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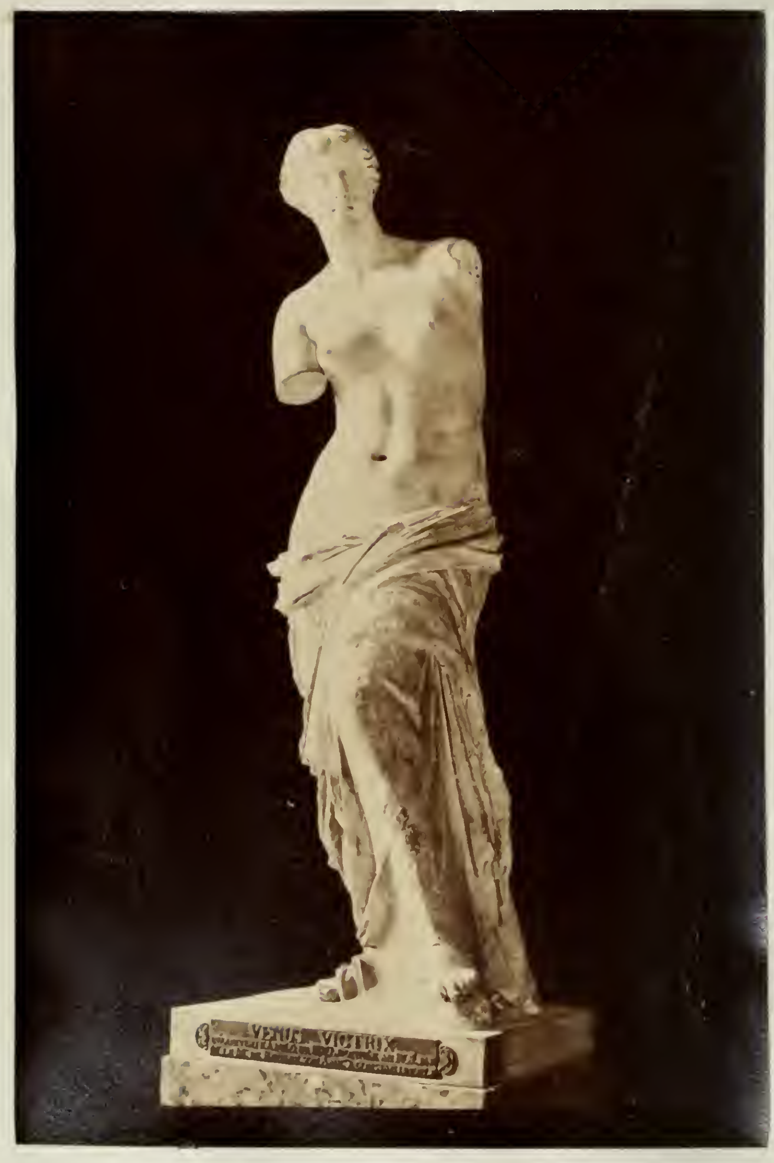
VENUS VICTRIX

ROMAN DAYS

FROM THE SWEDISH OF

VIKTOR RYDBERG

BY

ALFRED CORNING CLARK

WITH A SKETCH OF RYDBERG

BY

DR. H. A. W. LINDEHN

AUTHORIZED TRANSLATION

[ILLUSTRATED]

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF THE

AUTHOR.

BY DR. H. A. W. LINDEHN.

HAVING been honored with the request to introduce to the American reader, by a biographical sketch, my distinguished compatriot, Dr. VIKTOR RYDBERG, I very much regret that distance from our common country deprives me of access to the materials necessary for a comprehensive presentation of the man and his work. I fear, too, that my hand may lack the firmness and delicacy of touch requisite to fairly portray so accomplished a thinker and writer. Nevertheless, I feel myself under a certain obligation to give at least the outlines, believing that the reader himself, after a perusal of the charming work now presented to him, will be able to fill up the picture for himself more satisfactorily than can be done by any words of mine. The country which in common with the talented author I call my fatherland, is rich in treasures of song and saga, of memories from bygone days of power and fame, and can rightly boast of skilled laborers in every field of human culture. But, alas, its language is far less known throughout the world than its deeds of olden time, and this, together with remoteness from the literary markets of the world, prevents many of its most valuable productions from reaching foreign readers. It appears to me, therefore, that from pure patriotism, if for no other reason, I should grasp the opportunity, offered me by an able and faithful translator, to take a share in making known beyond the narrow limits of his own land, and especially on this side of the ocean, one of the most eminent of Swedish writers, trusting to the indulgence of the reader to judge leniently of the manner in which I have performed my task.

Viktor Rydberg was born at Jönköping, a city of the province of Småland, in Sweden, December 18, 1829. It was in the same province that a century and a quarter earlier Karl von Linné, the "King of the Flowers," opened those eyes to which nature was to reveal so many of its mysteries, and where, too, was born in our days Christina Nilsson, predestined to a world-wide fame in another sphere, the realm of song.

Småland cannot be classed among the most fertile of the Swedish provinces, but its woody regions, its varying scenery, its numberless lakes, resting in slumbering silence within forests of dark northern pines, give to it a great natural charm. I can but imagine that these, the surroundings of his childhood, inspired Rydberg with the romantic sentiment, which pervades his earlier literary productions, and that from them he received those impressions, which later manifested themselves in his charming and realistic pictures of nature.

Rydberg's parental home was broken up early in his childhood, and, like many others who have been useful to mankind, and have won from the world its reluctant praise, he entered life's struggle with no inheritance of earthly goods. But, on the other hand, he was richly endowed with those higher mental capacities, which give promise of future success, and which, when rightly developed and adapted, rarely fail to insure it. Actuated by an ardent desire for knowledge, he, after having availed himself of the instruction that the common school of his native city afforded, entered the college at the city of Wexiö, in order to prepare himself for the higher studies of the university. There his earnest diligence in study, his good behavior, and his attractive genial nature gained for him as well the approbation and regard of his instructors as the sympathies and affection of his fellow students.

At this time the celebrated poet, E. Tegnér, resided at Wexiö in the capacity of bishop of the diocese of the same name, being also superintendent of the college. Tegnér was without question one of the greatest geniuses of this century. His *Frithiof's Saga* is familiar to almost every civilized nation, and on this side of the Atlantic he is further well known through Mr. Longfellow's excellent translations of other of his poems. The veteran poet, with his keen perception, was quick to discover the talents of the young Rydberg, and extended to him the encouragement and sympathies so precious to an ambitious youth from so great a genius.

Having completed his preliminary studies at the college in 1851, Rydberg went to the University at Lund, and there, in the same year, passed his examination as Bachelor of Arts. He now began the study of law, depending for his subsistence on the scant returns he could receive from newspaper contributions. But he soon found that this slender source of revenue was inadequate to the pecuniary demands of a protracted course at the University. He, therefore, in order to earn the necessary means for the further pursuit of his studies, accepted employment as tutor outside of the University city. This step, however, changed the course of his life, for he never more returned to the University. Whether this was of any final disadvantage to the development of his abilities, I shall not venture to say; but I am inclined to think that Rydberg was better guided in his search after knowledge by his own sound judgment and a clear insight into the requirements of his mental life, than he would have been by following the beaten track of doctrines expounded partly with the view of instructing students for the different branches of official life. As it was, to judge from the great fund of knowledge in so many different and heterogeneous sciences, which he displayed at a later period in his literary work, Rydberg seems to have made good use of his time and his acquiring capacities.

During this period he became acquainted with Dr. S. A. Hedlund, a highly gifted and liberal journalist, who then was editor of the "Gottenburg Shipping and Mercantile Gazette," one of the most influential newspapers in Sweden. This acquaintance proved to be of great moment in his life, inasmuch as, influenced by Dr. Hedlund, he resolved to confine himself entirely to the press, and to spend his leisure time in free and independent studies and literary undertakings. In 1854, therefore, he joined Dr. Hedlund in the editorship of the paper mentioned, to which he has since contributed largely on political, social, and religious matters, touching in his articles on widely different subjects. Some of his novels were also published in this paper before they appeared in book form. And now, after the lapse of a quarter of a century, he still occupies this position, never having aspired to any public office, preferring to be free and unrestrained in the pursuit of his scientific researches, and to be left undisturbed in unfolding his rich inner life by giving expression to the vivid conceptions of his imagination. Latterly he has also given a portion of his time to lectures on philosophy at Gottenburg, with the purpose of realizing one of his favorite ideas, viz.: the establishing of a free university in this mercantile metropolis of the Scandinavian North.

From this brief sketch it will be seen, that Rydberg's career does not furnish materials for a biography of exciting interest to those who measure the significance of life by its thrilling events, strange adventures, or sudden changes of condition. With Rydberg, it is to his inner life, to the different stages in his development into a rich and varied character, a profound thinker, and a finished writer, that we must look for phases of interest. Most of his time was spent in unnoticed retirement, and that period of his life may fairly be compared to a river flowing unseen, gathering strength and volume in its course till it bursts forth into open day, mirroring upon its surface a life rich in thought.

No sooner had the first ripe fruit of Rydberg's genius, "*The Last Athenian*," appeared, than he at once was greeted as a thinker and writer of the first rank; and every new book from his pen was anxiously awaited and enthusiastically received. He was very shortly called upon to take part in public affairs. In 1868 he was elected a lay member of the first Ecclesiastical Convention of Sweden, and in 1870 and 1872 a member of the Swedish Parliament (Riksdag). In public as in private life, all his acts were in strict adherence to the liberal principles and the fervent patriotism which pervade his whole work as an author.

In 1877 a new honor, the highest that can fall to a writer in Sweden, was bestowed upon him, that of a chair in the Swedish Academy. This institution was founded in 1786, by King Gustavus III., himself a gifted writer, for the care and culture of the Swedish language, and with the view of enlivening and elevating the national sentiment of the beautiful. This distinction, like that for a Frenchman of membership in the French Academy, is a goal which is looked forward to more or less hopefully by every talented Swedish writer, and attracts him as by a magnetic force. The Academy has only eighteen places to be filled with candidates for "immortality." The number of those, therefore, who can arrive at the desired goal necessarily falls far short of the long list who fail to reach it. Rydberg, however, by public opinion, had long been designated for a seat in this lettered Areopagus, when the Academy itself called him to the chair that had been vacated through the death of another celebrated poet, Dr. C. W. Strandberg. The election of Rydberg was only a simple act of justice to a man who has hardly ever been exceeded in zeal for the culture of his native language.

In the same year that Rydberg became member of the Academy, the University at Upsala celebrated its four hundredth anniversary by a jubilee, to which had been sent representatives from universities and learned institutions of all parts of the civilized world. Among those upon whom the University on this occasion conferred the title of honorary Doctor of Philosophy was Rydberg. And it may here be especially mentioned that the festival hymn was his work; for it is a masterpiece of genius, full of pious sentiment, deep thought, and glowing inspiration, and it can fairly be said to stand unrivaled by anything that has ever been written for similar occasions.

This jubilee was a solemn occurrence in the annals of the time-honored University. The great old cathedral, filled to its utmost capacity with thousands of sight-seekers, eager to behold the laureating of celebrities from the whole learned world, with veterans of science side by side with the younger seekers after knowledge, with glittering uniforms and brilliant flowers of female beauty; the subdued light falling through the stained windows on the great multitude like a blessing, and the festival hymn, bursting forth from the grand organ and from the mighty choir of thousands of voices, borne on the wings of melody to the vaulted dome above; indeed all this formed a scene seldom to be equaled; and we can imagine that for Rydberg, who now stood at the height of his fame, honored and admired by his countrymen, it was an especially proud moment.

Having thus briefly sketched the principal events of Rydberg's life, I will now proceed to touch slightly upon his qualities as an author, and to indicate the characteristics of his more important works.

In Viktor Rydberg there is a rare combination of all the faculties which constitute the thinker, artist, and writer.

In his own creations are made manifest a lively imagination, guided and checked by the keenest critical judgment, and a refined and cultivated taste connected with a clear and penetrating perception of the true and the beautiful in all forms of life. To this may be added a profound knowledge of his own native language, and great force and elegance of style. According to his idealistic conception, language is an essential form of national life. He has, therefore, given an almost devout care to the Swedish language in purifying it from foreign words and phrases, and in zealously gathering up neglected or half-forgotten words, appreciating every single word of pure idiomatic origin as too precious a grain of gold to be wasted or even alloyed with those of foreign extraction. Hence the peculiar charm of his style to Swedish readers, but also the difficulty in transferring the beauty of his creations into a foreign language.

The leading principles in his authorship can be best exhibited in the following quotation from one of his own works: "In science to believe in liberty, is to believe in the human reason; in politics to believe in liberty, is to believe in an ethical order of the world; in religion to believe in liberty, is to believe in God." If to this be added another quotation from himself, "the true love of human kind manifests itself first in the love of one's country," we have before us the main features of his personality in all phases of his life and writings.

It would lead me far beyond the limits of this sketch, were I to go into the details of a literary work that deals with so many different topics. Especially may this be said with regard to his more exclusively scientific works.

I cannot, however, pass by in silence "*The Christ of the Bible*," a volume that called forth a lively and protracted controversy between orthodoxy and independent research into the scriptural sources of the Christian faith, and which violently stirred up the learned world of Sweden. In connection with this work of accomplished scholarship, may also be mentioned "*The Magi of the Mediæval Time*," and "*The Pre-existence of Man*," in which Rydberg showed himself a philosopher rarely excelled in power of thought and clearness of expression.

Foremost among Rydberg's works as a novelist may be ranked "*The Last Athenian*," which has been translated into several languages. In this, on the substratum of a thorough knowledge of the Hellenic race, literature, and life, and also of the differences and shades of opinion within the rising Christianity, he evinces an admirable capacity for seizing the important features of an epoch, a keen appreciation of character, a quick sense of nature, and a vivid imagination, by means of which his pictures rise as realities before us. When he takes us to the Athens of fifteen hundred years ago, we feel ourselves at home in the midst of the every-day life of this wonderful people, rejoicing in the sunny sky that hangs over this classic soil, and breathing with delight the balmy breezes from the Archipelago. When Bulwer wrote "*The Last Days of Pompeii*," he had at least seen the places he described; but when writing "*The Last Athenian*," Rydberg had not yet set foot beyond the borders of his own country: yet his knowledge of the remotest corner of the land he pictures impresses us with the feeling that he must have been born in this very land of the distant South.

But it ought not to be forgotten that early in his life Rydberg turned his eyes toward the Acropolis and the race that had erected its shining marble colonnades, and that he keenly appreciated all that this little people had done for the Occidental culture in its seeking after the same ideal that is everywhere apparent in his own writings, that of a beautiful, free, and wise mankind.

In "*The Last Athenian*," Rydberg has revealed qualities which prove that his authorship is not confined within the limits of a single land or nation, and which place him in the foremost rank of writers for the world. These high qualities he has also shown in a Swedish translation of Goethe's *Faust* and a discursive commentary on that work. We know no equal to this translation in any language, unless it be Bayard Taylor's English rendering of the world-renowned drama. Rydberg's great power of thought, his profound knowledge of human nature, his poetic imagination, and his brilliancy and versatility of diction have here combined to produce what is truly a masterpiece in translation of this wonderful production of modern thought and poetry. Alike are to be admired the rare understanding of Goethe and the perfect manner in which the spirit of the great poet is breathed into another language.

In 1873, Viktor Rydberg made a journey via Paris to Italy, where he stayed until the summer of the following year. It is a fruit of this visit to the city on the Tiber, "once the city of the world," that now is offered in this translation, under the title of "*Roman Days*." I shall not dwell at any length on this work of the eminent writer. The reader may judge it for himself. I shall only say that here will be met the same excellent qualities which rendered the "*Last Athenian*" so attractive. The "*Roman Traditions*" were originally published by themselves. In this volume they have properly enough been brought together with the "*Roman Emperors in Marble*," so as to form a bouquet of varied characters. In his studies on the emperors, the Aphrodite of Melos and the Antinous, the author places us face to face with ancient Rome, throwing the light of new views on some of the most debated characters among its former rulers; and in the pencil sketches, with a nice æsthetic sense and excellent power of observation and description, he gives us, in lively pictures, the physiognomy of this city as the capital of the New Italy; again, in the traditions of Paul and Peter, he keeps a middle way between the historical style and the plain attire in which the people are accustomed to clothe the products of their own imagination, thus handling the subjects in a style appropriately adapted to their different intrinsic qualities. The whole is a highly interesting series of historical and artistic studies and picturesque sketches. And I should question whether the tourist, who spends some time in the Eternal City, could find a better companion during his days in Rome, than the "*Roman Days*" of Viktor Rydberg.

Having not yet left behind him his fiftieth year, Rydberg is still in the full vigor of his mental and bodily faculties: he possesses "a sound mind in a sound body." We are then still permitted to look forward to many a delightful product of his spirited and skillful pen. Since his return from Italy, he has from time to time published some lyrical poems, which show the truly humane spirit in which he treats even subjects of every-day life, casting over them an idealistic glow. I think that this sketch could not be better concluded, than by giving the following specimen of these lyrics, which may be said to give the reader an insight into the inner life of the author. The English version is by the translator of this volume.

PHILADELPHIA, May, 1879. H. A. W. L.

THE PICTURE IN THE HYMN-BOOK.

BY VIKTOR RYDBERG.

[An old schoolmate speaks.]

WITH hymn-book—it was the first I had,
And clasped with silver gay—
I well remember, that Sunday, glad
I bounded to church away.
I see the morning,
And how the street,
With Spring's adorning,
Is clean and sweet ;
How, fresh and green,
Against our wall
The lilacs lean ;
How blossoms fall.
Oh what color, scents, light outpoured !
Folk, all dressed
In holiday best,
Take their way to the house of the Lord.

The golden cross on the church-tower gleams :
'Tis afire with flames of the sun.
Above, in a cataract, sounding streams
From the metal, quivering run ;

And rumbling and booming,
  Their journey make
To the isle far looming
  Across the lake :
The lake, that glasses
  Upon its blue,
Cloud, sail that passes,
  And mountain's hue.
Ding, dong ! ding, dong !
  The city lies
  Bathing in dyes,
And light, and perfume, and belfry-song.

With the arms of Svea and Göta, wrought
  On the granite—off from the street,
And cool in shade by the old trees brought,
  Is the porch where the faithful meet.
There, brother and brother,
  I saw them go
Beside each other,
  High and low :
In rank, in endeavor,
  Though parted now,
I saw it ever
  On each clear brow,
The same sweet calm of the Sabbath, lie.
  And in the sun,
  One by one,
The schoolboys, bare-necked and ruddy, went by.

I follow the many who bend their way
  Through aisles with gravestones laid ;
As silently, solemnly, slowly, they
  Move on through the colonnade.
And over me kneeling,
  The daylight shakes
Beneath the dark ceiling,
  In scattered flakes.

Yet there they stood,
  Cross, crown, to sight,
As if in a flood
  Of heavenly light,
Far off, in all the blaze of the choir:
  Harmonies stealing,
  Anthems pealing,
Filling the temple, rose higher, higher.

I took my book and opened it: awe
  My reverent soul seemed to fill.
I see the woodcut now, that I saw,
  For memory guards it still:
Its quaint portraying
  David the King,
By Jordan praying,
  Or Kedron's spring.
A psalm mounts high on
  The air, to Him:
Afar is Zion,
  In outline dim.
As art, indeed, 'twas a wonderful thing;
  In Lundström's style
  (I see you smile),
Old father Lundström, in Jönköping.

But oh, the beauty it had for me!
  How, thrilled, my fancy found
The colors (fairer than mortals see)
  To lay on that sordid ground!
The sapphire meadow,
  The azure height
And limpid shadow!
  The strings, as bright
As the sun, are flinging
  Out sparks that, cast,
Are sounding and ringing,
  And die at last—

By the surging waves of the organ, won.
To tunes that stirred
The chords, I heard
The voice of Jesse's crownèd son.

I heard his voice in the people's psalm:
"My ransomed soul shall wing
To Salem's heavenly mountain calm,
Where harps of angels ring."
On the leaf, mine eyes
Saw outlines fair
Of the mountain rise
On the azure air.
I heard the lay
Of the larks in flight,
Soaring away
To the fields of light.
My longing, too, had wings, and peer
Of the joyous throng,
Was borne along
To Zion, that shone in the ether clear.

O'er groves of olive it fluttering sped,
O'er Canaan's cities and towns;
Whence folk, with palms, and in gay robes, led
The snow-white lamb, with its crowns
Of green; and wending
Beneath the shade
Of cedars bending,
Procession made.
West, on the ocean
In distance wan,
Sails were in motion,
Swan after swan:
But farther and farther did earth appear;
And Salem rare,
On the stream of the air,
With towers of gold, ever drew more near—

With towers of gold, on the glorious sky,
  And banners all rippling wide :
I heard the pinions sweeping by,
  And the forms of the blest descried.
And there, and there,
  I see her now,
(Serene and fair
  The angel brow);
She seems to call,
  To beckon me, she
Who all-in-all
  Was, once, to me ;
And eager I fly to the dear embrace,
  And falling, I
  On her bosom lie,
The fluttering heart's sweet resting-place.

But now, ah now, the psalm was o'er,
  And ended the organ's stream ;
My picture was colorless as before,
  I wakened out of my dream :
Dark—cold—'twas another
  Church stood there—
I miss my mother
  Everywhere.
She was there, I know,
  Still near the spot,
With her child, but oh !
  I saw her not—
The worshipped presence hovering nigh.
  And the heart, bereaved
  And numb, relieved
The grief of the motherless boy in a sigh.

It was but a cloud, that came and went
  (As clouds will come and depart),
With the temple's darkness a moment blent
  And that in my boyish heart.

As the cloud dispersed,
  Came anew the light
To my heart; as erst,
  The choir was bright.
I thought of her
  I had looked upon,
And we two were
  Forever one.
It was a greeting from Salem ta'en—
  Each golden ray
  That found its way
Through the elms that shaded the dusky pane.

And long, Father Lundström seemed to me
  A master who had no peer,
For the world of radiant beauty, he
  Had wrought in that woodcut dear.
And what I found, many
  A later day,
In blessed Giovanni
  Of Fiesole,
Before had been known to me
  In the vignette
Old Lundström had shown to me,
  While I was yet
A boy. What I felt by the old man's grave,
  Comes to me now—
  O friend, be thou
Thanked, for the gift thy hand once gave!

To

L. S. S., C. A. L., and H. A. W. L.,

FRIENDS

WHO ENCOURAGED ME IN THIS WORK.

A. C. C

ROMAN DAYS.

THE ROMAN EMPERORS IN MARBLE.

I.

JULIUS CÆSAR AND AUGUSTUS.

IF you go up to the Capitol to see Julius Cæsar—and where shall one find him if not there?—do not look to see Sulla's "carelessly belted boy," with the self-reliant bearing, the persuasive gesture, the head of curls, the lively black eyes, and slender, well-rounded limbs! That Cæsar, descendant of Aphrodite, whose youthful beauty drew to him the glances of all his fellow-citizens assembled on the forum, and charmed King Nicomedes, has vanished. Whether you go to the left to see the bust of Caius Julius in the Hall of Emperors of the Capitoline gallery, or to the right where his colossal statue awaits you in the arcade of the conservators' palace, you will not discover a trace of the fopling of whom Cicero declared: "When I see his locks curled with such infinite care, and mark how he strokes them with a finger, it seems to me impossible that that man can brood upon so great a disaster—the overthrow of the Roman republic."

But it is almost a pity he is gone. He should appear again; not as a mere statue, but alive in the body, upon

Disrael

the Corso. The Englishmen who idle there in troops, would maybe recognize beneath his toga a kinsman of their own Pelham. The young Romans would greet him as the model of their dreams. The latest shade of the Parisian dandy—he who educated in the school of the Jesuits is beginning to drive out the second empire's unsuccessful pattern of male refinement, the "petit crevé," —would stare wonderingly after the heathen; whose features, radiant with genius, should gain heightened relief from the empty, scholastically pious, but not unpretentious look, peculiar to these young Frenchmen, and in which one reads as plainly as in an advertisement: *Je ne sais rien; donc je suis homme du monde.*

The colossal statue of Julius Cæsar in the conservators' palace, is an antique work, probably from the time of the first empire, but by no means a master-work. That the leader of Rome's golden youth cannot be even faintly discerned here, we need bestow no thought upon; for it is the aged emperor and tyrant of the world, not the young patrician, whom the sculptor wished to represent. But here, so much is wanting that we believed inseparable from Cæsar. Before us stands a military chief in full armor, in whose hard, bony, elderly face never gleamed the most distant flash of that genius which with the fires of lightning split asunder the hosts of Gaul and Germany, crushed the warlike fame of Pompey, overthrew the Republic, and annihilated the remnants of old Roman virtue. Not a glimpse of that affability which, in the old Cæsar as in the young, took captive an adversary; or of that sense of beauty which made him an artist among historians and orators; or of that magnanimity which, with human nobleness, gilded the selfishness of a fiend. Is this the man who by the poetic strength of his being, changed a tedious campaign of many years into a high-sounding epic for the grizzled warriors, who under burden of armor and baggage had to follow him from conflict to conflict, through all the lands of the Gauls and Belgians, over the Rhine into the woods of Germany, across the sea into unknown Britain? The man who with limbs wasting away by excesses, disease and vigils, went bareheaded in the sun and beating rain in front of his legions, and when a watercourse stopped the advance, swam over first of all, and when a division weakened, threw himself into the struggle, fighting in the ranks, after as commander he had planned all for victory?

If genius can be found in these features, it is that of the calculator, who, out of the wants of the time, the claims of society, the virtues, faults and vices of mankind, has put together an intricate problem, and solved it with cool perseverance to his own advantage.

If conscience can be found, it expresses itself in the mocking words of the Greek poet, which Cæsar is said to have often had on his lips: *Hold sacred law and right! but if thou break them, Then break them for a throne!*

If passion there be, it is that of which the jolly soldiers sang, as they followed the triumphal car of their commander: *Burgher, do thou mind thy helpmate! Moonshine-pate is coming on!*

Worse things yet, they sang on the same occasion of their idolized chief; but nothing that struck him on a more sensitive place. Achilles' tender spot was the heel, Cæsar's the head. Before their time the locks so carefully tended grew thin, and that was a fateful omen for Rome. For more than Alexander's statue, which he saw in Gades, this spurred him on towards the goal to which he aspired; since he could not put his hand to his head without a reminder that he had passed the age at which Macedon's hero had by arms won a world. He tried to help himself by "discount:" the crown borrowed from the back of the head, to cover the deficiency; but at last the lender too was bankrupt. Cæsar's biographers affirm that among the distinctions the senate lavished upon him, was the right to wear the laurel wreath that best accorded with his taste, as the wreath hid his baldness. Be that as it may, for every hair that fell from that head there grew a lock upon "Dionian Cæsar's star,"—the comet that boded a new era for Rome, and that still, on antique reliefs rests above his head, as the twin stars rest above the heads of the Dioscuri.

But enough of this statue of Cæsar. The other works of art under the same arcade and in the court of the palace, seem to have been placed there and arranged in a spirit of irony. Near by are to be seen two enormous heads; one, it is supposed, that of a colossus of Domitian, the other, of an Otho. Giant fruits grown in the furrow Cæsar ploughed. Directly opposite to him a lion presses his jaws unctuously into a horse that quivers beneath his grip. Civil war sucking the blood of the republic. By the side of this stately group look out from the shade, behind an iron grating, barbarian prisoners with hands hewn off. Shapes mysterious and threatening as if Saga had placed them there, a warning of her death-sentence upon Cæsarian Rome. Near the head of Domitian, the pedestal of an urn that held the dust of the elder Agrippina. A handful of ashes of old Roman virtue.

There are other and better portraits of the founder of the empire. Nowhere, however, do we find the Cæsar we dreamed of on the bench at school. Most of them show us a dark, suffering, nay, agonizing face. Day and night this mind is weaving a web of great, profitable thoughts; but he feels by presentiment that before the memory of his violation of the law can reach its envelopment in that shimmering veil, he himself shall sink, his toga pierced by the knife. Perhaps he feels that which is still worse: that his shade is doomed to an eternal triumphal procession, followed by the most unscrupulous souls of all generations; that the scum of philosophers, in honor of him and for protection of his greater or less imitators, shall set up the doctrine of a two-fold moral law—that for predestined heroes, and that for common folk; that the most brilliant malefactors of history shall point to him as their prototype and justification, and if they sink under the blows of fate, wrap themselves in his mantle, in so far as they do not rather choose the purple of the crucified Messiah, the fate of which was to fall a prey to soldiers casting lots.

When the Wandering Jew roams through the world, he follows the endless tracks of the triumphal car of Cæsar's spirit. In front of him hastens the phantom of that hero who dealt the sanctity of the law wounds incurable, as he lent the crime the seductive beauty of good fortune and genius; behind him sounds the voice of that hero who gave himself under the law, and fulfilled to death upon the cross, the claims of righteousness. So shall the poor beggar from Jerusalem stumble along between the Messiah of the Rubicon and Him of the Jordan, until the last voice that chants the praises of the idol of success shall have been silenced; and that shall come to pass when the seventh seal is broken over the world.

By the side of Cæsar's statue that of Gordianus should be set up—for the sake of the contrast. I think Cæsar's marble lips would be drawn into a smile at thought of the horror with which Gordianus saw himself cast up by a breaker on that strand to which Cæsar himself, with burning desire and by all the means the art of sailing gave, sought to attain.

It once happened, that an aged and worthy man who passed his leisure hours in company with books, was disturbed in his meditations by a shout raised around his house. Soldiers and citizens had encompassed it. A warrior with a naked sword in one hand, and a purple torn from a standard in the other, rushed at the head of a crowd of people into the atrium, and roared to the trembling slaves: "Where is the proconsul?" They pointed to a room. The band throws itself headlong in, and finds its victim reclining on a sofa. Mauricius, leader of the crowd, casts the purple over the old man, lifts his sword and cries: "Hail to thee, Gordianus Augustus!" "Hail!" All the others join the cry and throw themselves upon their knees. But the old man flings the purple as it were a mantle of Nessus, with horror from him, and cries: "Back! Maximinus is your emperor, not I!" "Maximinus," they answer him, "is the foe of gods and men! Maximinus seeks after thy own life! Save us! Save thy country! Take Cæsar's diadem!" "Never!" "Thou must. Choose: the diadem or death! Take the purple, or we tear thee asunder! Thou and thy son, ye shall rule over us." "Spare me!" "No!" Mauricius grasps the purple, sign of the imperial dignity, to throw it again over his shoulders. The old man tries to defend himself, and in the struggle falls to the ground. They seize him, raise him up, wrap the purple by force around him and show him, emperor, to the jubilant people.

A while after this, the younger Gordianus had fallen in battle, and the elder had himself laid the noose around his neck, to escape the diadem around his head. Man is the measure of things, said the Grecian thinker. The dominion of the world has the worth one sets upon it. But if Gordianus were not a Julius Cæsar, neither could he look for rescue by a Brutus.

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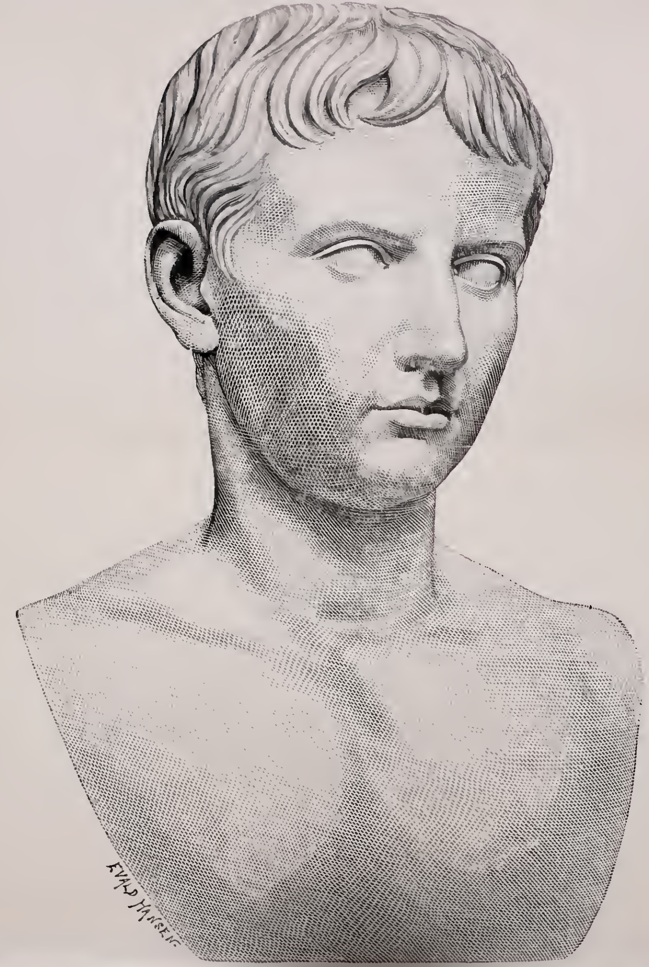
The most notable of Cæsar's later biographers and judges is no doubt Napoleon III. In his preface to *L'Histoire de Jules César* he has linked two separate historical views together. For Cæsar's part, he is a "determinist"—bows to the idea of an adamantine necessity. Cæsar, we must take as he was; a mind so formed that the temper of the time found in him the most faithful expression—its head to think and its hand to execute. A creative genius like this, must not be measured by the standard of moral law, for above moral law stands necessity—in the highborn writer's language, *La Providence*. Providence occasionally calls into being geniuses that have a pre-ordained task, *une mission providentielle*, to fulfill here in the world. They are, namely, to point out the way other people shall go. How far they themselves act in the full consciousness of being messengers and instruments of Providence, is a question upon which the author does not enter. Enough that when they work, it must be in the lofty sentiment of their calling; or when they follow selfish passions and trample on all that has been hitherto deemed holy, they are doing the work of Providence. They could not act otherwise.

In that which concerns people in general, however, the imperial thinker is not a "determinist." They have received the precious but dangerous gift of freedom of choice. They can go the way a heaven-ordained hero has pointed out to them, or take another. Happy are those who understand how to follow saviors like Cæsar and Napoleon I.! But "Wo to those peoples who mistake and oppose them! They do as did the Jews; they crucify their Messiah; they are blind and guilty!"

A solemn warning, a heavy judgment! These luckless people have cause to complain of the free will they have received as their lot. More to be desired, for them, were the secure position of the heroes of Providence; for such cannot contract any debts. The worst of all is that people, even when they are willing to follow the rescuing genius that is sent them as leader, have not a single decisive token by which they can tell a true Messiah from a false; since that inward testimony, the touchstone of moral law, has been taken from them, as unfit to use with geniuses like these. Or is it meant that the eyes of mankind shall be opened to the heaven-bestowed authority of such, when a Cæsar breaks into the state treasury and threatens the courageous young tribune of the people with death, who, true to his duty, has stationed himself on the steps of the temple of Saturn, and upholds the law against the assailing robbers? Or when Napoleons break up councils, and cast the country's highest tribunal out into the street? Unluckily, these actions have such a confusing likeness to crimes, that people would perchance, before a more lenient judge than the exalted writer, be in a certain measure excused if they made a mistake, and conceived the doer of such deeds rather as called to the penitentiary than the throne of Messiah. However this may be, there will doubtless always be found blind people who think that the Messiah who has borne witness of himself in the conscience of mankind is the only one deserving that name. But on the other hand—and that can serve as


EVALD HANSEN.

AUGUSTUS

(CHIARAMONTI GALL [illegible])

consolation—there will always be many to salute a banner of Messiah in the flag of every ship that carries a Cæsar and his fortune. The Romans idolized their Caius Julius, and qualified themselves for that happiness which the author has promised the people who follow the beck of a "hero of Providence." During the long death-struggle the Cæsarian epoch of their community shows, they were sated with bread and diverted with plays.

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In the beginning of this century, Fagan, the English consul undertook excavations in Ostia, the ancient sea-port of Rome, and found among other things a bust in Parian marble, uninjured and glistening as freshly as if it had newly left the master's studio. The bust, which represents a youth with—if I may so speak—features of a select fineness, can now be seen in the Museo Chiaramonti, in the Vatican; and copies in shining Carrara are to be met with everywhere in the windows of Roman dealers in art; for this head works like a magnet upon the gaze of passers-by. Will you, with your imagination try the same experiment that Wagner the alchemist did, with his crucibles and retorts? Take, then, the dust of Hellenic culture and feeling for humanity; take also a full measure of Hellenic craft, and mix these materials with Roman sobriety and strength of will, and if your soul have any creative power, you will have formed for yourself a likeness of the young Octavius, afterwards called Cæsar Octavianus Augustus.

Forehead, eyes and mouth, here form a singular psychological whole. The eyes have nothing of the sharp and searching look that betrays the wish and purpose to force a way into the hiding-places of another soul; but they open with a clear gaze that seizes the object perceived, and conveys the impression pure and distinct, to a brain, of the mighty but quietly logical working of which this brow gives a presage. The fine smile about the lips bears witness that the work has been successful ; that he has seen through us, and knows what we are worth.

But this smile has nothing that wounds him who is thus seen through. The judgment is as kindly as it is exact. If he will take advantage of our faults, he had rather take it of our virtues, if we have any ; and he willingly throws the weight of benevolence into the scale, to let the latter more than outweigh the former. His own face bears the stamp of a balance of the faculties rarely encountered. From these features Horace, the friend of Cæsar Augustus, might have drawn the inspiration for his "*aurea mediocritas.*"

Young Octavius is handsome, it might be said beautiful. As you see that formation of features, in which forehead and nose lie nearly on the same line, and are more Hellenic than many of the Greek portrait busts we now possess, you are reminded that the Octavian race took its rise in Thurii, an Athenian Sybaritic colony in lower Italy. Suetonius the biographer gives us the colors for these forms. The lightly waving hair was of a golden hue ; the eyes had a mild and kindly glance ; the complexion varied between tawny and white.

Cæsar's heir was not like young Caius Julius, in foppish manners. He clad himself simply and soberly. On his hair, which Cæsar would have envied him, he bestowed not a thought, except when the slave who acted as hair-cutter presented himself with the shears. That was as tiresome an hour for him as washing-time for the little ones in the nursery. So it might happen that he would call in another hair-cutter and make them begin, each at his respective ear, until the shears met at the crown. During this time he read in some book, and when the wearisome business was over, did not even give a glance at the mirror to see if the divided work of the shears had produced a coherent whole.

Rome has many antique marble statues of Augustus, representing him at various ages. We have now seen him as a youth. The best portrait of him as a mature man, as the emperor in all his splendor and honor, was dug out in the year 1863, from the ground of the Campagna, and now stands in the Braccio Nuovo, in the Vatican. A walk to the place of its discovery repays the trouble. You go out through the Porta del Popolo and follow the old Flaminian Way over a tract of the Campagna, the historic memories of which fill the wanderer's soul, while landscapes of grandiose beauty appeal to his eye. Here lies outspread that battle-field which decided the struggle between heathendom and Christianity. Here at the Milvian bridge, where now St. Nepomuc, big with affected spirituality and absurd pompousness, mirrors himself in the river, Emperor Maxentius was drowned in the mire of the Tiber, and with him the cause of heathendom. The strife began near the reddish yellow rocks at the goal of our journey, ("*saxa rubra*,") and gradually neared the city. Rome does not know the result yet; and the senators trembling, wonder for which of them they shall raise the triumphal arch—which of them—Constantine or Maxentius—they shall celebrate as "restorer of freedom," or brand as "tyrant;" for that question is to be settled by the fortune of arms. At last they see from the heights of Pincius the ancient honorable banner with S. P. Q. R. sink in the dust, and the forces of Constantine, drunk with victory, rush on under the standard of the cross. So, then, hail Constantine! Shame on the memory of Maxentius! The Deity —"*divinitas*" to speak the theologically guarded language of the arch of Constantine—always gives virtue the victory. Fortune is the measure of desert.

The grave of the Nasos, which recalls Ovid the flatterer of Augustus, Nicolas Poussin's valley, the field where the three hundred and five Fabii fell, we pass, and reach the country-house of Livia, wife of Augustus. In the rubbish that hid the ruined walls of this magnificent villa, was discovered, eleven years ago, the most beautiful statue of Augustus that has come down to our time. The statue lay in pieces; but these were whole and almost unimpaired, so that the work of art, under the careful hands of Tenerani, without any restoration worthy of mention, again grew into an entire figure. Augustus here stands in the garb of emperor, in richly adorned armor, tunic and purple, with the sceptre in his left hand, and the right arm outstretched, as if, protecting and blessing, he called down the peace of Olympus upon the earth. According to Suetonius, Augustus had an "uncommonly fine figure." This is to be found here. The harmonious proportion of the limbs, recalls the even balance of his mind. The attitude is pleasing, the face and the action stamped with the gentlest majesty. The mail-clad ruler of the world seems to repeat the verse of Virgil which alludes to him:

Din of arms shall cease and days of hardship be softened.

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Upon this statue, the gaze of his wife has many a time dwelt; but with what feelings? At the age of twenty-four, Augustus was wedded to Livia; after more than a half century's life together, he fell asleep in her arms. His eye, even in death, sought hers; the last words he uttered, were: "Livia, remember our happy married life!" Can a beloved and faithful wife win higher praise? Even stern Tacitus gives the best of testimony to the private life of the empress. And nevertheless, the most terrible suspicions cleave to her. Were they true, Augustus would have harbored at his hearth and heart a spirit from the bottomless pit, in the being he believed to be the model of a virtuous woman. Augustus was surrounded by a blooming family; but a mysterious demoniac power had secretly made its way over his threshold, and one after another of those he loved fell a victim to early death, or to a fate that made death a boon to be wished for.

At last, he might have cried, in the words of the Northern bard: "Stripped of my kin, as the fir of its branches." Rumor says it was she, who, while she encompassed Augustus with tender care, removed his sister's son and his own son-in-law, the young and promising Marcellus, and his daughter's sons, Lucius and Caius Cæsar, as well as finally mixed poison for her own husband, to make way to the throne for Tiberius. In the Lateran Museum there is a portrait of her; but the cold beauty of that countenance discloses to posterity nothing of that which it hid from those around her. The spade has brought to light the walls up on the Palatine within which she suckled Tiberius and betrayed his father, to give herself up to Augustus. These walls, like those of her villa out on the Campagna, are brilliant with gay colors still; but frightful stories haunt the one spot as well as the other, and the pilgrim leaves them with dark misgivings. Near Livia's country-house, was the wood where branches were cut for the laurel crowns of the Cæsars. Upon the brow of many a Roman emperor, have those wreaths cast the shadow of the thoughts of Livia.

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There are other good portraits of Augustus, besides that of which we have just spoken. In the portico of the Casino of the Villa Albani, two enthroned figures are to be seen, of which one, in particular, gives the impression of majesty. The Vatican owns an Augustus as high priest, with toga-veiled head, from the rich treasure-ground of Otricoli. A bust in the Capitoline gallery represents him in his advanced old age, but beaming with dignity and personal charm.

In none of these portraits could the reader's servant perceive that which Ampère, the talented author of *L' Histoire romaine à Rome*, discovered in their features. He says that Augustus looks false; that his glance reveals the hypocrite; that the intrigues, fears and lies of many years have stamped him with an ineffaceable print of uneasiness and menace.

But Ampère does not appear as an impartial judge, but a zealous advocate. It is a noble cause he has undertaken to defend, the cause of the republic, and there is certainly no wrong in his doing so, since among the historians so many Lachauds stand ready to speak for the other side. But he has not looked at Augustus in the light from Palatium's sun; but rather, in the glare from gas-jets at the Tuileries, some evening when a newer Cæsar had assembled around him the military leaders of the *coup d'état*, senators bought with a price, ladies of doubtful fame, philosophers of fatalism, and camellia-raisers in the world of letters. Under the impression produced by sights like these, Ampère sketches his Augustus, and makes him answerable for that which he himself has seen. This is laying hold far back upon the chain of causes, indeed, without therefore laying hold of the right link. A good republican does not make an emperor, or a king, or a demagogue, or a party, answerable in the first instance for the destruction of freedom and morality; for him, the people itself is the cause—the Roman of its own Cæsarism, the French of its own. It is an unworthy doctrine, that of the "poor, innocent people," and far less truthful than De Maistre's assertion: "*les peuples n'ont jamais que le gouvernement qu'ils méritent.*" And it is a despicable sight, that of a powerful and educated people, that will not answer before the world's tribunal for its fate, but always has a Peter or a Paul to shift the blame upon.

