrest and conveyed with an escort of Liburnian cruisers[2] to Atria,[3] where he was imprisoned by Vibennius Rufinus, who commanded a regiment of auxiliary horse in garrison there. However, he was soon set free on the intervention of Hormus, one of the emperor's freedmen. For he, too, ranked as a general.

13 When the news that the navy had gone over became known, Caecina, carefully selecting a moment when the camp was deserted, and the men had all gone to their various duties, summoned to head-quarters the senior centurions and a few of the soldiers. He then proceeded

[1] See ii. 86. [2] See ii. 16, note 3. [3] Atri.

to praise the spirit and the strength of Vespasian's party: 'they themselves had been deserted by the fleet; they were cramped for supplies; Spain and Gaul were against them; Rome could not be trusted.' In every way he exaggerated the weakness of Vitellius' position. Eventually, when some of his accomplices had given the cue and the rest were dumbfoundered by his change of front, he made them all swear allegiance to Vespasian. Immediately the portraits [1] of Vitellius were torn down and messengers dispatched to Antonius. However, when the treason got abroad in the camp, and the men returning to head-quarters saw Vespasian's name on the standards and Vitellius' portraits scattered on the ground, at first there was an ominous silence: then with one voice they all vented their feelings. Had the pride of the German army sunk so low that without a battle and without a blow they should let their hands be shackled and render up their arms? What had they against them? None but defeated troops. The only sound legions of Otho's army, the First and the Fourteenth, Vespasian had not got, and even those they had routed and cut to pieces on that same field. And all for what? That these thousands of fighting men should be handed over like a drove of slaves to Antonius, the convict! [2] 'Eight legions, forsooth, are to follow the lead of one miserable fleet. Such is the pleasure of Bassus and Caecina. They have robbed the emperor of his home, his estate, and all his wealth, and now they want to take away his troops.

[1] i.e. the medallions on the standards. [2] See ii. 86.

We have never lost a man nor shed a drop of blood. The very Flavians will despise us. What answer can we give when they question us about our victory or our defeat?'

14 Thus they shouted one and all as their indignation urged them. Led by the Fifth legion, they replaced the portraits of Vitellius and put Caecina in irons. They selected Fabius Fabullus, commanding the Fifth legion, and the camp-prefect, Cassius Longus, to lead them. Some marines who arrived at this point from three Liburnian cruisers,[1] quite innocent and unaware of what had happened, were promptly butchered. Then the men deserted their camp, broke down the bridge,[2] and marched back to Hostilia, and thence to Cremona to join the two legions, the First Italian and Twenty-first Rapax, which Caecina had sent ahead[3] with some of the cavalry to occupy Cremona.

The Engagement near Cremona

15 When Antonius heard of this he determined to attack the enemy while they were still at variance and their forces divided. The Vitellian generals would soon recover their authority and the troops their discipline, and confidence would come if the two divisions were allowed to join. He guessed also that Fabius Valens had already started from Rome and would hasten his march when he heard of Caecina's

[1] See ii. 16, note 3.
[2] Over the Tartaro (chap. 9).
[3] See ii. 100.

treachery. Valens was loyal to Vitellius and an experienced soldier. There was good reason, besides, to fear an attack on the side of Raetia from an immense force of German irregulars. Vitellius had already summoned auxiliaries from Britain, Gaul, and Spain in sufficient numbers to blight their chances utterly, had not Antonius in fear of this very prospect forestalled the victory by hurriedly forcing an engagement. In two days he marched his whole force from Verona to Bedriacum.[1] On the next day[2] he left his legions behind to fortify the camp, and sent out his auxiliary infantry into territory belonging to Cremona, to taste the joys of plundering their compatriots under pretext of collecting supplies. To secure greater freedom for their depredations, he himself advanced at the head of four thousand cavalry eight miles along the road from Bedriacum. The scouts, as is usual, turned their attention further afield.

About eleven in the morning a mounted scout 16
galloped up with the news that the enemy were at hand; there was a small body in advance of the rest, but the noise of an army in movement could be heard over the country-side. While Antonius was debating what he ought to do, Arrius Varus, who was greedy to distinguish himself, galloped out with the keenest of the troopers and charged the Vitellians, inflicting only slight loss; for, on the arrival of reinforcements, the tables were turned and those who had been hottest in pursuit were now hindmost in the rout. Their

[1] About thirty-three miles. [2] October 27.

haste had no sanction from Antonius, who had foreseen what would happen. Encouraging his men to engage with brave hearts, he drew off the cavalry on to each flank and left a free passage in the centre to receive Varus and his troopers. Orders were sent to the legions to arm and signals were displayed to the foraging party, summoning them to cease plundering and join the battle by the quickest possible path. Meanwhile Varus came plunging in terror into the middle of their ranks, spreading confusion among them. The fresh troops were swept back along with the wounded, themselves sharing the panic and sorely embarrassed by the narrowness of the road.

17 In all the confusion of the rout Antonius never for a moment forgot what befitted a determined general and a brave soldier. Staying the panic-stricken, checking the fugitives, wherever the fight was thickest, wherever he saw a gleam of hope, he schemed, he fought, he shouted, always conspicuous to his own men and a mark for the enemy. At last, in the heat of his impatience, he thrust through with a lance a standard-bearer, who was in full flight, then seized the standard and turned it against the enemy. Whereupon for very shame a few of his troopers, not more than a hundred, made a stand. The nature of the ground helped them. The road there was narrower; a stream barred their way, and the bridge was broken; its depth was uncertain and the steep banks checked their flight. Thus necessity or chance restored their fallen fortunes. Forming in close order, they received

the Vitellians' reckless and disordered charge, and at once flung them into confusion. Antonius pressed hard on the fugitives and cut down all who blocked his path. The others followed each his inclination, rifling the dead, capturing prisoners, seizing arms and horses. Meanwhile, summoned by their shouts of triumph, those who had just now been in full flight across the fields came hurrying back to share the victory.

Four miles from Cremona they saw the standards of 18
the Rapax and Italian legions gleaming in the sun. They had marched out thus far under cover of their cavalry's original success. When fortune turned against them, they neither opened their ranks to receive the routed troops nor marched out to attack the enemy, who were wearied with fighting and their long pursuit. While all went well the Vitellians did not miss their general, but in the hour of danger they realized their loss. The victorious cavalry came charging into their wavering line, and at the same time Vipstanus Messala arrived with the Moesian auxiliaries and a good number of men from the legions, who had kept up with the pace of their forced march.[1] These combined forces broke the opposing column, and the proximity of Cremona's sheltering walls gave the Vitellians more hope of refuge and less stomach for resistance.

[1] They would be more heavily laden than the Moesian auxiliaries.

The Fate of Cremona

Antonius did not follow up his advantage. He realized that, although the issue had been successful, the battle had long been doubtful, and had cost the troopers and their horses many wounds and much
19 hard fighting. As evening fell, the whole strength of the Flavian army arrived. They had marched among heaps of corpses, and the still reeking traces of slaughter, and now, feeling that the war was over, they clamoured to advance at once on Cremona and either receive its submission or take it by storm. This sounded well for public utterance, but each man in his heart was thinking, 'We could easily rush a city on the plain. In a night-assault men are just as brave and have a better chance of plunder. If we wait for day it will be all peace and petitions, and what shall we get for our wounds and our labours? A reputation for mercy! There 's no money in that. All the wealth of Cremona will find its way into the officers' pockets. Storm a city, and the plunder goes to the soldiers: if it surrenders, the generals get it.' They refused to listen to their centurions and tribunes and drowned their voices in a rattle of arms, swearing they would break their orders
20 unless they were led out. Antonius then went round among the companies, where his authoritative bearing obtained silence. He assured them that he had no wish to rob them of the glory and the reward they so well deserved. 'But,' he said, 'an army and a general have different functions. It is right that soldiers

should be greedy for battle, but the general often does more good not by temerity but by foresight, deliberation, and delay. I have done all I could to aid your victory with my sword: now I will serve you by the general's proper arts of calculation and strategy. The risks that face us are obvious. It is night; we know nothing of the lie of the city; the enemy are behind the walls; everything favours an ambush. Even if the gates were open, we cannot safely enter except by day and after due reconnoitring. Are you going to begin storming the town when you cannot possibly see where the ground is level and how high the walls are? How do you know whether to assault it with engines and showers of missiles, or with penthouses and shelters?'[1] Then he turned to individuals, asking one after another whether they had brought hatchets and pick-axes and other implements for storming a town. When they answered no, 'Well,' he said, 'could any troops possibly break through walls or undermine them with nothing but swords and javelins? Suppose it proves necessary to construct a mound and to shelter ourselves with mantlets and fascines,[1] are we going to stand idle like a lot of helpless idiots, gaping at the height of the enemy's towers and ramparts? Why not rather wait one night till our siege-train arrives and then carry the victory by force?' So saying, he sent the camp-followers and servants with the freshest of the troopers back to Bedriacum to bring up supplies and whatever else was wanted.

[1] See ii. 21.

21 The soldiers indeed chafed at this and mutiny seemed imminent, when some of the mounted scouts, who had ridden right up to the walls, captured a few stragglers from Cremona, and learnt from them that six Vitellian legions and the whole Hostilia army had that very day covered thirty miles, and, hearing of their comrades' defeat, were already arming for battle and would be on them immediately. This alarming news cured their obstinate deafness to the general's advice. He ordered the Thirteenth legion to take up their position on the raised Postumian high-road. In touch with them on the left wing in the open country were the Seventh Galbian, beside whom stood the Seventh Claudian, so placed that their front was protected by a ditch. On the right wing were the Eighth, drawn up along an open cross-road, and next to them the Third, distributed among some thick clumps of trees. Such, at any rate, was the order of the eagles and standards. In the darkness the soldiers were confused and took their places at random. The band of Guards[1] was next to the Third, and the auxiliaries on the wings, while the cavalry were disposed in support round the flanks and the rear. Sido and Italicus with their picked band of Suebi[2] fought in the front line.

22 For the Vitellians the right course was to rest at Cremona and recuperate their strength with food and a night's rest, and then on the next day to crush and

[1] i.e. the band of Otho's old Guards whom Vitellius had disbanded and Vespasian re-enlisted (see ii. 67, 82).

[2] See chap. 5.

rout the Flavians when they were stiff with cold and weak from hunger. But they had no general;[1] they had no plan. Though it was nearly nine at night they flung themselves upon the Flavians, who were standing steady in their places to receive them. In their fury and the darkness the Vitellian line was so disordered that one can hardly venture to describe the disposition of their troops. However, it has been stated that the Fourth Macedonian legion were on the right flank; in the centre were the Fifth and Fifteenth with the detachments of the Ninth, the Second and the Twentieth from Britain; the Sixteenth, the Twenty-second, and the First formed the left wing. The men of the Rapax and Italian legions[2] were distributed among all the companies.[3] The cavalry and auxiliaries picked their own position. All night the battle raged with varying fortune, never decided, always savagely contested. Disaster threatened now one side, now the other. Courage, strength were of little use: their eyes could not even see in front of them. Both sides were armed alike; the watchwords, constantly demanded, soon became known; the standards were all in confusion, as they were captured and carried off from one band to another. The Seventh legion, raised recently by Galba, suffered most severely. Six of the senior centurions fell and several

[1] Caecina was under arrest, Valens still on his way from Rome (see chaps. 14, 15).

[2] XXI and I.

[3] Because they had already suffered heavy losses earlier in the day (see chap. 18).

standards were lost. They nearly lost their eagle too, but it was rescued by the bravery of the senior centurion, named Atilius Verus, who after great slaughter of the enemy fell finally himself.

23 Antonius had meanwhile called up the Guards to reinforce his wavering line. Taking up the fight, they repulsed the enemy, only to be repulsed in their turn. For the Vitellian artillery, which had at first been scattered all along the line, and had been discharged upon the bushes without hurting the enemy, was now massed upon the high-road, and swept the open space in front. One immense engine in particular, which belonged to the Fifteenth, mowed down the Flavian line with huge stones. The slaughter thus caused would have been enormous, had not two of the Flavian soldiers performed a memorable exploit. Concealing their identity by snatching up shields from among the enemy's dead,[1] they cut the ropes which suspended the weights of the engine. They fell immediately, riddled with wounds, and so their names have perished. But of their deed there is no doubt.

Fortune had favoured neither side when, as the night wore on, the moon rose and threw a deceptive glamour over the field of battle. Shining from behind the Flavians the moon was in their favour. It magnified the shadows of their men and horses so that the enemy took the shadow for the substance, and their

[1] These shields would have Vitellius' name on them, and thus conceal their identity.

missiles were misdirected and fell short. The Vitellians, on the other hand, had the moon shining full on them and were an easy mark for the Flavians, shooting as it were out of cover.[1]

Thus being enabled to recognize his own men, 24
and to be recognized by them, Antonius appealed to some by taunting their honour, to many by words of praise and encouragement, to all by promising hope of reward. He asked the Pannonian legions why they had drawn their swords again. Here on this field they could regain their glory and wipe out the stain of their former disgrace.[2] Then turning to the Moesian troops, who were the chief promoters of the war,[3] he told them it was no good challenging the Vitellians with verbal threats, if they could not bear to face them and their blows. Thus he addressed each legion as he reached it. To the Third he spoke at greater length, reminding them of their victories both old and new. Had they not under Mark Antony defeated the Parthians[4] and the Armenians under Corbulo?[5] Had they not but lately crushed the Sarmatians?[6] Then he turned in fury on the Guards. 'Peasants that you are,' he shouted, 'have you another emperor, another camp waiting to shelter you, if you are defeated? There in the enemy's line are your standards

[1] Dio asserts that the moon was 'black and bloody, and gave off other fearsome hues'.

[2] i.e. at the first battle of Bedriacum (see ii. 43).

[3] See ii. 85. [4] 36 B.C. [5] A.D. 63.

[6] i.e. the Rhoxolani (cp. i. 79).

and your arms: defeat means death and—no, you have drained disgrace already to the dregs.'

These words roused cheers on all sides, and the Third, following the Syrian custom,[1] saluted the rising
25 sun. Thus arose a casual rumour—or possibly it was suggested by the general's ingenuity—that Mucianus had arrived, and that the two armies were cheering each other. On they pressed, feeling they had been reinforced. The Vitellian line was more ragged now, for, having no general to marshal them, their ranks now filled, now thinned, with each alternation of courage and fear. As soon as Antonius saw them waver, he kept thrusting at them in massed column. The line bent and then broke, and the inextricable confusion of wagons and siege-engines prevented their rallying. The victorious troops scattered along the cross-road in headlong pursuit.

The slaughter was marked by one peculiar horror. A son killed his father. I give the facts and names on the authority of Vipstanus Messala.[2] One Julius Mansuetus, a Spaniard who had joined the legion Rapax, had left a young son at home. This boy subsequently grew up and enlisted in the Seventh legion, raised by Galba.[3] Chance now sent his father in his way, and he felled him to the ground. While he was ransacking the dying man, they recognized each other. Flinging his arms round the now lifeless corpse, in

[1] They had served recently in Syria under Corbulo (see above).

[2] An eyewitness (see p. 18, note 2).

[3] In Spain.

a piteous voice he implored his father's spirit to be appeased and not to turn against him as a parricide. The crime was his country's, he cried; what share had a single soldier in these civil wars? Meanwhile he lifted the body and began to dig a grave and perform the last rites for his father. Those who were nearest noticed this; then the story began to spread, till there ran through the army astonishment and many complaints and curses against this wicked war. Yet they never ceased busily killing and plundering friends and relatives and brothers; and while they talked of the crime they were committing it themselves.

When they reached Cremona a fresh task of vast 26
difficulty awaited them. During the war with Otho[1] the German army had entrenched their camp round the walls of Cremona and then erected a rampart round the camp; and these fortifications had been further strengthened. The sight of them brought the victors to a halt, and their generals were uncertain what instructions to give. The troops had had no rest for a day and a night. To storm the town at once would be an arduous and, in the absence of reserves, a perilous task. On the other hand, a retreat to Bedriacum would involve the intolerable fatigue of a long march, and destroy the value of their victory. Again, it would be dangerous to entrench themselves so close to the lines of the enemy, who might at any minute sally forth and rout them while they were dispersed and digging trenches. The chief anxiety lay in the temper

[1] i. e. at the time of the first battle of Bedriacum in April.

of the men, who were much more ready to face danger than delay. To them discretion was disagreeable and hazard spelt hope. Their thirst for plunder outweighed all fears of wounds and bloodshed.

27 Antonius also inclined to this view and gave orders for them to surround the rampart. At first they stood back and delivered volleys of arrows and stones, suffering themselves the severer loss, for a storm of missiles rained down from the walls. Antonius then told off each legion to assault a different point of the rampart or one of the gates, hoping that by thus separating them he could distinguish the cowards from the brave and inflame them with a spirit of honourable rivalry. The Third and Seventh took the position nearest the road to Bedriacum; the Eighth and Seventh Claudian assaulted the right-hand side of the rampart; the Thirteenth swept up to the Brixian Gate.[1] A brief delay was caused while some fetched mattocks and pickaxes from the fields, and others hooks and ladders. Then holding their shields above their heads in close 'tortoise' formation,[2] they advanced under the rampart. Both sides employed Roman tactics. The Vitellians rolled down huge masses of stones, and, as the sheltering cover of shields parted and wavered, they thrust at it with lances and poles, until at last

[1] i. e. the gate giving on to the road to Brescia.

[2] In this famous formation the front-rank men kept close together and covered their bodies with long, concave shields, while the others, holding flat shields over their heads and pressing them one against another, formed a protecting roof. They could thus approach the walls under cover.

the whole structure was broken up and they mowed down the torn and bleeding soldiers beneath with terrible slaughter.

The men would certainly have hesitated, had not the generals, realizing that they were really too tired to respond to any other form of encouragement, pointed significantly to Cremona. Whether this was 28
Hormus's idea, as Messala [1] records, or whether we should rather follow Caius Pliny, who accuses Antonius, it is not easy to determine. This one may say, that, however abominable the crime, yet in committing it neither Antonius nor Hormus belied the reputation of their lives. After this neither wounds nor bloodshed could stay the Flavian troops. They demolished the rampart, shook the gates, climbed up on each other's shoulders, or over the re-formed 'tortoise', and snatched away the enemy's weapons or caught hold of them by the arms. Thus the wounded and unwounded, the half-dead and the dying, all came rolling down and perished together by every imaginable kind of death.

The fight raged thickest round the Third and 29
Seventh legions, and the general, Antonius, came up with a picked band of auxiliaries to support their assault. The Vitellians, finding themselves unable to resist the attack of troops thus stubbornly vying with each other, and seeing their missiles all glide off the shelter of shields, at last sent their engine of war crashing down upon their heads. For the moment it

[1] Cp. ii. 101, note 1.

scattered and crushed beneath it the men on whom it fell, but it dragged with it some of the battlements and the top of the rampart. At the same moment one of the towers on the rampart gave way under a shower of stones. While the men of the Seventh struggled up to the breach in close column,[1] the Third hewed down the gate with hatchets and swords. All the authorities[2] agree that Caius Volusius of the Third legion was the first man in. Emerging on the top of the rampart, he hurled down those who barred his path, and from this conspicuous position waved his hand and shouted that the camp was taken. The others poured through, while the Vitellians in panic flung themselves down from the rampart, and the whole space between the camp and the walls became a seething scene of carnage.

30 Here, again, was a new type of task for the Flavians. Here were high walls, stone battlements, iron-barred gates, and soldiers hurling javelins. The citizens of Cremona were numerous and devoted to the cause of Vitellius, and half Italy had gathered there for the Fair which fell just at that time. Their numbers were a help to the defenders, but the prospect of plundering them offered an incentive to their assailants. Antonius ordered his men to bring fire and apply it to the most beautiful of the buildings outside the walls, hoping that the loss of their property might induce the citizens to turn traitor. The houses that stood nearest to

[1] For the term (*cuneus*) here used, see note on ii. 42.

[2] Cp. ii. 101, note 1.

the walls and overtopped them he crowded with his bravest troops, who dislodged the defenders with showers of beams and tiles and flaming torches. Mean- 31
while, some of the legionaries began to advance in 'tortoise' formation,[1] while others kept up a steady fire of javelins and stones.

Gradually the spirit of the Vitellians ebbed. The higher their rank, the more easily they gave way to misfortune. For they were afraid that if Cremona too[2] was demolished, there would be no hope of pardon; the victors' fury would fall not on the common poor but on the tribunes and centurions, whom it would pay to kill. The common soldiers felt safe in their obscurity, and, careless of the future, continued to offer resistance. They roamed the streets or hid themselves in houses, and though they had given up the war, refused even so to sue for peace. Meanwhile the tribunes and centurions did away with the name and portraits of Vitellius.[3] They released Caecina, who was still in irons,[4] and begged his help in pleading their cause. When he turned from them in haughty contempt they besought him with tears. It was, indeed, the last of evils that all these brave men should invoke a traitor's aid. They then hung veils and fillets[5] out on the walls, and when Antonius had given the order to cease

[1] See p. 36, note 2.

[2] As well as the buildings outside the walls.

[3] i.e. tore them off the standards and shields, and broke the statues at head-quarters.

[4] See chap. 14.

[5] Cp. i. 66.

firing, they carried out their standards and eagles, followed by a miserable column of disarmed soldiers, dejectedly hanging their heads. The victors had at first crowded round, heaping insults on them and threatening violence, but when they found that the vanquished had lost all their proud spirit, and turned their cheeks with servile endurance to every indignity, they gradually began to recollect that these were the men who had made such a moderate use of their victory at Bedriacum.[1] But when the crowd parted, and Caecina advanced in his consular robes, attended by his lictors in full state, their indignation broke into flame. They charged him with insolence and cruelty, and—so hateful is crime—they even flung his treachery in his teeth.[2] Antonius restrained them and sent Caecina under escort to Vespasian.

32 Meanwhile the citizens of Cremona suffered sorely from the violence of the troops, and only the entreaties of their generals could withhold them from a general massacre. Antonius summoned a mass meeting and delivered a eulogy upon his victorious army, promising mercy to the vanquished and speaking of Cremona in ambiguous terms. Besides their natural passion for plunder, there was an old grudge which urged them to sack Cremona. The town was believed to have given assistance to the Vitellian cause before this in the war with Otho;[3] and again, when the Thirteenth

[1] Cp. ii. 45.
[2] i.e. even though it was in their own interest.
[3] Cp. ii. 70.

had been left behind to build an amphitheatre,[1] the populace had shown its town-bred impertinence by assailing them with insolent ridicule. Other causes increased this bad feeling: it was here that Caecina had given his show of gladiators:[1] the town had become for a second time the theatre of the war: the citizens had conveyed food to the Vitellians during the battle: some women had been killed, whose enthusiasm for the cause had led them to take part in the fight. Besides all this, the Fair had filled the rich city with an even greater display of wealth than usual. All eyes were now centred on Antonius, whose fame and good fortune overshadowed all the other generals. It so happened that he hurried off to the baths to wash off the stains of blood. Finding fault with the temperature of the water, he received the answer, 'It will not be long before it is hot,' and this phrase was caught up. The attendant's words were repeated, and brought all the odium on Antonius, who was thus believed to have given the signal to set fire to Cremona, which was already in flames.[2]

Thus forty thousand soldiers burst into the town 33
with a yet larger crowd of servants and sutlers, even more depraved than the soldiers in their readiness for cruelty and lust. Without any respect for age or for

[1] Cp. ii. 67.

[2] The words were either attributed wrongly to Antonius or were supposed to be spoken in answer to his question, 'Are the furnaces not lit?' In either case they were taken to apply not to the heating of the baths but to the burning of the town.

authority they added rape to murder and murder to rape. Aged men and decrepit old women, who were worthless as booty, were hustled off to make sport for them. If some grown girl or a handsome youth fell into their clutches, they would be torn to pieces in the struggle for possession, while the plunderers were left to cut each other's throats. Whoever carried off money or any of the solid gold offerings in the temples was liable to be cut to pieces, if he met another stronger than himself. Some, disdaining easy finds, hunted for hidden hoards, and dug out buried treasure, flogging and torturing the householders. They held torches in their hands and, having once secured their prize, would fling them wantonly into an empty house or some dismantled temple. Composed as the army was of citizens, allies, and foreign troops, differing widely in language and customs, the objects of the soldiers' greed differed also. But while their views of what was right might vary, they all agreed in thinking nothing wrong.

Cremona lasted them four days. While all other buildings sacred and secular sank in the flames, only the temple of Mefitis outside the walls was left standing, saved either by its position or the power of the presiding deity.[1]

34 Such was the end of Cremona two hundred and eighty-six years after its foundation. It had been originally built in the consulship of Tiberius Sempronius and Publius Cornelius, while Hannibal was

[1] i.e. the goddess of malaria, who reigned in terror by the swampy banks of the Po.

threatening to invade Italy, to serve as a bulwark against the Gauls beyond the Po,[1] and to resist any other power that might break in over the Alps. And so it grew and flourished, aided by its large number of settlers, its conveniently situated rivers,[2] the fertility of its territory, and its connexion through alliance and intermarriage with other communities. Foreign invasions had left it untouched only to become the victim of civil war. Antonius, ashamed of his crime, and realizing his growing disfavour, proclaimed that no citizen of Cremona was to be kept as a prisoner of war; and, indeed, the unanimous feeling in Italy against buying such slaves had already frustrated the soldiers' hope of profit. So they began to kill their captives, whose relatives and friends, when this became known, covertly bought their release. After a while, the rest of the inhabitants returned, and the squares and temples were rebuilt by the munificence of the burghers and under Vespasian's direct patronage.

However, the soil was so foully infected by the reek 35
of blood that it was impossible for the Flavians to encamp for long on the ruins of this buried city. They advanced along the road to the third milestone, and mustered the Vitellians, still straggling and panic-stricken, each under his own standard. The defeated legions were then distributed through Illyricum, for the civil war was still in progress and their fidelity

[1] Cremona was founded in 218 B.C. as a Latin colony, together with Placentia, to keep the Gallic tribes of North Italy in check.

[2] The Po, Adda, and Oglio.

could not be relied on. They then dispatched couriers to carry the news to Britain and the Spanish provinces. To Gaul they sent an officer named Julius Calenus, to Germany Alpinius Montanus, who had commanded an auxiliary cohort. Montanus was a Treviran and Calenus an Aeduan; both had fought for Vitellius and thus served to advertise Vespasian's victory. At the same time garrisons were sent to hold the passes of the Alps, for fear that Germany might rise in support of Vitellius.

VITELLIUS

36 When Caecina had left Rome,[1] Vitellius, after an interval of a few days, sent Fabius Valens hurrying to the front, and then proceeded to drown his cares in self-indulgence. He neither made any provision for the war, nor tried to increase the efficiency of his troops either by haranguing or by drilling them. He did not keep himself in the public eye, but retired into the pleasant shade of his gardens, regarding past, present, and future with equal indifference, like one of those listless animals which lie sluggish and torpid so long as you supply them with food. While he thus loitered languid and indolent in the woods of Aricia,[2] he received the startling news of Lucilius Bassus' treachery and the disaffection of the fleet at Ravenna.[3] Soon afterwards he heard with mixed feelings of distress and satisfaction that Caecina had deserted him and had been imprisoned by the

[1] The story returns again to ii. 101.
[2] La Riccia.
[3] See chap. 12.

army. On his insensate nature joy had more effect than trouble. He returned in triumph to Rome and at a crowded meeting praised the devotion of the troops in extravagant terms. He gave orders for the imprisonment of Publilius Sabinus, the prefect of the Guards, on the ground of his intimacy with Caecina, and appointed Alfenus Varus [1] in his place.

He next delivered a pompous and elaborate speech 37
in the senate, where he was loaded with far-fetched compliments by the members. Lucius Vitellius rose to propose a harsh sentence against Caecina. The rest of the house inveighed with assumed indignation against the consul who had betrayed his country, the general who had betrayed his commander-in-chief, the friend who had betrayed his benefactor to whom he owed all his riches and distinction. But their protestations of sympathy with Vitellius really voiced their personal vexation.[2] None of the speeches contained any criticism of the Flavian generals. They threw the blame on the misguided and impolitic action of the armies, and with cautious circumlocution avoided all direct mention of Vespasian. Caecina's consulship [3] had still one day to run, and Rosius Regulus actually made humble petition for this one day's office, Vitellius' offer and his acceptance exciting universal derision. Thus he entered and abdicated his office on the same day, the last of October. Men who were learned in constitutional history pointed out

[1] Hitherto camp-prefect (cp. ii. 29).
[2] Against Caecina for his inefficiency. [3] Cp. i. 77.

that no one before had ever been elected to fill a vacancy without the passing of a bill or some act of deprivation, although there was precedent for the one day consulship in the case of Caninius Rebilus when Caius Caesar was dictator and the civil war necessitated prompt rewards.[1]

38 It was at this time that the news of the death of Junius Blaesus[2] gave rise to much talk. I give the story as I find it. When Vitellius was lying seriously ill at his house in the Servilian Park, he noticed that a neighbouring mansion was brilliantly illuminated at night. On asking the reason, he was told that Caecina Tuscus[3] was giving a large dinner-party, at which Junius Blaesus was the chief guest. He further received an exaggerated account of their extravagance and dissipation. Some of his informants even made specific charges against Tuscus and others, but especially accused Blaesus for spending his days in revelry while

[1] This was in 45 B.C., when Caesar was carrying on the government with a high hand and small regard for precedent. Holding an election on the last day of the year, he was told that the consul was dead: there was no one to preside. So he promptly announced that Caninius was consul till the next morning. 'So no one,' says Cicero, 'breakfasted during his consulship. However, there was no crime either, and his vigilance was such that he never closed an eye during his whole term of office.'

[2] Cp. ii. 59.

[3] This man had been prefect of Egypt, and had built special baths for Nero, who was expected to visit Alexandria. But he committed the indiscretion of washing in them first, for which Nero had banished him.

his emperor lay ill. There are people who keep a sharp eye on every sign of an emperor's displeasure. They soon made sure that Vitellius was furious and that Blaesus' ruin would be an easy task, so they cast Lucius Vitellius for the part of common informer. He had a mean and jealous dislike for Blaesus, whose spotless reputation far outshone his own, which was tainted with every kind of infamy. Bursting into the emperor's apartment, he caught up Vitellius' young son in his arms and fell at his feet. When asked the reason of this excitement, he said it was due to no anxiety for himself; all his suit and all his prayers were for his brother and his brother's children. Their fears of Vespasian were idle: between him and Vitellius lay all the legions of Germany, all those brave and loyal provinces, and an immeasurable space of land and sea. 'It is here in Rome,' he cried, 'in the bosom of our household that we have an enemy to fear, one who boasts the Junii and Antonii as his ancestors, one who shows himself affable and munificent to the troops, posing as a descendant of imperial stock.[1] It is to him that Rome's attention turns, while you, Sire, careless who is friend or foe, cherish in your bosom a rival, who sits feasting at his table and watches his emperor in pain. You must requite his unseasonable gaiety with a night of deadly sorrow, in which he

[1] Both the Junii and Antonii could claim as an ancestor Augustus' sister Octavia; and the Junii were also connected with M. Junius Silanus, Augustus' great-great-grandson, whom Nero had put out of the way.

may both know and feel that Vitellius lives and is his emperor, and, if anything should happen, has a son to be his heir.'

39 Vitellius hesitated anxiously between his criminal desires and his fear that, if he deferred Blaesus' death, he might hasten his own ruin, or by giving official orders for it might raise a storm of indignation. He decided to proceed by poison. The suspicion against him he confirmed by going to see Blaesus and showing obvious satisfaction. Moreover, he was heard to make the savage boast that he had, to quote his own words, 'feasted his eyes on his enemy's deathbed.'

Blaesus, besides his distinguished origin and refined character, was steadfastly loyal. Even before the decline of Vitellius' cause he had been canvassed by Caecina and other party leaders, who were turning against the emperor, and had met them with a persistent refusal. He was a man of quiet and blameless life, with no ambition for the principate or, indeed, for any sudden distinction, but he could not escape the danger of being considered worthy of it.

40 Meanwhile Fabius Valens, encumbered by a long train of harlots and eunuchs, was conducting a leisurely advance, most unlike a march to the front, when couriers arrived post-haste with the news that Lucilius Bassus had surrendered the Ravenna fleet.[1] If he had hurried forward on his march he might have been in time to save Caecina's faltering loyalty, or to have joined the legions before the critical engagement was

[1] See chap. 12.

fought. Many, indeed, advised him to avoid Ravenna and to make his way by obscure by-roads to Hostilia or Cremona. Others wanted him to send to Rome for the Guards and to break through the enemy's lines with a strong force. Valens himself, with helpless indecision, let the time for action go by while he took advice; and then rejecting the advice he was offered, chose the middle course, which is always the worst in a crisis, and thus failed both in courage and in caution.

