

**THE
GERMAN
Y

AND THE
AGRICOL
A

OF
TACITUS.**

THE OXFORD
TRANSLATION REVISED,
WITH NOTES.

By Tacitus

*With An Introduction
By Edward Brooks, Jr.*

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INTRODUCTI ON.

Very little is known concerning the life of Tacitus, the historian, except that which he tells us in his own writings and those incidents which are related of him by his contemporary, Pliny.

His full name was Caius Cornelius Tacitus. The date of his birth can only be arrived at by conjecture, and then only approximately. The younger Pliny speaks of him as *prope modum aequales*, about the same age. Pliny was born in 61. Tacitus, however, occupied the office of quaestor under Vespasian in 78 A.D., at which time he must, therefore, have been at least twenty-five years of age. This would fix the date of his birth not later than 53 A.D. It is probable, therefore, that Tacitus was Pliny's senior by several years.

His parentage is also a matter of pure conjecture. The name Cornelius was a common one among the Romans, so that from it we can draw no inference. The fact that at an early age he occupied a prominent public office indicates that he was born of good family, and it is not impossible that his father was a certain Cornelius Tacitus, a Roman knight, who was procurator in Belgic Gaul, and whom the elder Pliny speaks of in his "Natural History."

Of the early life of Tacitus and the training which he underwent preparatory to those literary efforts which afterwards rendered him a conspicuous figure among Roman literateurs we know absolutely nothing.

Of the events of his life which transpired after he attained man's estate we know but little beyond that which he himself has recorded in his writings. He occupied a position of some eminence as a pleader at the Roman bar, and in 77 A.D. married the daughter of Julius Agricola, a humane and honorable citizen, who was at that time consul and was subsequently appointed governor of Britain. It is quite possible that this very advantageous alliance hastened his promotion to the office of quaestor under Vespasian.

Under Domitian, in 88, Tacitus was appointed one of fifteen commissioners to preside at the celebration of the secular games. In the same year he held the office of

praetor, and was a member of one of the most select of the old priestly colleges, in which a pre-requisite of membership was that a man should be born of a good family.

The following year he appears to have left Rome, and it is possible that he visited Germany and there obtained his knowledge and information respecting the manners and customs of its people which he makes the subject of his work known as the "Germany."

He did not return to Rome until 93, after an absence of four years, during which time his father-in-law died.

Some time between the years 93 and 97 he was elected to the senate, and during this time witnessed the judicial murders of many of Rome's best citizens which were perpetrated under the reign of Nero. Being himself a senator, he felt that he was not entirely guiltless of the crimes which were committed, and in his "Agricola" we find him giving expression to this feeling in the following words: "Our own hands dragged Helvidius to prison; ourselves were tortured with the spectacle of Mauricus and Rusticus, and sprinkled with the innocent blood of Senecio."

In 97 he was elected to the consulship as successor to Virginius Rufus, who died during his term of office and at whose funeral Tacitus delivered an oration in such a manner to cause Pliny to say, "The good fortune of Virginius was crowned by having the most eloquent of panegyrists."

In 99 Tacitus was appointed by the senate, together with Pliny, to conduct the prosecution against a great political offender, Marius Priscus, who, as proconsul of Africa, had corruptly mismanaged the affairs of his province. We have his associate's testimony that Tacitus made a most eloquent and dignified reply to the arguments which were urged on the part of the defence. The prosecution was successful, and both Pliny and Tacitus were awarded a vote of thanks by the senate for their eminent and effectual efforts in the management of the case.

The exact date of Tacitus's death is not known, but in his "Annals" he seems to hint at the successful extension of the Emperor Trajan's eastern campaigns during the years 115 to 117, so that it is probable that he lived until the year 117.

Tacitus had a widespread reputation during his lifetime. On one occasion it is related of him that as he sat in the circus at the celebration of some games, a Roman knight asked him whether he was from Italy or the provinces. Tacitus answered, "You know me from your reading," to which the knight quickly replied, "Are you then Tacitus or Pliny?"

It is also worthy of notice that the Emperor Marcus Claudius Tacitus, who reigned during the third century, claimed to be descended from the historian, and directed that ten copies of his works should be published every year and placed in the public libraries.

The list of the extant works of Tacitus is as follows: the "Germany;" the "Life of Agricola;" the "Dialogue on Orators;" the "Histories," and the "Annals."

The following pages contain translations of the first two of these works. The "Germany," the full title of which is "Concerning the situation, manners and inhabitants of Germany," contains little of value from a historical standpoint. It describes with vividness the fierce and independent spirit of the German nations, with many suggestions as to the dangers in which the empire stood of these people. The "Agricola" is a biographical sketch of the writer's father-in-law, who, as has been said, was a distinguished man and governor of Britain. It is one of the author's earliest works and was probably written shortly after the death of Domitian, in 96. This work, short as it is, has always been considered an admirable specimen of biography on account of its grace and dignity of expression. Whatever else it may be, it is a graceful and affectionate tribute to an upright and excellent man.

The "Dialogue on Orators" treats of the decay of eloquence under the empire. It is in the form of a dialogue, and represents two eminent members of the Roman bar discussing the change for the worse that had taken place in the early education of the Roman youth.

The "Histories" relate the events which transpired in Rome, beginning with the ascension of Galba, in 68, and ending with the reign of Domitian, in 97. Only four books and a fragment of a fifth have been preserved to us. These books contain an account of the brief reigns of Galba, Otho and Vitellius. The portion of the fifth book which has been preserved contains an interesting, though rather biased, account of the character, customs and religion of the Jewish nation viewed from the standpoint of a cultivated citizen of Rome.

The "Annals" contain the history of the empire from the death of Augustus, in 14, to the death of Nero, in 68, and originally consisted of sixteen books. Of these, only nine have come down to us in a state of entire preservation, and of the other seven we have but fragments of three. Out of a period of fifty-four years we have the history of about forty.

The style of Tacitus is, perhaps, noted principally for its conciseness. Tacitean brevity is proverbial, and many of his sentences are so brief, and leave so much for the student to read between the lines, that in order to be understood and appreciated the author must be read over and over again, lest the reader miss the point of some of his most excellent thoughts. Such an author presents grave, if not insuperable, difficulties to the translator, but notwithstanding this fact, the following pages cannot but impress the reader with the genius of Tacitus.

A TREATISE ON THE SITUATION, MANNERS AND INHABITANTS OF GERMANY. 1

1. Germany 2 is separated from Gaul, Rhaetia, 3 and Pannonia, 4 by the rivers Rhine and Danube; from Sarmatia and Dacia, by mountains 5 and mutual dread. The rest is surrounded by an ocean, embracing broad promontories 6 and vast insular tracts, 7 in which our military expeditions have lately discovered various nations and kingdoms. The Rhine, issuing from the inaccessible and precipitous summit of the Rhaetic Alps, 8 bends gently to the west, and falls into the Northern Ocean. The Danube, poured from the easy and gently raised ridge of Mount Abnoba, 9 visits several nations in its course, till at length it bursts out 10 by six channels 11 into the Pontic sea; a seventh is lost in marshes.

2. The people of Germany appear to me indigenous, 12 and free from intermixture with foreigners, either as settlers or casual visitants. For the emigrants of former ages performed their expeditions not by land, but by water; 13 and that immense, and, if I may so call it, hostile ocean, is rarely navigated by ships from our world. 14 Then, besides the danger of a boisterous and unknown sea, who would relinquish Asia, Africa, or Italy, for Germany, a land rude in its surface, rigorous in its climate, cheerless to every beholder and cultivator, except a native? In their ancient songs, 15 which are their only records or annals, they celebrate the god Tuisto, 16 sprung from the earth, and his son Mannus, as the fathers and founders of their race. To Mannus they ascribe three sons, from whose names 17 the people bordering on the ocean are called Ingaevones; those inhabiting the central parts, Herminones; the rest, Istaevones. Some, 18 however, assuming the licence of antiquity, affirm that there were more descendants of the god, from whom more appellations were derived; as those of the Marsi, 19 Gambrivii, 20 Suevi, 21 and Vandali; 22 and that these are the genuine and original names. 23 That of Germany, on the other hand, they assert to be a modern addition; 24 for that the people who first crossed the Rhine, and expelled the Gauls, and are now called Tungri, were then named Germans; which appellation of a particular tribe, not of a whole people, gradually prevailed; so that the title of Germans, first assumed by the victors in order to excite terror, was afterwards adopted by the nation

in general. [25](#) They have likewise the tradition of a Hercules [26](#) of their country, whose praises they sing before those of all other heroes as they advance to battle.

3. A peculiar kind of verses is also current among them, by the recital of which, termed "barding," [27](#) they stimulate their courage; while the sound itself serves as an augury of the event of the impending combat. For, according to the nature of the cry proceeding from the line, terror is inspired or felt: nor does it seem so much an articulate song, as the wild chorus of valor. A harsh, piercing note, and a broken roar, are the favorite tones; which they render more full and sonorous by applying their mouths to their shields. [28](#) Some conjecture that Ulysses, in the course of his long and fabulous wanderings, was driven into this ocean, and landed in Germany; and that Asciburgium, [29](#) a place situated on the Rhine, and at this day inhabited, was founded by him, and named *Askipurgion*. They pretend that an altar was formerly discovered here, consecrated to Ulysses, with the name of his father Laertes subjoined; and that certain monuments and tombs, inscribed with Greek characters, [30](#) are still extant upon the confines of Germany and Rhaetia. These allegations I shall neither attempt to confirm nor to refute: let every one believe concerning them as he is disposed.

4. I concur in opinion with those who deem the Germans never to have intermarried with other nations; but to be a race, pure, unmixed, and stamped with a distinct character. Hence a family likeness pervades the whole, though their numbers are so great: eyes stern and blue; ruddy hair; large bodies, [31](#) powerful in sudden exertions, but impatient of toil and labor, least of all capable of sustaining thirst and heat. Cold and hunger they are accustomed by their climate and soil to endure.

5. The land, though varied to a considerable extent in its aspect, is yet universally shagged with forests, or deformed by marshes: moister on the side of Gaul, more bleak on the side of Norieum and Pannonia. [32](#) It is productive of grain, but unkindly to fruit-trees. [33](#) It abounds in flocks and herds, but in general of a small breed. Even the beeve kind are destitute of their usual stateliness and dignity of head: [34](#) they are, however, numerous, and form the most esteemed, and, indeed, the only species of wealth. Silver and gold the gods, I know not whether in their favor or anger, have denied to this country. [35](#) Not that I would assert that no veins of these metals are generated in Germany; for who has made the search? The possession of them is not coveted by these people as it is by us. Vessels of silver are indeed to be seen among them, which have been presented to their ambassadors and chiefs; but they are held in no higher estimation than earthenware. The borderers, however, set a value on gold and silver for the purpose of commerce, and have learned to distinguish several kinds of our coin, some of which they prefer to others: the remoter inhabitants continue the more simple and ancient usage of bartering commodities. The money preferred by the Germans is the old and well-known species, such as the *Serrati* and *Bigati*. [36](#) They are also better pleased with silver than gold; [37](#) not on account of any fondness for that metal, but because the smaller money is more convenient in their common and petty merchandise.

6. Even iron is not plentiful [38](#) among them; as may be inferred from the nature of their weapons. Swords or broad lances are seldom used; but they generally carry a spear, (called in their language *framea*, [39](#)) which has an iron blade, short and narrow, but so sharp and manageable, that, as occasion requires, they employ it either in close or distant fighting. [40](#) This spear and a shield are all the armor of the cavalry. The foot have, besides, missile weapons, several to each man, which they hurl to an immense distance. [41](#) They are either naked, [42](#) or lightly covered with a small mantle; and have no pride in equipage: their shields only are ornamented with the choicest colors. [43](#) Few are provided with a coat of mail; [44](#) and scarcely here and there one with a casque or helmet. [45](#) Their horses are neither remarkable for beauty nor swiftness, nor are they taught the various evolutions practised with us. The cavalry either bear down straight forwards, or wheel once to the right, in so compact a body that none is left behind the rest. Their principal strength, on the whole, consists in their infantry: hence in an engagement these are intermixed with the cavalry; [46](#) so Well accordant with the nature of equestrian combats is the agility of those foot soldiers, whom they select from the whole body of their youth, and place in the front of the line. Their number, too, is determined; a hundred from each canton: [47](#) and they are distinguished at home by a name expressive of this circumstance; so that what at first was only an appellation of number, becomes thenceforth a title of honor. Their line of battle is disposed in wedges. [48](#) To give ground, provided they rally again, is considered rather as a prudent strategem, than cowardice. They carry off their slain even while the battle remains undecided. The greatest disgrace that can befall them is to have abandoned their shields. [49](#) A person branded with this ignominy is not permitted to join in their religious rites, or enter their assemblies; so that many, after escaping from battle, have put an end to their infamy by the halter.

7. In the election of kings they have regard to birth; in that of generals, [50](#) to valor. Their kings have not an absolute or unlimited power; [51](#) and their generals command less through the force of authority, than of example. If they are daring, adventurous, and conspicuous in action, they procure obedience from the admiration they inspire. None, however, but the priests [52](#) are permitted to judge offenders, to inflict bonds or stripes; so that chastisement appears not as an act of military discipline, but as the instigation of the god whom they suppose present with warriors. They also carry with them to battle certain images and standards taken from the sacred groves. [53](#) It is a principal incentive to their courage, that their squadrons and battalions are not formed by men fortuitously collected, but by the assemblage of families and clans. Their pledges also are near at hand; they have within hearing the yells of their women, and the cries of their children. These, too, are the most revered witnesses of each man's conduct, these his most liberal applauders. To their mothers and their wives they bring their wounds for relief, nor do these dread to count or to search out the gashes. The women also administer food and encouragement to those who are fighting.

8. Tradition relates, that armies beginning to give way have been rallied by the females, through the earnestness of their supplications, the interposition of their bodies, [54](#) and the pictures they have drawn of impending slavery, [55](#) a calamity which these people bear with more impatience for their women than themselves; so that those states who have been obliged to give among their hostages the daughters of noble families, are the most effectually bound to fidelity. [56](#) They even suppose somewhat of sanctity and prescience to be inherent in the female sex; and therefore neither despise their counsels, [57](#) nor disregard their responses. [58](#) We have beheld, in the reign of Vespasian, Veleda, [59](#) long revered by many as a deity. Aurima, moreover, and several others, [60](#) were formerly held in equal veneration, but not with a servile flattery, nor as though they made them goddesses. [61](#)

9. Of the gods, Mercury [62](#) is the principal object of their adoration; whom, on certain days, [63](#) they think it lawful to propitiate even with human victims. To Hercules and Mars [64](#) they offer the animals usually allotted for sacrifice. [65](#) Some of the Suevi also perform sacred rites to Isis. What was the cause and origin of this foreign worship, I have not been able to discover; further than that her being represented with the symbol of a galley, seems to indicate an imported religion. [66](#) They conceive it unworthy the grandeur of celestial beings to confine their deities within walls, or to represent them under a human similitude: [67](#) woods and groves are their temples; and they affix names of divinity to that secret power, which they behold with the eye of adoration alone.