Augustus does not look false; but shrewd—that may be conceded. There is, however, a pretty bit of road between shrewdness and falseness. The one lies still within the boundaries of honor, the other, far without. As to the "uneasiness and menace," there is not a trace of them. On the contrary; the portraits of Augustus confirm the words of Suetonius, that "his features were quiet and cheerful, whether he spoke or was silent." When one has seen them, one understands how the tradition could spring up, of a Gallic chief who would have thrown Augustus over a precipice, but was hindered from doing so by the gentle expression of his face.

Our manner of seeing is influenced more than we suppose by our thoughts concerning that we see. And Ampère has, as we know, but sorry thoughts of Augustus.

Tacitus expresses himself about him with a caution that stands out in strong relief against the zeal with which later historians have tried to unveil his inmost nature, and the security with which they have judged it. More than any of his successors, has the author of "Roman Annals" understood the difficulty of uniting the scattered fragments of Augustus' life into an entire figure of psychological truthfulness. A seeming unity can indeed be obtained, with limited perspicacity and little art, if one stamp all the good with which he for many decades gave an example to his time, as hypocrisy. But to so cheap an explanation, Tacitus cannot accommodate himself. Neither will he, on the other hand, praise a man whose very virtues seem to him adapted to hasten the decline of the Roman people and state. On this account he is sparing of judgments, or puts them into the mouths of others. Too strictly moral to justify or excuse him who carried out Cæsar's work, he nevertheless places the abhorred tyrant's picture in the most favorable light the truth allows. The shadow of this man's ambition is softened when it is seen by the side of the people's slavish disposition. Tacitus owns that the people preferred the safety of bondage to the dangers of freedom. It loved its chains, quite as well as Augustus, his power. Tacitus throws the heaviest part of the responsibility upon the shoulders of the people; and turns silently away from the man who lifted himself up to be ruler of the state, by lowering himself to serve the weakness of the people.

Gibbon might have learned something from the great Roman historian's caution, and Ampère from his eloquent and haughty silence. But Gibbon grasps at once at the idea of dissimulation, as the key to that riddle called Octavianus Augustus. This is a cool, calculating head, a heart without feeling, a cowardly nature; he is a hypocrite, who from his nineteenth year to his seventy-seventh wore the mask of dissembling, while the age he lived in did not succeed in seeing through him. Had not that age, then, fallen low enough to suspect every virtue and tolerate every vice?

The picture Gibbon has drawn in a few hard strokes, is executed in the finest detail by Ampère. But with every shadow he puts in, the portrait stands out not uglier only, but more improbable, too; and when he makes out every word, every action of Augustus a lie or a deception, the reader has at last to ask himself if this be sound psychology, and whether light has really been thrown upon the character and motives of Augustus, when he is turned into a monster, who for fifty years incessantly and successfully plays the virtuous, without, as in the case of other actors, the part's entering into his soul, and changing into a kind of nature.

Augustus adorned Rome with beautiful buildings and works of art, but not with an imperial palace. At a time of unbridled luxury, when Roman citizens surrounded themselves with the splendor of Eastern kings, and Eastern kings built temples to the prince of the Roman senate, this prince lived in a little house on the Palatine, which had previously belonged to Hortensius the orator. On each side of the entrance stood a laurel-tree; above the door hung the wreath of oak leaves given by the senate. The colonnade in front of the house was not made of marble, not even of travertine, but of the spotted volcanic tufa, peperine, which is the poorest of Roman building materials. He who stepped in, in the hope of finding behind the unpretentious walls, marble statues, artistic furniture, costly mosaics—had made a mistake. Nothing was to be discovered that indicated the rich man and judge of art. Tables, sofas, and whatever else was to be seen, reminded one of the modest home of a citizen. A little room in the upper story was the master's study. That, he called his "Syracusa." He rather chose to work, however, surrounded by his family.

In this dwelling lived the lord of the Roman realm, over forty years. The children who grew up by his hearth, he himself taught to read. Here he looked with pleasure upon his kinswomen busied with the distaff and loom. For every-day use, the emperor never clad himself in other stuff than that made ready by wife, sister or daughter.

Why did he choose that manner of life, when he might have outshone the old-time great monarch of Persia in magnificence? The answer lies near at hand, that he did so because it was his humor. Another answer too, lies not far off; he was the highest judge of the behavior of his fellow-citizens, and deemed himself bound to be an example to them, in the natural habits of life of their forefathers.

But no! Ampère has looked more deeply down. When Augustus is gladdened at the sight of his proud Livia or his still blameless Julia, at the distaff, or when he takes little Lucius Cæsar upon his knee, and patiently teaches him letter after letter, lo! it is the hypocrite, who with little homelike pictures means to cheat the Roman people into forgetting the tyrant in the simple father of the family. The tables and chairs are not so innocent as they look: he who has seen through their owner detects in them *les ruses de son caractère et l'hypocrisie de sa politique.* The very peperine in the columns of the house is a bit of trickery: *jusque dans le choix de* *sa maison et des matériaux dont elle était formée, Auguste semble avoir cherché à tromper sur la nature de son pouvoir.*

Near his house, Augustus built a stately temple of Apollo, in which he arranged a select library, ornamented with statues or busts of renowned writers. Another snare! *Toujours le meme calcul: il se faisait petit, pour se faire puissant.* When he laid out for the Romans a new forum, it was to exorcise the memories of freedom that haunted the old; although it must be allowed that these ghosts in the shape of temples, basilicas, statues, orator's chairs, and so forth, left the crowd of citizens but very scanty elbow-room. And when stubborn house-owners hindered him from giving his market a regular form, the respect he in this matter paid to private right, was only a means for affronting public right with impunity.

As I read these explanations of Ampère, I get an impression of over-exertion. Augustus over-exerts himself; so does Ampère; one to deceive, in little and great, in weighty and worthless matters, in possible and impossible; the other to be sharp-sighted at the right time and the wrong, and convince the reader that if cunning Octavius has succeeded thus far in hoodwinking the whole world, he has at last met an eye that pursues the treacherous man through all his winding ways, into all his hiding-places, and finds him out even in his peperine.

For our own part, we have no desire to strip Augustus of all other human qualities, in order to make of him a bodily abstract of deceitfulness. We must not deny him the relief of sometimes being himself, in the presence of the world. This self of his very likely had, as every other, its contrasts and contradictions. The human soul is an elastic thing, and has room for such. Not quite outside the realm of possibilities, lies the art of housing in the same breast love of liberty and lust for power, republican conscience and leanings toward monarchy. The dissimulation practised most, does not consist in tricking the world, but one's self. We will talk ourselves into believing that the conscience is satisfied when we yield to passion. In that sense, Augustus was undoubtedly a hypocrite. And we must judge him sternly for that! Such is our right, our duty. For if we judged him mildly, how much rather would we overlook the same faults in—certain other people. Let us own, at least, that there is a hypocrite of the same sort who stands nearer than Augustus to every one of us!

Octavian's was a finely formed mind, with receptive faculty for the most diverse impressions and ideas; not a very deep receptive faculty, perhaps, but one large in compass, and joined with the power to weigh and value the impression. On closer scrutiny, one finds in his life a number of traits that unquestionably prove he had a sense for the morally exalted, as well as for the beautiful. But for a Roman, even the most degenerate, granted that he was yet possessed of moral perception, there was no more elevating sight than the old republic, with its stern heroic temper, sturdy obedience to the law, and inexhaustible spirit of self-sacrifice. Now, to suspect in Augustus the deadly foe of the memories of this greatness, the hardened hypocrite, who under the mask of liberty's friend is brooding upon constantly new murderous plans against civic independence, is with regard to psychology as violent as it is needless. That does not explain, but confuses, the riddle of his soul. It is our conviction that he admired the republic and loved the memories of it. We hasten, however, to add: admired the republic, because no one wanted to reëstablish it, loved its memories because they lay so far away, on the other side of the horrors of the civil war and dictature,—Platonic love in fact, admiration at a distance. But these are the most candid of all feelings. They come least into conflict with our selfish aims. We believe in them, because we never get a chance to try them seriously. By this conception of him, no honor is done Augustus, nor is that the intention, either; but he is made less monstrous, in that he is himself ashamed of worshipping only his own advantage. He is given, in common with the rest of us, an opportunity to fit up, in one of the chambers of the soul, a sanctuary to something worthier of adoration—which he worships, because that worship ennobles him in his own eyes, without incommoding his egotism. Many a prince has believed himself a good republican, so long as there was no question of setting up a republic.

We are not afraid to go a step farther. Since we have been bold enough to express the opinion that Augustus cherished feelings (let us say) platonic, towards the free state, we must add that this love was not entirely inactive, not altogether idly sunk in the contemplation of a harmless ideal. If we would be just, we must allow that the same man whose strong and moderate rule gave the world a time of peace and plenty never enjoyed until then, carried on with great perseverance an intestine war against those faults of the age which create and uphold tyranny. Cautiously, the war was waged, it is true; for circumspection, he said himself, is a commander's preëminent virtue; but to the decision of his aim, the bold blows testify that he struck, when mildness was not enough. Can it be thought possible that the secret foe of a free condition of the people would set his own existence at stake, to breathe new life into state institutions that had been and yet were purposed to uphold liberty? This Augustus ventured, when he by suitable means purged the senate of hundreds of members, who more than any were apt for tools of tyranny: prodigals, who on the brink of destruction looked for rescue by Cæsar's grace, parasites, who would have felt themselves honored by the most shameful errands in the service of power. He tried to raise the knighthood, too, and the people, he gave to understand that alms dishonored it; that the poorest Roman was by virtue of his civic rights a nobleman, with duties towards society and himself. Augustus saw that what had before been, and still was called, the Roman people, was more and more thinning out into a cosmopolitan rabble. No change was more favorable to tyranny. A people has memories, and knows itself a legally recognized community. But a rabble, without ancestral tree, without patriotic recollections, and therefore without national feeling, is glad to live on the emperor's distributions of corn, be amused by his plays, and follow his beck. Augustus sought to stop this decline. The blood of the Roman people must not degenerate, its ancient spirit be completely crushed under the increasing servile humor; and with this before his eyes, the emperor took measures which a broader view of the claims of humanity would not have suffered him to take, as they made harder the rise of slave and freedman to the rank of citizen. Cæsarism was else, as is well known, highly "liberal"—when the point was, to break down barriers that hindered equality, but might serve as bulwarks to freedom.

This feeling of his, for the sanctity of the Roman blood, also expressed itself in an attempt to guard the old Quiritian national dress, the toga, against foreign whims of fashion, Hellenic and Gallic. This species of romance was pardonable. What grand recollections present themselves in that garb! More than once had the fate of the world been borne in the end of a toga, and how plastically rich it is, with its wealth of stately falling folds! One day as Augustus went over the Forum Romanum and saw in the crowd so few togas, and so many mantles of other form and color, he repeated sadly the Virgilian verse:

> "*Romans, lords of the world, the race that weareth the toga!*"

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Distant, now, were the days, when "Roman matron" was a title of honor. The fall from innocence begins, in a community, not with Eve, but with Adam. Woman guards purity of morals longest; she does so from inherited habit, if not from attraction towards honesty. But when man has made her his equal in vice, she soon sinks lower than he; and the ruin is then irreparable, for the cradle of the race then stands upon a violated hearth. They had reached that point in Rome. The degradation of the Roman people showed itself most conspicuously in that of the Roman woman. The oldest and noblest races died out, the number of free citizens decreased yearly, because men trembled before the dangers of matrimony. To wed was to give one's name to be played with by a dissolute woman. They preferred, then, unfettered love; for to be betrayed by a slave, they thought, wounded less than to be betrayed by a wife. Augustus took hold with the hand of the law, to defend home and state. But the law is powerless when moral feeling is dead. Yet it is a picture worth remembering, the aged emperor standing upright in his box at the playhouse, while every one, to a man, on the knight's benches cried out with violent gestures to him: "Down with thy marriage laws!" As the cry sounds louder and louder, Augustus beckons to him Germanicus and his children, and takes the youngest little one in his arms. By his side now stands the worshipped hero of the Romans, the young father, in his manly beauty. The emperor points to him and his blooming children, in order, with a picture of that highest earthly happiness, of the virtuous home, to still the surging people, and show how well he had meant with his laws.

Augustus is made out so very crafty, when in all he undertakes or shuns, snares for freedom are suspected. And nevertheless, he would have been rather shortsighted had he not appreciated that which a Caligula, a Nero, a Domitian could grasp without trouble; that tyranny knows not its own welfare, if it do not stand on a good footing with immorality.

Had Augustus expected that his effort for the requickening of a moral spirit in the people would at once breed a new race of Catos, it is very possible that the prospect of an advance so rich in blessings as this, would rather have cooled than excited his zeal. But he well knew the good seed he sowed fell in barren soil, and would, under the best conditions, bear a late harvest. For his own power he had nothing to fear from the growth of a better race. Through bone and marrow he, as well as the grave men around him, must have felt the prophecy of Horace, that the Romans of their time, worse than their ancestors, should give birth to offspring more wretched than themselves.

Twice, Augustus offered to lay down the supreme power. This has been stamped as the most impudent trait of his hypocrisy. We think, too, that he would not have made the offer, had he not been sure of the rejection. That is probable, in a man whose only passion—though not whose only inclination—was for power, and who had used it so well for the advancement of the people. But was this action therefore solely a fruit of dissimulation? Did it not contain a reminder to senate and people of something they seemed to wish to forget—that the tyrant of the Roman realm was commissioned by the people, was a casual steward of its power, and had need to continue in his office, of its declared will and renewed permission? It has so often been said that Augustus wanted to "cheat the people with a shadow of freedom." But that care with which he guarded the republican names and forms, can it not be better explained by his wish to hold the way back to the free state open, when he, and those nearest him, should have left the stage?

No one allowed himself to be deceived by "freedom's shadow;" neither he who would, nor he who would not have freedom's substance. The man ill knows the Romans of that time who thinks they had not the power to underrate and give the worst interpretation to everything. A fair shadow they did not take for a reality; but a fair reality, if once in a while it came to light, they were very willing to deem a shadow. Augustus, who had drunk at the springs of Hellenic principle, knew that greater honor awaited him, with posterity, as new creator of the republic, than as founder of a tyranny. And is it not in a great measure due to him, that it needed centuries for the Roman realm to sink into anything like the despotisms of the East? In all truthfulness, the honor of this belongs to him more than to senate or people. To that shadow of freedom he sustained, is it due, that when the world was closed against the republic, there was yet a shelter for republicans—on the imperial throne. There, could men like the Antonines, like Tacitus, descendant of the historian, like Julian, yet work in the spirit of the free state, though the people was beyond being penetrated by this spirit.

When Augustus after an offer of abdication, returned from the solemn meeting in the senate, to his cabin on the Palatine, we do not think that he said to himself: "What a cunning fellow thou art—*dolis instructus et arte pelasga!* How well thou knowest how to satisfy man's craving to be duped!" Rather would he persuade himself that the step he had just taken was a proof not to be challenged of unselfishness and public spirit. If his self-knowledge ever deserted him, it was doubtless here. He never thought of himself as actually the living political antithesis of the Brutuses and Catos. The bearers of those great names stood in another camp than that into which fate had thrown him as Cæsar's successor; but his respect for them was unaffected: he praised with his favorite poets *atrocem animum Catonis*, and queried with them:

"*Quis te, magne Cato, tacite relinquet?*"

After at table he had taken his three—on greater occasions six—dishes, and with the Æneid in hand, awaited his little afternoon nap upon the sofa, which he used to take with his head on his hand, more than once, perhaps his eye rested on the lines of Virgil:

"Wilt thou behold the Tarquinian kings, and Brutus avenger's
Soul heroic, and see the lictor's rods that he won him,
First in the consular line, with axes the realm defending?
O for the ward of liberty fair, unfortunate father,
Must thou thyself to punishment call thy children rebellious!
Howsoe'er by an after age thou art judged, O Brutus,
Love in thy heart for thy forefathers' land, for honor did conquer!

Ultor Brute! Pulchra libertas!

Augustus could fall asleep with these words on his lips, and fear no unquiet dreams. The shade of Brutus, and freedom's beauty, were to him æsthetically pleasing but not practically dangerous phantoms; and tyranny was beforehand so rooted in every mind, that he never, during his long government, had a chance to try the weight of his love of liberty against that of his lust for power. He thought himself the best Cato in Rome; and it was probably not without an allusion in this quarter, that he so often, when the talk in his circle of friends fell upon old Roman virtue, uttered with a sadness soon comforted: "We must be content with the Cato we have."

Without such an estimate of himself, granted a much too flattering one, he would hardly have been able, during a long life, and battling with many household cares, to sustain the peace of mind that scattered joy over his being and made him gentle and friendly. We should be able to forgive him, that his virtues only advanced tyranny, when we see that the vices of the Cæsars who followed, did not avail to cast it down.

II.

TIBERIUS.

IN the Hall of Emperors of the Capitoline gallery, one is surrounded by the fullest collection of antique busts of the emperors, that (as far as I know) is to be found. It is a high-born company, but there is cause to question if it be as good as it is select. From the market, where the equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius warns us not to forget the lights of the empire in its shadows, the sunshine falls upon many a mighty brow and able profile, and the prevailing impression of the lords of Rome is of undeniable strength and developed character—developed in good and evil. One is tempted to believe that " the natural selection " has in general asserted its right, whether it were the predecessor's will, or votes of the senators, or arms of the legions, or the life-guards' thirst for gold, that opened the way to the place of honor of the world's empire. Faces that say nothing, are not many.

Nor are the nobly eloquent many either; and one seems, on one's entrance into the Hall of Emperors, to have taken a step downward on the scale of humanity, if one have lately stood among the statues of the law-givers, heroes, philosophers and poets, of the old republic. Many of these art has idealized, and some, the chisel has freely invented; but on most of them, their own life has stamped the seal of lofty or profound nature. If you would see the flower of antique humanity, look for it among the citizens, not the princes. Power, succeeded to or possessed by birthright, is clearly not the condition most favorable for the improvement of man. Still less is slavery.

Seldom does the quiet and gentle strength of moral will shine forth from the features of a Roman emperor, as from the glorious face of Antoninus Pius ; oftener, the force of a coldly mathematical understanding, bare of ideality, inaccessible to great visions ; now and then, the beast-tamer's power to subjugate ; and sometimes, too, the might of unbridled passions, which at the bottom is weakness.

Another remark one makes is that the races show—even if interruptedly—retrogression. They begin with a fine, regular type, which more or less sustains itself through all the members of the so-called Julian family, and in which one might be inclined to see the influence of an æsthetic breeding, carried through many generations. These are men who have grown up amid Hellenic paintings and sculpture, have brought their mental food from the literature of Greece, and moved in circles where every gesture passing the limit of beauty, shocks ; where no one can expect success without mastery over his outer man, and intuitive knowledge of the dispositions of those around him ; and where perception is sharpened against the polished exterior of his companions. With the Flavians, a coarser mould of features comes on ; "the urbane" gives way for a something rustic ; the æsthetic for a something common. The honest, good-humored, but stingy toll officer who was father of this house, plainly has handed down his face to Vespasian and Titus. Some of the Antonines have a spiritual look that more than counterbalances the refinement of the Julians; but the beauty of the former is less a heritage than a personal gain; is more of a spiritual than of a bodily kind. In their features, as in their time, the antique strives for a higher form of life—an ethical form—to escape death. After them, faces of doubtful or barbaric mould are usual. Rude soldiers change with dull stewards of the realm, and the peculiarities of both kinds unite in a repulsive whole in Constantius Chlorus and Constantine.

Art, unbrokenly sinking, at last even technically impotent, does its share to cast upon the counterfeits of Rome's emperors the shadow of Rome's decline; but the deterioration in type and expression is not therefore a mere illusion bred by the chisel; as little as the decay of the Roman empire is a cheating vision, called up by its degenerate historians. Did we own a consecutive line of statues going through all ages, that faithfully reproduced the features of their distinguished men, we should with wonder perceive on the outside of humanity, the stamp of different epochs. The bust of Julian called the Apostate, which is the next to last head in the Capitoline gallery, clearly shows that antique art, even upon its lowest step, was not quite insensible to genius in the features it had to reproduce.

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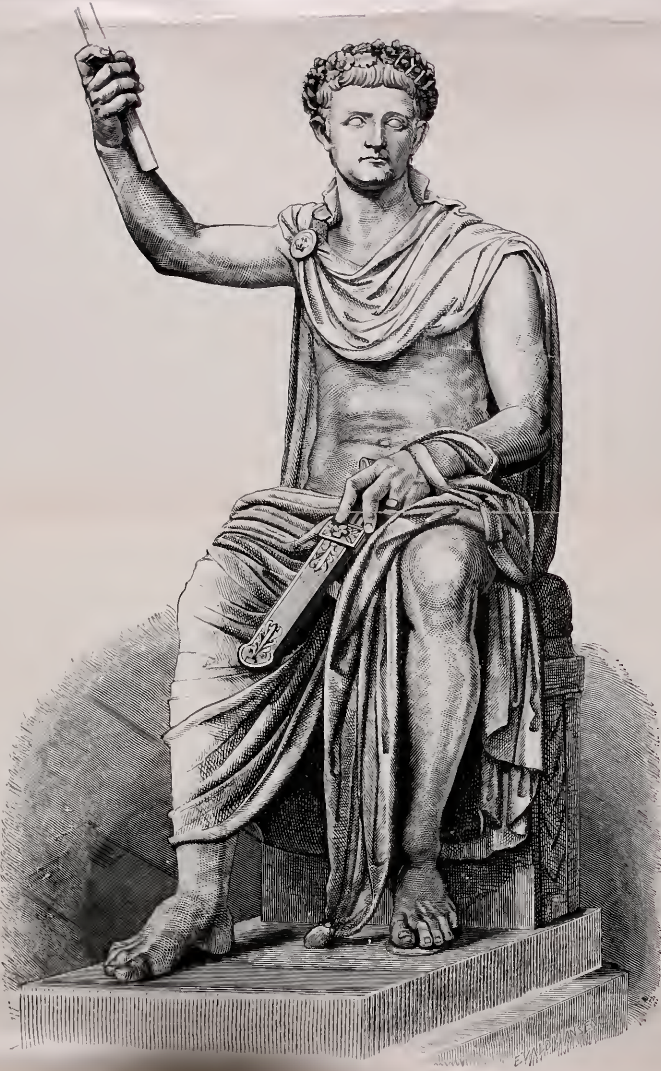
To the great works of art of its time, belonged a monument erected in front of the temple of Venus genetrix, to Tiberius, by fourteen Asiatic cities which an earthquake had devastated, and he had rebuilt. The cities, in a gracefully wrought allegorical ring, surrounded the pedestal of the emperor's colossal statue, a free imitation of which, dug up at Puteoli, has come down to our


E.VALD HANSEN

TIBERIUS.
(CHIARAMONTI GALLERY VATICAN.)

time, to give us an idea of what the annals of beauty lost when that work was destroyed. Many other statues of Tiberius, raised by flattery or fear, or, as in this case, by gratitude, hate has broken to pieces; but nevertheless, we own good portraits of the heir of Augustus. Into the inheritance go the features of the latter. In spite of the curved nose—the Roman nose, so seldom seen in Rome—Tiberius has so strong a family likeness to his step-father that many have suspected a nearer relationship between them. Most striking, perhaps, is that resemblance, if the bust of young Octavius found at Ostia, be likened with the busts of young Tiberius, of which the Lateran gallery and the Museo nazionale at Naples are in possession. But years do not efface the likeness, although the expression of the one grows darker and darker, and harder, and more artificial, while the other is ever illuminated more with clemency and peace.

Had we a chance to see, side by side, the statues and busts of Tiberius which are now scattered through the Vatican, Museo Capitolino, Lateran, Villa Albani, Villa Borghese, Museo nazionale, Louvre and others, representing him at different ages, we might in some degree be able to follow the advance of his spirit through the valley of the shadow of death, until he disappears in Acheron. The colossal head found at Veii in the year 1811, and which belongs to the Museo Chiaramonti, especially fastens itself upon the memory. It is not a low mind we have before us, but one fallen far down; and we think of a prostrate archangel as we see it. In the same gallery we find a colossal statue in Pentelic marble; Tiberius as an Olympian god. It makes the impression of greatness, but the artist's effort to give it something of the benignant majesty of Zeus, has stranded on the impossible.

In accordance with the statues, Suetonius draws him as handsome, well-knit and broad-shouldered. But he does not inspire confidence. In particular, the lines around the mouth are apt to awaken mistrust. The enthroned statues in the Museo Chiaramonti have an affected sweet smile, that would like to express goodness, while the small, finely cut under-lip, that rises from the strongly marked hollow over the chin, ought in its natural position to sharpen with a dash of contempt the conscious superiority that lies upon his broad, magnificently formed forehead. One of the busts in the Capitoline gallery discloses around the mouth the long repressed sensual desire, that in old age broke out in unbridled force. The smile described, is in strong contrast with the cold gaze of the large open eyes. As we have heard so much of the mistrustfulness of Tiberius, we might expect the eyes to betray that quality; but it is not so. The mistrustful man yet is curious, with regard to the object he perceives; he hesitates still between a probability that it will lose, and a possibility that it may gain upon nearer scrutiny. But this gaze examines not, hesitates not, but without mercy verifies a judgment fixed in advance, that gives up every one to contempt. The outlines of the head are noble, and the profile is stately. Tacitus tells us that the well-formed face was disfigured by pimples and boils: with such things, art rightly refuses to make us acquainted.

The statues do not give us an idea of his usual bearing. This was purposely the opposite of that to be found in many an upstart, who imposes on himself constrained gestures and a haughty look, as he feels within that he must represent something other than he really is. Tiberius had by nature these gestures and this look; but strove, though with no particular success, to moderate them. Just as one immediately traces affectation in that which separates an upstart from the crowd, so one discovered in Tiberius the artificial nature of his burgher-like sociability. When he thought himself alone, or walked along, musing, he had a mocking and forbidding aspect.

Ampère finds that Tiberius' brow has greater repose than that of Augustus. In this there is a glimmer of truth. For the brow of the latter discloses the working of observation and proof ; that of the former, on the other hand, the still brooding of thought. Augustus never ceased reading men, because he did not despise them ; they formed a literature in which there was for him always something new to gather ; and he rejoiced like the natural philosopher and found his advantage like the wise man in his discoveries. Tiberius, on the contrary, when he ascended the throne, had long since ended his practical course in the knowledge of mankind, and gone over to theory. He is, in very truth, made to be a theorist. As orator and letter-writer he weighs every word like gold and makes use of none, before he strictly proves its logical value—this not always to be clear, but also with the intent of veiling his meaning. In his communications to the senate, he arranges every separate case under a rule, and asks, or rather himself demonstrates, how it should be solved with reference to that rule ; and his thoughts always form themselves in binding or entangling syllogisms. And so the historians describe him as a dull speaker, except—and this is psychologically worthy of note—when he sometimes declares in favor of an innocent man accused. Then, for a moment, the closed passage between his understanding and his heart opens, and a warmth else rarely found in him, causes the ice-bound speech to flow freely. His inclination to "generalize" reveals itself in everything. This is why he gave less heed to men than to mankind. And the conclusion in which he has verified his observations of it, is: it is so contemptible, it would be unworthy of hate, were it not at the same time dangerous.

Arrived at this conclusion, he does not believe it worth while to examine the various mixtures of vanity, envy, craft and stupidity, that meet him in the manifold changing revelations of the essential nature of man. Such a study as that, would farther embitter the dark moodiness with which he feels himself suffering. Only from the point of view of precaution, as more or less dangerous, would they merit scrutiny. But the simplest way is to observe caution towards all, and to find a system that may cast the burden of this upon those who are to be watched. This system he has found, without trouble. And the panting anxiety in which it holds the world, forms the contrast at once explicit and sharp, to the repose of his own brow.

Tiberius is one of the great commanders Rome possessed. Since the death of Marius, no one had saved the empire from such threatening dangers as he had. That and other things that redound to his honor, we are disposed to forget in his crimes; especially as the great deeds he achieved never were executed in a brilliant fashion. What Frenchmen call *la mise en scène*, the art of bringing a thing upon the boards, he despised. Julius Cæsar understood that art, thoroughly; and farther on, we shall see an Otho, whose life was an Atellan farce, put on the cothurnus and tragic mask, and play the falling hero so well, that he can cheat the very muse of history of her tears. There is something of theory quietly put into practice in the exploits, too, of Tiberius. They sprang from the same roots as his crimes. His leading virtue as commander, was prudence sharpened by mistrust; but before the enemy the inclination to mistrust is very nearly the same as the power to foresee. Tiberius, who theorized upon all menacing possibilities on the enemy's side and suspected all possibilities of negligence and weakness in his own subordinates, took his precautions on both sides, and conquered by silent, perseverant fighting, without making much sensation and without awakening enthusiasm. Besides Augustus, Vellejus Paterculus, his sub-commander was perhaps the only one who fully appreciated his greatness as leader of an army. His whole life became afterwards a campaign in secret. Whether he were in Rome or on Capri, the primeval woods of Germany, with barricades, ambushes and lurking spearsmen, stood constantly before his sight; but the woods were now colonnades, and the German cloak of skins had given way to the toga, the ambush to flattery.

A dash of contempt for humanity is common in petty souls—is the unconscious reflection of themselves—but to be thorough, contempt for mankind presupposes a deep nature. It is like the parasite that flourishes on a tree full of sap. He who has within him no room for a human ideal to compare with his "sensually rational" self, and with the others who move round him, and who is not deeply agitated by the result of the comparison, neither sinks into a despiser of men, nor rises to be a saint. Tiberius had affluent gifts not alone in the matters of intellect and strength of will. His sense of justice was from the beginning strong, his zeal to defend the helpless, ardent. Often he came into the judgment hall, sat down in a corner of the room, not to force the prætor from his chair, and listened to the case. Safe stood the poor man against an unjust judgment, even had he the ranks of the mighty against him, when the tall man with the dark features had listened to his suit. It is possible that the sense of justice in Tiberius, strictly considered was anger, that the wisdom of the state expressed in the laws, could be cheated by the craft of lawyers and criminals; it is possible that it was the vexation of a huntsman who sees that the lamb has been caught in the snare of the fox. But whatever of good we can award this Cæsar, must count at its full weight; the evil in him is heavy enough, still.

Money, in his hand, was long a beneficent force. Sparing in everyday habits, he was helpful to undeserved want, and for giant misfortunes he had a giant bounty. "A noble use of riches," said Tacitus, "was a virtue he long retained, after he had cast off the others."

Tiberius aimed his suspicions not least against himself. He did not except himself from the judgment he had pronounced upon the human race. And in his dark conception of the world, his daily increasing contempt for mankind—fed it must be allowed copiously by the meanness of those around him—he saw dangers for the community and his own future. During the first and happy years of his reign, more than once in the senate words escaped him, inspired as it would seem by an anxious presentiment that his spiritual life was about to undergo a change to the very worst.

The race Tiberius governed, was meaner than that over which Augustus wielded his gentle sceptre. That which Horace had prophesied of this, had been fulfilled. There was no praiseworthy action of the prince that was not misinterpreted and repaid with scurrility. His kindness was translated as want of strength; his magnanimity, as fear; his care for justice to the poor, as hunting after popularity; and when once he refused to accept worship as a god, and forbade the erection of temples to him, reminding them, meanwhile, of his weak human nature, all agreed in finding in this the expression "of an ignoble soul indifferent to distinction." Thus did they spur on the evil spirit Tiberius bore within, wrestling with his better self. He had his defensive system ready, but struggled yet against its application. When the senate one day cried out that Cæsar's revilers should be punished, he bade them "not open that window." He long appeared as insensible to blame, as he was bitter or rebuking to flattery. "In a free community," said he, "thoughts and tongues are free." But an apophthegm does not make the skin hard; nor is it quite certain, either, that contempt for humanity makes one indifferent to its reproach. In the ninth year of his reign, Tiberius was ready to lay the world under his system.

Tiberius had grown up among people with whom *one* thought ruled absolute—power; *one* passion—ambition. All endeavor moved around this point. Love, he had experienced only from his mother, and that love was wrapped about a selfishness that would be satisfied by her son's elevation. Tiberius drew back then into his hard shell, and stifled every utterance of a heart as strong in devoted love, as in seething hate. To his stepfather, Augustus, who liked life and gayety around him, he was respectful, but in a cold and measured manner, and obedient, but in the rigid form of knowledge of duty, not from the heart. He saw that Augustus had become attached to the lively, pliant and amiable

Drusus, and knew that the emperor, for state reasons, prized the popularity Drusus had won; and from pride, he could not bring himself to use a gesture, a look, a word, that should be misconstrued into an attempt to emulate the favorite in his stepfather's liking. That he himself stretched out his hand after the power, cannot on valid grounds be imputed to him. Livia, his mother, worked in his stead; and the question is always open, whether the melancholy, the weariness of life, that at that time weighed him down, was not aggravated by a horrible suspicion of the means she is thought to have made use of to that end. By this, I would on no account be understood to say that he was a stranger to ambition; but one can safely say that little as anything else power loomed up before his soul in illusive colors. He found no aim worth striving for; but when a call was given him, duties as public officer or general were laid upon him, he cared for his business with superior understanding, and transacted it with the inherited energy of the Claudian race.

From the circle that surrounded him with cold calculations and insidious snares, he broke loose in his love for the woman who was his first wife. State reasons snatched her from his embrace, and bound him to Julia, the daughter of Augustus, who violated the proud man's honor. Years after the separation, as Tiberius was one day walking in one of the streets of Rome, chance willed it that he and his first wife should meet. As they passed each other, he stood still and gazed after her: the mocking look vanished, the hard features softened; and he who reckoned emotion a shame, and who least of all would bare his feelings to the crowd, burst into tears. He had seen the happiness of his life go by him.

His first affection was not his only dream. We do not know what event it was, that for a moment scattered the cloud of distrust and contempt for humanity that had rested on his spirit, and suffered a sunbeam to give life to something like confidence in a mortal. Enough, that such a feeling had sprung up in him, for Sejanus, chief captain of the prætorian guard. Doubtless, it led but a struggling existence, until an accident happened that not only rooted his confidence more deeply, but caused his whole theory about mankind to totter. It was on the journey to Naples and Capri, after he had left Rome, never to return thither. He had come half way, into the neighborhood of Terracina, where the Fundian mountains rise, offering a view that on the one side extends to Rome, on the other to Naples and Vesuvius. In the slope of the mountain was a cave, where a fancy struck the emperor to have the evening meal made ready. The guests at table were Sejanus, two other Romans of rank, and certain Greek men of science. These jested over the wine, but Cæsar doubtless here, too, had his own dark thoughts; for before him lay in the twilight the island of Pandataria, the place of banishment of Julia. A noise like thunder is heard. Fragments fall from a rock overhanging the mouth of the cave, some of his servants lie crushed, gravel and pebbles are loosened from the roof, the guests fly; but Sejanus throws himself on his knees, and covers the prince with his body. The guard who hastens to the spot, when the fall has ceased, finds him unhurt.

That the others had left him in the lurch, he regarded as a common and pardonable expression of sudden fear. But that Sejanus had remained, astonished him. Here, there was no time for deliberation; here, devotion had revealed itself as an instantly working mainspring of ac tion. Tiberius was forced to believe, and wished to believe. That which the philosopher had sought with taper and lantern, without finding it, propitious gods had now given the prince, to ease his troubled heart; a man and a friend, too. The Fundian rocks had made a hole in his theory. But the hole was stopped a few years after that, when a conspiracy was discovered, which Sejanus, all-powerful after the incident in the cave and aspiring to the imperial dignity, had organized against his master. It was stopped with the bodies of the traitor and his innocent children. And with this, the theory was entire again, and ready, and stood on firmer ground than ever; but Tiberius himself was lost beyond every hope of redemption. From that hour, he believed nothing; from that hour, he was the unrestrained tyrant. *I hold a wolf by the ears!* That was now his common saying. A wolf has small ears, and the point was not to let go his hold. Nothing better paints his own idea of the situation.

If one except these visions soon proved false of love and friendship, despair, like a sable woof, goes through his whole life. His keen eye for our human wretchedness, was joined to the conviction that it never could grow better. The thought of progress lay far from the minds of the men of antiquity: they were not spurred on by it to a consoling struggle. But the best among them had incitement enough in the knowledge that the ever-balancing strife between good and evil, has need of swords upon the right side. Tiberius wanted even that to prick him on. He saw—and this awakens compassion —he saw with wrath in the world's advance, nothing but the everlasting triumphal march of evil. A shallow and good-natured soul would have laughed off sorrow, in epicurean pleasures ; his age reproached him, indeed, that he did not seek this remedy for a dark humor. A humble and trustful nature would have found relief, if not cure, in striving after perfection. But Tiberius brooded hopeless upon his woe.

To plaster as Augustus did the sores of society, and seek by his own example and general laws to better its morals, was to him like pouring water into a sieve. With disgust, he conceived life only as a struggle between beings unworthy of existence ; and his own position in the fight, as the most exposed mark for every strong and selfish will. Upon the discovery of the treachery of Sejanus, followed—blow upon blow—the discovery that this his only friend had murdered his only son, and that, too, in concert with his son's wife ! And the more mercilessly he now applied his defensive system, the more frightful were the pictures of human baseness that were unrolled before his sight, and urged him on to wilder outbreaks. To this came added despair over the judgment of posterity, which he had called down upon himself ; for he, who so profoundly despised the opinion of the living, still set a value on that of races to come. This contradiction is not uncommon—"*nomen erit indelebile nostrum :*" the sense of belonging to history, and bringing damnation upon one's name from the conscience of mankind, confirmed by every age, bends the stiffest neck. Yet his position he must defend, since fate had willed it his, even though he felt it to be a glaring contradiction to offer hecatombs of wretches for the safety of a single wretch. The longer the strife raged, the deeper he sank into its billows ; and at last his spiritual being had vanished—in hate, revenge, and that instinct of self-preservation which, ruthless, strikes.

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The system of Tiberius was simple. When all are suspected by all, society is seized by that crippling terror which is the shield of tyrants. Denunciation is the Medusa head he holds forth for his protection. Through all classes of the community, in every home, the monster's polypus arms and feelers grope. In the crowd of audacious denouncers, stand men with the noblest of names: a Caius Gracchus, a Porcius Cato! One suspects an eavesdropper in every mortal, a snare in every word, a purpose in every laugh. A father has reason to suspect his son, a husband his wife. A single picture from this time. The knight Titius Sabinus still dares to show respect for the widow and children of Germanicus, although they are objects of the prince's hate. One day Titius meets in the street the senator Latiaris, who salutes him and begins a talk upon indifferent themes, at last pressing the hand of Titius and whispering his appreciation of friendship steadfast in time of trouble. A few days after, they meet in the street again. The senator invites him to his house, leads him up to his own bedchamber, where no listeners can overhear them, and speaks out his abhorrence of Cæsar, who is heaping crime upon crime. His guest relieves his heart in similar words—he has so long borne a mute and therefore doubly heavy grief. Immediately after, an act of accusation against Titius Sabinus, signed by Latiaris, Porcius Cato and two other senators is in the hands of Tiberius. The act relates how according to agreement among the four councillors, Latiaris caught Titius in the street and decoyed him into an ambush; how the place chosen for their talk, by the appearance of privacy, inspired Titius with confidence, and how the host had arranged for Porcius Cato and the other two fathers a hiding-place between the roof and panelling of the bedchamber, with crevices at which to listen.

As we see, they boast of their cowardly deed. By it they risked nothing, for they already had Tiberius' profoundest contempt; but something they might possibly win. The reward to which two of them aspired, was the consulate; yet no year in the chronicles of Rome is dishonored by their names. Not long after, Latiaris himself stood accused of high treason: he was judged, executed, and thrown a naked corpse, down the Gemonic stairs.

Such events were common. The denouncer followed the denounced to death. Tiberius hated his tools more than their victims: he who betrays a friend, watches for an opportunity to betray his prince. Tiberius found himself encompassed by cunning wild beasts, and saw his safety, and had his pleasure, in setting them on, one against the other. This setting-on, once begun, must continue without interruption; a pause, and all would fall upon him, where he stood in the midst of the arena.

It is in a spiritual sense he stands there. Bodily, he has fortified himself on rock-bound Capri. There, he seeks in dissipation a few moments' oblivion of fearful sights, a few moments' lethargy that shall free him from scourging terror. He had, as we know, drawn back from the application of his system; but Sejanus had proved it and found it good, not dreaming he himself should be its victim; and when it has got well going, it moves of itself, a Satanic *perpetuum mobile.* If Tiberius lay his hand upon it to arrest it, it will draw him in between the cogs and crush him.

But these gladiators, who murder each other with ear and tongue, flatter him even in death. *Ave Cæsar, morituri te salutant!* Even art, the daughter of freedom, does homage to the tyrant, and—does homage to his system! At the foot of a statue of Tiberius in the Villa Borghese, is to be seen an ear. The artist wished to express that Cæsar is a god who hears even the most secret whisper.

Tiberius does not spare his own kindred when he sacrifices that of others. Has the reader seen the sitting statue of Agrippina, ornament of the Emperor's Hall of the Capitoline gallery, without remembering the scene when the centurion, her guard, lifts the staff against that noble head and strikes out one of her eyes? Under such ill usage, Agrippina carries out her resolve to die of hunger. And when she is dead, the senate renders thanks to Cæsar for his clemency towards her!

Did any one at that time chance to speak of Brutus and Cassius, safety demanded he should call them *parricidæ*, a word as good as two, for it may be interpreted both as *father-slayers* and *traitors to the country*. Zeal was ready to add *latrones*, *robbers*. The contrast between the free state and the empire, which Augustus would not allow even to himself, was now clear as the day; and no one wondered that Cæsarism was frightened at the memories of the republic. Yet they were harmless, these memories; phantoms that seldom appeared, except by a grave. The night the ashes of Germanicus were buried, there sounded upon the torch-lighted field of Mars, one unanimous cry, from army, public officers and people; *The republic has fallen! All hope is over!* And when the dust of Junia, Cato's niece, is carried to the pyre, in the funeral escort hundreds of statues of illustrious forefathers are borne; but Brutus and Cassius—says the greatest of Roman chroniclers—outshone them all, for their statues were not to be seen. They shone by absence.

The aged historian Cremutius Cordus was accused of having praised the patriotism of Brutus, and called Cassius *the last Roman.* This was in a writing he had read aloud, to his friend, emperor Augustus ; but he was now summoned, rather late, to answer for his crime. He made a brilliant speech, to defend the right of history, not to shield himself. "Seventy years," said he at last, "seventy years after their fall, Brutus and Cassius still live in its pictures, that not even the victor has destroyed. Should they not, then, be sure of their share of the inheritance, in the memory of history? If ye do strike me down, there shall not be wanting men to ward their memory and mine." Thereupon he left the senate and ended his life.

Neither Tiberius nor any of the succeeding tyrants have been able to hinder a portrait from antiquity of Marcus Junius Brutus from taking its place in the "hall of illustrious men," in the Museo Capitolino. As a work of art, this bust is good, but the features were not those I looked for. On the other side of the forum, in the conservators' palace, may be seen an excellent antique bust of another Brutus—Lucius Junius ; without doubt an ideal head, but so true to nature, that one would be tempted to think an Etrurian artist had bequeathed to posterity the proud features of Rome's first consul. A statue in the Villa Albani, that is said to represent the same Brutus, is on the contrary a hideous caricature, worthy the chisel of a slave, but not of a freeborn artist, and farther degraded by the restorations and additions of a later time. I do not know if there be any portrait of Cassius. Perhaps he stands among the many nameless, but often highly interesting, Roman heads possessed by the Italian galleries. During excavations in the villa at Tivoli which, rightly or wrongly, bears his name, no head of Cassius was discovered, but a work of art that betokens love for republican memories: the head of Pericles, namely, which has found a home in the British Museum.