He wrote to Vitellius demanding reinforcements, 41
and there arrived three cohorts of Guards and a regiment of cavalry from Britain, too many to slip through unobserved and too few to force a passage. But even in such a crisis as this Valens' reputation was as unsavoury as ever. He was still believed to use violence in the pursuit of illicit pleasures, and to betray the confidence of his hosts by seducing their wives and families. He had money and authority to help him, and the feverish impatience of one whose star is on the wane. At last the arrival of the reinforcements revealed the perversity of his strategy. He had too few men to assume the offensive, even if they had been unquestionably loyal, and their loyalty was under grave suspicion. However, their sense of decency and respect for the general restrained them for a while, though such ties are soon broken when troops are disinclined for danger and indifferent to disgrace.[1] Fearing trouble, he sent the Guards forward to

[1] They had already incurred the disgrace of betraying first Galba, then Otho.

Ariminum[1] with the cavalry to secure the rear. Valens himself, with a few companions, whose loyalty had survived misfortune, turned off into Umbria and thence to Etruria, where he learnt the result of the battle of Cremona. Thereupon he formed a plan, which was far from cowardly and might have had alarming consequences, if it had succeeded. He was to seize ships and cross to some point on the coast of Narbonnese Gaul, whence he could rouse the provinces of Gaul and the native German tribes, and thus raise forces for a fresh outbreak of war.

42 Valens' departure having dispirited the troops at Ariminum, Cornelius Fuscus[2] advanced his force and, stationing Liburnian[3] cruisers along the adjoining coast, invested the town by land and sea. The Flavians thus occupied the Umbrian plain and the sea-board of Picenum; and the Apennines now divided Italy between Vitellius and Vespasian.

Valens, embarking from the Bay of Pisa, was either becalmed on a slow sea or caught by an unfavourable wind and had to put in at the harbour of Hercules Monoecus.[4] Stationed in the neighbourhood was Marius Maturus, the Governor of the Maritime Alps,[5] who had remained loyal to Vitellius, and, though surrounded by enemies, had so far been faithful to his oath of allegiance. He gave Valens a friendly welcome and strongly advised him not to venture rashly into Narbonnese Gaul. This alarmed

[1] Rimini.
[2] Now admiral of the Ravenna fleet (see chap. 12).
[3] See ii. 16, note 3. [4] Monaco. [5] See ii. 12.

Valens, who found also that his companions' loyalty was yielding to their fears. For Valerius Paulinus, 43
the imperial agent in the province, was an energetic soldier who had been friendly with Vespasian in old days, and had lately sworn all the surrounding communities to his cause. Having summoned to his flag all the Guards discharged by Vitellius,[1] who needed no persuasion to resume the war, he was now holding the colony of Forum Julii,[2] the key to the command of the sea. His influence carried the more weight since Forum Julii was his native town and, having once been an officer in the Guards, he was respected by the men. Besides this, the inhabitants supported their fellow citizen, and in the hope of future aggrandizement rendered enthusiastic service to the party. When the news of these efficient preparations, somewhat exaggerated by rumour, came to the ears of the Vitellians, who were already in some doubt, Fabius Valens returned to the ships with four men of the Body Guard, three of his friends and three centurions, while Maturus and the rest preferred to remain and swear allegiance to Vespasian. As for Valens, though he felt safer at sea than among the cities on the coast, he was still full of doubts for the future, since he was certain what he had to avoid but quite uncertain whom he could trust. Eventually a gale drove him upon the Stoechades,[3] some islands belonging to Marseilles, and there he was overtaken by the cruisers which Paulinus had sent in pursuit.

[1] Cp. ii. 67. [2] Fréjus. [3] Îles d'Hyères.

THE STATE OF THE PROVINCES

44 With the capture of Valens the tide had now fully turned in favour of Vespasian. The movement had been begun in Spain by the First legion *Adjutrix*,[1] whose reverence for Otho's memory made them hate Vitellius. They carried the Tenth and the Sixth[2] with them. The provinces of Gaul soon followed suit. Britain was bound to his cause by the favour felt for one who had been sent there by Claudius in command of the Second legion, and had fought with great distinction in the war. But the adherence of the province was to some extent opposed by the other legions, in which many of the centurions and soldiers had been promoted by Vitellius. They were used to their emperor and felt some doubt about the change.

45 This quarrel between the legions and the constant rumours of civil war, encouraged the Britons to take heart. Their chief instigator was one Venutius. He was of a ferocious disposition and hated the name of Rome, but his strongest motive was a private quarrel with Queen Cartimandua, a member of a powerful family, who ruled the Brigantes.[3] Her authority had lately increased, since she had betrayed King Caratacus into the hands of the Romans, and was thus considered to have provided Claudius Caesar with material for his triumph.[4] Thus she had grown rich, and with

[1] The marines (see ii. 67, i. 6). [2] X Gemina, VI Victrix.

[3] They occupied a large district of the north of England, from the Trent to the Tyne.

[4] As a matter of fact his triumph took place in 44. Caratacus

prosperity came demoralization. She threw over Venutius, who was her husband, and gave her hand and kingdom to his squire, Vellocatus. This crime soon proved the ruin of her house. The people supported her husband: she defended her lover with passionate ferocity. Venutius therefore summoned assistance and, aided by the simultaneous revolt of the Brigantes, brought Cartimandua into dire straits. She petitioned for troops from Rome. Our auxiliaries, both horse and foot, then fought several engagements with varying success, but eventually rescued the queen. Thus the kingdom was left in the hands of Venutius and the war in ours.

Almost simultaneously a disturbance broke out in 46
Germany, where the inefficiency of the generals, the disaffection of the troops, the strength of the enemy, and the treachery of our allies all combined to bring the Roman government into serious danger. The causes and history of this protracted struggle—for such it proved—we must leave to a later chapter.[1] Amongst the Dacians [2] also there was trouble. They could never be trusted, and now that the army was moved from Moesia they were no longer under the restraint of fear. At first they remained quiet and awaited developments. But when they saw Italy in the flames of war, and found the whole empire divided into hostile camps,

was brought to Rome in 51. Perhaps Tacitus regards this in itself as a 'triumph', or else he makes a venial mistake.

[1] The rebellion on the Rhine is described in Books IV and V.

[2] In Roumania.

they fell upon the winter-quarters of the auxiliary infantry and cavalry and began to occupy both banks of the Danube. They were on the point of storming the Roman camp as well, when Mucianus, who knew of the victory at Cremona, sent the Sixth legion[1] against them. For the empire was in danger of a double foreign invasion, if the Dacians and the Germans had broken in from opposite directions. But here, as so often, Rome's good fortune saved her by bringing Mucianus on the scene with the forces of the East just at the moment when we had settled matters at Cremona. Fonteius Agrippa, who had for the last year been proconsul in Asia, was transferred to the government of Moesia. His forces were strengthened by a draft from the defeated Vitellian army, for in the interest of peace it seemed prudent to distribute these troops over the provinces and to keep their hands tied by a foreign war.

47 The other peoples soon made their voices heard. Pontus[2] had suddenly risen in a general rebellion at the instigation of a foreign menial, who was in command of what had once been the royal fleet. He was one of Polemo's freedmen, by name Anicetus, who had formerly been influential and resented the change which had converted the kingdom into a province of the Roman empire. He accordingly enlisted the

[1] Ferrata. Cp. ii. 83.

[2] This little kingdom west of Trebizond was left to Rome by Polemo II, A.D. 63. Nero made it a Roman province under the name of Pontus Polemoniacus.

maritime tribes of Pontus in Vitellius' service, attracting all the neediest ruffians with promises of plunder. At the head of no mean force he suddenly fell upon Trapezus,[1] an ancient and famous city, founded by Greek settlers on the frontier of the Pontic kingdom. There he cut to pieces the auxiliaries, who had once formed the king's Body Guard, and, after receiving the Roman franchise, had adopted our ensigns and equipment, while still retaining all the inefficiency and insubordination of Greek troops. Anicetus also set fire to the fleet[2] and thus enjoyed complete mastery of the sea, since Mucianus had moved the pick of his cruisers and all his troops to Byzantium. The sea was overrun by natives too, who had hurriedly built themselves boats. These, which they call 'arks',[3] are broad-bottomed boats with low sides, built without any brass or iron rivets. In a rough sea, as the waves rise higher and higher, the height of the sides is raised by the addition of planks which, in the end, enclose the whole boat under a sort of roof. They are thus left to toss up and down on the waves. They have bows at both ends and the paddles can be used on either side, since it is as easy and as safe to row in one direction as in the other.

This state of things attracting Vespasian's attention, 48
he was obliged to send out a picked force of detach-

[1] Trebizond.

[2] Mucianus had 'ordered the fleet to move from Pontus to Byzantium' (ii. 83). This leads some editors to change the text, and others to suppose that a few ships were left behind.

[3] Literally, arched boats. Tacitus describes somewhat similar craft in *Germania*, 44.

ments from the legions under Virdius Geminus, a soldier of tried experience. He attacked the enemy while they were dispersed in all directions in quest of plunder, and drove them back to their ships. He then had some Liburnian cruisers hurriedly constructed and ran Anicetus to ground in the mouth of the river Chobus,[1] where he had taken refuge with the King of the Sedochezi tribe, whose alliance he had purchased by bribes. At first, indeed, the king endeavoured to protect his petitioner by using threats of violence, but he soon saw that it was a choice between making war or being paid for his treachery. The barbarian's sense of honour was unequal to this strain. He came to terms, surrendered Anicetus and the other fugitives, and thus put an end to 'the slaves' war'.

This victory delighted Vespasian: everything was succeeding beyond his hopes: and to crown all the news of the battle of Cremona now reached him in Egypt. He hurried forward all the faster towards Alexandria with the object of bringing starvation[2] upon Vitellius' defeated troops and the inhabitants of Rome, who were already feeling the pinch of diminished imports. For he was at the same time making preparations for an invasion of the adjacent province of Africa[3] by land and sea. By cutting off their corn supply he hoped to reduce the enemy to famine and disunion.

[1] The Khopi, which flows from the Caucasus into the Euxine.

[2] Cp. chap. 8.

[3] Africa came next to Egypt in importance as a Roman granary (cp. i. 73).

Antonius' Advance from Cremona

Thus[1] a world-wide convulsion marked the passing 49
of the imperial power into new hands. Meanwhile, after Cremona, the behaviour of Antonius Primus was not so blameless as before. He had settled the war, he felt; the rest would be plain sailing. Or, perhaps, in such a nature as his success only brought to light his greed and arrogance and all his other dormant vices. While harrying Italy like a conquered country, he courted the goodwill of his troops and used every word and every action to pave his way to power. He allowed his men to appoint centurions themselves in place of those who had fallen, and thus gave them a taste for insubordination; for their choice fell on the most turbulent spirits. The generals no longer commanded the men, but were dragged at the heels of their caprices. This revolutionary system, utterly fatal to good discipline, was exploited by Antonius for his own profit.[2] Of Mucianus' approach he had no fears, and thus made a mistake even more fatal than despising Vespasian.[3]

His advance, however, continued. As winter was 50
at hand[4] and the Po had inundated the meadows, his column marched unencumbered by heavy baggage.

[1] The narrative is here resumed from the end of chap. 35.

[2] Would-be centurions doubtless bribed him to influence the soldiers in their favour.

[3] Vespasian was too big to mind being despised; Mucianus was not, and eventually retaliated (cp. iv. 11).

[4] November.

The main body of the victorious legions was left behind at Verona, together with such of the soldiers as were incapacitated by wounds or old age, and many besides who were still in good condition. Having already broken the back of the campaign, Antonius felt strong enough with his auxiliary horse and foot and some picked detachments from the legions. The Eleventh [1] had voluntarily joined the advance. They had held back at first, but, seeing Antonius' success, were distressed to think they had had no share in it. The column was also accompanied by a force of six thousand Dalmatian troops, which had been recently raised. The ex-consul, Pompeius Silvanus,[2] commanded the column, but the actual control was in the hands of a general named Annius Bassus. Silvanus was quite ineffective as a general, and wasted every chance of action in talking about it. Bassus, while showing all due respect, managed him completely, and was always ready with quiet efficiency to do anything that had to be done. Their force was further increased by enlisting the best of the marines from the Ravenna fleet, who were clamouring for service in the legions. The vacancies in the fleet were filled by Dalmatians. The army and its generals halted at Fanum Fortunae,[3] still hesitating what policy to adopt, for they had heard that the Guards were on the move from Rome, and supposed that the Apennines were held by troops. And they had fears of their own. Supplies

[1] From Dalmatia (see ii. 11, 67).

[2] Governor of Dalmatia (cp. ii. 86).

[3] Fano.

were scarce in a district devastated by war. The men were mutinous and demanded 'shoe-money',[1] as they called the donative, with alarming insistence. No provision had been made either for money or for stores. The precipitate greed of the soldiers made further difficulties, for they each looted what might have served for them all.

I find among the best authorities evidence which 51
shows how wickedly careless were the victorious army of all considerations of right and wrong. They tell how a trooper professed that he had killed his brother in the last battle, and demanded a reward from his generals. The dictates of humanity forbade them to remunerate such a murder, but in the interests of civil war they dared not punish it. They had put him off with the plea that they could not at the moment reward his service adequately. And there the story stops. However, a similar crime had occurred in earlier civil wars. In the battle which Pompeius Strabo fought against Cinna at the Janiculum,[2] one of his soldiers killed his own brother and then, realizing what he had done, committed suicide. This is recorded by Sisenna.[3] Our ancestors, it seems, had a livelier sense than we have both of the glory of good deeds

[1] Apparently soldiers' slang. Probably at some period an officer had bribed his men under the pretence of making special grants for the purchase of nails for their shoes.

[2] 87 B.C.

[3] L. Cornelius Sisenna, who died 67 B.C. in Pompey's war against the pirates, wrote a history of his own time, dealing in particular with Sulla's wars.

and the shame of bad.[1] These and other such instances from past history may be appropriately cited, whenever the subject seems to demand either an example of good conduct or some consolation for a crime.

52 Antonius and his fellow generals decided to send the cavalry ahead to explore the whole of Umbria, and to see whether any of the Apennines were accessible by a gentler route; to summon the eagles and standards[2] and all the troops at Verona,[3] and to fill the Po and the sea with provision ships. Some of the generals continually suggested obstacles. Antonius had grown too big for his place, and they had surer hopes of reward from Mucianus. He was distressed that victory had come so soon, and felt that, if he was not present when Rome was taken, he would lose his share in the war and its glory. So he kept on writing to Antonius and Varus in ambiguous terms, sometimes urging them to 'press forward on their path', sometimes expatiating on 'the manifold value of delay'. He thus managed to arrange that he could disclaim responsibility in case of a reverse, or acknowledge their policy as his own if it succeeded. To Plotius Grypus, whom Vespasian had lately raised to senatorial rank and put in command of a legion, and to his other trusty friends he sent less ambiguous instructions, and they all wrote back criticizing the haste with which Antonius and Varus

[1] This or some similar incident seems to have become a respected commonplace of history and poetry (cp. chap. 25).

[2] i.e. the main body of the legions. [3] See chap. 50.

acted. This was just what Mucianus wanted. He forwarded the letters to Vespasian with the result that Antonius' plans and exploits were not appreciated as highly as Antonius had hoped. This he took very ill 53
and threw the blame on Mucianus, whose charges he conceived had cheapened his exploits. Being little accustomed to control his tongue or to obey orders, he was most unguarded in his conversation and composed a letter to Vespasian in presumptuous language which ill befitted a subject, making various covert charges against Mucianus. 'It was I,' he wrote, 'who brought the legions of Pannonia into the field :[1] it was my stimulus which stirred up the officers in Moesia :[2] it was by my persistence that we broke through the Alps, seized hold of Italy and cut off the German and Raetian auxiliaries.[3] When Vitellius' legions were all scattered and disunited, it was I who flung the cavalry on them like a whirlwind, and then pressed home the attack with the infantry all day and all night. That victory is my greatest achievement and it is entirely my own. As for the mishap at Cremona, that was the fault of the war. In old days the civil wars cost the country far more damage and involved the destruction of more than one town. It is not with couriers and dispatches that I serve my master, but with my sword in my hand. Nor can it be said that I have interfered with the glory of the men who have meanwhile settled

[1] See ii. 86.

[2] i.e. Aponius, Vipstanus Messala, Dillius, and Numisius (see ii. 85, iii. 9, 10).

[3] Cp. chap. 8.

matters in Dacia.[1] What peace in Moesia is to them, the safety and welfare of Italy are to me. It was my encouragement which brought the provinces of Gaul and of Spain, the strongest parts of the whole world, over to Vespasian's side. But my labours will prove useless, if the reward for the dangers I have run is to fall to the man who was not there to share them.' All this reached the ears of Mucianus and a serious quarrel resulted. Antonius kept it up in a frank spirit of dislike, while Mucianus showed a cunning which was far more implacable.

Vitellius' Measures of Defence

54 After the crushing defeat at Cremona Vitellius stupidly suppressed the news of the disaster, thus postponing not the danger itself but only his precautions against it. Had he admitted the facts and sought advice, hope and strength were still left to him: his pretension that all went well only made matters worse. He was himself extraordinarily silent about the war, and in Rome all discussion of the subject was forbidden. This only increased the number of people who, if permitted, would have told the truth, but in the face of this prohibition spread grossly exaggerated rumours. Nor were the Flavian leaders slow to foster these rumours. Whenever they captured Vitellian spies they escorted them round the camp to show them the strength of the winning army, and sent them back

[1] i.e. Mucianus and his officers (see chap. 46).

again. Vitellius cross-examined each of them in private and then had them murdered. A centurion named Julius Agrestis, after many interviews, in which he endeavoured in vain to fire Vitellius' courage, at last with heroic persistence induced the emperor to send him to inspect the enemy's forces and discover what had really happened at Cremona. He made no attempt to deceive Antonius by concealing the object of his mission, but openly avowed the emperor's instructions, stated his intentions and demanded to be shown everything. He was given guides, who showed him the field of battle, the ruins of Cremona and the captured legions. Back went Agrestis to Vitellius. Finding that the emperor disbelieved his report and even suggested that he had been bribed, he said, 'You want some certain evidence and, since you have no further use for me either alive or dead, I will give you evidence that you can believe.' And he was as good as his word. He went straight from the emperor's presence and committed suicide. Some say he was killed by order of Vitellius, but they give the same account of his heroic devotion.[1]

55 Vitellius was like a man roused from sleep. He dispatched Julius Priscus and Alfenus Varus[2] with fourteen cohorts of Guards and all his available cavalry to hold the Apennines. A legion levied from

[1] This incident was probably another historical commonplace. See the story from Plutarch (ii. 46, p. 155, note 1), which is also told by Suetonius and Dio.

[2] The prefects of the Guards (cp. ii. 92).

the marines [1] was sent after them. This large army of picked men and horses, if there had been any general to lead it, was strong enough to have even taken the offensive. His other cohorts [2] were given to his brother, Lucius Vitellius, for the protection of the city. The emperor himself gave up none of his habitual luxuries, but, feeling nervous and depressed, he hurried on the elections and nominated consuls for several years in advance. He lavished special charters [3] on allied communities and extended Latin rights [4] to foreign towns: he remitted taxation here, granted immunities there. In fact, he took no thought for the future, and did his best to cripple the empire. However, the mob accepted these munificent grants with open mouths. Fools paid money for them, but wise men held them invalid, since they could be neither given nor received without a revolution. At last he yielded to the demands of the army and joined the camp at Mevania,[5] where they had taken up their position. A long train of senators followed him, many moved by their ambition, but most by their fears. Here he

[1] At Misenum. (Leg. II Adjutrix.) The Ravenna marines were on the Flavian side (see chap. 50).

[2] i.e. the rest of the Guards (2), with the city garrison (4), and police (7) (cp. ii. 93).

[3] i.e. granting them special privileges denied to other communities in the same province.

[4] A sort of 'half-way house to Roman citizenship'. Full commercial rights were included but not those of intermarriage. It was possible for individual citizens in a Latin town to obtain the full rights of a Roman.

[5] Bevagna.

was still undecided and at the mercy of treacherous advice.

During one of his speeches a portent occurred. 56
A cloud of ill-omened birds [1] flew over his head and its density obscured the daylight. To this was added another omen of disaster. A bull broke from the altar, scattered the utensils for the ceremony, and escaped so far away that it had to be killed instead of being sacrificed according to the proper ritual. But the chief portent was Vitellius himself. He was ignorant of soldiering, incapable of forethought: knew nothing of drill or scouting, or how far operations should be pressed forward or protracted. He always had to ask some one else. At every fresh piece of news his expression and gait betrayed his alarm. And then he would get drunk. At last he found camp life too tedious, and on learning of a mutiny in the fleet at Misenum [2] he returned to Rome. Every fresh blow terrified him, but of the real crisis he seemed insensible. For it was open to him to cross the Apennines and with his full strength unimpaired to attack the enemy while they were worn out with cold and hunger. But by breaking up his forces he sent his keenest soldiers, stubbornly loyal to the last, to be killed or taken prisoner. The more experienced of his centurions disapproved of this policy and would have told him the truth, if they had been consulted. But the emperor's intimates refused

[1] Dio makes them vultures and the scene a sacrifice: they scattered the victims and nearly knocked Vitellius off his pulpit.

[2] Described in the following chapter.

them admittance. He had, indeed, formed a habit of regarding wholesome advice as unpleasant, and refusing to listen to any that was not agreeable, and in the long run fatal.

57 In civil war individual enterprise counts for much. The mutiny of the fleet at Misenum had been engineered by Claudius Faventinus, a centurion whom Galba had dismissed in disgrace. To obtain his object he had forged a letter from Vespasian promising rewards for treachery. The admiral, Claudius Apollinaris,[1] was neither a staunch loyalist nor an enthusiastic traitor. Accordingly Apinius Tiro, an ex-praetor, who happened to be at Minturnae,[2] offered to take the lead of the rebels. They proceeded to win over the colonies and country towns. Puteoli in particular was strong for Vespasian, while Capua remained loyal to Vitellius, for they dragged their local jealousies into the civil war. To pacify the excited troops Vitellius chose Claudius Julianus, who had lately been in command of the fleet at Misenum and had allowed lax discipline. To support him he was given one cohort of the city garrison and the force of gladiators already serving under him. The two parties encamped close to one another, and it was not long before Julianus came over to Vespasian's side. They then joined forces and occupied Tarracina,[3] which owed its strength more to

[1] He had succeeded Bassus (iii. 12).

[2] Near the mouth of the Liris.

[3] Horace's 'Anxur perched on gleaming rocks'. It lay near the Pontine marshes on the Appian way.

its walls and situation than to the character of its new garrison.

When news of this reached Vitellius, he left part of 58
his force at Narnia[1] with the prefects of the Guard,[2] and sent his brother Lucius with six regiments of Guards and five hundred horse to cope with the threatened outbreak in Campania. His own nervous depression was somewhat relieved by the enthusiasm of the troops and of the populace, who clamoured loudly for arms. For he dignified this poor-spirited mob, which would never dare to do anything but shout, by the specious titles of 'the army' or 'his legions'. His friends were all untrustworthy in proportion to their eminence; but on the advice of his freedmen he held a levy for conscription and swore in all who gave their names. As their numbers were too great, he gave the task of selection to the two consuls. From each of the senators he levied a fixed number of slaves and a weight of silver. The knights offered money and personal service, while even freedmen volunteered similar assistance. Indeed, protestations of loyalty prompted by fear, had gradually changed into real sympathy. People began to feel pity, not perhaps so much for Vitellius as for the throne and its misfortunes. He himself by his looks, his voice, his tears made ceaseless demands upon their compassion, promising rewards lavishly and, as men do when they are frightened, beyond all limits. He had hitherto

[1] Narni.

[2] Priscus and Varus (see chap. 55).

refused the title of Caesar,[1] but he now expressed a wish for it. He had a superstitious respect for the name, and in moments of terror one listens as much to gossip as to sound advice. However, while a rash and ill-conceived undertaking may prosper at the outset, in time it always begins to flag. Gradually the senators and knights deserted him. At first they hesitated and waited till his back was turned, but soon they ceased to care and openly showed their disrespect. At last Vitellius grew ashamed of the failure of his efforts and excused them from the services which they refused to render.

The Passage of the Apennines

59 The occupation of Mevania[2] had terrified Italy with the prospect of a revival of the war, but Vitellius' cowardly retreat[3] sensibly strengthened the popularity of the Flavian party. The Samnites, Pelignians, and Marsians were now induced to rise. They were jealous of Campania for stealing a march on them, and the change of masters, as so often happens, made them perform all their military duties with the utmost alacrity. But in crossing the Apennines Antonius' army suffered severely from the rough December weather. Though they met with no opposition, they found it hard enough to struggle through the snow, and realized what danger they would have had to face if Vitellius had not happened to turn back. Certainly chance helped the Flavian generals quite as often

[1] i. 62, ii. 62. [2] See chap. 55. [3] See chap. 56.

as their own strategy. Here they came across Petilius Cerialis,[1] who had been enabled by his knowledge of the country to elude Vitellius' outposts, disguised as a peasant. As he was a near relative of Vespasian and a distinguished soldier he was given a place on the staff. Several authorities say that Flavius Sabinus and Domitian[2] were also afforded facilities for escape, and that Antonius sent messengers who contrived by various devices to get through to them, and made arrangements for an interview and safe conduct. Sabinus, however, pleaded that his health was unequal to the fatigue of such a bold step. Domitian was quite ready to venture, but although the guards to whom Vitellius had entrusted him, promised that they would share his flight, he was afraid they might be laying a trap for him. As a matter of fact, Vitellius was too anxious for the safety of his own relatives to plot any harm against Domitian.

Arrived at Carsulae[3] the Flavian generals took a 60
few days' rest and awaited the arrival of the main legionary force.[4] The place suited them admirably for an encampment. It commanded a wide view, and with so many prosperous towns in the rear their supplies were safe. The Vitellians too, were only ten miles away, and they had hopes of negotiating treason

[1] A distinguished officer, who successfully crushed the rebellion on the Rhine (Book IV), and became governor of Britain in 71.

[2] Vespasian's brother and younger son were both in Rome, the former still holding the office of city prefect (cp. i. 46).

[3] Casigliano. [4] From Verona (see chap. 52).

with them. The soldiers chafed at this delay, prefering victory to peace. They did not even want to wait for their own legions, for there would be more plunder than danger to share with them. Antonius accordingly summoned a meeting of the men and explained to them that Vitellius still had troops at his command. Reflection might make them waver, despair would steel their hearts. In civil war, he told them, the first steps may be left to chance, nothing but careful strategy can win the final victory. The fleet at Misenum and the richest districts of Campania had already deserted Vitellius, and in the whole world nothing was left to him now except the country between Narnia and Tarracina. The battle of Cremona had brought them credit enough, and the destruction of the town more than enough discredit. Their desire must be not to take Rome but to save it. They would gain richer rewards and far more glory if they could show that they had saved the senate and people of Rome without shedding a drop of blood. Such considerations as these calmed their excitement, and it was not long before the legions arrived.

61 Alarmed at the repute of this augmented army, Vitellius' Guards began to waver. There was no one to encourage them to fight, while many urged them to desert, being eager to hand over their companies or squadrons to the enemy and by such a gift to secure the victor's gratitude for the future. These also let the Flavians know that the next camp at Interamna[1]

[1] Terni.

had a garrison of four hundred cavalry. Varus was promptly sent off with a light marching force, and the few who offered resistance were killed. The majority threw away their arms and begged for quarter. Some escaped to the main camp [1] and spread universal panic by exaggerating the strength and prowess of the enemy, in order to mitigate the disgrace of losing the fort. In the Vitellian camp all offences went unpunished: desertion met with sure reward. Their loyalty soon gave way and a competition in treachery began. Tribunes and centurions deserted daily, but not the common soldiers, who had grown stubbornly faithful to Vitellius. At last, however, Priscus and Alfenus [2] abandoned the camp and returned to Vitellius, thus finally releasing all the others from any obligation to blush for their treachery.

About the same time Fabius Valens [3] was executed 62
in his prison at Urbinum, and his head was exhibited to Vitellius' Guards to show them that further hope was vain. For they cherished a belief that Valens had made his way into Germany, and was there mustering his old force and fresh troops as well. This evidence of his death threw them into despair. The Flavian army was vastly inspirited by it and regarded Valens' death as the end of the war.

Valens had been born at Anagnia of an equestrian family. He was a man of loose morality, not without intellectual gifts, who by indulging in frivolity

[1] At Narnia.

[2] The two prefects of the guard.

[3] See chap. 43.

posed as a wit. In Nero's time he had acted in a harlequinade at the Juvenalian Games.[1] At first he pleaded compulsion, but afterward she acted voluntarily, and his performances were rather clever than respectable. Rising to the command of a legion, he supported Verginius[2] and then defamed his character. He murdered Fonteius Capito,[2] whose loyalty he had undermined—or perhaps because he had failed to do so. He betrayed Galba and remained faithful to Vitellius, a merit to which the treachery of others served as a foil.

63 Now that their hopes were crushed on all sides, the Vitellians prepared to go over to the enemy. But even at this crisis they saved their honour by marching down with their standards and colours to the plains below Narnia, where the Flavian army was drawn up in full armour ready for battle in two deep lines on either side of the road. The Vitellians marched in between and were surrounded. Antonius then spoke to them kindly and told them to remain, some at Narnia and some at Interamna. He also left behind some of the victorious legions, which were strong enough to quell any outbreak but would not molest them so long as they remained quiet.

[1] Properly a festival to celebrate the first cutting of the beard. Nero forced high officials and their wives to take part in unseemly performances (ii. 62), and the festivities became a public scandal, culminating in Nero's own appearance as a lyrist.

[2] See i. 7, 8.

The Abdication of Vitellius and the Burning of the Capitol

During these days Antonius and Varus kept sending messages to Vitellius, in which they offered him his life, a gift of money, and the choice of a safe retreat in Campania, if he would stop the war and surrender himself and his children to Vespasian. Mucianus wrote him letters to the same effect. Vitellius usually took these offers seriously and talked about the number of slaves he would have and the choice of a seaside place. He had sunk, indeed, into such mental torpor that, if other people had not remembered that he was an emperor, he was certainly beginning to forget it himself. However, it was to Flavius Sabinus, the 64
City Prefect, that the leading men at Rome addressed themselves. They urged him secretly not to lose all share in the glory of victory. They pointed out that the City Garrison was under his own command, and that he could count on the police and their own bands of slaves, to say nothing of the good fortune of the party and all the advantage that victory gives. He must not leave all the glory to Antonius and Varus. Vitellius had nothing left but a few regiments of guards, who were seriously alarmed at the bad news which came from every quarter. As for the populace, their feelings soon changed, and if he put himself at their head, they would be just as loud in their flattery of Vespasian. Vitellius himself could not even cope

with success, and disaster had positively paralysed him. The credit of ending the war would go to the man who seized the city. It was eminently fitting that Sabinus should secure the throne for his brother, and that Vespasian should hold him higher than any one else.

65 Age had enfeebled Sabinus, and he showed no alacrity to listen to such talk as this. Some people covertly insinuated that he was jealous of his brother's success and was trying to delay its realization. Flavius Sabinus was the elder brother and, while they were both private persons, he had been the richer and more influential. It was also believed that he had been chary in helping Vespasian to recover his financial position, and had taken a mortgage on his house and estates. Consequently, though they remained openly friendly, there were suspicions of a secret enmity between them. The more charitable explanation is that Sabinus's gentle nature shrank from the idea of bloodshed and massacre, and that this was his reason for so constantly discussing with Vitellius the prospects of peace and a capitulation on terms. After several interviews at his house they finally came to a settlement—so the report went—at the Temple of Apollo.[1] To the actual conversation there were only two witnesses, Cluvius Rufus[2] and Silius Italicus,[3] but the expression of their faces was watched from a distance.

[1] On the Palatine.

[2] See i. 8.

[3] A friend of Vitellius and the author of the historical epic on the second Punic War.

Vitellius was said to look abject and demoralized: Sabinus showed less sign of pride than of pity.

Had Vitellius found it no harder to persuade his 66
friends than to make his own renunciation, Vespasian's army might have marched into Rome without bloodshed. But as it was, each of his friends in proportion to his loyalty persisted in refusing terms of peace. They pointed to the danger and disgrace. Would their conqueror keep his promises any longer than he liked? However great Vespasian's self-confidence, he could not allow Vitellius to live in private. Nor would the losers acquiesce: their very pity would be a menace.[1] 'Of course,' they said, 'you are an old man. You have done with fortune, good or bad. But what sort of repute or position would your son Germanicus[2] enjoy? At present they are promising you money and a household, and the pleasant shores of Campania. But when once Vespasian has seized the throne, neither he nor his friends nor even his army will feel their safety assured until the rival claimant is dead. They imprisoned Fabius Valens and meant to make use of him if a crisis occurred, but they found him too great an incubus. You may be sure that Antonius and Fuscus and that typical representative of the party, Mucianus, will have no choice but to kill you. Julius Caesar did not let Pompey live unmolested, nor Augustus Antony.[3]

[1] This apparently means that, if Vitellius were spared, pity for his position would inspire his supporters to make further trouble.

[2] See ii. 59.