10. No people are more addicted to divination by omens and lots. The latter is performed in the following simple manner. They cut a twig [68](#) from a fruit-tree, and divide it into small pieces, which, distinguished by certain marks, are thrown promiscuously upon a white garment. Then, the priest of the canton, if the occasion be public; if private, the master of the family; after an invocation of the gods, with his eyes lifted up to heaven, thrice takes out each piece, and, as they come up, interprets their signification according to the marks fixed upon them. If the result prove unfavorable, there is no more consultation on the same affair that day; if propitious, a confirmation by omens is still required. In common with other nations, the Germans are acquainted with the practice of auguring from the notes and flight of birds; but it is peculiar to them to derive admonitions and presages from horses also. [69](#) Certain of these animals, milk-white, and untouched by earthly labor, are pastured at the public expense in the sacred woods and groves. These, yoked to a consecrated chariot, are accompanied by the priest, and king, or chief person of the community, who attentively observe their manner of neighing and snorting; and no kind of augury is more credited, not only among the populace, but among the nobles and priests. For the latter consider themselves as the ministers of the gods, and the horses, as privy to the divine will. Another kind of divination, by which they explore the event of momentous wars, is to oblige a prisoner, taken by any means whatsoever from the nation with whom they are at variance, to fight with a picked man of their own, each with his own country's arms; and, according as the victory falls, they presage success to the one or to the other party. [70](#)

11. On affairs of smaller moment, the chiefs consult; on those of greater importance, the whole community; yet with this circumstance, that what is referred to the decision of the people, is first maturely discussed by the chiefs. [71](#) They assemble, unless upon some sudden emergency, on stated days, either at the new or full moon, which they account the most auspicious season for beginning any enterprise. Nor do they, in their computation of time, reckon, like us, by the number of days, but of nights. In this way they arrange their business; in this way they fix their appointments; so that, with them, the night seems to lead the day. [72](#) An inconvenience produced by their liberty is, that they do not all assemble at a stated time, as if it were in obedience to a command; but two or three days are lost in the delays of convening. When they all think fit, [73](#) they sit down armed. [74](#) Silence is proclaimed by the priests, who have on this occasion a coercive power. Then the king, or chief, and such others as are conspicuous for age, birth, military renown, or eloquence, are heard; and gain attention rather from their ability to persuade, than their authority to command. If a proposal displease, the assembly reject it by an inarticulate murmur; if it prove agreeable, they clash their javelins; [75](#) for the most honorable expression of assent among them is the sound of arms.

12. Before this council, it is likewise allowed to exhibit accusations, and to prosecute capital offences. Punishments are varied according to the nature of the crime. Traitors and deserters are hung upon trees: [76](#) cowards, dastards, [77](#) and those guilty of unnatural practices, [78](#) are suffocated in mud under a hurdle. [79](#) This difference of punishment has in view the principle, that villainy should be exposed while it is punished, but turpitude concealed. The penalties annexed to slighter offences [80](#) are also proportioned to the delinquency. The convicts are fined in horses and cattle: [81](#) part of the mulct [82](#) goes to the king or state; part to the injured person, or his relations. In the same assemblies chiefs [83](#) are also elected, to administer justice through the cantons and districts. A hundred companions, chosen from the people, attended upon each of them, to assist them as well with their advice as their authority.

13. The Germans transact no business, public or private, without being armed: [84](#) but it is not customary for any person to assume arms till the state has approved his ability to use them. Then, in the midst of the assembly, either one of the chiefs, or the father, or a relation, equips the youth with a shield and javelin. [85](#) These are to them the manly gown; [86](#) this is the first honor conferred on youth: before this they are considered as part of a household; afterwards, of the state. The dignity of chieftain is bestowed even on mere lads, whose descent is eminently illustrious, or whose fathers have performed signal services to the public; they are associated, however, with those of mature strength, who have already been declared capable of service; nor do they blush to be seen in the rank of companions. [87](#) For the state of companionship itself has its several degrees, determined by the judgment of him whom they follow; and there is a great emulation among the companions, which shall possess the highest place in the favor of their chief; and among the chiefs, which shall excel in the number and valor of his

companions. It is their dignity, their strength, to be always surrounded with a large body of select youth, an ornament in peace, a bulwark in war. And not in his own country alone, but among the neighboring states, the fame and glory of each chief consists in being distinguished for the number and bravery of his companions. Such chiefs are courted by embassies; distinguished by presents; and often by their reputation alone decide a war.

14. In the field of battle, it is disgraceful for the chief to be surpassed in valor; it is disgraceful for the companions not to equal their chief; but it is reproach and infamy during a whole succeeding life to retreat from the field surviving him. [88](#) To aid, to protect him; to place their own gallant actions to the account of his glory, is their first and most sacred engagement. The chiefs fight for victory; the companions for their chief. If their native country be long sunk in peace and inaction, many of the young nobles repair to some other state then engaged in war. For, besides that repose is unwelcome to their race, and toils and perils afford them a better opportunity of distinguishing themselves; they are unable, without war and violence, to maintain a large train of followers. The companion requires from the liberality of his chief, the warlike steed, the bloody and conquering spear: and in place of pay, he expects to be supplied with a table, homely indeed, but plentiful. [89](#) The funds for this munificence must be found in war and rapine; nor are they so easily persuaded to cultivate the earth, and await the produce of the seasons, as to challenge the foe, and expose themselves to wounds; nay, they even think it base and spiritless to earn by sweat what they might purchase with blood.

15. During the intervals of war, they pass their time less in hunting than in a sluggish repose, [90](#) divided between sleep and the table. All the bravest of the warriors, committing the care of the house, the family affairs, and the lands, to the women, old men, and weaker part of the domestics, stupefy themselves in inaction: so wonderful is the contrast presented by nature, that the same persons love indolence, and hate tranquillity! [91](#) It is customary for the several states to present, by voluntary and individual contributions, [92](#) cattle or grain [93](#) to their chiefs; which are accepted as honorary gifts, while they serve as necessary supplies. [94](#) They are peculiarly pleased with presents from neighboring nations, offered not only by individuals, but by the community at large; such as fine horses, heavy armor, rich housings, and gold chains. We have now taught them also to accept of money. [95](#)

16. It is well known that none of the German nations inhabit cities; [96](#) or even admit of contiguous settlements. They dwell scattered and separate, as a spring, a meadow, or a grove may chance to invite them. Their villages are laid out, not like ours in rows of adjoining buildings; but every one surrounds his house with a vacant space, [97](#) either by way of security against fire, [98](#) or through ignorance of the art of building. For, indeed, they are unacquainted with the use of mortar and tiles; and for every purpose employ rude unshapen timber, fashioned with no regard to pleasing the eye. They bestow more than ordinary pains in coating certain parts of their buildings with a kind

of earth, so pure and shining that it gives the appearance of painting. They also dig subterraneous caves, [99](#) and cover them over with a great quantity of dung. These they use as winter-retreats, and granaries; for they preserve a moderate temperature; and upon an invasion, when the open country is plundered, these recesses remain unviolated, either because the enemy is ignorant of them, or because he will not trouble himself with the search. [100](#)

17. The clothing common to all is a sagum [101](#) fastened by a clasp, or, in want of that, a thorn. With no other covering, they pass whole days on the hearth, before the fire. The more wealthy are distinguished by a vest, not flowing loose, like those of the Sarmatians and Parthians, but girt close, and exhibiting the shape of every limb. They also wear the skins of beasts, which the people near the borders are less curious in selecting or preparing than the more remote inhabitants, who cannot by commerce procure other clothing. These make choice of particular skins, which they variegate with spots, and strips of the furs of marine animals, [102](#) the produce of the exterior ocean, and seas to us unknown. [103](#) The dress of the women does not differ from that of the men; except that they more frequently wear linen, [104](#) which they stain with purple; [105](#) and do not lengthen their upper garment into sleeves, but leave exposed the whole arm, and part of the breast.

18. The matrimonial bond is, nevertheless, strict and severe among them; nor is there anything in their manners more commendable than this. [106](#) Almost singly among the barbarians, they content themselves with one wife; a very few of them excepted, who, not through incontinence, but because their alliance is solicited on account of their rank, [107](#) practise polygamy. The wife does not bring a dowry to her husband, but receives one from him. [108](#) The parents and relations assemble, and pass their approbation on the presents—presents not adapted to please a female taste, or decorate the bride; but oxen, a caparisoned steed, a shield, spear, and sword. By virtue of these, the wife is espoused; and she in her turn makes a present of some arms to her husband. This they consider as the firmest bond of union; these, the sacred mysteries, the conjugal deities. That the woman may not think herself excused from exertions of fortitude, or exempt from the casualties of war, she is admonished by the very ceremonial of her marriage, that she comes to her husband as a partner in toils and dangers; to suffer and to dare equally with him, in peace and in war: this is indicated by the yoked oxen, the harnessed steed, the offered arms. Thus she is to live; thus to die. She receives what she is to return inviolate [109](#) and honored to her children; what her daughters-in-law are to receive, and again transmit to her grandchildren.

19. They live, therefore, fenced around with chastity; [110](#) corrupted by no seductive spectacles, [111](#) no convivial incitements. Men and women are alike unacquainted with clandestine correspondence. Adultery is extremely rare among so numerous a people. Its punishment is instant, and at the pleasure of the husband. He cuts off the hair [112](#) of the offender, strips her, and in presence of her relations expels her from his house, and pursues her with stripes through the whole village. [113](#) Nor is any indulgence shown to

a prostitute. Neither beauty, youth, nor riches can procure her a husband: for none there looks on vice with a smile, or calls mutual seduction the way of the world. Still more exemplary is the practice of those states [114](#) in which none but virgins marry, and the expectations and wishes of a wife are at once brought to a period. Thus, they take one husband as one body and one life; that no thought, no desire, may extend beyond him; and he may be loved not only as their husband, but as their marriage. [115](#) To limit the increase of children, [116](#) or put to death any of the later progeny [117](#) is accounted infamous: and good habits have there more influence than good laws elsewhere. [118](#)

20. In every house the children grow up, thinly and meanly clad, [119](#) to that bulk of body and limb which we behold with wonder. Every mother suckles her own children, and does not deliver them into the hands of servants and nurses. No indulgence distinguishes the young master from the slave. They lie together amidst the same cattle, upon the same ground, till age [120](#) separates, and valor marks out, the free-born. The youths partake late of the pleasures of love, [121](#) and hence pass the age of puberty unexhausted: nor are the virgins hurried into marriage; the same maturity, the same full growth is required: the sexes unite equally matched [122](#) and robust; and the children inherit the vigor of their parents. Children are regarded with equal affection by their maternal uncles [123](#) as by their fathers: some even consider this as the more sacred bond of consanguinity, and prefer it in the requisition of hostages, as if it held the mind by a firmer tie, and the family by a more extensive obligation. A person's own children, however, are his heirs and successors; and no wills are made. If there be no children, the next in order of inheritance are brothers, paternal and maternal uncles. The more numerous are a man's relations and kinsmen, the more comfortable is his old age; nor is it here any advantage to be childless. [124](#)

21. It is an indispensable duty to adopt the enmities [125](#) of a father or relation, as well as their friendships: these, however, are not irreconcilable or perpetual. Even homicide is atoned [126](#) by a certain fine in cattle and sheep; and the whole family accepts the satisfaction, to the advantage of the public weal, since quarrels are most dangerous in a free state. No people are more addicted to social entertainments, or more liberal in the exercise of hospitality. [127](#) To refuse any person whatever admittance under their roof, is accounted flagitious. [128](#) Every one according to his ability feasts his guest: when his provisions are exhausted, he who was late the host, is now the guide and companion to another hospitable board. They enter the next house uninvited, and are received with equal cordiality. No one makes a distinction with respect to the rights of hospitality, between a stranger and an acquaintance. The departing guest is presented with whatever he may ask for; and with the same freedom a boon is desired in return. They are pleased with presents; but think no obligation incurred either when they give or receive.

22. [129](#) [Their manner of living with their guest is easy and affable] As soon as they arise from sleep, which they generally protract till late in the day, they bathe, usually in warm water, [130](#) as cold weather chiefly prevails there. After bathing they take their meal, each on a distinct seat, and a a separate table. [131](#) Then they proceed, armed, to

business, and not less frequently to convivial parties, in which it is no disgrace to pass days and nights, without intermission, in drinking. The frequent quarrels that arise amongst them, when intoxicated, seldom terminate in abusive language, but more frequently in blood. [132](#) In their feasts, they generally deliberate on the reconciliation of enemies, on family alliances, on the appointment of chiefs, and finally on peace and war; conceiving that at no time the soul is more opened to sincerity, or warmed to heroism. These people, naturally void of artifice or disguise, disclose the most secret emotions of their hearts in the freedom of festivity. The minds of all being thus displayed without reserve, the subjects of their deliberation are again canvassed the next day; [133](#) and each time has its advantages. They consult when unable to dissemble; they determine when not liable to mistake.

23. Their drink is a liquor prepared from barley or wheat [134](#) brought by fermentation to a certain resemblance of wine. Those who border on the Rhine also purchase wine. Their food is simple; wild fruits, fresh venison, [135](#) or coagulated milk. [136](#) They satisfy hunger without seeking the elegances and delicacies of the table. Their thirst for liquor is not quenched with equal moderation. If their propensity to drunkenness be gratified to the extent of their wishes, intemperance proves as effectual in subduing them as the force of arms. [137](#)

24. They have only one kind of public spectacle, which is exhibited in every company. Young men, who make it their diversion, dance naked amidst drawn swords and presented spears. Practice has conferred skill at this exercise; and skill has given grace; but they do not exhibit for hire or gain: the only reward of this pastime, though a hazardous one, is the pleasure of the spectators. What is extraordinary, they play at dice, when sober, as a serious business: and that with such a desperate venture of gain or loss, that, when everything else is gone, they set their liberties and persons on the last throw. The loser goes into voluntary servitude; and, though the youngest and strongest, patiently suffers himself to be bound and sold. [138](#) Such is their obstinacy in a bad practice—they themselves call it honor. The slaves thus acquired are exchanged away in commerce, that the winner may get rid of the scandal of his victory.

25. The rest of their slaves have not, like ours, particular employments in the family allotted them. Each is the master of a habitation and household of his own. The lord requires from him a certain quantity of grain, cattle, or cloth, as from a tenant; and so far only the subjection of the slave extends. [139](#) His domestic offices are performed by his own wife and children. It is usual to scourge a slave, or punish him with chains or hard labor. They are sometimes killed by their masters; not through severity of chastisement, but in the heat of passion, like an enemy; with this difference, that it is done with impunity. [140](#) Freedmen are little superior to slaves; seldom filling any important office in the family; never in the state, except in those tribes which are under regal government. [141](#) There, they rise above the free-born, and even the nobles: in the rest, the subordinate condition of the freedmen is a proof of freedom.