. . . .

While the massacre in Rome goes on, monotonous and wearisome in all its horror, its instigator roves about among the cliffs of Capri. The shores of the island are hard to approach; only small vessels can land. Guards stop every passage up the heights and examine every one who lands there. When a sail draws near over the sunlit bay, it brings acts of denunciation, or accused prisoners, whom the emperor himself wishes to hear; or it is a purveyor, who among the youth of Campania has found a new prey for his shameful desire.

Tiberius cannot hide that he is unhappy. Agonies overwhelm his pride. Once, at least, he wished to lighten his heart by confessing his woe. And this confession is not the whispered confidence, but the cry of anguish of a Titan, that pierces the ages. To posterity, which shall judge him, he says that he has judged himself, and without begging for compassion he bares his breast torn by the Eumenides. "*What I shall write to you, fathers in the council, or how I shall write, or what I in this hour shall not write at all—if I know it, may the gods and goddesses visit me with tortures more frightful than those in which I now feel myself daily consuming.*"

So, he once began a letter to the senate. It is as though one heard a cry of woe from the forecourt of the realm of the damned. Seneca had perhaps these words of Tiberius in mind, when he wrote down his thought; "The sinner's first and greatest punishment, is sin: in the misdeed lurks the chastisement." But if the punishment grow out of the crime, forth from the punishment shoots the expiation; and we are right, to feel sorrow over the powers that went down, in the abyss of that soul. He is one of the mightiest figures in the gloomy style, that history knows; and he yet awaits the master hand able to draw him. That hand cannot cleanse him entirely. Stahr's attempt to do so is a warning.

It happened to Michael Angelo that after he had begun to fashion in marble one of his giant thoughts, he found a flaw in the grain of the stone. So he threw down the chisel and left the work unfinished—stamped with the seal of greatness, and yet condemned. Before Tiberius, a Gnostic might be seized by the thought that Demiurgos, in the workshop of the Æons, had destined this being for a vessel of honor; but because of an irremediable flaw in the grain of his soul, had thrown down the chisel, and given him up to disgrace.

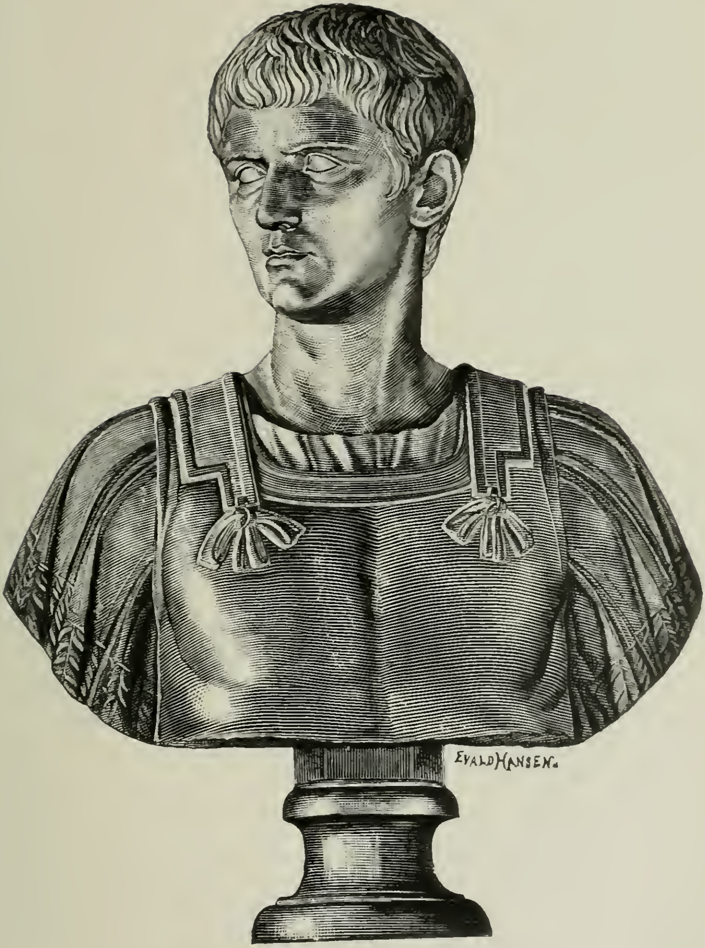
In his clumsy nephew, Claudius, treated as a fool and half idiot at home, Tiberius had discovered a good heart. Surprised by this discovery, he intended to make him his successor; but gave up the idea, perhaps because he did not wish that goodness should in history, too, wear a fool's cap.

III.

CALIGULA.

CAIUS Cæsar Caligula had accompanied Tiberius to Capri, and lived there until the latter's death. Were warning always a good teacher, Capri should have been a good school for him.

The contempt Tiberius entertained for his young kinsman, the latter repaid with blind obedience. Whether it was, as it has commonly been interpreted, hypocrisy, or rather the influence of the old man's overwhelming, fear-inspiring and demoniac nature—Caius Cæsar seemed to have lost his own and taken upon him his grandfather's self. When Tiberius laughed with his sweet laugh, Caius laughed in the same manner; when anger wrinkled his brow, or scorn curled his lip, Caius produced the same look. It must be at such a time that his features were represented by the master hand that formed his basalt bust in the Capitoline museum. The head is turned slightly aside, the brow thunders, the eyes lighten, the fine mouth is pressed wrathfully and scornfully together; but one can at once see that this look is counterfeited or practised: it is still only the theatre tyrant, appearing with features according to rule. "His whole exterior," says Tacitus, "was an imitation of that which Tiberius had put on for the day, and he spoke almost with the latter s words."


EVALD HANSEN.

CALIGULA.

(BASALT BUST IN THE CAPITOLINE GALLERY.)

However one may interpret it, Caligula's mental growth was undoubtedly dwarfed in this way. It seems to me as if this furious worker of violence had throughout his whole life something of the child remaining; nay, all, except its innocence and amiability. These qualities, he early grew out of. But he has the child's entire lack of knowledge of itself, its leaning towards the adventurous and fanciful, its eagerness to prove the extent of its power, its inability to grasp the reason for the existence of other wills, its impulse to destroy, and without purpose to create. There is something *naif*, something of the simple security of nature, in his most shameful misdeeds; and in his cruelties, the direct reverse of plan and object. He has aped his predecessor, but not studied him. The instant that predecessor dies, the imitation drops, and we have before us, despite twenty-five years of life, a pestilent boy, who has got the world and mankind for playthings, and at their expense gives a loose rein to his mischievous humor.

Caligula had not been emperor long, when he honored Bajae, the chief bathing-place of the time, with a visit that was never to be forgotten. The high society and the dissolute, which here met, and held revels from which "a Penelope came back a Helen," now had a sight to see, which might brace up even nerves relaxed and weary of life. On the other side of the bay, at the distance of three miles, lies Puteoli. The land road between the two cities is not very much longer; but the straight way is always the shortest, and Caius Cæsar ordered a bridge to be thrown up between them. And what a bridge! It was in every way to be like the queen of roads, the Via Appia. As many ships as could in haste be procured, those composing the entire fleet that was to bring from

Egypt the year's provision of corn for the metropolis of the world, were collected, placed in order, bound to their anchors in a double row, and were buried in a dike of earth, which was laid with hewn stone, and furnished with sidewalks and milestones. Stations for imperial couriers, and taverns for thirsty travellers must not be lacking, either. Within a few days, Cæsar's will and the architect's regard for his own head, had conjured forth this wonder, by the side of which Xerxes' bridge over the Hellespont was a trifle. But the grandest part of it all, was that the work was of no use. Utility is the object of the undertakings of every mortal man, ripened to the prose of life; but children and gods are elevated above this. When a god does a great deed, it is but play to him. The day of dedication came. The visitors at the bath wondered in what costume, or rather as what divinity, Caius would make his appearance. Perhaps as Aphrodite? The fair Caius had often been seen in the attire of the goddess of love. Or as Jupiter, with a false beard, gilded, and a sheaf of thunderbolts in his hand? Or as Neptune, with trident and the look so well counterfeited by Cæsar: *Quos ego—!* Or, mayhap, as a being between god and man, in *penula* sprinkled with gems? These were the idlers' questions, and the substance of their bets; for dressed as a Roman, or even as a human being, Caius had not been seen since he had removed to the Palatine. But this time all had guessed wrong. They had forgotten that Caius was now busy with thoughts of battles in Germany. He came mounted, clad in a Greek mantle embroidered with gold, with sword by his side, and a shield of Spanish leather hanging from a strap over his shoulder. A division of the prætorian guard followed him. He points to Puteoli, gallops on over the bridge, and after a sham siege of the city, returns in triumph. The next day also, there is a feast. Cæsar appears in a two-wheeled golden chariot, drawn by horses famous in the sporting chronicle of that time. At evening the bridge and all the circle of mountains and hills that surrounds the inner part of the bay of Puteoli, shine in the light of countless torches. The whole is like a giant theatre. The bridge, now open to the whole public, is thronged with merry multitudes, when all at once a piercing shriek is heard. At a signal from Caius Cæsar, the pleasure-seekers are hurled into the sea. Upon those who keep themselves up by swimming or have caught hold of rudders and anchor-chains, blows are rained from sticks and oars, until they sink into the depths of the sea.

Long, people spoke in Bajae of that boyish freak, longer than of Cæsar's baths in fragrant essences, or his dinners that devoured millions.

Caligula had a passion for building; but nearly all he caused to be erected, was as purposeless as the bridge of which we have spoken. It is hard to think of artists in a nicer position than his architects were. Caius had a taste of his own, with regard to the productions of literature and art; and no schoolboy ever more boldly rejected as worthless all that until then had passed for models of the beautiful. To this keen critic, Virgil was a dunce, Livy a prattling fool; he is said to have doomed the Homeric songs to one general destruction, perhaps from recollection of the strictness with which Tiberius had forced him to read them. All must bow to Caligula's taste; and it is not improbable that the greater number of the busts of Virgil, then so common, disappeared during his reign. Not one has come down to our time; but by conjecture, the poet's name has been given to an antique bust in the Museo Capitolino, which bears the traits of his muse's and his own nature, in amiable union.

Caius' opinions in architecture were equally destructive. For his castles and villas, he made plans that he thought the more ingenious, the more they defied a sound understanding. The architect had to obey, and in so far as life was dear to him, see that all was ready within the time set by Cæsar's impatience.

Not far from the baths of Caracalla and the Porta San Sebastiano, is a columbarium that belonged to the freedmen of Augustus. Within, a niche is to be seen, adorned in uncouth taste, with a spiral line broken off. One would not have expected to find upon antique ground a presage of the style that more than fifteen hundred years later was to deck the churches and gates of Rome with curled periwigs; but one soon discovers that this eccentricity did not spring from the taste, but was imposed upon it, by the space. Had any of Caligula's castles been spared by time, I have a suspicion that we should have been surprised to find in them, many small prophecies of the grotesque and rococo manners. But all that is left of his buildings are the mighty ruined walls of his imperial palace on the Palatine, and a foundation wall of the bridge he threw out from this hill over the Forum Romanum to one of the summits of the Capitoline. The bridge was a connecting link between two high divinities, when they wished to take counsel together upon things of importance. One of the gods was Jupiter Capitolinus; the other—for whom the emperor had built a temple, founded a priesthood, raised golden statues and imagined costly sacrifices—was Caius himself. When they spoke with each other, it took place in this fashion: Caius, also called Jupiter Latiaris, whispered into his co-divinity's ear, and then placed his own ear at the latter's mouth. Jupiter Capitolinus, who never answered in the same way, had, however, ground to complain, if not on his own, on his kinsmen's behalf; for the emperor had had a number of the most beautiful of Greece's statues of the gods transported to Rome, and beheaded, in order to give them other heads, bearing the features of his own face; and it is said that he had designed the same fate for the Olympian Zeus.

This is undoubtedly based on madness. Caligula's age, too, suspected that all was not quite right in his brain. There were whispers of a love-potion that had taken away his understanding. But give omnipotence to a scrapegrace, put slaves and flatterers around his throne, and madness may come on without the arts of Canidia.

Caius was jealous. The statues of great men, which Augustus had removed from the overfilled Capitol to the field of Mars, he broke into pieces; for Rome had enough with *one* great man. If at the theatre he noticed that a handsome fellow attracted the eyes of the women, woe to that man! He was doomed: he had stolen from Cæsar the exclusive homage which the fair sex owed him. Jealousy comes out in him with the whole artlessness of childhood, when the public claps hands for Porius the charioteer, who in his joy over a victory gives freedom to his slave. Caligula cries from his seat: "This people shows a gladiator greater honor than its prince!" and he rushes out so hastily, that he entangles himself in his toga and falls down the steps. On such an occasion it was, that he wished the Roman people but a single neck, to ease the executioner.

His tyranny, as previously indicated, bears an entirely different stamp from that of Tiberius. One, in his cruelty, is sly and calculating; the other, thoughtless and naughty. Out of pure mischief, he defies the wrath of all classes, not seeking support in any. Senators in their togas, he allows to run thousands of steps by the side of his wagon; at his feasts with actors and loose women, senators in the guise of slaves wait at table. He does not deem the knighthood worthy such humiliation; but a part of his amusement is to put blackguards on the knight's benches at the circus and the amphitheatre, and watch the quarrels that arise from this proceeding. He squeezes the wealthy citizens like sponges, after having emptied in less than a year the treasury of Tiberius. Sometimes he gives this method of acquiring money a humorous turn; as when old Aponius Saturninus, who at an auction arranged by the emperor has chanced to fall asleep and in his sleep to nod at the auctioneer, finds himself on awaking owner of thirteen of Cæsar's gladiators, in exchange for the price of a million and a half crowns. They who were not bled in their lifetime, were forced to make Cæsar their heir, and look to death by poison. His avarice, like his ugliness, struck even at the poor. The porter had to give up an eighth of his daily gain to the emperor. When the granaries were full, it amused him to close them and let the masses starve. He did not hesitate, either, to defy the legions. When Caligula was a child, and lived with his parents in the camp by the Rhine, the German legions had revolted. Now, about twenty years after, he wanted to cut them down, to the last man; but at the earnest entreaties of those around him, he changed his purpose into decimating them. According to Dio Cassius, he carried out his idea; according to Suetonius he fled from the spot and gave up the plan, when certain soldiers in the legions, which were assembled without arms and surrounded by bands of horsemen, snuffed treachery and hastened to their swords.

History preserves some of Caligula's sayings which make an insight into his soul possible. He himself prized unflinching firmness as his chief and most characteristic quality. The expression throws a sudden light into his inner world. It is a psychological experience knowing no exception, that heartless men admire themselves as strong of will. The driver who flays the sore back of his jaded horse with lashes, believes, so long as his own back goes free, that he is a man of firm character, and is strengthened in his self-admiration by the compassion of others. That cowards are heartless, is another rule that is not abolished by its exceptions. "Cowards are cruel," says Gay, and is right in that, even if he be not always right when he adds:

> "but the brave
> Love mercy and delight to save."

Caligula's cowardice is known. His biographers give serio-comic testimony of it. His fancied firmness did not withstand even the show of an impending danger. But a timid boy backed by a powerful fellow, thinks he can challenge a world. Caligula, surrounded by a well paid band of stout Germans and freed gladiators, thought the same. Cowardice is easy to reconcile with defiance. But to Caius, defiance was the same as courage. So this poor wretch admired himself as a firm and courageous man, and found in multiplied misdeeds added impulse to self-admiration.

Tiberius suffered from pangs of conscience. Caligula never ripened into so much humanity that pangs of conscience were possible for him. Once, when his grandmother Antonia ventured to reproach him with some crime, she met a pair of astonished eyes and the answer: "*Have you then forgotten that to me everything is allowed?*" What a child can do, and is not forbidden to do, it is allowed to do. His very conception of majesty was a companion picture to that of the nursery, where Bugaboo forms the sublime and terrible. He was observed practising before a mirror the most frightful faces, that he might appear as beseemed an arbiter of life and death.

Caligula had sleepless nights; but those one may have, without a diseased conscience. The cause was rather an imagination, in the mire of which monsters and abominations wallowed, awaiting the hour when they should become deeds. He could never quite recover from astonishment at the breadth of his power, and rejoiced the more in its immensity, the farther he went beyond the limits that a law within us has drawn for masters of the law without. In the absence of contrary pressure, his will sweated blood, as the human body does in the absence of atmospheric pressure. Often the watchmen saw him wandering by starlight and moonlight in the wide-stretching colonnades of the palace, or upon the bridge over the Forum Romanum. With what were his thoughts then busied? Commonly with wild bits of eloquence, that next day struck terror into the senate. Before he began such a speech, he commonly liked to send out in advance the words: "I draw the sword of my nocturnal studies." Especially it pleased him to speak in defence of criminals and for the overthrow of the innocent, for his legal talent thus appeared the greater

Morally an idiot, he was by no means a dunce. He had wit pointed by wickedness; he had logic sharpened by malice; and style that acquired elevation from a taste for the horrible.

If this creature were not in full possession of his senses, I yet doubt whether as an individual man he could on valid grounds have been shut up in a madhouse. Rather ought he to have been housed in a penitentiary. Where the landmark stands between insanity and crime, is still a matter undecided, although every day needs a solution of the question of accountability. That Caligula built a palace and established a court state for his favorite horse Incitatus, our jockey-clubs at least should not regard as a mark of unsoundness of mind; and that he thought of making Incitatus Roman consul, was not so mad, either. Worse consuls had Rome had; and the duties of office accompanying the dignity were not now so weighty that they could not be discharged by Incitatus, with the help of a stable-boy.

Two men at Caligula's court were the objects of his merciless tricks. One was his uncle Claudius, the other. Cassius Cerea, colonel of the guard. The latter's incomparable proofs of manhood on the battlefield did not shield him from the most shameful scorn in the imperial palace. Cerea bore it, or seemed to bear it, with the rough patience of an old soldier; Claudius, with the absent-minded calm of an aged scholar. One was Caligula's slayer, the other his successor.

One day as Caligula was leaving the theatre, the two colonels of the guard doing duty on the occasion, waited for him in the portico, to receive the password for the day. One of them was Cerea. When he at other times asked the watchword, the emperor's mocking answer commonly was *Priapus!* But Cerea held himself this time somewhat in the background, and it was to the other captain Caligula gave the word, *Jupiter!* Hardly was the word spoken, ere a cry sounded: *Thus let his wrath fall upon thee!* and Cerea's sword was red with the blood of his body. Many conspirators fell upon him, and before the German guard had arrived, Caligula lay, a bloody and lifeless mass upon the ground.

. . . .

The statues and busts we have of Caius Cæsar, show that in a comparatively short time—he was murdered in his twenty-ninth year—he succeeded in his constant effort to acquire a forbidding appearance. Between the handsome youth in the gallery of the Museo Capitolino and the toga-draped statue in the Villa Borghese, the distance is immense. One would not deny the former the possibility of a noble development. In the basalt bust before mentioned, in the imperial hall of the same museum, nothing but evil is to be read; but still, in a (so to speak) imitated hand. Here, he tries to look repulsive. The statue in mail in Naples, the heroic statue in the Vatican and the toga-draped statue in the Villa Borghese, are like milestones on the road to open villainy. In the last named work of art, and in the excellent bust in the Villa Albani, he is represented in priestly attire; and this, as well as the expression of the face, reminds us of an occasion on which he appeared as priest of the sacrifice, and with the axe felled—the victim? No, but the unsuspecting servant of the altar, who stood by its side. The Caligula of the Villa Borghese, with its eyes looking obliquely, and its evil contraction of the mouth, seems to be brooding upon a jest like this.

After Caligula's death, the innumerable statues in

Rome that bore his features, vanished in a single night. It is lucky that the zeal for collecting is spurred on by that for destroying. Our time could not otherwise compare a marble Caligula, Nero, Commodus, with the same men in history. Caius Cæsar's mail-clad statue in the gallery of Naples was dug up at Garigliano, together with a statue of Trajan. Only to a collector would it occur to house them under the same roof.

IV.

CLAUDIUS.

DID Claudius live to posterity only in the laws he enacted, the buildings he constructed and the statues we still have of him, one would involuntarily be misled into a flattering conception of the successor of Caligula. The statues of Claudius in the galleries of Rome, surprise. "The misbegotten," as his own mother called him, the lover of gladiatorial games, the glutton and wine-bibber, the learned dunce, the semi-idiot without a will of his own—all epithets that have been heaped upon his head—is it possible he had any likeness to these statues that meet us with melancholy and mildness in the regular Julian features?

Yes, from all that we know of Roman portrait art, we are obliged to think so. One cannot reproach that art with flattering: it gave what the Romans asked of it—rough, immitigable truth to nature; and it made no exception for the Cæsars and their house, not even for their women.

Proofs of this, almost repulsive, are to be found. An empress, arrived at a more than mature age, is to be represented as Venus. It is possible that she would rather decline this honor, that she belongs to

"*die alten, die sich klug verhuellen*,"

but she has duties towards her dignity as Cæsar's spouse, and must resign herself to her fate. The goddess of love, indeed, was the ancestral mother of the Julian race; and so her attributes, if not her beauty, go down to every mother by the Cæsarian fireside, in a manner like that in which the pope inherits St. Peter's keys, perhaps without inheriting his faith. And thus the artist has to immortalize her undraped charms; and he does it truthfully, so that the little cupid, who with finger to mouth stands there at the foot of the statue, cannot possibly whisper to these charms anything but—veil yourselves!

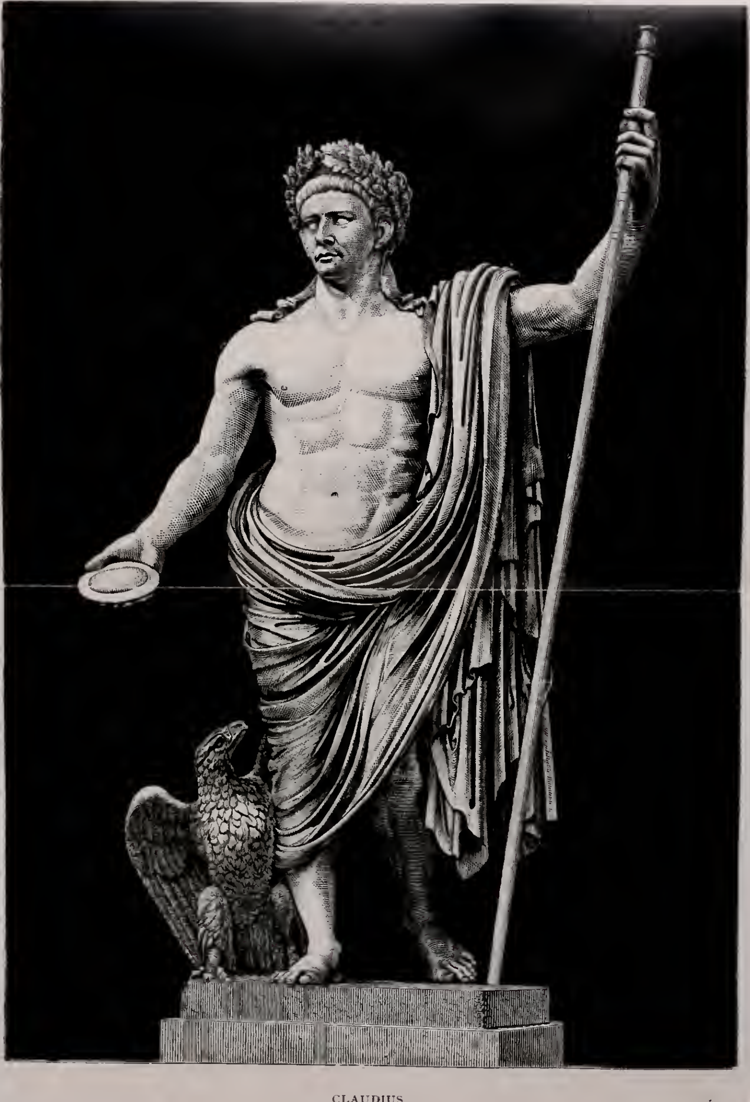
One may say, besides, that the subtlest flattery were to confine himself to the truth, which ought to be good enough not to need correction by art.

This was in any case required by prudence; for would-be wits and satirists were very numerous on the market, and in the assembly-rooms, and at the bath, where the imperial statues were exhibited. Flattery would have challenged ridicule. The grounds on which Sturleson bears favorable testimony of the ancient songs of the exploits of great men, when the songs were sung before the men themselves, are valid also with regard to the faithfulness of the imperial statues: a variation from truth, based on vanity and apparent to all—"that would have been mockery, but not praise."

Only in the statues and reliefs that portray an emperor in his apotheosis, can idealization be discovered; and that, such as would transfigure nature without correcting it.

We must believe, therefore, that Claudius had these attractive features. All his statues, by various chisels, and of different degrees of merit, unanimously bear witness to this. And it is not contradicted by his biographers. They have, indeed, made merry over his pedantic manner and his rolling gait; but no one has said that he was ugly. Suetonius, eager collector of everything that might cast ridicule upon his memory, speaks too, of "a commanding dignity in his appearance" (*autoritas dignitasque formæ*) when he stood, sat or reclined.

The statue of Claudius in the rotunda of the Vatican is a singular work of art. A Hamlet grown old! That is the first impression. But Hamlet and Claudius Cæsar —Shakespeare's refined modern romantic dreamer, and the ungainly, weak, sensual old man on the throne of Rome—such a comparison must certainly bring a whole throng of objections in tow! True; and yet I do not give up the belief that Shakespeare had read of Claudius before he wrote of Hamlet: that Suetonius's description of the unhappy Roman prince, and Saxe's tradition of the unhappy Danish, were wedded in the poet's fancy when Hamlet was created there. A melancholy youth spent at court, that forced them to feign madness, was common to both. And that there lay a Hamlet hidden deep in the soul of Claudius Cæsar, and that the keen eye of Shakespeare found him there and caused him to emerge like the butterfly from the formless chrysalis—this, one seems to see, as one stands in front of the Vatican statue; in which the sculptor, so to speak, has wrought in marble the Greek word by which Augustus hit the chief trait in Claudius's nature. The word applied to him needs no translation: when we hear *meteoria*, we represent to ourselves a floating in boundless space, amid clouds and vapors, an irresolute life in empty dreams, burdened by regret at the feeble will, and sometimes crossed by lofty purposes. It was young Hamlet's life, and it was that of the old Roman emperor. One reads it with surprising clearness in every line.



CLAUDIUS.

(ROTUNDA OF THE VATICAN.)

His is a well formed head, against which from the point of view of beauty, one can hardly note anything, but that the oval of the face is somewhat too compressed. The broad forehead is overcast with clouds of melancholy. The eyes disclose with their unsteady, sad and kindly look, a plodding and suffering spirit, that is conscious of its noble birth, but unable to maintain its freedom. The mouth is well modelled, and indicates a refinement of feeling one should not have expected here, but which, upon impartial investigation of Claudius's nature, comes to light. The bearing is noble, but constrained; the formation of the body, irreproachable, with exception of the narrow shoulders. The whole makes a painful, yet a winning impression. We seem to see unhappiness that has a right to plead for sympathy, and weakness coupled with too much good for it to awaken only pity and contempt.

This statue, also, proves that the old story about the coldness of the antique, may be objected to. When the model was such that the stress fell more upon life's disruption than its harmony, works of art were born, animated with the fire produced by the uneven play of the soul's forces. But the works of antiquity do not offer themselves for sale: to buyers they are cool. They do not allow themselves, by anything affectedly sentimental, anything exaggerated in the action, anything artful in the drapery, to catch a barbarous taste. One surprises them in the confession of their feelings; but they do not wish to surprise by this confession. It has often been remarked that they seem to be in existence for their own sake, like the flower that, seen by none, unfolds its beauty in the depths of the primeval forest.

The statue of Claudius now spoken of, was dug out at Civita Lavinia, in 1865. The rotunda of the Vatican has also an excellent bust of the same emperor; and the Lateran has in its keeping another enthroned statue—that, too, a good work. They all speak well of their original, and all seem to show that their creators loved the task. That love, which one discovers one knows not how, has not always, in the sculptors of the Roman imperial statues, worked together with the eye and taste. One finds it in the statues of Claudius, in the beautiful figure of Nerva, at the Vatican, in certain of the best portraits of Trajan and Antoninus Pius—but otherwise, rarely.

If we leave the galleries for the Campagna, Claudius meets us even there. The Campagna holds his memory in her embrace, and she and that memory make each other beautiful. The melancholy, and grandeur in decay, one perceives in the features of the unfortunate emperor, are found again in this group formed by nature and art. The arches of Aqua Claudia traverse the Roman waste, as a firm resolution sometimes traversed the cloudy spaces of this Cæsar's soul. From the mountains that on the east gird Rome's horizon, the arcades of the Claudian aqueduct wander over a stretch of many miles to the eternal city. The old inscription over the Porta Maggiore narrates where they entered Rome; and the five arches that yet stand on the slope of the Palatine hill, facing the Via di Gregorio, tell us where the duct ended, after emptying its waters, fresh as their own springs, into many a marble basin embellished by art. If one travel on the Via Appia Nuova, or on the road to Frascati, one sees as far as eye can reach, at longer or shorter intervals, these mighty arcades, rising often to the height of a hundred feet, and by their vastness easy to distinguish from the arches of Aqua Marcia, running in the same direction. It is hard to believe that this giant work arose at the bidding of the weakest of all the Cæsars; it is an odd sport of destiny that just his name should be attached to a monument that more than any other bears witness to the might of ancient Rome and the energy of the Roman race.

If you go upon one of the small steamers that plough the Tiber, down to Ostia, you stumble over a contradiction of the same kind. There, where one now sees a few miserable huts, once stood Rome's seaport, populous and splendid; and that city, with its harbor reckoned among the wonders of the world, had Claudius to thank for its prosperity. The mouth of the Tiber at Ostia was even before Julius Cæsar's time so blocked up, by the river's mud and sand from the sea, that none ventured into it with ships of any size. One of Julius Cæsar's great plans was to make Ostia Rome's harbor again; but he would not have carried out the idea, even had he lived; for he, who else was spurred on by obstacles, let the undertaking drop after experts had declared it impossible. Claudius took up the plan. The experts again discouraged it. The emperor made them bring forward their reasons, examined them, discarded them, and ordered the work to be begun. A few years after, Ostia was a harbor between the mighty arms of which the corn-fleet from Egypt and Africa found safe anchorage, and above the jetties of which a beacon arose, that rivalled that of Alexandria.

Behind the Sabine mountains, in a circular valley formed by the Appenines, lies the lake of Celano, Fucinus of the olden time. In the year 1752, when the water-level was very low, remnants of an ancient city were laid bare, and among them statues were found of emperor Claudius and his second wife, Agrippina. Where a statue of Claudius has come to light, there has the old emperor lived, in the record of some useful enterprise. Thus is it here, also. Fucinus had no apparent outlet, and often overflowed the region round about. Julius Cæsar intended, therefore, to fix the water-level by a tunnel through that which now is called Monte Salviano. But here, too, it was allotted Claudius to take up and carry out Cæsar's idea. For eleven years, thirty thousand men were busied breaking through the rock. In the year 25 after Christ, the work was completed. That, like so much else, fell into decay, during the middle ages. More than a thousand years after Claudius, the matter was taken up afresh, and a new tunnel has now given agriculture fruitful lands around Lake Celano, in safe possession. In the year 1875, Italy celebrated this great work, by stamping a medal in honor of its author, prince Alessandro Torlonia.

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Claudius, as child and youth, was sickly. His powers of body and mind developed so slowly, that after he had come to years of discretion, he was still under charge of a tutor. At home, he was heartlessly treated, even by his mother. She was heard to complain that she had brought a half-witted creature into the world ; and when she wished to distinguish any one as uncommonly dull, her unvarying phrase was: "He is sillier than my son Claudius." The beauty and genius with which his brother Germanicus shone, made by comparison his position worse. The only one of his relations who showed him kindness, was emperor Augustus. From letters Augustus wrote to Livia (and of which Suetonius has left us extracts) we find among other things, that the emperor for some time daily asked Claudius to his table, in the hope of being able to wean him from the shyness and uncouth behavior which made him so ridiculous. The youth, to escape scorn and derision, had made himself as invisible as he could, and chosen his familiar friends among certain respectable bookworms, who had none of the Hellenic scientific men's conventional ease, smooth manners and light conversational tone. Under the guidance of these friends, he had with zeal applied himself to study. Titus Livius, the distinguished historian, bosom friend of the emperor, sometimes joined this circle and encouraged Claudius to historical writing; if for nothing else, that the youth's mind might have a noble occupation. But the emperor soon discovered, with both amusement and vexation, that the young prince had absorbed not only the information that a Sulpicius Florus, an Athenodorus had to offer, but their pedantic manners, too. What was to be done with him? When the emperor wrote one of these letters, the festival in honor of Mars Ultor was at hand, which he had instituted, and at which he, with all of the imperial family, must be present. But could Claudius, the poor fellow (*misellus*) be taken with them? Could he with his twenty-one years on his shoulders pass for a complete man? Would they not lay themselves open to ridicule, if they exhibited him before a people so given to wicked jesting as the Roman? The writer owns that these questions make him anxious, and that now, once for all, he wishes it to be decided whether Claudius, in social and political life, is possible or not. On another occasion, the emperor writes that he has discovered nobleness of soul below the simple surface—a discovery that honors his equally keen and benevolent eye—and he utters his astonishment at the unity of thought and clearness of expression of which Claudius was master, when he made a well-considered speech; while in every day life, he talked nonsense.

The same observation, the Roman people often had opportunity to make, after Claudius had come to the throne. When he did not speak unprepared, his orations in the senate were not only clear, but familiar with the subject and remarkable for thoroughness; and nevertheless, hardly a day went by, that at the forum or in private circles, they had not some absurdity of his or some foolish phrase from his lips to report.

The sympathetic kindness Augustus had shown him during the joyless life of his youth, Claudius kept in very grateful remembrance. That Augustus had deemed it necessary to shut him out from all state offices except that of priest of augury, and in his last will had remembered him with but a meagre sum of money, did not lessen this gratitude. If there were in the Roman realm any one who in the founder of the empire saw a higher being, and attached a serious meaning to his elevation among the gods, it was this man, his successor.

Under the reign of Tiberius, Claudius was still more sternly held aloof from public affairs. When the senate gave him a seat and voice among its members of consular rank, Tiberius annulled the resolution, with the open declaration that his kinsman was not in full possession of his senses. The contempt Tiberius felt for him, and the fear he had that "the fool" would cast ridicule upon Cæsar's house, were mingled nevertheless with other feelings. Even he, had in Claudius discovered noble stuff; it irritated him that the uncommon dispositions for a good man which he thought he had found here, should be mated with helpless weakness; and by his will, he tried to assure Claudius an independent and easy pecuniary position. But Caligula robbed him of his means, and Claudius afterwards lived the life of the poor scholar, with all its privations. Unhappy, however, he was not except during the hours he was summoned to court, to serve as target for the witty sallies of Caligula. He had his consolation in reading and authorship, and his rest in the empty dreams to which he gave himself up, after at the nearest inn he had sated his appetite, always enormous, and his love for the Alban wine. When he was not in the country, he dwelt in a modest house in one of Rome's suburbs, liked by his neighbors, who seemed to wish to make amends, by respectful treatment, for the contumely he had to bear from his kindred. Greek literature, he had thoroughly searched; his historical studies were careful and extensive; his work as author was great in compass, and to judge from contemporary expressions of opinion, worthy of notice for that which it contained. In Roman history, he wrote twenty-three volumes; of Etrurian researches, he wrote twenty books; of Carthaginian, eight. Besides these, he was author of a "Defence of Cicero" against his adversary Asinius Gallus, of a work on the game of backgammon, another on Latin orthography, and finally, copious records of his own life. That his Etrurian and Carthaginian annals have been lost, must be accounted an irreparable damage to science; for we would have undoubtedly found in them enormous erudition, and a wealth of conscientious accounts of facts, drawn from sources now long since dry. Claudius had the entire nature of a professional man of our day, who loves to bury himself in the smallest details of his subject, and does not risk a judgment of anything, without the most careful sifting of all that has up to the time been ransacked and expressed upon the same theme.

Perhaps this quality was one of his greatest misfortunes, as ruler of the realm. It made him a pedant and bureaucratic chief in every trifle which he knew he understood, and misled him into a well-meant but ridiculous or aggravating interference, through prescribing in household matters and other things which those practised in such affairs, and for whom the instructions were intended, understood at least as well as he did himself. But what was far worse: this same quality of his made him utterly crest-fallen in those daily arising questions in which he did not feel himself at home. Conscious of the dullness with which he received an impression of everything that did not tickle his senses, and of the slowness with which he cleared his ideas, he had no confidence in his own judgment, and had for such questions, therefore, no other answer than Holberg's "Ask my steward!" Least of all did he attribute to himself the power to see through the thoughts and designs of others, to separate the honest from the dishonest, and friend from foe. That care he left to the men around him, who once for all had won his confidence. The charges to which a great many senators and knights fell victims during his reign, are collectively to be written on the calendar of sins of those around him. When, after the emperor's death, his papers were looked through, it was found that he himself had never urged or advanced any accusation. Of the death sentences given, he was commonly ignorant until they had been executed; often even afterwards, so that he invited to his table Romans of rank, who had already been executed for high treason. He knew that he was, as Tacitus says, "not in condition to protect himself." When he was roused from his learned researches, or his plodding over important proposals for laws, or his trifling with bureaucratic trumpery, to a view of the life around him, and his ear was filled with talk of intrigues dangerous to the state, and threatening conspiracies, he sat quite at a loss, mistrusting his power to find out what was true and what false, what real and what invented, in that which he heard; and he surrendered at discretion to those upon whose "practical eye" he relied, and upon whose affection and friendship he believed he could count. That this was a momentous weakness, and unworthy a prince, he had a troublesome consciousness of, which he tried to lull with the pleasures of the table and with persevering study.

He made, meanwhile, serious efforts to improve his understanding to the wants of practical life. On this account, he often took the seat of judgment, even when law-suits of minor importance were going on. His essays as judge had diverse issues. Sometimes he succeeded in fastening his attention upon the reasons and counter-reasons which were advanced in the suit; and when he had taken a little time for consideration, he could pronounce judgments that showed sagacity. But just as often it happened, that musings upon Etrurian or Carthaginian chronology, perhaps, or some new problem in backgammon, crossed his thoughts, and the judgment was then given accordingly. On an occasion like this, one of the parties, a Hellene, threw into his face the word *blockhead*. The emperor took the reproach in good part, feeling that it was well deserved. On another occasion when he sat as judge, pleasant fumes of meat made their way into the hall from a neighboring temple, the priests of which were known throughout the city as dainty livers. Claudius forgot suit and parties, and hurried from the tribunal into the dining-room of the priests, where he sat down and took a copious meal.

On the whole, it may be said that his nervousness overmastered him. He was exceedingly weak against stimulation of the senses. Woman's beauty, noble wine, a good table, were temptations to which without any resistance other than silent opposition, he yielded; while, on the other hand, in matters that did not appeal to the senses, but to reflection, he showed strength of will when he had once formed a conviction about them. Through this nervous irritability must be explained the many sins he was guilty of against court etiquette, nay, against the courtesy and dignity which every Roman wished to maintain on the outside. Even upon occasions of ceremony, and on the throne, he could show an ugly though transient and perfectly harmless heat, at an unexpected contradiction; he could drop tears at the slightest appeal to his heart, and laugh immoderately when anything ridiculous happened, that good breeding required should be left unnoticed. Since, with all this, his continued efforts to appear as an emperor should, bore no better fruit, we must not wonder at the following incident, which took place while he still lived as a private man and an "old student." He wished, like other authors, to judge by means of public readings, what success his unpublished writings might expect. Many people came to the first reading, and waited in respectful silence to hear what the unassuming and popular kinsman of princes had to say. But when he had begun his reading, a bench broke under an uncommonly stout man in the audience. The public soon recovered from the merriment this made; but the one who could not control his risible muscles, was the reader himself; and the listeners were obliged to go, after long waiting in vain for him to give them something besides uproarious laughter.

With this nervous irritability, was connected also his sudden fear, which has unjustly been interpreted as cowardice, for it was balanced by a moral courage that on most occasions held it in check. From his campaign, (short to be sure) in Britain, Suetonius the zealous story-hunter, has not been able to give us a single trait to justify the reproach of cowardice. By the same bodily weakness, must be explained the pleasurable enjoyment people sometimes thought they discerned on his features, when he looked on bloodshed. His age, itself so insatiably avid of the cruel sports of the gladiators, would probably never have remarked this, had it not found it just in a prince whose philanthropic nature was universally known.

One reads in the face of Claudius, that he grieved over his defeat, in this strife between the law within him and the law in his flesh. Study and plodding were his only safeguard against temptations of the senses. When he was thus absorbed in his world of thought and dreams, objects might pass before his eye, without his seeing them; voices sound near by him, without his hearing them; events happen, that convulsed all around him, without his having an idea of anything uncommon. His soul was a *camera obscura* that caught a slender ray of light, and left all else in darkness. He was forced to look away from outward objects or again run the risk of captivation by some impression on the nerves. Lacking swift inspiration and sharp insight, he tried his strength in the discovery and disentanglement of the theoretic knot in practical questions that came up; and this he often did in a manner that bore witness, one may almost say, of philosophic gifts. Tacitus has given us a notable proof of this. The leading citizens of Gallia Comata, who owned the right of Roman citizenship, and whose language and education had long been Roman, urged that they were entitled to apply for and be appointed to offices of state in Rome. The demand excited bitterness and vehement opposition, not only among the multitude of senators and knights, but even we may safely say, among the common people of the capital; for in spite of all divisions of rank and class, even at that period every street boy born within the city walls, pretended to greater consequence than the foremost citizens of the provincial towns. There was in truth a hierarchical arrangement, supported by tradition though no longer applied in political life, of the lands and peoples tributary to Rome, in which the Italians took the first place, the Greeks the second, the Gauls the third, and so down to the Egyptians, who were commonly put lowest. They questioned now, in Rome, whether men whose fathers had been barbarians, and the fiercest foes of the city on the Tiber, should force their way into the senate itself, and humble the descendants of Romulus, by wearing the purple-bordered toga. The call to rights of blood, of race, of "nationality," echoed as loudly then as in our own day. Claudius called the senate together, then, and made a speech to the fathers, rebellious listeners, to demonstrate that Rome was not, nor ever had been, what they were pleased to imagine—a society built upon the basis of nationality. He reminded them of the Sabine origin of his own very ancient race, of the derivation of the Julii from Alba Longa, and of the Porcii from Tusculum. He reminded them of Equans, Hernicans, Etruscans and Lucans, and so many other peoples Rome had subjugated, only to penetrate them with the Roman spirit and cultivation, and fuse them into one with itself. The posterity of these races now bore the Roman name and loved Rome as their fatherland. He showed how states like Athens and Sparta had vanished, because they held too strictly to the principle of blood ; while Rome, on the contrary, had won dominion of the world, because it strove for the propagation of its culture, more than for the superiority of any one race of people. "Fathers in the assembly," so he ended his speech, "all that is held ancient now, was once new ; after the patrician officers came the plebeian, after them the Latin, after them, again, officers of the other Italian races. Even this race shall win the right of age ; and that which we now defend by examples from history, shall one day itself, too, stand among history's examples."

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Not always did his orations in the senate deal with such weighty political questions. As already stated, the emperor meddled in everything with which he was familiar, and no subject under deliberation seemed to him unworthy an attack on the part of the head of the state. When the senate one day took in hand a question about some change in the ordinances for the poorer class of inns and public houses, the emperor presented himself in the *curia*, and as held, on good grounds, that none of the assembled fathers were better acquainted with those places than he was himself—who had so often brought his midday meal from them, had even crossed the threshold to play at backgammon with their frequenters, by the side of a measure of wine—he came forward, and to the wrath and amusement of the senators, gave precise information on what he himself had experience of, in relation to the arrangement, articles sold, and prices of these places of resort.