[3] Two good points, but both untrue.

Do you suppose that Vespasian's is a loftier disposition? Why, he was one of your father's dependants,[1] when your father was Claudius's colleague.[2] No, think of your father's censorship, his three consulships,[2] and all the honour your great house has won. You must not disgrace them. Despair, at least, should nerve your courage. The troops are steadfast; you still enjoy the people's favour. Indeed, nothing worse can happen to you than what we are eager to face of our own free will. If we are defeated, we must die; if we surrender, we must die. All that matters is whether we breathe our last amid mockery and insult or bravely and with honour.'

67 But Vitellius was deaf to all courageous counsel. His mind was obsessed with pity for his wife and children, and an anxious fear that obstinate resistance might make the conqueror merciless towards them. He had also a mother,[3] very old and infirm, but she had opportunely died a few days before and thus forestalled the ruin of her house. All she had got out of her son's principate was sorrow and a good name. On December 17 he heard the news that the legion and the Guards at Narnia had deserted him and surrendered to the enemy. He at once put on mourning and left the palace, surrounded by his sorrowful household. His small son was carried in a little litter, as though this had been his funeral. The populace

[1] This too is probably hyperbole, but Vespasian may have owed his command in Germany to the influence of Vitellius' father. [2] See i. 52, p. 69, note 2. [3] See ii. 64, 89.

uttered untimely flatteries: the soldiers kept an ominous silence.

On that day there was no one so indifferent to the 68
tragedy of human life as to be unmoved by this spectacle. A Roman emperor, yesterday master of the inhabited world, had left the seat of his authority, and was now passing through the streets of the city, through the crowding populace, quitting the throne. Such a sight had never been seen or heard of before. The dictator, Caesar, had been the victim of sudden violence; Caligula of a secret conspiracy. Nero's had been a stealthy flight to some obscure country house under cover of night. Piso and Galba might almost be said to have fallen on the field of battle. But here was Vitellius—before the assembly of his own people, his own soldiers around him, with women even looking on—uttering a few sentences suitable to his miserable situation. He said it was in the interest of peace and of his country that he now resigned. He begged them only to retain his memory in their hearts and to take pity on his brother, his wife, and his little innocent children. As he said this, he held out his son to them and commended him, now to individuals, now to the whole assembly. At last tears choked his voice. Turning to the consul, Caecilius Simplex,[1] who was standing by, he unstrapped his sword and offered to surrender it as a symbol of his power over the life and death of his subjects. The consul refused. The people in the assembly shouted 'No'. So he left them with the

[1] See ii. 60.

intention of depositing the regalia in the Temple of Concord and then going to his brother's house. But he was faced with a still louder uproar. They refused to let him enter a private house, and shouted to him to return to the palace. They blocked every other way and only left the road leading into the Via Sacra open.[1] Not knowing what else to do, Vitellius returned to the palace.

69 A rumour of his abdication had preceded him, and Flavius Sabinus had sent written instructions to the Guards'[2] officers to keep the men in hand. Thus the whole empire seemed to have fallen into Vespasian's lap. The chief senators, the majority of the knights, and the whole of the city garrison and the police came flocking to the house of Flavius Sabinus. There they heard the news of the popular enthusiasm for Vitellius and the threatening attitude of the German Guards.[3] But Sabinus had gone too far to draw back, and when he showed hesitation, they all began to urge him to fight, each being afraid for his own safety if the Vitellians were to fall on them when they were disunited and consequently weaker. However, as so often happens on these occasions, every one offered to give

[1] i. e. the way back from the Forum to the Palace.

[2] Including the city garrison and police.

[3] In chap. 78 we find three cohorts of Guards still faithful to Vitellius, and, as it appears from ii. 93, 94 that men from the legions of Germany had been enlisted in the Guards, the term *Germanicae cohortes* seems to refer to these three cohorts, in which perhaps the majority were men from the German army.

advice but few to share the danger. While Sabinus' Body Guard were marching down by the Fundane reservoir[1] they were attacked by some of the most determined Vitellians. The surprise was unpremeditated, but the Vitellians got the best of an unimportant skirmish. In the panic Sabinus chose what was at the moment the safest course, and occupied the summit of the Capitol,[2] where his troops were joined by a few senators and knights. It is not easy to record their names, since after Vespasian's victory crowds of people claimed credit for this service to the party. There were even some women who endured the siege, the most famous of them being Verulana Gratilla, who had neither children nor relatives to attract her, but only her love of danger.[3]

The Vitellians, who were investing them, kept a half-hearted watch, and Sabinus was thus enabled to send for his own children and his nephew Domitian at dead of night, dispatching a courier by an unguarded route to tell the Flavian generals that he and his men were under siege, and would be in great straits unless they were rescued. All night, indeed, he was quite unmolested, and could have escaped with perfect safety. The Vitellian troops could face danger with spirit, but were much too careless in the task of keeping guard;

[1] Said to be on the Quirinal.

[2] Either the whole hill, or, if the expression is exact, the south-west summit.

[3] This seems to have led her later into the paths of conspiracy, for she is said to have been banished by Domitian for her friendship with Arulenus Rusticus.

besides which a sudden storm of chilly rain interfered with their sight and hearing.

70 At daybreak, before the two sides commenced hostilities, Sabinus sent Cornelius Martialis, who had been a senior centurion, to Vitellius with instructions to complain that the conditions were being violated; that he had evidently made a mere empty show of abdication, meant to deceive a number of eminent gentlemen. Else why had he gone from the meeting to his brother's house, which caught the eye from a conspicuous position overlooking the Forum, and not rather to his wife's on the Aventine. That was the proper course for a private citizen, anxious to avoid all pretension to supreme authority. But no, Vitellius had returned to the palace, the very stronghold of imperial majesty. From there he had launched a column of armed men, who had strewn with innocent dead the most crowded quarter of Rome, and even laid violent hands upon the Capitol. As for Sabinus himself, the messenger was to say, he was only a civilian, a mere member of the senate. While the issue was being decided between Vespasian and Vitellius by the engagement of legions, the capture of towns, the capitulation of cohorts; even when the provinces of Spain, of Germany, of Britain, had risen in revolt; he, though Vespasian's brother, had still remained faithful to his allegiance, until Vitellius, unasked, began to invite him to a conference. Peace and union, he was to remind him, serve the interest of the losers, and only the reputation of the winners. If Vitellius

regretted their compact, he ought not to take arms against Sabinus, whom he had treacherously deceived, and against Vespasian's son, who was still a mere boy. What was the good of killing one youth and one old man? He ought rather to march out against the legions and fight for the empire on the field. The result of the battle would decide all other questions.

Greatly alarmed, Vitellius replied with a few words in which he tried to excuse himself and throw the blame on his soldiers. 'I am too unassuming,' he said, 'to cope with their overpowering impatience.' He then warned Martialis to make his way out of the house by a secret passage, for fear that the soldiers should kill him as an ambassador of the peace to which they were so hostile. Vitellius himself was not in a position to issue orders or prohibitions; no longer an emperor, merely an excuse for war.

Martialis had hardly returned to the Capitol when 71
the furious soldiery arrived. They had no general to lead them: each was a law to himself. Their column marched at full speed through the Forum and past the temples overlooking it. Then in battle order they advanced up the steep hill in front of them, until they reached the lowest gates of the fortress on the Capitol. In old days there was a series of colonnades at the side of this slope, on the right as you go up. Emerging on to the roof of these, the besieged overwhelmed the Vitellians with showers of stones and tiles. The attacking party carried nothing but swords, and it seemed a long business to send for siege-engines and

missiles. So they flung torches into the nearest[1] colonnade and, following in the wake of the flames, would have burst through the burnt gates of the Capitol, if Sabinus had not torn down all the available statues—the monuments of our ancestors' glory—and built a sort of barricade on the very threshold. They then tried to attack the Capitol by two opposite approaches, one near the 'Grove of Refuge'[2] and the other by the hundred steps which lead up to the Tarpeian Rock. This double assault came as a surprise. That by the Refuge was the closer and more vigorous. Nothing could stop the Vitellians, who climbed up by some contiguous houses built on to the side of the hill, which in the days of prolonged peace had been raised to such a height that their roofs were level with the floor of the Capitol. It is uncertain whether the buildings at this point were fired by the assailants or—as tradition prefers—by the besieged in trying to dislodge their enemies who had struggled up so far. The fire spread to the colonnades adjoining the temples, and then the 'eagles'[3] supporting the roof, which were made of very old wood, caught the flames and fed them. And so the Capitol, with its doors fast shut, undefended and unplundered, was burnt to the ground.

72 Since the foundation of the city no such deplorable and horrible disaster had ever befallen the people of

[1] *Prominentem* seems to mean the one that projected towards them.

[2] The space lying between the two peaks of the Capitoline.

[3] A technical term for the beams of the pediment.

Rome. It was no case of foreign invasion. Had our own wickedness allowed, the country might have been enjoying the blessings of a benign Providence; and yet here was the seat of Jupiter Almighty—the temple solemnly founded by our ancestors as the pledge of their imperial greatness, on which not even Porsenna,[1] when Rome surrendered, nor the Gauls, when they took it, had ever dared to lay rash hands—being brought utterly to ruin by the mad folly of two rival emperors![2] The Capitol had been burnt before in civil war,[3] but that was the crime of private persons. Now it had been openly assaulted by the people of Rome and openly burnt by them. And what was the cause of war? what the recompense for such a disaster? Were we fighting for our country?

King Tarquinius Priscus had vowed to build this temple in the Sabine war, and had laid the foundations on a scale that suited rather his hope of the city's future greatness than the still moderate fortunes of the Roman people. Later Servius Tullius, with the aid of Rome's allies, and Tarquinius Superbus, with the spoils of the Volscians after the capture of Suessa Pometia,[4] continued the building. But the glory of completing it was reserved for the days of freedom. After the expulsion of the kings, Horatius Pulvillus,

[1] 'Lars Porsenna of Clusium,' 507 B.C.

[2] 'Burning the Capitol' was a proverb of utter iniquity.

[3] In the war between Sulla and Marius, 83 B.C.

[4] The capital town of the Volscians. This early history is told in the first book of Livy.

in his second consulship [1] dedicated this monument on such a magnificent scale, that in later days, with all her boundless wealth, Rome has been able to embellish but never to enlarge it. After an interval of four hundred and fifteen years, in the consulship of Lucius Scipio and Caius Norbanus,[2] it was burnt and rebuilt on the same site. Sulla after his victory undertook the task of restoring it, but did not dedicate it. This only was lacking to justify his title of 'Fortune's Favourite'.[3] Much as the emperors did to it, the name of Lutatius Catulus [4] still remained upon it up to the time of Vitellius.[5] This was the temple that was now ablaze.

73 The besieged suffered more panic than their assailants. The Vitellian soldiers lacked neither resource nor steadiness in moments of crisis. But on the other side the troops were terrified, the general [6] inert, and apparently so paralysed that he was practically deaf and dumb. He neither adopted others' plans nor formed any of his own, but only drifted about from place to place, attracted by the shouts of the enemy, contradicting all his own orders. The result was what always happens in a hopeless disaster: everybody gave orders and nobody obeyed them. At last they threw away their weapons and began to peer round for

[1] 507 B.C.

[2] 83 B.C. The interval is really 425 years.

[3] This, according to Pliny, was Sulla's own saying.

[4] Consul in 69 B.C. He took the title of Capitolinus.

[5] On the monument which details his exploits Augustus says that he restored the Capitol at immense cost without inscribing his name on it.

[6] Flavius Sabinus.

a way of escape or some means of hiding. Then the Vitellians came bursting in, and with fire and sword made one red havoc. A few good soldiers dared to show fight and were cut to pieces. Of these the most notable were Cornelius Martialis,[1] Aemilius Pacensis,[2] Casperius Niger, and Didius Scaeva. Flavius Sabinus, who stood unarmed and making no attempt to escape, was surrounded together with the consul Quintius Atticus,[3] whose empty title made him a marked man, as well as his personal vanity, which had led him to distribute manifestoes full of compliments to Vespasian and insults against Vitellius. The rest escaped by various means. Some disguised themselves as slaves: some were sheltered by faithful dependants: some hid among the baggage. Others again caught the Vitellians' password, by which they recognized each other, and actually went about demanding it and giving it when challenged, thus escaping under a cloak of effrontery.

When the enemy first broke in, Domitian had taken 74
refuge with the sacristan, and was enabled by the ingenuity of a freedman to escape among a crowd of worshippers in a linen dress,[4] and to take refuge near the Velabrum with Cornelius Primus, one of his father's dependants. When his father came to the throne, Domitian pulled down the sacristan's lodging and

[1] Cp. chap. 70. [2] Cp. i. 20, 87; ii. 12.

[3] Consul for November and December. His colleague, Caecilius Simplex, was on the other side (see chap. 68).

[4] The dress of the worshippers of the Egyptian goddess Isis, who considered woollen clothes unclean.

built a little chapel to Jupiter the Saviour with an altar, on which his adventures were depicted in marble relief. Later, when he became emperor, he dedicated a huge temple to Jupiter the Guardian with a statue of himself in the lap of the god.

Sabinus and Atticus were loaded with chains and taken to Vitellius, who received them without any language or looks of disfavour, much to the chagrin of those who wanted to see them punished with death and themselves rewarded for their successful labours. When those who stood nearest started an outcry, the dregs of the populace soon began to demand Sabinus' execution with mingled threats and flatteries. Vitellius came out on to the steps of the palace prepared to plead for him : but they forced him to desist. Sabinus was stabbed and riddled with wounds : his head was cut off and the trunk dragged away to the Ladder
75 of Sighs.[1] Such was the end of a man who certainly merits no contempt. He had served his country for thirty-five years, and won credit both as civilian and soldier. His integrity and fairness were beyond criticism. He talked too much about himself, but this is the one charge which rumour could hint against him in the seven years when he was Governor of Moesia, and the twelve years during which he was Prefect of the City. At the end of his life some thought he showed a lack of enterprise, but many believed him

[1] A flight of steps leading down from the Capitol to the Forum. On them the bodies of criminals were exposed after execution.

a moderate man, who was anxious to save his fellow citizens from bloodshed. In this, at any rate, all would agree, that before Vespasian became emperor the reputation of his house rested on Sabinus. It is said that Mucianus was delighted to hear of his murder, and many people maintained that it served the interests of peace by putting an end to the jealousy of two rivals, one of whom was the emperor's brother, while the other posed as his partner in the empire.[1]

When the people further demanded the execution of the consul, Vitellius withstood them. He had forgiven Atticus, and felt that he owed him a favour, for, when asked who had set fire to the Capitol, Atticus had taken the blame on himself, by which avowal—or was it a well-timed falsehood?—he had fixed all the guilt and odium on himself and exonerated the Vitellian party.

The Taking of Tarracina

About this same time Lucius Vitellius,[2] who had 76
pitched his camp at the Temple of Feronia,[3] made every effort to destroy Tarracina, where he had shut up the gladiators and sailors, who would not venture to leave the shelter of the walls or to face death in the open. The gladiators were commanded, as we have already seen,[4] by Julianus, and the sailors by

[1] Mucianus. [2] See chap. 58.

[3] An Italian goddess of freedom. The temple is mentioned in Horace's *Journey to Brundisium*, where Anxur = Tarracina, which was three miles from the temple. [4] Chap. 57.

Apollinaris, men whose dissolute inefficiency better suited gladiators than general officers. They set no watch, and made no attempt to repair the weak places in the walls. Day and night they idled loosely; the soldiers were dispatched in all directions to find them luxuries; that beautiful coast rang with their revelry; and they only spoke of war in their cups. A few days earlier, Apinius Tiro [1] had started on his mission, and, by rigorously requisitioning gifts of money in all the country towns, was winning more unpopularity than assistance for the cause.

77 In the meantime, one of Vergilius Capito's slaves deserted to Lucius Vitellius, and promised that, if he were provided with men, he would put the abandoned castle into their hands. Accordingly, at dead of night he established a few lightly armed cohorts on the top of the hills which overlooked the enemy. Thence the soldiers came charging down more to butchery than battle. They cut down their victims standing helpless and unarmed or hunting for their weapons, or perhaps newly startled from their sleep—all in a bewildering confusion of darkness, panic, bugle-calls, and savage cries. A few of the gladiators resisted and sold their lives dearly. The rest rushed to the ships; and there the same panic and confusion reigned, for the villagers were all mixed up with the troops, and the Vitellians slaughtered them too, without distinction. Just as the

[1] He was in command of the rebels from the fleet at Misenum, and engaged in bringing over the country-towns (see chap. 57).

first uproar began, six Liburnian cruisers slipped away with the admiral Apollinaris on board. The rest were either captured on the beach or overweighted and sunk by the crowds that clambered over them. Julianus was taken to Lucius Vitellius, who had him flogged till he bled and then killed before his eyes. Some writers have accused Lucius Vitellius' wife, Triaria,[1] of putting on a soldier's sword, and with insolent cruelty showing herself among the horrors of the captured town. Lucius himself sent a laurel-wreath to his brother in token of his success, and inquired whether he wished him to return at once or to continue reducing Campania. This delay saved not only Vespasian's party but Rome as well. Had he marched on the city while his men were fresh from their victory, with the flush of success added to their natural intrepidity, there would have been a tremendous struggle, which must have involved the city's destruction. Lucius Vitellius, too, for all his evil repute, was a man of action. Good men owe their power to their virtues; but he was one of that worst sort whose vices are their only virtue.

The Sack of Rome and the end of Vitellius

While things[2] went thus on Vitellius' side, the 78
Flavian army after leaving Narnia spent the days of

[1] Cp. chaps. 63 and 64.

[2] The narrative is continued from chap. 63.

the Saturnalian holiday[1] quietly at Ocriculum.[2] The object of this disastrous delay was to wait for Mucianus. Antonius has been suspected of delaying treacherously after receiving a secret communication from Vitellius, offering him as the price of treason the consulship, his young daughter, and a rich dowry. Others hold that this story was invented to gratify Mucianus. Many consider that the policy of all the Flavian generals was rather to threaten the city than to attack it. They realized that Vitellius had lost the best cohorts of his Guards, and now that all his forces were cut off they expected he would abdicate. But this prospect was spoilt first by Sabinus' precipitation and then by his cowardice, for, after very rashly taking arms, he failed to defend against three cohorts of Guards the strongly fortified castle on the Capitol, which ought to have been impregnable even to a large army. However, it is not easy to assign to any one man the blame which they all share. Even Mucianus helped to delay the victors' advance by the ambiguity of his dispatches, and Antonius was also to blame for his untimely compliance with instructions—or else for trying to throw the responsibility[3] on Mucianus. The other generals thought the war was over, and thus rendered its final scene all the more appalling. Petilius Cerialis was sent forward with a thousand cavalry to

[1] December 17–23. [2] Otricoli.

[3] i. e. for the delay which gave time for the burning of the Capitol. The fact that he tried to shift the responsibility seemed to argue an uncomfortable conscience.

make his way by cross-roads through the Sabine country, and enter the city by the Salarian road.[1] But even he failed to make sufficient haste, and at last the news of the siege of the Capitol brought them all at once to their senses.

Marching up the Flaminian road, it was already deep 79
night when Antonius reached 'The Red Rocks'.[2] His help had come too late. There he heard that Sabinus had been killed, and the Capitol burnt; the city was in panic; everything looked black; even the populace and the slaves were arming for Vitellius. Petilius Cerialis, too, had been defeated in a cavalry engagement. He had pushed on without caution, thinking the enemy already beaten, and the Vitellians with a mixed force of horse and foot had caught him unawares. The engagement had taken place near the city among farm buildings and gardens and winding lanes, with which the Vitellians were familiar, while the Flavians were terrified by their ignorance. Besides, the troopers were not all of one mind; some of them belonged to the force which had recently surrendered at Narnia, and were waiting to see which side won. Julius Flavianus, who commanded a regiment of cavalry, was taken prisoner. The rest fell into a disgraceful panic and fled, but the pursuit was not continued beyond Fidenae.

This success served to increase the popular excite- 80
ment. The city rabble now took arms. A few had service-shields: most of them snatched up any weapons

[1] i.e. through the Colline Gate. [2] Grotta Rosa.

they could find and clamoured to be given the sign for battle. Vitellius expressed his gratitude to them and bade them sally forth to protect the city. He then summoned a meeting of the senate, at which envoys were appointed to go to the two armies and urge them in the name of public welfare to accept peace. The fortunes of the envoys varied. Those who approached Petilius Cerialis found themselves in dire danger, for the soldiers indignantly refused their terms. The praetor, Arulenus Rusticus,[1] was wounded. Apart from the wrong done to a praetor and an envoy, the man's own acknowledged worth made this seem all the more scandalous. His companions were flogged, and the lictor nearest to him was killed for venturing to make a way through the crowd. Indeed, if the guard provided by the general had not intervened, a Roman envoy, the sanctity of whose person even foreign nations respect, might have been wickedly murdered in the mad rage of civil strife under the very walls of Rome. Those who went to Antonius met with a more reasonable reception; not that the soldiers were less violent, but the general had more authority.

81 A knight named Musonius Rufus had attached himself to the envoys. He was a student of philosophy and an enthusiastic advocate of Stoicism. He mingled with the armed soldiers offering them advice and discoursing on the advantages of peace and the perils of war. This amused many of them and bored still

[1] A well-known member of the Stoic opposition, executed by Domitian's order, A. D. 94.

more. Some, indeed, wanted to maul him and kick him out, but the advice of the more sober spirits and the threats of others persuaded him to cut short his ill-timed lecture. The Vestal Virgins, too, came in procession to bring Antonius a letter from Vitellius, in which he demanded one day's postponement of the final crisis, saying that everything could easily be settled, if only they would grant this respite. Antonius sent the Virgins away with all respect, and wrote in answer to Vitellius that the murder of Sabinus and the burning of the Capitol had broken off all negotiations. However, he summoned the legions to a meeting and 82
endeavoured to mollify them, proposing that they should pitch their camp near the Mulvian Bridge and enter the city on the following day. His motive for delay was a fear that the troops, when once their blood was up after a skirmish, would have no respect for civilians or senators, or even for the temples and shrines of the gods. But they suspected every postponement as a hindrance to their victory. Moreover, some colours which were seen glittering along the hills, gave the impression of a hostile force, although none but peaceful citizens accompanied them.

The attack was made in three columns. One advanced from its original position on the Flaminian road, one kept near the bank of the Tiber, and the third approached the Colline Gate along the Salarian road. The cavalry rode into the mob and scattered them. But the Vitellian troops faced the enemy, themselves, too, in three separate divisions. Again

and again they engaged before the walls with varying success. But the Flavians had the advantage of being well led and thus more often won success. Only one of the attacking parties suffered at all severely, that which had made its way along narrow, greasy lanes to Sallust's Gardens[1] on the left side of the city. Standing on the garden walls, the Vitellians hurled stones and javelins down upon them and held them back until late in the day. But at last the cavalry forced an entrance by the Colline Gate and took the defenders in the rear. Then the opposing forces met on the Martian Plain itself. Fortune favoured the Flavians and the sense of victories won. The Vitellians charged in sheer despair, but, though driven back, they gathered again in the city.

83 The people came and watched the fighting, cheering and applauding now one side, now the other, like spectators at a gladiatorial contest. Whenever one side gave ground, and the soldiers began to hide in shops or seek refuge in some private house, they clamoured for them to be dragged out and killed, and thus got the greater part of the plunder for themselves: for while the soldiers were busy with the bloody work of massacre, the spoil fell to the crowd. The scene throughout the city was hideous and terrible: on the one side fighting and wounded men, on the other baths and restaurants: here lay heaps of bleeding dead, and close at hand were harlots and their companions—all the vice and licence of luxurious peace,

[1] The historian. They now belonged to the emperor.

and all the crime and horror of a captured town. One might well have thought the city mad with fury and mad with pleasure at the same time. Armies had fought in the city before this, twice when Sulla mastered Rome,[1] once under Cinna.[2] Nor were there less horrors then. What was now so inhuman was the people's indifference. Not for one minute did they interrupt the life of pleasure. The fighting was a new amusement for their holiday.[3] Caring nothing for either party, they enjoyed themselves in riotous dissipation and took a frank pleasure in their country's disaster.

The storming of the Guards' camp was the most 84
troublesome task. It was still held by some of the bravest as a forlorn hope, which made the victors all the more eager to take it, especially those who had originally served in the Guards. They employed against it every means ever devised for the storming of the most strongly fortified towns, a 'tortoise',[4] artillery, earthworks, firebrands. This, they cried, was the crown of all the toil and danger they had undergone in all their battles. They had restored the city to the senate and people of Rome, and their Temples to the gods: the soldier's pride is his camp, it is his country and his home. If they could not regain it at once, they must spend the night in fighting. The Vitellians, for their part, had numbers and fortune against them, but by marring their enemy's victory, by postponing

[1] 88 and 82 B.C.
[2] 87 B.C.
[3] The Saturnalia.
[4] See chap. 27, note 2.

peace, by fouling houses and altars with their blood, they embraced the last consolations that the conquered can enjoy. Many lay more dead than alive on the towers and ramparts of the walls and there expired. When the gates were torn down, the remainder faced the conquerors in a body. And there they fell, every man of them facing the enemy with all his wounds in front. Even as they died they took care to make an honourable end.

When the city was taken, Vitellius left the Palace by a back way and was carried in a litter to his wife's house on the Aventine. If he could lie hid during the day, he hoped to make his escape to his brother and the Guards at Tarracina. But it is in the very nature of terror that, while any course looks dangerous, the present state of things seems worst of all. His fickle determination soon changed and he returned to the vast, deserted Palace, whence even the lowest of his menials had fled, or at least avoided meeting him. Shuddering at the solitude and hushed silence of the place, he wandered about, trying closed doors, terrified to find the rooms empty; until at last, wearied with his miserable search, he crept into some shameful hiding-place. There Julius Placidus, an officer of the Guards, found him and dragged him out. His hands were tied behind his back, his clothes were torn, and thus he was led forth—a loathly spectacle at which many hurled insults and no one shed a single tear of pity. The ignominy of his end killed all compassion. On the way a soldier of the German army either

aimed an angry blow at him, or tried to put him out of his shame, or meant, perhaps, to strike the officer in command; at any rate, he cut off the officer's ear and was immediately stabbed. With the points of 85
their swords they made Vitellius hold up his head and face their insults, forcing him again and again to watch his own statues hurtling down, or to look at the Rostra and the spot where Galba had been killed. At last he was dragged along to the Ladder of Sighs,[1] where the body of Flavius Sabinus had lain. One saying of his which was recorded had a ring of true nobility. When some officer flung reproaches at him, he answered, 'And yet I was once your emperor.' After that he fell under a shower of wounds, and when he was dead the mob abused him as loudly as they had flattered him in his lifetime—and with as little reason.

Vitellius' home was at Luceria.[2] He was in his 86
fifty-seventh year, and had won the consulship, priesthoods, and a name and position among Rome's greatest men, all of which he owed to no efforts of his own, but solely to his father's eminence.[3] Those who offered him the throne had not yet learnt to know him; and yet his slothful cowardice won from his soldiers an enthusiasm which the best of generals have rarely evoked. Still he had the qualities of candour and generosity, which without moderation are

[1] Cp. p. 86, note 1.
[2] The words are uncertain. There is probably a lacuna.
[3] Cp. vol. i, p. 69, note 2.

liable to prove disastrous. He had few friends, though he bought many, thinking to keep them, not by showing moral stamina, but by giving liberal presents. It was indubitably good for the country that Vitellius should be beaten. But those who betrayed him to Vespasian can hardly make a merit of their perfidy, for they were the very men who had deserted Galba for Vitellius.

The day was already sinking into evening. The magistrates and senators had fled in terror from the city, or were still in hiding at dependants' houses: it was therefore impossible to call a meeting of the senate. When all fear of violence was at an end, Domitian came out[1] and presented himself to the generals of his party. The crowds of soldiers at once hailed him as Caesar, and marched off, still in full armour, to escort him to his father's house.

[1] He had taken refuge with a humble friend (see chap. 74).

BOOK IV

Rome after the Fall of Vitellius (January—July, A. D. 70)

The death of Vitellius ended the war without in- 1
augurating peace. The victors remained under arms, and the defeated Vitellians were hunted through the city with implacable hatred, and butchered promiscuously wherever they were found. The streets were choked with corpses; squares and temples ran with blood. Soon the riot knew no restraint; they began to hunt for those who were in hiding and to drag them out. All who were tall and of youthful appearance, whether soldiers or civilians, were cut down indiscriminately.[1] While their rage was fresh they sated their savage cravings with blood; then suddenly the instinct of greed prevailed. On the pretext of hunting for hidden enemies, they would leave no door unopened and regard no privacy. Thus they began to rifle private houses or else made resistance an excuse for murder. There were plenty of needy citizens, too, and of rascally slaves, who were perfectly ready to betray wealthy householders: others were indicated by their friends. From all sides came cries of mourning

[1] Because they were taken for members of Vitellius' German auxiliary cohorts.

and misery. Rome was like a captured city. People even longed to have the insolent soldiery of Otho and Vitellius back again, much as they had been hated. The Flavian generals, who had fanned the flame of civil war with such energy, were incapable of using their victory temperately. In riot and disorder the worst characters take the lead; peace and quiet call for the highest qualities.

2 Domitian having secured the title and the official residence of a Caesar,[1] did not as yet busy himself with serious matters, but in his character of emperor's son devoted himself to dissolute intrigues. Arrius Varus[2] took command of the Guards, but the supreme authority rested with Antonius Primus. He removed money and slaves from the emperor's house as though he were plundering Cremona. The other generals, from excess of modesty or lack of spirit, shared neither the distinctions of the war nor the profits of peace.

People in Rome were now so nervous and so resigned to despotism that they demanded that Lucius Vitellius and his force of Guards should be surprised on their way back from Tarracina,[3] and the last sparks of the war stamped out. Some cavalry were sent forward to Aricia, while the column of the legions halted short of Bovillae.[4] Vitellius, however, lost no time in surrendering himself and his Guards to the conqueror's

[1] Cp. iii. 86 sub fin. [2] Cp. iii. 6. [3] See iii. 76.

[4] These three towns are all on the Appian Way, Bovillae ten miles from Rome, Aricia sixteen, Tarracina fifty-nine, on the coast.

discretion, and the men flung away their unlucky swords more in anger than in fear. The long line of prisoners filed through the city between ranks of armed guards. None looked like begging for mercy. With sad, set faces they remained sternly indifferent to the applause or the mockery of the ribald crowd. A few tried to break away, but were surrounded and overpowered. The rest were put in prison. Not one of them gave vent to any unseemly complaint. Through all their misfortunes they preserved their reputation for courage. Lucius Vitellius was then executed. He was as weak as his brother, though during the principate he showed himself less indolent. Without sharing his brother's success, he was carried away on the flood of his disaster.

3 At this time Lucilius Bassus[1] was sent off with a force of light horse to quell the disquiet in Campania, which was caused more by the mutual jealousy of the townships than by any opposition to the emperor. The sight of the soldiers restored order. The smaller colonies were pardoned, but at Capua the Third legion[2] was left in winter quarters and some of the leading families fined.[3] Tarracina, on the other hand, received no relief. It is always easier to requite an injury than a service: gratitude is a burden, but revenge is found to pay. Their only consolation was that one of Vergilius Capito's slaves, who had, as we

[1] Cp. iii. 12.

[2] Gallica.

[3] Capua had adhered to Vitellius. Tarracina had been held for Vespasian (cp. iii. 57).

have seen,[1] betrayed the town, was hanged on the gallows with the very rings[2] on his fingers which Vitellius had given him to wear.

At Rome the senate decreed to Vespasian all the usual prerogatives of the principate.[3] They were now happy and confident. Seeing that the civil war had broken out in the provinces of Gaul and Spain, and after causing a rebellion first in Germany and then in Illyricum, had spread to Egypt, Judaea, Syria,[4] and in fact to all the provinces and armies of the empire, they felt that the world had been purged as by fire and that all was now over. Their satisfaction was still further enhanced by a letter from Vespasian, which at first sight seemed to be phrased as if the war was still going on. Still his tone was that of an emperor, though he spoke of himself as a simple citizen and gave his country all the glory. The senate for its part showed no lack of deference. They decreed that Vespasian himself should be consul with Titus for his colleague, and on Domitian they conferred the praetorship with the powers of a consul.[5]

4 Mucianus had also addressed a letter to the senate

[1] See iii. 77.

[2] The insignia of equestrian rank (cp. i. 13).

[3] The chief of these were the powers of tribune, pro-consul, and censor, and the title of Augustus (cp. i. 47, ii. 55).

[4] Vindex had risen in Gaul; Galba in Spain; Vitellius in Germany; Antonius Primus in the Danube provinces (Illyricum); Vespasian and Mucianus in Judaea, Syria, and Egypt.