26. Lending money upon interest, and increasing it by usury, [142](#) is unknown amongst them: and this ignorance more effectually prevents the practice than a prohibition would do. The lands are occupied by townships, [143](#) in allotments proportional to the number of cultivators; and are afterwards parcelled out among the individuals of the district, in shares according to the rank and condition of each person. [144](#) The wide extent of plain facilitates this partition. The arable lands are annually changed, and a part left fallow; nor do they attempt to make the most of the fertility and plenty of the soil, by their own industry in planting orchards, inclosing meadows, and watering gardens. Corn is the only product required from the earth: hence their year is not divided into so many seasons as ours; for, while they know and distinguish by name Winter, Spring, and Summer, they are unacquainted equally with the appellation and bounty of Autumn. [145](#)

27. Their funerals are without parade. [146](#) The only circumstance to which they attend, is to burn the bodies of eminent persons with some particular kinds of wood. Neither vestments nor perfumes are heaped upon the pile: [147](#) the arms of the deceased, and sometimes his horse, [148](#) are given to the flames. The tomb is a mound of turf. They condemn the elaborate and costly honours of monumental structures, as mere burthens to the dead. They soon dismiss tears and lamentations; slowly, sorrow and regret. They think it the women's part to bewail their friends, the men's to remember them.

28. This is the sum of what I have been able to learn concerning the origin and manners of the Germans in general. I now proceed to mention those particulars in which they differ from each other; and likewise to relate what nations have migrated from Germany into Gaul. That great writer, the deified Julius, asserts that the Gauls were formerly the superior people; [149](#) whence it is probable that some Gallic colonies passed over into Germany: for how small an obstacle would a river be to prevent any nation, as it increased in strength, from occupying or changing settlements as yet lying in common, and unappropriated by the power of monarchies! Accordingly, the tract betwixt the Hercynian forest and the rivers Rhine and Mayne was possessed by the Helvetii: [150](#) and that beyond, by the Boii; [151](#) both Gallic tribes. The name of Boiemum still remains, a memorial of the ancient settlement, though its inhabitants are now changed. [152](#) But whether the Aravisci [153](#) migrated into Pannonia from the Osi, [154](#) a German nation; or the Osi into Germany from the Aravisci; the language, institutions, and manners of both being still the same, is a matter of uncertainty; for, in their pristine state of equal indigence and equal liberty, the same advantages and disadvantages were common to both sides of the river. The Treveri [155](#) and Nervii [156](#) are ambitious of being thought of German origin; as if the reputation of this descent would distinguish them from the Gauls, whom they resemble in person and effeminacy. The Vangiones, Triboci, and Nemetes, [157](#) who inhabit the bank of the Rhine, are without doubt German tribes. Nor do the Ubii, [158](#) although they have been thought worthy of being made a Roman colony, and are pleased in bearing the name of Agrippinenses from their founder, blush to acknowledge their origin from Germany; from whence they formerly migrated, and for their approved fidelity were settled on the

bank of the Rhine, not that they might be guarded themselves, but that they might serve as a guard against invaders.

29. Of all these people, the most famed for valor are the Batavi; whose territories comprise but a small part of the banks of the Rhine, but consist chiefly of an island within it. [159](#) These were formerly a tribe of the Catti, who, on account of an intestine division, removed to their present settlements, in order to become a part of the Roman empire. They still retain this honor, together with a memorial of their ancient alliance; [160](#) for they are neither insulted by taxes, nor oppressed by farmers of the revenue. Exempt from fiscal burthens and extraordinary contributions, and kept apart for military use alone, they are reserved, like a magazine of arms, for the purposes of war. The nation of the Mattiaci [161](#) is under a degree of subjection of the same kind: for the greatness of the Roman people has carried a reverence for the empire beyond the Rhine and the ancient limits. The Mattiaci, therefore, though occupying a settlement and borders [162](#) on the opposite side of the river, from sentiment and attachment act with us; resembling the Batavi in every respect, except that they are animated with a more vigorous spirit by the soil and air of their own country. [163](#) I do not reckon among the people of Germany those who occupy the Decumate lands, [164](#) although inhabiting between the Rhine and Danube. Some of the most fickle of the Gauls, rendered daring through indigence, seized upon this district of uncertain property. Afterwards, our boundary line being advanced, and a chain of fortified posts established, it became a skirt of the empire, and part of the Roman province. [165](#)

30. Beyond these dwell the Catti, [166](#) whose settlements, beginning from the Hercynian forest, are in a tract of country less open and marshy than those which overspread the other states of Germany; for it consists of a continued range of hills, which gradually become more scattered; and the Hercynian forest [167](#) both accompanies and leaves behind, its Catti. This nation is distinguished by hardier frames, [168](#) compactness of limb, fierceness of countenance, and superior vigor of mind. For Germans, they have a considerable share of understanding and sagacity; they choose able persons to command, and obey them when chosen; keep their ranks; seize opportunities; restrain impetuous motions; distribute properly the business of the day; intrench themselves against the night; account fortune dubious, and valor only certain; and, what is extremely rare, and only a consequence of discipline, depend more upon the general than the army. [169](#) Their force consists entirely in infantry; who, besides their arms, are obliged to carry tools and provisions. Other nations appear to go to a battle; the Catti, to war. Excursions and casual encounters are rare amongst them. It is, indeed, peculiar to cavalry soon to obtain, and soon to yield, the victory. Speed borders upon timidity; slow movements are more akin to steady valor.

31. A custom followed among the other German nations only by a few individuals, of more daring spirit than the rest, is adopted by general consent among the Catti. From the time they arrive at years of maturity they let their hair and beard grow; [170](#) and do not divest themselves of this votive badge, the promise of valor, till they have slain an

enemy. Over blood and spoils they unveil the countenance, and proclaim that they have at length paid the debt of existence, and have proved themselves worthy of their country and parents. The cowardly and effeminate continue in their squalid disguise. The bravest among them wear also an iron ring [171](#) (a mark of ignominy in that nation) as a kind of chain, till they have released themselves by the slaughter of a foe. Many of the Catti assume this distinction, and grow hoary under the mark, conspicuous both to foes and friends. By these, in every engagement, the attack is begun: they compose the front line, presenting a new spectacle of terror. Even in peace they do not relax the sternness of their aspect. They have no house, land, or domestic cares: they are maintained by whomsoever they visit: lavish of another's property, regardless of their own; till the debility of age renders them unequal to such a rigid course of military virtue. [172](#)

32. Next to the Catti, on the banks of the Rhine, where, now settled in its channel, it has become a sufficient boundary, dwell the Usipii and Tencteri. [173](#) The latter people, in addition to the usual military reputation, are famed for the discipline of their cavalry; nor is the infantry of the Catti in higher estimation than the horse of the Tencteri. Their ancestors established it, and are imitated by posterity. Horsemanship is the sport of their children, the point of emulation of their youth, and the exercise in which they persevere to old age. Horses are bequeathed along with the domestics, the household gods, and the rights of inheritance: they do not, however, like other things, go to the eldest son, but to the bravest and most warlike.

33. Contiguous to the Tencteri were formerly the Bructeri; [174](#) but report now says that the Chamavi and Angrivarii, [175](#) migrating into their country, have expelled and entirely extirpated them, [176](#) with the concurrence of the neighboring nations, induced either by hatred of their arrogance, [177](#) love of plunder, or the favor of the gods towards the Romans. For they even gratified us with the spectacle of a battle, in which above sixty thousand Germans were slain, not by Roman arms, but, what was still grander, by mutual hostilities, as it were for our pleasure and entertainment. [178](#) May the nations retain and perpetuate, if not an affection for us, at least an animosity against each other! since, while the fate of the empire is thus urgent, [179](#) fortune can bestow no higher benefit upon us, than the discord of our enemies.

34. Contiguous to the Angrivarii and Chamavi backwards lie the Dulgibini, Chasauri, [180](#) and other nations less known. [181](#) In front, the Frisii [182](#) succeed; who are distinguished by the appellations of Greater and Lesser, from their proportional power. The settlements of both stretch along the border of the Rhine to the ocean; and include, besides, vast lakes, [183](#) which have been navigated by Roman fleets. We have even explored the ocean itself on that side; and fame reports that columns of Hercules [184](#) are still remaining on that coast; whether it be that Hercules was ever there in reality, or that whatever great and magnificent is anywhere met with is, by common consent, ascribed to his renowned name. The attempt of Drusus Germanicus [185](#) to make discoveries in these parts was sufficiently daring; but the ocean opposed any further inquiry into itself and Hercules. After a while no one renewed the attempt; and it was

thought more pious and reverential to believe the actions of the gods, than to investigate them.

35. Hitherto we have traced the western side of Germany. It turns from thence with a vast sweep to the north: and first occurs the country of the Chauci, [186](#) which, though it begins immediately from Frisia, and occupies part of the seashore, yet stretches so far as to border on all the nations before mentioned, till it winds round so as to meet the territories of the Catti. This immense tract is not only possessed, but filled by the Chauci; a people the noblest of the Germans, who choose to maintain their greatness by justice rather than violence. Without ambition, without ungoverned desires, quiet and retired, they provoke no wars, they are guilty of no rapine or plunder; and it is a principal proof of their power and bravery, that the superiority they possess has not been acquired by unjust means. Yet all have arms in readiness; [187](#) and, if necessary, an army is soon raised: for they abound in men and horses, and maintain their military reputation even in inaction.

36. Bordering on the Chauci and Catti are the Cherusci; [188](#) who, for want of an enemy, long cherished a too lasting and enfeebling peace: a state more flattering than secure; since the repose enjoyed amidst ambitious and powerful neighbors is treacherous; and when an appeal is made to the sword, moderation and probity are names appropriated by the victors. Thus, the Cherusci, who formerly bore the titles of just and upright, are now charged with cowardice and folly; and the good fortune of the Catti, who subdued them, has grown into wisdom. The ruin of the Cherusci involved that of the Fosi, [189](#) a neighboring tribe, equal partakers of their adversity, although they had enjoyed an inferior share of their prosperity.

37. In the same quarter of Germany, adjacent to the ocean, dwell the Cimbri; [191](#) a small [192](#) state at present, but great in renown. [193](#) Of their past grandeur extensive vestiges still remain, in encampments and lines on either shore, [194](#) from the compass of which the strength and numbers of the nation may still be computed, and credit derived to the account of so prodigious an army. It was in the 640th year of Rome that the arms of the Cimbri were first heard of, under the consulate of Caecilius Metellus and Papirius Carbo; from which era to the second consulate of the emperor Trajan [195](#) is a period of nearly 210 years. So long has Germany withstood the arms of Rome. During this long interval many mutual wounds have been inflicted. Not the Samnite, the Carthaginian, Spain, Gaul, or Parthia, have given more frequent alarms; for the liberty of the Germans is more vigorous than the monarchy of the Arsacidae. What has the East, which has itself lost Pacorus, and suffered an overthrow from Ventidius, [196](#) to boast against us, but the slaughter of Crassus? But the Germans, by the defeat or capture of Carbo, [197](#) Cassius, [198](#) Scaurus Aurelius, [199](#) Servilius Caepio, and Cneius Manlius, [200](#) deprived the Roman people of five consular armies; [201](#) and afterwards took from Augustus himself Varus with three legions. [202](#) Nor did Caius Marius [203](#) in Italy, the deified Julius in Gaul, or Drusus, Nero, or Germanicus [204](#) in their own country, defeat them without loss. The subsequent mighty threats of Caligula terminated

in ridicule. Then succeeded tranquillity; till, seizing the occasion of our discords and civil wars, they forced the winter-quarters of the legions, [205](#) and even aimed at the possession of Gaul; and, again expelled thence, they have in latter times been rather triumphed over [206](#) than vanquished.

38. We have now to speak of the Suevi; [207](#) who do not compose a single state, like the Catti or Tencteri, but occupy the greatest part of Germany, and are still distributed into different names and nations, although all hearing the common appellation of Suevi. It is a characteristic of this people to turn their hair sideways, and tie it beneath the poll in a knot. By this mark the Suevi are distinguished from the rest of the Germans; and the freemen of the Suevi from the slaves. [208](#) Among other nations, this mode, either on account of some relationship with the Suevi, or from the usual propensity to imitation, is sometimes adopted; but rarely, and only during the period of youth. The Suevi, even till they are hoary, continue to have their hair growing stiffly backwards, and often it is fastened on the very crown of the head. The chiefs dress it with still greater care: and in this respect they study ornament, though of an undebasing kind. For their design is not to make love, or inspire it; they decorate themselves in this manner as they proceed to war, in order to seem taller and more terrible; and dress for the eyes of their enemies.

39. The Semnonnes [209](#) assert themselves to be the most ancient and noble of the Suevi; and their pretensions are confirmed by religion. At a stated time, all the people of the same lineage assemble by their delegates in a wood, consecrated by the auguries of their forefathers and ancient terror, and there by the public slaughter of a human victim celebrate the horrid origin of their barbarous rites. Another kind of reverence is paid to the grove. No person enters it without being bound with a chain, as an acknowledgment of his inferior nature, and the power of the deity residing there. If he accidentally fall, it is not lawful for him to be lifted or to rise up; they roll themselves out along the ground. The whole of their superstition has this import: that from this spot the nation derives its origin; that here is the residence of the Deity, the Governor of all, and that everything else is subject and subordinate to him. These opinions receive additional authority from the power of the Semnonnes, who inhabit a hundred cantons, and, from the great body they compose, consider themselves as the head of the Suevi.

40. The Langobardi, [210](#) on the other hand, are ennobled by, the smallness of their numbers; since though surrounded by many powerful nations, they derive security, not from obsequiousness, but from their martial enterprise. The neighboring Reudigni, [211](#) and the Avions, [212](#) Angli, [213](#) Varini, Eudoses, Suardones, and Nuithones, [214](#) are defended by rivers or forests. Nothing remarkable occurs in any of these; except that they unite in the worship of Hertha, [215](#) or Mother Earth; and suppose her to interfere in the affairs of men, and to visit the different nations. In an island [216](#) of the ocean stands a sacred and unviolated grove, in which is a consecrated chariot, covered with a veil, which the priest alone is permitted to touch. He becomes conscious of the entrance of the goddess into this secret recess; and with profound veneration

attends the vehicle, which is drawn by yoked cows. At this season, [217](#) all is joy; and every place which the goddess deigns to visit is a scene of festivity. No wars are undertaken; arms are untouched; and every hostile weapon is shut up. Peace abroad and at home are then only known; then only loved; till at length the same priest reconducts the goddess, satiated with mortal intercourse, to her temple. [218](#) The chariot, with its curtain, and, if we may believe it, the goddess herself, then undergo ablution in a secret lake. This office is performed by slaves, whom the same lake instantly swallows up. Hence proceeds a mysterious horror; and a holy ignorance of what that can be, which is beheld only by those who are about to perish. This part of the Suevian nation extends to the most remote recesses of Germany.