From the life he thus described, fate had suddenly moved him up to a throne. How it happened, we all know. Caligula had fallen by the swords of the conspirators, and the senate, at the first tidings thereof, had assembled at the Capitol in order, under protection of the arms of the hastily collected city cohorts, to "reinstate liberty," as the fine phrase sounded. But while the senators wrangle about how this shall be done, and how together with liberty they can secure order and property rights, not least a right to the ownership of slaves, a serio-comic event is taking place, but a stone's throw or two from the spot, which crosses all of a sudden, the grandiose scheme. A light-fingered soldier has taken care, in the confusion, to smuggle himself into the deserted palace, and there discovers a pair of feet below the tapestry of a door. The owner of the feet throws himself terrified on his knees, and begs for his life. The soldier, who in the petitioner knows Caligula's uncle Claudius, has straightway a capital idea. He steals Claudius, and meeting as he hurries out of the palace with him, a few comrades, they help him to lift the stolen goods into a chair, and carry them to the camp of the prætorian guard. The prætorians, who are surly at the confidence the senate has shown the city cohorts, and besides care more for pay and gifts of money than for freedom, proclaim Claudius emperor. The people, collected outside the council chamber of the senate, joins the cry of homage, the city cohorts retreat to their barracks, the cries for liberty are hushed, and the senators are scattered like chaff before the wind. The brain in which the prætorian power first came into existence thus, in the form of a cunning device, a sort of thief's idea, merits immortality quite as well as any other that has had the honor of carrying the kindling spark to a ready-prepared historical bonfire. The soldier was called Gratus, and was a native of Epirus.

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Of all that happened during the reign of Claudius, the fate of his first wife Messalina, is probably that which has most attracted the attention of the writers on ethics. Tacitus paints in lively colors the latest events in this cruel and vicious woman's life. The last in the long line of her willing or compulsory lovers, was Caius Silius, the handsomest of Rome's youth. If it had its dangers to accept her favor, it was yet more perilous to reject it. In the latter case, death awaited him ; in the former, a possibility, at least, of enjoying unpunished the riches and dignities that the empress lavished on objects of her passion ; for although all Rome knew and talked of her wild excesses, Claudius seemed not even to have an idea of them. One may say she had the whole city in her confidence, and dissembled only to her husband. After she had forced Silius to repudiate his young wife, she often came to his house, was almost always by his side when he was seen abroad, and surrounded him with a prince's pomp. The autumn came. The emperor had gone to Ostia, there to be present at the feast of Bacchus ; and Messalina made use of his absence to celebrate, she too, in her palace on the Palatine, the feast of the vintage, and jointly with this—incredible as it seems—her marriage with her lover ; a marriage of which it is not known how far it was intended merely to represent, or actually to be, a lawful one, but of which it is known that it took place in presence of the augurs, with witnesses summoned for the occasion, with sacrifices to the gods, with kisses and embraces.

After this came the feast of the vintage, arranged as a delirious bacchanal. The wine presses are in motion, the juices of the grape are gushing out, the women who take part in the orgy, clothed only in the wild beasts' skins of the Menads, are dancing in the character of sacrificial or inebriated bacchants. In the midst of them, Messalina, with hair dishevelled, appears, swinging a thyrsus; and by her side Silius, he too almost naked, with ivy wreath and cothurni. The courts and chambers of the palace ring with the songs of the riotous chorus and its cry of "Evoe!" One of the drunken revellers, Vectius Valens, climbs into a high tree and looks around him. "What seest thou?" they cry to him. "A terrible storm, coming from Ostia," is his prophetic answer. Straightway after, a messenger bursts into the palace, announcing that the emperor knows all, and is coming to be avenged. The orgy breaks up in horror. The guests scatter to every quarter; but already the centurions are on their track, and hew them down where they are found, in the streets or houses. Messalina alone quickly recovers herself. She hastens from the palace to her gardens on the present Monte Pincio, and bids her children, Britannicus and Octavia, hurry to their father and throw themselves into his arms. Herself, she resolves to make speed in advance of the children. She knows her husband's weakness, and trusts in the power of her beauty, her caresses and her tears, and the entreaties of her children.

So she hastened on foot the long way from Monte

Pincio to the city gate that now bears the name of the apostle Paul. There, she throws herself exhausted into the first vehicle she meets, and speeds on, upon the road leading along the Tiber to Ostia. Now, she sees the imperial escort before her; she discovers the emperor, and by his side, three courtiers, among whom Narcissus, her enemy and accuser. The face of Claudius rekindles her courage: it betrays more of pain than of anger. His lips have during the whole journey had no other words than these: "Humbled! humbled by the mother of my children! O my poor children!" The moment is final. It will bring death to one or the other—to Messalina or Narcissus. Both are aware of that. Already from afar, Messalina cries: "Cæsar, hear the mother of thy Octavia, thy Britannicus!" Claudius had never been able to withstand the sound of that voice, the sight of those charms; but Narcissus drowns her appeal with the cry: "Cæsar, forget not Silius! forget not the shameful marriage!" and when the empress would hasten forward to the car, he unrolls between her and her husband the deed of accusation, detailing her excesses. The emperor is silent: all are silent but Narcissus, whose voice sounds strong and commanding and extorts from those around, obedience. The imperial car, with its escort, continues the journey. At the city gate, a vestal awaits them, with Britannicus and Octavia by the hand; but Narcissus motions the children away, and bids the vestal go back to her duties. Then he drives the emperor straight to the house of Silius, which Messalina has adorned with the art treasures of the Julian and Claudian races, and then to the prætorians, who cry out for the death of the guilty. Silius is brought to trial, without hesitation confesses all, and is at once executed. When he has returned to the palace, Claudius announces that he will himself the next morning hear the "unhappy one." But Narcissus, who knows that Messalina has but to throw herself at the emperor's feet to win back his heart, immediately sends certain of the centurions then on guard, to execute as he says the sentence of death upon her. They found her crouching at her mother's feet, wringing her hands in despair, not heeding the aged woman who bade her be before the executioners, and die a less ignominious death by her own hand. When the soldiers entered, the empress at last seized the dagger and carried it to neck and bosom, but the trembling hand refused obedience. A colonel of the life guard ran her through, then, with his sword. When Claudius received the news that Messalina had "perished," he emptied his goblet and said nothing. He never uttered her name again.

Even in old age weak before female beauty, Claudius suffered himself to be cajoled by his young and fair niece Agrippina, who became his second wife, and in the saddest sense of the word a stepmother to his son Britannicus; to whose prejudice she prepared everything for the elevation of her own son Lucius Domitius (Nero) to the throne. When she suspected that Claudius, whom she had hitherto had in leading strings, would cross that plan, it is said she gave him poison. The tradition that this took place was not to be hushed because she honored his name and memory with a grand temple. Its remnants yet stand on the Cœlian hill, behind the Coliseum.

More enduringly has Claudius himself honored his memory, by his philanthropic laws. Still, in the ancient land of Gaul, monuments are occasionally dug out, with that emperor's name who abolished the human sacrifices of the Druids and gave Roman culture there a decisive victory. In Rome, there is a spot that for over two thousand years has been dedicated to the spirit of philanthropy. It is the Tiber island. There, where for centuries a hospital, with church and cloister, has stood, there was in the olden time a temple of Æsculapius, where the ailing poor sought aid and shelter. Heartlessness was even here ready to extract an advantage from mercy. Unscrupulous masters were used to give their sick slaves up to be tended on the Tiber island ; to claim them again if they grew well, but in the other event, to abandon them to their fate. Claudius put an end to this abuse. He issued a law which must have seemed to many a slaveholder dangerous to society ; for the law decreed that every slave so given up, who recovered, was a free man ; and that every master who killed a sick slave, rather than take care of or give him up, should be punished as a murderer.

Such memories must expiate something of that in which this Cæsar, in his weakness, was guilty. He was a noble-born soul in chains. Unhappily, such weakness is often more rigorously judged than the strength of will that has no chains at all, not even those of conscience, to shake off.

V.

NERO.

ONE day during the reign of emperor Claudius, the hundred and fifty thousand spectators the Circus Maximus could hold, had assembled to view the Trojan game. Youths of the noblest families of Rome were to display before the emperor, senate and people, their skill in managing horses and bearing arms.

The youthful host rode into the circus and saluted Cæsar and the senators. It then divided into equal companies, which at a given signal engaged, involved each other in an intricate line, fled and pursued, scattered into contesting groups, and again collected in a united body before the emperor and senate. In the very midst of this throng—

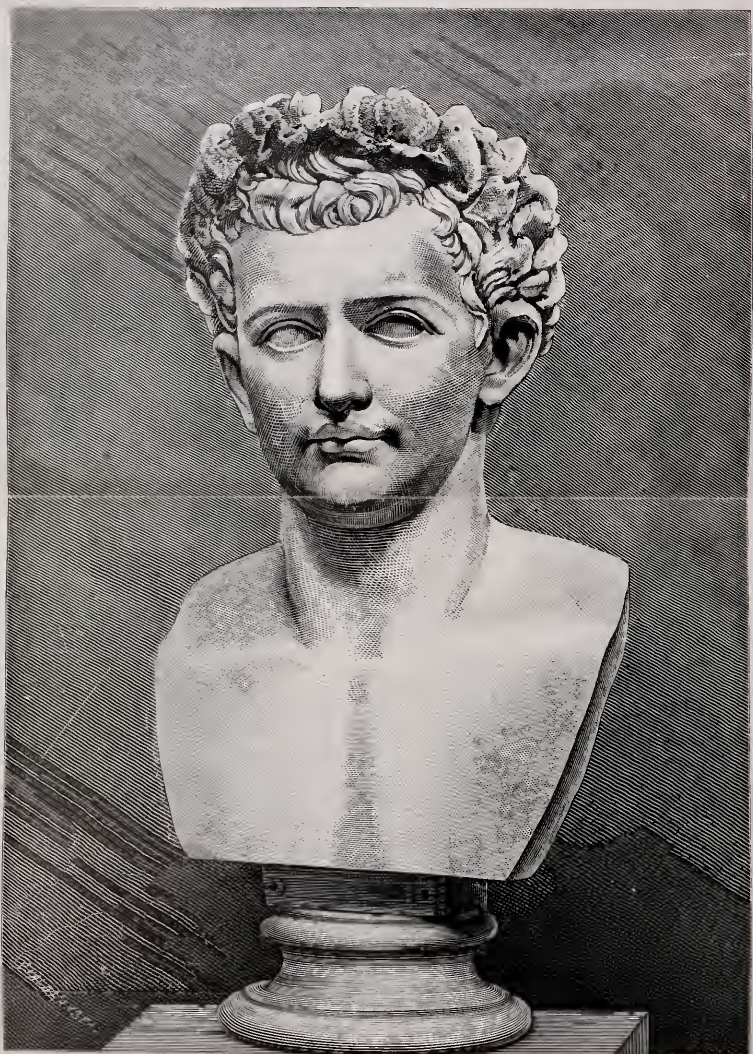
> *Like to the dolphins' shoal, that fills, as it tumbles in ocean,*
> *Now with its sport the Carpathian waves, now Libyan billows*—

was seen a boy of ten years, fair Agrippina's handsome son, Lucius Domitius Ahenobarbus. Britannicus the weakling, heir to the throne, was in the tournament also, in which he was to represent the young Iulus; but the glances, applause and approving cries of the spectators were not for him, but for Lucius Domitius, whose beauty, activity and endurance, enchanted every one. And so the day was fixed ineffaceably in his memory, and had its influence upon his whole life. Face to face, had Rome poured out to the boy the intoxicating draught of popular admiration: as youth and man, with the diadem around his brow, again and again he longed to bear that cup to his lips.

Nero—as he was entitled when shortly after he was adopted by the emperor as son and joint heir to the throne—was now the people's favorite, and seemed worthy to be so. All who came near him were charmed by his handsome person, and merry, kindly disposition, of a softness almost feminine. The teachers praised his generous mental gifts, and the diligence with which he cultivated them. Most eagerly he took hold of the branches of study which appealed to the imagination. Unoccupied, he was never seen; his leisure hours away from books and exercise, he passed in painting, modelling, engraving and practice in the art of poetry.

The men who had his education in hand, Seneca the writer and Afranius Burrus the commander, no doubt remarked, nevertheless, that these brilliant abilities were coupled with serious defects. The seeds of eloquence with which Seneca, turner of maxims, sought to implant a love of truth in the boy, were of no effect. If he had been guilty of any misdemeanor he tried to save himself by a clever untruth; and if this did not succeed, he silenced reproofs with kisses, and with pledges of amendment that were probably never redeemed. The aged Burrus, gruff with the boy, and short towards the emperor, won his respect but not his confidence. Seneca, on the contrary, whose nature united a kind of sensibility with a refined and dignified exterior, agreed better with his nature, and had, as Nero's guide in elocution, chance enough to place before his eyes that Stoic ideal which both teachers revered, and which was unquestionably fitted to arouse and strengthen the moral will. Often the pupil probably heard that "good should be done for its own sake, without thought of reward," and that "vice should be shunned, even were it able to hide itself from the eyes of gods and men." That inflexible virtue a falling universe cannot terrify, still less the wrath of a people or a tyrant's threat, was doubtless often from the orator's chair brought before the lively boy, whose soul could mirror everything noble, but as the mirror does, without the picture's leaving even upon the surface any trace. Did he enjoy the representation of a man whom fate cannot bend, it was because that form should be stately to look upon, in bronze or on the cothurnus.

But there was something even in Seneca's teaching that repelled the youth. He himself was sensible of the sufferings of others, as long as it cost him no trouble to be so; but here, he heard that "they are weak eyes that weep when those of others run," and he heard this likened with laughter when others laugh, and yawning when others yawn. For the very same Stoics who proclaimed the brotherhood of mankind, attached little or no value to feeling, as such: they did not look at the beautiful gift of nature—only at the ethical gain. But for one who does not attain to the latter, it may be dangerous to learn contempt for the former. Still more must it have wounded the pupil to hear Seneca's judgment of art. He, in common with Cicero, with so many other Romans, whether they belonged to the Stoic school or not, could let fall from them the opinion that the chisel and the pencil were playthings fit for the boys of Greece, but hardly for the men of Rome; and they who favored this idea, liked to have upon their lips the words of Virgil:



NERO.
(NATIONAL GALLERY, NAPLES.)

Bronze that breathes—with softer hand be it fashioned by others,
Beings (I deem so) with life, must others set free from the marble,
Choose with a daintier taste their words, and measure securely
Heaven's circling course, and of rising stars be prophetic.
Thou O Roman, remember, art born to counsel the nations—
That is the art which is thine—and peace to the universe offer:
Give to the down-trodden grace, and wrest his arms from the mighty

Nero's whole life shows that he was incapable of conceiving anything divine, or even anything of a higher value to life, otherwise than in the form of beauty. Such expressions, therefore, could only irritate him. They disclosed the fact that under a Grecianized exterior, the Roman still hid a barbarian ; and to drive that barbarian out—this, Nero made the purpose of his life. He probably thought that he thus but accomplished that which two centuries had already attempted. And in this he displayed an energy he lacked in everything else, an actual fanaticism for beauty, which was spurred on by his faith in his own artistic gifts, and his dreams of victory in games of contest sung in Pindaric songs.

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In the Italian halls of art are at least four antiques, that represent Lucius Domitius in his boyhood and the first years of his youth. The most interesting are the two in the Museo nazionale of Naples. A little toga-draped statue shows him to us at about the age of eight years. A strange face it is, this statue reveals to us: the features in their entirety, keep the look of a still younger childhood, while the brow and eyes have already something dreamy, that indicates a precocious sensibility. By the side of this is to be seen a bust of Nero at fifteen or sixteen. No one ever looked with a cheerier glance than this youth out into the world. Enjoyment of life in every feature, rather heightened than subdued by the dreamy shadow over the eyes. The brow so clear, the rounding of the cheeks so fresh, the mouth so smiling, the whole so simple and so stamped with faith in a future that shall realize his rosy dreams, one but unwillingly admits to himself that this face is far from inspiring confidence so much as full of confidence itself; and that the small upper lip curving upwards, tells a tale of the æsthetic epicure, and of something more, too. Put by the side of this bust of Nero, one of the many busts that we have of Marcus Aurelius as a boy! Then we perceive darkness behind the smile of the one lad; behind the other's thoughtful and melancholy earnestness, light.

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Nero stepped, so to speak, from the school bench to the throne. He had already been married some time to Octavia the daughter of Claudius, but had not yet completed his seventeenth year, when prætorians, senate and people hailed him emperor. Endowed with charming qualities, he was in greater measure than any of his predecessors, perhaps than any of his successors, object of the people's devotion. Of the sincerity and strength of this feeling, the doggedness with which it was clung to, the grief that breathes through the hatred and contempt which at last took its place, bear witness; the flowers, too, that were scattered many years by unknown hands upon his grave, and the traditions long current, that he was alive, and should come again and expiate by an honorable reign the errors and crimes of his youth.

The world came forth rejoicing, then, to meet young Cæsar, and strove to show him all the gladness and beauty that waited to be plucked by his hand. He saw before him the Bacchic procession of Roman life, its eager pursuit of enjoyment and insolent revels upon the treasure of continents captured by arms. He saw even the Stoic ideal, of which in the school-room he had heard so much; but only on the dark faces of a few republicans, in the wrathful countenances of a few soldiers, and in the austere bearing of a few philosophers, who stood as unwilling spectators, and might be borne with as such, since the occasional shadows of old Roman virtue they cast upon the stage, made an æsthetically effective break in the brilliance of the orgy. What wonder then, if the imperial youth had no wish to take his place among them, but rather chose to be Dionysus of the train as it moved on shouting "Evoe!" and make of his sceptre a thyrsus that swayed its frenzy to Hellenic rhythm, and gave a Grecian charm to its disorder?

To the sharers in this bacchanal, that old Roman virtue, excessively lauded by the poets, was nothing but a child, which the constrained simplicity of the olden time had begotten in fear of the gods. But why had their ancestors subdued the world, if not that posterity should enjoy it? As for the gods, their temples stood yet, worthy walls to protect the sculptured works of Greece; and the mystic rites of the temple attracted more than ever, since women had found it more delightful to sin, as holy ecstasies could expiate unholy; but the gods themselves no longer troubled the world as it went on, where they now, by consent of Epicurus, drank their nectar, in Olympus.

The ancestral customs were not even honored as an antiquated form of life: they were ridiculed as an old-fashioned and tasteless dress. Whatever good they had, it was a part of the reigning tone to despise. One may say without exaggeration, that tone was one with civic duty in such a community as that of Cæsarian Rome. Independence and honor were not to be found outside of a shrunken circle of old Romans; and all knew that these same men were displeased with the course of events and wished, if they did not hope, for the restoration of freedom. An Epicurean like Tigellinus, Nero's favorite, had perspicacity enough to see, and impudence enough to declare, that this devotion to the general good which the Stoics inculcated, threatened the new order of things, and that the best citizen was now he who cared for nothing but subsistence and pleasure.

And they gave themselves up to pleasure, wholly and entirely. The orgy was feverish, and this had its reasons. Under Tiberius, Caligula and Claudius, murder had gone on almost unbrokenly. Men of rank were served at their feasts by the executioner. One day they emptied the beaker at Cæsar's board, the next, they were borne off to death. This was so common! The blow could fall at any moment. So then, hurrah for the farce of life! Hurrah for the farce of death. Just as the excesses under the *ancien régime* aped in grotesque fashion the Roman life of this time, so the French "*après nous le déluge*" is the free translation of a Greek saying, which was then on the lips of every one: "Chaos, when I am dead!" Once when Nero heard it, he cried: "No! chaos, while I live!"

Into such a world, the young prince made his entry; and it follows naturally that its very worst elements should strive to outrun each other in their rush upon the inexperienced boy, to discover his faults, develope them into vices, and gain influence as their ministers. The circle of intimate companions that gathered around him, mirrored the humor of the time, and his own. There, were to be seen the foremost leaders of the Epicurean band: Marcus Salvius Otho, voluptuary in the grand style; Caius Petronius, voluptuary in the elegant; and Tigellinus, voluptuary in the satanic. Even poets and artists were to be seen there; and there was in the beginning an æsthetic spirit over the whole. Nobler elements were not entirely lacking: among these Lucan, the poet of "Pharsalia," in spite of all weaknesses, may be reckoned; and it is hardly likely that this company, howsoever evil its influence upon Nero, was worse than other assemblages that held their wild revels in the palaces of Rome or the colonnades and pleasure-gardens of the sumptuous villas near by.

The soul of the company was Caius Petronius, *arbiter elegantiarum* of the court, its omnipotent judge of taste and master of revels. Nero long regarded him, as one may say, with a guileless admiration. His society was charming; his bearing and manners were accomplished; from his judgment in literature and art, there was no appeal. The taste of the time was embodied in this model of Rome's golden youth. The rounded and polished license with which he appeared, that, too, accorded with the countersign of the day—naturalness in life, naturalness in art—and seemed the expression of finely-moulded feelings, the sure tact of which could banish the stiffer and more ceremonious forms in which society had previously moved, to the lumber-room to which the old maxims had been consigned. If it be the same Petronius who wrote the "Satyrikon,"—that work so eagerly read by the French Epicureans of the sixteenth century—and if he in society appeared as he does in his writings, he was, with all his refined cynicism, not insensible to good; and he has directed his lively scorn especially against the more unsavory phenomena in his own school. Petronius and his friends called themselves Epicureans, but threw aside the balancing and calculating Epicurean moderation, as a tiresome and thus an unallowable reminder, during life's revel, of human weakness. In opposition to the Stoics, they wished to show that those who make a comedy of life can display the same ability and the same contempt for death, as those for whom life is a school of duty. Otho, as governor of Lusitania, Petronius, as proconsul of Bithynia, were estimable rulers. Many an Epicurean who had laid aside the festal wreath and put on the armor, had on the battle-field given proofs of manhood deserving the praise of a Burrus and a Domitius Corbulus. And there came at last a day when Petronius, as well as Otho, could show that the Epicurean left the stage of life with the same tranquillity as the Stoic.

Such were the models of life that determined Nero's view of the world. Enjoy this world, and beautify the enjoyment by art, and sweeten it by sympathy! This was the conception to which, in the best cases, they lifted themselves. They believed, fully and firmly, that every higher aim than this was a phantom of the brain; that culture was based upon nothing else than refinement of the desires and multiplication of the means of enjoyment, and that the virtue of renunciation would be as useless to society as hard for the individual. Society is built up by human impulse towards companionship, and supported by selfishness. The benefits it brings with it are such that not even its supplying members, still less its consuming, will dispense with them. And as on the field of battle, the individual must risk his life for the whole, the passion of ambition and habits of discipline are strong enough to lead the legions on to the same exploits that once were accomplished by patriotism and sense of duty. These doctrines, then, were proclaimed in the palace on the Palatine, and have never, since that palace fell in ruins, wanted a house over their head.

Seneca's Stoic lectures had no other effect upon Nero than to provoke him to silent opposition; especially as he remarked that his teacher, under the mantle of philosophy, hid a disposition too eager after this world's goods not to engage in conflict with his high principles. That which in Seneca and others who revered a noble manner of life, was weakness of will, Nero suspected as dissimulation. And it was not long before he saw hypocrites in all who in word and deed did not embrace the doctrine of the emancipation of the flesh: he estimated men's honesty and trustworthiness by the measure of the audacity with which they flaunted their vices in the daylight. The new Dionysus, drawn by the panther-span of desires, would see around him a race of men which had cast off the last tatters of disguise, and in Menadic nakedness followed his car of triumph.

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Nero did not know lust for power, in and for itself; but all the more he knew the value of a position that promised him a life of joy, and the realization of his plans for Grecian culture. The burden of government, the youth of seventeen wished to bear as lightly as possible, both from want of faith in his own powers, and from desire for pleasanter pursuits. And so, feast followed feast, on the Palatine, or in the imperial villas, or in the gilded vessels, the gold-laced and scarlet-clad oarsmen of which, chosen from the handsomest youth of Asia, amid sounds of music bore Cæsar down the Tiber, or along the shores of Naples or Bajae, fair as Paradise. In the second year of Nero's reign, these pleasures shifted with nightly depredations and boyish freaks in the streets of Rome, and excursions to hostelries by the Milvian bridge—amusements that brought in their train fighting and other scandalous scenes, and during which it once happened that the disguised emperor was condignly thrashed by a citizen whose wife he had insulted. Had the man been silent, Nero would have been so too; but he was unwise enough to send the emperor a letter of apology; and when the answer came that he was in disgrace with Cæsar, he took the hint and shortened his own life. Such occurrences did not, however, disturb the hope that years of discretion might make of Nero an excellent prince. The people liked the buoyant youth, who wished to see every one merry, and who scattered his treasures to the four winds. The more serious men of his circle noted the lonely walks he liked to take in beautiful neighborhoods, as a sign that he would soon weary of riotous amusements. Neither did he altogether withdraw from the duties of his station. At the deliberations of the senate he was often present, and fulfilled with discretion his obligations as judge. The promises he gave, with regard to the principles of government, were redeemed. Court and state, commingled in the reign of Claudius, were separated; the senate recovered its right of decision; the taxes were lessened, and admirable laws enacted. Trajan used to say of the first five years of Nero's reign, that none had surpassed them. The honor of such testimony from such lips, belongs no doubt in the first place to Seneca and Burrus, who were his counsellors, as they had before been his teachers; but it ought still in some measure to be given to him, who leaned upon them, and himself long upheld them against their enemies and detractors. It must not be forgotten that the youth was encompassed by friends who under the mask of pleasure and æsthetic enthusiasm, had designs both ambitious and rapacious, and constantly pricked him on with the question: is it for you to obey Seneca and Burrus, or for them to obey you? Are you school-boy, or are you emperor?

Among the laws enacted, may be mentioned the Petronian, which forbade slave-owners, without the authority of law, to give up slaves for combat with wild beasts. A passage in the writings of Seneca tells us—what the Roman historians had concealed—that Nero carried his care for the enslaved classes much farther: he instituted a separate office for guarding the slaves against caprice, avarice and cruelty, on the part of their masters. The emperor's mind to give all an assured place at the banqueting-table of humanity, here worked together with Seneca's teachings, and the noble endeavor that distinguished the Stoic school in Roman jurisprudence.

We know that the slaughter of men in the amphitheatres of Rome went on until some time under the Christian emperors, and was not forbidden until Honorius stopped it, after an Eastern monk had there fallen victim to the compassion he showed; which compassion aroused the fury of his pleasure-loving brethren in the faith. We must not then deny Nero the honor that belongs to him, in that he had will and courage to deprive the people of the right it thought it possessed to the bloody diversions of the amphitheatre, and transformed the gladiatorial games into innocent exhibitions of skill in bearing arms! As long as he lived, no one, not even a criminal doomed to death, was killed in the arena. This was mildness upon which the Roman historians, as well as their epoch, set little or no value, and so is only casually mentioned by one among them ; but our own time ought to be able to judge otherwise. The Flavian emperors gave the Romans back their favorite pastime, and in the great amphitheatre they built over the lake belonging to Nero's Golden House, blood flowed in streams, even while Titus wielded the sceptre—he who was called the "delight of mankind," and at the foot of whose statue in the Villa Borghese, the antique sculptor has laid a honeycomb, as a sign of the sweetness of his nature. Nero's deserts in this matter ought not to be much lessened because his disgust for plays in which hired ruffians, prisoners of war, slaves and criminals were incited against each other to tickle the bestial impulses of the spectators, was in fact but the reverse side of his love for the Hellenic games, in which only freeborn and blameless men could appear, and a people could rejoice in the flowers of genius, strength and beauty, which with every Olympiad shot forth in the leafage of its own tree of life.

The word high treason, with which base denouncers in the days of Tiberius, Caligula and Claudius, had held Rome in terror and brought ruin upon so many, was not heard during the first half of Nero's reign. Tongues were freed and their license was often directed against the emperor himself. On the market and at the bath, not less than in private circles, lampoons could be read aloud and laughed at, that writers of note had made upon Nero. Nay, they could recite them in his own presence, and the only vengeance he took upon their authors, was to pay them in the same coin, and let his friends spread throughout the city the lampoons he had composed against the backbiters. Suetonius notes as very strange that Nero in all his life never showed greater kindness to any than to those who had attacked him with sneers and scurrility. Suetonius said however, something too much; for when denunciations for high treason again came into play—which happened against the emperor's will—those around him seem to have forced him into another conception of the sacredness of his dignity; and then, it might have been attended with danger to provoke Cæsar. The editor of the poet Persius' poems carried prudence so far as even to change the words, "King Midas hath the ass's pretty ears" to a more innocent question, as to whether every reader did not feel himself an accomplice in the fate of the Phrygian prince. It is nevertheless true that Nero, even in the darkest phase of his life, could patiently receive a stern rebuke, if any had courage to make him one.

In every land to which Grecian culture had attained, for three centuries a longing almost sickly, had been perceptible, after the glories of the old Hellenic life, now vanished forever. Kings waxed enthusiastic over the republicans of old Hellas, inserted the word Philhellene among their titles, and felt themselves honored, when they had adorned Athens with temples and monuments, to have as recompense their names inscribed in the list of the city's burghers. Sober Cicero felt holy ground under his feet when he trod the soil of Attica. This longing can hardly have seized upon any one more strongly than Rome's young emperor, with his passion for the beautiful. Nero saw that, in spite of all the victories of Hellenism in the branches of mythology, tradition, history, eloquence and poetry, in spite of the eagerness that prevailed, to see, purchase and copy the paintings and sculptures of Greece, Grecian culture was still for Roman life, what the Hellenic forms of architecture were for many of Rome's palaces: a decorative, but not a constructive element. Art, in Rome, was not the manifestation of a people's natural impulse, but a pleasure, sometimes also a study, for "the cultivated." It was and remained an exotic, to which persons of rank gave the same care as to the African plants in their parks. Apelles, although author of the proverb: "Shoemaker, keep to your last!" thought that the common people's judgment upon the productions of art was sounder than that of the artists. In Rome, however, the people was *profanum vulgus*, above which rose a class of judges, who called themselves *sapientes viri*, in an earlier sense of the word *sapiens*. The same phenomenon, this, that one finds everywhere where art is introduced and is unable to make itself quite at home.

Nero cherished, with the bold confidence of youth, the belief that through the æsthetic education of the people, he could make of Rome an Athens. The theatre, the arena, the lecture halls and the newly-instituted gymnasiums were to work the miracle. Public games should be elevated by the appearance in them of those of the highest rank; even the emperor, by striving with the others for the victor's crown in the realm of the beautiful, would break the spine of the old Roman arrogance towards the followers of art. His aged advisers warned him not to precipitate this enterprise, and succeeded in stemming for a time his zeal; but it was so much the more violent when the dam broke, and it drowned him and his throne in its whirlpool.

The bodily exercises of the Romans aimed exclusively at qualification for war. But Nero wished to combine with these, that kind of Grecian gymnastic which developed the beauty of the limbs and gave a charm to the bearing and movements. The wrath of the old Romans at this, still echoes through the annals of Tacitus. To give the people an idea of the taste the Hellenes infused into their war-dances, Nero summoned Grecian youths to Rome, made them exhibit Pyrrhic dances, and rewarded them with the right of Roman citizenship. He even allowed the people to look on at his own exercises on the field of Mars, gave gymnastic festal games in Septa Julia (on the *Via lata*, at the foot of the northern slope of the Capitoline) and erected at his own expense fine gymnasiums in Antium, Bajae and Ravenna.

The theatre in Rome stood low. The classic works of art, Greek tragedies as well as Roman imitations of Attic comedies, led a moribund existence by the side of pantomimes, clever and dull fairy plays, criminal dramas like " Laureolus," and farces of the coarsest realistic kind. Did a fire occur in such a piece, a house was built, filled with costly furniture, and set on fire, and the public had its pleasure in seeing the actors plunder in the flames whatever they could. Nero, who had the faculty to enjoy such things, yet wished to revive the dramatic art, and thought he could make it what it had been with the Greeks. For this purpose, he instituted the Juvenalian games, in which the drama took the foremost place ; and he appeared himself, before an extended but still exclusive circle, as an actor.

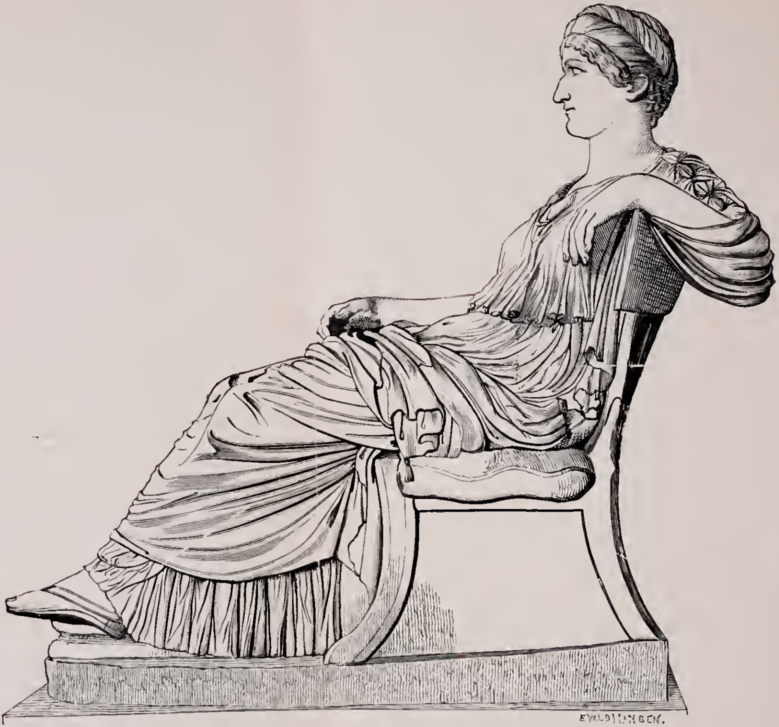
The gladiatorial games, until then so brutal and horrible, he had, as lately mentioned, tamed into harmless sports, in which scions of Rome's most prominent families displayed their skill in the use of arms. On one occasion, in Nero's amphitheatre on the field of Mars, four hundred senators and six hundred knights were seen taking part in the sword exercises. To Nero, no doubt, that day seemed like the dawn of a Roman-Hellenic era

But how Tacitus thunders, and with what a mass of clumsy antitheses Dio Cassius vainly endeavors to draw from us tears over Rome's humiliation on that day!

In the fifth year of his reign, the emperor took what he doubtless thought a decisive step towards the hellenization of Rome, by introducing under the name of the Neronic games, an imitation of the Olympic. The Neronic were, like the latter, to be held every fifth year, and include contests in poetry, eloquence, music, gymnastics, riding and driving. All were exhorted to make these games a high festival, worthy the greatness of the Roman people. The emperor himself competed and won in Latin eloquence and poetry, as well as playing upon the cithern. All who appeared, and the greater part of the spectators, were habited in the Greek costume; and it looked, for some time after, as if this should supplant the Roman, even for daily use.

Nero's plans for hellenization seemed to advance very favorably. For that which we in our day should call the introduction of art into life, a zeal, too hot to be long-lived, had taken possession of the people of rank. All, says Dio Cassius, practised that for which they thought themselves fitted. Men, wives, girls and boys had their separate training-schools, and those who could not appear otherwise, sold themselves for the choruses in the play.

But beneath the surface, there ran a stream of the deepest indignation over these devices, in which Greece avenged its overthrow upon Rome. The new Ilium by the Tiber saw as it were, its walls open to another deceitful tribute to Pallas Athena. Laocoons draped in the toga, muttered imprecations upon the evil gifts of the Greeks, Roman Cassandras foretold the destruction of the world,


EVALD HANSEN.

AGRIPPINA.
(CAPITOLINE GALLERY.)

and a party in resistance was formed, whose growls were greeted with storms of approbation by those who followed the court taste. Such as reproached the emperor, received these questions in reply: "Are not the prizes of victory of the orators and poets likely to spur genius to emulation? Does not the divine prophet Apollo stand with the ornaments of singer and cithern-player in the temples of Rome, as well as of Greece? Is not the art of driving the four-horse biga a kingly art, practised by the old time princes, celebrated in the songs of the poets, and dedicated to the gods?" That the malcontents were forced to say yes to these questions, did not cool their wrath.

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If the young emperor had dreamed for himself a life of happiness, he was soon to be taken from his error. It is beyond doubt that he ascended the throne in the hope of one day leaving to posterity the memory of a philanthropic prince; and his feelings can therefore be imagined, when, hardly adorned with the diadem, he heard that death sentences had already been executed in his name, and that many more were in prospect if he did not quickly intervene. It was Agrippina, his mother, who wished to consecrate his reign by a massacre of her enemies. She was checked and forced to give up the fulfilment of her design; but from that hour, silently or openly, a bitter strife went on between her on one side, Seneca and Burrus on the other, for influence over Nero; and beautiful as she still was, she is said not to have shunned the most shameful means to assure that influence to herself. With knowledge of the sophistry of human feelings, it seems probable that she fancied she had the welfare of her son, and nothing else, before her eyes. For Lucius Domitius as a boy, she had cherished a passionate tenderness, and by the best possible choice of teachers, undoubtedly showed her desire to see him grow up in moral strength. Neither did she omit, when the emperor gave way to the seductions of those around him, to add her word to the representations of his teachers, which he still, boyish in many things, received with a blush of shame and promises of amendment. But an unbridled ambition was yet the mainspring of all her actions. Thus, the senators were summoned from the curia to the imperial palace, that hidden behind a curtain she might follow their deliberations. And not always did she suffer a curtain between herself and affairs of state. At a ceremonious audience Nero gave the Armenian messengers, she stepped forward to share the throne with the emperor. Those present stood rooted to the ground with amazement; but Seneca, the only one who did not lose his presence of mind, begged the emperor to hasten to meet his mother, and thereby—says Tacitus—prevented a disgraceful scene. When Nero, who had always had a repugnance to his wife Octavia, fell in love with Acte, a beautiful freed slave, and was said to wish to raise her to the throne, and when Pallas, his mother's favorite, was dismissed from his office at court, and when Nero's friends, in whom she saw her most dangerous adversaries, seemed continually to gain greater ascendancy over him, Agrippina's love turned suddenly to hate. Now she neither admonished, nor prayed, nor flattered, longer. Before her son's eyes, she tore aside the veil from the crime by which she had made way for him to power, and threatened to do so in the presence of all. She threatened to take Britannicus, rightful heir to the throne, by the hand, go with him to the prætorian camp and beg compassion for the repudiated son of the emperor.

This threat is believed to have cost Britannicus, the boy of fourteen, his life. At the imperial table it is said, a drink was handed him, by which he at once lost the power of speech and of respiration. The amazed guests were quieted by Nero with the assurance that it was an attack of epilepsy, with which the boy had suffered from his tenderest years; and after a short interruption, the lively humor at the banquet was recovered. But in the city, a report spread, that Britannicus had died by poison. It was whispered that Nero had done the deed; and among those who so whispered, were many who did not find the matter entirely blameworthy, for "quarrels between brothers were so common in princely families, and the welfare of the state might require that a growing pretender to the throne should be removed in time." The doctrine of "*raison d'Etat*" and "the two kinds of morals" had, as we see, pierced the flesh and blood of the Romans. They professed to know that the poisoner Locusta had been summoned to Nero from prison, to prepare the poison; to know the name of the centurion who had brought her; nay, on the market, and at the bath and the barber's shops, they knew as many small details of this event, as if the chief actor himself had gone about and in confidence told the wiseacres everything that had happened in the strictest privacy, in this mysterious affair.

Here we have arrived at a point where he who writes this, ought humbly to lay down the pen, rather than contradict renowned historians, and draw upon himself the suspicion of trying to whitewash one of the unhappiest negroes of history. Still, let the question be permitted whether it be not more than possible that sycophancy towards the Flavian successor of the Julian-Clau dian race, joined to the influence that aversion, hate and hunting after spicy news, exerts on the imagination, may have spun Nero's portrait over with fictions, that sagacity might yet be able partially to separate from the truth. Is it not so, that the Roman choniclers, with Nero's later life before their eyes, believed him already as youth, as boy, to have been not only capable of but even a sharer in all the worst deeds of which his mother is accused? Are not the historians of the Flavian era the authorities of Tacitus? And what that high-minded portrayer of the times mentions but doubtfully, and as rumor is not that certainty for Suetonius and the others? It is probable that Burrus died of the protracted disease of the throat, of which both Tacitus and Suetonius speak; but does not the latter, as well as Dio Cassius after him, say without the slightest reservation that Nero sent his former teacher poison? According to them, did not Nero kick his second wife Poppæa Sabina to death, although Tacitus informs us that while some of his authorities affirmed this, others asserted that she died by poison? And Tacitus himself does not believe that Nero purposely caused her death, "for he wished himself children and loved her passionately." To the descriptions of the death of Britannicus, cling many contradictions. Not to dwell on the circumstance that neither Subrius Flavus nor Julius Vindex, while they charge Nero with so many other crimes, attribute to him fratricide—a circumstance that weighs but little, as we probably have the words of these men reproduced with the freedom common in Roman writers—I yet dare incline to the opinion that matricide is Nero's first crime.

I would not therewith be understood to contradict the possibility of Nero's guilt, in the death of Britannicus. I only wish to call attention to what Dio Cassius, in another connection, declared: that "they gave out as actual, what was possible, and as true, what was probable."

Nero's cruelty has become a byword. But to the cruelty that enjoys the pain of others—the cruelty of voluptuaries and hysterical women whose nerves are tickled at the sight of torture and blood—Nero was a stranger: he died too young, and with health too unbroken, to fall into that. Nor can he be charged with the villanous nature of a Caligula, who killed because he had the power to do so. Just as little can the kind of cruelty most usual be attributed to him, which has its rise in the impulse of retaliation or the feeling of revenge; and which has in all ages made itself more felt, in the framing of the laws, the rougher or more cowardly the epoch has been. He was, on the contrary, whenever he could without danger or sacrifice be so, inclined to overlook and forgive. But an amiable nature, without the support of moral principle, is altogether untrustworthy in the trials of life. One sees it best in the so-called natural people, in whom cruelty can of a sudden break out in the very midst of simple expressions of beautiful qualities of the human soul. And with all his surfeiting on the forms of an over-refined culture, Nero was and remained a "primitive man." When the instinct of self-preservation was aroused, when he saw his life menaced, or that he was threatened in the conditions for enjoying life, he lost the power of reason. Imagination, which can make ills in prospect worse than those that have happened, overpowered him; and if those around were such as urged him on, instead of restraining him, he struck, and spared not. The watchword of the time, besides, was by every means to seek enjoyment and avoid pain. But to an Epicurean savage, in whose hands had been placed the sceptre of the world, the desire to remove causes of suffering, lay in very close proximity to that of avoiding them. If he hesitated to take the step from one to the other, there were frightening, encouraging and flattering voices that conjured him to do so ; and seemed to be right, too, for when he had crossed the Rubicon of crime, everything came on rejoicing to meet him. And the dignified repose with which the Stoic went forth to die, the defiant frivolity with which the Epicurean left the feast of life, were equally apt to persuade the tyrant that everything—life and death, and the judgment of life and death—is play.

Nero's fear, for years repressed, of the intrigues of Agrippina, carried his thoughts more than once in the direction of some expedient to rid himself of her ; but he would perhaps never have ripened to matricide, had he not fallen into the diabolical power of Poppæa Sabina, Rome's most beautiful woman. Only the levity of Nero's nature can explain how, surrounded by never ceasing machinations, the centre of a desperate struggle between his mother and his mistress grasping at the diadem, between his teachers and counsellors who sought to bring him back to the path of duty, and his dissolute companions who plotted against them all and against each other reciprocally—he, during all this, could give himself up as heartily as he did, to jests and feasting, and the practice of art, and dreams of hellenization. But there came a day when this struggle grew unbearable to him, when he could no longer hear Poppæa's reproach that he was "a poor boy in his nonage, a slave to the will of others," nor resist her prayers, caresses and tears ; especially as she had friends who frightened him with the people's hatred of "Agrippina's government," and could send him a decoyer, his former teacher Anicetus, who out of the friendship of his boyhood forged the weapon against the source of his being; and when the hour had come, laid before him a plan by which Agrippina might disappear, and not a bubble on the stream of time betray in what manner.