[5] This was necessary in the absence of Vespasian and Titus.

which gave rise to a good deal of talk.[1] If he were a private citizen, why adopt the official tone? He could have expressed the same opinions a few days later from his place in the House. Besides, his attack on Vitellius came too late to prove his independence, and what seemed particularly humiliating for the country and insulting to the emperor was his boast that he had held the empire in the hollow of his hand, and had given it to Vespasian. However, they concealed their ill-will and made a great show of flattery, decreeing to Mucianus in the most complimentary terms full triumphal honours, which were really given him for his success against his fellow countrymen, though they trumped up an expedition to Sarmatia as a pretext.[2] On Antonius Primus they conferred the insignia of the consulship, and those of the praetorship on Cornelius Fuscus and Arrius Varus. Then came the turn of the gods: it was decided to restore the Capitol. These proposals were all moved by the consul-designate, Valerius Asiaticus.[3] The others signified assent by smiling and holding up their hands, though a few, who were particularly distinguished, or especially practised in the art of flattery, delivered set speeches. When it came to the turn of Helvidius Priscus, the praetor-designate, he expressed himself in terms which, while doing honour to a good emperor, were perfectly frank

[1] See vol. i, p. 163, note 4.

[2] A triumph could, of course, be held only for victories over a foreign enemy. Here the pretext was the repulse of the Dacians (iii. 46).

[3] Vitellius' son-in-law (cp. i. 59).

and honest.[1] The senate showed their keen approval, and it was this day which first won for him great disfavour and great distinction.

5 Since I have had occasion to make a second allusion[2] to a man whom I shall often have to mention again,[3] it may be well to give here a brief account of his character and ideals, and of his fortune in life. Helvidius Priscus came from the country town of Cluviae.[4] His father had been a senior centurion in the army. From his early youth Helvidius devoted his great intellectual powers to the higher studies, not as many people do, with the idea of using a philosopher's reputation as a cloak for indolence,[5] but rather to fortify himself against the caprice of fortune when he entered public life. He became a follower of that school of philosophy[6] which holds that honesty is the one good thing in life and sin the only evil, while power and rank and other such external things, not being qualities of character, are neither good nor bad. He had risen no higher than the rank of quaestor when Paetus Thrasea chose him for his son-in-law,[7] and of Thrasea's virtues he absorbed none so much as his independence. As citizen, senator, husband, son-in-law, friend, in every sphere of life he was thoroughly consistent, always showing contempt

[1] In the text some words seem to be missing here, but the general sense is clear. [2] Cp. ii. 91.

[3] If Tacitus ever told the story of his banishment and death, his version has been lost with the rest of his history of Vespasian's reign.

[4] In Samnium. [5] i.e. shirking the duties of public life.

[6] i.e. the Stoic. [7] See ii. 91.

for money, stubborn persistence in the right, and courage in the face of danger. Some people thought 6
him too ambitious, for even with philosophers the passion for fame is often their last rag of infirmity. After Thrasea's fall Helvidius was banished, but he returned to Rome under Galba and proceeded to prosecute Eprius Marcellus,[1] who had informed against his father-in-law. This attempt to secure a revenge, as bold as it was just, divided the senate into two parties, for the fall of Marcellus would involve the ruin of a whole army of similar offenders. At first the struggle was full of recrimination, as the famous speeches on either side testify; but after a while, finding that Galba's attitude was doubtful and that many of the senators begged him to desist, Helvidius dropped the prosecution. On his action in this matter men's comments varied with their character, some praising his moderation, others asking what had become of his tenacity.

To return to the senate: at the same meeting at which they voted powers to Vespasian they also decided to send a deputation to address him. This gave rise to a sharp dispute between Helvidius Priscus and Eprius Marcellus. The former thought the members of the deputation ought to be nominated by magistrates acting under oath; Marcellus demanded their selection by lot. The consul-designate had already spoken in favour of the latter method, but Marcellus' motive 7
was personal vanity, for he was afraid that if others

[1] Cp. ii. 53.

were chosen he would seem slighted. Their exchange of views gradually grew into a formal and acrimonious debate. Helvidius inquired why it was that Marcellus was so afraid of the magistrates' judgement, seeing that he himself had great advantages of wealth and of eloquence over many others. Could it be the memory of his misdeeds that so oppressed him? The fall of the lot could not discern character: but the whole point of submitting people to the vote and to scrutiny by the senate was to get at the truth about each man's life and reputation. In the interest of the country, and out of respect to Vespasian, it was important that he should be met by men whom the senate considered beyond reproach, men who would give the emperor a taste for honest language. Vespasian had been a friend of Thrasea, Soranus, and Sentius,[1] and even though there might be no need to punish their prosecutors, still it would be wrong to put them forward. Moreover, the senate's selection would be a sort of hint to the emperor whom to approve and whom to avoid. 'Good friends are the most effective instruments of good government. Marcellus ought to be content with having driven Nero to destroy so many innocent people. Let him enjoy the impunity and the profit he has won from that, and leave Vespasian to more honest advisers.'

[1] Soranus, like Thrasea, was a Stoic who opposed the government mainly on moral grounds. The story of their end is told in the *Annals*, Book XVI. Sentius was presumably another member of their party.

Marcellus replied that the opinion which was being 8
impugned was not his own. The consul-designate had already advised them to follow the established precedent, which was that deputations should be chosen by lot, so that there should be no room for intrigue or personal animosity. Nothing had happened to justify them in setting aside such an ancient system. Why turn a compliment to the emperor into a slight upon some one else? Anybody could do homage. What they had to avoid was the possibility that some people's obstinacy might irritate the emperor at the outset of his reign, while his intentions were undecided and he was still busy watching faces and listening to what was said. 'I have not forgotten,' he went on, 'the days of my youth or the constitution which our fathers and grandfathers established.[1] But while admiring a distant past, I support the existing state of things. I pray for good emperors, but I take them as they come. As for Thrasea, it was not my speech but the senate's verdict which did for him. Nero took a savage delight in farces like that trial, and, really, the friendship of such an emperor cost me as much anxiety as banishment did to others. In fine, Helvidius may be as brave and as firm as any Brutus or Cato; I am but a senator and we are all slaves together. Besides, I advise my friend not to try and get an upper hand with our emperor or to force his tuition on a man of ripe years,[2] who wears the insignia of a triumph and is the father

[1] He refers to Augustus' regularization of the principate.
[2] Fifty-nine.

of two grown sons. Bad rulers like absolute sovereignty, and even the best of them must set some limit to their subjects' independence.'

This heated interchange of arguments found supporters for both views. The party which wanted the deputies chosen by lot eventually prevailed, since even the moderates were anxious to observe the precedent, and all the most prominent members tended to vote with them, for fear of encountering ill-feeling if they were selected.

9 This dispute was followed by another. The Praetors, who in those days administered the Treasury,[1] complained of the spread of poverty in the country and demanded some restriction of expenditure. The consul-designate said that, as the undertaking would be so vast and the remedy so difficult, he was in favour of leaving it for the emperor. Helvidius maintained that it ought to be settled by the senate's decision. When the consuls began to take each senator's opinion, Vulcacius Tertullinus, one of the tribunes, interposed his veto, on the ground that they could not decide such an important question in the emperor's absence. Helvidius had previously moved that the Capitol should be restored at the public cost, and with the assistance of Vespasian. The moderates all passed over this suggestion in silence and soon

[1] The administration of this office was changed several times in the first century of the empire. Here we have a reversion to Augustus' second plan. Trajan restored Augustus' original plan—also adopted by Nero—of appointing special Treasury officials from the ex-praetors.

forgot it, but there were others who took care to remember it.[1]

10 It was at this time that Musonius Rufus[2] brought an action against Publius Celer on the ground that it was only by perjury that he had secured the conviction of Soranus Barea.[3] It was felt that this trial restarted the hue and cry against professional accusers. But the defendant was a rascal of no importance who could not be sheltered, and, moreover, Barea's memory was sacred. Celer had set up as a teacher of philosophy and then committed perjury against his pupil Barea, thus treacherously violating the very principles of friendship which he professed to teach. The case was put down for the next day's meeting.[4] But now that a taste for revenge was aroused, people were all agog to see not so much Musonius and Publius as Priscus and Marcellus and the rest in court.

11 Thus the senate quarrelled; the defeated party nursed their grievances; the winners had no power to enforce their will; law was in abeyance and the emperor absent. This state of things continued until Mucianus arrived in Rome and took everything into his own hands. This shattered the supremacy of Antonius and Varus, for, though Mucianus tried to show a friendly face towards them, he was not very

[1] His offence lay in assigning to the emperor a merely secondary position.

[2] His ill-timed advocacy of Stoicism is mentioned iii. 81.

[3] Described in the *Annals*, xvi. 32.

[4] The description of this is postponed to chap. 40. Celer was convicted.

successful in concealing his dislike. But the people of Rome, having acquired great skill in detecting strained relations, had already transferred their allegiance. Mucianus was now the sole object of their flattering attentions. And he lived up to them. He surrounded himself with an armed escort, and kept changing his house and gardens. His display, his public appearances, the night-watch that guarded him, all showed that he had adopted the style of an emperor while forgoing the title. The greatest alarm was aroused by his execution of Calpurnius Galerianus, a son of Caius Piso.[1] He had attempted no treachery, but his distinguished name and handsome presence had made the youth a subject of common talk, and the country was full of turbulent spirits who delighted in revolutionary rumours and idly talked of his coming to the throne. Mucianus gave orders that he should be arrested by a body of soldiers, and to avoid a conspicuous execution in the heart of the city, they marched him forty miles along the Appian road, where they severed his veins and let him bleed to death. Julius Priscus, who had commanded the Guards under Vitellius, committed suicide, more from shame than of necessity. Alfenus Varus survived the disgrace of his cowardice.[2] Asiaticus,[3] who was a freedman, paid for his malign influence by dying the death of a slave.[4]

[1] C. Piso had conspired against Nero, A. D. 65.
[2] They had both abandoned their camp at Narnia (cp. iii. 61).
[3] Cp. ii. 57.
[4] i. e. he was crucified.

The Revolt of Civilis and the Batavi

The growing rumour of a reverse in Germany[1] had 12
not as yet caused any alarm in Rome. People alluded to the loss of armies, the capture of the legions' winter quarters, the defection of the Gallic provinces as matters of indifference. I must now go back and explain the origin of this war, and of the widespread rebellion of foreign and allied tribes which now broke into flame.

The Batavi were once a tribe of the Chatti,[2] living on the further bank of the Rhine. But an outbreak of civil war had driven them across the river, where they settled in a still unoccupied district on the frontier of Gaul and also in the neighbouring island, enclosed on one side by the ocean and on the other three sides by the Rhine.[3] There they fared better than most tribes who ally themselves to a stronger power. Their resources are still intact, and they have only to contribute men and arms for the imperial army.[4] After

[1] Cp. iii. 46.

[2] One of the greatest and most warlike of the German tribes living in the modern Hessen-Nassau and Waldeck. Tacitus describes them at length in his *Germania*.

[3] i.e. a stretch of land about sixty miles in length, from Nymwegen to the Hook of Holland, enclosed by the diverging mouths of the Rhine, the northern of which is now called the Lek, the southern the Waal (in Tacitus' time Vahalis). The name Betuwe is still applied to the eastern part of this island.

[4] In the *Germania* Tacitus says that, like weapons, they are kept exclusively for use in war, and are spared the indignity of taxation.

a long training in the German wars, they still further increased their reputation in Britain, where their troops had been sent, commanded according to an ancient custom by some of the noblest chiefs. There still remained behind in their own country a picked troop of horsemen with a peculiar knack of swimming, which enabled them to make a practice [1] of crossing the Rhine with unbroken ranks without losing control of their horses or their weapons.

13 Of their chieftains two outshone the rest. These were Julius Paulus and Julius Civilis, both of royal stock. Paulus had been executed by Fonteius Capito on a false charge of rebellion.[2] On the same occasion Civilis was sent in chains to Nero. Galba, however, set him free, and under Vitellius he again ran great risk of his life, when the army clamoured for his execution.[3] This gave him a motive for hating Rome, and our misfortunes fed his hopes. He was, indeed, far cleverer than most barbarians, and professed to be a second Sertorius or Hannibal, because they all three had the same physical defect.[4] He was afraid that if he openly rebelled against the Roman people they would treat him as an enemy, and march on him at once, so he pretended to be a keen supporter of Vespasian's party. This much was true, that Antonius

[1] Some such word as *peritus* or *exercitus* must be supplied at the end of this chapter.

[2] Probably during the revolt of Vindex. Capito governed Lower Germany.

[3] Cp. i. 59.

[4] The loss of an eye.

Primus had written instructing him to divert the auxiliaries whom Vitellius had summoned, and to delay the legions on the pretence of a rising in Germany. Moreover, Hordeonius Flaccus [1] had given him the same advice in person, for Flaccus was inclined to support Vespasian and anxious for the safety of Rome, which was threatened with utter disaster, if the war were to break out afresh and all these thousands of troops come pouring into Italy.

Having thus made up his mind to rebel, Civilis 14
concealed in the meantime his ulterior design, and while intending to guide his ultimate policy by future events, proceeded to initiate the rising as follows. The young Batavians were by Vitellius' orders being pressed for service, and this burden was being rendered even more irksome than it need have been by the greed and depravity of the recruiting officers. They took to enrolling elderly men and invalids so as to get bribes for excusing them: or, as most of the Batavi are tall and good-looking in their youth, they would seize the handsomest boys for immoral purposes. This caused bad feeling; an agitation was organized, and they were persuaded to refuse service. Accordingly, on the pretext of giving a banquet, Civilis summoned the chief nobles and the most determined of the tribesmen to a sacred grove. Then, when he saw them excited by their revelry and the late hour of the night, he began to speak of the glorious past of the Batavi and to enumerate the wrongs they had suffered, the injustice

[1] Governor of Upper Germany.

and extortion and all the evils of their slavery. 'We are no longer treated,' he said, 'as we used to be, like allies, but like menials and slaves. Why, we are never even visited by an imperial Governor [1]—irksome though the insolence of his staff would be. We are given over to prefects and centurions; and when these subordinates have had their fill of extortion and of bloodshed, they promptly find some one to replace them, and then there are new pockets to fill and new pretexts for plunder. Now conscription is upon us: children are to be torn from parents, brother from brother, never, probably, to meet again. And yet the fortunes of Rome were never more depressed. Their cantonments contain nothing but loot and a lot of old men. Lift up your eyes and look at them. There is nothing to fear from legions that only exist on paper.[2] And we are strong. We have infantry and cavalry: the Germans are our kinsmen: the Gauls share our ambition. Even the Romans will be grateful if we go to war.[3] If we fail, we can claim credit for supporting Vespasian: if we succeed, there will be no one to call us to account.'

15 His speech was received with great approval, and he at once bound them all to union, using the barbarous ceremonies and strange oaths of his country. They

[1] As a subordinate division of Lower Germany the Batavian district would be administered by 'prefects' subordinate to the imperial legate.

[2] Vitellius had reduced the strength of the legions (cp. ii. 94).

[3] Because it would weaken the position of Vitellius.

then sent to the Canninefates to join their enterprise. This tribe inhabits part of the Island,[1] and though inferior in numbers to the Batavi, they are of the same race and language and the same courageous spirit. Civilis next sent secret messages to win over the Batavian troops, which after serving as Roman auxiliaries in Britain had been sent, as we have already seen,[2] to Germany and were now stationed at Mainz.[3]

One of the Canninefates, Brinno by name, was a man of distinguished family and stubborn courage. His father had often ventured acts of hostility, and had with complete impunity shown his contempt for Caligula's farcical expedition.[4] To belong to such a family of rebels was in itself a recommendation. He was accordingly placed on a shield, swung up on the shoulders of his friends, and thus elected leader after the fashion of the tribe. Summoning to his aid the Frisii[5]—a tribe from beyond the Rhine—he fell upon two cohorts of auxiliaries whose camp lay close to the neighbouring shore.[6] The attack was unexpected, and the troops, even if they had foreseen it, were not strong enough to offer resistance: so the camp was taken and looted. They then fell on the Roman camp-

[1] They lived north of the Batavi, between the Zuider Zee and the North Sea. [2] ii. 29. [3] Mogontiacum.

[4] Caligula's only trophy had been helmetfuls of stones and shells from the sea-shore of Germany.

[5] Living in Friesland, north-east of the Zuider Zee.

[6] Reading *applicata* (Andresen) instead of *occupata*, which gives no sense. The camp was probably somewhere near Katwyk.

followers and traders, who had gone off in all directions as if peace were assured. Finding the forts now threatened with destruction, the Roman officers set fire to them, as they had no means of defence. All the troops with their standards and colours retired in a body to the upper end of the island, led by Aquilius, a senior centurion. But they were an army in name only, not in strength, for Vitellius had withdrawn all the efficient soldiers and had replaced them by a useless mob, who had been drawn from the neighbouring Nervian and German villages and were only embarrassed by their armour.[1]

16 Civilis thought it best to proceed by guile, and actually ventured to blame the Roman officers for abandoning the forts. He could, he told them, with the cohort under his command, suppress the outbreak of the Canninefates without their assistance: they could all go back to their winter-quarters. However, it was plain that some treachery underlay his advice—it would be easier to crush the cohorts if they were separated—and also that Civilis, not Brinno, was at the head of this war. Evidence of this gradually leaked out, as the Germans loved war too well to keep

[1] The Nervii were a Gallic tribe living on the Sambre, with settlements at Cambray, Tournay, Bavay. Ritter's alteration of *Germanorum* to *Cugernorum* is very probably right. They lived about a dozen miles west of Vetera, and are thus a likely recruiting-ground. They were of German origin, so if *Germanorum* is right, the reference will still be to them and the Tungri and other German Settlements on the east of the Rhine.

the secret for long. Finding his artifice unsuccessful, Civilis tried force instead, forming the Canninefates, Frisii and Batavi into three separate columns.[1] The Roman line faced them in position near the Rhine bank.[2] They had brought their ships there after the burning of the forts, and these were now turned with their prows towards the enemy. Soon after the engagement began a Tungrian cohort deserted to Civilis, and the Romans were so startled by this unexpected treachery that they were cut to pieces by their allies and their enemies combined. Similar treachery occurred in the fleet. Some of the rowers, who were Batavians, feigning clumsiness tried to impede the sailors and marines in the performance of their functions, and after a while openly resisted them and turned the ships' sterns towards the enemy's bank. Finally, they killed the pilots and centurions who refused to join them, and thus all the twenty-four ships of the flotilla either deserted to the enemy or were captured by them.

This victory made Civilis immediately famous and 17
proved subsequently very useful. Having now got the ships and the weapons which they needed, he and his

[1] See ii. 42, note. Here, however, it is not improbable that the word *cuneus* means a V-shaped formation. Tacitus' phrase in *Germ.* 6 is generally taken to mean that the Germans fought in wedge-formation. The separation of the three tribes in three columns was also typical of German tactics. The presence of kinsmen stimulated courage.

[2] Presumably at the eastern end of the island, near either Nymwegen or Arnheim.

followers were enthusiastically proclaimed as champions of liberty throughout Germany and Gaul. The German provinces immediately sent envoys with offers of help, while Civilis endeavoured by diplomacy and by bribery to secure an alliance with the Gauls. He sent back the auxiliary officers whom he had taken prisoner, each to his own tribe, and offered the cohorts the choice of either going home or remaining with him. Those who remained were given an honourable position in his army: and those who went home received presents out of the Roman spoil. At the same time Civilis talked to them confidentially and reminded them of the miseries they had endured for all these years, in which they had disguised their wretched slavery under the name of peace. 'The Batavi,' he would say, 'were excused from taxation, and yet they have taken arms against the common tyrant. In the first engagement the Romans were routed and beaten. What if Gaul throws off the yoke? What forces are there left in Italy? It is with the blood of provincials that their provinces are won. Don't think of the defeat of Vindex. Why, it was the Batavian cavalry which trampled on the Aedui and Arverni,[1] and there were Belgic auxiliaries in Verginius' force. The truth is that Gaul succumbed to her own armies. But now we are all united in one party, fortified, moreover, by the military discipline which prevails in Roman camps:

[1] The Aedui lived in Bourgogne and Nivernois, between the Loire and the Saône; the Arverni in Auvergne, north-west of the Cevennes. Both had joined Vindex.

and we have on our side the veterans before whom Otho's legions lately bit the dust. Let Syria and Asia play the slave: the East is used to tyrants: but there are many still living in Gaul who were born before the days of tribute.[1] Indeed, it is only the other day[2] that Quintilius Varus was killed, when slavery was driven out of Germany, and they brought into the field not the Emperor Vitellius but Caesar Augustus himself. Why, liberty is the natural prerogative even of dumb animals: courage is the peculiar attribute of man. Heaven helps the brave. Come, then, fall upon them while your hands are free and theirs are tied, while you are fresh and they are weary. Some of them are for Vespasian, others for Vitellius; now is your chance to crush both parties at once.'

Civilis thus had his eye on Gaul and Germany and 18
aspired, had his project prospered, to become king of two countries, one pre-eminent in wealth and the other in military strength.

The Mutiny of the Batavian Cohorts

Hordeonius Flaccus at first furthered Civilis' schemes by shutting his eyes to them. But when messengers kept arriving in panic with news that a camp had been stormed, cohorts wiped out, and not a Roman left in the Batavian Island, he instructed

[1] 'Many' must be an exaggeration, since Augustus' census of Gaul took place 27 B.C., ninety-five years ago.

[2] Sixty years ago, to be exact.

Munius Lupercus, who commanded the two legions[1] in winter-quarters,[2] to march against the enemy. Lupercus lost no time in crossing the river,[3] taking the legions whom he had with him, some Ubii[4] who were close at hand, and the Treviran cavalry who were stationed not far away. To this force he added a regiment of Batavian cavalry, who, though their loyalty had long ago succumbed, still concealed the fact, because they hoped their desertion would fetch a higher price, if they actually betrayed the Romans on the field. Civilis set the standards of the defeated cohorts[5] round him in a ring to keep their fresh honours before the eyes of his men, and to terrify the enemy by reminding them of their disaster. He also gave orders that his own mother and sisters and all the wives and small children of his soldiers should be stationed in the rear to spur them to victory or shame them if they were beaten.[6] When his line raised their battle-cry, the men singing and the women shrieking, the legions and their auxiliaries replied with a comparatively feeble cheer, for their left wing had been exposed by the desertion of the Batavian cavalry, who promptly turned against us. However, despite the confusion, the

[1] V Alaudae and XV Primigenia, both depleted.

[2] At Vetera. [3] Waal.

[4] They lived round their chief town, known since A.D. 50 as Colonia Agrippinensis, now Cologne (cp. i. 56, note).

[5] See chap. 16.

[6] This was a German custom. We read in the *Germania* that in battle 'they keep their dearest close at hand, where the women's cries and the wailing of their babies can be heard'.

legionaries gripped their swords and kept their places. Then the Ubian and Treviran auxiliaries broke in shameful flight and went wandering all over the country. The Germans pressed hard on their heels and meanwhile the legions could make good their escape into the camp, which was called 'Castra Vetera'.[1] Claudius Labeo, who commanded the Batavian cavalry, had opposed Civilis as a rival in some petty municipal dispute. Civilis was afraid that, if he killed him, he might offend his countrymen, while if he spared him his presence would give rise to dissension; so he sent him off by sea to the Frisii.

It was at this time that the cohorts of Batavians and 19
Canninefates, on their way to Rome under orders from Vitellius, received the message which Civilis had sent to them.[2] They promptly fell into a ferment of unruly insolence and demanded a special grant as payment for their journey, double pay, and an increase in the number of their cavalry.[3] Although all these things had been promised by Vitellius they had no hope of obtaining them, but wanted an excuse for rebellion. Flaccus made many concessions, but the only result was that they redoubled their vigour and demanded what they felt sure he would refuse. Paying no further heed to him they made for Lower Germany,

[1] This means, of course, simply The Old Camp, but, as Tacitus treats Vetera as a proper name, it has been kept in the translation. It was probably on the Rhine near Xanten and Fürstenberg, some sixty-six miles north of Cologne.

[2] Cp. i. 59; ii. 97; iv. 15.

[3] Who got better pay for lighter service.

to join Civilis. Flaccus summoned the tribunes and centurions and debated with them whether he should use force to punish this defiance of authority. After a while he gave way to his natural cowardice and the fears of his subordinates, who were distressed by the thought that the loyalty of the auxiliaries was doubtful and that the legions had been recruited by a hurried levy. It was decided, therefore, to keep the soldiers in camp.[1] However, he soon changed his mind when he found himself criticized by the very men whose advice he had taken. He now seemed bent on pursuit, and wrote to Herennius Gallus in command of the First legion, who was holding Bonn, telling him to bar the path of the Batavians, and promising that he and his army would follow hard upon their heels. The rebels might certainly have been crushed had Flaccus and Gallus each advanced their forces from opposite directions and thus surrounded them. But Flaccus soon gave up the idea, and wrote another letter to Gallus, warning him to let the rebels pass undisturbed. This gave rise to a suspicion that the generals were purposely promoting the war; and all the disasters which had already occurred or were feared in the future, were attributed not to the soldiers' inefficiency or the strength of the enemy, but to the treachery of the generals.

20 On nearing the camp at Bonn, the Batavians sent forward a messenger to explain their intentions to Herennius Gallus. Against the Romans, for whom

[1] i.e. at Mainz, Bonn, Novaesium and Vetera.

they had fought so often, they had no wish to make war: but they were worn out after a long and unprofitable term of service and wanted to go home and rest. If no one opposed them they would march peaceably by; but if hostility was offered they would find a passage at the point of the sword. Gallus hesitated, but his men induced him to risk an engagement. Three thousand legionaries, some hastily recruited Belgic auxiliaries, and a mob of peasants and camp-followers, who were as cowardly in action as they were boastful before it, came pouring out simultaneously from all the gates, hoping with their superior numbers to surround the Batavians. But these were experienced veterans. They formed up into columns [1] in deep formation that defied assault on front, flank, or rear. They thus pierced our thinner line. The Belgae giving way, the legion was driven back and ran in terror to reach the trench and the gates of the camp. It was there that we suffered the heaviest losses. The trenches were filled with dead, who were not all killed by the blows of the enemy, for many were stifled in the press or perished on each other's swords. The victorious cohorts avoided Cologne and marched on without attempting any further hostilities. For the battle at Bonn they continued to excuse themselves. They had asked for peace, they said, and when peace was persistently refused, had merely acted in self-defence.

[1] See p. 117, note 1.

The Siege of Vetera

21 After the arrival of these veteran cohorts Civilis was now at the head of a respectable army. But being still uncertain of his plans, and engaged in reckoning up the Roman forces, he made all who were with him swear allegiance to Vespasian, and sent envoys to the two legions, who after their defeat in the former engagement[1] had retired into Vetera, asking them to take the same oath. The answer came back that they never followed the advice either of a traitor or of an enemy: Vitellius was their emperor, and they would keep their allegiance and their arms for him so long as they had breath in their bodies. A Batavian deserter need not try to decide the destiny of Rome; he should rather expect the punishment he richly deserved. When this was reported to Civilis he flew into a passion, and called the whole Batavian people to take arms. They were joined by the Bructeri and Tencteri,[2] and Germany was summoned to come and share the plunder and the glory.

22 Threatened with this gathering storm, Munius Lupercus and Numisius Rufus, who were in command of the two legions, proceeded to strengthen the ramparts and walls. They pulled down the buildings near the military camp, which had grown into a small town during the long years of peace, fearing that the

[1] Chap. 18.

[2] The Bructeri lived between the Lippe and the Upper Ems, the Tencteri along the eastern bank of the Rhine, between its tributaries the Ruhr and the Sieg, i. e. opposite Cologne.

enemy might make use of them. But they omitted to provide a sufficient store of provisions for the camp, and authorized the soldiers to make up the deficiency by looting, with the result that what might have supplied their needs for a long time was consumed in a few days. Meanwhile Civilis advanced, himself holding the centre with the flower of the Batavi: on both banks of the Rhine he massed large bands of Germans to strike terror into the enemy: the cavalry galloped through the fields, while the ships were simultaneously moved up the stream. Here could be seen the colours of veteran Roman cohorts, there the figures of beasts which the Germans had brought from their woods and groves, as their tribes do when they go to battle. It seemed both a civil and a savage war at once; and this strange confusion astounded the besieged. The hopes of the assailants rose when they saw the circumference of the ramparts, for there were barely five thousand Roman soldiers to defend a camp which had been laid out to hold two legions.[1] However, a large number of camp-followers had collected there on the break-up of peace, and remained to give what assistance they could to the military operations.

23 The camp was built partly on the gentle slope of a hill and partly on the level ground. Augustus had believed that it would serve as a base of operations and a check upon the German tribes: as for their actually coming to assault our legions, such a disaster

[1] i. e. about 12,000 men. The bulk of the Fifth and a detachment of the Fifteenth had gone to Italy.

never occurred to him. Consequently no trouble had been taken in choosing the site or erecting defences: the strength of the troops had always seemed sufficient.

The Batavians and the Germans from across the Rhine[1] now formed up tribe by tribe—the separation was designed to show their individual prowess—and opened fire from a distance. Finding that most of their missiles fell harmlessly on to the turrets and pinnacles of the walls, and that they were being wounded by stones hurled from above, they charged with a wild shout and surged up to the rampart, some using scaling-ladders, others climbing over their comrades who had formed a 'tortoise'. But no sooner had some of them begun to scale the wall, than they were hurled down by the besieged, who thrust at them with sword and shield, and buried under a shower of stakes and javelins. The Germans are always impetuous at the beginning of an action and over-confident when they are winning; and on this occasion their greed for plunder even steeled them to face difficulties. They actually attempted to use siege-engines, with which they were quite unfamiliar. But though they had no skill themselves, some of the deserters and prisoners showed them how to build a sort of bridge or platform of timber, on to which they fitted wheels and rolled it forward. Thus some of them stood on this platform and fought as though from a mound, while others, concealed inside, tried to undermine the walls. However, stones hurled from catapults soon

[1] i. e. Frisii, Bructeri, Tencteri, &c.

destroyed this rude engine. Then they began to get ready hurdles and mantlets, but the besieged shot blazing spears on to them from engines, and even attacked the assailants themselves with fire-darts. At last they gave up all hope of an assault and resolved to try a waiting policy, being well aware that the camp contained only a few days' provisions and a large number of non-combatants. They hoped that famine would breed treason, and counted, besides, on the wavering loyalty of the slaves and the usual hazards of war to aid them.

Meanwhile, Flaccus,[1] who had received news of the 24
siege of Vetera, dispatched a party to recruit auxiliaries in Gaul, and gave Dillius Vocula, in command of the Twenty-second, a force of picked soldiers from his two legions.[2] Vocula was to hurry by forced marches along the bank of the Rhine, while Flaccus himself was to approach by water, since he was in bad health and unpopular with his men. Indeed, they grumbled openly that he had let the Batavian cohorts get away from Mainz, had connived at Civilis' schemes, and invited the Germans to join the alliance. Vespasian, they said, owed his rise more to Flaccus than to all the assistance of Antonius Primus or of Mucianus, for overt hatred and hostility can be openly crushed, but treachery and deceit cannot be detected, much less parried. While Civilis took the field himself and arranged his own fighting line, Hordeonius lay on a couch in his bedroom and gave whatever orders

[1] At Mainz. [2] His other legion was IV Macedonica.

best suited the enemy's convenience. Why should all these companies of brave soldiers be commanded by one miserable old invalid? Let them rather kill the traitor and free their brave hearts and good hopes from the incubus of such an evil omen. Having worked on each other's feelings by these complaints, they were still further incensed by the arrival of a letter from Vespasian. As this could not be concealed, Flaccus read it before a meeting of the soldiers, and the messengers who brought it were sent to Vitellius in chains.

25 With feelings thus appeased the army marched on to Bonn, the head-quarters of the First legion. There the men were still more indignant with Flaccus, on whom they laid the blame of their recent defeat.[1] It was by his orders, they argued, that they had taken the field against the Batavians on the understanding that the legions from Mainz were in pursuit. But no reinforcements had arrived and his treachery was responsible for their losses. The facts, moreover, were unknown to the other armies, nor was any report sent to their emperor, although this treacherous outbreak could have been nipped in the bud by the combined aid of all the provinces. In answer Flaccus read out to the army copies of all the letters which he had sent from time to time all over Gaul and Britain and Spain to ask for assistance, and introduced the disastrous practice of having all letters delivered to the standard-bearers of the legions, who read them to the soldiers before the general had seen them.

[1] Cp. chap. 20.

He then gave orders that one of the mutineers should be put in irons, more by way of vindicating his authority than because one man was especially to blame. Leaving Bonn, the army moved on to Cologne, where they were joined by large numbers of Gallic auxiliaries, who at first zealously supported the Roman cause: later, when the Germans prospered, most of the tribes took arms against us, actuated by hopes of liberty and an ambition to establish an empire of their own when once they had shaken off the yoke.