41. If we now follow the course of the Danube, as we before did that of the Rhine, we first meet with the Hermunduri; [219](#) a people faithful to the Romans, [220](#) and on that account the only Germans who are admitted to commerce, not on the bank alone, but within our territories, and in the flourishing colony [221](#) established in the province of Rhaetia. They pass and repass at pleasure, without being attended by a guard; and while we exhibit to other nations our arms and camps alone, to these we lay open our houses and country seats, which they behold without coveting. In the country of the Hermunduri rises the Elbe; [222](#) a river formerly celebrated and known among us, now only heard of by name.

42. Contiguous to the Hermunduri are the Narisci; [223](#) and next to them, the Marcomanni [224](#) and Quadi. [225](#) Of these, the Marcomanni are the most powerful and renowned; and have even acquired the country which they inhabit, by their valor in expelling the Boii. [226](#) Nor are the Narisci and Quadi inferior in bravery; [227](#) and this is, as it were, the van of Germany as far as it is bordered by the Danube. Within our memory the Marcomanni and Quadi were governed by kings of their own nation, of the noble line of Maroboduus [228](#) and Tudrus. They now submit even to foreigners; but all the power of their kings depends upon the authority of the Romans. [229](#) We seldom assist them with our arms, but frequently with our money; nor are they the less potent on that account.

43. Behind these are the Marsigni, [230](#) Gothini, [231](#) Osi, [232](#) and Burrii, [233](#) who close the rear of the Marcomanni and Quadi. Of these, the Marsigni and Burrii in language [234](#) and dress resemble the Suevi. The Gothini and Osi prove themselves not to be Germans; the first, by their use of the Gallic, the second, of the Pannonian tongue; and both, by their submitting to pay tribute: which is levied on them, as aliens, partly by the Sarmatians, partly by the Quadi. The Gothini, to their additional disgrace, work iron mines. [235](#) All these people inhabit but a small proportion of champaign country; their settlements are chiefly amongst forests, and on the sides and summits of mountains; for a continued ridge of mountains [236](#) separates Suevia from various remoter tribes. Of these, the Lygian [237](#) is the most extensive, and diffuses its name through several communities. It will be sufficient to name the most powerful of them—the Arii, Helvecones, Manimi, Elysii, and Naharvali. [238](#) In the country of the latter is

a grove, consecrated to religious rites of great antiquity. A priest presides over them, dressed in woman's apparel; but the gods worshipped there are said, according to the Roman interpretation, to be Castor and Pollux. Their attributes are the same; their name, Alcis. [239](#) No images, indeed, or vestiges of foreign superstition, appear in their worship; but they are revered under the character of young men and brothers. The Arii, fierce beyond the superiority of strength they possess over the other just enumerated people, improve their natural ferocity of aspect by artificial helps. Their shields are black; their bodies painted: [240](#) they choose the darkest nights for an attack; and strike terror by the funereal gloom of their sable bands—no enemy being able to sustain their singular, and, as it were, infernal appearance; since in every combat the eyes are the first part subdued. Beyond the Lygii are the Gothones, [241](#) who live under a monarchy, somewhat more strict than that of the other German nations, yet not to a degree incompatible with liberty. Adjoining to these are the Rugii [242](#) and Lemovii, [243](#) situated on the sea-coast—all these tribes are distinguished by round shields, short swords, and submission to regal authority.

44. Next occur the communities of the Suiones, [244](#) seated in the very Ocean, [245](#) who, besides their strength in men and arms, also possess a naval force. [246](#) The form of their vessels differs from ours in having a prow at each end, [247](#) so that they are always ready to advance. They make no use of sails, nor have regular benches of oars at the sides: they row, as is practised in some rivers, without order, sometimes on one side, sometimes on the other, as occasion requires. These people honor wealth; [248](#) for which reason they are subject to monarchical government, without any limitations, [249](#) or precarious conditions of allegiance. Nor are arms allowed to be kept promiscuously, as among the other German nations: but are committed to the charge of a keeper, and he, too, a slave. The pretext is, that the Ocean defends them from any sudden incursions; and men unemployed, with arms in their hands, readily become licentious. In fact, it is for the king's interest not to entrust a noble, a freeman, or even an emancipated slave, with the custody of arms.

45. Beyond the Suiones is another sea, sluggish and almost stagnant, [250](#) by which the whole globe is imagined to be girt and enclosed, from this circumstance, that the last light of the setting sun continues so vivid till its rising, as to obscure the stars. [251](#) Popular belief adds, that the sound of his emerging [252](#) from the ocean is also heard; and the forms of deities, [253](#) with the rays beaming from his head, are beheld. Only thus far, report says truly, does nature extend. [254](#) On the right shore of the Suevic sea [255](#) dwell the tribes of the Aestii, [256](#) whose dress and customs are the same with those of the Suevi, but their language more resembles the British. [257](#) They worship the mother of the gods; [258](#) and as the symbol of their superstition, they carry about them the figures of wild boars. [259](#) This serves them in place of armor and every other defence: it renders the votary of the goddess safe even in the midst of foes. Their weapons are chiefly clubs, iron being little used among them. They cultivate corn and other fruits of the earth with more industry than German indolence commonly

exerts. [260](#) They even explore the sea; and are the only people who gather amber, which by them is called *Gliese*, [261](#) and is collected among the shallows and upon the shore. [262](#) With the usual indifference of barbarians, they have not inquired or ascertained from what natural object or by what means it is produced. It long lay disregarded [263](#) amidst other things thrown up by the sea, till our luxury [264](#) gave it a name. Useless to them, they gather it in the rough; bring it unwrought; and wonder at the price they receive. It would appear, however, to be an exudation from certain trees; since reptiles, and even winged animals, are often seen shining through it, which, entangled in it while in a liquid state, became enclosed as it hardened. [265](#) I should therefore imagine that, as the luxuriant woods and groves in the secret recesses of the East exude frankincense and balsam, so there are the same in the islands and continents of the West; which, acted upon by the near rays of the sun, drop their liquid juices into the subjacent sea, whence, by the force of tempests, they are thrown out upon the opposite coasts. If the nature of amber be examined by the application of fire, it kindles like a torch, with a thick and odorous flame; and presently resolves into a glutinous matter resembling pitch or resin. The several communities of the Sitones [266](#) succeed those of the Suiones; to whom they are similar in other respects, but differ in submitting to a female reign; so far have they degenerated, not only from liberty, but even from slavery. Here Suevia terminates.

46. I am in doubt whether to reckon the Peucini, Venedi, and Fenni among the Germans or Sarmatians; [267](#) although the Peucini, [268](#) who are by some called Bastarnae, agree with the Germans in language, apparel, and habitations. [269](#) All of them live in filth and laziness. The intermarriages of their chiefs with the Sarmatians have debased them by a mixture of the manners of that people. [270](#) The Venedi have drawn much from this source; [271](#) for they overrun in their predatory excursions all the woody and mountainous tracts between the Peucini and Fenni. Yet even these are rather to be referred to the Germans, since they build houses, carry shields, and travel with speed on foot; in all which particulars they totally differ from the Sarmatians, who pass their time in wagons and on horseback. [272](#) The Fenni [273](#) live in a state of amazing savageness and squalid poverty. They are destitute of arms, horses, and settled abodes: their food is herbs; [274](#) their clothing, skins; their bed, the ground. Their only dependence is on their arrows, which, for want of iron, are headed with bone; [275](#) and the chase is the support of the women as well as the men; the former accompany the latter in the pursuit, and claim a share of the prey. Nor do they provide any other shelter for their infants from wild beasts and storms, than a covering of branches twisted together. This is the resort of youth; this is the receptacle of old age. Yet even this way of life is in their estimation happier than groaning over the plough; toiling in the erection of houses; subjecting their own fortunes and those of others to the agitations of alternate hope and fear. Secure against men, secure against the gods, they have attained the most difficult point, not to need even a wish.

All our further accounts are intermixed with fable; as, that the Hellusii and Oxionae [276](#) have human faces, with the bodies and limbs of wild beasts. These unauthenticated reports I shall leave untouched. [277](#)

THE LIFE OF CNAEUS JULIUS AGRICOLA.

[This work is supposed by the commentators to have been written before the treatise on the manners of the Germans, in the third consulship of the emperor Nerva, and the second of Verginius Rufus, in the year of Rome 850, and of the Christian era 97. Brotier accedes to this opinion; but the reason which he assigns does not seem to be satisfactory. He observes that Tacitus, in the third section, mentions the emperor Nerva; but as he does not call him Divus Nerva, the deified Nerva, the learned commentator infers that Nerva was still living. This reasoning might have some weight, if we did not read, in section 44, that it was the ardent wish of Agricola that he might live to behold Trajan in the imperial seat. If Nerva was then alive, the wish to see another in his room would have been an awkward compliment to the reigning prince. It is, perhaps, for this reason that Lipsius thinks this very elegant tract was written at the same time with the Manners of the Germans, in the beginning of the emperor Trajan. The question is not very material, since conjecture alone must decide it. The piece itself is admitted to be a masterpiece in the kind. Tacitus was son-in-law to Agricola; and while filial piety breathes through his work, he never departs from the integrity of his own character. He has left an historical monument highly interesting to every Briton, who wishes to know the manners of his ancestors, and the spirit of liberty that from the earliest time distinguished the natives of Britain. "Agricola," as Hume observes, "was the general who finally established the dominion of the Romans in this island. He governed, it in the reigns of Vespasian, Titus, and Domitian. He carried his victorious arms northward: defeated the Britons in every encounter, pierced into the forests and the mountains of Caledonia, reduced every state to subjection in the southern parts of the island, and chased before him all the men of fiercer and more intractable spirits, who deemed war and death itself less intolerable than servitude under the victors. He defeated them in a

decisive action, which they fought under Galgacus; and having fixed a chain of garrisons between the friths of Clyde and Forth, he cut off the ruder and more barren parts of the island, and secured the Roman province from the incursions of the barbarous inhabitants. During these military enterprises he neglected not the arts of peace. He introduced laws and civility among the Britons; taught them to desire and raise all the conveniences of life; reconciled them to the Roman language and manners; instructed them in letters and science; and employed every expedient to render those chains, which he had forged, both easy and agreeable to them." (Hume's Hist. vol. i. p. 9.) In this passage Mr. Hume has given a summary of the Life of Agricola. It is extended by Tacitus in a style more open than the didactic form of the essay on the German Manners required, but still with the precision, both in sentiment and diction, peculiar to the author. In rich but subdued colors he gives a striking picture of Agricola, leaving to posterity a portion of history which it would be in vain to seek in the dry gazette style of Suetonius, or in the page of any writer of that period.]

1. The ancient custom of transmitting to posterity the actions and manners of famous men, has not been neglected even by the present age, incurious though it be about those belonging to it, whenever any exalted and noble degree of virtue has triumphed over that false estimation of merit, and that ill-will to it, by which small and great states are equally infested. In former times, however, as there was a greater propensity and freer scope for the performance of actions worthy of remembrance, so every person of distinguished abilities was induced through conscious satisfaction in the task alone, without regard to private favor or interest, to record examples of virtue. And many considered it rather as the honest confidence of integrity, than a culpable arrogance, to become their own biographers. Of this, Rutilius and Scaurus [1](#) were instances; who were never yet censured on this account, nor was the fidelity of their narrative called in question; so much more candidly are virtues always estimated; in those periods which are the most favorable to their production. For myself, however, who have undertaken to be the historian of a person deceased, an apology seemed necessary; which I should not have made, had my course lain through times less cruel and hostile to virtue. [2](#)

2. We read that when Arulenus Rusticus published the praises of Paetus Thrasea, and Herennius Senecio those of Priscus Helvidius, it was construed into a capital crime; [3](#) and the rage of tyranny was let loose not only against the authors, but against their writings; so that those monuments of exalted genius were burnt at the place of election in the forum by triumvirs appointed for the purpose. In that fire they thought to consume the voice of the Roman people, the freedom of the senate, and the conscious emotions of all mankind; crowning the deed by the expulsion of the professors of wisdom, [4](#) and the banishment of every liberal art, that nothing generous or honorable might remain. We gave, indeed, a consummate proof of our patience; and as remote ages saw the very utmost degree of liberty, so we, deprived by inquisitions of all the intercourse of conversation, experienced the utmost of slavery. With language we

should have lost memory itself, had it been as much in our power to forget, as to be silent.

3. Now our spirits begin to revive. But although at the first dawning of this happy period, [5](#) the emperor Nerva united two things before incompatible, monarchy and liberty; and Trajan is now daily augmenting the felicity of the empire; and the public security [6](#) has not only assumed hopes and wishes, but has seen those wishes arise to confidence and stability; yet, from the nature of human infirmity, remedies are more tardy in their operation than diseases; and, as bodies slowly increase, but quickly perish, so it is more easy to suppress industry and genius, than to recall them. For indolence itself acquires a charm; and sloth, however odious at first, becomes at length engaging. During the space of fifteen years, [7](#) a large portion of human life, how great a number have fallen by casual events, and, as was the fate of all the most distinguished, by the cruelty of the prince; whilst we, the few survivors, not of others alone, but, if I may be allowed the expression, of ourselves, find a void of so many years in our lives, which has silently brought us from youth to maturity, from mature age to the very verge of life! Still, however, I shall not regret having composed, though in rude and artless language, a memorial of past servitude, and a testimony of present blessings. [8](#)

The present work, in the meantime, which is dedicated to the honor of my father-in-law, may be thought to merit approbation, or at least excuse, from the piety of the intention.

4. CNAEUS JULIUS AGRICOLA was born at the ancient and illustrious colony of Forumjulii. [9](#) Both his grandfathers were imperial procurators, [10](#) an office which confers the rank of equestrian nobility. His father, Julius Graecinus, [11](#) of the senatorian order, was famous for the study of eloquence and philosophy; and by these accomplishments he drew on himself the displeasure of Caius Caesar; [12](#) for, being commanded to undertake the accusation of Marcus Silanus, [13](#)—on his refusal, he was put to death. His mother was Julia Procilla, a lady of exemplary chastity. Educated with tenderness in her bosom, [14](#) he passed his childhood and youth in the attainment of every liberal art. He was preserved from the allurements of vice, not only by a naturally good disposition, but by being sent very early to pursue his studies at Massilia; [15](#) a place where Grecian politeness and provincial frugality are happily united. I remember he was used to relate, that in his early youth he should have engaged with more ardor in philosophical speculation than was suitable to a Roman and a senator, had not the prudence of his mother restrained the warmth and vehemence of his disposition: for his lofty and upright spirit, inflamed by the charms of glory and exalted reputation, led him to the pursuit with more eagerness than discretion. Reason and riper years tempered his warmth; and from the study of wisdom, he retained what is most difficult to compass,—moderation.