If the Roman official journal, Acta Diurna, were now to be consulted, in the collection for the year 59, one might perhaps read that "a murderer, Agerinus, (one of Agrippina's confidential servants) had been captured sword in hand near the person of Cæsar, and that his mistress, from pangs of conscience at the crime she had planned, had herself expiated her fault.'" In other words: Agrippina was dead, and all good citizens were made to believe that after an attempt to murder her son, she had taken her own life. But the Roman historians have something of another kind to relate.

Nero and his court were present at the feast of Minerva, in Bajae. Agrippina was invited thither, and the emperor had the country-house Bauli, in the neighborhood of the cape of Misenæ, put in order for her. His mother came; Nero went to meet her, and gave a feast in her honor that lasted into the night. She was afterwards escorted on board of a magnificent ship, which was to carry her to Bauli. The ship was so built that it could be without difficulty sunk. The starlit night and stillness of the sea, however, would have made a shipwreck suspicious; so they took another method, and loaded the roof over her cabin so heavily that it burst. A courtier who accompanied her, was crushed; a lady who was seated at the feet of the princess, fell by a lurch of the ship into the water, and was beaten to death with oars, by the rowers. But Agrippina succeeded in saving herself from the murderers' hands by swimming, and was picked up by an approaching boat. At the first tidings of the failure of the plan, the terrified Nero sends Anicetus with soldiers to Bauli. They break into Agrippina's bedchamber and kill her with blows from sticks and with sword-thrusts.

At the parting with his mother, Nero had folded her in his arms and kissed her mouth and neck. Tacitus, who speaks of this, does not know if he should see in it dissimulation carried to its height, or whether " the last view of his mother hurrying to her destruction, did not hold the son's heart, in all its wildness, to her." The latter surmise seems to us entirely in accord with Nero's character. A psychological comment as subtle as this, is never, except in Tacitus, to be found in the intellectually weak historians of imperial Rome.

When the crime had been committed, Nero was seized with horror. The hours of peace he during his after-life may have had, were only an armistice with the ever lurking pangs of conscience. If his moral sense had been blighted in the germ by Epicurean doctrines, dissolute pleasures, and enthusiasm for a world of beauty that had nothing but beauty in it, so much the livelier was his imagination. In his dreams, he saw the mother's breasts that the child had sucked and the youth had stabbed. He summoned magi from the East to exorcise and appease his mother's spirit ; but it hunted sleep from his bed, and rest from his waking hours. From those nearest him, he could not hide the tortures he suffered ; he said himself that sleeping and waking he saw furies with fiery torches, and swinging their scourges. When he made his art journey through Greece, he dared not be present at the Eleusinian mysteries, for he felt within himself that he should have fled, at the herald's cry: "Let the sin-oppressed and guilty remain far off!" To Bajae he never returned: the sight of those shores, where the monstrous deed had been done, was unendurable to him. Poppæa Sabina, who had thought the greatest obstacle between herself and the imperial dignity removed, found herself cheated in her expectation, and had to struggle yet for years, though supported by Nero's infatuated heart, to reach her goal.

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Nero liked to have himself portrayed as Apollo, the god of poetry, song and cithern-playing. It follows as a matter of course that the best Greek masters of the time had the charge of immortalizing him as such, in bronze and marble. But it would seem as if their flattering chisels were not contented with this task; they wished not only to represent Nero as Apollo, but Apollo as Nero. The ideal beauty of the god must not be disturbed; but artists like Zenodorus were able to breathe upon that beauty a faint likeness to the emperor's handsome features. Thus, that age seems to have given rise to a peculiar type of Apollo, which in two or three works of art, has come down to our own day. The foremost of these works is also one of the most admirable that we have from the time of the later antique: the world-renowned Apollo Belvedere.

For him who writes these lines, this statue has a peculiarity apart from its æsthetic and art history. I am bold enough to think that it is evidence risen from the grave, of Nero's struggle with his pangs of conscience. He wished to have before his eyes the assurance that blood-guiltiness can be atoned for; and with this silent purpose, caused some prominent sculptor to create, or perhaps after a Delphic model to copy, an Apollo Catharsius.

The statue was dug out towards the end of the fifteenth century at Antium, Nero's birthplace and favorite city, from the ruins of a villa, believed to have been his own. The figure then wanted the left hand, and all the fingers of the right; and with them, the attribute they bore had disappeared. Critics have therefore up to the present time been in doubt, and have exhausted themselves in conjectures as to the action in which the god is represented. The commonest explanation is, that the artist has thought of the moment when Apollo, to shield his sanctuary at Delphi from the plundering hordes of the Gauls, advanced in person, ægis in hand, to meet them and put them to flight, with lightning and whirlwind. Overbeck, who approves this opinion, imagines the god placed in this action between the Artemis of Versailles and the Capitoline Athena. But recently Carl Bötticher has irrefutably shown that the figure must have borne in the right hand, lowered, the Delphic lustral whip, a remnant of the knotted lash of which he discovered on the tree-trunk that serves as pedestal. Now the lustral whip was the Pythian Apollo's attribute in his quality of *atoner of blood-guiltiness.*

There lies something of a suddenly blinding revelation, in this figure. With the left arm outstretched in menace or protection, the god hastens in majestic wrath towards an object which has unlawfully approached his sacred precinct. Carl Bötticher thinks of the scene in the "Eumenides" of Æschylus, where Orestes the matricide, pursued by the furies, has burst into the temple of Apollo and embraced its altar. He farther thinks that the divinity sees, at the moment, the goddesses of remorse forcing their way into the sanctuary, and with the bow in the left hand, angrily meets them, and drives them from the temple; and after this, completes with the whip of purification, the act by which the blood-guiltiness is to be expiated.

This does not entirely accord, no doubt, with the description of Æschylus, but meets it at the principal point, which it was enough for the artist to strike. No figure could better than one like this, remind the new Orestes that a reconciliation with the divine powers was possible, and none was better adapted, in his dark hours, to shine with a hope of peace.

In Æschylus, however, even Apollo himself is unable to appease the Eumenides: he can only lull them into sleep for a time. That divinely inspired poet, who with the sense of beauty and philosophic instinct of the Hellene combines the lofty nature and deep moral earnestness of the Hebrew prophets, has felt, and wished to express, that religious rites and services of the temple may deaden the stings of conscience, but cannot atone for sin, cannot mend that which is broken. Apollo himself counsels Orestes to fly to Pallas Athena, and there, before the Areopagus, submit to God's judgment in human affairs of justice and equity. The Eumenides follow him thither, too, and sing at the threshold of the tribunal, the heart-appalling chorus Schiller refers to, and has freely imitated in his fine ballad "Kraniche des Ibycus." The members of the Areopagus listen to the accusation and defence; and when it appears that their votes are equal in the scale, for release and for condemnation, the wise and gentle Pallas gives judgment in Orestes' favor. But she gives the pangs of conscience their honor, too.

and causes them, in the guise of goddesses of mercy, to be escorted in a solemn torchlight procession to the temple, which the people had consecrated to them, by the side of the Areopagus.

Nero, too, knew that he was under the same judgment; and he trembled to meet the eyes of men. But alas! With them, no expiation seemed necessary. The truth that lies in the paradox, "The people's voice, God's voice," seems to have been challenged sometimes after a fearful manner, in history. So in the Roman "*plébiscite*" of the year 59, and so in the French, of the year 1852; which latter, from this point of view, and without regard to the means by which it was brought to pass, was probably the most frightful event of modern history. Senators, soldiers, the rulers and judges of the Campanian cities, strove to outstrip each other to the emperor, to give him courage with their congratulations. Nevertheless, he quailed before the thought of going back to Rome. Of course his friends assured him that "the devotion of the people had risen through Agrippina's death;" but never could he even have dreamed of the spectacle that awaited him. The senate, in robes of office, comes out to meet him; from tribunes erected along the chief streets, women and children shout with joy; citizens throng around his car, thank-offerings burn in the temple—and so, in triumph, the matricide proceeds on his upward way to the Capitol. The senate assembles in the curia and declares, in the name of Rome, that Agrippina's death was a boon to the state.

A single one of the fathers blushed to share in this declaration. This was Trasea Petus, the Stoic. He thus verified what Tigellinus had said, that the Stoics were a party dangerous to the community.

But not even the readiness with which the Roman senate and people took the blood-guilt of Nero upon their shoulders, was able to restore equanimity to his soul. From the year 59, we find in most that he plans and undertakes, something overstrained and feverish. His pleasures become more unbridled; irresistible and insatiable is his thirst (from childhood a part of his nature, hitherto repressed but not tamed,) to intoxicate himself on the stage or in the arena with the people's applause. But we still perceive within him a battle between a better self and a worse. It is clear that for some time after the murder of his mother, he wished to conciliate—not public opinion, which seemed to be on his side, not the gods of Olympus, whom he denied and ridiculed, but—the divinity that made itself known in his own turbulent heart. During the next two years, he tried faithfully to fulfill the duties of a prince; and these can be added to the golden years that Trajan praised. The government of the realm went its even pace, good laws were enacted, the emperor was friendly, and as a judge, gentle and merciful. In the year 61, he became dangerously ill, and indicated, as he expected death, the noble Memmius Regulus as worthiest to stand at the helm of state. Still, in the year 62, could that man of whom it was said that he had never swerved from the path of right and never flattered, Trasea Petus, in the senate call Nero an admirable prince.

But that same year, for the first time during his reign, were heard the words high treason. The sanguinary epigrams against the new Orestes, which were read, of mornings, on the pedestals of statues and walls of the basilicas, Nero had left unheeded. But it now happened that Antistius, former tribune of the people, afterwards prætor, in a large and distinguished company recited lampoons he had composed upon the emperor. Freedom of the tongue, we cannot say of speech, had hitherto been unbounded; and though all were aware that the matter a few hours afterwards would be known by Cæsar, Antistius thought himself safe, and would have been so, had not Cossutanius Capito, worthy son-in-law to Tigellinus, denounced him before the senate for high treason. Then, the suit must take its course. The law decreed the penalty of death, but Trasea Petus voted for banishment, and that was the decision of the senate.

The same year, Burrus died, and the aged Seneca retired—whether weary of life at court, and affairs of state, or through the intrigues of Poppæa and the Epicurean favorites, it would be hard to say. The emperor thanked his teacher for the support he had given him, upon the slippery path of his early years, and tenderly bade him farewell. From that moment, Nero was wholly and entirely under the influence of Poppæa and Tigellinus. The latter was appointed chief captain of the prætorians in the place of Burrus.

For Poppæa Sabina, the point now was to remove the last obstacle to the satisfaction of her ambition, Nero's blameless and unfortunate wife Octavia; and she and her accomplice Tigellinus did it, by means the most shameful. It is possible that Nero believed the false accusation of adultery, that was trumped up against Octavia. In any case he wished to believe, that he might have the bond with her broken; and the indirect part he took in the abominable persecution that ended in the murder of his wife, shows us a slave of passion in all his abjectness. His way now went rapidly down to destruction. The remaining six years of his life—he was at that time twenty-four years old—are a frenzy of fiendish debauchery, of mad excesses that make trial of all a thoroughly depraved imagination conjures up, of an insatiable craving for art conquests, and of wholesale murder, when the instinct of self-preservation was stirred up by real or fancied dangers. A break in the orgy came, when Poppæa presented him with a daughter. But the father's joy, feverish too, veered around to wild sorrow, when the child died; and sorrow threw him into new and if possible more insane excesses.

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A richly endowed people that enters upon the road of culture, eager to learn of others, independent in its conception, development and application of the knowledge gained, glad in the feeling of its youthful strength, surrounded by a kind of nature—and itself formed with a fairness—that awakens a sense for the beauty of color and form, will desire to give everything around it an expression of the health and harmony it feels in its own spiritual and bodily being. So springs up art; and with the joy her very first simple manifestations awaken, couples itself in the people, the feeling that what seems to it highest of all, what it worships as divine, what it reveres as morality and law, and what it loves as good and noble, is, above all else, worthy to be looked upon, as far as may be possible, in beautiful forms. The people desires to see the true, as true and beautiful: its life of beauty is indissolubly knit together with its religious life and love of country; and as thanks for adornment of that life of faith and of patriotism, from them receives high inspirations, dignity and ideality. No one of them is the others' slave: they are sisters, of equal birth, and clasp each other like the Graces. They increase in stature with the people; and as it loves its faith and its fatherland, it loves its art, and understands her in all her stages; for they go together in their growth, through childhood's years, through youth and maturity. Slowly, but with the sound, healthy spirit of a boy, art forces her way onward through the technical obstructions that meet her; for in the people, there is no class that has risen above the level of the standpoint of the whole community; no higher æsthetic culture, used to something better, laughs at the homely simplicity and derides the clumsy but loving toil of the unpractised hand, in the service of beauty; but every bit of progress the hand makes, every new mastery of a technical hindrance, is seen by every one, and is admired. In this way did Greek art, and indeed every other that lived its own life and wrought earnestly, grow up. The simplest peasant's painting that shows a first trace of talent, holds within it better hope of a springtime of beauty for the nation, than the most faithful copies after the very greatest foreign master.

So the Romans came, and made themselves lords of Greece; and gradually learned to admire an art that in its long since complete and perfect shape, seemed to form a world by itself, that had not needed the coöperation of the moral forces, for its rise and prosperity. They took possession of its products as spoils of victory and means of enjoyment, and turned contemptuously aside from the humble expressions of a plastic sense in their own countrymen and nearest neighbors. But true as it is, that various ages and various peoples have to learn of each other, it must be equally true that an art imported from without, which stifles in the germ another that is trying to spring up from native dispositions, can not wholly and entirely be set down on the side of an intellectual gain—so long as it has not been proved that this art may be transplanted from the forcing-house of higher education into common earth, acclimated, and so become part of the people's intellectual economy, as foreign grains are of its material. But that this takes place, is extremely rare. Rome and Italy were stocked with Grecian works of art: markets, basilicas, temples, baths, houses, boasted of such; the race grew up among them; and nevertheless the Romans remained at bottom, strangers to the spirit of Hellenic art. An imported art has something that wounds national feeling: the people has a dim perception that injustice has by this introduction been done itself and its undeveloped resources. With some, the feeling becomes a suspicion that art is the foe of moral simplicity: the majority conceives her as a plaything for the rich and high born. And while it needs a subtle eye to discover her undoubtedly exalting influence, it cannot be denied that she widens the cleft between the classes, gives their education in degree and quality a difference that is not healthy, creates among her votaries a type of judge and epicure that is not a much more pleasing object than the gastronome; and sometimes even relaxes the desire for work in the service of society. And it cannot be denied either, that she has a certain tendency to turn into an *ars voluptuaria*, to appeal from the æsthetic desire to the sensual; so that she needs, what in our day happily are to be found, stout chiefs of police in the world of beauty, to hold her in check. In Hellenic art, this tendency betrayed itself as soon as she was made the servant of the high-born Macedonians.

With all this zeal for the introduction of art into every circumstance of life, Nero himself was nothing but one of those æsthetic epicures who spring up and flourish under the conditions touched on above; and beauty was and remained for him the chaplet around the cup of desires. He had no gain to gather from her for the man within. An imagination playing with pretty forms, does not fortify him who loses sense of duty when the duty seems hard, and benevolence when it requires self-sacrifice.

The story of the water-shoot that Greek art shot forth in Rome remains, in spite of the wealth of galleries, still in obscurity; and has certainly not gained in clearness by the attempts that were previous to the year 1870 made, in honor of a later Cæsarism, to change the shoot into the full leafage of the tree. One cannot so nicely determine, therefore, what influence the Neronic era exercised upon art in Rome; but that it had a remarkable one, may the more readily be taken for granted, that the art history of imperial Rome, more than any other, must resemble the chronicle of the whims and fancies that followed one upon another at court, and which the leading judges of art and the Mæcenases faithfully set up to themselves as models. It is clear that the taste under Nero was another than that under Augustus. The more severe style and the sobriety that were still observed by the Augustan age, yielded to a wish to astonish with the colossal, and captivate with a pleasing and piquant naturalness. Under Hadrian, a learned eclecticism ruled, with a predilection for idealism; under the Antonines, idealism, in a stiff, and if I may say so, Stoic form. Idealism, more and more feeble and calculated, clears the field subsequently for a realism that sometimes touches the limit of the coarse. Art, slave of the high-born, fell, as was fitting, more and more into the power of their slaves. Under Septimius Severus, even technical skill has declined; and with the Constantines, comes an invasion of barbarism, the intellectual emptiness and technical weakness of which, clutch at a style which is powerless to reach the *barocco* license, but is forerunner of its bombast.

Of Nero himself, as an artist, the opinions of the old writers are various. It honored a prince to practise the arts of poetry, history and oratory; it was allowed him to use the pencil and chisel; it was not taken ill, if in a small circle he sang, to the cithern; but the old Roman shuddered at the thought of an emperor who danced, or recited through the actor's mask; and if he did it in public, language wanted words for judgment of him. It is more than probable that they who witnessed his appearance on the stage did not trouble themselves to be impartial in their estimate of his powers as actor, singer and cithern-player; and that this state of mind did not act advantageously upon their judgment of his abilities in other branches of art. Tacitus does not entirely reject his poems, but charges them with want of strength and unity. Suetonius defends against Tacitus Nero's right to those poems which bore his name, and not even his worst enemies have been inclined to place him among the multitude of the Bavii and Mevii. The same Suetonius observes: "Painting and sculpture, Nero practised with no little success." Expressions scattered here and there give evidence too, that the zeal with which he exercised his voice and studied the art of acting, bore fruits. "Of Nauplius' misdeeds you sing admirably, but you do not use your own good gifts," said a cynic philosopher to him once, in the street. It seems not to have been mere empty foolery that the world practised upon him, when it honored him with crowns of victory in the games of contest. Such a farce would have been unbearable to those around him, and would probably have been at last seen through even by himself. More likely his artistship was enough developed to enable the judges with a moderately clear conscience to bribe themselves with his imperial dignity and make terms with their fear of his disfavor.

After the emperor had for many years appeared as singer and driver before large though select circles, the whole public had in the year 64 an opportunity for the first time to see the lord of the world on a public stage, bowing the knee before the spectators and pleading for a kindly judgment from men of cultivated taste. This was in Naples, a Greek city. Naturally, all thronged to hear him. Applause and shouts of approval reminded him of his triumph as a boy in the Circus Maximus. To the grumbling of the old Romans about the prostitution of the diadem, he replied by causing a coin to be struck off on which Nero Cæsar Augustus was to be seen, in the dress of a cithern-player.

Two years after, he undertook his art journey to Greece—a giddy Corybantic march, and at the same time a pillaging expedition, reeling from triumph to triumph, through sumptuous feasts and shameful excesses, over roads that were strewn with gold and lifeless bodies. The whole was planned by the plundering and murderous Tigellinus, as one immense bacchanal, dazzling and terrible. Of the insane magnificence displayed, one may get an idea, from knowlege of the fact that Nero in every-day life, on his customary excursions to any of the neighboring cities of Rome, took with him a small army of outriders, coachmen and runners, in golden embroidery, and baggage in a thousand wagons, with scarlet-clad drivers and horses shod with silver. The cities of Hellas were adorned to receive him ; the people flocked to the sacred sports to witness his victories in the games of contest. The *claque* alone, that accompanied the emperor from Italy, was composed of several thousand young men, decorated, all, with the golden ring of knighthood. The whole escort was like an intentional symbol of the emancipation of the senses, in a world that had banished all moral pathos to the myths dramatized in the tragedies, and only allowed it there for the excitement of the feelings. On his return to Rome, Nero was received with a triumph. And there was, too, a reason for this. In Cæsar's person, Hellas had conquered Rome, but only that Rome should in the same person conquer Hellas. The posterity of Æneas had avenged the fall of Troy, and the world-known strife which came from Leda's egg, ended with a world-known feast of reconciliation, when the emperor, after winning the Olympian olive crown, proclaimed the "liberty of Greece." A portion of Rome's city wall was torn down to make room for the triumphal entry. Foremost, went eighteen hundred men, with as many crowns which Nero had won as singer and actor. After these, spearsmen with tablets of bronze which announced where, over what celebrated artists, and in what song or character, every crown had been won. Next, in the triumphal car of Augustus, Nero himself, in purple tunic worked with gold and Grecian mantle sprinkled with stars, with the Olympian olive around his locks, and the Pythian bay in his hand. Following the car of triumph, the prætorians in their glittering armor ; and lastly, the knighthood in its holiday dress, and senators, in the purple-bordered toga. Houses adorned with flowers, the city by night lit with countless torches, and resounding with the cry: "Hail Olympionicus! Hail Pythionicus! Hail, Nero Apollo!"

The eighteen hundred crowns were hung upon the Egyptian obelisk in the circus of Nero, that thus the culture of the ancient time, mother of Græco-Roman civilization might also receive its tribute of homage.

It is the same obelisk that now stands between the fountains on the open place in front of St. Peter's. It has lived to see much—what shall it live to see yet?

Even Nero's artistic career had its thorns. However often he acted, he never did so without fear. On his entrance he was seen to be pale and trembling, and the encouraging shouts of the spectators first gave him confidence. He suffered from the suspicion that it was the emperor, more than the artist, for whom the applause was intended; and after victory he wished for defeat, that he might believe in the impartiality of the judges; but when it occasionally happened that he was overcome, he envied the lucky antagonist.

Among his favorite parts, were those of the two matricides, Orestes and Alcmæon. How shall we explain his so forcing his imagination into that world of anguish, from which he else wished to rescue it? Did he enjoy living over again in the person of another, the tortures he had so deeply suffered in his own? Did he wish to persuade posterity that he who liked to play Orestes, could not in reality be an Orestes? Or did it give him alleviation to do penance under another's name? It is a phenomenon in psychology, that criminals, when they think themselves safe, speak of the very kind of misdeed of which they know themselves to be guilty. Murder will out, says an old proverb. Perhaps something similar is at the bottom of this.

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The two years immediately preceding the art journey through Greece, belong to the most eventful of Nero's life. In the year 64, the fire took place, that destroyed the greater part of the world's metropolis: in the year 65, the Pisonian conspiracy was discovered, which cost Rome its noblest blood. Nero, who was in Antium when the fire broke out, came, while it was raging its worst, to the capital. From the tower of Mæcenas, (that on the Esquiline hill, and mentioned by Horace,) he looked upon the splendor of the conflagration, and fiendishly elated by the beauty of the flaming sea, sang of the destruction of Troy.

Probably the song was written by himself: it is known, at least, that he wrote an epic called "Troica." It is a pity, if not for literature, yet for the knowledge of Nero's cast of mind, that the poem has been lost. It must have been something strange of its kind; for while it otherwise honored a prince, to be reckoned among the poets, the paternity of "Troica" is counted among the infamous deeds of Nero. Juvenal remarks in one of his satires, that Orestes ought really to be more gently judged than Nero; for

"—— never sang on the stage Orestes,
Never 'Troica' wrote."

The key to this riddle is hidden perhaps, in a line of Dio Cassius, who reproaches Nero that "he deemed the Trojan King Priam happy, who lived to see the downfall of his kindred and realm." In other words: Troica probably sang in praise of such happiness, and all too plainly showed that the poet had received his inspirations not from Apollo, but from an æsthetic Typhon, for whom the sublimity in a grand devastation, more than counterbalances the misery it brings with it. And unfettered as he was by any considerations of moral delicacy, the author of "Troica" probably painted the love adventures of Zeus, Ganymede, Anchises, Aphrodite, Paris and Helen, in such lively colors in all the details, that even his own age, which could bear the incredible in that line, found them too strong. What power the Romans attributed to him to feel "purely æsthetically," and hold the sense of beauty aloof from "disturbing influences"—that is made manifest by the report, in reality untrue, that at sight of his murdered mother's body, he had no words but those of rapture over her beauty. This report was contradicted and confuted even by his enemies. But certain it is, that if Nero with his æsthetic theory went in advance of the new romantic school, he was the man to apply his doctrine more emphatically than even Schlegel in "Lucinda."

As we know, many Romans suspected Nero of having planned the fire, and through his emissaries, of having hindered its extinction. The suspicion rested on the conviction that he would buy a spectacle, at however dear a cost; and was strengthened, when they saw him take possession of a large part of the quarters burned, for his new imperial palace. But assuredly this fire, fine as it was as a spectacle, and welcome as it was for Nero's building plans, yet grieved none more deeply than himself; for countless works of art, and among them many of priceless value, paintings and statues by the most celebrated artists of ancient Greece, had been annihilated in the flames. Meanwhile, the feeling against the emperor grew so threatening, that his friends found it convenient to divert suspicion to another quarter, and point out the Christians. And it is more than possible that the authors of the accusation believed in its truthfulness. Of the new religious sect of the Christians, horrible falsehoods were in circulation. Even a generation later when the Romans had had time to make themselves better acquainted with the Christian doctrines, as upright a man as Tacitus, who well knew the duty of a historian, to ground his opinions upon knowledge, not hearsay, could call the new faith an abominable superstition, and reckon it among "the foul and shameful things that from all quarters flock together in the capital, and find adherents." There was at this time a strong tension of feeling between the Christians and their Jewish brethren in Rome, and it has been surmised that it was Poppæa Sabina, who seems to have had a certain fancy for Mosaism, who made the accusation. But let us rather believe she held a protecting hand over the Jews, so that these, with whom otherwise the Christians were classed, were not drawn into the persecution! The suspicion and accusation of the Christians are easily explained by the hope they cherished, and probably unguardedly expressed, of the overthrow of the rotting Roman empire, and the imminent coming of Christ. Many a Christian believer awaited, at that time, in the dawn of every morrow, the beginning of the first day of the millennium. Christians were found, says Tacitus, who confessed the crime. He does not speak, however, of the means by which such an avowal was drawn from them. And these denounced their fellow-believers in multitudes, who were convicted and sentenced "not exactly for incendiarism, but for hatred of the human race."

Tigellinus, rival and antagonist of Caius Petronius, as art judge and master of revels, had long since risen in the emperor's favor, and had carried the imperial pleasures into another stage. The refined orgies had yielded to a hellish adoration of sensuality, that no longer confined itself within closed doors, but offered up sacrifices before the very eyes of all, and invited every one to the sacrificial feast. It was Tigellinus who arranged the wild nocturnal revels on the Tiber and on Agrippina's lake. And it was probably the same Tigellinus, who had the superintendence and direction of the festivals now held at the foot of Janiculus, in the circus and gardens of Nero, where the condemned Christians, sewed in tarred sacks and hung upon columns, served as torches. He had no doubt taken care that the stench from the burning human flesh should disappear in the fires of censers spreading abroad the fumes of Arabian odors. In such things, the Romans had grown fastidious.

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The fire gave the emperor the desired opportunity to carry out grandiose plans for building. Rome rose again more beautiful than before. The height of the houses was diminished, open courts were constructed, and along the broad streets which crossed each other at right angles, ran covered colonnades. And now, too, he could realize his feverish dream of an imperial palace, the like of which the world had never seen. The palace grew up with incredible swiftness—incredible, when one remembers that everything, down to the minutest details, was to give proof of Cæsarian riches and Hellenic taste, and display the most careful work. Tacitus, who in his boyhood must have seen *the golden house* (" domus aurea,") says that " there, one did not so much admire the gold and precious stones, for such things were then a usual and vulgar luxury, but fields and lakes, and the spaces and vistas that revealed themselves between the groves." Upon the fields, browsed herds of choice cattle; in the woods, fluttered birds of varied splendor, and tamed wild beasts of the most different species roamed about. Golden boats, and structures representing cities, mirrored themselves in the largest of lakes. In front of the palace, in a projecting forecourt, the triple colonnade of which measured a thousand feet, stood a statue, in bronze compounded of gold and silver, of Nero Apollo, a hundred and twenty feet high; a work of Zenodorus the Greek, the greatest sculptor of the time, and according to Pliny, a master of the art of bronze-casting, already then dying out. The walls within the palace which were not covered with the finest frescoes and stuccoes were inlaid with gold, precious stones and mother-of-pearl; the floor, with the costliest mosaics, of which one can hardly form an idea, without calling to mind that in a citizen's house in a country town on Vesuvius, such a mosaic floor has been found as the so-called Alexander's battle. The ceilings of the banquet halls were covered with plates of ivory, from between the crevices of which, a shower of odors was spread over the guests. The largest banqueting-hall was a rotunda, the ceiling of which—probably adorned with pictures of the stars—moved day and night at an equal pace with the vault of heaven. Baths in the palace were fed by ducts that brought in part sea water, in part water from the sulphur springs between Rome and Tivoli. "Now I begin, finally, to live like a human being," said Nero, when the palace was inaugurated.

The enormous building was like a city by itself. The collection of older imperial palaces, rebuilt, which covered the Palatine hill, formed one wing of the golden house. Over the hillock, called Velia, which on the south side of the Roman market juts out from the Palatine, the palace ascended the Esquiline hill, and took in several quarters there. The valley between Esquilinus and Cœlius was also included in its precincts. The usual entrance—or rather passage—was at the place where the triumphal arch of Titus was afterwards erected.

Hardly on the throne, the Flavians hastened to destroy this wonder. To do so, was to pull down the finest part of Rome; a barbarism that not even hatred of Nero would have forgiven, had it not been made the means of a flattering attention to the people. The Romans had complained that Nero wished to make the metropolis of the world a dwelling for himself alone: they could now say that the Flavians dedicated the site of the golden house to the pleasures of the Quiritians. Over the great lake which had borne Nero's brilliant vessels, was built the amphitheatre, afterwards called the Colosseum, the walls of which yet astonish the world. That part of the palace-front that faced the Cœlian hill, was hidden by Titus behind a projecting edifice, several stories high, supported on powerful arches. The remaining portions of the palace, which were not razed to the ground were filled with earth and made to serve as foundation to the great baths which Titus presented to the Romans. How could these complain of the destruction of the golden house, when from the enjoyment of the luxurious baths, they wandered off to the nerve-thrilling games of the amphitheatre, and from them back to the porticoes of the baths—in their shade, amid statues, plashing fountains and fragrant roses, to drink, and talk of the fair ones of Suburra.

The colossus of Nero was allowed to remain for some time; no longer representing Nero, however, but the god of the sun. When Hadrian, over the ruins of the forecourt of the golden house, built his temple of Venus and Roma, the colossus, as it stood, was drawn by twenty-four elephants to the place between the temple named and the amphitheatre, where one yet sees a remnant of its pedestal. Commodus modestly had his own regular but vulgar and stupid features given to it. When Zenodorus' statue was destroyed, is not known, but this probably happened in an age that set less value upon the work of art than upon the bronze of mingled gold and silver.

Still, the Flavians did not succeed in totally destroying to posterity Nero's palace. What they left remaining, under the baths, has been sought after and found again ; and when the greatest artist of modern times descended into the now subterranean passages, he found there a spring of inspiration, which created a new era in the history of decorative painting. It was Raphael, who, accompanied by Giovanni da Udine, made this trip of exploration. They saw then, in richer splendor of color, what can yet be seen there below, though ever more affected by the dampness and blackened by the cicerone's torch—decorations in which an inexhaustible fancy had in sport lavished its wealth ; and when they again mounted to the light of day, they brought with them, in mind, the sketch for the wall pictures, Raphael afterwards designed, and Giovanni da Udine executed, in the arcades around the Damasus court in the Vatican—masterpieces which more than any other creation of the Renaissance, show that that epoch is directly connected with the antique.

The entrance by which Raphael made his way into the corridors of Nero, was soon after filled with rubbish again ; and thus arose a story, as groundless as it is unworthy of the noble artist, that he himself had the opening filled up, to prevent others from making the same studies. First in the year 1812, through the excavations

Napoleon caused to be made, did a portion of the golden house again become accessible. The greater part of the remains yet await the spade.

The darkness in the corridors, which obtained their light from above, is a great obstacle to an ordinary traveller, in the study of their pictures. In one of the passages, one may see eagles with outspread wings, and in their beaks, medallions with portraits of the princely Julian house. Among the paintings of the vault, are landscapes, mythological pictures, such as Venus admiring the beauty of her son, and mythic-historical, such as the herdsman Faustulus before the foster-sons of the she-wolf.

On the other side of the baths of Titus, on the Esquiline hill, lie the so-called Sette Sale, vaults that were originally reservoirs for the baths of the golden house, and afterwards served the same purpose for the *thermæ*. It was in a subterranean chamber, between the Sette Sale and these thermæ, but not in the corridor the cicerone points out, that the Laocoon group was found, in 1506.

Of Nero's other plans for building, nothing came. To them belonged cutting through the isthmus of Corinth; towards which he, himself, during his art journey in Hellas, dug the first spadeful.

Another plan—to extend Rome's walls to the sea, and cleanse the Tiber so that large vessels could anchor under the Aventine—was not even begun; nor was it taken up by the Flavians, either, who wished to sink into oblivion all that related to Nero, except his crimes.

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When the sums that went to the building enterprises and sumptuous court state of Nero were large enough to empty even the treasury of the Roman realm, the most unjust means were resorted to, to fill it again. The people's love for the young emperor had year by year grown less: displeasure and wrath had increased year by year; and the time seemed at last to have come, when those who would see the wild orgy ended, might hope to strike a blow with success. They who hated Cæsar, did so for different reasons and belonged to different circles, but sought each other out, and could join hands for coöperation. Himself, the emperor seems to have judged public opinion by the exultation with which the people in Rome and Italy's other cities thronged around him, and the zeal with which those of rank hastened to approve and imitate all he undertook. But Tigellinus saw somewhat deeper than the surface, and had long urged that the emperor, to secure himself and his friends, should apply the terrorizing system built on denunciation, which had propped the preceding governments. Ever since the year 61, from which Tacitus reckons the influence of Tigellinus over Nero, had this "red" Epicurean captain of the prætorians sought to make the Stoics, in particular, suspected; and had constantly on his lips that their philosophy "inspires men with a pride that makes them restless and ambitious." The first victims of these suspicions were two Romans of high rank: Sulla and Rubellius Plautus. The ruling tendency of the time cannot possibly be better marked than by the reasons for which Tigellinus recommended the removal of Plautus: he has set up our republican ancestors as his models, he has embraced the Stoic philosophy, he is rich and nevertheless does not give himself up to the pleasures of private life, he troubles himself about the state and has a taste for public affairs! Sulla was killed in Massilia, by assassins. Plautus, who then dwelt in Asia, had received, from a freed slave who had succeeded in getting before the messengers of Nero, information that his executioners were to be expected. A conversation with the philosophers Ceraunus and Musonius strengthened him in the resolve rather to submit to the tyrant's will, than seek his rescue in rebellion. When the soldiers who were to execute the sentence of death, entered his house, they found him naked and busied with gymnastic exercises. His head was severed from his body and sent to Rome. Two years after, Torquatus Silanus, a descendant of Augustus, killed himself, rather than wait for an expected indictment for treasonable plots.

Such were undoubtedly in progress. But what the opponents of the Neronic government wanted, was a man to place at the head. They agreed at last upon Caius Calpurnius Piso. Endowed with genius, birth, riches and engaging manners, Piso was nevertheless not one whom the best elements of the opposing party could with enthusiasm raise upon their shields. He lacked, says Tacitus, moral earnestness. He, too, was an Epicurean, and the old Romans remarked that like Nero he had lowered himself by acting. In the conspiracy, some of Rome's better men took part; some, too, of its very worst. While some of them had the salvation of their country as an aim, others had the gratification of private rancor. So the low-minded voluptuary, Claudius Senecio, who had belonged to the circle of Nero's most intimate friends, and still went to court, and Quintianus, whom the emperor had provoked by a lampoon. These wished for another man, not another system, upon the throne; and they had the majority with them. The minority, to which belonged many officers of the lifeguard, of the stern school of Burrus, had wished the system itself changed, and a Stoic to wear the diadem: were it the young philosopher Lucius Silanus, highly respected by public opinion, or the aged Seneca, esteemed in spite of all his faults. "The shame"—said one of the conspirators, Subrius Flavus, tribune of the guard—"is the same, if the cithern-player be removed and the tragic actor come instead." Flavus had proposed Seneca as emperor.

According to the idea of antiquity, a tyrant's murder was a deed of valor, not a felony. The idea had been formed in the Hellenic free states, where a citizen who had despised the law, had placed himself outside the pale of the law, and lay, legally unpunished, where he was struck down. In Rome this idea was not applicable now, for the power of the emperor stood upon lawful ground. But noteworthy it is, that much later in Roman history, on many occasions we see a feeling become apparent, that the empire was a violation of justice, to which time could never give prescriptive right; for generations yet, even the common soldier of the legion who fought on the frontiers of the realm, knew that the power of the state was to be sought in that indefinite something, called the *Roman senate and people.* In any case, the conspirators had to choose only between murder of the emperor and civil war; and they could, we know, plead the Cæsarian doctrine of "*raison d'Etat*," when they chose the former as safer and less detrimental. And so they at last agreed upon the day and place. Nero was to be killed at the Circus, when the festival of Ceres was celebrated there. One of the conspirators was on some pretext to approach the emperor, cast himself as if in entreaty at his feet, seize him around the legs, throw him to the ground, and hold him fast until the conspiring officers who belonged to the guard, could hasten forward and kill him with their swords. As Nero, in spite of his excesses, had powerful bodily strength—they wondered that in the Grecian games he had not also appeared as boxer and wrestler—Lateranus the consul, known for his strength, offered to be the first assailant. Meanwhile, Piso should wait at Ceres' temple, not far from the Circus, for Fenius Rufus—the chief of prætorians who had charge of the army, while his colleague, Tigellinus led the festivities at court—to be accompanied by him to the prætorian camp, and receive the homage of the life-guards.

But almost at the last moment the plan was betrayed by a freed slave. Among the first who, on his denunciation, were brought to trial, was a woman, Epicaris. The most frightful tortures, continued two days until her death, could not extract a word of the secret from her. Men, on the contrary, could not hold out against the sight of the torturer's instruments: they confessed their guilt and betrayed many of their fellow-conspirators. Longest were the names of the two officers of the prætorians, Fenius Rufus and Subrius Flavus, withheld and that to the increased trouble of both; for Rufus was appointed to lead, by the side of Nero, the investigation, and Flavus was obliged by his duty to be present. Perhaps those accused still hoped that Rufus and Flavus would strike the blow. And Flavus was a man to do it. His hand on the sword-hilt, with a nod he asked his chief if he should not draw the sword and strike Cæsar down; but Rufus gave a sign in the negative. The obdurate manner in which Rufus led the examination, provoked the conspirators to betray him. He was seized at the tribunal, and put in irons by a soldier. Flavus, too, was pointed out, and confessed. To Nero's question, how he could forget his oath of loyalty, he answered, "I hated thee—and yet thou hadst no truer soldier, so long as thou wast worthy of love: I began to hate thee when thou becamest the murderer of thy mother and thy wife, when thou becamest coachman, comedian and incendiary." When Flavus, at the place of execution, saw the grave that was to receive him, and found that it was not so deep and wide as the law prescribed, he observed, "Not even in this do they keep the ordinances of war;" and when the executioner exhorted him to reach out his neck boldly, he said, "Couldst thou strike as boldly!"

Piso forestalled his sentence of death, by opening his veins. Lateranus was put to death on the place of execution for slaves. The city was filled with corpses: the innocent died with the guilty. Cæsarian Epicureanism now found a fitting opportunity to make Stoicism innocuous, although it was not to be proven that more than one Stoic had taken part in the conspiracy—Lucan, the poet. They were a handful of men, Stoa's Roman friends; but the memory of freedom was guarded within their circle, and even the most miserable of the scum of that time could not deny that they were the marrow of the Roman world, and the only anchorage for a better future. The first blow was at Seneca: Nero's hand was guided in this by Poppæa and Tigellinus. Seneca's wife wished to die with him, and the aged pair opened their veins together. As the blood ran too slowly, Seneca took poison; and when this, too, did not work, he stepped into a bath, and died in its vapor. His last words were a thanksgiving to Jupiter, the releaser. His partner's life was saved against her will.

Seneca's last words lead our thoughts to certain lines in one of his writings: "Ay, thanks to death, to be born is no punishment; thanks to that, I can keep myself calm and resolute against the threats of misfortune. I have a port. It is not hard to serve, when one, tired of his master, may by a single step secure freedom."

If these lines prophesied his own fate, there are others which foreboded that of Nero. "God tries, disciplines and hardens the one He loves. But the weak who seem to be his favorites and to be guarded by His hand against misfortunes, them he spares for coming anguish."

Seneca's faults were well known to his contemporaries: when Subrius Flavus, in spite of this fact, called him a spotless man, he used the standard of the time, and compared him with others. The defects of his nature were described and exaggerated, once, from the very orator's chair on the Forum, by one of Rome's most voluble backbiters. But the respect his contemporaries gave him, (the more readily, the better they themselves were,) ought to weigh more in the balance of posterity than the scurrility of a venal advocate, and the sallies, equally angry and barren of criticism, of Dio Cassius. Philosopher, in the accepted meaning of the word in our time, he was not: he lacked sharpness of logic to be this, although he uttered amazing prophecies concerning the future of human research. He was a man of the world and a statesman, and wished to be an artist in the Stoic manner of life. Every man who in a time like his, had his gaze fastened upon a higher aim, and exhorted the young to strive to reach it, is for this alone, worthy our respect, and has not forfeited our sympathy because, in the struggle between the spirit and the flesh he gave, like us all, his tribute to weakness.

The galleries contain many antique busts to which Seneca's name has been given; most of them, perhaps all, wrongly. Unkempt hair hanging down over the forehead, and a dim-sighted look, distinguish them all, however unlike they otherwise are. Those who named these busts, seem to have thought only of the Stoic philosopher, and confused him with the cynic. Seneca was in his younger years a handsome man, and favorite with the women; his exterior in his elder days, is described as refined and dignified.

Lucan had been the friend of Nero's youth. How the emperor's pleasing appearance had blinded the poet, one sees in his poem "Pharsalia," where his admiration for the prince struggles with his enthusiasm for the republic. But gradually a coolness arose between the friends. The author of "Troica" envied the author of "Pharsalia;" and with the envy, was associated suspicion of the republican and Stoic. Placed before the tribunal, Lucan was overcome a moment by cowardice, and denounced his own mother, and many friends, as sharers in the conspiracy. He bitterly regretted that moment. When the blood streamed from his opened veins, and he felt his feet growing cold, he began his song of "The Dying Warrior," and expired with the song upon his lips.

A third Stoic, the aged commander and jurist, Cassius Longinus, was banished because, among the portraits of his ancestors, he had also that of Cassius, the slayer of Julius Cæsar. His young, morally pure disciple Lucius Silanus, whom some of the conspirators would have made emperor, was sentenced to exile, but murdered in Campania, by Nero's emissaries. Their leader advised him to open his veins; but Silanus said "he would not spare the murderers their honorable task," and went unarmed into combat with the soldiers, who ran him through with their swords. Banished, too, were the Stoics Musonius Rufus and Helvidius Priscus, besides several philosophers. Musonius was at that time Stoa's most prominent man. Stobæus the Macedonian has in his collections, kept one of his apophthegms: " Do thou good with effort; the effort shall flee, the good endure; do thou evil with pleasure, the evil shall endure, the pleasure flee."

The command to die, came to virtue itself, as Tacitus says—to Trasea Petus. He was the worst thorn in the flesh of the court; for in the distant camps as well as in Rome, everyone read the city journal, to see what Trasea had *not* done, in what degrees of the senate he had *not* taken part: the value of them was judged accordingly. This was an irreverent way to read this reverend sheet, but the fault was not its own, but Trasea's. To this, was added another crime, discovered by the court Epicureans; namely, " that the formal and serious manner of Trasea and his friends, was meant to reprove Nero and his friends for their frivolity." They even informed the emperor that the people set up the parallel: Cato is to Cæsar, as Trasea to Nero. When Petus received the sentence of death, many of the distinguished men and women of Rome were assembled at his house. He quietly dismissed the sorrowing circle of friends, and opened his veins. When the blood began to flow, he said to the quæstor who had brought the death-sentence: " Look, young man, and may the gods give, that what thou seest be not a presage to thee! But thou art born in a time when it may be useful to harden the soul by the sight of strength of mind." He turned then to Demetrius, who had remained, and continued with him the interrupted talk upon the reasons for man's hope of immortality.