Meanwhile the army's indignation steadily increased. The imprisonment of a single soldier was not enough to terrify them, and, indeed, the prisoner actually accused the general of complicity in crime, alleging that he himself had carried messages between Flaccus and Civilis. 'It is because I can testify to the truth,' he said, 'that Flaccus wants to get rid of me on a false charge.' Thereupon Vocula, with admirable self-possession, mounted the tribunal and, in spite of the man's protestations, ordered him to be seized and led away to prison. This alarmed the disaffected, while the better sort obeyed him promptly. The army then unanimously demanded that Vocula should lead them, and Flaccus accordingly resigned the chief command to him. However, there was much to exasperate their 26
disaffection. They were short both of pay and of provisions: the Gauls refused either to enlist or to pay tribute: drought, usually unknown in that climate, made the Rhine almost too low for navigation, and thus hampered their commissariat: patrols had

to be posted at intervals all along the bank to prevent the Germans fording the river : and in consequence of all this they had less food and more mouths to eat it. To the ignorant the lowness of the river seemed in itself an evil omen, as though the ancient bulwarks of the empire were now failing them. In peace they would have called it bad luck or the course of nature : now it was 'fate' and 'the anger of heaven'.

On entering Novaesium[1] they were joined by the Sixteenth legion. Herennius Gallus[2] now shared with Vocula the responsibility of command. As they could not venture out against the enemy, they encamped . . . at a place called Gelduba,[3] where the soldiers were trained in deploying, in fortification and entrenchment, and in various other military manœuvres. To inspire their courage with the further incentive of plunder, Vocula led out part of the force against the neighbouring tribe of the Cugerni,[4] who had accepted Civilis' offers of alliance. The rest of the troops were left behind with Herennius Gallus,[5]
27 and it happened that a corn-ship with a full cargo, which had run aground close to the camp, was towed over by the Germans to their own bank. This was more than Gallus could tolerate, so he sent a cohort to the rescue. The number of the Germans soon in-

[1] Neuss.

[2] He commanded the First legion, which had joined the main column at Bonn.

[3] Gellep. Some words are lost, perhaps giving the distance from Novaesium.

[4] See p. 116, note 1.

[5] At Gelduba.

creased : both sides gradually gathered reinforcements and a regular battle was fought, with the result that the Germans towed off the ship, inflicting heavy losses. The defeated troops followed what had now become their regular custom, and threw the blame not on their own inefficiency but on their commanding-officer's bad faith. They dragged him from his quarters, tore his uniform and flogged him, bidding him tell them how much he had got for betraying the army, and who were his accomplices. Then their indignation recoiled on Hordeonius Flaccus : he was the real criminal : Gallus was only his tool. At last their threats so terrified Gallus that he, too, charged Flaccus with treason. He was put in irons until the arrival of Vocula, who at once set him free, and on the next day had the ringleaders of the riot executed. The army showed, indeed, a strange contrast in its equal readiness to mutiny and to submit to punishment. The common soldiers' loyalty to Vitellius was beyond question,[1] while the higher ranks inclined towards Vespasian. Thus we find a succession of outbreaks and penalties ; an alternation of insubordination with obedience to discipline ; for the troops could be punished though not controlled.

Meanwhile the whole of Germany was ready to 28
worship Civilis, sending him vast reinforcements and ratifying the alliance with hostages from their noblest families. He gave orders that the country of the Ubii and Treviri was to be laid waste by their nearest

[1] Cp. iii. 61.

neighbours, and sent another party across the Maas to harass the Menapii and Morini[1] and other frontier tribes of Gaul. In both quarters they plundered freely, and were especially savage towards the Ubii, because they were a tribe of German origin who had renounced their fatherland and adopted the name of Agrippinenses.[2] A Ubian cohort was cut to pieces at the village of Marcodurum,[3] where they were off their guard, trusting to their distance from the Rhine. The Ubii did not take this quietly, nor hesitate to seek reprisals from the Germans, which they did at first with impunity. In the end, however, the Germans proved too much for them, and throughout the war the Ubii were always more conspicuous for good faith than good fortune. Their collapse strengthened Civilis' position, and emboldened by success, he now vigorously pressed on the blockade of the legions at Vetera, and redoubled his vigilance to prevent any message creeping through from the relieving army. The Batavians were told off to look after the engines and siege-works: the Germans, who clamoured for battle, were sent to demolish the rampart and renew the fight directly they were beaten off. There were so many of them that their losses mattered little.

29 Nightfall did not see the end of their task. They built huge fires of wood all round the ramparts and

[1] The Menapii lived between the Maas and the Scheldt; the Morini on the coast in the neighbourhood of Boulogne. They were a proverb for 'the back of beyond'.

[2] See i. 56, note. [3] Düren.

sat drinking by them ; then, as the wine warmed their hearts, one by one they dashed into the fight with blind courage. In the darkness their missiles were ineffective, but the barbarian troops were clearly visible to the Romans, and any one whose daring or bright ornaments made him conspicuous at once became a mark for their aim. At last Civilis saw their mistake, and gave orders to extinguish the fires and plunge the whole scene into a confusion of darkness and the din of arms. Discordant shouts now arose : everything was vague and uncertain : no one could see to strike or to parry. Wherever a shout was heard, they would wheel round and lunge in that direction. Valour was useless : chance and chaos ruled supreme : and the bravest soldier often fell under a coward's bolt. The Germans fought with blind fury. The Roman troops were more familiar with danger ; they hurled down iron-clamped stakes and heavy stones with sure effect. Wherever the sound of some one climbing or the clang of a scaling-ladder betrayed the presence of the enemy, they thrust them back with their shields and followed them with a shower of javelins. Many appeared on top of the walls, and these they stabbed with their short swords. And so the night wore on. Day dawned upon new methods of attack. The 30
Batavians had built a wooden tower of two stories and moved it up to the Head-quarters Gate,[1] which was the most accessible spot. However, our soldiers, by using strong poles and hurling wooden beams, soon

[1] i. e. the gate on to the street leading to Head-quarters.

battered it to pieces, with great loss of life to those who were standing on it. While they were still dismayed at this, we made a sudden and successful sally. Meanwhile the legionaries, with remarkable skill and ingenuity, invented still further contrivances. The one which caused most terror was a crane with a movable arm suspended over their assailants' heads: this arm was suddenly lowered, snatched up one or more of the enemy into the air before his fellows' eyes, and, as the heavy end was swung round, tossed him into the middle of the camp. Civilis now gave up hope of storming the camp and renewed a leisurely blockade, trying all the time by messages and offers of reward to undermine the loyalty of the legions.

The Relief of Vetera

31 Such was the course of events in Germany up to the date of the battle of Cremona.[1] News of this arrived by letter from Antonius Primus, who enclosed a copy of Caecina's edict,[2] and Alpinius Montanus,[3] who commanded one of the defeated auxiliary cohorts, came in person to confess that his party had been beaten. The troops were variously affected by the news. The Gallic auxiliaries, who had no feelings of affection or dislike to either party and served without sentiment,

[1] The end of October, A. D. 69 (see iii. 30–34).

[2] Caecina, as consul, had probably while at Cremona issued a manifesto in favour of joining the Flavian party.

[3] Cp. iii. 35.

promptly took the advice of their officers and deserted Vitellius. The veterans hesitated; under pressure from Flaccus and their officers they eventually took the oath of allegiance, but it was clear from their faces that their hearts were not in it, and while repeating the rest of the formula they boggled at the name of Vespasian, either muttering it under their breath or more often omitting it altogether. Their suspicions 32
were further inflamed when Antonius' letter to Civilis was read out before the meeting; it seemed to address Civilis as a member of the Flavian party, and to argue hostility to the German army. The news was next brought to the camp at Gelduba, where it gave rise to the same comments and the same scenes. Montanus was sent to carry instructions to Civilis that he was to cease from hostilities and not to make war on Rome under a false pretext; if it was to help Vespasian that he had taken arms, he had now achieved his object. Civilis at first replied in guarded terms. Then, as he saw that Montanus was an impetuous person who would welcome a revolution, he began to complain of all the dangers he had endured in the service of Rome for the last twenty-five years. 'A fine reward I have received,' he cried, 'for all my labours—my brother's execution,[1] my own imprisonment,[1] and the bloodthirsty clamours of this army, from which I claim satisfaction by natural right since they have sought my destruction. As for you Trevirans and all the rest that have the souls of slaves, what reward do you hope

[1] See chap. 13.

to gain for shedding your blood so often in the cause of Rome, except the thankless task of military service, endless taxation, and the rods and axes of these capricious tyrants? Look at me! I have only a single cohort under my command, and yet with the Canninefates and Batavi, a mere fraction of the Gallic peoples, I am engaged in destroying their great useless camp and besieging them with famine and the sword. In short, our venture will either end in freedom or, if we are beaten, we shall be no worse off than before.' Having thus inflamed Montanus he told him to take back a milder answer and dismissed him. On his return Montanus pretended that his errand had been fruitless, and said nothing about the rest of the interview: but it soon came to light.

33 Retaining a portion of his force, Civilis sent the veteran cohorts with the most efficient of the German troops against Vocula and his army.[1] He gave the command to Julius Maximus and his nephew Claudius Victor. After rushing the winter-quarters of a cavalry regiment at Asciburgium[2] on their way, they fell upon the Roman camp and so completely surprised it that Vocula had no time to address his army or to form it for battle. The only precaution he could take in the general panic was to mass the legionaries in the centre with the auxiliaries scattered on either flank. Our cavalry charged, but found the enemy in good order ready to receive them, and came flying back on to their own infantry. What followed was

[1] At Gelduba (chap. 26.

[2] Asberg.

more of a massacre than a battle. The Nervian cohorts, either from panic or treachery, left our flanks exposed; thus the legions had to bear the brunt. They had already lost their standards and were being cut down in the trenches, when a fresh reinforcement suddenly changed the fortune of the fight. Some Basque auxiliaries,[1] originally levied by Galba, who had now been summoned to the rescue, on nearing the camp heard the sound of fighting, and while the enemy were occupied, came charging in on their rear. This caused more consternation than their numbers warranted, the enemy taking them for the whole Roman force, either from Novaesium or from Mainz. This mistake encouraged the Roman troops: their confidence in others brought confidence in themselves. The best of the Batavians, at least of their infantry, fell. The cavalry made off with the standards and prisoners taken in the earlier stage of the battle. Though our losses that day were numerically larger, they were unimportant, whereas the Germans lost their best troops.

On both sides the generals deserved defeat, and 34
failed to make good use of their success. Their fault was the same. Had Civilis furnished the attacking column with more troops, they could never have been surrounded by such a small force, and having stormed the camp would have destroyed it. Vocula, on the other

[1] From the north-east frontier of the Tarragona division of Spain, of which Galba had been governor. Hordeonius explained (chap. 25) that he had summoned aid from Spain.

hand, had not even set scouts to warn him of the enemy's approach, and consequently no sooner sallied out than he was beaten. Then, when he had won the victory, he showed great lack of confidence, and wasted day after day before moving against the enemy. If he had made haste to follow up his success and struck at the enemy at once, he might have raised the siege of Vetera at one blow.

Meanwhile Civilis had been playing upon the feelings of the besieged by pretending that the Romans had been defeated and success had favoured his arms. The captured standards and colours were carried round the walls and the prisoners also displayed. One of these did a famous deed of heroism. Shouting at the top of his voice, he revealed the truth. The Germans at once struck him dead, which only served to confirm his information. Soon, too, the besieged saw signs of harried fields and the smoke of burning farms, and began to realize that a victorious army was approaching. When he was in sight of the camp Vocula ordered his men to plant the standards and construct a trench and rampart round them: they were to deposit all their baggage there and fight unencumbered. This made them shout at the general to give them the signal; and they had learnt to use threats too. Without even taking time to form their line they started the battle, all tired as they were, and in disorder. Civilis was ready waiting for them, trusting quite as much to their mistakes as to the merits of his own men. The Romans fought with varying fortune. All the most mutinous

proved cowards: some, however, remembered their recent victory and stuck to their places, cutting down the enemy, and encouraging themselves and their neighbours. When the battle was thus renewed, they waved their hands and signalled to the besieged not to lose their opportunity. These were watching all that happened from the walls, and now came bursting out at every gate. It chanced that at this point Civilis' horse fell and threw him; both armies believed the rumour that he had been wounded and killed. This caused immense consternation to his army and immense encouragement to ours. However, Vocula failed to pursue them when they fled, and merely set about strengthening the rampart and turrets, apparently in fear of another blockade. His frequent failure to make use of his victory gives colour to the suspicion that he preferred war.[1]

What chiefly distressed our troops was the lack of 35
supplies. The baggage-train of the legions was sent to Novaesium with a crowd of non-combatants to fetch provisions thence by land, the enemy being now masters of the river. The first convoy got through

[1] Mr. Henderson calls this sentence 'a veritable masterpiece of improbability', and finds it 'hard to speak calmly of such a judgement'. He has to confess that a military motive for Vocula's inaction is hard to find. Tacitus, feeling the same, offers a merely human motive. Soldiers of fortune often prefer war to final victory, and in these days the dangers of peace were only equalled by its ennui. Besides, Tacitus' explanation lends itself to an epigram which he would doubtless not have exchanged for the tedium of tactical truth.

safely, while Civilis was recovering from his fall. But when he heard that a second foraging-party had been sent to Novaesium under guard of several cohorts, and that they were proceeding on their way with their arms piled in the wagons as if it was a time of perfect peace, few keeping to the standards and all wandering at will, he sent some men forward to hold the bridges and any places where the road was narrow, and then formed up and attacked. The battle was fought on a long straggling line, and the issue was still doubtful when nightfall broke it off. The cohorts made their way through to Gelduba, where the camp remained as it was,[1] garrisoned by the soldiers who had been left behind there. It was obvious what dangers the convoy would have to face on the return journey; they would be heavily laden and had already lost their nerve. Vocula[2] accordingly added to his force a thousand picked men from the Fifth and Fifteenth legions who had been at Vetera during the siege, all tough soldiers with a grievance against their generals. Against his orders, more than the thousand started with him, openly complaining on the march that they would not put up with famine and the treachery of their generals any longer. On the other hand, those who stayed behind grumbled that they were left to their fate now that part of the garrison had been removed. Thus there was a double mutiny, one party

[1] Cp. chap. 26.

[2] Having strengthened the defences of Vetera, he was now going back to Gelduba.

calling Vocula back, the others refusing to return to camp.

Meanwhile Civilis laid siege to Vetera. Vocula retired 36
to Gelduba, and thence to Novaesium, shortly afterwards winning a cavalry skirmish just outside Novaesium. The Roman soldiers, however, alike in success and in failure, were as eager as ever to make an end of their generals. Now that their numbers were swelled by the arrival of the detachments from the Fifth and the Fifteenth[1] they demanded their donative, having learnt that money had arrived from Vitellius. Without further delay Flaccus gave it to them in Vespasian's name, and this did more than anything else to promote mutiny. They indulged in wild dissipation and met every night in drinking-parties, at which they revived their old grudge against Hordeonius Flaccus. None of the officers ventured to interfere with them—the darkness somehow obscured their sense of duty—and at last they dragged Flaccus out of bed and murdered him. They were preparing to do the same with Vocula, but he narrowly escaped in the darkness, disguised as a slave. When the excitement 37
subsided, their fears returned, and they sent letters round by centurions to all the Gallic communities, asking for reinforcements and money for the soldiers' pay.

Without a leader a mob is always rash, timorous, and inactive. On the approach of Civilis they hurriedly snatched up their arms, and then immediately dropped them and took to flight. Misfortune now bred disunion,

[1] From the Vetera garrison.

and the army of the Upper Rhine[1] dissociated itself from the rest. However, they set up the statues of Vitellius again in the camp and in the neighbouring Belgic villages, although by now Vitellius was dead.[2] Soon the soldiers of the First, Fourth, and Twenty-second repented of their folly and rejoined Vocula. He made them take a second oath of allegiance to Vespasian and led them off to raise the siege of Mainz. The besieging army, a combined force of Chatti,[3] Usipi, and Mattiaci,[4] had already retired, having got sufficient loot and suffered some loss. Our troops surprised them while they were scattered along the road, and immediately attacked. Moreover, the Treviri had built a rampart and breastwork all along their frontier and fought the Germans again and again with heavy loss to both sides. Before long, however, they rebelled, and thus sullied their great services to the Roman people.

Rome and the Empire under Vespasian

38 During these events Vespasian took up his second consulship and Titus his first, both in absence.[5] Rome was depressed and beset by manifold anxieties. Apart

[1] i.e. the troops which Flaccus at Mainz had put under Vocula for the relief of Vetera (chap. 24).

[2] It was therefore later than December 21. [3] Cp. chap. 12.

[4] The Usipi lived on the east bank of the Rhine between the Sieg and the Lahn; the Mattiaci between the Lahn and the Main, round Wiesbaden.

[5] We now reach the year A.D. 70. Vespasian had already been consul under Claudius in 51.

from the real miseries of the moment, it was plunged into a groundless panic on the rumour of a rebellion in Africa, where Lucius Piso was supposed to be plotting a revolution. Piso, who was governor of the province, was far from being a firebrand. But the severity of the winter delayed the corn-ships, and the common people, accustomed to buy their bread day by day, whose interest in politics was confined to the corn-supply, soon began to believe their fears that the coast of Africa was being blockaded and supplies withheld. The Vitellians, who were still under the sway of party spirit, fostered this rumour, and even the victorious party were not entirely displeased at it, for none of their victories in the civil war had satisfied their greed, and even foreign wars fell far short of their ambition.

On the first of January the senate was convened by 39
the Urban Praetor,[1] Julius Frontinus, and passed votes of thanks and congratulation to the generals, armies, and foreign princes.[2] Tettius Julianus,[3] who had left his legion when it went over to Vespasian, was deprived of his praetorship, which was conferred upon Plotius Grypus.[4] Hormus[5] was raised to equestrian rank. Frontinus then resigned his praetorship and Caesar Domitian succeeded him. His name now stood at the head of all dispatches and edicts, but the real authority

[1] In the absence of both consuls.
[2] i. e. Sohaemus, Antiochus, and Agrippa (cp. ii. 81).
[3] Cp. ii. 85.
[4] Cp. iii. 52.
[5] Vespasian's freedman (cp. iii. 12, 28.)

lay with Mucianus, although Domitian, following the promptings of his friends and of his own desires, frequently asserted his independence. But Mucianus' chief cause of anxiety lay in Antonius Primus and Arrius Varus. The fame of their exploits was still fresh; the soldiers worshipped them; and they were popular in Rome, because they had used no violence off the field of battle. It was even hinted that Antonius had urged Crassus Scribonianus[1] to seize the throne. He was a man who owed his distinction to famous ancestors and to his brother's memory, and Antonius could promise him adequate support for a conspiracy. However, Scribonianus refused. He had a terror of all risks, and would hardly have been seduced even by the certainty of success. Being unable to crush Antonius openly, Mucianus showered compliments on him in the senate and embarrassed him with promises, hinting at the governorship of Nearer Spain, which the departure of Cluvius Rufus[2] had left vacant. Meanwhile he lavished military commands on Antonius' friends. Then, having filled his empty head with ambitious hopes, he destroyed his influence at one stroke by moving the Seventh legion,[3] which was passionately attached to Antonius, into winter-quarters. The Third, who were similarly devoted to Arrius Varus,

[1] The elder brother of Galba's adopted son Piso.

[2] See ii. 65. He must by now have ceased to be absentee governor.

[3] It was to the command of this legion that Galba promoted Antonius (see ii. 86).

were sent back to Syria,[1] and part of the army was taken out to the war in Germany. Thus, on the removal of the disturbing factors, the city could resume its normal life under the old régime of law and civil government.

On the day of his first appearance in the senate 40
Domitian spoke a few moderate sentences regretting the absence of his father and brother. His behaviour was most proper, and, as his character was still an unknown quantity, his blushes were taken for signs of modesty.[2] He moved from the chair that all Galba's honours should be restored, to which Curtius Montanus proposed an amendment that some respect should also be paid to the memory of Piso. The senate approved both proposals, though nothing was done about Piso. Next, various commissions were appointed by lot to restore the spoils of war to the owners; to examine and affix the bronze tablets of laws, which in course of time had dropped off the walls; to revise the list of public holidays, which in these days of flattery had been disgracefully tampered with; and to introduce some economy into public expenditure. Tettius Julianus was restored to his praetorship as soon as it was discovered that he had taken refuge with Vespasian: but Grypus was allowed to retain his rank.[3] It was then decided to resume the hearing of the case of

[1] Varus had served under Corbulo in Syria.

[2] In his life of *Agricola* Tacitus speaks of Domitian' red face as 'his natural bulwark against shame'.

[3] See chap. 39.

Musonius Rufus against Publius Celer[1] Publius was convicted and the shade of Soranus satisfied. This strict verdict made the day memorable in the annals of Rome, and credit was also due to private enterprise, for everybody felt that Musonius had done his duty in bringing the action. On the other hand, Demetrius, a professor of Cynic philosophy, earned discredit for defending an obvious criminal[2] more for ostentatious motives than from honest conviction. As for Publius, courage and fluency alike failed him at the critical moment. This trial was the signal for further reprisals against prosecutors. Junius Mauricus[3] accordingly petitioned Domitian that the senate might be allowed access to the minutes of the imperial cabinet, in order to find out who had applied for leave to bring a prosecution and against whom. The answer was that on such a question as this the emperor must be consulted.

41 Accordingly, at the instigation of its leading members, the senate framed an oath in these words, 'I call heaven to witness that I have never countenanced any action prejudicial to any man's civil status, nor have I derived any profit or any office from the misfortune of any Roman citizen.' The magistrates vied with each other in their haste to take this oath, and the other members

[1] See chap. 10.

[2] i.e. Publius Celer. As this Demetrius was present with Thrasea at the end, holding high philosophical discourse with him (*Ann.* xvi. 34), he seems to have been a Cynic in the modern sense as well.

[3] Another Stoic malcontent, brother of the Arulenus Rusticus mentioned in iii. 80.

did the same, when called upon to speak. Those who had a guilty conscience were alarmed, and managed to alter the wording of the oath by various devices. The house meanwhile applauded every sign of scruple, and protested against each case of perjury. This kind of informal censure fell most severely on Sariolenus Vocula, Nonius Attianus, and Cestius Severus, who were notorious as habitual informers under Nero. Against Sariolenus there was also a fresh charge of having continued his practices with Vitellius. The members went on shaking their fists at him until he left the house. They next turned on Paccius Africanus, trying to hound him out in the same way. He was supposed to have suggested to Nero the murder of the two brothers Scribonius,[1] who were famous for their friendship and their wealth. Africanus dared not admit his guilt, though he could not very well deny it. So he swung round on Vibius Crispus,[2] who was pestering him with questions, and tried to turn the tables by implicating him in the charges which he could not rebut, thus shifting the odium on to his accomplice.

On this occasion Vipstanus Messala[3] gained a great 42
reputation, both for dutiful affection and for eloquence, by venturing to intercede for his brother Aquilius Regulus,[4] although he had not attained the senatorial age.[5] Regulus had fallen into great disfavour for having

[1] According to Dio they were two devoted and inseparable brothers. They became governors, one of Upper and the other of Lower Germany, and, being wealthy, were forced by Nero to commit suicide.

[2] Cp. ii. 10.

[3] Cp. iii. 9.

[4] Cp. i. 48, note 1.

[5] Twenty-five.

brought about the ruin of the noble families of the Crassi and of Orfitus. It was supposed that, though quite a young man, he had voluntarily undertaken the prosecution, not to escape any danger which was threatening him, but from purely ambitious motives. Crassus' wife, Sulpicia Praetextata, and his four sons were anxious to secure revenge if the senate would grant a trial. Messala therefore made no attempt to defend the case or the accused, but tried to shelter his brother, and had already won over some of the senators. Curtius Montanus now attacked him in a savage speech, and even went so far as to charge Regulus with having given money to Piso's murderer after Galba's death, and with having bitten Piso's head.[1] 'That,' said he, 'Nero certainly did not compel you to do. You purchased neither position nor safety by that savage piece of cruelty. We may put up with the pleas of those wretches who prefer to ruin others rather than endanger their own lives. But your father's banishment had guaranteed your security. His property had been divided amongst his creditors.[2] You were not of an age to stand for office. Nero had nothing either to hope or to fear from you. Your talents were as yet untried and you had never exerted them in any man's defence, yet your lust for blood, your insatiable ambition, led you to stain your young hands in the blood of Rome's nobility. At one swoop

[1] Piso was a brother of Regulus' victim. He was therefore glad to see him incapable of reprisal.

[2] i.e. there was no property left to tempt Nero.

you caused the ruin of innocent youths, of old and distinguished statesmen, of high-born ladies; and out of the country's disaster you secured for yourself the spoils of two ex-consuls,[1] stuffed seven million sesterces into your purse, and shone with the reflected glory of a priesthood. You would blame Nero's lack of enterprise because he took one household at a time, thus causing unnecessary fatigue to himself and his informers, when he might have ruined the whole senate at a single word. Why, gentlemen, you must indeed keep and preserve to yourselves a counsellor of such ready resource. Let each generation have its good examples: and as our old men follow Eprius Marcellus or Vibius Crispus, let the rising generation emulate Regulus. Villany finds followers even when it fails. What if it flourish and prosper? If we hesitate to touch a mere ex-quaestor, shall we be any bolder when he has been praetor and consul? Or do you suppose that the race of tyrants came to an end in Nero? That is what the people believed who outlived Tiberius or Caligula, and meanwhile there arose one more infamous and more bloody still.[2] We are not afraid of Vespasian. We trust his years and his natural moderation. But a good precedent outlives a good sovereign. Gentlemen, we are growing effete: we are no longer that senate which, after Nero had been killed, clamoured for the punishment of all informers and their menials according to our ancestors'

[1] i. e. the money and other rewards won by prosecuting Crassus and Orfitus. [2] Nero.

rigorous prescription. The best chance comes on the day after the death of a bad emperor.'

43 The senate listened to Montanus's speech with such sympathy that Helvidius began to hope that it might be possible to get a verdict even against Marcellus. Beginning with a eulogy of Cluvius Rufus, who, though quite as rich and as eloquent as Marcellus, had never brought any one into trouble under Nero, he went on to attack Marcellus, both by contrasting him with Rufus and by pressing home the charge against him. Feeling that the house was warming to this rhetoric, Marcellus got up as though to leave, exclaiming, 'I am off, Helvidius: I leave you your senate: you can tyrannize over it under Caesar's nose.' Vibius Crispus followed Marcellus, and, though both were angry, their expressions were very different. Marcellus marched out with flashing eyes, Crispus with a smile on his face. Eventually their friends went and brought them back. Thus the struggle grew more and more heated between a well-meaning majority and a small but powerful minority; and since they were both animated by irreconcilable hatred, the day was spent in vain recriminations.

44 At the next sitting Domitian opened by recommending them to forget their grievances and grudges and the unavoidable exigences of the recent past. Mucianus then at great length moved a motion in favour of the prosecutors, issuing a mild warning, almost in terms of entreaty, to those who wanted to revive actions which had been begun and dropped.

Seeing that their attempt at independence was being thwarted, the senate gave it up. However, that it might not seem as if the senate's opinion had been flouted and complete impunity granted for all crimes committed under Nero, Mucianus forced Octavius Sagitta and Antistius Sosianus, who had returned from exile, to go back to the islands to which they had been confined. Octavius had committed adultery with Pontia Postumina, and, on her refusal to marry him, had murdered her in a fit of jealous fury. Sosianus was an unprincipled scoundrel who had been the ruin of many.[1] The senate had found them both guilty, and passed a heavy sentence of exile, nor had their penalty been remitted, although others were allowed to return. However, this failed to allay the ill-feeling against Mucianus, for Sosianus and Sagitta, whether they returned or not, were of no importance, whereas people were afraid of the professional prosecutors, who were men of wealth and ability and experts in crime.

Unanimity was gradually restored in the senate by 45
the holding of a trial according to ancient precedent, before a court of the whole house. A senator named Manlius Patruitus complained that he had been beaten before a mob of people in the colony of Siena by order of the local magistrates. Nor had the affront stopped there. They had held a mock funeral before his eyes, and had accompanied their dirges and lamentations with gross insults levelled at the whole senate. The

[1] He had recited some libellous verses on Nero and been condemned for treason.

accused were summoned; their case was tried; they were convicted and punished. A further decree of the senate was passed admonishing the commons of Siena to pay more respect to the laws. About the same time Antonius Flamma was prosecuted by Cyrene for extortion, and exiled for the inhumanity of his conduct.

46 Meanwhile, a mutiny almost broke out among the soldiers. The men who had been discharged by Vitellius[1] came together again in support of Vespasian, and demanded re-admission. They were joined by the selected legionaries who had also been led to hope for service in the Guards, and they now demanded the pay they had been promised. Even the Vitellians[2] alone could not have been dispersed without serious bloodshed, but it would require immense sums of money to retain the services of such a large number of men. Mucianus accordingly entered the barracks to make a careful estimate of each man's term of service. He formed up the victorious troops with their own arms and distinctive decorations, each company a few paces from the next. Then the Vitellians who had surrendered, as we have described, at Bovillae,[3] and all the other soldiers who had been hunted down in the city and its neighbourhood, were marched out almost entirely without arms or uniforms. Mucianus then had them

[1] Cp. ii. 67.

[2] i.e. those who had surrendered at Narnia and Bovillae, as distinct from those who had been discharged after Galba's death.

[3] Chap. 2.

sorted out, and drew up in separate corps the troops of the German army, of the British army, and of any others that were in Rome. Their first glance at the scene astounded them. Facing them they saw what looked like a fighting front bristling with weapons, while they were caught in a trap, defenceless and foul with dirt. As soon as they began to be sorted out a panic seized them. The German troops in particular were terrified at their isolation, and felt they were being told off for slaughter. They embraced their comrades and clung upon their necks, asking for one last kiss, begging not to be left alone, crying out, 'Our cause is the same as yours, why should our fate be different?' They appealed now to Mucianus, now to the absent emperor, and lastly to the powers of Heaven, until Mucianus came to the rescue of their imaginary terrors by calling them all 'sworn servants of one emperor', for he found that the victorious army was joining in and seconding their tears with cheering. On that day the matter ended there. A few days later, when Domitian addressed them, they received him with renewed confidence, refused his offer of lands, and begged for enlistment and their pay instead. This was only a petition, but one that could not be refused: so they were admitted to the Guards. Subsequently, those who had grown old and completed the regular term of service[1] were honourably discharged. Others were dismissed for misbehaviour, but one by one at

[1] i.e. those who were either over fifty or had served in the Guards sixteen or in a legion twenty years.

different times, which is always the safest method of weakening any kind of conspiracy.

47 To return to the senate; a bill was now passed that a loan of sixty million sesterces should be raised from private individuals and administered by Pompeius Silvanus. This may have been a financial necessity, or they may have wanted it to seem so. At any rate the necessity soon ceased to exist, or else they gave up the pretence. Domitian then carried a proposal that the consulships conferred by Vitellius should be cancelled, and that a state funeral should be held in honour of Flavius Sabinus.[1] Both proposals are striking evidence of the fickleness of human fortune, which so often makes the first last and the last first.

48 It was about this time that Lucius Piso,[2] the pro-consul of Africa, was killed. To give a true explanation of this murder we must go back and take a brief survey of certain matters which are closely connected with the reasons for such crimes. Under the sainted Augustus and Tiberius the pro-consul of Africa had in his command one legion and some auxiliaries with which to guard the frontier of the empire.[3] Caligula, who was restless by nature and harboured suspicions

[1] See iii. 74. [2] See chap. 38.

[3] Africa was peculiar in that the pro-consul, who governed it for the senate, commanded an army. All the other provinces demanding military protection were under imperial control. Caligula, without withdrawing the province from the senate, in some degree regularized the anomaly by transferring this command to a 'legate' of his own, technically inferior to the civil governor.

of the then pro-consul, Marcus Silanus, withdrew the legion from his command and put it under a legate whom he sent out for the purpose. As each had an equal amount of patronage and their functions overlapped, Caligula thus caused a state of friction which was further aggravated by regrettable quarrels. The greater permanence of his tenure[1] gradually strengthened the legate's position, and perhaps an inferior is always anxious to vie with his betters. The most eminent governors, on the other hand, were more careful of their comfort than of their authority.

At the present time the legion in Africa was com- 49
manded by Valerius Festus,[2] an extravagant young man, immoderately ambitious, whose kinship with Vitellius had given him some anxiety. He had frequent interviews with Piso, and it is impossible to tell whether he tempted Piso to rebel or resisted Piso's temptations. No one was present at their interviews, which were held in private, and after Piso's death most people were inclined to sympathize with his murderer. Beyond doubt the province and the garrison were unfavourable to Vespasian. Besides, some of the Vitellian refugees from Rome pointed out to Piso that the Gallic provinces were wavering. Germany was ready to rebel, and he himself was in danger; 'and,' they added, 'if you earn suspicion in peace your safest

[1] Whereas the pro-consul's appointment was for one year only, the emperor's legate retained his post at the emperor's pleasure, and was usually given several years.