5. He learned the rudiments of war in Britain, under Suetonius Paullinus, an active and prudent commander, who chose him for his tent companion, in order to form an

estimate of his merit. [16](#) Nor did Agricola, like many young men, who convert military service into wanton pastime, avail himself licentiously or slothfully of his tribunitial title, or his inexperience, to spend his time in pleasures and absences from duty; but he employed himself in gaining a knowledge of the country, making himself known to the army, learning from the experienced, and imitating the best; neither pressing to be employed through vainglory, nor declining it through timidity; and performing his duty with equal solicitude and spirit. At no other time in truth was Britain more agitated or in a state of greater uncertainty. Our veterans slaughtered, our colonies burnt, [17](#) our armies cut off, [18](#)—we were then contending for safety, afterwards for victory. During this period, although all things were transacted under the conduct and direction of another, and the stress of the whole, as well as the glory of recovering the province, fell to the general's share, yet they imparted to the young Agricola skill, experience, and incentives; and the passion for military glory entered his soul; a passion ungrateful to the times, [19](#) in which eminence was unfavorably construed, and a great reputation was no less dangerous than a bad one.

6. Departing thence to undertake the offices of magistracy in Rome, he married Domitia Decidiana, a lady of illustrious descent, from which connection he derived credit and support in his pursuit of greater things. They lived together in admirable harmony and mutual affection; each giving the preference to the other; a conduct equally laudable in both, except that a greater degree of praise is due to a good wife, in proportion as a bad one deserves the greater censure. The lot of quaestorship [20](#) gave him Asia for his province, and the proconsul Salvius Titianus [21](#) for his superior; by neither of which circumstances was he corrupted, although the province was wealthy and open to plunder, and the proconsul, from his rapacious disposition, would readily have agreed to a mutual concealment of guilt. His family was there increased by the birth of a daughter, who was both the support of his house, and his consolation; for he lost an elder-born son in infancy. The interval between his serving the offices of quaestor and tribune of the people, and even the year of the latter magistracy, he passed in repose and inactivity; well knowing the temper of the times under Nero, in which indolence was wisdom. He maintained the same tenor of conduct when praetor; for the judiciary part of the office did not fall to his share. [22](#) In the exhibition of public games, and the idle trappings of dignity, he consulted propriety and the measure of his fortune; by no means approaching to extravagance, yet inclining rather to a popular course. When he was afterwards appointed by Galba to manage an inquest concerning the offerings which had been presented to the temples, by his strict attention and diligence he preserved the state from any further sacrilege than what it had suffered from Nero. [23](#)

7. The following year [24](#) inflicted a severe wound on his peace of mind, and his domestic concerns. The fleet of Otho, roving in a disorderly manner on the coast, [25](#) made a hostile descent on Intemelii, [26](#) a part of Liguria, in which the mother of Agricola was murdered at her own estate, her lands were ravaged, and a great part of her effects, which had invited the assassins, was carried off. As Agricola upon this event

was hastening to perform the duties of filial piety, he was overtaken by the news of Vespasian's aspiring to the empire, [27](#) and immediately went over to his party. The first acts of power, and the government of the city, were entrusted to Mucianus; Domitian being at that time very young, and taking no other privilege from his father's elevation than that of indulging his licentious tastes. Mucianus, having approved the vigor and fidelity of Agricola in the service of raising levies, gave him the command of the twentieth legion, [28](#) which had appeared backward in taking the oaths, as soon as he had heard the seditious practices of his commander. [29](#) This legion had been unmanageable and formidable even to the consular lieutenants; [30](#) and its late commander, of praetorian rank, had not sufficient authority to keep it in obedience; though it was uncertain whether from his own disposition, or that of his soldiers. Agricola was therefore appointed as his successor and avenger; but, with an uncommon degree of moderation, he chose rather to have it appear that he had found the legion obedient, than that he had made it so.

8. Vettius Bolanus was at that time governor of Britain, and ruled with a milder sway than was suitable to so turbulent a province. Under his administration, Agricola, accustomed to obey, and taught to consult utility as well as glory, tempered his ardor, and restrained his enterprising spirit. His virtues had soon a larger field for their display, from the appointment of Petilius Cerealis, [31](#) a man of consular dignity, to the government. At first he only shared the fatigues and dangers of his general; but was presently allowed to partake of his glory. Cerealis frequently entrusted him with part of his army as a trial of his abilities; and from the event sometimes enlarged his command. On these occasions, Agricola was never ostentatious in assuming to himself the merit of his exploits; but always, as a subordinate officer, gave the honor of his good fortune to his superior. Thus, by his spirit in executing orders, and his modesty in reporting his success, he avoided envy, yet did not fail of acquiring reputation.

9. On his return from commanding the legion he was raised by Vespasian to the patrician order, and then invested with the government of Aquitania, [32](#) a distinguished promotion, both in respect to the office itself, and the hopes of the consulate to which it destined him. It is a common supposition that military men, habituated to the unscrupulous and summary processes of camps, where things are carried with a strong hand, are deficient in the address and subtlety of genius requisite in civil jurisdiction. Agricola, however, by his natural prudence, was enabled to act with facility and precision even among civilians. He distinguished the hours of business from those of relaxation. When the court or tribunal demanded his presence, he was grave, intent, awful, yet generally inclined to lenity. When the duties of his office were over, the man of power was instantly laid aside. Nothing of sternness, arrogance, or rapaciousness appeared; and, what was a singular felicity, his affability did not impair his authority, nor his severity render him less beloved. To mention integrity and freedom from corruption in such a man, would be an affront to his virtues. He did not even court reputation, an object to which men of worth frequently sacrifice, by ostentation or

artifice: equally avoiding competition with, his colleagues, [33](#) and contention with the procurators. To overcome in such a contest he thought inglorious; and to be put down, a disgrace. Somewhat less than three years were spent in this office, when he was recalled to the immediate prospect of the consulate; while at the same time a popular opinion prevailed that the government of Britain would be conferred upon him; an opinion not founded upon any suggestions of his own, but upon his being thought equal to the station. Common fame does not always err, sometimes it even directs a choice. When consul, [34](#) he contracted his daughter, a lady already of the happiest promise, to myself, then a very young man; and after his office was expired I received her in marriage. He was immediately appointed governor of Britain, and the pontificate [35](#) was added to his other dignities.

10. The situation and inhabitants of Britain have been described by many writers; [36](#) and I shall not add to the number with the view of vying with them in accuracy and ingenuity, but because it was first thoroughly subdued in the period of the present history. Those things which, while yet unascertained, they embellished with their eloquence, shall here be related with a faithful adherence to known facts. Britain, the largest of all the islands which have come within the knowledge of the Romans, stretches on the east towards Germany, on the west towards Spain, [37](#) and on the south it is even within sight of Gaul. Its northern extremity has no opposite land, but is washed by a wide and open sea. Livy, the most eloquent of ancient, and Fabius Rusticus, of modern writers, have likened the figure of Britain to an oblong target, or a two-edged axe. [38](#) And this is in reality its appearance, exclusive of Caledonia; whence it has been popularly attributed to the whole island. But that tract of country, irregularly stretching out to an immense length towards the furthest shore, is gradually contracted in form of a wedge. [39](#) The Roman fleet, at this period first sailing round this remotest coast, gave certain proof that Britain was an island; and at the same time discovered and subdued the Orcades, [40](#) islands till then unknown. Thule [41](#) was also distinctly seen, which winter and eternal snow had hitherto concealed. The sea is reported to be sluggish and laborious to the rower; and even to be scarcely agitated by winds. The cause of this stagnation I imagine to be the deficiency of land and mountains where tempests are generated; and the difficulty with which such a mighty mass of waters, in an uninterrupted main, is put in motion. [42](#) It is not the business of this work to investigate the nature of the ocean and the tides; a subject which many writers have already undertaken. I shall only add one circumstance: that the dominion of the sea is nowhere more extensive; that it carries many currents in this direction and in that; and its ebbings and flowings are not confined to the shore, but it penetrates into the heart of the country, and works its way among hills and mountains, as though it were in its own domain. [43](#)

11. Who were the first inhabitants of Britain, whether indigenous [44](#) or immigrants, is a question involved in the obscurity usual among barbarians. Their temperament of body is various, whence deductions are formed of their different origin. Thus, the ruddy hair and large limbs of the Caledonians [45](#) point out a German derivation. The swarthy

complexion and curled hair of the Silures, [46](#) together with their situation opposite to Spain, render it probable that a colony of the ancient Iberi [47](#) possessed themselves of that territory. They who are nearest Gaul [48](#) resemble the inhabitants of that country; whether from the duration of hereditary influence, or whether it be that when lands jut forward in opposite directions, climate gives the same condition of body to the inhabitants of both. [49](#) On a general survey, however, it appears probable that the Gauls originally took possession of the neighboring coast. The sacred rites and superstitions [50](#) of these people are discernible among the Britons. The languages of the two nations do not greatly differ. The same audacity in provoking danger, and irresolution in facing it when present, is observable in both. The Britons, however, display more ferocity, [51](#) not being yet softened by a long peace: for it appears from history that the Gauls were once renowned in war, till, losing their valor with their liberty, languor and indolence entered amongst them. The same change has also taken place among those of the Britons who have been long subdued; [52](#) but the rest continue such as the Gauls formerly were.

12. Their military strength consists in infantry; some nations also make use of chariots in war; in the management of which, the most honorable person guides the reins, while his dependents fight from the chariot. [53](#) The Britons were formerly governed by kings, [54](#) but at present they are divided in factions and parties among their chiefs; and this want of union for concerting some general plan is the most favorable circumstance to us, in our designs against so powerful a people. It is seldom that two or three communities concur in repelling the common danger; and thus, while they engage singly, they are all subdued. The sky in this country is deformed by clouds and frequent rains; but the cold is never extremely rigorous. [55](#) The length of the days greatly exceeds that in our part of the world. [56](#) The nights are bright, and, at the extremity of the island, so short, that the close and return of day is scarcely distinguished by a perceptible interval. It is even asserted that, when clouds do not intervene, the splendor of the sun is visible during the whole night, and that it does not appear to rise and set, but to move across. [57](#) The cause of this is, that the extreme and flat parts of the earth, casting a low shadow, do not throw up the darkness, and so night falls beneath the sky and the stars. [58](#) The soil, though improper for the olive, the vine, and other productions of warmer climates, is fertile, and suitable for corn. Growth is quick, but maturation slow; both from the same cause, the great humidity of the ground and the atmosphere. [59](#) The earth yields gold and silver [60](#) and other metals, the rewards of victory. The ocean produces pearls, [61](#) but of a cloudy and livid hue; which some impute to unskilfulness in the gatherers; for in the Red Sea the fish are plucked from the rocks alive and vigorous, but in Britain they are collected as the sea throws them up. For my own part, I can more readily conceive that the defect is in the nature of the pearls, than in our avarice.

13. The Britons cheerfully submit to levies, tributes, and the other services of government, if they are not treated injuriously; but such treatment they bear with

impatience, their subjection only extending to obedience, not to servitude. Accordingly Julius Caesar, [62](#) the first Roman who entered Britain with an army, although he terrified the inhabitants by a successful engagement, and became master of the shore, may be considered rather to have transmitted the discovery than the possession of the country to posterity. The civil wars soon succeeded; the arms of the leaders were turned against their country; and a long neglect of Britain ensued, which continued even after the establishment of peace. This Augustus attributed to policy; and Tiberius to the injunctions of his predecessor. [63](#) It is certain that Caius Caesar [64](#) meditated an expedition into Britain; but his temper, precipitate in forming schemes, and unsteady in pursuing them, together with the ill success of his mighty attempts against Germany, rendered the design abortive. Claudius [65](#) accomplished the undertaking, transporting his legions and auxiliaries, and associating Vespasian in the direction of affairs, which laid the foundation of his future fortune. In this expedition, nations were subdued, kings made captive, and Vespasian was held forth to the fates.

14. Aulus Plautius, the first consular governor, and his successor, Ostorius Scapula, [66](#) were both eminent for military abilities. Under them, the nearest part of Britain was gradually reduced into the form of a province, and a colony of veterans [67](#) was settled. Certain districts were bestowed upon king Cogidunus, a prince who continued in perfect fidelity within our own memory. This was done agreeably to the ancient and long established practice of the Romans, to make even kings the instruments of servitude. Didius Gallus, the next governor, preserved the acquisitions of his predecessors, and added a very few fortified posts in the remoter parts, for the reputation of enlarging his province. Veranius succeeded, but died within the year. Suetonius Paullinus then commanded with success for two years, subduing various nations, and establishing garrisons. In the confidence with which this inspired him, he undertook an expedition against the island Mona, [68](#) which had furnished the revolvers with supplies; and thereby exposed the settlements behind him to a surprise.

15. For the Britons, relieved from present dread by the absence of the governor, began to hold conferences, in which they painted the miseries of servitude, compared their several injuries, and inflamed each other with such representations as these: "That the only effects of their patience were more grievous impositions upon a people who submitted with such facility. Formerly they had one king respectively; now two were set over them, the lieutenant and the procurator, the former of whom vented his rage upon their life's blood, the latter upon their properties; [69](#) the union or discord [70](#) of these governors was equally fatal to those whom they ruled, while the officers of the one, and the centurions of the other, joined in oppressing them by all kinds of violence and contumely; so that nothing was exempted from their avarice, nothing from their lust. In battle it was the bravest who took spoils; but those whom *they* suffered to seize their houses, force away their children, and exact levies, were, for the most part, the cowardly and effeminate; as if the only lesson of suffering of which they were ignorant was how to die for their country. Yet how inconsiderable would the number of invaders

appear did the Britons but compute their own forces! From considerations like these, Germany had thrown off the yoke, [71](#) though a river [72](#) and not the ocean was its barrier. The welfare of their country, their wives, and their parents called them to arms, while avarice and luxury alone incited their enemies; who would withdraw as even the deified Julius had done, if the present race of Britons would emulate the valor of their ancestors, and not be dismayed at the event of the first or second engagement. Superior spirit and perseverance were always the share of the wretched; and the gods themselves now seemed to compassionate the Britons, by ordaining the absence of the general, and the detention of his army in another island. The most difficult point, assembling for the purpose of deliberation, was already accomplished; and there was always more danger from the discovery of designs like these, than from their execution."