Two years later, during Nero's sojourn in Greece, Tigellinus marked out his honored commander Domitius Corbulo as a victim. "It is my right," said Corbulo, and threw himself upon his sword. A fine bust in the Capitoline gallery wards for posterity the features of this hero.

So went the Stoics to death. Caius Petronius, Nero's former bosom friend, provided a hideous caricature of their farewell to life. Tigellinus had on the loosest grounds accused him of participation in the Pisonian conspiracy. All the admiration Nero had before given Petronius, had now gone over, the latter was aware, to the new leader of the court festivities. Tigellinus was all powerful. The emperor, whose soul could not dispense with the chains of a passionate love or a blind friendship, was now accustomed to say: "I cannot live without Tigellinus, nor Tigellinus without me." Petronius resolved, therefore, not to await the issue of the trial. He bade his friends to a feast, opened his veins and bound them, several times, to continue the merry supper, at which, to the wine-cup they sang light songs and talked of the newest love adventures in the high society of Rome. Of his servants he took farewell, in part with gifts, in part with stripes. Then he wrote his last will, and reckoned up in the document, all Nero's crimes and vices. When he had sealed the testament and provided for its transmission to the emperor, he went back to the gayety of the table, and thence to his death-bed.

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What the conspiracies in Rome had not been able to do, was accomplished by revolutions in the provinces. Julius Vindex, state governor in Gaul, was the first who raised the flag of rebellion; then Galba in Spain, and Rufus in upper Germany. The tidings of the revolt of

Vindex were forwarded to Nero while he was looking on at a gymnastic game in Naples, and seemed to make no impression upon him. His thoughts were at that time so filled with a new discovery in the domain of music—the water-organ—that once, in the middle of the night, he called certain senators to him, that he might not keep back until morning the news that he had discovered a way to give the organ a stronger and clearer tone. Only after renewed exhortations, did he return to Rome. Fresh tidings from the west and north at last opened his eyes to the extent of the danger. And now, hours of terror alternated with hours of his accustomed levity. Now he should go forth with his loyal Italian troops against the rebels; now his imagination bewitched him with the idea that he might go alone and unarmed against the rebellious legions, who at sight of Cæsar would lay down their arms and restore to him their affection; now he thought of living as a private man, by his art, without longing after the lost power. At last he decided to move forward, with the war material at his command. Armor and equipments were made in all haste, though not with speed so great that the statues, paintings and musical instruments he took with him on all his journeys, could not go with him now, also. But what he did not observe in the smooth faces of those around him, in the submissive bearing of the senators, or in the eyes of the soldiers, was, that they had already given him up as lost. Galba's emissaries, with promises and money, had undermined the last support under the scaffolding on which he stood. The imperial actor should vanish, as through a trap-door, down into Hades. He wakes, or is awakened, one stormy night, and finds no one at hand. Attendants gone, sentinels gone, the courtiers' rooms empty, no guard around the palace. The thunder rolls and the rain falls. He hastens back into his bedchamber, and seeks after his poison-case, but it is not to be found. At last, a few shadows appear. They are Sporus, the court-officers Epaphroditus and Phaon, and a fourth who is not named. They announce what he has already guessed: that the prætorians with Tigellinus at their head, and the German life-guard, have revolted. He wishes, then, to send for Speculus the gladiator, that he may die by a surely-aimed thrust of the sword; but the four trusty friends hurry him along with them, throw a cloak over him, bind a cloth over his face, and with him, mount. The riders gallop on through the streets leading to the Nomentan gate. On the right of the gate, lay the walled camp of the prætorians, the present Campo Militare. From this quarter, shouts and rejoicing are heard through the storm. The friends of rebellion have made haste thither, declared Nero the foe of his country and exhorted the soldiers to proclaim Galba emperor. A few night wanderers who meet the fugitives, remark: "Those people are pursuing Nero." "What news from the city?" ask others, they meet outside the gate. The emperor's horse is frightened at the stench of a corpse lying on the road. The veil falls from Nero's face, and by the glare of a flash of lightning, he is recognized and greeted by name, by a retired prætorian. The old writers add, perhaps for the sake of a better effect, that an earthquake took place, and heightened the horror of the night.

Hardly a quarter of a Swedish mile* from the city, on the other side of the sacred mountain, on the grounds of the present Tenuta Serpentana, lay Phaon's villa, the fugitives' goal. They turned off to the right, from the highway, into a by-road which led, over a marshy field overgrown with reeds and bushes, to the rear of the country-house. Among the bushes they dismounted, and let the horses go. To escape the notice of the slaves, they decided to introduce themselves into the villa by means of an opening in the garden wall. While the wall was being broken through, the emperor hid himself in the reeds by a pond, and refreshed himself with the muddy water. Phaon had shown him another hiding-place, which may still be recognized from Suetonius's description: a vault-like excavation, leading down into a gravel pit; but Nero had refused to "go down living into the grave." In the villa garden, they now awaited with anxiety what the next hours had in store. It is clear that Phaon and Epaphroditus, when they took the emperor with them, believed in the possibility of a change in his favor. Messenger after messenger was sent to the city, to hear what happened there. They came back with ever worse tidings.

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* A Swedish mile equals, approximately, six English miles.—C.

The different accounts we have of Nero's last hours, contradict themselves, when they would attribute to him cowardice. He did not show fear of death; but when he saw all was lost, it incensed him that he had so long let himself be cheated by hope. Yet—what made this enthusiast shudder, was the thought that his corpse might be mutilated. Again and again he entreated those around him to take care that no one should do violence to his dead body. Again and again, too, he lamented that the world should now lose a great artist. ("*Qualis artifex morior!*")

Himself, he gave orders that a grave should be dug, and took the measure for it, from the length of his body. He looked on, as the grave was hollowed out, and begged earnestly for a few marble flags to place around the spot While this was in progress, came a message that horsemen were approaching, in search of Nero. Soon they were heard galloping on upon the way that led to the villa gate. Leaning on the arm of Epaphroditus, he then carried the dagger to his throat. He had even at that moment the power to look upon his fate as if he were on the stage, playing the last scene of a tragedy, and presence of mind enough to recite a verse of Homer:

Struck is the ear by the sound of the hoofs of the hurrying horses.

With this, he plunged the dagger into his throat.

Nero was still alive, when the horsemen burst into the villa. A centurion who saw him outstretched all bloody upon the ground, hastened to press his mantle over the wound, to staunch the flow of blood. "Too late," said the dying man, and he added, moved: "this is fidelity." They were his last words.

His prayer for his dead body, was heard, and they even granted him a not unworthy burial. His two nurses and his first love Acte, who were allowed, in the very midst of the rejoicings for Galba, to show their grief, deposited his urn in the family vault of the Domitians, on the slope of the Garden Hill.

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Galba's reign did not last seven months; and when Otho over his body had made himself a way to the throne, such a change had already taken place in the mood of the Romans, that the crowd, when it desired to wish the new prince welcome, called him Nero. Even Otho himself seems to have adopted Nero's name, in his letters to the Eastern provinces, where the latter had always been beloved. Nero's statues were again erected on squares, and in public buildings. Twenty years, even, after his death, an adventurer who gave himself out as Lucius Domitius Ahenobarbus, could find support from the people of the East: only with difficulty could the Parthians be induced to deliver him up.

This devotion to the memory of so guilty and vicious an emperor, can hardly be explained, as some have wished to explain it, by the gratitude of the masses for the care with which he provided bread and amusements. The distributions of corn were quite as plentiful, and even more regular, under his predecessors and successors. And as far as public amusements were concerned, the masses found his æsthetically refining devices, his contests in song and cithern-playing, his Greek dramas and gymnastic games, a paltry substitute for the bloody strife of the gladiators, he had abolished. The people had in memory, I think, the light-hearted and beautiful boy with the promising talents, and did not forget the first and happy years of his reign, for the last, so dark and disastrous. And it well knew it was an accomplice in his faults and crimes; as much of an accomplice as it is possible to be, without casting the responsibility of the individual upon that scapegoat of history which is called "the age."

Tigellinus, minister of pleasures to the crowd as well as the court, during the latter days of Nero, was and remained an object of the people's hate. It saw in him Nero's evil spirit, and clamored for his death. Galba had shielded the traitor; Otho could not or would not do so. When Tigellinus saw the fate that threatened him, he made ready a riotous feast, and during the orgy cut his throat with a barber's knife.

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Of Nero's appearance in the years of his boyhood and youth, mention has before been made. Among the many portraits we have of him in his riper years, that in the Capitoline gallery is probably the best. The lifelike head is somewhat turned aside—the very position that Caracalla subsequently copied—and the eyes are cast down, as if Cæsar at the table of the gods were casting a critic's look towards the earth, and saw there something to provoke the fine smile around his dainty mouth. The Epicurean expression of the features is increased by a double chin, full, but not of bloated Vitellian proportions, under which a slight, carefully tended fringe of beard rises toward the cheeks.

The Vatican has a small statue of Nero as a cithern-player. It is a hurriedly executed work ; but the personal delight with which the singer is buried in his performance, has been happily rendered, and the eyes show the far-sightedness Pliny speaks of, and to which, perhaps, Suetonius also alludes, in the word "*hebetior*." The same expression in the look, but coupled with a shade of fear and ill humor, is to be found in the well-known bust at the Louvre, with its narrow brow, bound by the diadem of rays, and its expanded cheeks. It is a so-called "character" head, with which a later artist intended rather to delineate the emperor as posterity imagined him, than as he was. The same observation is true of one of the two busts of Nero, in Florence. A profile caricature, which a prætorian sentinel, perhaps, amused himself by scratching in, was found a few years since upon a wall on the Palatine. The profile, with all its exaggeration, strikingly resembles Nero.

Suetonius says that his features were more handsome than engaging. His hair was, like that of all the Domitians, light brown, his eyes were bluish gray. He was of middle height, and had strong dispositions to corpulency. At the play—when he sat among the spectators, namely, and did not himself appear—he made use of a polished emerald, as an eye-glass. This "lorgnette," the only one known from the antique world, has given modern optics a good deal to think about and wrangle over. In his letter on the Greek and Roman art of cutting precious stones, Lessing has given a few lines to this subject.

In the Revelation of St. John, we find an echo of the feelings which the terrible persecution of the Christians at Rome awakened in their brethren of the faith. Babylon the great, the city on the seven hills, is undoubtedly Rome ; and few are probably those who look into history, who now doubt that the beast whose "number is six hundred, three score and six," is Nero. If you write Cæsar Nero in Hebrew letters, and add their value in numbers, you obtain 666. The predictions of Antichrist possibly stand in some relation to the prophecies Suetonius speaks of, that Nero, if he lost Rome's sceptre, should found a kingdom of Jerusalem, or a larger Eastern power ; yes, at last win back the empire of the world. Even the traditions of the middle ages are busied with him. Spirits and devils, it is said, haunted Nero's grave on Monte Pincio, and frightened the Romans, until the latter succeeded in driving them away, by a powerful incantation. But from the grave, in course of time, there grew an immense walnut tree, in which a multitude of ravens made hideous clamor. It was supposed that these were the exorcised fiends, and the supposition was strengthened, when it was discovered that the leafage of the tree was at night transformed into a basalt dome. Pope Paschal II. (1099—1118) was much alarmed at the clamor, and knew of nc remedy, until the Madonna appeared to him and gave him the simple advice to cut the tree down and burn it. Grateful for this inspiration, and following a hint she gave him on the point, he built in her honor, there, over Nero's grave, the first church of Santa Maria del Popolo. A true monkish fancy !

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The period of the Roman empire is attractive in spite of its shadows. Our culture, fundamentally unlike the Roman as it happily is, has nevertheless so much kinship with it, that we can more easily understand and feel with the men of the Julian, Flavian and Antoninan eras, than with those who lived a thousand years nearer to us. Political life, pining away under Cæsarism, made room for a more expansive life in the domain of society. Never, probably, has any age previous to our own, tried so many experiments in that domain, and made itself so independent of time-honored ideas. The two leading tendencies that wage unceasing war with each other in the breast of history, as in that of individual man, and which were then called Stoicism and Epicureanism, but come forward in every age with different names and in different gradations, in philosophic dress and in theological—these tendencies have probably never in form more strongly marked, gone on, side by side yet opposed to each other, than in Cæsarian Rome ; and nowhere does a richer field for inquiries into moral pathology present itself, than there. Epicureanism and Stoicism both had opportunity, with the reins of the world gathered in hand, to prove their premises and apply their conclusions. The gospel of the flesh, and art regardless of all morality, did so under Nero ; Stoicism, under the Antonines.

Perhaps it will seem to some of my readers that I have described Nero in colors too bright. This may come from the fact that, aside from the purely individual, which can easily be felt, but not directly portrayed, since the object wants any others with which to be likened, and speech words to do it in—aside from this, I have in Nero's character not been able to discover other elements than such as are to be found in thousands of our fellow-men. They are to be found there, and they act more or less harmlessly, because the moral atmosphere they meet with, hinders them from developing their disturbing force.

Weakness of will and lust for pleasure are very common phenomena. Sense of beauty makes itself known around us, too, though in measure incomparably less than with the old Græco-Italian peoples, and it has a legitimate and beatifying power, for it works together with the moral forces. But when this is not the case—when it appears, absolute, in a being who has obtained the right to do as pleases him, and in a circle to whose advantage it is to practise usury upon the weaknesses of this being, and in a time when art is degraded to be servant of the sensual pleasures, and the air is heavy with selfish doctrines, embraced with rapture because they promise disenthralment from the chains of superstition—then may these elements, like explosive stuff struck by the igniting blow, burst out in volcanic desolation. Beings like Caligula and Domitian are, to the honor of humanity, rare, and oftenest found, it is probable, in prisons or madhouses; but Neros *in petto* are doubtless more numerous than we think. And that is perhaps the lesson to be drawn from this picture.

Rome contained on the same day within her walls, such men as Sophonius Tigellinus, Nero, Seneca, Trasea Petus and Paul of Tarsus: gradations of human nature, from the devilish worshipper of sensuality to the worshipper of the Ideal in the crown of thorn. They might have trodden the pavement of the Forum at the same moment. And while the court Epicureans, who made beauty as independent of morality as a later age would have made religious faith independent of reason, held their wild revels on the Palatine, in the Ghetto of that time, walked the poor tent-maker from Cilicia, looking compassionately on these orgies of the flesh—for he felt their might in his own frame—and absorbed in the great mystery of salvation: the annihilation of sin, and the reunion of erring mankind to a spiritual body in the true ideal of beauty, the First-born of the creation.

ANTIQUE STATUES.

THE APHRODITE OF MELOS.

(1874.)

IN the month of February, 1820, that statue came to light, which, known under the name of "*la Vénus de Milo*" passes for the most precious pearl of the collection of antique works in marble, at the Louvre.

High up on a mountain, the summit of which is crowned by the little city of Castro, while its declivities are overstrewn with remains from the old Hellenic time, a peasant was at work in his garden. With the hoe, he cleared away weeds and parasites, and so came to a mastic bush, which he tore up by the roots. The dry earth in which this had shot out branches, ran down into a hole which now became visible between two bricks. Jorgos, so the peasant was named, drew from this the inference that there must be a vault underneath. He called his son, Antonio Bottonis; both seized their spades, dug eagerly, struck upon a wall; discovered in the wall a deep niche adorned in colors, and in the niche a marble statue six feet* high, standing upon its pedestal. The statue represented a woman, covered from the hips to the feet with a drapery. They found near it, in the same vault, two figures of Hermes and some fragments of marble.

The French consular agent at Melos, Louis Brest.

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* Swedish feet.

lived in the neighborhood, and at once received news of the discovery.

The collection of antiques at the Louvre, which Bonaparte augmented with the most precious booty from conquered lands, especially from Italy, had been forced, by a change in the fortunes of war, to return much of its accumulated treasure. With grief had many Frenchmen seen these proud spoils go back the way they came. But so much the more those concerned felt themselves called upon to fill, by purchases, the gaps that had arisen. Everywhere where discovery of antique works could be expected, the emissaries of France to foreign countries had been charged to forestall, if possible, other purchasers.

Mr. Brest thus had for this event, a duty prescribed him, and did not delay a moment the beginning of negotiations for the purchase. He knew that he had dangerous rivals—not Englishmen only, who on such occasions are always at the front, but also the art-loving crown prince of Bavaria, who stopped at no sacrifice, to augment his collections, and had recently bought the old marble amphitheatre, in the neighborhood of Castro. But what worth might the statue discovered have? Mr. Brest thought, to be sure, that this was a stately woman, and though the tip of her nose was injured, he deemed her features beautiful; but a judge of art, he was not, and the Greek peasant was not to be satisfied with a low price. In the harbor below Castro, lay two French men-of-war, *La Lionne* and *l'Estafette.* There might be art judges among the officers on board. Mr. Brest begged to hear their opinion. They marched up to Jorgos's garden, took the statue under consideration and with one voice declared that the Louvre ought not to lose that work. But Jorgos, who knew that statues were things sought after in the West, would not give up his treasure for a less sum than twenty-five thousand francs; and this was more than Mr. Brest was willing to assume the responsibility of giving. Meanwhile he wrote without delay, of the matter, to his chief Pierre David, consul general in Smyrna.

Mr. Brest, during these days, was anything but happy. What might not take place before his letter reached Smyrna, and before Mr. Pierre David could inform his superior the Marquis de Rivière, ambassador at Constantinople, of the discovery, and before the latter could make any intervention! With uneasiness, he saw every foreign flag that approached Melos. There might be a rival on board! Daily he wandered between his house and Jorgos's cabin, and his anxiety was not lessened by the fact that he daily found the peasant just as refractory, and the statue ever more captivating.

Three weeks after, the French man-of-war *La Chevrette*, on a cruise for scientific purposes, in the Turkish waters, cast anchor in the port of Melos. Among the officers on board, was a young lieutenant, of whose scientific and artistic views Mr. Brest formed the highest opinion, when he saw that the lieutenant carried with him a Pausanias, in the original tongue, that he might with the Baedeker of antiquity as his guide, make his observations in the land of Hellas. The lieutenant was called Dumont d'Urville—a name its owner afterwards made immortal by his voyages of discovery in the South Arctic Sea. Mr. Brest escorted the learned officer, of course, to the niche that contained the object of his thoughts and anxiety by day and night. But when d'Urville entered, the upper half of the figure had vanished·

he saw on the pedestal only a very fine drapery, and rising from this, a few iron pins. The statue was formed of two blocks, and Jorgos had carried one block—the upper part of the statue's body—to his cabin, where d'Urville found it, by the side of his wife's distaff. Jorgos had taken this action as a measure of prudence, for he felt at least as unhappy as Mr. Brest, and was in constant fear, night and day, lest some one should steal, or out of spite harm his treasure. D'Urville saw at once that the work was of great value. It was in his opinion a *Venus victrix*, of peculiar and incomparable beauty. He sketched the statue, drew up a written account of the discovery, and copied an inscription that was on a marble tablet over the entrance to the niche. When *la Chevrette* landed at Constantinople, he delivered the account and the drawing to the Marquis de Rivière, and described the beauty of the statue in such glowing terms, that the ambassador charged his secretary, count de Marcellus, to set sail at once with the man-of-war *l'Estafette* to Melos, to assure the right of France to the newly-discovered masterpiece of Hellenic sculpture.

During this time, Mr. Brest was in despair. He had, to be sure, succeeded in making an agreement with the municipal council that the statue should not be sold or taken away from the island, until he had had answer from his chief, the consul general at Smyrna. But this agreement did not balance the alarming fact that a speculator on the statue had landed at Melos—a speculator who was not sent out by England or the Bavarian crown prince, but acted for himself, and on his own account: a fellow with money in his purse, and a consummately smooth, crafty and bold fellow, besides, known throughout the Grecian archipelago as a dangerous man to have for an enemy and almost as dangerous to have for a friend. This was the monk Oikonomos, who had long been favorite of the tyrant of the island Greeks, the dragoman prince Nikolaki Morusi, but had now fallen into disgrace with the latter, because in spite of his economical name, he had pouched or squandered moneys collected on the prince's account. To mollify his master, he had hit upon the idea of buying and presenting to him the statue found by Jorgos. Jorgos and the municipal council, he had frightened with threats that the Turkish government should demand the statue without remuneration; and thus he had contrived a bargain, by which Jorgos for the sum of seven hundred and fifty piastres gave up the statue to him. Prince Nikolaki, glad in the expected gift, which he in his turn intended to present to Kapudan Pacha, received the monk again into favor, and sent a vessel and crew to Melos to bring the statue.

The Turkish vessel had already anchored off Adamantos, below Castro; Oikonomos and his men had already laid hands on the work of art, to convey it on board; the authorities at Castro who had signed the agreement with Mr. Brest, stood with folded arms and thought of the higher powers that sometimes cross the decrees of municipal councils, and Mr. Brest himself stood upon the lookout, on the mountain-top, and gazed mournfully out over the sea. A ship with the rigging of a man-of-war, emerged on the horizon. The wind blew towards the island and bellied all her sails. She drew near with beautiful speed. Mr. Brest sees that she bears the white flag with the lilies, which then was that of France. He draws a deep breath and asks himself: Is help coming? is rescue coming?

Oikonomos of the long beard, has discovered the

French vessel, too, and he urges and spurs his men to hasten the work. The September sun burns hard, and the men sweat beneath their fez caps and turbans, as they bear the marble down the shelves of the mountain. Step by step they near the strand; cable's length by cable's length the ship flies towards the harbor. It is *l'Estafette* with Mr. de Marcellus on board. Now the sails are lowered and the anchor made fast. Mr. Brest hurries to the spot, gives a cry of distress and points to the band which, led or driven by the long-bearded monk, is struggling with its burden down towards the Turkish vessel. Mr. de Marcellus, accompanied by captain Robert and a score of soldiers and seamen hurriedly armed, hastens to land.

What happened after that, has been a well-kept secret, until the month of April of this present year, 1874. According to the declaration of the French secretary of embassy, repeated in several writings, it was his own eloquent tongue that, after unceasing labor, succeeded in amicably arranging the matter to the advantage of France. The Turks gave way to his winged diplomatic words, and the Greeks stood open-mouthed before this inheritor of Isocrates' and Demosthenes' art. It makes a singular impression to read these writings of Mr. Marcellus. Self-complacency speaks in every line; what Mr. Brest and others have done to forward the matter, is left in the shade; it is de Marcellus, and him only, France has to thank for the Aphrodite of Melos, he calls her his "*protegée*," his "daughter," and it was his eloquence, that saved her to the culture of her new country and the West.

A few months ago, however, an account of the matter was published, through Mr. Jean Aicard, which differs altogether from that which Mr. Marcellus has given us. The account is drawn up by Dumont d'Urville's friend and former comrade on board *la Chevrette*, Matterer, captain of a frigate and major of marines at Toulon. The latter informs us that the question was decided not by the gifts of eloquence of Mr. de Marcellus, but as he himself expresses it, "by main force." Captain Robert, at the head of his sailors and soldiers, attacked Oikonomos's men. Mr. Brest, swinging in one hand a sabre, in the other a cudgel, took part in the fray. Oikonomos got a sound drubbing, his men were routed, and the *Venus victrix*, as spoils and sign of victory, was carried on board of *l'Estafette*.*

Prince Nikolaki Morusi was seized with the most violent indignation, at news of this event, and knew no better way of cooling his wrath than to have the members of the unlucky municipal council of Castro soundly flogged. When the Greek war of independence broke out, they took their revenge. They or their friends seized Prince Nikolaki, and hanged him.

The Melian statue arrived safely in Paris. Long the work remained behind closed doors; but the Parisian press already announced, in advance, that France, through its ambassador at Constantinople, had been enriched with a production of ancient Greek art, of the very highest order, outshining even the works that had won the most rapturous homage of Winckelmann.

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At last the Melian Venus had obtained her place among the other objects to be seen in the gallery of the

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* This report of Matterer is confirmed by French travellers—most recently by the former emissary of France to Greece, Jules Ferry, who during his sojourn at Melos, last year, heard the fight spoken of.

Louvre. Judges of art, lovers of art, and inquisitive people flocked to the Louvre, to see and enjoy. Poets came and were enraptured. And they were poets who knew how to give their rapture words: Chateaubriand, de Lamartine, Victor Hugo. "Never has Greece given us a more striking proof of her greatness," exclaimed the first of these. It was generally said that no other than Praxiteles could have created this glorious statue; and long before a more thorough investigation could be made, this surmise had settled into an article of faith, not least with King Louis XVIII himself.

Much of what was then said in praise of the masterpiece, was repeated by a younger generation of writers, by Alfred de Musset, Heinrich Heine, Theophile Gautier, and is still repeated, to-day, on perfectly valid grounds, by the foremost judges of art, though scarcely any one will now believe that he has a work of Praxiteles before him. The oftener one sees the Melian Venus, the more readily will one with a laugh excuse the idolatrous worship Heine offered her. It is not to be denied, that as one approaches this statue, one is surprised by the grandiose lines and elastic forms that the marble displays, and one cannot look long into that passionless face, where loftiness of soul, pride and womanly gentleness are manifest, or upon that figure of the noblest symmetry, rounded by health, strength and loveliness, or receive the impression of that serious and dignified bearing, from which every thought of attracting the eye is as far removed as possible, without feeling that one breathes as it were a purer air, and is animated by a chaste warmth.

Briefly, in every stroke of the chisel, art judges will discover evidence of the fine perception the Hellenic master had for every expression, even the slightest, of a nobly-developed woman's form. In the whole, and in every part, one finds "the full-blown flower of womanly beauty." In every contour there is a moderation that includes luxuriance and excludes weakness. To the flesh, the words of Homer have been applied, "it blooms with eternal youth;" and anything comparable to it, will not have been seen, be it in the sculptured works of the old or the new. Even the manner in which the outer skin, the "epidermis," is reproduced in the marble, is praised as unsurpassable. After rubbing with pumice-stone, to let the chisel skim lightly over the surface of the marble, was customary with the Hellenic sculptors of the good period, when they wished to produce the effect of a skin warm with life, and soft as velvet. On far too many antique works, however, this outer skin has been destroyed by polishing. But here, nothing of the kind has taken place: the naked parts shine like an elastic cellular tissue, in the warm tint of the Parian marble.

During the general enthusiasm, the French art-critics had not forgotten the requirements of their science. It belonged to them to find out whom the statue represents, to what master, school or time it should be ascribed, and in what action it had originally been engaged. Above all, the last question forced itself upon the beholder; for the statue, as it was when it was set up in the Louvre, lacked arms, and will probably lack them always.

Whom does this statue represent? A doubting German or a cautious Italian would probably have begun by asking, not what goddess he had before him, but if it were a goddess. For while the work in its entirety shows that it came into existence at a time when the ideal types of the gods had long since reached their full development, the features of the Melian statue vary so much from the severe Olympian models, that one has recently been able to say: "the artist has fallen into the realistic—he has held too faithfully to the living model." And as one perceives in everything, that this artist knew what he did, and could do what he wished, the conclusion was in this case near at hand, that when he departed from the strongly-marked ideal which belongs to the high gods, and so nearly approached the natural and human, he did so that his work might represent, not a womanly divinity, but a divine woman.

But the French art writers took the matter more lightly. Although the statue lacks every supplemental token or so-called attribute, already Dumont d'Urville had guessed at a victorious Aphrodite. The first professional critic who expressed himself about the work, Mr. Quatremère de Quincy, then secretary of the academy of arts, and contributor to the *Journal des Savans*, laid stress upon the likeness to be found between the Melian head and the Cnidan head of Venus in the Vatican, a likeness which the difference of style does not obscure. His view that the work found is a Venus, was supported by the warden of the Louvre galleries, Count de Clarac. And so the name of the statue became "*la Vénus de Milo*." Any objection to the judgment of these authorities was so much the less to be expected, that the statue is really so fair, the goddess of beauty could not be more beautifully represented. The poets, too, had already sung, that this was *that* Venus who was born of the ocean waves, and that she was not rocked along to the strand of Paphos but of Melos, and that their hearts pine for "the soft embrace" fate has denied her from giving those she loves. This was a judgment of Paris in inverted form. The Trojan herdsman judged that Aphrodite was the fairest woman in Olympus; the French art-critics and poets, that the fairest woman must be Aphrodite.

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So comes the question, by whom it was made. As a beginning, all agreed that only one of the greatest Hellenic masters, one of those whose names are in every man's mouth, could be author of the work. They had, then, to choose between Phidias, Polyclete, Myron, Scopas, Praxiteles, Lysippus. We are, to be sure, at this very hour, in spite of increased discoveries and more searching investigations, in want of guidance, to distinguish with any certainty between all these masters and their schools—sharp as the boundary lines undoubtedly are between Phidias and Myron, for instance, or Polyclete and Lysippus. Even the art judges of the antique time, who had opportunity to see and compare works of Scopas and Praxiteles, hesitated between the one and the other, when the report of the master was doubtful, and the work did not bear his name. But—"*la Vénus de Milo*" was by Praxiteles. As it is troublesome to have only a possibility, where one would have certainty, and as no unchallengeable witness could be conjured out of Elysium to testify the contrary, so—the Louvre undoubtedly possessed a work by the same hand that had created the Cnidan Aphrodite, that illustrious work, for the possession of which a Bithynian king in vain offered to pay the Cnidan national debt. King Louis XVIII, his court, and the whole public, talked of "Praxiteles' masterpiece," when they spoke of the Melian Venus. The Louvre had thus obtained a compensation for the treasures of beauty which the French had been obliged to return to their rightful owners. At what price, was not mentioned, and it would have wounded many a high-minded Frenchman to know; but it may here be said, that Count de Marcellus caused Mr. Brest, on the part of the Marquis de Rivière to deliver to the peasant of Melos who discovered the statue, four thousand francs over and above the twelve thousand he had received from Oikonomos, as satisfaction for a work of art which in the hands of the state cannot be valued in money, but which in private hands would be worth a million.

The artist's name, as has been said, was Praxiteles. His right to the beautiful statue stood as firm as the house of Bourbon's right to the throne of France, and rested on a foundation as immovable.

But outside of France, there was a French artist who doubted the right of the house of Bourbon, and perhaps even of Praxiteles. On account of the former doubt, he was an exile. His name was Louis David. He was living in Brussels, when he read in the papers that the Melian statue had arrived in Paris. We can fancy how he longed to see with his own eyes this creation of the antique, he who had so zealously tried to paint the very forms that the antique had chiseled, and of whose works we possess "Paris and Helen," "The Death of Socrates," "The Sabine Women," "Amor and Psyche;" and who, if I mistake not, had just before given the last touch of the pencil to his "Mars disarmed by Venus, Amor and the Graces." But as he could not buy permission to come to Paris at a lower price than a political recantation, he wrote to his former pupil, Baron Gros, and begged him to procure a faithful drawing of the statue. Gros gave this commission to his pupil, Auguste Debay. Accompanied by his father, J. B. Debay, who like Gros had worked under David's instruction, the young man went to the Louvre and there obtained an opportunity to draw the statue, long before it was ready for exhibition to the public. In this way, Messieurs Debay were lucky enough to see something that the public never looked upon. There was, namely, a Greek inscription on the pedestal. This pedestal was composed of two pieces of marble joined together, one somewhat higher than the other. The higher piece had on its face three rows of Greek letters, which young Debay drew with all the greater accuracy that he did not know how to read a single one of them. The inscription read in translation, as follows:

[ALEX ?] ANDROS, MENIDES SON, FROM ANTIOCH ON THE MEANDER, MADE THE WORK.

A copy of the work was sent to Louis David. The drawing itself remained in the elder Debay's hands; but was lent by him to the Count de Clarac, when to his essay on "*la Vénus de Milo*," he wished to add a sketch of the statue.

Here was a troublesome secret disclosed. But the parties concerned, who had determined that the Louvre should possess a masterpiece of Praxiteles—above all the superintendents of the museum, Messrs. Percier and Fontaine—did not lose courage on that account. What occurred behind the closed doors of the workshop of the gallery, is not hard to make out; for when the statue had taken its place in the gallery and the public had free access to it, the inscription was gone, and those concerned professed to be wholly ignorant of the fact that anything of the kind had ever been found. They shook their heads at Mr. de Clarac and Mr. Debay, and were of opinion that, in the best view of the case, they had seen it in a vision. The work was by Praxiteles.

One of the few who suspected that all was not as it should be, was the distinguished inquirer, Mr. de Longpérier. Many years passed, however, before he found himself in a position to undertake an investigation in the Louvre itself. He has searched the vault of the museum, even dug under its floor, in the hope of finding the missing marble tablet with the artist's name. But in vain. He has since openly expressed the opinion that the Messrs. Percier and Fontaine mentioned, had purposely destroyed the inscription. The barbarity with which at that time memorials of antiquity were treated, as he says, leaves no room for doubt that they were capable of this. In a letter from the year 1868, he writes to professor Friederichs in Berlin: "I know both Messieurs Debay intimately enough to be positively sure that neither of them understood a word of Greek. So they could not have invented the inscription."

One thing is sure: the pedestal of the statue had undergone a change in the workshop of the Louvre. What is left of the old pedestal has been fitted into newly added blocks of marble. Another thing is also sure: publicly, and in writing, no one dared challenge Debay's drawing—in which is to be read on the pedestal in distinct letters the inscription reproduced above—although an occasion to do so often presented itself. Mr. de Marcellus who every now and then wrote about the Melian Venus, something that was at the same time a hymn of praise to himself, and ought to have borne as motto the Virgilian "*Tu Marcellus eris*," even he mentions that the younger Debay copied the statue in the laboratorium of the Louvre, and that it was that drawing which Count de

Clarac used, when in his essay on the work of art he "wished to give the reader a first representation of the statue, which the public had not yet seen;" but he took care not to venture upon the question of the inscription, a nice question to those concerned, and one they wished to give up to oblivion. Still farther: before De Clarac published his essay, he consulted with Mr. de Marcellus; nay, the latter affirms that De Clarac's whole work is based upon written accounts that Mr. de Marcellus had given him; and we must from this draw the conclusion that De Marcellus had not the smallest objection to urge against the faithfulness of Debay's drawing, which he had previously seen. In the year 1839, Mr. de Marcellus first entered upon the question of the inscription; but only to announce that he did not remember whether he received, on Melos, the stone with the artist's name, and that he did not know whether this stone was found in Jorgos's garden or not.

Yet another proof that an inscription was on the pedestal! Charles Lenormand in the year 1829 visited Melos and had a conversation with consular agent Brest, from which he drew the conclusion that the superintendents of the Louvre museum had destroyed an inscription "which would oppose the conjecture that they had succeeded in acquiring a masterpiece from the epoch of the highest development of Greek art."

Strange it is, however that Dumont d'Urville, in his description of the statue, published in the *Annales Maritimes* of 1821, does not say a word of an inscription on the pedestal, while on the contrary he mentions two others: one, over the entrance to the niche, the other, on one of the Hermes' found in the niche. Must we interpret his silence as a sacrifice brought to the purpose of the authorities that the Louvre should own a work of Praxiteles?

The question of the original author of the work is nevertheless not decided, whatever may be the case with the authenticity of the inscription communicated by Debay. Of this, more by-and-by.

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In what action must one imagine the Melian Aphrodite engaged? A nice question, since, as we know, the arms and every attribute are wanting; a riddle hard to solve, and yet not to be dismissed. For in this work of art, the singular circumstance prevails, that the absence of such essential parts as the arms, does not seem in the slightest degree to lessen its beauty; but at the same time, the animated rhythm in the bearing of the statue forces the beholder to imagine for himself two arms in movement harmonious with the direction of the face, the look, the shoulders, and the inclination of the upper part of the supple body. One thinks with dread of the possible completion of the statue by any of the artists of our time, were he even Thorvaldsen's equal in his power to heal such injuries, and did he even succeed in giving the added parts the most probable and charming position; and nevertheless, this lack of arms is as if a solemn and sweet melody were broken off, before it had reached its natural conclusion: the listener would continue the succession of tones.

Aphrodite is an art idea that embraces much, almost as much as the idea, love. In countless variations, this idea spreads itself out over the immeasurable space that divides the heavenly Aphrodite from the Venus Vulgivaga. Now it may certainly seem to us dwellers in the North, when we look at the Melian masterpiece, as if its creator had so used his chisel that no one can mistake the point in this vast circle where he sought and found his archetype. It may, in other words, seem as if *this* Aphrodite could not possibly have furnished the stuff for the Olympian adventures Lucian has made the theme of his wicked jests. But French nature is other than ours, and when Quatremère de Quincy had to interpret the statue, his choice fell on that Venus who gave her honest partner Hephæstus, blacksmith of the gods, the emblems which on the front of Jupiter Ammon, but not on his, denote strength and good luck. And when De Clarac had to solve the same problem, before his eyes stood Venus with the apple of Paris, proud of the prize of victory, which she had won because she did not cherish the chaste coyness of Hera or Pallas, in letting fall the veil.

Quatremère de Quincy places the goddess together with Ares, the god of war, her favored suitor. If she have held the left arm uplifted, which she plainly has done, it was to let the hand rest on the shoulder of the beloved soldier. Her right hand she lays confidingly in his left. So, then, a prologue to the hour when Hephæstus surprised them with the net, and made them— and himself — the jest of Olympus. The surmise is founded on many similar groups; all, however, of late and obscure origin, and inferior worth.

Were this interpretation correct, we should have additional reason to feel disappointment at the state in which the work has come down to our time. For a statue of Ares worthy the master-hand that chiseled the Aphrodite of Melos, would be something alone of its kind. Among the many marble treasures that have been discovered in classic ground, we seek in vain for such a statue; and this must be something more than an accident. The most beautiful, or to speak more accurately, the only beautiful statue of Ares to be found, as far as I know, is that in the Villa Ludovisi—a youth buried in romantic dreams, with sword in hand and a roguish Eros at his feet—but when I call him Ares, it is only out of respect for those high authorities in the world of beauty who have named him so; for his features, which recall those of the "Apoxyomenos," belong rather to the type of the athletes than of the gods; and the whole seems to me a figure-piece representing simply a young hero, choosing and hesitating between warlike feats and love. In the Louvre is another so-called Ares, a short-legged and rather clumsy form, of Roman fashioning; and the other statues of Ares, which have come down to our day, including the imperial statues after the Ares model, stand for artistic worth not very much higher than this. In general, it would seem as if Hellenic art in its better days unwillingly, and without enthusiasm, busied itself with the god of war. Raised to the dignity of an Olympian, he was yet by birth a Thracian alien, to whom the Hellene never became quite reconciled. He had few temples, in Hellas. The poets never could file off the stupidity and coarseness that from his barbaric cradle went with him; nay, caused him on the very battlefield, where he ought by prerogative to shine, to draw the shorter straw, not only in competition with the goddess of wisdom, but with mortal heroes, also. The old Athenian traditions place him before a human tribunal, which judges him guilty of murder and violence. As far as we can perceive from classic literature, from Pausanias and others, he was seldom, as an independent theme, subject of the Hellenic sculptors' chisel. Pausanias mentions but few statues of Ares. An Ares of Scopas, another of Leocares or Timotheus, a third of Alcamenes; and besides these, an ancient wooden statue, belonging to a group in Olympia—these are all. That torso from the left gable of the Parthenon which is thought to be an Ares, is as Bötticher has proved, an Ericthonius. Oftener, on the contrary, especially during the decadence of art, he appears coupled with that Aphrodite who is the goddess of unrestrained vice, as on the Roman *Ara Casali*, in the Vatican. A wretched Roman work in Florence, and a few others in the galleries of Rome and in the Louvre, where one or another emperor is portrayed as Mars and his empress as Venus, presuppose an elder model, portraying the god seized by the desire for battle, but held back by her he loves.

Is it possible, then, that the Melian Venus has belonged to such a group? It seems to me that the artist has with every stroke of the chisel contradicted this idea. We do not possess from the antique time a single statue of a woman more proud and noble, more pure and chaste than this. The whole spirit of the work rejects the hypothesis of Quatremère de Quincy. All the reasons within us rise and cry aloud against a conception like his. Give the Thracian a Venus Kallipygos for a companion figure, or one of those silly Aphrodites who stand in the galleries to be looked at, busy with the mirror, or the bath sponge, or with their nails—one of those pre-Offenbachian goddesses of love, whose faces reflect a soul incapable of a passion for anything but gladiators and frippery!

Even external grounds speak against the hypothesis of Quatremère. If Ares stood by her side in the love relation which the French art critic has supposed, why then, are the goddess's eyes directed to another point than that where her heart and her hands are? She should in such a case turn her face more in profile. And how then, explain the strong inclination, showing effort, of the upper part of the body? Only thus: that by calling up her whole corporeal strength, she would draw the struggling and clumsy lout of a lover to her! And while she is doing this, her eyes would nevertheless be busy with another object: with an Adonis, may be, for whom she one fine day forgot her war-god, or an Anchises, who soon consoled her for the loss of the fair huntsman! Melos' Aphrodite is, then, to speak with Faust, nothing but

Ein Mädchen, das an meiner Brust
Mit Aeugeln schon dem Nachbar sich verbindet.

Strangely enough, Quatremère's conjecture has found a friend in J. Overbeck, who in the last edition of his "Geschichte der griechischen Plastik," still takes it under his protection. But it should be added that he is a lukewarm and doubting friend, who only in the absence of a more pleasing hypothesis, inclines to the side of Quatremère. Overbeck naturally allows, what no one can deny, that "while the expression in the face of the Medician Venus is entirely merged in the longing and tenderness of love, the features of the Melian statue disclose hardly a trace of emotion or passion;" and that "these features are in all their beauty so perfectly serene, one might rather call their expression haughty and cold." How will he make this rhyme, then, with Quatremère's view that the artist has placed her in a love relation with Ares? Why, thus: he draws a stroke of the pen through the real Ares-Aphrodite myth, and lays before us a new one of his own fashioning, a very agreeable myth, that should have inspired even satiric Lucian with respect According to Overbeck, namely, Hephæstus is a bachelor, who has no light-minded spouse to be anxious about, and with the most perfect serenity of soul can forge thunderbolts for Zeus; and Aphrodite is Ares' lawful, wedded wife, with whom the war-god lives in the most peaceful matrimonial relation. Overbeck imagines, now, this pair of divinities whom he himself has united, "in their holy matrimonial state, designed as a group for the temple." By this he thinks he has found a fitting answer to the objection that the goddess's look seeks another object than Ares; for they are not lover and mistress, you see, but man and wife, whom it does not befit openly to let their tenderness run over, least of all before the eyes of the devout. "They stand united, but not absorbed in each other," and "they are in this respect like Göthe and Schiller in Rietschel's group at Weimar" (!) But how, then, does Overbeck explain the strong inclination of the upper part of the goddess's body? That, he cannot explain at all. He can only point out that "this inclination is less striking when one sees the statue from the right." But how does that help?

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A while after Quatremère's essay upon the Melian Venus, Count de Clarac's appeared. His view was, that the goddess, proud of her victory, displays in her left hand the apple of Paris, and in her right, holds a girdle, a fillet, or some attribute. Here it should at once be remarked, that Clarac himself did not hold to this opinion, but afterwards adopted the hypothesis of Millingen, of which I shall give an account farther on. And it was indeed useless to fight long for such a lost cause. Would the weight of an apple be enough to explain that leaning to the right, of the upper part of the body, to which we must again refer, since no proposed hypothesis that does not satisfactorily explain that, can stand? In the world of poetry, this apple had certainly a considerable weight; for Venus rewarded it with the promise that Paris should possess the world's most beautiful woman; and the consequence was the flight of Helen, the Trojan war, Homer's songs, and the founding of Rome. But poetry is one thing, and statics are another; and from a statical point of view, this apple weighs no more than a common summer fruit. But Clarac's conjecture sins most against the rhythm of the statue, which demands a harmonious motion of both arms, and rejects every hypothesis that the right hand held "une bandelette," or some other trifle, in order not to be empty. The sculptor of the statue would in that case have solved his problem much as the designers of fashion-plates do, when they give the ideal gentlemen of the tailor's art a cane, or a riding-whip, or a glove, to hold. We must agree with the words of Welcker and Overbeck, that this would be a very unsuitable and clumsy composition.