[2] Cp. ii. 98.

course is war.' Meanwhile, Claudius Sagitta, who commanded Petra's Horse,[1] made a good crossing and outstripped the centurion Papirius, who had been sent out by Mucianus and was commissioned, so Sagitta affirmed, to assassinate Piso. Sagitta further stated that Galerianus,[2] Piso's cousin and son-in-law, had already been murdered, and told him that while his one hope lay in taking a bold step, there were two courses open to him: he might either take up arms on the spot, or he might prefer to sail to Gaul and offer to lead the Vitellian armies. This made no impression on Piso. When the centurion whom Mucianus had sent arrived at the gates of Carthage, he kept on shouting all sorts of congratulations to Piso on becoming emperor. The people he met, who were astounded at this unexpected miracle, were instructed to take up the cry. With a crowd's usual credulity, they rushed into the forum calling on Piso to appear, and as they had a passion for flattery and took no interest in the truth, they proceeded to fill the whole place with a confused noise of cheering. Piso, however, either at a hint from Sagitta, or from his natural good sense, would not show himself in public or give way to the excitement of the crowd. He examined the centurion, and learnt that his object was to trump up a charge against him and then kill him.[3] He accordingly had the man executed more from indignation against

[1] See i. 70. [2] See chap. 11.

[3] i.e. he hoped that Piso would accept the story with alacrity and thus commit himself.

the assassin than in any hope of saving his life ; for he found that the man had been one of the murderers of Clodius Macer,[1] and after staining his hand in the blood of a military officer was now proposing to turn it against a civil governor. Piso then reprimanded the Carthaginians in an edict which clearly showed his anxiety, and refrained from performing even the routine of his office, shutting himself up in his house, for fear that he might by accident provide some pretext for further demonstrations.

When the news of the popular excitement and the 50
centurion's execution reached the ears of Festus, considerably exaggerated and with the usual admixture of falsehood, he at once sent off a party of horsemen to murder Piso. Riding at full speed, they reached the governor's house in the twilight of early dawn and broke in with drawn swords. As Festus had mainly chosen Carthaginian auxiliaries and Moors to do the murder, most of them did not know Piso by sight. However, near his bedroom they happened on a slave and asked him where Piso was and what he looked like. In answer the slave told them a heroic lie and said he was Piso, whereupon they immediately cut him down. However, Piso himself was killed very soon after, for there was one man among them who knew him, and that was Baebius Massa, one of the imperial agents in Africa, who was already a danger to all the best men in Rome. His name will recur again and again in this narrative, as one of the causes of the troubles

[1] Cp. i. 7.

which beset us later on.[1] Festus had been waiting at Adrumetum[2] to see how things went, and he now hastened to rejoin his legion. He had the camp-prefect, Caetronius Pisanus, put in irons, alleging that he was one of Piso's accomplices, though his real motive was personal dislike. He then punished some of the soldiers and centurions and rewarded others; in neither case for their deserts, but because he wanted it to be thought that he had stamped out a war. His next task was to settle the differences between Oea and Lepcis.[3] These had had a trivial origin in thefts of fruit and cattle by the peasants, but they were now trying to settle them in open warfare. Oea, being inferior in numbers, had called in the aid of the Garamantes,[4] an invincible tribe, who were always a fruitful source of damage to their neighbours. Thus the people of Lepcis were in great straits. Their fields had been wasted far and wide, and they had fled in terror under shelter of their walls, when the Roman auxiliaries, both horse and foot, arrived on the scene. They routed the Garamantes and recovered all the booty, except what the nomads had already sold among the inaccessible hut-settlements of the far interior.

51 After the battle of Cremona and the arrival of good

[1] Under Domitian he became one of the most notorious and dreaded of informers. His name doubtless recurred in the lost books of the Histories. But the only other extant mention of him by Tacitus is in the life of Agricola (chap. 45).

[2] On the coast between Carthage and Thapsus.

[3] Tripoli and Lebda.

[4] Further inland; probably the modern Fezzan.

news from every quarter, Vespasian now heard of Vitellius' death. A large number of people of all classes, who were as lucky as they were adventurous, successfully braved the winter seas on purpose to bring him the news.[1] There also arrived envoys from King Vologaesus offering the services of forty thousand Parthian cavalry.[2] It was, indeed, a proud and fortunate situation to be courted with such splendid offers of assistance, and to need none of them. Vologaesus was duly thanked and instructed to send his envoys to the senate and to understand that peace had been made. Vespasian now devoted his attention to the affairs of Italy and the Capitol, and received an unfavourable report of Domitian, who seemed to be trespassing beyond the natural sphere of an emperor's youthful son. He accordingly handed over the flower of his army to Titus, who was to finish off the war with the Jews.[3]

It is said that before his departure Titus had a long 52
talk with his father and begged him not to be rash and lose his temper at these incriminating reports, but to meet his son in a forgiving and unprejudiced spirit, 'Neither legions nor fleets,' he is reported to have said, 'are such sure bulwarks of the throne as a number of children. Time, chance and often, too, ambition and misunderstanding weaken, alienate or extinguish friendship: a man's own blood cannot be severed from him; and above all is this the case with

[1] Vespasian was still at Alexandria.

[2] Cp. ii. 82, note.

[3] Cp. ii. 4 and Book V.

a sovereign, for, while others enjoy his good fortune, his misfortunes only concern his nearest kin. Nor again are brothers likely to remain good friends unless their father sets them an example.' These words had the effect of making Vespasian rather delighted at Titus' goodness of heart than inclined to forgive Domitian. 'You may ease your mind,' he said to Titus, 'It is now your duty to increase the prestige of Rome on the field: I will concern myself with peace at home.' Though the weather was still very rough, Vespasian at once launched his fastest corn-ships with a full cargo. For the city was on the verge of famine.[1] Indeed, there were not supplies for more than ten days in the public granaries at the moment when Vespasian's convoy brought relief.

53 The task of restoring the Capitol[2] was entrusted to Lucius Vestinus, who, though only a knight, yet in reputation and influence could rank with the highest. He summoned all the soothsayers,[3] and they recommended that the ruins of the former temple should be carried away to the marshes[4] and a new temple erected on the same site: the gods were unwilling, they said, that the original form of the building should be changed. On the 21st of June, a day of bright sun-

[1] It had been Vespasian's original plan to starve Rome out by holding the granaries of Egypt and Africa. See iii. 48.

[2] Cp. iii. 71.

[3] Probably from Etruria, where certain families were credited with the requisite knowledge and skill. Claudius had established a College of Soothsayers in Rome. They ranked lower than the Augurs.

[4] At Ostia.

shine, the whole consecrated area of the temple was decorated with chaplets and garlands. In marched soldiers, all men with names of good omen, carrying branches of lucky trees:[1] then came the Vestal Virgins accompanied by boys and girls, each of whom had father and mother alive,[2] and they cleansed it all by sprinkling fresh water from a spring or river.[3] Next, while the high priest, Plautius Aelianus, dictated the proper formulae, Helvidius Priscus, the praetor, first consecrated the site by a solemn sacrifice[4] of a pig, a sheep and an ox, and then duly offering the entrails on an altar of turf, he prayed to Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva, as the guardian deities of the empire, to prosper the enterprise, and by divine grace to bring to completion this house of theirs which human piety had here begun. He then took hold of the chaplets to which the ropes holding the foundation-stone were attached. At the same moment the other magistrates and the priests and senators and knights and large numbers of the populace in joyous excitement with one great effort dragged the huge stone into its place. On every side gifts of gold and silver were flung into the foundations, and

[1] Their names would suggest prosperity and success, e.g. Salvius, Victor, Valerius, and they would carry branches of oak, laurel, myrtle, or beech.

[2] This too was 'lucky' and a common ritualistic requirement.

[3] The 'holy water' must come from certain streams of special sanctity, such as the Tiber or its tributary, the Almo. The water would be sprinkled from the 'lucky' branches.

[4] To the god Mars.

blocks of virgin ore unscathed by any furnace, just as they had come from the womb of the earth. For the soothsayers had given out that the building must not be desecrated by the use of stone or gold that had been put to any other purpose. The height of the roof was raised. This was the only change that religious scruples would allow, and it was felt to be the only point in which the former temple lacked grandeur.

The Loss of Germany

54 Meanwhile,[1] the news of Vitellius' death had spread through Gaul and Germany and redoubled the vigour of the war. Civilis now dropped all pretence and hurled himself upon the Roman Empire. The Vitellian legions felt that even foreign slavery was preferable to owning Vespasian's sovereignty. The Gauls too had taken heart. A rumour had been spread that our winter camps in Moesia and Pannonia were being blockaded by Sarmatians and Dacians:[2] similar stories were fabricated about Britain: the Gauls began to think that the fortune of the Roman arms was the same all the world over. But above all, the burning of the Capitol led them to believe that the empire was coming to an end. 'Once in old days the Gauls had captured Rome, but her empire had stood firm since Jupiter's high-place was left unscathed. But now,

[1] Tacitus here resumes the thread of his narrative of the rebellion on the Rhine, interrupted at the end of chap. 37, and goes back from July to January, A.D. 70.

[2] Cp. iii. 46.

so the Druids[1] with superstitious folly kept dinning into their ears, this fatal fire was a sign of Heaven's anger, and meant that the Transalpine tribes were destined now to rule the world.' It was also persistently rumoured that the Gallic chieftains, whom Otho had sent to work against Vitellius,[2] had agreed, before they parted, that if Rome sank under its internal troubles in an unbroken sequence of civil wars, they would not fail the cause of the Gallic freedom.

Previous to the murder of Hordeonius Flaccus[3] 55
nothing had leaked out to arouse suspicions of a conspiracy, but when he had been assassinated, negotiations passed between Civilis and Classicus,[4] who commanded the Treviran cavalry. Classicus was far above the rest both in birth and in wealth. He came of royal line and his stock was famous both in peace and war. It was his boast that his family had given Rome more enemies than allies. These two were now joined by Julius Tutor and Julius Sabinus, the one a Treviran, the other a Lingonian. Tutor had been appointed by Vitellius to watch the bank of the Rhine.[5] Sabinus'

[1] The danger of Druidism was always before the eyes of the emperors. Augustus had forbidden Roman citizens to adopt it. Claudius had tried to stamp it out in Gaul and in Britain, yet they appear again here to preach a fanatic nationalism. However, this seems to be their last appearance as leaders of revolt.

[2] Probably they were in Rome, and were sent back to their homes to intrigue against Vitellius' rising power.

[3] See chap. 36. [4] Cp. ii. 14.

[5] i.e. he was to prevent any incursions from Germany along the frontier of his canton, between Bingen and Coblenz.

natural vanity was further inflamed by spurious pretensions of high birth, for he alleged that his great-grandmother's beauty had caught the fancy of Julius Caesar during the campaign in Gaul, and that they had committed adultery. These four tested the temper of the rest in private interviews, and having bound to the conspiracy those who were considered fit, they held a conference at Cologne in a private house, the general feeling in the city being hostile to such plans as theirs. A few of the Ubii and Tungri, indeed, attended, but the Treviri and Lingonians were the backbone of the conspiracy. Nor would they tolerate deliberation or delay. They vied with each other in protesting that Rome was distracted by internal quarrels; legions had been cut to pieces, Italy devastated, the city was on the point of being taken, while all her armies were occupied with wars of their own in different quarters. They need only garrison the Alps and then, when liberty had taken firm root, they could discuss together what limit each tribe should set to its exercise of power.

56 All this was no sooner spoken than applauded. About the remnant of Vitellius' army they were in some doubt. Many held that they ought to be killed as being treacherous and insubordinate and stained with the blood of their generals. However, the idea of sparing them carried the day. To destroy all hope of pardon would only steel their obstinacy: it was much better to seduce them into alliance: only the generals need be killed; a guilty conscience and the hope of pardon would soon bring the rest flocking over

to their flag. Such was the tenor of their first meeting. Agitators were sent all over Gaul to stir up war. The conspirators themselves feigned loyalty to Vocula, hoping to catch him off his guard.[1] There were, indeed, traitors who reported all this to Vocula, but he was not strong enough to crush the conspiracy, his legions being short-handed and unreliable. Between suspected troops on one side and secret enemies on the other, it seemed his best course under the circumstances to dissemble, as they were doing, and thus use their own weapons against them. So he marched down the river to Cologne. There he found Claudius Labeo, who after being taken prisoner, as described above,[2] and relegated to the Frisii, had bribed his guards and escaped to Cologne. He promised that if Vocula would provide him with troops, he would go to the Batavi and win back the better part of their community to the Roman alliance. He was given a small force of horse and foot. Without venturing any attempt upon the Batavi, he attracted a few of the Nervii and Baetasii[3] to his standard, and proceeded to harass the Canninefates and Marsaci[3] more by stealth than open warfare.

Lured by the treachery of the Gauls, Vocula marched 57
out against his enemy.[4] Not far from Vetera, Classicus and Tutor rode forward[5] on a pretext of scouting,

[1] At Mainz. [2] Chap. 18.

[3] These tribes lived between the Maas and the Scheldt, and the Marsaci were round the mouth of the Scheldt.

[4] Civilis, again besieging Vetera (chap. 36).

[5] i. e. from the rest of Vocula's force, which they had not yet deserted.

and ratified their compact with the German leaders. They were now for the first time separated from the legions, and entrenched themselves in a camp of their own. At this, Vocula loudly protested that Rome was not as yet so shattered by civil war as to earn the contempt of tribes like the Treviri and Lingones. She could still rely on loyal provinces and victorious armies, on the good fortune of the empire and the avenging hand of God. Thus it was that in former days Sacrovir and the Aedui,[1] more lately Vindex and the Gallic provinces had each been crushed at a single battle. Now, again, these treaty-breakers must expect to face the same powers of Providence and Destiny. The sainted Julius and the sainted Augustus had understood these people better: it was Galba's reduction of the tribute[2] that had clothed them in enmity and pride. 'They are our enemies to-day because their yoke is easy: when they have been stripped and plundered they will be our friends.' After these spirited words, seeing that Classicus and Tutor still persisted in their treachery, he turned back and retired to Novaesium, while the Gauls encamped a couple of miles away. Thither the centurions and soldiers flocked to sell their souls. This was, indeed, an unheard

[1] The Aedui, one of the most powerful of the Gallic tribes, living between the Saône and the Loire had revolted in A. D. 21, and held out for a short time at their chief town (Autun).

[2] This had only been granted to a few tribes who had helped in crushing Vindex (see i. 8 and 51). The Treviri and Lingones had been punished. But it is a good rhetorical point.

of villainy that Roman soldiers should swear allegiance to a foreign power, and offer as a pledge for this heinous crime either to kill or imprison their generals. Though many urged Vocula to escape, he felt that he must make a bold stand, so he summoned a meeting and spoke somewhat as follows :—'Never before have I addressed 58
you with such feelings of anxiety for you, or with such indifference to my own fate. That plans are being laid for my destruction I am glad enough to hear : in such a parlous case as this I look for death as the end of all my troubles. It is for you that I feel shame and pity. It is not that a field of battle awaits you, for that would only accord with the laws of warfare and the just rights of combatants, but because Classicus hopes that with your hands he can make war upon the Roman people, and flourishes before you an oath of allegiance to the Empire of All Gaul. What though fortune and courage have deserted us for the moment, have we not glorious examples in the past ? How often have not Roman soldiers chosen to die rather than be driven from their post ? Often have our allies endured the destruction of their cities and given themselves and their wives and children to the flames, without any other reward for such an end save the name of honourable men. At this very moment Roman troops are enduring famine and siege at Vetera, and neither threats nor promises can move them, while we, besides arms and men and fine fortifications, have supplies enough to last through any length of war. Money, too—the other day there was enough even

for a donative, and whether you choose to say that it was given you by Vespasian or by Vitellius, at any rate you got it from a Roman Emperor. After all the engagements you have won, after routing the enemy at Gelduba, at Vetera, it would be shameful enough to shirk battle, but you have your trenches and your walls, and there are ways of gaining time until armies come flocking from the neighbouring provinces to your rescue. Granted that you dislike me; well, there are others to lead you, whether legate, tribune, centurion, and even private soldier. But do not let this portent be trumpeted over the whole world, that Civilis and Classicus are going to invade Italy with you in their train. Suppose the Germans and Gauls lead the way to the walls of Rome, will you turn your arms upon your fatherland? The mere thought of such a crime is horrible. Will you stand sentry for the Treviran Tutor? Shall a Batavian give you the signal for battle? Will you swell the ranks of German hordes? And what will be the issue of your crime, when the Roman legions take the field against you? Desertion upon desertion, treachery upon treachery! You will be drifting miserably between the old allegiance and the new, with the curse of Heaven on your heads. Almighty Jupiter, whom we have worshipped at triumph after triumph for eight hundred and twenty years; and Quirinus, Father of our Rome, if it be not your pleasure that under my command this camp be kept clean from the stain of dishonour, grant at the least, I humbly beseech ye, that it never be defiled with

the pollution of a Tutor or a Classicus; and to these soldiers of Rome give either innocence of heart or a speedy repentance before the harm is done.'

The speech was variously received, with feelings 59
fluctuating between hope, fear, and shame. Vocula withdrew and began to prepare for his end, but his freedmen and slaves prevented him from forestalling by his own hand a dreadful death. As it was, Classicus dispatched Aemilius Longinus, a deserter from the First legion, who quickly murdered him. For Herennius and Numisius imprisonment was thought sufficient. Classicus then assumed the uniform and insignia of a Roman general, and thus entered the camp. Hardened though he was to every kind of crime, words failed him,[1] and he could only read out the oath. Those who were present swore allegiance to the Empire of All Gaul. He then gave high promotion to Vocula's assassin, and rewarded the others each according to the villainy of his service.

The command was now divided between Tutor and Classicus. Tutor at the head of a strong force besieged Cologne and forced the inhabitants and all the soldiers on the Upper Rhine to take the same oath of allegiance. At Mainz he killed the officers and drove away the camp-prefect, who had refused to swear. Classicus ordered all the greatest scoundrels among the deserters to go to Vetera and offer pardon to the besieged if they would yield to circumstances: otherwise there was no hope for them: they should suffer famine and sword

[1] His presumption took away his breath.

and every extremity. The messengers further cited their own example.

60 Torn by a conflict of loyalty and hunger, the besieged vacillated between honour and disgrace. While they hesitated, all their sources of food, both usual and unusual, began to fail them. They had eaten their mules and horses and all the other animals which, though foul and unclean, their straits had forced into use. At last they took to grubbing up the shrubs and roots and the grass that grew between the stones, and became a very pattern of endurance in wretchedness, until at last they soiled their glory by a shameful end. Envoys were sent to Civilis begging him to save their lives. Even then he refused to receive their petition until they had sworn allegiance to All Gaul. He then negotiated for the plunder of the camp and sent guards, some to secure the money, servants and baggage, and others to conduct the men themselves out of the camp with empty hands. About five miles down the road their line was surprised by an ambush of Germans. The bravest fell on the spot; many were cut down in flight; the rest got back to camp. Civilis, indeed, complained that the Germans had criminally broken faith and rebuked them for it. There is no evidence to show whether this was a pretence or whether he was really unable to restrain his savage troops. The camp was plundered and burnt, and all who had survived the battle were devoured by the flames.

61 When Civilis first took up arms against Rome he made a vow, such as is common with barbarians, to

let his ruddled hair[1] grow wild; now that he had at last accomplished the destruction of the legions he had it cut. It is said also that he put up some of the prisoners for his little son to shoot in sport with javelins and arrows. However that may be, he did not himself swear allegiance to All Gaul, nor did he force any of the Batavi to do so. He felt that he could rely on the strength of the Germans, and that if any quarrel arose with the Gauls about the empire, his fame would give him an advantage. Munius Lupercus, one of the Roman commanding-officers, was sent among other presents to Veleda, a virgin of the Bructeran tribe who wielded a wide-spread authority.[2] It is an ancient custom in Germany to credit a number of women with prophetic powers, and with the growth of superstition these develop into goddesses. At this moment Veleda's influence was at its height, for she had prophesied the success of the Germans and the destruction of the Roman army.[3] However, Lupercus was killed on the journey. A few of the centurions and officers who had been born in Gaul were detained as a security for good faith. The winter camps of the legions and of the auxiliary infantry and cavalry were all dismantled and burnt, with the sole exception of those at Mainz and Vindonissa.[4]

[1] i.e. artificially reddened according to a Gallic custom.

[2] Cp. chap. 69.

[3] Under Vespasian she inspired another rebellion and was brought as a captive to Rome, where she aroused much polite curiosity.

[4] Windisch.

62 The Sixteenth legion and the auxiliary troops who had surrendered with it now received orders to migrate from their quarters at Novaesium to Trier, and a date was fixed by which they had to leave their camp. They spent the meantime brooding on various anxieties, the cowards all shuddering at the precedent of the massacre at Vetera, the better sort covered with shame at their disgrace. 'What sort of a march would this be? Whom would they have to lead them? Everything would be decided by the will of those into whose hands they had put their lives.' Others, again, were quite indifferent to the disgrace, and simply stowed all their money and most cherished possessions about their persons, while many got their armour ready and buckled on their swords, as if for battle. While they were still busy with these preparations the hour struck for their departure, and it proved more bitter than they had expected. Inside the trenches their disgrace was not so noticeable. The open country and the light of day revealed their depth of shame. The emperors' medallions had been torn down[1] and their standards desecrated, while Gallic ensigns glittered all around them. They marched in silence, like a long funeral procession, led by Claudius Sanctus,[2] a man whose sinister appearance—he had lost one eye—was only surpassed by his weakness of intellect. Their disgrace was doubled when they were joined by the First legion, who had left their camp at

[1] From the standards.

[2] Claudius the Holy; lucus a non lucendo.

Bonn. The famous news of their capture had spread, and all the people who shortly before had trembled at the very name of Rome, now came flocking out from fields and houses, and scattered far and wide in transports of joy at this unwonted sight. Their insulting glee was too much for 'The Picenum Horse'.[1] Defying all Sanctus' threats and promises, they turned off to Mainz, and coming by chance upon Longinus, the man who killed Vocula, they slew him with a shower of javelins and thus made a beginning of future amends. The legions, without changing their route, came and camped before the walls of Trier.

Highly elated by their success, Civilis and Classicus 63
debated whether they should allow their troops to sack Cologne. Their natural savagery and lust for plunder inclined them to destroy the town, but policy forbade; and they felt that in inaugurating a new empire a reputation for clemency would be an asset. Civilis was also moved by the memory of a past service, for at the beginning of the outbreak his son had been arrested in Cologne, and they had kept him in honourable custody. However, the tribes across the Rhine were jealous of this rich and rising community, and held that the war could only be ended either by throwing the settlement open to all Germans without distinction or by destroying it and thereby dispersing

[1] An auxiliary squadron of Italian horse, originally raised, we may suppose, by a provincial governor who was a native of Picenum.

64 the Ubii together with its other inhabitants.[1] Accordingly the Tencteri,[2] their nearest neighbours across the Rhine, dispatched a deputation to lay a message before a public meeting of the town. This was delivered by the haughtiest of the delegates in some such terms as these :—'We give thanks to the national gods of Germany and above all others, to the god of war, that you are again incorporate in the German nation and the German name, and we congratulate you that you will now at last become free members of a free community. Until to-day the Romans had closed to us the roads and rivers, and almost the very air of heaven, to prevent all intercourse between us ; or else they offered a still fouler insult to born warriors, that we should meet under supervision, unarmed and almost naked,[3] and should pay for the privilege. Now, that our friendly alliance may be ratified for all eternity, we demand of you that you pull down those bulwarks of slavery, the walls of your town, for even wild beasts lose their spirit if you keep them caged : that you put to the sword every Roman on your soil, since tyrants are incompatible with freedom ; that all the property of those killed form a common stock and no one be

[1] The Ubii were distrusted as having taken the name Agrippinenses and become in some degree Romanized. The town was strongly walled, and Germans from outside only admitted on payment and under Roman supervision.

[2] See chap. 21.

[3] Not, of course, to be taken literally. 'The Germans do no business public or private except in full armour,' says Tacitus in the *Germania*. So to them 'unarmed' meant 'unclothed'.

allowed to conceal anything or to secure any private advantage. It must also be open both for us and for you to live on either river-bank, as our forefathers could in earlier days. As daylight is the natural heritage of all mankind, so the land of the world is free to all brave men. Resume again the customs and manners of your own country and throw off those luxurious habits which enslave Rome's subjects far more effectively than Roman arms. Then, grown simple and uncorrupt, you will forget your past slavery and either know none but equals or hold empire over others.'

The townspeople took time to consider these pro- 65
posals, and, feeling that their apprehensions for the future forbade them to assent, while their present circumstances forbade them to return a plain negative, they answered as follows: 'We have seized our first opportunity of freedom with more haste than prudence, because we wanted to join hands with you and all our other German kinsmen. As for our town-walls, seeing that the Roman armies are massing at this moment, it would be safer for us to heighten them than to pull them down. All the foreigners from Italy or the provinces who lived on our soil have either perished in the war or fled to their own homes. As for the original settlers [1], who are united to us by ties of marriage, they and their offspring regard this as their home, and we do not think you are so unreason-

[1] i.e. the veterans whom Agrippina had sent out to her birthplace in A.D. 50.

able as to ask us to kill our parents and brothers and children. All taxes and commercial restrictions we remit. We grant you free entry without supervision, but you must come in daylight and unarmed, while these ties which are still strange and new are growing into a long-established custom. As arbitrators we will appoint Civilis and Veleda, and we will ratify our compact in their presence.'

Thus the Tencteri were pacified. A deputation was sent with presents to Civilis and Veleda, and obtained all that the people of Cologne desired. They were not, however, allowed to approach and speak to Veleda or even to see her, but were kept at a distance to inspire in them the greater awe. She herself lived at the top of a high tower, and one of her relatives was appointed to carry all the questions and answers like a mediator between God and man.

66 Now that he had gained the accession of Cologne, Civilis determined to win over the neighbouring communities or to declare war in case of opposition. He reduced the Sunuci[1] and formed their fighting strength into cohorts, but then found his advance barred by Claudius Labeo[2] at the head of a hastily-recruited band of Baetasii, Tungri, and Nervii.[2] He had secured the bridge over the Maas and relied on the strength of his position. A skirmish in the narrow defile proved indecisive, until the Germans swam across and took Labeo in the rear. At this point

[1] West of the Ubii, between the Roer and the Maas.

[2] See chap. 56.

Civilis by a bold move—or possibly by arrangement—rode into the lines of the Tungri and called out in a loud voice, 'Our object in taking up arms is not to secure empire for the Batavi and Treviri over other tribes. We are far from any such arrogance. Take us as allies. I am come to join you; whether as general or as private it is for you to choose.' This had a great effect on the common soldiers, who began to sheathe their swords. Then two of their chieftains, Campanus and Juvenalis, surrendered the entire tribe. Labeo escaped before he was surrounded. Civilis also received the allegiance of the Baetasii and Nervii, and added their forces to his own. His power was now immense, for all the Gallic communities were either terrified or ready to offer willing support.

In the meantime, Julius Sabinus,[1] who had destroyed 67
every memorial of the Roman alliance,[2] assumed the title of Caesar and proceeded to hurry a large unwieldy horde of his tribesmen against the Sequani,[3] a neighbouring community, faithful to Rome. The Sequani accepted battle: the good cause prospered: the Lingones were routed. Sabinus fled the field with the same rash haste with which he had plunged into battle. Wishing to spread a rumour of his death, he took refuge in a house and set fire to it, and was thus supposed to have perished by his own act. We shall, however, relate in due course the devices by which

[1] Cp. chap. 55.

[2] e.g. the inscriptions recording the terms of alliance granted to the Lingones by Rome. [3] Round Vesontio (Besançon).

he lay in hiding and prolonged his life for nine more years, and allude also to the loyalty of his friends and the memorable example set by his wife Epponina.[1]

The Ebb-tide of Revolt

This success on the part of the Sequani checked the rising flood. The Gallic communities gradually came to their senses and began to remember their obligations as allies. In this movement the Remi[2] took the lead. They circulated a notice throughout Gaul, summoning a meeting of delegates to consider whether liberty or
68 peace was the preferable alternative. At Rome, however, all these disasters were exaggerated, and Mucianus began to feel anxious. He had already appointed Annius Gallus and Petilius Cerialis to the chief command, and distinguished officers as they were, he was afraid the conduct of such a war might be too much for them. Moreover, he could not leave Rome without government, but he was afraid of Domitian's unbridled passions, while, as we have already seen,[3] he suspected Antonius Primus and Arrius Varus. Varus, as commanding the Guards, still had the chief power and influence in his hands. Mucianus accordingly displaced him, but, as a compensation, made him Director of

[1] The story, which Tacitus presumably told in the lost part of his *History*, dealing with the end of Vespasian's reign, is mentioned both by Plutarch and Dio. Sabinus and his wife lived for nine years in an underground cave, where two sons were born to them. They were eventually discovered and executed. [2] Round Reims. [3] Chap. 39.

the Corn-supply. As he had also to placate Domitian, who was inclined to support Varus, he appointed to the command of the Guards Arrecinus Clemens, who was connected with Vespasian's family [1] and very friendly with Domitian. He also impressed it upon Domitian that Clemens' father had filled this command with great distinction under Caligula: that his name and his character would both find favour with the troops, and that, although he was a member of the senate,[2] he was quite able to fill both positions. He then chose his staff, some as being the most eminent men in the country, others as recommended by private influence.

Thus both Domitian and Mucianus made ready to start, but with very different feelings. Domitian was full of the sanguine haste of youth, while Mucianus kept devising delays to check this enthusiasm. He was afraid that if Domitian once seized control of an army, his youthful self-assurance and his bad advisers would lead him into action prejudicial both to peace and war. Three victorious legions, the Eighth, Eleventh, and Thirteenth;[3] the Twenty-first—one of Vitellius' legions—and the Second, which had been newly enrolled, all started for the front, some by way of the Poenine and Cottian [4] Alps, others over the Graian

[1] His sister was Titus's first wife.

[2] Augustus had made it a rule that the *praefectus praetorio* should come from the equestrian order.

[3] The text is here uncertain, and some historians maintain that the third of these legions was not XIII Gemina but VII Claudia (v. Henderson, *Civil War*, &c., p. 291).

[4] Great St. Bernard and Mt. Genèvre.

Alps.[1] The Fourteenth was also summoned from Britain, and the Sixth and First from Spain.

The rumour that this force was on its way, combined with the present temper of the Gauls, inclined them to adopt a sober policy. Their delegates now met in the territory of the Remi, where they found the representatives of the Treviri awaiting them. One of these, Julius Valentinus, who was the keenest instigator of a hostile policy, delivered a set speech, in which he heaped spiteful aspersions on the Roman people, making all the charges which are usually brought against great empires. He was a clever agitator, whose mad rhetoric made him popular with the crowd.
69 However, Julius Auspex, a chieftain of the Remi, enlarged upon the power of Rome and the blessings of peace. 'Any coward can begin a war,' he said, 'but it is the brave who run the risks of its conduct: and here are the legions already upon us.' Thus he restrained them, awakening a sense of duty in all the sager breasts, and appealing to the fears of the younger men. So, while applauding Valentinus' courage, they followed the advice of Auspex. The fact that in Vindex's rising the Treviri and Lingones sided with Verginius is known to have told against them in Gaul. Many, too, were held back by tribal jealousy. They wanted to know where the head-quarters of the war would be, to whom were they to look for auspices and orders, and, if all went well, which town would be chosen as the seat of government. Thus dissension

[1] Little St. Bernard.

preceded victory. They angrily magnified, some their great connexions, others their wealth and strength, others their antiquity, until they grew tired of discussing the future and voted for the existing state of things. Letters were written to the Treviri in the name of All Gaul, bidding them cease hostilities, suggesting, however, that pardon might be obtained, and that many were ready to plead their cause if they showed repentance. Valentinus opposed this mandate and made his tribesmen offer a deaf ear to it. He was always less anxious to organize a campaign than to make speeches on every possible occasion.

The result was that neither the Treviri nor the 70
Lingones nor the other rebel tribes behaved as if aware of the serious risks they were undertaking. Even the leaders did not act in concert. Civilis wandered over the wilds of the Belgic country, trying to catch or expel Claudius Labeo. Classicus ordinarily took his ease, apparently enjoying the fruits of empire. Even Tutor seemed in no hurry to garrison the Upper Rhine and block the Alpine passes. In the meantime, the Twenty-first legion made its way down from Vindonissa, while Sextilius Felix[1] advanced through Raetia with some auxiliary cohorts. These were joined by the 'Picked Horse',[2] a force that had been raised by Vitellius and then deserted to Vespasian. This was commanded by Civilis' nephew, Julius Briganticus,[3] for uncle and nephew hated each other

[1] See iii. 5.
[2] i.e. not raised in any one locality.
[3] Cp. ii. 22.

with all the aggravated bitterness of near relatives. Tutor swelled his force of Treviri with fresh levies from the Vangiones, Triboci, and Caeracates,[1] and a stiffening of Roman veterans, both horse and foot, who had either been bribed or intimidated. These first cut up an auxiliary cohort sent forward by Sextilius Felix, but on the advance of the Roman army with its generals they loyally deserted to their old flag, and were followed by the Triboci, Vangiones, and Caeracates. Tutor, followed by his Treviri, avoided Mainz and fell back on Bingium,[2] relying on his position there, as he had broken down the bridge over the river Nava. However, Sextilius' cohorts followed him up; some traitor showed them a ford; Tutor was routed. This disaster was a crushing blow to the Treviri. The rank and file dropped their weapons and took to the fields, while some of their chieftains, hoping it might be thought that they had been the first to lay down arms, took refuge among tribes who had never repudiated the Roman alliance. The legions which had been moved, as we saw above,[3] from Novaesium and Bonn to Trier, now administered to themselves the oath of allegiance to Vespasian. This happened in Valentinus' absence. When he arrived in furious excitement, ready to spread universal

[1] The Triboci were in Lower Alsace; the Vangiones north of them in the district of Worms; the Caeracates probably to the north again, in the district between Mainz and the Nahe (Nava).