16. Instigated by such suggestions, they unanimously rose in arms, led by Boadicea, [73](#) a woman of royal descent (for they make no distinction between the sexes in succession to the throne), and attacking the soldiers dispersed through the garrisons, stormed the fortified posts, and invaded the colony [74](#) itself, as the seat of slavery. They omitted no species of cruelty with which rage and victory could inspire barbarians; and had not Paullinus, on being acquainted with the commotion of the province, marched speedily to its relief, Britain would have been lost. The fortune of a single battle, however, reduced it to its former subjection; though many still remained in arms, whom the consciousness of revolt, and particular dread of the governor, had driven to despair. Paullinus, although otherwise exemplary in his administration, having treated those who surrendered with severity, and having pursued too rigorous measures, as one who was revenging his own personal injury also, Petronius Turpilianus [75](#) was sent in his stead, as a person more inclined to lenity, and one who, being unacquainted with the enemy's delinquency, could more easily accept their penitence. After having restored things to their former quiet state, he delivered the command to Trebellius Maximus. [76](#) Trebellius, indolent, and inexperienced in military affairs, maintained the tranquillity of the province by popular manners; for even the barbarians had now learned to pardon under the seductive influence of vices; and the intervention of the civil wars afforded a legitimate excuse for his inactivity. Seditious however infected the soldiers, who, instead of their usual military services, were rioting in idleness. Trebellius, after escaping the fury of his army by flight and concealment, dishonored and abased, regained a precarious authority; and a kind of tacit compact took place, of safety to the general, and licentiousness to the army. This mutiny was not attended with bloodshed. Vettius Bolanus, [77](#) succeeding during the continuance of the civil wars, was unable to introduce discipline into Britain. The same inaction towards the enemy, and the same insolence in the camp, continued; except that Bolanus, unblemished in his character, and not obnoxious by any crime, in some measure substituted affection in the place of authority.

17. At length, when Vespasian received the possession of Britain together with the rest of the world, the great commanders and well-appointed armies which were sent

over abated the confidence of the enemy; and Petilius Cerealis struck terror by an attack upon the Brigantes, [78](#) who are reputed to compose the most populous state in the whole province. Many battles were fought, some of them attended with much bloodshed; and the greater part of the Brigantes were either brought into subjection, or involved in the ravages of war. The conduct and reputation of Cerealis were so brilliant that they might have eclipsed the splendor of a successor; yet Julius Frontinus, [79](#) a truly great man, supported the arduous competition, as far as circumstances would permit. [80](#) He subdued the strong and warlike nation of the Silures, [81](#) in which expedition, besides the valor of the enemy, he had the difficulties of the country to struggle with.

18. Such was the state of Britain, and such had been the vicissitudes of warfare, when Agricola arrived in the middle of summer; [82](#) at a time when the Roman soldiers, supposing the expeditions of the year were concluded, were thinking of enjoying themselves without care, and the natives, of seizing the opportunity thus afforded them. Not long before his arrival, the Ordovices [83](#) had cut off almost an entire corps of cavalry stationed on their frontiers; and the inhabitants of the province being thrown into a state of anxious suspense by this beginning, inasmuch as war was what they wished for, either approved of the example, or waited to discover the disposition of the new governor. [84](#) The season was now far advanced, the troops dispersed through the country, and possessed with the idea of being suffered to remain inactive during the rest of the year; circumstances which tended to retard and discourage any military enterprise; so that it was generally thought most advisable to be contented with defending the suspected posts: yet Agricola determined to march out and meet the approaching danger. For this purpose, he drew together the detachments from the legions, [85](#) and a small body of auxiliaries; and when he perceived that the Ordovices would not venture to descend into the plain, he led an advanced party in person to the attack, in order to inspire the rest of his troops with equal ardor. The result of the action was almost the total extirpation of the Ordovices; when Agricola, sensible that renown must be followed up, and that the future events of the war would be determined by the first success, resolved to make an attempt upon the island Mona, from the occupation of which Paullinus had been summoned by the general rebellion of Britain, as before related. [86](#) The usual deficiency of an unforeseen expedition appearing in the want of transport vessels, the ability and resolution of the general were exerted to supply this defect. A select body of auxiliaries, disencumbered of their baggage, who were well acquainted with the fords, and accustomed, after the manner of their country, to direct their horses and manage their arms while swimming, [87](#) were ordered suddenly to plunge into the channel; by which movement, the enemy, who expected the arrival of a fleet, and a formal invasion by sea, were struck with terror and astonishment, conceiving nothing arduous or insuperable to troops who thus advanced to the attack. They were therefore induced to sue for peace, and make a surrender of the island; an event which threw lustre on the name of Agricola, who, on the very entrance upon his province, had employed in toils and dangers that time which is usually devoted to

ostentatious parade, and the compliments of office. Nor was he tempted, in the pride of success, to term that an expedition or a victory; which was only bridling the vanquished; nor even to announce his success in laureate despatches. [88](#) But this concealment of his glory served to augment it; since men were led to entertain a high idea of the grandeur of his future views, when such important services were passed over in silence.

19. Well acquainted with the temper of the province, and taught by the experience of former governors how little proficiency had been made by arms, when success was followed by injuries, he next undertook to eradicate the causes of war. And beginning with himself, and those next to him, he first laid restrictions upon his own household, a task no less arduous to most governors than the administration of the province. He suffered no public business to pass through the hands of his slaves or freedmen. In admitting soldiers into regular service, [89](#) to attendance about his person, he was not influenced by private favor, or the recommendation or solicitation of the centurions, but considered the best men as likely to prove the most faithful. He would know everything; but was content to let some things pass unnoticed. [90](#) He could pardon small faults, and use severity to great ones; yet did not always punish, but was frequently satisfied with penitence. He chose rather to confer offices and employments upon such as would not offend, than to condemn those who had offended. The augmentation [91](#) of tributes and contributions he mitigated by a just and equal assessment, abolishing those private exactions which were more grievous to be borne than the taxes themselves. For the inhabitants had been compelled in mockery to sit by their own locked-up granaries, to buy corn needlessly, and to sell it again at a stated price. Long and difficult journeys had also been imposed upon them; for the several districts, instead of being allowed to supply the nearest winter quarters, were forced to carry their corn to remote and devious places; by which means, what was easy to be procured by all, was converted into an article of gain to a few.

20. By suppressing these abuses in the first year of his administration, he established a favorable idea of peace, which, through the negligence or oppression of his predecessors, had been no less dreaded than war. At the return of summer [92](#) he assembled his army. On their march, he commended the regular and orderly, and restrained the stragglers; he marked out the encampments, [93](#) and explored in person the estuaries and forests. At the same time he perpetually harassed the enemy by sudden incursions; and, after sufficiently alarming them, by an interval of forbearance, he held to their view the allurements of peace. By this management, many states, which till that time had asserted their independence, were now induced to lay aside their animosity, and to deliver hostages. These districts were surrounded with castles and forts, disposed with so much attention and judgment, that no part of Britain, hitherto new to the Roman arms, escaped unmolested.

21. The succeeding winter was employed in the most salutary measures. In order, by a taste of pleasures, to reclaim the natives from that rude and unsettled state which prompted them to war, and reconcile them to quiet and tranquillity, he incited them, by

private instigations and public encouragements, to erect temples, courts of justice, and dwelling-houses. He bestowed commendations upon those who were prompt in complying with his intentions, and reprimanded such as were dilatory; thus promoting a spirit of emulation which had all the force of necessity. He was also attentive to provide a liberal education for the sons of their chieftains, preferring the natural genius of the Britons to the attainments of the Gauls; and his attempts were attended with such success, that they who lately disdained to make use of the Roman language, were now ambitious of becoming eloquent. Hence the Roman habit began to be held in honor, and the toga was frequently worn. At length they gradually deviated into a taste for those luxuries which stimulate to vice; porticos, and baths, and the elegancies of the table; and this, from their inexperience, they termed politeness, whilst, in reality, it constituted a part of their slavery.

22. The military expeditions of the third year [94](#) discovered new nations to the Romans, and their ravages extended as far as the estuary of the Tay. [95](#) The enemies were thereby struck with such terror that they did not venture to molest the army though harassed by violent tempests; so that they had sufficient opportunity for the erection of fortresses. [96](#) Persons of experience remarked, that no general had ever shown greater skill in the choice of advantageous situations than Agricola; for not one of his fortified posts was either taken by storm, or surrendered by capitulation. The garrisons made frequent sallies; for they were secured against a blockade by a year's provision in their stores. Thus the winter passed without alarm, and each garrison proved sufficient for its own defence; while the enemy, who were generally accustomed to repair the losses of the summer by the successes of the winter, now equally unfortunate in both seasons, were baffled and driven to despair. In these transactions, Agricola never attempted to arrogate to himself the glory of others; but always bore an impartial testimony to the meritorious actions of his officers, from the centurion to the commander of a legion. He was represented by some as rather harsh in reproof; as if the same disposition which made him affable to the deserving, had inclined him to austerity towards the worthless. But his anger left no relics behind; his silence and reserve were not to be dreaded; and he esteemed it more honorable to show marks of open displeasure, than to entertain secret hatred.

23. The fourth summer [97](#) was spent in securing the country which had been overrun; and if the valor of the army and the glory of the Roman name had permitted it, our conquests would have found a limit within Britain itself. For the tides of the opposite seas, flowing very far up the estuaries of Clota and Bodotria, [98](#) almost intersect the country; leaving only a narrow neck of land, which was then defended by a chain of forts. [99](#) Thus all the territory on this side was held in subjection, and the remaining enemies were removed, as it were, into another island.

24. In the fifth campaign, [100](#) Agricola, crossing over in the first ship, [101](#) subdued, by frequent and successful engagements, several nations till then unknown; and stationed troops in that part of Britain which is opposite to Ireland, rather with a view

to future advantage, than from any apprehension of danger from that quarter. For the possession of Ireland, situated between Britain and Spain, and lying commodiously to the Gallic sea, [102](#) would have formed a very beneficial connection between the most powerful parts of the empire. This island is less than Britain, but larger than those of our sea. [103](#) Its soil, climate, and the manners and dispositions of its inhabitants, are little different from those of Britain. Its ports and harbors are better known, from the concourse of merchants for the purposes of commerce. Agricola had received into his protection one of its petty kings, who had been expelled by a domestic sedition; and detained him, under the semblance of friendship, till an occasion should offer of making use of him. I have frequently heard him assert, that a single legion and a few auxiliaries would be sufficient entirely to conquer Ireland and keep it in subjection; and that such an event would also have contributed to restrain the Britons, by awing them with the prospect of the Roman arms all around them, and, as it were, banishing liberty from their sight.

25. In the summer which began the sixth year [104](#) of Agricola's administration, extending his views to the countries situated beyond Bodotria, [105](#) as a general insurrection of the remoter nations was apprehended, and the enemy's army rendered marching unsafe, he caused the harbors to be explored by his fleet, which, now first acting in aid of the land-forces gave the formidable spectacle of war at once pushed on by sea and land. The cavalry, infantry, and marines were frequently mingled in the same camp, and recounted with mutual pleasure their several exploits and adventures; comparing, in the boastful language of military men, the dark recesses of woods and mountains, with the horrors of waves and tempests; and the land and enemy subdued, with the conquered ocean. It was also discovered from the captives, that the Britons had been struck with consternation at the view of the fleet, conceiving the last refuge of the vanquished to be cut off, now the secret retreats of their seas were disclosed. The various inhabitants of Caledonia immediately took up arms, with great preparations, magnified, however, by report, as usual where the truth is unknown; and by beginning hostilities, and attacking our fortresses, they inspired terror as daring to act offensively; insomuch that some persons, disguising their timidity under the mask of prudence, were for instantly retreating on this side the firth, and relinquishing the country rather than waiting to be driven out. Agricola, in the meantime, being informed that the enemy intended to bear down in several bodies, distributed his army into three divisions, that his inferiority of numbers, and ignorance of the country, might not give them an opportunity of surrounding him.

26. When this was known to the enemy, they suddenly changed their design; and making a general attack in the night upon the ninth legion, which was the weakest, [106](#) in the confusion of sleep and consternation they slaughtered the sentinels, and burst through the intrenchments. They were now fighting within the camp, when Agricola, who had received information of their march from his scouts, and followed close upon their track, gave orders for the swiftest of his horse and foot to charge the

enemy's rear. Presently the whole army raised a general shout; and the standards now glittered at the approach of day. The Britons were distracted by opposite dangers; whilst the Romans in the camp resumed their courage, and secure of safety, began to contend for glory. They now in their turns rushed forwards to the attack, and a furious engagement ensued in the gates of the camp; till by the emulous efforts of both Roman armies, one to give assistance, the other to appear not to need it, the enemy was routed: and had not the woods and marshes sheltered the fugitives, that day would have terminated the war.

27. The soldiers, inspired by the steadfastness which characterized and the fame which attended this victory, cried out that "nothing could resist their valor; now was the time to penetrate into the heart of Caledonia, and in a continued series of engagements at length to discover the utmost limits of Britain." Those even who had before recommended caution and prudence, were now rendered rash and boastful by success. It is the hard condition of military command, that a share in prosperous events is claimed by all, but misfortunes are imputed to one alone. The Britons meantime, attributing their defeat not to the superior bravery of their adversaries, but to chance, and the skill of the general, remitted nothing of their confidence; but proceeded to arm their youth, to send their wives and children to places of safety, and to ratify the confederacy of their several states by solemn assemblies and sacrifices. Thus the parties separated with minds mutually irritated.