But it is nevertheless more than probable, nay, it is certain, that the Aphrodite of Melos has once been as Clarac first imagined her. She has really at one time stood with the apple in her left hand, and that on account of a bungling alteration that has been undertaken in her, at the epoch of the decline of art, in the beginning of the Roman empire. This view stands in the closest relation to the question—in what condition was the Melian statue discovered? Did she lack arms at the moment when the first ray of light over Jorgos's spade fell into the niche where she had so many hundred years been hidden?

It is that question which is now in the order of the day, among the friends of art in France, since Jean Aicard, a few months since, published his "*La Vénus de Milo: Recherches sur l'Histoire de la découverte, d'après des documents inédits.*

Until then, it had been affirmed, entirely without contradiction, that the statue on its discovery was such as we see it now, but that in the niche, besides the two Hermes' had been found a fragment of an arm, and half a hand, with an apple between the fingers; and that the dispute could only be on the question whether this fragment of arm and this hand had belonged to the statue, either originally or after an alteration.

Aicard's researches, on the contrary, came to the following result: when the Melian Venus was discovered, she still had her left arm. This was first broken when the monk tried to carry the work of art on board the Turkish vessel, either during the transport down the Castro mountain, or the fight between Oikonomos's men and the crew of *La Chevrette.* The witnesses he calls for this view of his, are:

(1) *Louis Brest*, through his son, the present vice-consul at Melos, and through Salicis, captain of a frigate, and professor at the polytechnic school. The younger Brest, last year, in a conversation with Jules Ferry, former minister of France to Greece, said that his now deceased father had always described the statue to him as having, at its discovery, the left arm remaining, in a slightly raised position, and with an apple in the hand. Mr. Salicis communicates that in the year 1852 he talked with Louis Brest himself. The latter then declared that the statue at its discovery held the left arm outstretched, while the right followed the side of the body

and caught the drapery, as if to prevent it from falling down.

(2) *Antonio Bottonis*, Jorgos's son. Antonio, who plied the spade by the side of his father when the discovery was made, is yet alive. Jules Ferry met him in Castro, at the younger Brest's house. On being asked, he declared without hesitation, that when the statue was discovered, it stood upright on its pedestal, with the left arm outstretched, and an apple in the hand. About the right arm, his reports were doubtful.

(3) *Dumont d'Urville.* In his account in the year 1821, he says: "The statue represented a nude woman, whose left hand, raised, held an apple, and whose right grasped a tastefully-draped garment, which fell carelessly from the hip to the foot. Both, however, were mutilated, and are now (*actuellement*) separated from the body."

(4) *Matterer*, the major of marines mentioned previously. This gentleman, who in company with Dumont d'Urville saw the statue at the peasant Jorgos's house, declares, in a *notice historique* published by Aicard: "When Mr. Dumont d'Urville and I, in Jorgos's cabin took the statue under examination, it had its left arm raised in the air, (*élevé en l'air* [*sic !*]) and held in its hand an apple. As for the right arm, it was broken at the elbow. When Mr. d'Urville says that the statue had both arms remaining, he is slightly mistaken, for the right fore-arm was wanting."

At the first glance, this evidence seems conclusive. But on nearer investigation, its worth diminishes not a little. Dumont d'Urville's expressions are not clear. The word *actuellement* can be interpreted in two ways; and if the right comprehension of d'Urville's evidence rested alone on this word, we could never come to any decision about it, for the only one who could with certainty say what he meant with his *actuellement* would be D'Urville himself; and he died in 1842. But if, now, we consider that D'Urville wrote his account of the discovery only a few months after he had in the most precise manner examined, measured and drawn the statue, it borders very nearly on the impossible that he should have been guilty of the lapse of memory Matterer would attribute to him, touching the right arm of the statue. And since not even Aicard asserts that the statue, when the discovery was made, had the right arm remaining, D'Urville's declaration can hardly be interpreted otherwise than thus: that by the help of the two arms, found in the niche with the statue, but already broken, he had imagined the statue as it was at a former time and described it in accordance with that idea.

Again, as far as Mr. Matterer's evidence is concerned, it certainly, looked at by itself, is clear and unequivocal; but unluckily, the same witness had previously given entirely contrary testimony in the matter; and thus, the question is solely whether Mr. Matterer's memory was more trustworthy in the year 1842, when he first expressed himself on the subject, or in the year 1858, when he wrote his *notice historique*. In a biographical sketch of Dumont d'Urville, written by Mr. Matterer, we read, namely, of what they saw in Jorgos's cabin: "How great was our surprise when we saw before us a beautiful statue of Parian marble! Unfortunately, both arms were broken, and the tip of the nose was a little injured." (*Les deux bras étaient malheureusement cassés, et le bout du nez un peu altéré.*)

The other accounts are more than counterbalanced by a document which has been discovered and published by Count De Vogué, since Aicard's book came out. This is the letter that Louis Brest, immediately after the discovery of the statue, sent to the consul general at Smyrna, P. David. We read in this letter that "the arms of the statue are broken" (*les bras de la statue sont cassés,*) but that in the niche where it stood, were found, among other fragments, a piece of an arm, and "a mutilated hand, holding an apple." It must be noted, that Brest wrote this letter several weeks before the monk Oikonomos laid hands upon the work of art. With this, the dispute seems settled. It is in any case of but minor consequence. The main question is, whether the fragments mentioned, the bit of arm and the hand with the apple, *originally* belonged to the statue. And among the leading judges of art and investigators, there is hardly more than one opinion on this point: that such was *not* the case. This view is strengthened by the very latest investigations, undertaken by Ravaisson and laid, last June, before the *Académie des Inscriptions.* Ravaisson exhibited the piece of arm and the hand before the academy, and set forth a number of reasons why it must be conjectured that they did not originally belong to the statue, but date from an alteration, which however had already been made in the antique time.

That such an alteration had been made, is proved also by the condition in which Debay found the pedestal. One of the blocks of marble of which the support was made, fitted into the other exactly, and yet was of different marble. It must therefore have been put in at a later period. On this newer piece, the inscription was to be read, according to which [*Alex*] *andros, Menides' son from Antioch on the Meander, made the work.* The form of the letters points to the beginning of the Roman imperial time. Undecided it is and remains, whether this Menides' son from Antioch is the one who made the alteration, or whether, at the mending of the pedestal, an elder inscription with the original master's name was copied.

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After Quatremère and Clarac, Wieseler appeared, with a third hypothesis, according to which the Melian Aphrodite had held a lance, a sword or a helmet, in the left hand. He leaves entirely out of the question what she may have done with the right. This conjecture does not solve any of the difficulties before pointed out.

But we now come to a third view, put forward by the Englishman Millingen, and later adopted by Clarac, as well as by the excellent art critics, Otfr. Müller and Welcker. Millingen supposes that the goddess held Ares' shield in her hands. This is indisputably a happier solution than those preceding. The reader will remember that the left knee of the statue is bent, and the foot rests upon some object, now destroyed, which rose above the level of the base. Millingen's hypothesis explains this circumstance, as well as the marked inclination of the upper part of the body. The war-god's shield has been supported on the bent knee; the goddess's right hand has held the edge of the shield close to this point of support; her left hand has lain upon the upper edge of the weapon of defence; and the upper part of the body, by its leaning to the right, has accomplished a statically correct and æsthetically charming balance of the whole.

The hypothesis is based, moreover, upon similar antique compositions. The thought is Hellenic, if not from the best epoch of the art. In his poem "Argonautica," Apollonius of Rhodes depicts the magnificent embroidery upon the mantle of Jason the hero, and mentions, among the ornaments, an Aphrodite mirroring herself in the shield of Ares, which she holds in her hands. On a Corinthian coin from the time of the Romans, we find a Venus in the same attitude and occupation, and it is thought that the die of this coin reproduces a statue that Pausanias saw on Acrocorinth. The gallery of Naples possesses a Venus, found about a hundred years ago in the amphitheatre of Capua. Her attitude recalls that of the Melian statue, and has an almost perfect likeness to that of the figure on the Corinthian coin; wherefore, and at the instance of professor Friederichs, the cast of the Capuan Venus in the Berlin museum has been given the shield of Ares to hold as a mirror in her hands.

But has the Aphrodite of Melos really mirrored herself in the war-god's shield? Is this trifling and pretty motive in harmony with the lofty and severe seriousness that marks her? Assuredly not. Besides, the position of the head and the direction of the look make reflection an impossibility. The Capuan Venus looks more to the side and downwards; the Melian, more straight forward, and on a level. May she have borne a shield, it was not to look at her features in it. Nor has Millingen himself pronounced for the motive of reflection. For him, it is enough that the goddess holds the shield of Ares, as a sign of victory; and therein may lie a thought worthy the noble masterpiece: love's victory over discord, order's over violence.

But an objection that weighs heavily, can yet be made. Friederichs rightly remarks: "The mirroring in the shield, even if a trifling motive, is yet a conceivable one; but that the goddess with effort holds the shield to one side, without using it for any practical purpose, has nc real pith." Overbeck makes the same observation, and indicates besides, that on the drapery over the statue's left knee, no trace can be discovered of the hand that must have rested there, to hold the lower edge of the shield.

I have now given an account of the chief hypotheses concerning the original action of the Melian Aphrodite; and the result is, as the reader finds, that they all seem more or less unsatisfactory. The riddle has for more than half a century defied penetration, and does so still.

Is an accurate solution, then, possible? Yes; at least, so far as it lies within the realm of possibility for one man to re-create what another man has felt and thought. If that happen in this case, there is however, no touchstone to prove that it has happened. But such an explanation as continues the interrupted melody in its own spirit, and which by what it adds, does not contradict but confirms what is there, has at least so far accomplished the purpose, that the beholder can give himself fully up to the æsthetic impression of the statue, without disturbing his thoughts with the enigma it presents. The question as it lies before us, necessarily borders upon the realm of the subjective. Without pretending to have solved objectively a problem, which among professional art critics lacks its Œdipus, even the layman may express his opinion here, and say how he himself proceeded, in order to view the statue as a whole. When art critics on good grounds destroy each other's hypotheses, one is left to his own resources, and must try them, however insufficient they are.

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I believe that the statue from the beginning belonged to the ancient commonwealth in the territory of which it was found. In this, I differ from preceding interpreters, who think that such a grand work of art must have had a more brilliant fatherland than the little-mentioned Cycladean rock. An area of two Swedish miles, a handful of inhabitants, that is and that was Melos! A little spot like this on the outskirts of the Hellenic world, occupied by olive-growers and sea-folk, who lived and struggled for their material existence, a commonwealth the name of which is associated with the melon, but not with the art history of Hellas—how can we believe that our Aphrodite had her home from the beginning there?

This was probably the train of thought, when, without farther ceremony, Melos was made to forfeit the first right of ownership in the most beautiful work of sculpture at the Louvre, and it was taken for granted, that some time in the lapse of ages it had been "dragged" thither. Investigation has its rules, however; and one of them is, that an antique is assigned to the land where it has been found, unless strong reasons advocate an exception. Exceptions often occur, but do not abolish the rule; without which, the doors would be opened to boundless caprice. But here are only apparent reasons. Melos herself has refuted them.

For first and foremost, our Aphrodite is not the only prominent work that was discovered in that ground. Seven years after it was found, another discovery was made, less talked of, but hardly less fitted to astonish those who here expected a sterile soil for art. In the ruined walls of a temple of Æsculapius, a colossal statue of the god of medicine was found; and this statue is reckoned among the best works we have, of Hellenic art. More than one good Æsculapius has come down to us; but in none of them appears, as in this, the majesty of the Zeus type softened into humane nobleness ; in none, the sympathetic heart, the piercing eye, the power of thought, which the best chisels of Greece know how to unite in their statues of the "helpful" and "modest" son of Zeus. The British museum owns the work. In the Berlin museum of casts, one of this head of Æsculapius is placed by the side of the Otricolanian head of Zeus, the most beautiful likeness of the father of the gods that we possess ; and that dangerous vicinity, (instructive as it is for the study of types of the gods,) does not lessen the grandiose impression of this other Melian discovery. No one, as far as I know, has ventured to assert that this Æsculapius had been "dragged" to Melos, or that it had not been executed for the temple in which it was found. The same thing, then, may be assumed for the Melian Aphrodite.

In the second place, Melos, in both an intellectual and material sense, had a right to possess good works of art. It was not a Grecian *Trosa*.* It was a small, wealthy community, flourishing through industry and commerce. The state against which Athens sent out sixty ships of war and two thousand heavily-armed warriors, to compel it to an alliance, and which successfully repulsed such an enemy, had means enough to adorn its temples with beautiful statues. And no reason can be found to deny the Melians that feeling for art which animated all other Hellenes, when by reason of the evidence of history, we must attribute to them, and that in a high degree, the other qualities that made the Hellenes a noble nation. Melos was greater than it looks on the map, greater than the surveyor's line will allow, for its inhabitants were lofty-minded ; and no Greek community, not even Athens, more ardently felt itself Hellenic, or according to the measure of its power, did more for Hellas. Kinsmen of the Spartans, the Melians possessed their virtues, but were free from their selfish conception of the life-aims of state and race. One trait from the history of Melos tells all. When the other islands of the archipelago submitted, trembling, to the great king of the East, and preferred slavery to a resistance that seemed hopeless, that Cycladean rock, alone among them all, refused the threatening claim of Persia, and sent its ships to Salamis. The Melians had then, according to tradition, tilled their island for seven hundred years, without ever bending the neck under an enemy's yoke. To them, the battle before them seemed no more hopeful than to the others; but they were of one mind, to die as free men, since their fathers had lived as such. When they took that resolution, they listened to the voice of the goddess they worshipped, and who was born of the waves that surged around their shores—the heavenly Aphrodite; for she who is love for all that is grand and beautiful, is love for freedom, honor and native land.

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* A very small place in Sweden.—C.

Far from admitting that this work of art must be a stranger to the soil that has had it in keeping for our time, it is therefore my belief that the statue is Melian in a twofold sense: created for Melos and—*representing Melos*. This, in the same manner as Pallas may represent Athens, as Minerva sometimes may represent Rome. It is a *Melos-Aphrodite*.

When I saw her the first time, precisely that illustrious trait in the history of the island, stood forth in my mind, and as instantly as if I had heard it in a whisper from the goddess's lips. She spoke to me of a little people's power to be great, when it lifts itself above its destiny. I read in the lines of the marble a Grecian thought, that borrowed its dress from the language I heard around me, clothing itself in the words of Mme. de Staël: "*Les individus doivent se résigner à la destinée, mais jamais les nations.*" This principle pervades, in time of good and time of evil, the history of the Doric island state, and in this statue has obtained life, under the hand of a truly inspired master. The spirit of stern morality and heroic nerve in the people of Melos, is stamped on the noble and lofty face of this Aphrodite—its tragic fate, in the melancholy that shines through it, and is as strangely united with the health of the soul, sound to the core, as the goddess's beauty melts into the gentle Doric woman's unsought charm. Herein, I think, lies the explanation of the realism, the approach to "a living model," which is discovered in the statue, at the same time that no other statue of Aphrodite than this, leads the mind to the pure, the heavenly goddess of love. Thus to unite two natures in one personality, the idea of fatherland and race in the Doric woman, of the divine in Aphrodite, is the most exalted triumph the master of this work could win. And like Venus from the ocean's foam, as from the waves of the archipelago the Cycladean isle with its luxuriant vegetation, at once stern and friendly, rises the naked beauty of this Melos-Aphrodite from out her sumptuous drapery.

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The heavenly Aphrodite is the expression of that power which attunes the first-created elements of the universe to harmony, and unites men to home and state. She is beauty in nature, love in the home: in the state she is law, that impels a million of selfish wills to work for one common weal.

When the sun sinks in golden clouds over a landscape with billowing fields, grazing herds, friendly cabins and happy men; when a veil of sweet enchantment covers all the unrest and pain that go with life, and makes us aware of existence as an unmingled joy—it is a smile upon the lips of Aphrodite, mirrored again by nature and our own feelings. When the veil has fallen, and the world shows itself as it is, with its strife and anguish, she reveals herself in the shape of a loving mother, wife, sister, or consoling friend. She is present on the battlefield itself, in the strength of union and self-sacrifice, and can be felt even in the Tyrtæan war-song that sounds, accompanied by the Doric flute, before the spear-shafts of the tribes cross each other:

Peerless is death, if bravely thou fall, with the line that leadeth,
Fall in the fight for thy land, die for thy city and home.
Therefore, with hearts of fire, up, ward the gift of our fathers!
Hasten to offer with joy life for the races unborn!
On, ye youth, ever on, in ranks unflinching and steadfast,
Never a feeling of fear, never but thinking of flight!
Shame befalls the host, and disgrace, that in front of the legions
Sees, in advance of the young, veterans bleeding in death,
Yeomen, with locks besilvered by age and cheeks that are ashen,
Prone in the dust exhale, dauntless, the warrior's heart.
This, beseemeth the boy, and nobly, as yet he beareth
Gracefully binding his locks, wreaths of the beauty of Spring.
Comely to women, stately to men should he seem, as he liveth,
Beautiful even in death, slain in the thick of the fray.

It was this Aphrodite, of harmony, health, strength and devotion, that I saw in the Melian statue. She recalled to me both the high divinity and the gentle sister. Herself infinitely hale and full of life, she told me that we do not lead the life of health, but in the glad resolve to die, if need be, for that which is to profit others than ourselves. She led me into the homes where chaste mothers suckled the sturdy-minded sons, who at Marathon and Salamis saved Europe. She revived the dim heroic memories of the little isle where her temple stood. In front of her, I forgot that Venus who had intrigues with Mars, and her who longed for the apple of Paris; and it is still hard for me to believe, although I know it, that any one, in presence of this statue, could have thought of them.

. . . .

Still another trait from the history of Melos, to illustrate the statue. The same pigmy state that defied the Persian giant when the freedom of Hellas was at stake, refused to take part in that feud between brethren that is called the Peloponnesian war. All the Grecian states stood armed for battle in one camp or the other. All the islands had declared themselves for Athens or Sparta. One alone, and that was Melos, dared have its own opinion and maintain it. "For Hellenes to fight against Hellenes is a crime in which we will not share. But whoever would force us to do so, against him we draw the sword." This was the neutrality of patriotism, but not of politic circumspection, still less of cowardice; for neutrality here, every one saw, was the same as compulsory war with either side, without help from the other. It has already been mentioned that the Athenians came with force to Melos, to compel it to an alliance, but were repulsed. From that hour, Melos declared itself for Sparta. The Athenians returned, laid waste the island's fields and vineyards and surrounded the city. The Melians defended their walls valiantly, and made bold sallies, but were forced at last to capitulate. Once masters of the city, the Athenians forgot that they had raised altars to the divine powers of pity and compassion: they slew all who bore arms, dragged women and children into slavery, and brought Athenian colonists to the ruined Doric state. But after the victory of the Spartans at Egospotamos, the Melians who survived were again masters of their land. From that time, the inhabitants of Melos formed a mixture of Dorians, of descendants from the old Melians, and of Ionians, posterity of the Athenian colonists. Bloody memories must long have kept them apart. But when time, and work for the same fatherland, had at last begun to unite them, there was one memory around which all could meet with the same joy: the memory of the fight of Melos against Persia, the memory of Salamis, where the forefathers of them all, of Dorians as well as Ionians, had fought like brothers by each other's side, and won.

What, then, was more natural, than that art should erect a monument sacred to this uniting memory, the brightest and proudest of Melos? And what worthier, more pleasing and suitable monument could be imagined, than the island's own guardian goddess, Melos-Aphrodite, symbol of the fatherland and love for the fatherland, who with outstretched shield into which she has cut the legend, reminds the people of its ancestors' greatest deed: the refusal of the Persian claim to sovereignty? Long before Mme. de Staël wrote the words, the Hellenes had thought the thought: nations must never submit to fate, or to that which comes forward as resistless; for it is they themselves who form their fate; one will more, in the balance, and rescue is won. A thought of this kind, I read on Melos-Aphrodite's shield as in her whole aspect.

Shields with inscriptions, were common in the Hellenic temples. If they were booty of war, they were dedicated to a god and hung up on the pillars of his shrine. So the romantic adventurer Pyrrhus, king of the Epirotes, did, after his victory over the dreaded Macedonians. The inscription he caused to be cut upon the Macedonian shields, which he offered to Zeus at Dodona, as trophies of victory, may be taken as proof of this custom. He did not forget to parade the fact that the nation he had overcome was that which under Philip had destroyed the freedom of Hellas, and under Alexander had won the East by arms:

Asia's fruitful lands, these shields have wasted and ravaged,
Shields that erst too, have laid Hellas in fetters and chains;
Now, Macedonia, to Zeus, they as trophies on pillars are hanging,
Torn from the combatant's arms, wrested, thou scorner, from thee!

Quatremère called attention to the likeness between the features of the Melian and the Cnidan Aphrodites. Since then, new discoveries have been made and other likenesses found. A head of Venus dug up on Cyprus, reminds one strongly of that of Melos; but yet more striking is the kinship between our statue and the admirable work of art which is the pride of Brescia: the winged Victoria. The family resemblance between them plainly points to one and the same original, and one and the same fundamental thought, of which they are gradations allied in development.

Brescia's Victory supports on the left knee, bent, a shield, which she holds in an upright position, while inclining her laurel-crowned head, she writes on the round surface of the shield. The lower part of the body is hidden by a rich drapery. A light tunic falls over her left breast.

This motive was in the antique time held in esteem, and often repeated. Still, on the triumphal arch of Constantine in Rome—that arch of triumph over the overthrow of art, the decay of the world's metropolis and the destruction of heathendom—among the reliefs is to be seen a Victory in precisely the same action; coarsely executed, yet giving evidence of a noble model.

Aphrodite and Victoria are nearly related: in *Venus Victrix*, the victorious goddess of love, they mingle in one.

Remove, now, the wings and the airy tunic from Brescia's Victory, and let us conceive her as a victorious Aphrodite, in the *next* moment of her action. She has completed the inscription: the deed which is to be immortalized, is cut upon the shield. What attitude does she now take?

The bended left knee continues bent, for the left foot, resting on a prop, gives just the support that the continuance needs.

The shield is lifted by both arms from its resting-place on the knee, and turned, so that the inscription meets the beholder's eye.

While the arms with their burden are extended to the left, the upper part of the supple body leans to the right as counterbalance.

The head is raised, and the goddess's look directed more to the front.

With this movement, the drapery glides down upon the right hip.

This is exactly the attitude of the Melian Aphrodite, and all that has hitherto been less satisfactorily explained seems to me in this way accounted for: the carriage of the head, the direction of the look, the bent knee, where every mark of a shield or a hand is lacking, and the position of the drapery. The shield, in this attitude, hides nothing of the beautiful form, from the point of view the spectator ought to take. The weapon is no longer, as in Millingen's hypothesis, an empty attribute, clutched at only to give the goddess something to hold. Its inscription reproduces in words, or if one rather choose, in a lightly-traced picture drawn by the goddess's pencil, the grave and lofty language, every line of the statue speaks.

This explanation which makes allusion to the annals of Melos, and finds support in them, and at the same time links itself to another work of art as a development of its idea, transfers the production of the statue to a much later time than that of Praxiteles. If Alexander, son of Menides, from Antioch on the Meander, be the creator of the statue, and not he who altered it, it is also in the nature of things that the work cannot be older than the city named, founded by Antiochus I. The motive of the drapery, as well, speaks, as Overbeck has shown, for a later time.

The half-effaced inscription, Dumont d'Urville found over the entrance to the niche, contains nothing that can serve to account for the previous lot of the work. The inscription seems to declare that the niche was consecrated to Hermes and Hercules. With this the idea is in harmony, that the Hermes' found on the spot represent, one a Mercury, the other a boy Hercules.

With regard to the alteration the statue has undergone during the time of the Romans, I must be allowed to express a conjecture. The manner in which the hand discovered encloses, and as it were, hides the apple, proves that there can be no question here of the judgment of Paris. When art is in its decadence, it loves jesting allusions and does not shun " *Witze*." The island of Melos was in form like an apple, before an earthquake opened the bay on its northern coast, and seamen called the rock so. The name Melos, (Mælos) and the Greek word melon, (*mælon*, apple) are also near of kin. The fruit in the goddess's hand might thus be a symbol of the island. With the extended left arm, then, it seems as if in the same sense as Leonidas, she would say: " Come and take it!" Such an alteration would be in many particulars clumsy; but modern times have not an exclusive right to unlucky " restorations." The later antique time was also acquainted with such.

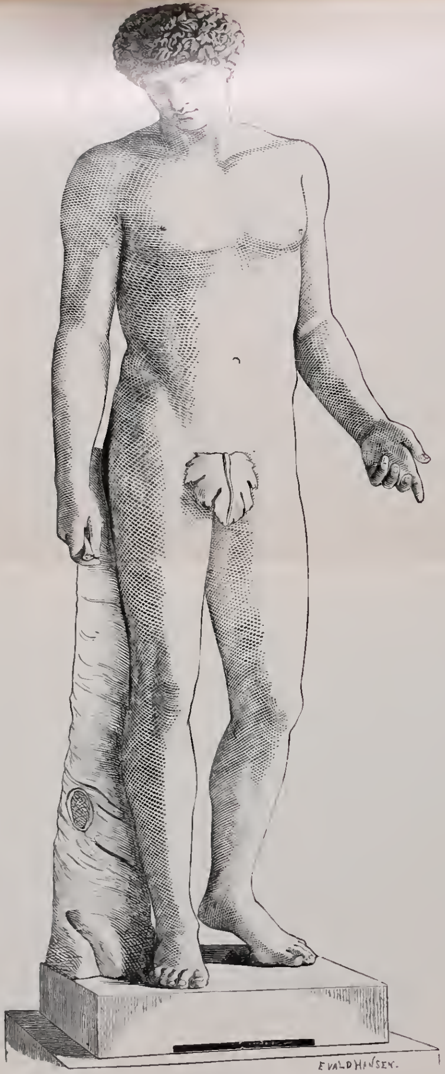
He who with me is inclined to see in the Aphrodite of Melos a monument of Hellenic love of liberty, mated with Hellenic sense of beauty, will recollect with pleasure that in the same year and the same month she again saw the light of day, the Greek war of independence broke out. It was, as aforesaid, February, 1821. Immediately after, the Melians again stood in arms against the Orient, and in the beginning of June of the same year, the island Greeks defeated the Turkish fleet at Mitylene. That was a freak of fate that resembled a thought of history.

II.

ANTINOUS.

ANTINOUS, the youth with dejected head and dreaming look, meets us in the halls of art, often; but the mysterious face has always the same power of attraction. He muses upon a riddle, and himself is one, that tempts to solution and baffles the solver.

The brief road of his life lay through a morally debased world; but he looks as serene and pure as if no shadow could ever have been cast upon his memory, and it is with the halo of innocence that he takes the heart captive. A world of thought would work itself out into clearness beneath that broad forehead and nobly arched head; and yet one perceives nothing of a dawning dialectician in his features. He bears a sorrow, and yet, with the semblance of unruffled peace of mind, repels compassion. He looks as if he were good, but reticent; absorbed in himself, and nevertheless roguish; resolute, yet floating in spaces where forebodings and dreams are all, and the will is nothing. The formation of his face is Hellenic, but diverges from the Hellenic type. His figure is fine, but not faultless, for one shoulder is higher than the other; his frame, with the powerfully vaulted chest, is the scaffolding of an athlete; the strength of the arms and legs reminds us of the palæstra, and yet the contours are softly marked. He appears always the


EVALD HANSEN.

ANTINOUS.
(VATICAN GALLERY.)

same, at the first glance recognizable, in changing forms, as hero or as god—now he is Agathodæmon, or Ganymede, or Hercules; now Dionysus, Hermes or Apollo; so that beneath his exterior, we might imagine the spirit of the universe, effulgence of the first-created light, that reveals itself in varying divine phenomena, but in them all, bears with it sorrow at having forsaken life in the infinite for life in the finite world. And notwithstanding all this, he is a human being of flesh and blood, that art has made its subject—a boy, and nothing else, who was cut off in his bloom, by death. He is in a word, from head to foot, a web of contradictions, resolving itself into a whole of touching beauty.

Who was this Antinous? Perhaps in life the same riddle as in the marble? We know of the circumstances of his life very little, and his death is enveloped in mystery.

Emperor Hadrian, then fifty years old, was sojourning in Greece, when he saw the youth of eighteen, and made him one of his court. The boy's native land contained a mixture of Thracian, Gallic, Syrian and Hellenic blood; but Claudiopolis, the city of his birth, was according to tradition a Hellenic colony, and Antinous reckoned his ancestry from that idyllic land celebrated by the poets, Arcadia. What chance brought them together, is not mentioned; but soon Antinous belonged to the circle of the emperor's nearest confidants, and was his constant companion.

Hadrian spent a long time in that land, the memories, art and literature of which had been from youth his delight, as its regeneration was the dream of his riper years. These years were his happiest. Behind him he had a course of grandly successful activity. The

Roman realm had never enjoyed greater safety and prosperity. Countless abuses had been abolished, the government of the land rearranged in a practical manner, military discipline was restored, the arts were flourishing. The peoples united under the wing of Rome, looked gratefully up to the worthy successor of the great Trajan. To them, he was father and peaceful prince; to men of science, poets and artists, a fellow-citizen in their republic, to public officers, the keen-sighted administrator, to the soldiers, the able commander and hardy warrior. His nearest circle had in him a friend with a frank disposition and with time enough to share in their separate joys and sorrows. After a day taken up with hard work, he could watch the whole night through, by a servant's sick-bed. With his wide-reaching activity, his power to suffice for all that entered into the duties of chief of the realm and individual man, he had at bottom a romantic nature, that delighted to dwell in the labyrinths of mysticism, longed after love, friendship and beauty, that filled his imagination with the glory of the old Hellenic life, and dreamed of the possibility of rearing a better race of men, and of founding a faith able as well to satisfy the claims of reason and morality as of feeling and presentiment.

Hadrian was at that time in the midst of his labor on the regeneration of Hellas. One can hardly think otherwise than that he unfolded to the friend who was his daily companion, the plans he had made with this view. And the plans became, as if by enchantment, realities. Temples and other public buildings, harbors, city quarters, and entire cities, arose at the bidding of the mighty. Sculptors and painters, quickened by his spirit, produced works of art that seemed worthy of an age gone by, Where the lord of the world came on, it was as though a new spring-tide of humanity had burst into bloom. Himself, he had a temperament as sensitive to the beauty of nature as of art. Spartianus mentions in connection with this, a trait that reminds us more of the man of the present, than of him of antiquity. Hadrian one night climbed Ætna, to enjoy from its summit the spectacle of a sunrise.

In Athens, at that time, taught the New Pythagorean philosopher Secundus, called the Silent. In Ceronea, his native city, yet lived, according to the computation of some, the venerable Plutarch. Epictetus, Hadrian's friend, was dead, but Arrianus, his disciple, proclaimed his master's sublime philosophy, near of kin to Christianity. Philosophy was in a state of transition to a theosophy, full of presentiments. The emperor leaned in the same direction, and presumably the young Bithynian also. The conjecture is not improbable, that the latter was living in Athens for the sake of studies in philosophy, when Hadrian made acquaintance with him. In any case he can hardly have been a stranger to the doctrines promulgated by the intimate friends of the emperor and embraced by the emperor himself. If ever a face be mirror of the soul, then did the imaginative, the mysterious and the romantic that had expression in the New Pythagorean, the New Platonic and the Gnostic systems, which that and the following age begot, find receptive ground in the mind of Antinous. The little that history has to say of his nature, supports the idea art has designed to give us of him. His contemporaries thought he had inspirations from Apollo, and shortly after his death, prophecies in his name were circulated among the Hellenes. To ambition, court intrigues and politics, he was an utter stranger, and the influence he had with the emperor, he used neither to reach high places of honor, nor to amass wealth. Envy, always in arms against the favorites of princes, seems to have spared him, in the feeling that the bond between him and Hadrian was congeniality in unpractical things. We seem to behold in his features the musing mystic, and at the same time the world of Hellas, fair, but now languishing and dying under an apparent renewal of life; and we would gladly remain in the belief, that Hadrian loved in him his own best dreams and those of his time. That the emperor, artist as he was, was struck at first with his physical beauty, seems unquestionable; but with Socrates and Plato before our eyes, we may and ought to believe that this feeling, so common in the antique world, was not seldom coupled with the aim of forming in the physically beautiful, the morally good. When Hadrian had lost his beloved friend, he expressed with a warmth of conviction that created laughter among the sober sceptics, the belief that a good genius had taken up its abode in that friend's soul; and when, as it now happened a new star, (that which yet bears Antinous' name) was lit in the firmament, the emperor saw in this, a proof that the youth had been received into the circle of the heavenly powers. In this enthusiasm, the psychologist should rather see the evidence of a noble friendship, than of the contrary. And such enthusiasm could hardly have been possible, if the (in the Hellenic sense) *demoniac** which meets us in the statues of Antinous had not had something to correspond with it in the youth's being; and if it had, this feeling may easily be explained, by the humor of the time. Where youth and beauty appeared,

* Δαιμων—a god.

joined with fine intellectual gifts, the striving after wisdom, and religious aspiration, they acted as the revelation of a higher spirit. We call attention to the contemporary of Antinous, the Gnostic Epiphanes, who died at sixteen, to whom the inhabitants of Cephalene erected temples and museums, statues and altars. When one speaks of an Antinous ideal, it should probably be understood that nature gave this ideal already perfect to an art that had long been incapable of begetting anything new and original.

From Greece, Antinous went with the emperor upon his travels through Asia Minor, Syria and Palestine, to Egypt, where they met with the monuments of the Pharaohs, the Hamitic symbolical worship of the gods, and the Alexandrian philosophers' misty ponderings over the questions of humanity. During their stay in Egypt, threatening signs appeared of the insurrection that broke out in Palestine under the leadership of Messiah-Barkokba, and a tradition arose, that an oracle had foretold the emperor's speedy death. Yet Antinous was fated to go before him. He was drowned in the neighborhood of Baesa, during a boating-party on the Nile.

Probably he died by an accident. But this, the age would not believe. His death was placed in connection with the oracle of which mention has been made. It was a common idea that one man by voluntary death could obtain from fate longer life for another; and the rumor was generally circulated that Antinous, out of love and gratitude, had consecrated himself to the world below, in Hadrian's stead.

By a later historian, Aurelius Victor, this tradition is reproduced in the following manner: "When Hadrian wished his life prolonged, but the magi had declared that some one else must then devote himself to death in his stead, all the others refused to do so, but Antinous, on the contrary, offered to die for the emperor." That the emperor should have proposed such a sacrifice to those around him and accepted Antinous' offer to fulfill it, is an absurdity that does not deserve refutation. If Antinous gave his life for him, the event took place of his own free will alone, and without the knowledge of Hadrian.

Strangely enough, a work of art from the time of Hadrian or his immediate successors has been preserved to our day, which involuntarily leads the thought to the Bithynian youth's reputed or real sacrifice of death, and seems to have been born of the tradition concerning it. This is the so-called Ildefonso group, of which an account will be given farther on. The same tradition is alone able to explain the otherwise inconceivable circumstance, that Antinous after death took such a notable place in the imaginative life of mankind, and that the religious worship of which Hadrian made him the object, continued with a kind of enthusiasm, for centuries, and maintained itself, in defiance of the protests of the church fathers, long after Christianity had been made the religion of the state. To see in the servile disposition of the people and its base readiness to meet an insane imperial whim, a sufficient ground for this phenomenon, has hitherto been the common way; but it has been forgotten that this servile disposition, when the pressure from above had ceased, found greater pleasure in breaking down unworthy statues and altars, than before in setting them up; and that the successors of Hadrian were Antoninus Pius and Marcus Aurelius, the philosopher. They would have done everything to sink into oblivion a worship which must have aroused the wrath and contempt or the mockery and derision of their age, had it only been knit to the memory of an emperor's darling.

The worship of Antinous rests on another basis: in the bloom of his youth and the lap of the greatest outward happiness, he had, or it was believed he had, voluntarily suffered death for one who loved him, and upon whose life the welfare of the Roman realm seemed to rest. It is *satisfactio vicaria*, in the taste of antiquity and in its æsthetic form, that here presents itself to our eyes—a strange counterpart of the idea of Messiah, but only one of the many representations, running parallel and superficially like, that dying heathendom has to exhibit with growing Christianity. When the last temple of Antinous had been razed to the ground, and the last statue of Antinous thrown down from its pedestal, doubtless the Christian zealots who did this, little dreamed that after a lapse of many centuries his statues, risen again to the light of day, should be seen with a new admiration; and that his beauty, radiant with the glory of self sacrifice to death, should open to him the doors of a Christian temple. We shall by-and-by see how this happened.

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The last years of his life, Hadrian spent in his villa among the Sabine mountains. It was the wonder of its time; a pile of magnificent buildings, of the various styles that had become prevalent with the cultured peoples in the Roman empire: palace, temple, library, palæstra, race-course, theatres, baths and gardens, called after renowned places in Hellas and Egypt: Akademia, Lykeion, Stoa Poikile, Kanopus, and others. Art had adorned the villa with admirable creations from its different schools and stages of development. It was the Græco-Roman world in miniature—a world's exhibition of the forms in which human cultivation had up to that time given itself utterance. Here the emperor had hoped to rest from his labors, and live a happy old age. But he was burdened with melancholy, and with this was associated bodily suffering, that bowed him ever more and more. He sighed for death, but it delayed long. It was as though an inexorable power lay in the sacrifice with which Antinous was said to have augmented the measure of his life.

Amidst the ruined walls and rubbish of this villa have been found many statues of Antinous, among others, the fine statue at the Capitoline, the Vatican colossal bust in the Museo Pio Clementino, and the relief in the Villa Albani. The last-named work is one of touching and saddening beauty. It represents a boyish Antinous with long lotus-crowned locks, thoughtfully contemplating the wreath of Nile flowers he holds in one hand. The bust in the Museo Pio Clementino rises from out a lotus-flower, and is in particular remarkable for the moist brilliancy the artist has given the eye. Other statues of Antinous—there are more than thirty scattered through the museums of Europe, not to count the Egyptianized figures—have been dug from the tracts around Rome, at Palestrina, Frascati and other places; such as the colossal bust in the Louvre, loaded with praises by Winckelmann, a work executed in the grand and solemn style, and the magnificent statue in the Vatican, an Antinous-Iacchus, with ivy crown and thyrsus.

On the medallion reliefs, taken from some older building to adorn the triumphal arch of Constantine, but which by their merits place the coarse sculpture of his own time in so much the stronger light, the likeness of Antinous appears, certainly in one, the author thinks in two, places. This confutes the supposition still entertained by one and another, that the reliefs belong to Trajan's time, as that emperor is the hero of the majority of those. They are probably from the last years of Hadrian's life.

A few words now, concerning the Antinous type. The somewhat broad head, with its waves of luxuriant curls, has an arch that has often been thought the peculiar property of men with great sensibility, imagination and attraction towards the ideal. The forehead, in great part hidden by the falling curls, has a mighty breadth. It is the brow of presentiment and of rather the receptive, than the independently productive, power of thought; but the brow of resolution, also. The eyebrows are marked on all the statues that the author has seen: they lie close to the hollow of the eye, and have the form in which Lavater would read modesty and simplicity. The profile is Hellenic, but with nature's variation from the type: the nose does not lie in exactly the same line with the forehead. Straight, and nobly formed, it has the same broad bridge as that of the Ludovisi Hera, but at the same time something childlike in its blunt rounding. The eyes, large and deeply sunken, dream, beneath the finely marked lines of the eyelashes. The iris and pupil are wanting only in the figure of Antinous in the San Ildefonso group. The distance between the nose and mouth is unusually small. The lips are full and lightly closed. The chin keeps something of the child. So, too the cheeks. The last named features are especially those that by their formation, at once refined and full, give the face in its entirety the expression of childishness and innocence.

Of all the works of art that point to Antinous, there is none so hard to interpret as the San Ildefonso group in the museum at Madrid. Formerly the property of queen Christina, who bought it in, at Rome, it came with the Odescalchi collection to Spain, where it long stood in the palace from which it has obtained its name.* Two youths, entirely nude, crowned with wreaths, stand side by side, both looking toward the same point, with the gaze inclined downwards, as if towards an abyss that yawns a short distance from them, in front. One, somewhat elder and more strongly built, holds with the right hand a torch to the fire upon an altar; the left hand is closed around another torch that rests upon his shoulder. The features express solemn repose. The younger has his left arm around the other's neck and leans towards him with sorrowing trustfulness. The weight of the body rests upon the left foot, while the right, drawn back, touches the ground only with the tips of the toes. The youth, who has something of longing in his looks, bends forward with drooping head and attentive gaze. It is as though he would in silent wonder and not without trembling, pierce with his eye the darkness of an abyss, out of which a voice is calling to him to come. And it is plainly his purpose to go; if he wonder and feel that he shudders, it is not at death, but at that which is great, mysterious and unfathomable, in the riddle of his fate. It is resolution, without defiance or levity—deliberate, and of devotion ready for the sacrifice.

To the group belongs as attribute a small, archaically modelled Persephone, the goddess of death, with the pomegranate in her hand, and corn-measure upon her head.

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* The author has only seen copies: two in marble, at Paris and Naples, and two plaster casts, one in the Dresden museum, the other in that of Berlin.

Many conjectures clung to this group from the very day it was dug out of the earth; but the first who gave an admissible explanation was the brother of the poet Ludwig Tieck, Friedrich Tieck the sculptor, and this is approved of still, by the majority of art critics. By reason of the unmistakable likeness of the features, Tieck saw in one of the youths, Antinous. The solemn spirit that pervades the whole, the presence of the goddess of death, the altar and the torches, the wreaths in the hair of the youths, all this seemed to him to bear witness to an act of sacrifice. And who the victim is, cannot be doubted. It is Antinous, who is consecrated, and who consecrates himself to death. The elder, towards whom he leans, must be some one whom the sacrificial rite most nearly concerns, some one who stood in that relation to Antinous which the artist so feelingly expressed when he laid the latter's arm around his neck. This can be no other than Hadrian; that is to say, not the aging emperor, not the perishable in him, but the eternally young and imperishable. It is his genius.

Friederichs, in his "*Bausteine zur Geschichte der griechisch-römischen Plastik*," adopts in all essential points this view. Let us hear him.

In the interpretation, he says, the whole weight rests upon this: whether we allow or do not allow the likeness of Antinous, which certain careful observers have found in the one youth. To us, that likeness seems unmistakable. The profile in this head is clearly not an ideal profile, the distinctive mark of which is, that nose and forehead form an unbroken line. Here it forms an angle and the same angle as in the Antinous heads. Besides, the position of the eyebrows, the forehead shaded by curls, and the hair itself, are exactly as in the portraits of Antinous. With regard to Antinous' companion, it is harder to come to any conclusion. He is engaged in a sacrifice, and therefore crowned, like Antinous himself. With the torch, he lights the altar fire, which is the sign that the sacrifice begins. That he holds in the right hand another torch, may seem singular, but may correspond with a more solemn rite: on "Homer's Apotheosis," (a relief in the British Museum,) we also find a figure engaged in the sacrifice, with two torches. But for whom is the victim he is about to offer? Manifestly for the little goddess, by his side. She is rightly explained as Persephone, since she has on her head a *modius* and in her hand an attribute, which appears to be the pomegranate. A victim, then, is brought the goddess of death by the torch-bearer, in whom, to all appearance, we have to imagine a divine or allegorical being; and the sacrificial victim is no other than Antinous, who in the attitude of sorrowful devotion leans upon the other. If we remind ourselves, then, that the most trustworthy tradition of Antinous' end is that he voluntarily killed himself to prolong the life of his benefactor Hadrian, it cannot be denied that this group tellingly expresses the situation: Antinous gives himself up to the genius who is to offer him to the goddess of the world below.