[2] Bingen.

[3] Chap. 62.

ruin and confusion, the legions withdrew into the friendly territory of the Mediomatrici.[1] Valentinus and Tutor then led the Treviri forcibly back into the field, but first they killed the two Roman officers, Herennius and Numisius.[2] By diminishing the hope of pardon they tried to cement their bond of crime.

71 Such was the position when Petilius Cerialis reached Mainz. His arrival roused high hopes. He was himself thirsting for battle, and being always better at despising his enemy than at taking precautions, he fired his men by delivering a spirited harangue, promising that directly there was a chance of getting into touch with the enemy he would engage without delay. He dismissed the Gallic recruits to their homes with a message that the legions were enough for his task: the allies could resume their peaceful occupations, feeling assured that the war was practically ended, now that Roman troops had taken it in hand. This action rendered the Gauls all the more tractable. They made less difficulty about the war-tax, now that they had got their men back again, while his disdain only sharpened their sense of duty. On the other side, when Civilis and Classicus heard of Tutor's defeat, the destruction of the Treviri, and the universal success of the Roman arms, they fell into a panic, hastily mobilized their own scattered forces, and kept sending messages to Valentinus not to risk a decisive battle. This only hastened Cerialis' movements. He sent

[1] Round Metz. [2] See chap. 59.

guides to the legions stationed in the country of the Mediomatrici to lead them by the shortest route on the enemy's rear. Then, assembling all the troops to be found in Mainz[1] together with his own force, he marched in three days to Rigodulum.[2] Here, on a spot protected by the mountains on one side and the Moselle on the other, Valentinus had already taken his stand with a large force of Treviri. His camp had been strengthened with trenches and stone barricades, but these fortifications had no terrors for the Roman general. He ordered the infantry to force the position in front, while the cavalry were to ascend the hill. Valentinus' hurriedly assembled forces filled him with contempt, for he knew that whatever advantage their position might give them, the superior morale of his men would outweigh it. A short delay was necessary while the cavalry climbed the hill, exposed to the enemy's fire. But when the fight began, the Treviri tumbled headlong down the hill like a house falling. Some of our cavalry, who had ridden round by an easier gradient, captured several Belgic chieftains, including their general, Valentinus.

72 On the next day Cerialis entered Trier. The troops clamoured greedily for its destruction. 'It was the native town of Classicus and of Tutor: these were the men who had wickedly entrapped and slaughtered the legions. Its guilt was far worse than that of Cremona, which had been wiped off the face of Italy

[1] The other detachments of legions IV and XXII.

[2] Riol.

for causing the victors a single night's delay. Was the chief seat of the rebellion to be left standing untouched on the German frontier, glorying in the spoil of Roman armies and the blood of Roman generals?[1] The plunder could go to the Imperial Treasury. It would be enough for them to see the rebel town in smoking ruins; that would be some compensation for the destruction of so many camps.' Cerialis was afraid of soiling his reputation if it was said that he gave his men a taste for cruelty and riot, so he suppressed their indignation. They obeyed him, too, for now that civil war was done with, there was less insubordination on foreign service. Their thoughts were now distracted by the pitiful plight of the legions who had been summoned from the country of the Mediomatrici.[2] Miserably conscious of their guilt, they stood with eyes rooted to the ground. When the armies met, they raised no cheer: they had no answer for those who offered comfort and encouragement: they skulked in their tents, shunning the light of day. It was not fear of punishment so much as the shame of their disgrace which thus overwhelmed them. Even the victorious army showed their bewilderment: hardly venturing to make an audible petition, they craved pardon for them with silent tears. At length Cerialis soothed their alarm. He insisted that all disasters due to dissension between officers and men, or to the enemy's guile, were to be regarded as 'acts

[1] Hordeonius Flaccus, Vocula, Herennius, and Numisius.
[2] Legions I and XVI.

of destiny'. They were to count this as their first day of service and sworn allegiance.[1] Neither he nor the emperor would remember past misdeeds. He then gave them quarters in his own camp, and sent round orders that no one in the heat of any quarrel should taunt a fellow soldier with mutiny or defeat.

73 Cerialis next summoned the Treviri and Lingones, and addressed them as follows: 'Unpractised as I am in public speaking, for it is only on the field that I have asserted the superiority of Rome, yet since words have so much weight with you, and since you distinguish good and bad not by the light of facts but by what agitators tell you, I have decided to make a few remarks, which, as the war is practically over, are likely to be more profitable to the audience than to ourselves. Roman generals and officers originally set foot in your country and the rest of Gaul from no motives of ambition, but at the call of your ancestors, who were worn almost to ruin by dissension. The Germans whom one party summoned to their aid had forced the yoke of slavery on allies and enemies alike. You know how often we fought against the Cimbri and the Teutons, with what infinite pains and with what striking success our armies have undertaken German wars. All that is notorious. And to-day it is not to protect Italy that we have occupied the Rhine, but to prevent some second Ariovistus making himself

[1] They had, as a matter of fact, changed their allegiance no less than six times since the outbreak of the civil war.

master of All Gaul.[1] Do you imagine that Civilis and his Batavi and the other tribes across the Rhine care any more about you than their ancestors cared about your fathers and grandfathers? The Germans have always had the same motives for trespassing into Gaul—their greed for gain and their desire to change homes with you. They wanted to leave their marshes and deserts, and to make themselves masters of this magnificently fertile soil and of you who live on it. Of course they use specious pretexts and talk about liberty. No one has ever wanted to enslave others and play the tyrant without making use of the very same phrases.

'Tyranny and warfare were always rife throughout 74
the length and breadth of Gaul, until you accepted Roman government. Often as we have been provoked, we have never imposed upon you any burden by right of conquest, except what was necessary to maintain peace. Tribes cannot be kept quiet without troops. You cannot have troops without pay; and you cannot raise pay without taxation. In every other respect you are treated as our equals. You frequently command our legions yourselves: you govern this and other provinces yourselves. We have no exclusive privileges. Though you live so far away, you enjoy the blessings of a good emperor no less than we do,

[1] Ariovistus, king of the Suebi, summoned to aid one Gallic confederacy against another, formed the ambition of conquering Gaul, but was defeated by Julius Caesar near Besançon (Vesontio) in 58 B.C.

whereas the tyrant only oppresses his nearest neighbours. You must put up with luxury and greed in your masters, just as you put up with bad crops or excessive rain, or any other natural disaster. Vice will last as long as mankind. But these evils are not continual. There are intervals of good government, which make up for them. You cannot surely hope that the tyranny of Tutor and Classicus would mean milder government, or that they will need less taxation for the armies they will have to raise to keep the Germans and Britons at bay. For if the Romans were driven out—which Heaven forbid—what could ensue save a universal state of intertribal warfare? During eight hundred years, by good fortune and good organization, the structure of empire has been consolidated. It cannot be pulled down without destroying those who do it. And it is you who would run the greatest risk of all, since you have gold and rich resources, which are the prime causes of war. You must learn, then, to love and foster peace and the city of Rome in which you, the vanquished, have the same rights as your conquerors. You have tried both conditions. Take warning, then, that submission and safety are better than rebellion and ruin.' By such words as these he quieted and reassured his audience, who had been afraid of more rigorous measures.

75 While the victors were occupying Trier, Civilis and Classicus sent a letter to Cerialis, the gist of which was that Vespasian was dead, though the news was being suppressed: Rome and Italy were exhausted by civil

war: Mucianus and Domitian were mere names with no power behind them: if Cerialis desired to be emperor of All Gaul, they would be satisfied with their own territory: but if he should prefer battle, that, too, they would not deny him. Cerialis made no answer to Civilis and Classicus, but sent the letter and its bearer to Domitian.

The enemy now approached Trier from every quarter in detached bands, and Cerialis was much criticized for allowing them to unite, when he might have cut them off one by one. The Roman army now threw a trench and rampart round their camp, for they had rashly settled in it without seeing to the fortifications. In the German camp different opinions were being 76
keenly debated. Civilis contended that they should wait for the tribes from across the Rhine, whose arrival would spread a panic sufficient to crush the enfeebled forces of the Romans. The Gauls, he urged, were simply a prey for the winning side and, as it was, the Belgae, who were their sole strength, had declared for him or were at least sympathetic. Tutor maintained that delay only strengthened the Roman force, since their armies were converging from every quarter. 'They have brought one legion across from Britain, others have been summoned from Spain, or are on their way from Italy.[1] Nor are they raw recruits, but experienced veterans, while the Germans, on whose aid we rely, are subject to no discipline or control, but do whatever they like. You can only

[1] See chap. 68.

bribe them with presents of money, and the Romans have the advantage of us there: besides, however keen to fight, a man always prefers peace to danger, so long as the pay is the same. But if we engage them at once, Cerialis has nothing but the remnants of the German army,[1] who have sworn allegiance to the Gallic Empire. The very fact that they have just won an unexpected victory over Valentinus' undisciplined bands[2] serves to confirm them and their general in imprudence. They will venture out again and will fall, not into the hands of an inexperienced boy, who knows more about making speeches than war, but into the hands of Civilis and Classicus, at the sight of whom they will recall their fears and their flights and their famine, and remember how often they have had to beg their lives from their captors. Nor, again, is it any liking for the Romans that keeps back the Treviri and Lingones: they will fly to arms again, when once their fears are dispelled.' Classicus finally settled the difference of opinion by declaring for Tutor's policy, and they promptly proceeded to carry it out.

77 The Ubii and Lingones were placed in the centre, the Batavian cohorts on the right, and on the left the Bructeri and Tencteri. Advancing, some by the hills and some by the path between the road and the river,[3]

[1] Tutor erred. Cerialis had also the Twenty-first from Vindonissa, Felix's auxiliary cohorts, and the troops he had found at Mainz (see chaps. 70 and 71).

[2] He suppresses his own defeat at Bingen (chap. 70).

[3] The town lay on the right bank of the Moselle; the Roman

they took us completely by surprise. So sudden was their onslaught that Cerialis, who had not spent the night in camp, was still in bed when he heard almost simultaneously that the fighting had begun and that the day was lost. He cursed the messengers for their cowardice until he saw the whole extent of the disaster with his own eyes. The camp had been forced, the cavalry routed, and the bridge over the Moselle, leading to the outskirts of the town, which lay between him and his army,[3] was held by the enemy. But confusion had no terrors for Cerialis. Seizing hold on fugitives, flinging himself without any armour into the thick of the fire, he succeeded by his inspired imprudence and the assistance of the braver men in retaking the bridge. Leaving a picked band to hold it, he hurried back to the camp, where he found that the companies of the legions which had surrendered at Bonn and Novaesium [1] were all broken up, few men were left at their posts, and the eagles were all but surrounded by the enemy. He turned on them in blazing anger, 'It is not Flaccus or Vocula that you are deserting. There is no "treason" about me. I have done nothing to be ashamed of, except that I was rash enough to believe that you had forgotten your Gallic ties and awakened to the memory of your Roman allegiance. Am I to be numbered with

camp on the left bank between the river and the hills. There was only one bridge.

[1] The Sixteenth had its permanent camp at Novaesium, the First at Bonn. Both surrendered at Novaesium (cp. chap. 59).

Numisius and Herennius?[1] Then you can say that all your generals have fallen either by your hands or the enemy's. Go and tell the news to Vespasian, or rather, to Civilis and Classicus—they are nearer at hand—that you have deserted your general on the field of battle. There will yet come legions who will not leave me unavenged or you unpunished.'

78 All he said was true, and the other officers heaped the same reproaches on their heads. The men were drawn up in cohorts and companies, since it was impossible to deploy with the enemy swarming round them, and, the fight being inside the rampart, the tents and baggage were a serious encumbrance. Tutor and Classicus and Civilis, each at his post, were busy rallying their forces, appealing to the Gauls to fight for freedom, the Batavians for glory, and the Germans for plunder. Everything, indeed, went well for the enemy until the Twenty-first legion, who had rallied in a clearer space than any of the others, first sustained their charge and then repulsed them. Then, by divine providence, on the very point of victory the enemy suddenly lost their nerve and turned tail. They themselves attributed their panic to the appearance of the Roman auxiliaries, who, after being scattered by the first charge, formed again on the hill-tops and were taken for fresh reinforcements. However, what really cost the Gauls their victory was that they let their enemy alone and indulged in ignoble squabbles over the spoil. Thus after Cerialis' carelessness had

[1] See chaps. 59 and 70.

almost caused disaster, his pluck now saved the day, and he followed up his success by capturing the enemy's camp and destroying it before nightfall.

Cerialis' troops were allowed short respite. Cologne 79
was clamouring for help and offering to surrender Civilis' wife and sister and Classicus' daughter, who had been left behind there as pledges of the alliance. In the meantime the inhabitants had massacred all the stray Germans to be found in the town. They were now alarmed at this, and had good reason to implore aid before the enemy should recover their strength and bethink themselves of victory, or at any rate of revenge. Indeed, Civilis already had designs on Cologne, and he was still formidable, for the most warlike of his cohorts, composed of Chauci and Frisii,[1] was still in full force at Tolbiacum,[2] within the territory of Cologne. However, he changed his plans on receiving the bitter news that this force had been entrapped and destroyed by the inhabitants of Cologne. They had entertained them at a lavish banquet, drugged them with wine, shut the doors upon them and burned the place to the ground. At the same moment Cerialis came by forced marches to the relief of Cologne. A further anxiety haunted Civilis. He was afraid that the Fourteenth legion, in conjunction with the fleet from Britain,[3] might harry

[1] The Frisii occupied part of Friesland; the Chauci lay east of them, between the Ems and Weser. [2] Zulpich.

[3] A small flotilla on guard in the Channel. It probably now transported the Fourteenth and landed them at Boulogne.

the Batavian coast. However, Fabius Priscus, who was in command, led his troops inland into the country of the Nervii and Tungri, who surrendered to him. The Canninefates[1] made an unprovoked attack upon the fleet and sank or captured the greater number of the ships. They also defeated a band of Nervian volunteers who had been recruited in the Roman interest. Classicus secured a further success against an advance-guard of cavalry which Cerialis had sent forward to Novaesium. These repeated checks, though unimportant in themselves, served to dim the lustre of the recent Roman victory.[2]

Events in Rome and in the East

80 It was about this time that Mucianus gave orders for the murder of Vitellius' son,[3] on the plea that dissension would continue until all the seeds of war were stamped out. He also refused to allow Antonius Primus to go out on Domitian's staff, being alarmed at his popularity among the troops and at the man's own vanity, which would brook no equal, much less a superior. Antonius accordingly went to join Vespasian, whose reception, though not hostile, proved a disappointment. The emperor was drawn two ways. On the one side were Antonius' services: it was undeniable that his generalship had ended the war. In the other scale were Mucianus' letters. Besides

[1] Cp. chap. 15.

[2] The narrative is resumed from this point in v. 14.

[3] Cp. ii. 59.

which, every one else seemed ready to rake up the scandals of his past life and inveigh against his vanity and bad temper. Antonius himself did his best to provoke hostility by expatiating to excess on his services, decrying the other generals as incompetent cowards, and stigmatizing Caecina as a prisoner who had surrendered. Thus without any open breach of friendship he gradually declined lower and lower in the emperor's favour.

During the months which Vespasian spent at Alex- 81
andria waiting for the regular season of the summer winds[1] to ensure a safe voyage, there occurred many miraculous events manifesting the goodwill of Heaven and the special favour of Providence towards him. At Alexandria a poor workman who was well known to have a disease of the eye, acting on the advice of Serapis, whom this superstitious people worship as their chief god, fell at Vespasian's feet demanding with sobs a cure for his blindness, and imploring that the emperor would deign to moisten his eyes and eyeballs with the spittle from his mouth. Another man with a maimed hand, also inspired by Serapis, besought Vespasian to imprint his footmark on it. At first Vespasian laughed at them and refused. But they insisted. Half fearing to be thought a fool, half stirred to hopes by their petition and by the flattery of his courtiers, he eventually told the doctors to form an opinion whether such cases of blindness and deformity

[1] During June and July before the Etesian winds (cp. ii. 98) began to blow from the north-west.

could be remedied by human aid. The doctors talked round the question, saying that in the one case the power of sight was not extinct and would return, if certain impediments were removed; in the other case the limbs were distorted and could be set right again by the application of an effective remedy: this might be the will of Heaven and the emperor had perhaps been chosen as the divine instrument. They added that he would gain all the credit, if the cure were successful, while, if it failed, the ridicule would fall on the unfortunate patients. This convinced Vespasian that there were no limits to his destiny: nothing now seemed incredible. To the great excitement of the bystanders, he stepped forward with a smile on his face and did as the men desired him. Immediately the hand recovered its functions and daylight shone once more in the blind man's eyes. Those who were present still attest both miracles to-day,[1] when there is nothing to gain by lying.

82 This occurrence deepened Vespasian's desire to visit the holy-place and consult Serapis about the fortunes of the empire. He gave orders that no one else was to be allowed in the temple, and then went in. While absorbed in his devotions, he suddenly saw behind him an Egyptian noble, named Basilides, whom he knew to be lying ill several days' journey from Alexandria. He inquired of the priests whether Basilides had entered the temple that day. He inquired of every one he met whether he had been seen in the city. Even-

[1] Circa A. D. 108.

tually he sent some horsemen, who discovered that at the time Basilides was eighty miles away. Vespasian therefore took what he had seen for a divine apparition, and guessed the meaning of the oracle from the name 'Basilides'.[1]

The origins of the god Serapis are not given in any 83
Roman authorities. The high-priests of Egypt give the following account: King Ptolemy, who was the first of the Macedonians to put the power of Egypt on a firm footing,[2] was engaged in building walls and temples, and instituting religious cults for his newly founded city of Alexandria, when there appeared to him in his sleep a young man of striking beauty and supernatural stature, who warned him to send his most faithful friends to Pontus to fetch his image. After adding that this would bring luck to the kingdom, and that its resting-place would grow great and famous, he appeared to be taken up into heaven in a sheet of flame. Impressed by this miraculous prophecy, Ptolemy revealed his vision to the priests of Egypt, who are used to interpreting such things. As they had but little knowledge of Pontus or of foreign cults, he consulted an Athenian named Timotheus, a member of the Eumolpid clan,[3] whom he had brought over from Eleusis to be overseer of

[1] Meaning 'king's son', and therefore portending sovereignty.

[2] i.e. Ptolemy Soter, who founded the dynasty of the Lagidae, and reigned 306–283 B.C.

[3] They inherited the priesthood of Demeter at Eleusis and supplied the hierophants who conducted the mysteries.

religious ceremonies, and asked him what worship and what god could possibly be meant. Timotheus found some people who had travelled in Pontus and learnt from them, that near a town called Sinope there was a temple, which had long been famous in the neighbourhood as the seat of Jupiter-Pluto,[1] and near it there also stood a female figure, which was commonly called Proserpine. Ptolemy was like most despots, easily terrified at first, but liable, when his panic was over, to think more of his pleasures than of his religious duties. The incident was gradually forgotten, and other thoughts occupied his mind until the vision was repeated in a more terrible and impressive form than before, and he was threatened with death and the destruction of his kingdom if he failed to fulfil his instructions. He at once gave orders that representatives should be sent with presents to King Scydrothemis, who was then reigning at Sinope, and on their departure he instructed them to consult the oracle of Apollo at Delphi. They made a successful voyage and received a clear answer from the oracle: they were to go and bring back the image of Apollo's father but leave his sister's behind.

84 On their arrival at Sinope they laid their presents, their petition, and their king's instructions before Scydrothemis. He was in some perplexity. He was afraid of the god and yet alarmed by the threats of his subjects, who opposed the project: then, again, he often felt tempted by the envoys' presents and

[1] i. e. the sovereign god of the underworld.

promises. Three years passed. Ptolemy's zeal never abated for a moment. He persisted in his petition, and kept sending more and more distinguished envoys, more ships, more gold. Then a threatening vision appeared to Scydrothemis, bidding him no longer thwart the god's design. When he still hesitated, he was beset by every kind of disease and disaster : the gods were plainly angry and their hand was heavier upon him every day. He summoned an assembly and laid before it the divine commands, his own and Ptolemy's visions, and the troubles with which they were visited. The king found the people unfavourable. They were jealous of Egypt and fearful of their own future. So they surged angrily round the temple. The story now grows stranger still. The god himself, it says, embarked unaided on one of the ships that lay beached on the shore, and by a miracle accomplished the long sea-journey and landed at Alexandria within three days. A temple worthy of so important a city was then built in the quarter called Rhacotis, on the site of an ancient temple of Serapis and Isis.[1] This is the most widely accepted account of the god's origin and arrival. Some people, I am well aware, maintain that the god was brought from the Syrian town of Seleucia during the

[1] It is evident from these words that the worship of Serapis was ancient in Egypt. It seems to be suggested that the arrival of this statue from Pontus did not originate but invigorated the cult of Serapis. Pluto, Dis, Serapis, are all names for a god of the underworld. Jupiter seems added vaguely to give more power to the title. We cannot expect accurate theology from an amateur antiquarian.

reign of Ptolemy, the third of that name.[1] Others, again, say it was this same Ptolemy, but make the place of origin the famous town of Memphis,[2] once the bulwark of ancient Egypt. Many take the god for Aesculapius, because he cures disease: others for Osiris, the oldest of the local gods; some, again, for Jupiter, as being the sovereign lord of the world. But the majority of people, either judging by what are clearly attributes of the god or by an ingenious process of conjecture, identify him with Pluto.

85 Domitian and Mucianus were now on their way to the Alps.[3] Before reaching the mountains they received the good news of the victory over the Treviri, the truth of which was fully attested by the presence of their leader Valentinus. His courage was in no way crushed and his face still bore witness to the proud spirit he had shown. He was allowed a hearing, merely to see what he was made of, and condemned to death. At his execution some one cast it in his teeth that his country was conquered, to which he replied, 'Then I am reconciled to death.'

Mucianus now gave utterance to an idea which he had long cherished, though he pretended it was a sudden inspiration. This was that, since by Heaven's grace the forces of the enemy had been broken, it would ill befit Domitian, now that the war was practically

[1] Ptolemy Euergetes, 247–222 B.C.

[2] According to Eustathius there was a Mount Sinopium near Memphis. This suggests an origin for the title Sinopitis, applied to Serapis, and a cause for the invention of the romantic story about Sinope in Pontus.

[3] Cp. chap. 68.

over, to stand in the way of the other generals to whom the credit belonged. Were the fortunes of the empire or the safety of Gaul at stake, it would be right that a Caesar should take the field; the Canninefates and Batavi might be left to minor generals. So Domitian was to stay at Lugdunum and there show them the power and majesty of the throne at close quarters. By abstaining from trifling risks he would be ready to cope with any greater crisis.

The ruse was detected, but it could not be unmasked. 86
That was part of the courtier's policy.[1] Thus they proceeded to Lugdunum. From there Domitian is supposed to have sent messengers to Cerialis to test his loyalty, and to ask whether the general would transfer his army and his allegiance to him, should he present himself in person. Whether Domitian's idea was to plan war against his father or to acquire support against his brother, cannot be decided, for Cerialis parried his proposal with a salutary snub and treated it as a boy's day-dream. Realizing that older men despised his youth, Domitian gave up even those functions of government which he had hitherto performed. Aping bashfulness and simple tastes, he hid his feelings under a cloak of impenetrable reserve, professing literary tastes and a passion for poetry. Thus he concealed his real self and withdrew from all rivalry with his brother, whose gentler and altogether different nature he perversely misconstrued.

[1] i.e. Mucianus was too cunning to give Domitian any excuse for declaring his suspicions.

BOOK V

The Conquest of Judaea

1 Early in this same year[1] Titus Caesar had been entrusted by his father with the task of completing the reduction of Judaea.[2] While he and his father were both still private citizens, Titus had distinguished himself as a soldier, and his reputation for efficiency was steadily increasing, while the provinces and armies vied with one another in their enthusiasm for him. Wishing to seem independent of his good fortune, he always showed dignity and energy in the field. His affability called forth devotion. He constantly helped in the trenches and could mingle with his soldiers on the march without compromising his dignity as general. Three legions awaited him in Judaea, the Fifth, Tenth, and Fifteenth, all veterans from his father's army. These were reinforced by the Twelfth from Syria and by detachments of the Twenty-second and the Third,[3] brought over from Alexandria. This force was accompanied by twenty auxiliary cohorts and eight regiments of auxiliary cavalry besides the Kings Agrippa and Sohaemus, King Antiochus' irregulars,[4] a strong force of Arabs, who had a neighbourly hatred for the Jews, and a crowd of persons who had come from Rome and the rest of Italy, each tempted by the hope of securing

[1] A.D. 70. [2] See ii. 4; iv. 51.
[3] XXII Deiotariana and III Cyrenaica. [4] Cp. ii. 4.

the first place in the prince's still unoccupied affections. With this force Titus entered the enemy's country at the head of his column, sending out scouts in all directions, and holding himself ready to fight. He pitched his camp not far from Jerusalem.

Since I am coming now to describe the last days 2
of this famous city, it may not seem out of place to recount here its early history. It is said that the Jews are refugees from Crete,[1] who settled on the confines of Libya at the time when Saturn was forcibly deposed by Jupiter. The evidence for this is sought in the name. Ida is a famous mountain in Crete inhabited by the Idaei,[2] whose name became lengthened into the foreign form Judaei. Others say that in the reign of Isis the superfluous population of Egypt, under the leadership of Hierosolymus and Juda, discharged itself upon the neighbouring districts, while there are many who think the Jews an Ethiopian stock, driven to migrate by their fear and dislike of King Cepheus.[3] Another tradition makes them Assyrian refugees,[4] who,

[1] There seems little to recommend Tacitus' theory of the identity of the Idaei and Judaei, though it has been suggested that the Cherethites of 2. Sam. viii. 18 and Ezek. xxv. 16 are Cretans, migrated into the neighbourhood of the Philistines. The Jewish Sabbath (Saturn's day) seems also to have suggested connexion with Saturn and Crete.

[2] Elsewhere the Idaei figure as supernatural genii in attendance on either Jupiter or Saturn.

[3] Ethiopian here means Phoenician. Tradition made Cepheus, the father of Andromeda, king of Joppa.

[4] From Damascus, said Justin, where Abraham was one of their kings, and Trogus Pompeius adds that the name of

lacking lands of their own, occupied a district of Egypt, and later took to building cities of their own and tilling Hebrew territory and the frontier-land of Syria. Yet another version assigns to the Jews an illustrious origin as the descendants of the Solymi—a tribe famous in Homer[1]—who founded the city and called it Hiero*solyma* after their own name.[2]

3 Most authorities agree that a foul and disfiguring disease once broke out in Egypt, and that King Bocchoris,[3] on approaching the oracle of Ammon and inquiring for a remedy, was told to purge his kingdom of the plague and to transport all who suffered from it into some other country, for they had earned the disfavour of Heaven. A motley crowd was thus collected and abandoned in the desert. While all the other outcasts lay idly lamenting, one of them, named Moses, advised them not to look for help to gods or men, since both had deserted them, but to trust rather in themselves and accept as divine the guidance of the first being by whose aid they should get out of their present plight. They agreed, and set out blindly to march wherever chance might lead them.

Abraham was honourably remembered at Damascus. These are variants of the Biblical migration of Abraham.

[1] *Il.* vi. 184; *Od.* v. 282.

[2] Another piece of fanciful philology, based on a misinterpretation of a Greek transliteration of the name Jerusalem. The Solymi are traditionally placed in Lycia. Both Juvenal and Martial use Solymus as equivalent to Judaeus.

[3] The only known King Bocchoris belongs to the eighth century B.C., whereas the Exodus is traditionally placed not later than the sixteenth.

Their worst distress came from lack of water. When they were already at death's door and lying prostrate all over the plain, it so happened that a drove of wild asses moved away from their pasture to a rock densely covered with trees. Guessing the truth from the grassy nature of the ground, Moses followed and disclosed an ample flow of water.[1] This saved them. Continuing their march for six successive days, on the seventh they routed the natives and gained possession of the country. There they consecrated their city and their temple.

To ensure his future hold over the people, Moses 4
introduced a new cult, which was the opposite of all other religions. All that we hold sacred they held profane, and allowed practices which we abominate. They dedicated in a shrine an image of the animal[2] whose guidance had put an end to their wandering and thirst. They killed a ram, apparently as an insult to Ammon, and also sacrificed a bull, because the Egyptians worship the bull Apis.[3] Pigs are subject to leprosy; so they abstain from pork in memory of their misfortune and the foul plague with which they were once infected. Their frequent fasts[4] bear

[1] See Exod. xvii.

[2] i.e. an ass. The idea that this animal was sacred to the Jews was so prevalent among 'the Gentiles' that Josephus takes the trouble to refute it.

[3] Cp. Lev. xvi. 3, 'a young bullock for a sin offering, and a ram for a burnt offering.' Tacitus' reasons are of course errors due to the prevalent confusion of Jewish and Egyptian history. [4] Cp. Luke xviii. 12, 'I fast twice a week.'

witness to the long famine they once endured, and, in token of the corn they carried off, Jewish bread is to this day made without leaven. They are said to have devoted the seventh day to rest, because that day brought an end to their troubles.[1] Later, finding idleness alluring, they gave up the seventh year as well to sloth.[2] Others maintain that they do this in honour of Saturn;[3] either because their religious principles are derived from the Idaei, who are supposed to have been driven out with Saturn and become the ancestors of the Jewish people; or else because, of the seven constellations which govern the lives of men, the star of Saturn moves in the topmost orbit and exercises peculiar influence, and also because most of the heavenly bodies move round[4] their courses in multiples of seven.

5 Whatever their origin, these rites are sanctioned by their antiquity. Their other customs are impious and abominable, and owe their prevalence to their depravity. For all the most worthless rascals, renouncing their national cults, were always sending money to swell the sum of offerings and tribute.[5] This is one cause of Jewish prosperity. Another is that they

[1] Cp. Deut. v. 15.

[2] Cp. Lev. xxv. 4, '... in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of solemn rest for the land, a sabbath unto the Lord: thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard.'

[3] The seventh day being named after Cronos or Saturn (cp. chap. 2, note 1).

[4] Reading *commeent* (Wölfflin).

[5] This refers to proselytes, who, like Jews resident abroad, contributed annually to the Temple treasury. They numbered at this time about four millions. Romans naturally regarded this diversion of funds with disfavour.

are obstinately loyal to each other, and always ready to show compassion, whereas they feel nothing but hatred and enmity for the rest of the world.[1] They eat and sleep separately. Though immoderate in sexual indulgence, they refrain from all intercourse with foreign women: among themselves anything is allowed.[2] They have introduced circumcision to distinguish themselves from other people. Those who are converted to their customs adopt the same practice, and the first lessons they learn are to despise the gods,[3] to renounce their country, and to think nothing of their parents, children, and brethren. However, they take steps to increase their numbers. They count it a crime to kill any of their later-born children,[4] and they believe that the souls of those who die in battle or under persecution are immortal.[5] Thus they think

[1] Jewish exclusiveness always roused Roman indignation, and 'hatred of the human race' was the usual charge against Christians (see *Ann.* xv. 44).

[2] The strict regulations of Deut. xxii. &c. give a strange irony to this slander. Most of these libels originated in Alexandria.

[3] 'A people,' says the elder Pliny, 'distinguished by their contemptuous atheism.'

[4] *Agnati*, as used here and in *Germ.* 19 means a child born after the father has made his will and therein specified the number of his children. The mere birth of such a child invalidated any earlier will that the father had made, but the fact of its birth might be concealed by making away with the baby. This crime seems to have been not uncommon, but there is no evidence that 'exposure of infants' was permitted.