28. During the same summer, a cohort of Usipii, [107](#) which had been levied in Germany, and sent over into Britain, performed an extremely daring and memorable action. After murdering a centurion and some soldiers who had been incorporated with them for the purpose of instructing them in military discipline, they seized upon three light vessels, and compelled the masters to go on board with them. One of these, however, escaping to shore, they killed the other two upon suspicion; and before the affair was publicly known, they sailed away, as it were by miracle. They were presently driven at the mercy of the waves; and had frequent conflicts, with various success, with the Britons, defending their property from plunder. [108](#) At length they were reduced to such extremity of distress as to be obliged to feed upon each other; the weakest being first sacrificed, and then such as were taken by lot. In this manner having sailed round the island, they lost their ships through want of skill; and, being regarded as pirates, were intercepted, first by the Suevi, then by the Frisii. Some of them, after being sold for slaves, by the change of masters were brought to the Roman side of the river, [109](#) and became notorious from the relation of their extraordinary adventures. [110](#)

29. In the beginning of the next summer, [111](#) Agricola received a severe domestic wound in the loss of a son, about a year old. He bore this calamity, not with the ostentatious firmness which many have affected, nor yet with the tears and lamentations of feminine sorrow; and war was one of the remedies of his grief. Having sent forwards his fleet to spread its ravages through various parts of the coast, in order to excite an extensive and dubious alarm, he marched with an army equipped for expedition, to

which he had joined the bravest of the Britons whose fidelity had been approved by a long allegiance, and arrived at the Grampian hills, where the enemy was already encamped. [112](#) For the Britons, undismayed by the event of the former action, expecting revenge or slavery, and at length taught that the common danger was to be repelled by union alone, had assembled the strength of all their tribes by embassies and confederacies. Upwards of thirty thousand men in arms were now descried; and the youth, together with those of a hale and vigorous age, renowned in war, and bearing their several honorary decorations, were still flocking in; when Calgacus, [113](#) the most distinguished for birth and valor among the chieftans, is said to have harangued the multitude, gathering round, and eager for battle, after the following manner:—

30. "When I reflect on the causes of the war, and the circumstances of our situation, I feel a strong persuasion that our united efforts on the present day will prove the beginning of universal liberty to Britain. For we are all undebased by slavery; and there is no land behind us, nor does even the sea afford a refuge, whilst the Roman fleet hovers around. Thus the use of arms, which is at all times honorable to the brave, now offers the only safety even to cowards. In all the battles which have yet been fought, with various success, against the Romans, our countrymen may be deemed to have reposed their final hopes and resources in us: for we, the noblest sons of Britain, and therefore stationed in its last recesses, far from the view of servile shores, have preserved even our eyes unpolluted by the contact of subjection. We, at the furthest limits both of land and liberty, have been defended to this day by the remoteness of our situation and of our fame. The extremity of Britain is now disclosed; and whatever is unknown becomes an object of magnitude. But there is no nation beyond us; nothing but waves and rocks, and the still more hostile Romans, whose arrogance we cannot escape by obsequiousness and submission. These plunderers of the world, after exhausting the land by their devastations, are rifling the ocean: stimulated by avarice, if their enemy be rich; by ambition, if poor; unsatiated by the East and by the West: the only people who behold wealth and indigence with equal avidity. To ravage, to slaughter, to usurp under false titles, they call empire; and where they make a desert, they call it peace. [114](#)

31. "Our children and relations are by the appointment of nature the dearest of all things to us. These are torn away by levies to serve in foreign lands. [115](#) Our wives and sisters, though they should escape the violation of hostile force, are polluted under names of friendship and hospitality. Our estates and possessions are consumed in tributes; our grain in contributions. Even our bodies are worn down amidst stripes and insults in clearing woods and draining marshes. Wretches born to slavery are once bought, and afterwards maintained by their masters: Britain every day buys, every day feeds, her own servitude. [116](#) And as among domestic slaves every new comer serves for the scorn and derision of his fellows; so, in this ancient household of the world, we, as the newest and vilest, are sought out to destruction. For we have neither cultivated lands, nor mines, nor harbors, which can induce them to preserve us for our labors. The

valor too and unsubmitting spirit of subjects only render them more obnoxious to their masters; while remoteness and secrecy of situation itself, in proportion as it conduces to security, tends to inspire suspicion. Since then all Lopes of mercy are vain, at length assume courage, both you to whom safety and you to whom glory is dear. The Trinobantes, even under a female leader, had force enough to burn a colony, to storm camps, and, if success had not damped their vigor, would have been able entirely to throw off the yoke; and shall not we, untouched, unsubdued, and struggling not for the acquisition but the security of liberty, show at the very first onset what men Caledonia has reserved for her defence?

32. "Can you imagine that the Romans are as brave in war as they are licentious in peace? Acquiring renown from our discords and dissensions, they convert the faults of their enemies to the glory of their own army; an army compounded of the most different nations, which success alone has kept together, and which misfortune will as certainly dissipate. Unless, indeed, you can suppose that Gauls, and Germans, and (I blush to say it) even Britons, who, though they expend their blood to establish a foreign dominion, have been longer its foes than its subjects, will be retained by loyalty and affection! Terror and dread alone are the weak bonds of attachment; which once broken, they who cease to fear will begin to hate. Every incitement to victory is on our side. The Romans have no wives to animate them; no parents to upbraid their flight. Most of them have either no home, or a distant one. Few in number, ignorant of the country, looking around in silent horror at woods, seas, and a heaven itself unknown to them, they are delivered by the gods, as it were imprisoned and bound, into our hands. Be not terrified with an idle show, and the glitter of silver and gold, which can neither protect nor wound. In the very ranks of the enemy we shall find our own bands. The Britons will acknowledge their own cause. The Gauls will recollect their former liberty. The rest of the Germans will desert them, as the Usipii have lately done. Nor is there anything formidable behind them: ungarrisoned forts; colonies of old men; municipal towns distempered and distracted between unjust masters and ill-obeying subjects. Here is a general; here an army. There, tributes, mines, and all the train of punishments inflicted on slaves; which whether to bear eternally, or instantly to revenge, this field must determine. March then to battle, and think of your ancestors and your posterity."

33. They received this harangue with alacrity, and testified their applause after the barbarian manner, with songs, and yells, and dissonant shouts. And now the several divisions were in motion, the glittering of arms was beheld, while the most daring and impetuous were hurrying to the front, and the line of battle was forming; when Agricola, although his soldiers were in high spirits, and scarcely to be kept within their intrenchments, kindled additional ardor by these words:—

"It is now the eighth year, my fellow-soldiers, in which, under the high auspices of the Roman empire, by your valor and perseverance you have been conquering Britain. In so many expeditions, in so many battles, whether you have been required to exert your courage against the enemy, or your patient labors against the very nature of the

country, neither have I ever been dissatisfied with my soldiers, nor you with your general. In this mutual confidence, we have proceeded beyond the limits of former commanders and former armies; and are now become acquainted with the extremity of the island, not by uncertain rumor, but by actual possession with our arms and encampments. Britain is discovered and subdued. How often on a march, when embarrassed with mountains, bogs and rivers, have I heard the bravest among you exclaim, 'When shall we descry the enemy? when shall we be led to the field of battle?' At length they are unharbored from their retreats; your wishes and your valor have now free scope; and every circumstance is equally propitious to the victor, and ruinous to the vanquished. For, the greater our glory in having marched over vast tracts of land, penetrated forests, and crossed arms of the sea, while advancing towards the foe, the greater will be our danger and difficulty if we should attempt a retreat. We are inferior to our enemies in knowledge of the country, and less able to command supplies of provision; but we have arms in our hands, and in these we have everything. For myself, it has long been my principle, that a retiring general or army is never safe. Not only, then, are we to reflect that death with honor is preferable to life with ignominy, but to remember that security and glory are seated in the same place. Even to fall in this extremest verge of earth and of nature cannot be thought an inglorious fate.

34. "If unknown nations or untried troops were drawn up against you, I would exhort you from the example of other armies. At present, recollect your own honors, question your own eyes. These are they, who, the last year, attacking by surprise a single legion in the obscurity of the night, were put to flight by a shout: the greatest fugitives of all the Britons, and therefore the longest survivors. As in penetrating woods and thickets the fiercest animals boldly rush on the hunters, while the weak and timorous fly at their very noise; so the bravest of the Britons have long since fallen: the remaining number consists solely of the cowardly and spiritless; whom you see at length within your reach, not because they have stood their ground, but because they are overtaken. Torpid with fear, their bodies are fixed and chained down in yonder field, which to you will speedily be the scene of a glorious and memorable victory. Here bring your toils and services to a conclusion; close a struggle of fifty years [118](#) with one great day; and convince your country-men, that to the army ought not to be imputed either the protraction of war, or the causes of rebellion."

35. Whilst Agricola was yet speaking, the ardor of the soldiers declared itself; and as soon as he had finished, they burst forth into cheerful acclamations, and instantly flew to arms. Thus eager and impetuous, he formed them so that the centre was occupied by the auxiliary infantry, in number eight thousand, and three thousand horse were spread in the wings. The legions were stationed in the rear, before the intrenchments; a disposition which would render the victory signally glorious, if it were obtained without the expense of Roman blood; and would ensure support if the rest of the army were repulsed. The British troops, for the greater display of their numbers, and more formidable appearance, were ranged upon the rising grounds, so that the first line stood

upon the plain, the rest, as if linked together, rose above one another upon the ascent. The charioteers [119](#) and horsemen filled the middle of the field with their tumult and careering. Then Agricola, fearing from the superior number of the enemy lest he should be obliged to fight as well on his flanks as in front, extended his ranks; and although this rendered his line of battle less firm, and several of his officers advised him to bring up the legions, yet, filled with hope, and resolute in danger, he dismissed his horse and took his station on foot before the colors.

36. At first the action was carried on at a distance. The Britons, armed with long swords and short targets, [120](#) with steadiness and dexterity avoided or struck down our missile weapons, and at the same time poured in a torrent of their own. Agricola then encouraged three Batavian and two Tungrian [121](#) cohorts to fall in and come to close quarters; a method of fighting familiar to these veteran soldiers, but embarrassing to the enemy from the nature of their armor; for the enormous British swords, blunt at the point, are unfit for close grappling, and engaging in a confined space. When the Batavians; therefore, began to redouble their blows, to strike with the bosses of their shields, and mangle the faces of the enemy; and, bearing down all those who resisted them on the plain, were advancing their lines up the ascent; the other cohorts, fired with ardor and emulation, joined in the charge, and overthrew all who came in their way: and so great was their impetuosity in the pursuit of victory, that they left many of their foes half dead or unhurt behind them. In the meantime the troops of cavalry took to flight, and the armed chariots mingled in the engagement of the infantry; but although their first shock occasioned some consternation, they were soon entangled among the close ranks of the cohorts, and the inequalities of the ground. Not the least appearance was left of an engagement of cavalry; since the men, long keeping their ground with difficulty, were forced along with the bodies of the horses; and frequently, straggling chariots, and affrighted horses without their riders, flying variously as terror impelled them, rushed obliquely athwart or directly through the lines. [122](#)

37. Those of the Britons who, yet disengaged from the fight, sat on the summits of the hills, and looked with careless contempt on the smallness of our numbers, now began gradually to descend; and would have fallen on the rear of the conquering troops, had not Agricola, apprehending this very event, opposed four reserved squadron of horse to their attack, which, the more furiously they had advanced, drove them back with the greater celerity. Their project was thus turned against themselves; and the squadrons were ordered to wheel from the front of the battle and fall upon the enemy's rear. A striking and hideous spectacle now appeared on the plain: some pursuing; some striking: some making prisoners, whom they slaughtered as others came in their way. Now, as their several dispositions prompted, crowds of armed Britons fled before inferior numbers, or a few, even unarmed, rushed upon their foes, and offered themselves to a voluntary death. Arms, and carcasses, and mangled limbs, were promiscuously strewed, and the field was dyed in blood. Even among the vanquished were seen instances of rage and valor. When the fugitives approached the woods, they

collected, and surrounded the foremost of the pursuers, advancing incautiously, and unacquainted with the country; and had not Agricola, who was everywhere present, caused some strong and lightly-equipped cohorts to encompass the ground, while part of the cavalry dismounted made way through the thickets, and part on horseback scoured the open woods, some disaster would have proceeded from the excess of confidence. But when the enemy saw their pursuers again formed in compact order, they renewed their flight, not in bodies as before, or waiting for their companions, but scattered and mutually avoiding each other; and thus took their way to the most distant and devious retreats. Night and satiety of slaughter put an end to the pursuit. Of the enemy ten thousand were slain: on our part three hundred and sixty fell; among whom was Aulus Atticus, the praefect of a cohort, who, by his juvenile ardor, and the fire of his horse, was borne into the midst of the enemy.

38. Success and plunder contributed to render the night joyful to the victors; whilst the Britons, wandering and forlorn, amid the promiscuous lamentations of men and women, were dragging along the wounded; calling out to the unhurt; abandoning their habitations, and in the rage of despair setting them on fire; choosing places of concealment, and then deserting them; consulting together, and then separating. Sometimes, on beholding the dear pledges of kindred and affection, they were melted into tenderness, or more frequently roused into fury; insomuch that several, according to authentic information, instigated by a savage compassion, laid violent hands upon their own wives and children. On the succeeding day, a vast silence all around, desolate hills, the distant smoke of burning houses, and not a living soul descried by the scouts, displayed more amply the face of victory. After parties had been detached to all quarters without discovering any certain tracks of the enemy's flight, or any bodies of them still in arms, as the lateness of the season rendered it impracticable to spread the war through the country, Agricola led his army to the confines of the Horesti. [123](#) Having received hostages from this people, he ordered the commander of the fleet to sail round the island; for which expedition he was furnished with sufficient force, and preceded by the terror of the Roman name. Pie himself then led back the cavalry and infantry, marching slowly, that he might impress a deeper awe on the newly conquered nations; and at length distributed his troops into their winter-quarters. The fleet, about the same time, with prosperous gales and renown, entered the Trutulensian [124](#) harbor, whence, coasting all the hither shore of Britain, it returned entire to its former station. [125](#)

39. The account of these transactions, although unadorned with the pomp of words in the letters of Agricola, was received by Domitian, as was customary with that prince, with outward expressions of joy, but inward anxiety. He was conscious that his late mock-triumph over Germany, [126](#) in which he had exhibited purchased slaves, whose habits and hair [127](#) were contrived to give them the resemblance of captives, was a subject of derision; whereas here, a real and important victory, in which so many thousands of the enemy were slain, was celebrated with universal applause. His greatest dread was that the name of a private man should be exalted above that of the prince. In

vain had he silenced the eloquence of the forum, and cast a shade upon all civil honors, if military glory were still in possession of another. Other accomplishments might more easily be connived at, but the talents of a great general were truly imperial. Tortured with such anxious thoughts, and brooding over them in secret, [128](#) a certain indication of some malignant intention, he judged it most prudent for the present to suspend his rancor, tilt the first burst of glory and the affections of the army should remit: for Agricola still possessed the command in Britain.

40. He therefore caused the senate to decree him triumphal ornaments, [129](#)—a statue crowned with laurel, and all the other honors which are substituted for a real triumph, together with a profusion of complimentary expressions; and also directed an expectation to be raised that the province of Syria, vacant by the death of Atilius Rufus, a consular man, and usually reserved for persons of the greatest distinction, was designed for Agricola. It was commonly believed that one of the freedmen, who were employed in confidential services, was despatched with the instrument appointing Agricola to the government of Syria, with orders to deliver it if he should be still in Britain; but that this messenger, meeting Agricola in the straits, [130](#) returned directly to Domitian without so much as accosting him. [131](#) Whether this was really the fact, or only a fiction founded on the genius and character of the prince, is uncertain. Agricola, in the meantime, had delivered the province, in peace and security, to his successor; [132](#) and lest his entry into the city should be rendered too conspicuous by the concourse and acclamations of the people, he declined the salutation of his friends by arriving in the night; and went by night, as he was commanded, to the palace. There, after being received with a slight embrace, but not a word spoken, he was mingled with the servile throng. In this situation, he endeavored to soften the glare of military reputation, which is offensive to those who themselves live in indolence, by the practice of virtues of a different cast. He resigned himself to ease and tranquillity, was modest in his garb and equipage, affable in conversation, and in public was only accompanied by one or two of his friends; insomuch that the many, who are accustomed to form their ideas of great men from their retinue and figure, when they beheld Agricola, were apt to call in question his renown: few could interpret his conduct.

41. He was frequently, during that period, accused in his absence before Domitian, and in his absence also acquitted. The source of his danger was not any criminal action, nor the complaint of any injured person; but a prince hostile to virtue, and his own high reputation, and the worst kind of enemies, eulogists. [133](#) For the situation of public affairs which ensued was such as would not permit the name of Agricola to rest in silence: so many armies in Moesia, Dacia, Germany, and Pannonia lost through the temerity or cowardice of their generals; [134](#) so many men of military character, with numerous cohorts, defeated and taken prisoners; whilst a dubious contest was maintained, not for the boundaries, of the empire, and the banks of the bordering rivers, [135](#) but for the winter-quarters of the legions, and the possession of our territories. In this state of things, when loss succeeded loss, and every year was

signalized by disasters and slaughters, the public voice loudly demanded Agricola for general: every one comparing his vigor, firmness, and experience in war, with the indolence and pusillanimity of the others. It is certain that the ears of Domitian himself were assailed by such discourses, while the best of his freedmen pressed him to the choice through motives of fidelity and affection, and the worst through envy and malignity, emotions to which he was of himself sufficiently prone. Thus Agricola, as well by his own virtues as the vices of others, was urged on precipitously to glory.

42. The year now arrived in which the proconsulate of Asia or Africa must fall by lot upon Agricola; [136](#) and as Civica had lately been put to death, Agricola was not unprovided with a lesson, nor Domitian with an example. [137](#) Some persons, acquainted with the secret inclinations of the emperor, came to Agricola, and inquired whether he intended to go to his province; and first, somewhat distantly, began to commend a life of leisure and tranquillity; then offered their services in procuring him to be excused from the office; and at length, throwing off all disguise, after using arguments both to persuade and intimidate him, compelled him to accompany them to Domitian. The emperor, prepared to dissemble, and assuming an air of stateliness, received his petition for excuse, and suffered himself to be formally thanked [138](#) for granting it, without blushing at so invidious a favor. He did not, however, bestow on Agricola the salary [139](#) usually offered to a proconsul, and which he himself had granted to others; either taking offence that it was not requested, or feeling a consciousness that it would seem a bribe for what he had in reality extorted by his authority. It is a principle of human nature to hate those whom we have injured; [140](#) and Domitian was constitutionally inclined to anger, which was the more difficult to be averted, in proportion as it was the more disguised. Yet he was softened by the temper and prudence of Agricola; who did not think it necessary, by a contumacious spirit, or a vain ostentation of liberty, to challenge fame or urge his fate. [141](#) Let those be apprised, who are accustomed to admire every opposition to control, that even under a bad prince men may be truly great; that submission and modesty, if accompanied with vigor and industry, will elevate a character to a height of public esteem equal to that which many, through abrupt and dangerous paths, have attained, without benefit to their country, by an ambitious death.

43. His decease was a severe affliction to his family, a grief to his friends, and a subject of regret even to foreigners, and those who had no personal knowledge of him. [142](#) The common people too, and the class who little interest themselves about public concerns, were frequent in their inquiries at his house during his sickness, and made him the subject of conversation at the forum and in private circles; nor did any person either rejoice at the news of his death, or speedily forget it. Their commiseration was aggravated by a prevailing report that he was taken off by poison. I cannot venture to affirm anything certain of this matter; [143](#) yet, during the whole course of his illness, the principal of the imperial freedmen and the most confidential of the physicians was sent much more frequently than was customary with a court whose visits were chiefly

paid by messages; whether that was done out of real solicitude, or for the purposes of state inquisition. On the day of his decease, it is certain that accounts of his approaching dissolution were every instant transmitted to the emperor by couriers stationed for the purpose; and no one believed that the information, which so much pains was taken to accelerate, could be received with regret. He put on, however, in his countenance and demeanor, the semblance of grief: for he was now secured from an object of hatred, and could more easily conceal his joy than his fear. It was well known that on reading the will, in which he was nominated co-heir [144](#) with the excellent wife and most dutiful daughter of Agricola, he expressed great satisfaction, as if it had been a voluntary testimony of honor and esteem: so blind and corrupt had his mind been rendered by continual adulation, that he was ignorant none but a bad prince could be nominated heir to a good father.

44. Agricola was born in the ides of June, during the third consulate of Caius Caesar; [145](#) he died in his fifty-sixth year, on the tenth of the calends of September, when Collega and Priscus were consuls. [146](#) Posterity may wish to form an idea of his person. His figure was comely rather than majestic. In his countenance there was nothing to inspire awe; its character was gracious and engaging. You would readily have believed him a good man, and willingly a great one. And indeed, although he was snatched away in the midst of a vigorous age, yet if his life be measured by his glory, it was a period of the greatest extent. For after the full enjoyment of all that is truly good, which is found in virtuous pursuits alone, decorated with consular and triumphal ornaments, what more could fortune contribute to his elevation? Immoderate wealth did not fall to his share, yet he possessed a decent affluence. [147](#) His wife and daughter surviving, his dignity unimpaired, his reputation flourishing, and his kindred and friends yet in safety, it may even be thought an additional felicity that he was thus withdrawn from impending evils. For, as we have heard him express his wishes of continuing to the dawn of the present auspicious day, and beholding Trajan in the imperial seat,—wishes in which he formed a certain presage of the event; so it is a great consolation, that by his untimely end he escaped that latter period, in which Domitian, not by intervals and remissions, but by a continued, and, as it were, a single act, aimed at the destruction of the commonwealth. [148](#)

45. Agricola did not behold the senate-house besieged, and the senators enclosed by a circle of arms; [149](#) and in one havoc the massacre of so many consular men, the flight and banishment of so many honorable women. As yet Carus Metius [150](#) was distinguished only by a single victory; the counsels of Messalinus [151](#) resounded only through the Albanian citadel; [152](#) and Massa Baebius [153](#) was himself among the accused. Soon after, our own hands [154](#) dragged Helvidius [155](#) to prison; ourselves were tortured with the spectacle of Mauricus and Rusticus, [156](#) and sprinkled with the innocent blood of Senecio. [157](#)

Even Nero withdrew his eyes from the cruelties he commanded. Under Domitian, it was the principal part of our miseries to behold and to be beheld: when our sighs were

registered; and that stern countenance, with its settled redness, [158](#) his defence against shame, was employed in noting the pallid horror of so many spectators. Happy, O Agricola! not only in the splendor of your life, but in the seasonableness of your death. With resignation and cheerfulness, from the testimony of those who were present in your last moments, did you meet your fate, as if striving to the utmost of your power to make the emperor appear guiltless. But to myself and your daughter, besides the anguish of losing a parent, the aggravating affliction remains, that it was not our lot to watch over your sick-bed, to support you when languishing, and to satiate ourselves with beholding and embracing you. With what attention should we have received your last instructions, and engraven them on our hearts! This is our sorrow; this is our wound: to us you were lost four years before by a tedious absence. Everything, doubtless, O best of parents! was administered for your comfort and honor, while a most affectionate wife sat beside you; yet fewer tears were shed upon your bier, and in the last light which your eyes beheld, something was still wanting.

46. If there be any habitation for the shades of the virtuous; if, as philosophers suppose, exalted souls do not perish with the body; may you repose in peace, and call us, your household, from vain regret and feminine lamentations, to the contemplation of your virtues, which allow no place for mourning or complaining! Let us rather adorn your memory by our admiration, by our short-lived praises, and, as far as our natures will permit, by an imitation of your example. This is truly to honor the dead; this is the piety of every near relation. I would also recommend it to the wife and daughter of this great man, to show their veneration of a husband's and a father's memory by revolving his actions and words in their breasts, and endeavoring to retain an idea of the form and features of his mind, rather than of his person. Not that I would reject those resemblances of the human figure which are engraven in brass or marbles but as their originals are frail and perishable, so likewise are they: while the form of the mind is eternal, and not to be retained or expressed by any foreign matter, or the artist's skill, but by the manners of the survivors. Whatever in Agricola was the object of our love, of our admiration, remains, and will remain in the minds of men, transmitted in the records of fame, through an eternity of years. For, while many great personages of antiquity will be involved in a common oblivion with the mean and inglorious, Agricola shall survive, represented and consigned to future ages.

FOOTNOTES:

A TREATISE ON THE
SITUATION, MANNERS
AND INHABITANTS OF
GERMANY.

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23 ([return](#))

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24 ([return](#))

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25 ([return](#))

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26 ([return](#))

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27 ([return](#))

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and hence it is translated in some indication arises as, "the German war-song". From the following passage extracted from

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28 ([return](#))

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29 ([return](#))

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30 ([return](#))

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have many Greek characters in their inscriptions.
The Helvetians also, as we are informed by Caesar, used Greek letters

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31 ([return](#))

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bodies of the German states are elsewhere taken notice of by Tacitus, and also by other authors. It would appear as if

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32 ([return](#))

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33 ([return](#))

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clearing and draining the land has taken place in North America. It may be added, that the Germans, as we are

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34 ([return](#))

[
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35 ([return](#))

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36 ([return](#))

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37 ([return](#))

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38 ([return](#))

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39 ([return](#))

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40 ([return](#))

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41 ([return](#))

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42 ([return](#))

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43 ([return](#))

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44 ([return](#))

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45 ([return](#))

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46 ([return](#))

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47 ([return](#))

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"The nation of the Svevici is by far the greatest and most warlike of the Germans. They are said to inhabit a hundred

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48 ([return](#))

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they were enabled to break through enemy's ranks, as all their weapons were directed to one spot. The soldiers called

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49 ([return](#))

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50 ([return](#))

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51 ([return](#))

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60 ([return](#))

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63 ([return](#))

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Sacra Deum, structae diris altaribus arae,
Omnis et humanis lustrata cruoribus arbor."]*

64 ([return](#))

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70 ([return](#))

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71 ([return](#))

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72 ([return](#))

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75 ([return](#))

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76 ([return](#))

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77 ([return](#))

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78 ([return](#))

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79 ([return](#))

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80 ([return](#))

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81 ([return](#))

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82 ([return](#))

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83 ([return](#))

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85 ([return](#))

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86 ([return](#))

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87 ([return](#))

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88 ([return](#))

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89 ([return](#))

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90 ([return](#))

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92 ([return](#))

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93 ([return](#))

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94 ([return](#))

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lest they should be led, by being accustomed to one spot, to exchange the tools of war for the business of agriculture;

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might be retained by the bonds of equity and moderation."
— Bell. Gall. vi. 21.]

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*Collegit vestes, miserique insignia Magni.
Armaque, et impressas auro, quas gesserat olim
Exuvias, pictasque togas, velamina summo
Ter conspecta Jovi, funestoque intulit igni.—Lib. ix. 175.*

*"There shone his arms, with antique gold inlaid,
There the rich robes which she herself had made,
Robes to imperial Jove in triumph thrice display'd:
The relics of his past victorious days,
Now this his latest trophy serve to raise,
And in one common flame together blaze."—ROWE.]*

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*Venit accola sylvae
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"The Bructerian, borderer on the Hercynian forest, came."

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continually flying from them with the waves. They do not, like their neighbors, possess cattle, and feed on milk; nor

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*"You, too, tow'rds Rome advance, ye warlike band,
That wont the shaggy Cauci to withstand."—ROWE]*

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published at Berlin, 1845, a passage is founded (of which a translation is here given) which quite harmonizes with the account

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10 ([return](#))

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11 ([return](#))

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12 ([return](#))
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13 ([return](#))
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14 ([return](#))

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15 ([return](#))

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16 ([return](#))

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17 ([return](#))

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18 ([return](#))

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19 ([return](#))
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20 ([return](#))
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21 ([return](#))

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22 ([return](#))

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23 ([return](#))

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24 ([return](#))

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25 ([return](#))

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26 ([return](#))

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27 ([return](#))

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28 ([return](#))

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29 ([return](#))

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30 ([return](#))

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31 ([return](#))

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32 ([return](#))

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33 ([return](#))

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34 ([return](#))

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35 ([return](#))

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36 ([return](#))

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37 ([return](#))

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38 ([return](#))

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39 ([return](#))

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40 ([return](#))

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41 ([return](#))

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42 ([return](#))

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43 ([return](#))

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44 ([return](#))

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46 ([return](#))

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47 ([return](#))

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48 ([return](#))

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49 ([return](#))

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50 ([return](#))

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51 ([return](#))

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52 ([return](#))

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53 ([return](#))

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54 ([return](#))

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55 ([return](#))

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56 ([return](#))

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57 ([return](#))

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58 ([return](#))

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59 ([return](#))

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60 ([return](#))

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62 ([return](#))

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63 ([return](#))

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64 ([return](#))

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66 ([return](#))

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67 ([return](#))

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68 ([return](#))

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69 ([return](#))

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70 ([return](#))

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71 ([return](#))

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72 ([return](#))

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73 ([return](#))

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74 ([return](#))

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75 ([return](#))

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76 ([return](#))

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77 ([return](#))

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78 ([return](#))

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79 ([return](#))

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80 ([return](#))

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81 ([return](#))

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82 ([return](#))

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83 ([return](#))

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84 ([return](#))

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85 ([return](#))
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86 ([return](#))

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87 ([return](#))

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88 ([return](#))

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89 ([return](#))

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*Atque utinam his potius nugis tota illa dedisset
Tempora saevitiae: claras quibus abstulit Urbi
Illustresque animas impune, et vindice nullo.
Sed periit, postquam cerdonibus esse timendus
Coeperat: hoc nocuit Lamiarum, caede madenti.—Sat. iv. 150.*

*"What folly this! but oh! that all the rest
Of his dire reign had thus been spent in jest!
And all that time such trifles had employ'd
In which so many nobles he destroy'd!
He safe, they unrevenged, to the disgrace
Of the surviving, tame, patrician race!
But when he dreadful to the rabble grew,
Him, who so many lords had slain, they slew."—DUKE.]*

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*-Quem Massa timet, quem munere palpat
Carus.-Sat. i. 35.*

"Whom Massa dreads, whom Carus soothes with bribes."

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*Et cum mortifero prudens Vejento Catullo,
Qui numquam visae flagrabat amore puellae,
Grande, et conspicuum nostro quoque tempore monstrum,
Caecus adulator, dirusque a ponte satelles,
Dignus Aricinos qui mendicaret ad axes,
Blandaue devexae jactaret basia rhedae.—Sat. iv. 113.*

*"Cunning Vejento next, and by his side
Bloody Catullus leaning on his guide:
Decrepit, yet a furious lover he,
And deeply smit with charms he could not see.
A monster, that ev'n this worst age outvies,
Conspicuous and above the common size.
A blind base flatterer; from some bridge or gate,
Raised to a murd'ring minister of state.
Deserving still to beg upon the road,
And bless each passing wagon and its load."—DUKE.]*

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