[5] Josephus also alludes to this belief that the corruption of disease chained the soul to the buried body, while violent death freed it to live for ever in the air and protect posterity.

much of having children and nothing of facing death. They prefer to bury and not burn their dead.[1] In this, as in their burial rites, and in their belief in an underworld, they conform to Egyptian custom. Their ideas of heaven are quite different. The Egyptians worship most of their gods as animals, or in shapes half animal and half human. The Jews acknowledge one god only, of whom they have a purely spiritual conception. They think it impious to make images of gods in human shape out of perishable materials. Their god is almighty and inimitable, without beginning and without end. They therefore set up no statues in their temples, nor even in their cities, refusing this homage both to their own kings and to the Roman emperors. However, the fact that their priests intoned to the flute and cymbals and wore wreaths of ivy, and that a golden vine was found in their temple[2] has led some people to think that they worship Bacchus,[3] who has so enthralled the East. But their cult would be most inappropriate. Bacchus instituted gay and cheerful rites, but the Jewish ritual is preposterous and morbid.

[1] Under the kings cremation was an honourable form of burial, but in Babylon the Jews came to regard fire as a sacred element which should not be thus defiled.

[2] This was over the door of the Temple. Aristobulus gave it as a present to Pompey.

[3] Plutarch shared this error, which seems somehow to have been based on a misinterpretation of the Feast of Tabernacles, at which they were to 'take . . . the fruit of goodly trees, . . . and willows of the brook; and . . . rejoice before the Lord your God seven days' (Lev. xxiii. 40).

The country of the Jews is bounded by Arabia on 6
the east, by Egypt on the south, and on the west by Phoenicia and the sea. On the Syrian frontier they have a distant view towards the north.[1] Physically they are healthy and hardy. Rain is rare; the soil infertile; its products are of the same kind as ours with the addition of balsam and palms. The palm is a tall and beautiful tree, the balsam a mere shrub. When its branches are swollen with sap they open them with a sharp piece of stone or crockery, for the sap-vessels shrink up at the touch of iron. The sap is used in medicine. Lebanon, their chief mountain, stands always deep in its eternal snow, a strange phenomenon in such a burning climate. Here, too, the river Jordan has its source[2] and comes pouring down, to find a home in the sea. It flows undiminished through first one lake, then another, and loses itself in a third.[3] This last is a lake of immense size, like a sea, though its water has a foul taste and a most unhealthy smell, which poisons the surrounding inhabitants. No wind can stir waves in it: no fish or sea-birds can live there. The sluggish water supports whatever is thrown on to it, as if its surface were solid, while those who cannot swim float on it as easily as those who can. Every year at the same time the lake yields asphalt. As with other arts, it is experience which shows how to collect it. It is a black liquid which, when congealed with a

[1] Over Coele-Syria, from the range of Lebanon.

[2] i. e. from Mount Hermon, nearly 9,000 feet high.

[3] Merom; Gennesareth; the Dead Sea.

sprinkling of vinegar, floats on the surface of the water. The men who collect it take it in this state into their hands and haul it on deck. Then without further aid it trickles in and loads the boat until you cut off the stream. But this you cannot do with iron or brass: the current is turned by applying blood or a garment stained with a woman's menstrual discharge. That is what the old authorities say, but those who know the district aver that floating blocks of asphalt are driven landwards by the wind and dragged to shore by hand. The steam out of the earth and the heat of the sun dries them, and they are then split up with axes and wedges, like logs or blocks of stone.

7 Not far from this lake are the Plains, which they say were once fertile and covered with large and populous cities which were destroyed by lightning.[1] Traces of the cities are said to remain, and the ground, which looks scorched, has lost all power of production. The plants, whether wild or artificially cultivated, are blighted and sterile and wither into dust and ashes, either when in leaf or flower, or when they have attained their full growth. Without denying that at some date famous cities were there burnt up by lightning, I am yet inclined to think that it is the exhalation from the lake which infects the soil and poisons the surrounding atmosphere. Soil and climate being equally deleterious, the crops and fruits all rot away.

[1] 'Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven; and he overthrew those cities, and all the Plain' (Gen. xix. 24).

The river Belus also falls into this Jewish sea. Round its mouth is found a peculiar kind of sand which is mixed with native soda and smelted into glass. Small though the beach is, its product is inexhaustible.

8 The greater part of the population live in scattered villages, but they also have towns. Jerusalem is the Jewish capital, and contained the temple, which was enormously wealthy. A first line of fortifications guarded the city, another the palace, and an innermost line enclosed the temple.[1] None but a Jew was allowed as far as the doors: none but the priests might cross the threshold.[2] When the East was in the hands of the Assyrians, Medes and Persians, they regarded the Jews as the meanest of their slaves. During the Macedonian ascendancy[3] King Antiochus[4] endeavoured to abolish their superstitions and to introduce Greek manners and customs. But Arsaces at that moment rebelled,[5] and the Parthian war prevented him from effecting any improvement in the character of this grim people. Then, when Macedon waned, as the Parthian power was not yet ripe and Rome was

[1] These were not concentric, but an enemy approaching from the north-west would have to carry all three before reaching the temple, which stood on Mount Moriah at the eastern extremity of the city.

[2] Cp. Luke i. 8–10, where Zacharias entered the temple to burn incense, 'and the whole multitude of the people were praying without.'

[3] The Seleucids. [4] Antiochus Epiphanes (176–164 B. C.).

[5] This was really in the reign of Antiochus II (260–245 B. C.).

still far away, they took kings of their own.[1] The mob were fickle and drove them out. However, they recovered their throne by force; banished their countrymen, sacked cities, slew their brothers, wives, and parents, and committed all the usual kingly crimes. But this only fostered the hold of the Jewish religion, since the kings had strengthened their authority by assuming the priesthood.

9 Cnaeus Pompeius was the first Roman to subdue the Jews and set foot in their temple by right of conquest.[2] It was then first realized that the temple contained no image of any god: their sanctuary was empty, their mysteries meaningless. The walls of Jerusalem were destroyed, but the temple was left standing. Later, during the Roman civil wars, when the eastern provinces had come under the control of Mark Antony, the Parthian Prince Pacorus seized Judaea,[3] and was killed by Publius Ventidius. The Parthians were driven back over the Euphrates, and Caius Sosius[4] subdued the Jews. Antony gave the kingdom to Herod,[5] and Augustus, after his victory, enlarged it. After Herod's death, somebody called

[1] Of the Hasmonean or Maccabean family.

[2] 63 B.C. when he was called in to decide between Aristobulus II and Hyrcanus.

[3] At the invitation of the Maccabean Antigonus, who thus recovered the throne.

[4] Ventidius and Sosius were Antony's officers. The former was famous as having begun life as a mule-driver and risen to be a consul and to hold the first triumph over the Parthians.

[5] Herod the Great, who on the return of Antigonus had fled to Rome and chosen the winning side.

Simon,[1] without awaiting the emperor's decision, forcibly assumed the title of king. He was executed by Quintilius Varus, who was Governor of Syria ; the Jews were repressed and the kingdom divided between three of Herod's sons.[2] Under Tiberius all was quiet. Caligula ordered them to put up his statue in the temple. They preferred war to that. But Caligula's death put an end to the rising.[3] In Claudius' reign the kings had all either died or lost most of their territory. The emperor therefore made Judaea a province to be governed by Roman knights or freedmen. One of these, Antonius Felix,[4] indulged in every kind of cruelty and immorality, wielding a king's authority with all the instincts of a slave. He had married Drusilla, a granddaughter of Antony and Cleopatra, so that he was Antony's grandson-in-law, while Claudius was Antony's grandson.[5]

The Jews endured such oppression patiently until 10
the time of Gessius Florus,[6] under whom war broke out. Cestius Gallus, the Governor of Syria, tried to crush it, but met with more reverses than victories. He died, either in the natural course or perhaps of disgust, and Nero sent out Vespasian, who, in a couple of campaigns,[7] thanks to his reputation, good fortune, and able subordinates, had the whole of the country

[1] One of Herod's slaves.

[2] Archelaus, Herod Antipas, and Philip. [3] A. D. 40.

[4] A freedman, Procurator of Judaea, A. D. 52–60 (cp. Acts xxiv).

[5] Claudius' mother, Antonia, was the daughter of Antony's first marriage. [6] A. D. 64–66. [7] A. D. 67 and 68.

districts and all the towns except Jerusalem under the heel of his victorious army. The next year[1] was taken up with civil war, and passed quietly enough as far as the Jews were concerned. But peace once restored in Italy, foreign troubles began again with feelings embittered on our side by the thought that the Jews were the only people who had not given in. At the same time it seemed best to leave Titus at the head of the army to meet the eventualities of the new reign, whether good or bad.

II Thus, as we have already seen,[2] Titus pitched his camp before the walls of Jerusalem and proceeded to display his legions in battle order. The Jews formed up at the foot of their own walls, ready, if successful, to venture further, but assured of their retreat in case of reverse. A body of cavalry and some light-armed foot were sent forward, and fought an indecisive engagement, from which the enemy eventually retired. During the next few days a series of skirmishes took place in front of the gates, and at last continual losses drove the Jews behind their walls. The Romans then determined to take it by storm. It seemed undignified to sit and wait for the enemy to starve, and the men all clamoured for the risks, some being really brave, while many others were wild and greedy for plunder. Titus himself had the vision of Rome with all her wealth and pleasures before his eyes, and felt that their enjoyment was postponed unless Jerusalem fell at once. The city, however, stands high and is

[1] A. D. 69. [2] Chap. 1.

fortified with works strong enough to protect a city standing on the plain. Two enormous hills[1] were surrounded by walls ingeniously built so as to project or slope inwards and thus leave the flanks of an attacking party exposed to fire. The rocks were jagged at the top. The towers, where the rising ground helped, were sixty feet high, and in the hollows as much as a hundred and twenty. They are a wonderful sight and seem from a distance to be all of equal height. Within this runs another line of fortification surrounding the palace, and on a conspicuous height stands the Antonia, a castle named by Herod in honour of Mark Antony.

The temple was built like a citadel with walls of 12
its own, on which more care and labour had been spent than on any of the others. Even the cloisters surrounding the temple formed a splendid rampart. There was a never-failing spring of water,[2] catacombs hollowed out of the hills, and pools or cisterns for holding the rain-water. Its original builders had foreseen that the peculiarities of Jewish life would lead to frequent wars, consequently everything was ready for the longest of sieges. Besides this, when Pompey took the city, bitter experience taught them

[1] Jerusalem stands on a rock which rises into three main hills, Zion (south), Acra (north), and Moriah (east). It is not clear to which two of these Tacitus alludes; probably Zion and Moriah.

[2] Of this no traces remain, and the tradition may have been based on the metaphorical prophecy that a fount of living water would issue from the Sanctuary.

several lessons, and in the days of Claudius they had taken advantage of his avarice to buy rights of fortification, and built walls in peace-time as though war were imminent. Their numbers were now swelled by floods of human refuse and unfortunate refugees from other towns.[1] All the most desperate characters in the country had taken refuge there, which did not conduce to unity. They had three armies, each with its own general. The outermost and largest line of wall was held by Simon; the central city by John, and the temple by Eleazar.[2] John and Simon were stronger than Eleazar in numbers and equipment, but he had the advantage of a strong position. Their relations mainly consisted of fighting, treachery, and arson: a large quantity of corn was burnt. Eventually, under pretext of offering a sacrifice, John sent a party of men to massacre Eleazar and his troops, and by this means gained possession of the temple.[3] Thus Jerusalem was divided into two hostile parties, but on the approach of the Romans the necessities of foreign warfare reconciled their differences.

13 Various portents had occurred at this time, but so sunk in superstition are the Jews and so opposed to all religious practices that they think it wicked

[1] i. e. the Galilean towns captured by Vespasian in A.D. 67 and 68.

[2] Simon was a bandit from the east of Jordan; John of Gischala headed a party of refugees from Galilee; Eleazar was the leader of the Jewish war-party, and related to the high priests.

[3] They submitted to John's authority and were not killed.

to avert the threatened evil by sacrifices[1] or vows. Embattled armies were seen to meet in the sky with flashing arms, and the temple shone with sudden fire from heaven. The doors of the shrine suddenly opened, a supernatural voice was heard calling the gods out, and at once there began a mighty movement of departure. Few took alarm at all this. Most people held the belief that, according to the ancient priestly writings, this was the moment at which the East was fated to prevail: they would now start forth from Judaea and conquer the world.[2] This enigmatic prophecy really applied to Vespasian and Titus. But men are blinded by their hopes. The Jews took to themselves the promised destiny, and even defeat could not convince them of the truth. The number of the besieged, men and women of every age, is stated to have reached six hundred thousand. There were arms for all who could carry them, and far more were ready to fight than would be expected from their total numbers. The women were as determined as the men: if they were forced to leave their homes they had more to fear in life than in death.

Such was the city and such the people with which

[1] 'Ye shall not . . . use enchantments, nor practise augury' (Lev. xix. 26).

[2] e. g. 'And in the days of those kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed, nor shall the sovereignty thereof be left to another people; but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms' (Dan. ii. 44). The Jews were looking for Messiah: the Romans thought of Vespasian.

Titus was faced. As the nature of the ground forbade a sudden assault, he determined to employ siege-works and penthouse shelters. The work was accordingly divided among the legions, and there was a truce to fighting until they had got ready every means of storming a town that had ever been devised by experience or inventive ingenuity.

The End of the German Revolt

14 After the severe reverse at Trier[1] Civilis recruited his army in Germany, and pitched his camp near Vetera. The position was a safe one, and he hoped to inspirit his native troops with the memory of their former victories there.[2] Cerialis followed in his footsteps, with forces now doubled by the arrival of the Second,[3] Thirteenth, and Fourteenth legions, besides auxiliary troops, both horse and foot,[4] who had long received their summons and came hurrying on the news of victory. Neither general was dilatory, but a vast plain lay between them. It was by nature swampy, and Civilis had built a dam projecting into the Rhine, which stemmed the current and flooded the adjacent fields. The treacherous nature of the ground, where the shallows were hard to find, told against our men, who were heavily armed and afraid

[1] iv. 78. [2] Cp. iv. 28, 33, 35. [3] Adiutrix.

[4] Before this Cerialis had five legions, I, IV, XVI, XXI, and XXII, but of these only XXI was in full force, so these new reinforcements may have doubled his army. The auxiliaries had been called out by Hordeonius Flaccus (iv. 24).

of swimming. The Germans, on the other hand, were used to rivers, lightly armed, and tall enough to keep their heads above water.

Provoked by the Batavi, the bravest of our troops 15
opened the engagement at once, but soon fell into a panic when their arms and horses began to sink in the deep marshes. The Germans, who knew the fords, came leaping across them, often leaving our front alone and running round to the flanks or the rear. It was not like an infantry engagement at close quarters, but more like a naval battle. The men floundered about in the water or, finding firm foothold, strove with all their might for possession of it. Thus, wounded and whole, those who could swim and those who could not, struggled helplessly with each other and perished all alike. However, considering the confusion, our loss was less than might have been expected, for the Germans, not daring to venture out of the marsh, withdrew to their camp. The result of this engagement gave each of the generals a different motive for hastening on a decisive battle. Civilis wanted to follow up his success, Cerialis to wipe out his disgrace. Success stimulated the pride of the Germans; the Romans thrilled with shame. The natives spent the night singing uproariously, while our men muttered angry threats.

At daybreak Cerialis formed up his cavalry and the 16
auxiliary cohorts on his front, with the legions behind them, while he himself held a picked body in reserve for emergencies. Civilis did not deploy his line, but

halted them in columns,[1] with the Batavi and Cugerni[2] on his right, and the forces from across the Rhine[3] near the river on the left. Neither general followed the usual custom of haranguing the whole army. They rode along and addressed their various divisions in turn. Cerialis spoke of the ancient glory of the Roman name and of all their victories old and new. He urged them 'to blot out for ever their treacherous and cowardly enemy whom they had already beaten. They had to punish not to fight them. They had just fought against superior numbers and had yet routed the Germans, and, moreover, the pick of their troops. This remnant had their hearts full of panic and all their wounds behind them.' He then gave special encouragement to each of the legions, calling the Fourteenth the conquerors of Britain,[4] reminding the Sixth that the influence of their example had set Galba on the throne,[5] and telling the Second that in the coming fight they would for the first time dedicate their new colours and their new eagle to Rome's service.[6] Then riding along to the German army,[7] he pointed with his hand and bade them recover their own river-bank and their own camp[8] at the enemy's expense. They all cheered with hearts the lighter for his words. Some longed for

[1] Perhaps 'in wedge-formation' (see p. 117, note 1).
[2] Cp. iv. 26.
[3] Bructeri, Tencteri, &c. (cp. iv. 23).
[4] Cp. ii. 11.
[5] Cp. iii. 44.
[6] They had been newly enrolled (see iv. 68).
[7] i. e. the Roman army of occupation which had joined the Gauls and come over again.
[8] Vetera.

battle after a long spell of quiet : others were weary of war and pined for peace, hoping that the future would bring them rest and recompense.

Nor was there silence in Civilis' lines. As he formed 17
them up he appealed to the spot as evidence of their valour. The Germans and Batavians were standing, he told them, ' on the field of their glory, trampling the charred bones of Roman soldiers under foot. Wherever the Romans turned their eyes they saw nothing but menacing reminders of surrender and defeat. They must not be alarmed by that sudden change of fortune in the battle at Trier. It was their own victory which hampered the Germans there : they had dropped their weapons and filled their hands with loot. Since then everything had gone in their favour and against the Romans. He had taken every possible precaution, as befitted a cunning general. They themselves were familiar with these soaking plains, but the swamps would be a deadly trap for the enemy. They had the Rhine and the gods of Germany before their eyes, and in the might of these they must go to battle, remembering their wives and parents and their fatherland. This day would either gild the glory of their ancestors or earn the execration of posterity.' They applauded his words according to their custom by dancing and clashing their arms, and then opened the battle with showers of stones and leaden balls and other missiles, trying to lure on our men, who had not yet entered the marsh.

Their missiles exhausted, the enemy warmed to their 18
work and made an angry charge. Thanks to their

great height and their very long spears they could thrust from some distance at our men, who were floundering and slipping about in the marsh. While this went on, a column [1] of Batavi swam across from the dam which, as we described above,[2] had been built out into the Rhine. This started a panic and the line of our auxiliaries began to be driven back. Then the legions took up the fight and equalized matters by staying the enemy's wild charge. Meanwhile a Batavian deserter approached Cerialis, avowing that he could take the enemy in the rear if the cavalry were sent round the edge of the swamp: the ground was solid there, and the Cugerni, whose task it was to keep watch, were off their guard. Two squadrons of horse were sent with the deserter, and succeeded in outflanking the unsuspecting enemy. The legions in front, when the din told them what had happened, redoubled their efforts. The Germans were beaten and fled to the Rhine. This day might have brought the war to an end, had the Roman fleet [3] arrived in time. As it was, even the cavalry were prevented from pursuit by a sudden downpour of rain shortly before nightfall.

19 On the next day the Fourteenth legion were sent to join Annius Gallus [4] in Upper Germany, and their place in Cerialis' army was filled by the Tenth from Spain. Civilis was reinforced by the Chauci.[5] Feeling

[1] See p. 220, note 1.
[2] Chap. 14.
[3] Stationed in the Rhine (see chap. 21).
[4] Cp. iv. 68.
[5] Cp. iv. 79.

that he was not strong enough to hold the Batavian capital,[1] he took whatever was portable with him, burnt everything else, and retired into the island. He knew that the Romans had not enough ships to build a bridge, and that they had no other means of getting across. He also destroyed the mole built by Drusus Germanicus.[2] As the bed of the Rhine here falls towards Gaul, his removal of all obstacles gave it free course; the river was practically diverted, and the channel between the Germans and the island became so small and dry as to form no barrier between them. Tutor and Classicus also crossed the Rhine,[3] together with a hundred and thirteen town-councillors from Trier, among whom was Alpinius Montanus, who, as we have already seen,[4] had been sent by Antonius Primus into Gaul. He was accompanied by his brother. By arousing sympathy and by offering presents, the others, too, were all busy raising reinforcements among these eagerly adventurous tribes.

The war was far from being over. Dividing his 20
forces, Civilis suddenly made a simultaneous attack on all four Roman garrisons—the Tenth at Arenacum, the Second at Batavodurum, and the auxiliary horse and

[1] ? Cleves.

[2] This mole, begun by Drusus in A. D. 9, was built out from the left bank of the Rhine near Cleves. It turned most of the water into the Lek, thus making the island easily accessible from the Roman side and barring access from the north. Civilis now reversed this position. His friends were now on the north. The swollen Waal would be an obstacle to the Romans.

[3] i. e. the Waal.

[4] See iii. 35.

foot at Grinnes and at Vada.[1] Civilis himself, Verax his nephew, Classicus and Tutor each led one of the attacking parties. They could not hope all to be successful, but reckoned that, if they made several ventures, fortune would probably favour one or the other. Besides, Cerialis, they supposed, was off his guard; on receiving news from several places at once he would hurry from one garrison to another, and might be cut off on his way. The party told off against the Tenth considered it no light task to storm a legion, so they fell on the soldiers, who had come outside to cut timber, and killed the camp-prefect, five senior centurions, and a handful of the men. The rest defended themselves in the trenches. Meanwhile another party of Germans endeavoured to break the bridge[2] which had been begun at Batavodurum, but nightfall put an end to the battle before it was won.

21 The attack on Grinnes and Vada proved more formidable. Civilis led the assault on Vada, Classicus on Grinnes. Nothing could stop them. The bravest of the defenders had fallen, among them, commanding a cavalry squadron, Briganticus, whom we have seen already, as a faithful ally of Rome and a bitter enemy of his uncle Civilis.[3] However, when Cerialis came to the rescue with a picked troop of horse, the tables were turned, and the Germans were

[1] These places cannot be certainly identified. They must have lain on the south of the Waal, probably east and west of Nymwegen.

[2] Across the now swollen Waal. [3] See iv. 70.

driven headlong into the river. While Civilis was trying to stop the rout he was recognized, and finding himself a target, he left his horse and swam across the river. Verax escaped in the same way, while some boats put in to fetch Tutor and Classicus.

Even now the Roman fleet had not joined the army. They had, indeed, received orders, but fear held them back, and the rowers were employed on various duties elsewhere. It must be admitted, also, that Cerialis did not give them time enough to carry out his orders. He was a man of sudden resolves and brilliant successes. Even when his strategy had failed, good luck always came to his rescue. Thus neither he nor his army cared much about discipline. A few days later, again, he narrowly escaped being taken prisoner and did not escape disgrace. He had gone to Novaesium and Bonn 22
to inspect the winter quarters that were being built for his legions, and was returning with the fleet.[1] The Germans noticed that his escort [2] straggled, and that watch was carelessly kept at night. So they planned a surprise. Choosing a night black with clouds they slipped down stream and made their way unmolested into the camp.[3] For the first onslaught they called cunning to their aid. They cut the tent-ropes and slaughtered the soldiers as they struggled under their own canvas. Another party fell on the ships, threw

[1] Which he had found on his way.

[2] Marching along the bank.

[3] Pitched on the left bank somewhere between Novaesium and Vetera. The German assailants were probably Tencteri.

hawsers aboard, and towed them off. Having surprised the camp in dead silence, when once the carnage began they added to the panic by making the whole place ring with shouts. Awakened by their wounds the Romans hunted for weapons and rushed along the streets,[1] some few in uniform, most of them with their clothes wrapped round their arms and a drawn sword in their hand. The general, who was half-asleep and almost naked, was only saved by the enemy's mistake. His flag-ship being easily distinguishable, they carried it off, thinking he was there. But Cerialis had been spending the night elsewhere; as most people believed, carrying on an intrigue with a Ubian woman named Claudia Sacrata. The sentries sheltered their guilt under the general's disgrace, pretending that they had orders to keep quiet and not disturb him: so they had dispensed with the bugle-call and the challenge on rounds, and dropped off to sleep themselves. In full daylight the enemy sailed off with their captive vessels and towed the flag-ship up the Lippe as an offering to Veleda.[2]

23 Civilis was now seized with a desire to make a naval display. He manned all the available biremes and all the ships with single banks of oars, and added to this fleet an immense number of small craft. These carry thirty or forty men apiece and are rigged like Illyrian cruisers.[3] The small craft he had captured[4] were

[1] Dividing the different portions of the camp.

[2] Cp. iv. 61. [3] Cp. ii. 16.

[4] See chap. 22 and iv. 16 and 79. But the ships captured

worked with bright, parti-coloured plaids, which served as sails and made a fine show. He chose for review the miniature sea of water where the Rhine comes pouring down to the ocean through the mouth of the Maas.[1] His reason for the demonstration—apart from Batavian vanity—was to scare away the provision-convoys that were already on their way from Gaul. Cerialis, who was less alarmed than astonished, at once formed up a fleet. Though inferior in numbers, he had the advantage of larger ships, experienced rowers, and clever pilots. The Romans had the stream with them, the Germans the wind. So they sailed past each other, and after trying a few shots with light missiles they parted. Civilis without more ado retired across the Rhine.[2] Cerialis vigorously laid waste the island of the Batavi, and employed the common device of leaving Civilis's houses and fields untouched.[3] They were now well into autumn. The heavy equinoctial rains had set the river in flood and thus turned the marshy, low-lying island into a sort of lake. Neither fleet nor provision-convoys had arrived, and their camp on the flat plain began to be washed away by the force of the current.

by Civilis were not small craft. Perhaps *luntres* is here repeated from the preceding sentence by mistake for *naves* or *puppes*.

[1] The de Noord channel carries the combined waters of the Maas and the Waal into the Lek a few miles above Rotterdam. From the point of this confluence to the sea the Lek takes the name of Maas.

[2] Into the country of the Frisii up toward the Zuyder Zee.

[3] To make his party suspect that he was in league with the Romans.

24 Civilis afterwards claimed that at this point the Germans could have crushed the Roman legions and wanted to do so, but that he had cunningly dissuaded them. Nor does this seem far from true, since his surrender followed in a few days' time. Cerialis had been sending secret messages, promising the Batavians peace and Civilis pardon, urging Veleda and her relatives[1] to change the fortune of a war that had only brought disaster after disaster, by doing a timely service to Rome.[2] 'The Treviri,' he reminded them, 'had been slaughtered; the allegiance of the Ubii recovered; the Batavians robbed of their home. By supporting Civilis they had gained nothing but bloodshed, banishment, and bereavement. He was a fugitive exile, a burden to those who harboured him. Besides, they had earned blame enough by crossing the Rhine so often: if they took any further steps,—from the one side they might expect insult and injury, from the other vengeance and the wrath of heaven.'

25 Thus Cerialis mingled threats and promises. The loyalty of the tribes across the Rhine was shaken, and murmurs began to make themselves heard among the Batavi. 'How much further is our ruin to go?' they asked. 'One tribe cannot free the whole world from the yoke. What good have we done by slaughtering and burning Roman legions except to bring out others, larger and stronger? If it was to help Vespasian that we have fought so vigorously, Vespasian is master of the world. If we are challenging Rome—what an

[1] Cp. iv. 65. [2] i. e. by betraying Civilis to them.

infinitesimal fraction of the human race we Batavians are! We must remember what burdens Raetia and Noricum and all Rome's other allies bear. From us they levy no tribute, only our manhood and our men.[1] That is next door to freedom. And, after all, if we have to choose our masters, it is less disgrace to put up with Roman emperors than with German priestesses.' Thus the common people: the chieftains used more violent language. 'It was Civilis' lunacy that had driven them to war. He wanted to remedy his private troubles[2] by ruining his country. The Batavians had incurred the wrath of heaven by blockading Roman legions, murdering Roman officers, and plunging into a war which was useful for one of them and deadly for the rest. Now they had reached the limit, unless they came to their senses and openly showed their repentance by punishing the culprit.'

Civilis was well aware of their changed feelings and 26
determined to forestall them. He was tired of hardship, and he felt, besides, that desire to live which so often weakens the resolution of the bravest spirits. He demanded an interview. The bridge over the river Nabalia[3] was broken down in the middle, and the two generals advanced on to the broken ends. Civilis began as follows: 'If I were defending myself before one of Vitellius' officers, I could expect neither

[1] Tacitus remarks in the *Germania* (chap. 29) that the Batavi do not suffer the indignity of paying tribute, but, 'like armour and weapons are reserved for use in war.'

[2] Cp. iv. 13. [3] Perhaps the Neue Yssel, near Arnhem.

pardon for my conduct nor credence for my words. Between him and me there has been nothing but hatred. He began the quarrel, I fostered it. Towards Vespasian I have from the beginning shown respect. When he was a private citizen, we were known as friends. Antonius Primus was aware of this when he wrote urging me to take up arms to prevent the legions from Germany and the Gallic levies from crossing the Alps.[1] The instructions which Antonius gave in his letter Hordeonius Flaccus ratified by word of mouth. I raised the standard in Germania, as did Mucianus in Syria, Aponius in Moesia, Flavianus in Pannonia . . .'

[The rest is lost.]

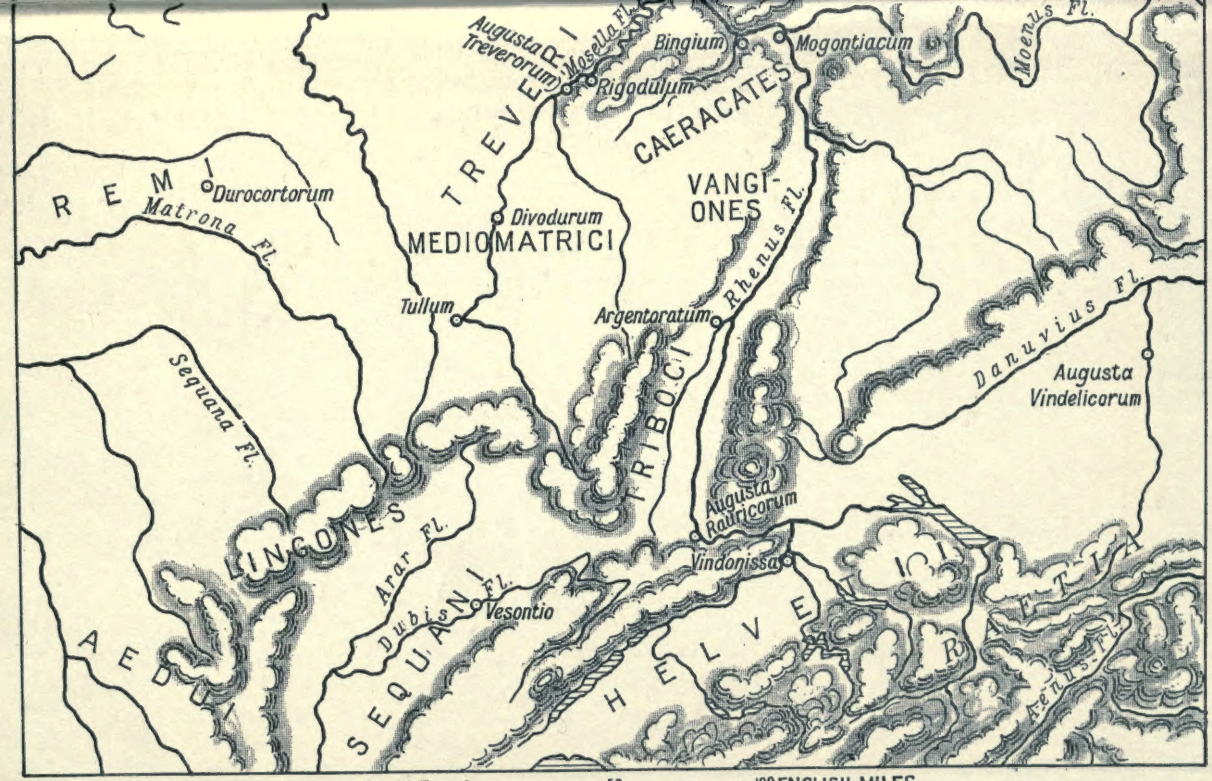
[1] Cp. iv. 13, 32.

INDEX OF NAMES

[The references are to the chapters of the Latin text as given in the margin. The Roman numerals denote the book.]

OXFORD: HORACE HART
PRINTER TO THE UNIVERSITY


FRISII
CANNINEFATES
BATAVI
Lugdunum Batavorum
Arenacum?
Nabalia Fl.
BRUCTERI
CHAUCI
Visurgis Fl.
Albis Fl.
?Batavodurum
CUGERNI
Castra Vetera
Lupia Fl.
MARSI
Asciburgium
Gelduba
Novaesium
TENCTERI
Colonia Agrippinensis
MORI-NI
MARSACI
BAETASII
NERVII
Scaldis Fl.
Mosa Fl.
UBII
TUNGRI
Marcodurum
Tolbiacum
Bonna
USIPI
CHATTI
Confluentes


Augusta Treverorum
Mosella Fl.
Bingium
Mogontiacum
Moenus Fl.
Rigodulum
TREVERI
CAERACATES
VANGIONES
REMI
Durocortorum
Matrona Fl.
Divodurum
MEDIOMATRICI
Rhenus Fl.
Tullum
Argentoratum
TRIBOCI
Danuvius Fl.
Augusta Vindelicorum
Sequana Fl.
Augusta Rauricorum
LINGONES
Arar Fl.
Vindonissa
Dubis Fl.
Vesontio
SEQUANI
HELVETII
AEDUI
Aenus Fl.
SCALE 0 50 100 ENGLISH MILES