So far, Friederichs. His explanation differs from that of Tieck only in this: that he does not venture upon the certainly rather bold interpretation of the "demon" as Hadrian's genius. But just on that account, his conception of the work has something hard and stern, which conflicts with its character. The handsome and melancholy torch-bearer has no likeness whatever to a spirit offering a human victim, but to a loving and beloved friend, who with deep fellow-suffering fulfills a duty imposed on him by fate.

Carl Bötticher has recently devised another interpretation. He agrees with Tieck, that the torch-bearer is Hadrian's genius, the other youth Antinous, and the small puppet-like archaic figure, Persephone. But of Antinous' dedication to death there can, in his judgment, be no question. For as Antinous gave himself up to the waves of the Nile, he should then have worn a wreath of the sacred flower of the Nile, the lotus, in his hair. The old ritual of sacrifice was in such points precise, and the artists observed it faithfully. Farther, if the premises of Tieck and Friederichs were correct, we should have expected to see the statue of Isis the Egyptian goddess, and not Persephone's, as marking the divine power to whom the victim was consecrated. The matter must have another explanation, then, and Bötticher gives the following.

The two friends, Hadrian, as a youthful genius, and Antinous, stand in the sanctuary of Persephone. To this, not only the little idol points, which is modelled in the old style of figures for the temple, but the altar, too, which is adorned, not with Nile plants, but with fruits of the earth and other symbols of Persephone. The genius and Antinous are crowned, not with Nile flowers, but with myrtle, of the noble large-leaved kind the Hellenes called *stephanitis*, and which was sacred to the goddess of the world below, ever since Dionysus, with a gift of this plant, had ransomed the soul of his mother Semele from Hades. They are performing a sacrifice, doubtless, but not a sacrifice of death. Hadrian's genius has brought Antinous to Persephone's shrine, that there, before the divinity of death, he may receive from his beloved companion the promise of inviolable friendship to the brink of the grave. Such an act, the Greeks called "pact of loyalty." That not Hadrian himself appears, but his genius, is an allusion, springing from the most delicate feeling, to the pure and noble friendship between him and Antinous. It was to the spiritual not the corporeal being of his lofty, high-minded friend, that Antinous gave his heart: to the former, not the latter, belongs the oath of fidelity. Their dearest vows, the Hellenes made by the powers of the world below: even the Olympian gods swore by Styx, the river of the lower world, and regarded the oath as sacred. The oath was spoken, while one lighted a torch or a wax light at the flame of the altar, which was made a witness of the vow and avenger of its violation. This rite, Hadrian's genius is in the very act of performing, as with the right hand he extends a torch to his friend, and with the left holds that he himself will use.

"The action described here," adds Bötticher, "leads to the conclusion that the work of art was produced *before* the death of Antinous; it bears witness of the love, blameless and lifted above every suspicion, of Hadrian for Antinous." Bötticher like Friederichs and others, does not believe the time of Hadrian capable of independently creating such a work as this. An Attic prototype from the flourishing time of art, "The pact of loyalty between Theseus and Perithous," has, perhaps at the instance of Hadrian himself, given the artist guidance. A vase is still in existence, upon which both heroes are to be seen offering together to Persephone; and on various grounds, it is to be inferred that there was a group representing this subject, in Athens.

Bötticher's interpretation is so winning, that one would gladly accept it, did not certain doubts, hard to be removed, place themselves in the way. Were it correct, the attention of both the youths would of necessity be wholly taken up by the sacred action of the promise, and their eyes fastened upon the altar or upon the torch that, according to Bötticher's conception, the one is offering the other. But exactly the opposite is the case. Neither of them gives heed to these objects. The faces of both are turned aside, somewhat: both seem to be sunken in the contemplation of an unknown something, that appears before them in an abyss at their feet. And how translate the melancholy in the features of the one, the sorrowfully devoted and resigned expression in those of the other? What have these feelings to do with a pact of loyalty?

That one of the youths who is Antinous, seems, too, to represent something else. Almost everywhere, Antinous meets us as a twofold being: as historical character and mythical personage. In the other works, this duality in unity is held to in a more superficial manner: the faithfulness, namely, of the features and of the formation of body is preserved, and the mythical nature is expressed by those attributes that mark a certain hero or god. Here, however, the artist has fused two types, or to speak more accurately, has made them change one into the other. In profile or half-profile the face of the youth has so striking a likeness to that of Antinous, that any doubt of the intention in this, cannot be entertained, although the under lip has not the accustomed fullness, and the fresh rounding of the cheek is wanting. But seen from the front, the features are merged in another type.

To this may be added, that we do not find the peculiar and easily recognized vaulting of the chest of Antinous and that the body in its entirety, where melancholy is wasting a beautiful frame, has not the Antinoan rhythm.

What, then, is this other type? In the Museo Pio Clementino, there is a figure of a youth, dug out at Centocelli near Rome, to which Visconti, without the smallest reason, has given the name of Apollo; while the bended head, the fixed gaze and the expression of longing, point to Narcissus at the spring. The Antinous of the San Ildefonso group has from the front the strongest likeness to this statue, and might therefore be an Antinous-Narcissus.

On a Pompeian picture preserved at Naples, is to be seen behind Narcissus a genius, with a lowered and lighted torch. Such a work of art may have inspired Ovid with the simile he uses in his fine representation of Narcissus, when he likens the youth's susceptibility to passion with that of the torch to the fire brought near it. There comes, even in this poem, a moment when the genius of death no longer stands in the background of the picture; when Narcissus feels his presence, and calls him to his side, as a friend and deliverer:

primoque extinguor in ævo,
Nec mihi mors gravis est, posituro morte dolores.

(In the morning of life I perish; yet to me death is not hard, for sorrows are stilled by death.)

If this youth be, then, an Antinous-Narcissus, the group undoubtedly treats, as Tieck has conjectured, of a death sacrifice, and not of a pact of loyalty; and then Persephone, as equally suited to an interpretation of the one kind and the other, is better in her place than Isis, who could only allude to the death of the one in the Nile, not to that of the other at the spring. And in this case the torch-bearer, in relation to Narcissus, may be the genius of death with the torches of the perishable and the enduring; to Antinous, Hadrian's genius, that gave his beloved friend death and immortality.

To the myth-interpreters of that time, Narcissus was not self-love. The reflected image with which he fell in love, was the ideal; and the spring, the cold wave of reality, which every one encounters when he would take that ideal to his heart. The expression, in Narcissus, is therefore that of wasting away. He cannot approach the ideal before decay has consumed everything earthly in his being. In Antinous, art has expressed another but nearly-related feeling. Antinous has something pantheistic in him. He seems, without intermission, to look fixedly into the Heraclitan stream of life. As man, before his apotheosis, he grieves over the annihilation that inevitably comes to every single thing, and asks with anxiety: whence and whither? until every question is resolved into dreams that flow on with the stream. After his apotheosis, he has, through the loving sacrifice of himself, found the key to the riddle of life and death, and secure in its possession, looks down with imperturbable calm into the flood of hollow seeming that hurries past him. The master who made the San Ildefonso group has sought to fuse into one, these two sentiments. That he has done so with as clear a purpose as that with which he has united the two types, can nevertheless not be affirmed. Great artists are philosophers without knowing it. The thoughts of the time, as far as they admit of expression, are translated by them, in form and color.

But if the artist have, as it seems to me, wished to give us an Antinous-Narcissus in action, he has made his task very difficult; for, easy as it comparatively is to represent a dual personality in a state of repose, and not grouped, just so hard is it, to make it appear in a group, and engaged in an action that may with equal freedom be referred to both natures in its being. Perhaps the difficulty of explaining the San Ildefonso group is an evidence of this. But a blemish, that hardness of interpretation is not, which, as in this case, tempts every beholder to lay some of his own subjectivity into the work, and invites the mind to efforts at explanation, though only to resolve it again into the feeling of a mysticism that rests upon the object. If we have long stood face to face with Antinous, all impressions at last combine in one feeling, the nearest utterance of which is given in the poet Lenau's admonition:

Didst thou e'er see a joy go by,
Thou never mayst recover,
Cast on the hurrying stream thine eye,
A bubble, and all is over.

. . . .

In the fifteen hundreds, at the time when art through Michael Angelo and Raphael celebrated the feast of triumph of her resurrection, it happened—so says a Roman tradition—that a man who had wandered up to the Sabine mountains, and lost himself in the ruins of the Villa Adriana, forgot that he was there, as he saw the beams of the evening sun play until they were tired on the ivy-clad stones. Night came, and the star-picture of Antinous shone through the laurels and cypresses. The man thought of great Cæsar Hadrian, whose shade was said to dwell there, and the thought called up the sighing spirit; and it told him Hadrian never should find rest, until the good name of the Bithynian youth should be cleared. This message the pilgrim bore to Raphael, who was then engaged on the Chigian chapel in the church of Santa Maria del Popolo. Thus ripened a thought that Raphael long had cherished, to christen Antinous, consecrate his beauty, and bestow on the youth who had given up himself, a place in the veneration of those who in Christ adore the mystery of self-sacrifice, and of the life eternal won by self-sacrifice. And so in Raphael the bold plan was conceived, of making the Chigian chapel a temple to Antinous, under the name of the prophet Jonah.

As Antinous, by voluntary death, would save the Roman ship of state and its master, so in the storm had Jonah rescued vessel and crew, when he said: "take me up, and cast me forth into the sea." And as Jonah, after "the waters had compassed him about, the depth closed him round about, and the weeds were wrapped about his head," was restored to the light of day, and became to the Christians a sign of the resurrection, so grew Antinous up out of the depths, in the cup of the lotus-flower, and flew towards immortality—to the heathen, a type of the imperishable in man.

So was the heathen allegory knit with the Christian, and Jonah, under the pencil of Raphael became, not the aged, long-bearded prophet, clothed in a mantle, but the youthfully fair, nude pagan Antinous, now free from all pain, and rejoicing that life had vanquished death. As such, has he been seen for more than three centuries, in the church by the side of the Porta del Popolo.

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The suggestive and winning tradition of Eros and Psyche, also made famous by Raphael, is in its classic form contemporary with Antinous. He who first wrote it down, was born about the time that Antinous died; but it was then already known and widely diffused. The tradition seems like a sister to him. They bear each other's features, and over them both falls a glimmer of the evening glow of departing antiquity.

Still there—where he a thousand years hath stood
And watched, with gaze intent, the ages' flood
His graceful limbs reflecting, then as now,
His lotus-crown, the sadness on his brow.

And races new, in line unending, glide
Along in shells upon the flowing tide;
With purple pennant, mast entwined with flow'rs,
And song and strings and jest, to charm the hours.

But aye, as they approach and look on him,
Athwart their joy there steals a sorrow dim:
The citherns cease, that rang ere they drew nigh,
On glowing lips the jests and kisses die.

For where he stands, eternal blooms the shore,
Around him laughs the Spring for evermore;
But through the Spring their way, beyond a dark
Autumnal world, leads tow'rd a hidden mark.

Into the azure depths his glances thrown,
The riddle search, that race on race hath known
And pondered on, but left unsolved, as done
Its task, it vanished with the setting sun.

What vision rivets, then, the eye cast down?
What means the cloud of grief beneath the crown?
O if that sorrowing gentle face of his
Reflect the mystery of all that is!

And lo, the heart is seized by infinite woe.
With arms outstretched they gaze, as on they go:
"O waken, boy, O waken from thy dream!
Say what thou seest, below the ages' stream!

"Tell us, is life's enigma known to thee:
Give us thy own fair immortality!"—
But ere he from his revery waken, they
Have with the river drifted far away.

PREFATORY NOTE TO ROMAN TRADITIONS.

THE pilgrims of ages gone by, came to Rome to see the spots hallowed to them by traditions of the church. These traditions live yet, and often meet us, in the eternal city; but in so far as they have not been made themes of one or another distinguished artist's productions, they are passed by with indifference. For Rome's purely historic memories, its treasures of beauty from the days of antiquity or of the new birth of art, the many-colored life of its people, and its beautiful environs, appeal with incomparably better right to the stranger's mind. One and another "legend" may, however, still be read; and this seems to me especially true of those that have become linked to the life and death of the great apostles. Without seeking these traditions, I found them on my way, and venture herewith to offer them to the public.

If one desire to reproduce them in the form they take in the places themselves, he must surrender every thought of clothing them in the noble and simple dress that belong to the true creatures of a people's imagination. With a claim, assuredly ill-founded but all the more tenaciously held, to be pure truth, they wrap themselves in the garb of history. To the mass of the people they appear as art has conceived them; and that art is in most cases the post-Raphaelite, which is not exactly distinguished by straightforward simplicity. In my own narration, I have neither been able nor wished to avoid the influence of this. Perhaps it is far too apparent, notably in the description of the "Ascension of Simon the Sorcerer." VIKTOR RYDBERG.

ROMAN TRADITIONS OF PETER AND PAUL.

I.

PAUL IN NAPLES.

ONE beautiful day in the year 61 after the birth of our Lord, an Alexandrian ship, called "The Dioscuri," and adorned with figures of Castor and Pollux, was seen to drop anchor in the harbor of Puteoli,* the city so rich in temples, a journey of an hour or two from Naples.

On board was a division of Roman soldiers, with some prisoners of state. The soldiers, born Italians, saw their native land again with all the greater joy, that they had long done tedious service in the distant land of Judah, where the inhabitants had always shown them a sullen face, and where many signs foreboded an insurrection of the people. In honor of going ashore, they had polished their armor and put on the plumes that marked them as belonging to a body of life-guard, the Augustan cohort, of equal birth with the prætorian life-guard in Rome.

Less reason to rejoice at the sight of Italy's coast, had the prisoners. They were to be conveyed to the capital, and placed before the judgment-seat of the emperor. But the emperor, then, was called Nero, and the decrees of the judgment-seat bore all too often the stamp of the cruel whims of a tyrant's humor.

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* Pozzuoli.—C.

Among the prisoners, was one to whom ship's crew and soldiers both paid especial respect—a short, spare man, slightly bent, with bald head, and prematurely old features, arched eyebrows grown together, thick beard, fine contours and expressive eyes. He was a Jew, born in Tarsus, of a respectable family, that owned the right of Roman citizenship, at that time a kind of nobility. The scribes in Jerusalem had accused him of offences against their law and temple, and what was worse, against the Roman emperor; and the accused had, on the ground of his rights as a Roman citizen, appealed to the judgment-seat of Cæsar. On that account he was now upon his way to Rome. The prisoner was named Paul.

The harbor of Puteoli was full of ships from all the countries skirting the Mediterranean, and its streets were thronged with strangers: Greeks, Syrians, Jews, Egyptians, Africans and Hispanians. The surrounding heights were oversprinkled with multitudes of splendid castles and villas, belonging to Roman senators and knights. Nero himself loved to sojourn amid this luxuriant nature, as Lucullus and Cicero had done before him.

Among the numerous Jews and Greeks in Puteoli, were some who had let themselves be baptized to Christ, and who often assembled, for mutual building-up in the faith. Had they known whom "The Dioscuri" was now bringing ashore, they would have hastened to meet Paul, for his name and deeds were familiar to them, and his Epistle to the Romans, in written copies, had reached the Christians of Puteoli and been read by them with attention and diligence.

They were now ready to land. The captain of the soldiers was called Julius. The Acts of the Apostles testify that in his behavior to Paul he displayed a liberal spirit. He summoned Paul to him and said: "Before we continue our journey to Rome, we stop seven days in Puteoli. Use them as you wish! You can go where you will, but accompanied by a soldier. If during that time you would like to see Naples, you are free to do so. Thanks for your good and helpful counsel, in the danger to our lives we went through, on the sea. God keep you!"

Paul sought out his brethren in the faith, and that very evening they sat in unity together. The elders of the church at Puteoli sent word to the Christians at Rome and caused them to be told: "Paul, the proclaimer and servant of our Saviour, is here, and in seven days' time will be in Rome. Go out to meet him."

. . . .

Here begin the traditions. If they may not bear the close scrutiny of the historian, they yet perhaps may bear a hearing.

Paul was very ready to follow the friendly captain's advice to see Naples. Not because the beauty of city and neighborhood, or the works of art, or the glad life of the people, would have drawn him, like so many others, thither. He had reasons of his own. The foremost was that Jesus, at the time he wandered dreaming as boy and youth, by the shores of Gennesareth had longed to see this enchanting region, and had satisfied his longing; had come thither, and climbed Vesuvius, and seen.

Paul would tread that dust in which the Sinless had once set His foot, and look upon the same sights as He.

So the apostle came to Naples. But the temples and castles of the city, its noisy crowd of men in pursuit of pleasure, he left behind him—and went up towards Vesuvius.

The mountain did not look, then, as it does now. The highest of its summits, now encompassed by volcanic clouds and threatening all around with destruction, was then not there. Not a sign foreboded that fire was at work within. No chronicle had foretold an eruption. Grecian joy in existence, and Roman luxury, held their revels in security, in the woods and pleasure-gardens that clothed the declivities up to the very height of the plain of Somma, without the least anxiety about the fact, that this ashen waste, with its murky gaps and flame-gnawed blocks of stone, disclosed that of which the annals had said nothing: they lived and sported on the surface of a mountain of fire.

There wandered Paul now, laying aside all thoughts of the fate that awaited him in Rome. The road led him farther and farther up. And now he came to a spot where the magic beauty of the scene held him enchained. He looked out over Parthenope, lying beneath, embedded in woods of laurel, cypress, plane and olive, over the shores strewn with cities of shining white, the purple isles, the boundless sea. He was glad in the knowledge that the same sea had once glassed its sunny shores in the gentlest of all eyes, mirrors of the purest and most innocent soul that ever came down to our earth; and with folded hands he whispered:

"God's wonderful nature is seen in His works—in the creation of the world!"

. . . .

Just above the spot where, according to the tradition, Paul stopped, captivated by the surpassing beauty of this region, is situated in our time the observatory, in which a zealous man of science, Palmieri, follows every movement within the passionate breast of Vesuvius.

A little below the observatory, there is an *osteria*, once a hermitage. The friendly host is pleased to set before weary visitors a red wine, which he calls *lacrymæ Christi*, but which commonly has a strange likeness, as far as taste goes, to the juice of Ischia's or Marsala's grape. But if he suspect the traveller to be a judge of wine, it may also happen that with many cunning chuckles, he will bring out a wine which has actually grown upon Somma, and is the real *lacrymæ*, to be known by its full, rich color and fine fragrance.

. . . .

Here stood, in Paul's time, a peasant's hut. Its owner, an old man with silver hair, when he saw the stranger, stopped his work with the vines, and came forward to meet him. Paul accepted his invitation to rest under his roof and refresh himself at his board. The fruits the daughter of the house set forth, were juicy, and the wine, beyond measure pleasant to the taste. Paul praised it, as a good gift, and the host said: "Its origin, too, is of the strangest." And he told the following story of it.

One day, about thirty years before, he had seen just on the spot where late he found his guest, an unknown youth, with golden locks and brow white as a lily; clothed as a Hebrew, but beautiful as the son of a god, and not unlike Dionysus. The youth looked out over land and shores and sea, and said this region was a bit of the glory of paradise, of that splendor of the true Olympus, that had fallen to earth during the struggle, in the morning of time, between powers of good and evil Titans. And he wept at thought of the suffering and sin with which this garden of delight is filled. After he had departed, there sprang up from the ground his tears had watered, a vine, which grew with miraculous swiftness, and bore the first of the grapes that yielded the juice in Paul's beaker.

"I have my own thoughts about that youth," said the silver-haired host. "A god has honored the neighborhood of my hut with his presence. He was Dionysus, giver of the grape, son of the supreme god."

"I think with you," said the soldier, Paul's guard, and emptied his goblet.

"Yes, a god's son he assuredly was," replied Paul, "and a noble, life-giving wine has he bestowed on us, in the cup in which grace has been given me to drink, in memory of him."

"You know him then, you also?"

"Yes, even to me, he has appeared. On earth he was not, however, called Dionysus, but Jesus of Nazareth."

"He did indeed so name himself," cried the old man, and passed a hand over his forehead, as if to revive a half-effaced recollection.

"Will you hear more of Him?" asked the apostle.

"Yes, tell us all that you know!"

And Paul spoke. He was speaking still, when the sun sank behind Ischia, and flooded the sea and its hovering sails with the purple of evening. The people of the house had gathered around him. Before him sat the host's daughter, devoutly listening, with her hands in her lap. It grew dark, the lamp was lighted, and still he spoke.

Before he next morning departed, he had baptized them all, even the soldier that followed him, in the name of Christ.

But that wine, which according to the story was born of the tears of the golden-haired youth, grows on Vesuvius yet, and is called *lacrymæ Christi*—Tears of Christ.

. . . .

The owner of the hut was a really intelligent man. He did not own many books; but one he had that he read assiduously, and that was the "Georgics" of Virgil; for there, in ringing verse, he had found excellent counsel, touching the care of vineyards, fields, domestic animals and beehives.

He was glad, therefore, when Paul said that he too had some acquaintance with what Virgil had sung; in fact, that one of the two reasons why he had come to Naples, was, that he wished to see the poet's grave.

On the other side of Naples and the bay, lies Mount Posilipo. According to tradition, the ashes of Virgil are buried there. The ancient tomb, a so-called *columbarium*, that is believed to contain his dust, is one of the city's curiosities, which every boy in Naples knows.

Thither Paul now took his way, accompanied by his host. They shortened the road with talk. "If I reckon rightly," said the old man, "Our Lord and Master appeared upon Vesuvius the very year Virgil died."

"Yes," said Paul, "the grace was not granted him, he so ardently yearned after: to live long enough to sing of the crucified conqueror's mighty work—

'*O be the autumn of life prolonged, and my age be accorded*
Spirit and strength enough to sing of the works, thou achievest.'*

But Christ has since descended into the place of departed spirits, and proclaimed deliverance to the expectant souls. Virgil has seen him, there."

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* Virgil, Ecl. 4, verses 53, 54.

"I am glad to hear that, for he was in his lifetime dear to all who knew him," said the old man from Vesuvius.

And so they came to the goal of their pilgrimage. The apostle stood long, lost in silent thought, by the grave of the heathen singer. An old Latin song tells us that he "shed the dew of pious tears," over the dust, and at last uttered:

"Could I on my path have stayed thee,
What a man I might have made thee,
Greatest of the poets all!" *

Near the resting-place of Virgil stood, at that time, a stately villa adorned with Grecian works of art, belonging to the poet Silius Italicus. He was in the habit of daily visiting the grave, which was for him as a holy temple. He came even now, accompanied by his friend Plinius, chief captain of the Roman fleet stationed at Misenum. Crowned with chaplets and wrapped in their togas, they approached the Hebrew stranger, and began a friendly conversation with him. Paul said to Silius: "I also can prophesy, although I am no poet. And I say to you now, that we two, by separate ways but in the same year, shall rise to the highest point of our honor. Thy way shall lead up before the Capitol, and steel shall glitter in front of thee. My way shall lead down from the Aventine hill, and after me shall the steel drop blood."

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* Ad Maronis mausoleum
Ductus, fudit super eum
Piæ rorem lacrymæ.
Quantum, inquit, te fecissem
Virum, si te invenissem,
Poetarum maxime!

Seven years after, Silius Italicus became Roman consul, and before him were borne the consular marks of honor—the lictor's axes. The same year the apostle was led out before the Ostian gate, and beheaded.

. . . .

'Tis a strange story, that of Virgil. Not he, the shy, girlish, retiring man, could in his lifetime foresee that he should, as by enchantment, take captive the imagination of all ages to come. The less could he foresee it, that he, so mild in judging others, judged himself and his songs severely, received with mistrust the enthusiasm they awakened, and valued as nothing what is called an immortal name. A quiet life sweetened by friendship, and after death, oblivion—were the best lot he wished for. His most celebrated work, The Æneid, was rescued from the flames only by setting aside the dying poet's last will. But as has been said, his name has come down through all these centuries, and all times have loved him. Even the darkest epoch of the middle ages, honored him after its fashion; for popular superstition made of him a benevolent and philanthropic magician, and invented Virgil sagas, that reached even Iceland; while the church very nearly made him a Christian prophet, engrafted his name in its liturgy, and gave him a place of honor at the feet of the seers of the Old Testament. Nor does this seem so strange, either, when one reads the fourth of his pastorals, in which he links to some verses about a child's cradle, the prediction of a new order of things—a golden age, when justice shall come back to the earth, our sins shall be blotted out, the serpent trodden down, and the lamb shall feed in peace by the lion. Many a cloudier prophecy has been thought to refer to the Messiah.

When Dante, in the spirit, undertook his journey through the awful regions under earth, a gentle shade crowned with laurel, walked by his side, teaching and soothing him—Virgil. Never has Gustave Doré more skilfully used his pencil, than in the drawings to the "Divine Comedy" of Dante, where he has placed these pilgrims side by side; one with the plastic bearing of the antique, and a noble ease in his movements, the other, irritable and passionate in every gesture. When Swedenborg, in his pavilion at Stockholm, received guests from the world of spirits, Virgil was one of those with whom he by preference spoke. Year after year, trains of pilgrims go, as Paul did aforetime, to Virgil's grave. Many go only to have been there. But assuredly they are many, too, who go thither to offer at his grave their warm thanksgiving for the grand and beautiful pictures with which he filled the inner world of their boyhood.

The road thither is worth going. It winds along the *Riviera di Chiaja*, by the *Villa Nazionale* and *Boschetto*, where the high society of Naples unfolds its magnificence, as dower to one of the most beautiful shores in the world. You stroll under palms, acacias and evergreen oaks, through the leafy vault of which the sunbeams seek a way, to sparkle upon marble statues or break in the spray of swelling fountains. On the right, you have the street, with its throng of riders and its carriages with fair, dark-eyed women; on the left, the sea, with fresh breezes, playing waves and shimmering colors, no pencil can ever portray. Here, already, you can do homage to Virgil; for the Neapolitans have raised an Ionic temple to him in the *Boschetto*, and between the rows of columns you see his bust. There is reason to stop here, and tarry a while on the round terrace that projects over the sea, and is called "Belvedere," sung in the lays of poets, (still more in the songs of the waves,) inviting to dreams without mysticism, to contemplation without sadness. Over the plain of glistening waters, mingling with glass-like ring of the advancing waves, and fresh murmur of the broken and retreating, from afar is faintly heard the fisherman's song:

Sul mare luccica
l'astro d'argento,
placida è l'onda
prospero il vento—
O dolce Napoli,
suolo beato,
dove sorridere
volle il creato—

and meanwhile, sunshine and golden vapors strive with each other out there on the horizon, Sorrento shines like silver, and over coast and islands, liquid metallic hues melt one into another.

When once you have torn yourself away from this place, the grotto of Posilippo and the height where the grave of Virgil is shown, are not far off, if you are not too chary of the minutes. With a *custode* as guide, you ascend a winding staircase, bounded on both sides by the rich vegetation of the South; you come to views you shall never forget, when you have seen them once; and you are finally ushered into the vault containing the grave; which, with its niches for urns holding the ashes of the dead, much resembles other *columbaria*, but in which you find the well-known inscription:

"Mantua's son, and the prey of Calabria,* Parthenope now holds me, who sang of herds, fields and war."

Mantua me genuit, Calabri rapuere, tenet nunc
Parthenope, cecini pascua, rura, duces.

The inscription was to be read, during the middle ages, over the frieze of the vault. Now it is again to be seen on a sort of memorial stone that a Frenchman, with not altogether uncommon Gallic vanity, has erected, in order at the cheapest possible price to let Virgil's name drag his own into the haven of immortality. The stone announces solemnly that it is "*consacré au prince des poètes latins*" by Mr. (I do best in leaving out the name) "*bibliothécaire de la reine des Français.*" Well, Virgil immortalized Bavius: why not, then, the well-meaning "*bibliothécaire*" from Paris?

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From Puteoli, Paul continued his journey to Rome, burdened with gloomy thoughts; but at the *Forum Appii* and the *Tres Tabernæ*, several miles from the capital, a large number of Christians had come together, to meet him, on the Appian Way; and when he saw them, says the Acts of the Apostles, he took courage and thanked God. He had now travelled over the Pontine marshes. On the right, he had the wild Volscian mountains, before him the Alban mountains, on the slopes of which were to be seen the cities of Velitræ and Lanuvium. Now they went on through fairer and richer lands, strewn with castles, villas, country-houses and magnificent tombs, and at last appeared before the apostle's eyes—Rome, queen of the world, with her walls, and with her hills, crowned by stately palaces and temples. Through the Porta Capena, they entered the Eternal City. We shall find Paul there again.

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* On a journey back from Greece, in company with the emperor Augustus, Virgil was taken ill and died in Calabria. The phrase "prey of Calabria" alludes to this.

II.

PAUL IN ROME.

AMONG the Christians who went out upon the Appian Way to meet Paul, to welcome and comfort him, was a man of the name of Martialis. All the brethren of the faith could relate of him, that which follows.

His parents lived in the land of Judah, beyond the Jordan. One day, came Jesus with his disciples into that region; and as usual much people assembled to hear the words of the Galilean Master. Jesus spoke this time of the sanctity of the marriage tie, and of the love that makes home the dwelling-place of God. When the mothers who were among his listeners heard this, they pressed forward with their children, that He should bless them. Among the women was the mother of Martialis. Softly pushing her son before her, she stood pale and imploring before the Saviour, who read in her look that she wished on the head of her boy to bring a blessing into her house. The disciples signed her to be gone. She was about to yield; but Jesus said: "Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God." And he took the boy in his arms, laid his hands upon his locks in blessing, and said to those standing by: "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein."

From that hour, Martialis followed Jesus. When by a miracle He fed a hungry throng in the wilderness, Martialis bore the basket of bread and the fishes around. It was he who served at table, when Jesus held the Last Supper with his disciples. He was the youngest, but perhaps esteemed the foremost of the disciples who were closest to Jesus and the Apostles, and who were called "the seventy."

Martialis had early taken a resolution to proclaim Christianity in the capital of the world. He had now for several years dwelt in Rome, where he owned a house in the *via lata* (the same street that afterwards received the name of *Corso*,) in which the faithful often assembled.

. . . .

Julius, the captain, conducted Paul and the other prisoners to the administrative palace of the chief of the prætorian guard, where he left them.

Next to the emperor, the chief of the guard was the mightiest man in the Roman empire. He who now held this office was called Burrus Afranius, a man of strict principles and a good general. Jointly with the philosopher Seneca, he had been the emperor Nero's preceptor and teacher, but had no joy of that now. Burrus read the official letters Julius handed him, attentively through, after which he announced: "The man whose name is Saul, and who is entitled Paul, can live here at liberty, but under guard of a soldier." Festus, governor of Judea, had written, namely, that Paul's affair had reference only to a petty quarrel between two parties of the Jews, and he himself would have set him at liberty, had not Paul appealed to the judgment-seat of the emperor.

When the Christians who were waiting with the prisoners below in the court of the palace, heard that Paul, instead of being cast into prison, would be allowed to go about in freedom, they rejoiced; and Martialis and his wife eagerly offered him a dwelling-place in their house. "With us you can rest," they said; "for God has blessed our home with prosperity and peace."

"Peace, I have no right to seek," answered Paul; "but here by my side you see a brother who needs the quiet of a good home, for the work he intends to perform. He is an artist in many branches: physician, painter and writer. In your house, he will paint pictures of our Saviour and his mother, so that we and those who come after us may see them, as though we had the beloved ones bodily before our eyes; and with you, he shall under inspiration of the Spirit, write the annals of the early lot of our brotherhood, and the acts of Christ's messengers."

And so it came to pass. Luke followed Martialis to his home, and there, in the course of the year, wrote his Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles; and with colors, he fixed on the canvas the features of Jesus and the Virgin Mary.

Paul hired for himself a house very near that quarter of the city where his kindred in the flesh then had and have still, their abiding-place—the so-called Ghetto: the peculiar life of which, and its narrow, dirty lanes, exhort the artist's pencil to activity, and his sense of smell, to rest.

This house, or rather a successor upon the ground on which it was built, is called to this day "Paul's School," as for two years he taught there daily, and instructed concerning Christ; and in doing so, himself penetrated more deeply into the mysteries of the doctrine of the Messiah. There he wrote the Epistles to the Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians, as well as the short, but liberal and artistically beautiful, Epistle to Philemon. There, he is said to have received the philosopher Seneca—tradition knows of a correspondence between Paul and Seneca—besides another Roman of high degree, Theophilus, to whom Luke has inscribed his gospel. Through the soldiers who guarded Paul, knowledge of the new religion was spread from the same centre to the captains of the prætorian guard, and through them, to members of the emperor's household.

Between the bridge of Sextus and the Ghetto, on the Via della Regola, behind the old church of S. Paolo alla Regola, "Paul's School" is to be found. In its present shape, it is a moderately large hall, the walls of which are full of inscriptions, quoted from the Acts of the Apostles, but where there is otherwise nothing ancient or remarkable, to be seen.

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When Paul came the second time to Rome, he accepted the renewed invitation of Martialis, and stayed at his house, until amid the tears of the Christians, he was removed to the Mamertine prison.

The peace that reigned in Martialis's dwelling, was not of the outward kind; for on one side of the house ran *via lata* (Broad Street) the main artery connecting the Roman market, the Capitol and the Field of Mars; and in its immediate neighborhood, the portico of the great bazaar, Septa Julia, extended its colonnades. But while the billows of human life roared round about this home, its children stood in reverent silence around the writing-table of Paul, or by the easel of Luke, and followed with wonder the movements of the pen on the parchment, or of the pencil on the canvas; and as they thus stood, it often happened that they saw by their side other children, winged, and shining with a beauty above that of earth, who came to mingle the colors of Luke, or whisper something to Paul, as lost in thought he suffered the pen to lie idle.

If you go from the Piazza di Venezia into the Corso, Rome's chief thoroughfare, you have immediately on the left the Doria Pamfili palace, and next it a church, *Santa Maria in via lata*. Once a year, in this more elaborately than chastely adorned temple, a solemn mass is celebrated; and the opportunity is then given to look at a Madonna, over the high altar, which tradition says is by the hand of Luke the Evangelist, and was discovered beneath the church—where are to be found remains of the house of Martialis, transformed into a crypt with two chapels. Two flights of stairs lead down to the rooms where Paul wrote the epistles to Timothy and Titus, and where Luke painted and wrote. The walls yet bear traces of frescoes from the olden time. The pious, for whom tradition is history, leave not the holy twilight here below, without having drunk of a spring Paul called up from the earth, to baptize in. In those days, however, the rooms stood above ground, and had light enough for pen and easel. But the streets of Rome have risen, with centuries. The eternal city is a kind of geological history. Wheresoever you dig, there, you will find the periods of history piled one upon another.

. . . .

No day passed in Rome without some event of note, which took the curiosity and attention of all captive, until a new day came, with a new event. Now, the emperor gave, in the amphitheatre or the Circus Maximus, or the theatre of Marcellus, some festal pageant of marvelous splendor. Now, he himself came before the Roman people in the character of singer or driver. Often a rumor ran around, that some member of the emperor's household, or some great man suspected of republican ideas, had been put out of the way. Sometimes there was talk of mysterious warning signs, that had appeared in secluded parts of the country; of conspiracies in Rome; of mutinous movements among the armies stationed at the frontiers of the empire. But at this time, one thing in particular formed the theme of conversation, not for a day only but for weeks and months, in all the circles of Rome. On the forum, at the great baths, everywhere where citizens and strangers came together in numbers, they asked each other: " Have you seen Simon the wise man? Have you heard of the miracle he last performed?"

There was no less talk of his companion, Helene. Divine wisdom, it was said, had become incarnate in her person. A more beautiful woman, no one had seen. But most people added that her beauty made them shudder. She was like an image of Isis. Her features were fixed, her skin was of the Parian marble's hue, her eyes had the lustre of gems, but not of life. Was she a statue, to which Simon's magic had given the power of motion? Was she mortal creature, or spirit of evil?

When Paul had sojourned several days in Rome, he walked across the Field of Mars to the Flaminian gate and the Garden Hill (Monte Pincio). The Field of Mars was filled with a crowd of people, attracted by the rumor that Simon the Sorcerer and Helene would appear. And they came, in a triumphal car, glancing with gold and drawn by white horses; Simon, clad as Jupiter Serapis, with corn-measure glistening with gems, upon his head and sceptre in hand; Helene, as Isis, with the veil of *byssos*, diadem shaped like a half-moon, and in her locks a lotus-flower. In their driver, people knew the emperor himself. The car was girt by wreathed singers and boys bearing censers. Before and behind it, rode prætorian guards, in armor of gold. Along the entire way the procession moved, people sank upon their knees and cried: "Hail, god from Samaria, Cæsar's friend! Hail, wisdom divine, Helene!" From the boats on the Tiber, rang song and music of strings, and into the water baskets of lotus-flowers were flung, which, as they rocked on the waves, might cause a spectator to believe the sacred streams of Memphis and of Rome had united in one.

In the crowd, was one or another philosopher, republican or Christian, who would not fall in the dust before the magician, and the ruler of the world, his driver. Such hurried away. But Paul stood upright, and his eye sought and met Simon's.

He had guessed aright. It was the very impostor who had wished to purchase from the apostles the power of the Holy Ghost—in the belief that all things, even the holiest, could be bought with money. Yes, it was undoubtedly Simon *Magus*, the magician from Gitton in Samaria, disciple of the Egyptian priests, the worst foe of Christendom; it was he, whose shameful offer Luke had that very day described in his advancing work, the Acts of the Apostles. And Paul knew now, he should have a hard struggle to go through, with that man.

. . . .

In Rome, Simon exercised a boundless influence. He had come thither to establish a new religion. People, little content with the old which they had inherited, sought in all quarters better satisfaction for their devout feelings, and their attraction towards the mysterious. Great flocks (especially of women of rank) made pilgrimages, therefore, to the temple of Isis and the caves of Mitras, where, in heart-enthralling music, incomprehensible forms of prayer and strange rites of the temple, they thought they perceived a higher world. Simon had now made himself chief priest in the temple of Isis and the grottoes of Mitras, where, with his magic, he intoxicated every sense and stupefied the whole understanding. Paul found with sorrow that many who before had listened to the Christian teaching, had been torn from him, and followed the daily augmenting current of imposture.

Before Simon Magus came to Rome, the emperor Nero's reign had promised well; had given signs of a bent towards useful enterprise, and of a philanthropic disposition. But now, he had suddenly been changed into a madman, a wild beast. Whence did this come?

Nero had wished to see Helene at his palace, and hear from her lips the most occult truth of divine wisdom. It was else forbidden to speak to Helene, and herself she spoke to none. When sometimes she appeared in a chosen circle, it was for a passing moment, only; and then, all forgot she was silence itself, for the majesty in her bearing and the charm in her immobility, were mighty as the eloquence of a Demosthenes. In a goddess like her, a seal upon the lips was what it is with many another —the wisest and most effective speech.

Simon Magus gave his consent to the fulfillment of the emperor's wish, but on the following conditions. Helene, accompanied by himself, should come to the palace by night, at change of the moon. No sound to remind of the busy life of day, must be heard within its walls. Courtiers and guards should receive them in silence. Torch and lamp should but meagrely light their way. The emperor should receive Helene in his throne-room, alone, and should listen to her, without himself uttering a word.

And thus it came to pass. With Simon, she one night came in a palanquin to the palace. Through shining marble corridors and halls, lit by sparsely scattered lamps, the veiled woman was ushered by a silent courtier deeper and deeper into the palace on the Palatine. Here and there, was seen a centurion of the guard keeping watch, stiff and rigid, as though the chisel had cut him from the wall by which he stood. At the doors of the throne-room, Simon stopped. Within, but a few candelabra were lighted, and in the shade of the background, sat the emperor on his throne. Helene clad as an Egyptian priestess glided in, with noiseless footfall drew near, strode up the steps of the throne, drew back her veil, bent her marble head over Nero, fastened her frigid, gem-like eyes with the power of the snake-charmer upon his, and whispered in his ear—what? "The most occult truth of divine wisdom." But what is its import? Nero sat as if changed into stone. Helene glided off. But the following night, Nero bade the poison-mixer Locusta be summoned to him, who before his eyes prepared the death-draught for Britannicus. After this, followed murder upon murder.

Peter the apostle, supervisor of the Roman congregation, was at that time absent on journeys in the West, for the purpose of making converts. An angel called him back to Rome, to co-operate with Paul in the struggle with Simon the Sorcerer.

At a banquet of intimates of the emperor, to which only Simon, Sporus the effeminately handsome favorite, and a few voluptuaries of rank were invited, Sporus, under influence of the Falernian wine, said to Simon:

"Great are thy wonderful works. Yet none of them can be likened with the last miracle of Jesus the Nazarene, when he ascended living into heaven. Do that after him, if thou canst, or own thyself beaten."

Simon answered: "Such a thing, only the ignorant can hold to be miraculous. In death, man casts aside his coarser wrapping, and that which then remains is a transfigured body, for which the stars have resistless attraction. But a wonder in truth, and perhaps the greatest of all, would it be, if one clothed in his tabernacle of clay, were to rise to Olympus. That never yet has come to pass, though the Jews have had much talk of such things."

"And that is impossible, even for the greatest worker of miracles," said Nero.

"No, Cæsar, for thee and Simon, nothing is impossible," interrupted the magician from Gitton.

"I take thee at thy word!" cried the half-drunken Nero. "Thou shalt make an ascension to heaven, before mine eyes and the Roman people's, or thou shalt die!"

"I will with these limbs, before thy face and that of the all-powerful people of Rome, ascend above the clouds, to the royal throne of my father Jove, drink Cæsar's happiness in the brimming beakers of Ganymede the cupbearer, and afterwards come back to earth, and the god of earth—the emperor, my friend."

"Good," cried Nero, "that will be a sight to offer the people, the like of which has never been seen. But soon, soon!"

"Fourteen days from this, I will undertake my ascension. After that, the whole people will believe in me."

Simon emptied his cup, and added: "The miracle is alone of its kind, but for me a trifle. Cæsar, let us speak now of more serious or of merrier things!"

The next morning, all Rome knew the day and hour, when Simon the Sorcerer should fly from the Capitol to heaven, and people talked of nothing else.

Peter hastened to Paul, and both apostles agreed to be among the spectators, at the Forum, on the decisive day.

III.

THE ASCENSION OF SIMON THE SORCERER.

THE expected day had come at last. Senate and tribunals had suspended their business, booths and workshops stood empty, the camp of the prætorian guard by the Porta Nomentana was deserted—only a few sentinels paced to and fro there, grumbling that the service should hinder them from being present at the great festival of the day—the gymnastic and warlike games of the Field of Mars were for the time given up, the closely-built Aventine hill was to-day as silent as the brilliant quarter, Suburra ; for everything that had life and limb, had hastened to the show-place of the ascent of Simon the wise man.

The Roman market, the holy way and the colonnades of temples and basilicas there, exhibited one tightly-packed mass of human beings. Every tower and pinnacle, every roof, projection and window on the Esquiline hill, was filled with spectators, like quiet swarms of bees. On the verandas of the imperial buildings on the Palatine, decorated with awnings, sat the foremost matrons of Rome in briliant attire, eagerly talking of Simon, their idol, and impatiently awaiting the time when he should give a proof above all other proofs, of his power.

High up on the temple-crowned Capitolium, with a free view over all this multitude, the emperor and his court were seen. On each side of the richly-adorned imperial throne, were marble seats for the consuls, senators and knights.

At the feet of the emperor and empress, sat Helene, attired as the goddess Victory. When Simon, after a successful ascension, should have come back to earth, she was to receive from Nero's hand a golden wreath of victory, with which to crown the triumphant hero of the day.

In all the temples, the priests had assembled in holiday robes of white, and on the temple stairs lingered groups crowned with chaplets, around the sacrificial victims, adorned with the sacred girdle.

All the omens for the day had been favorable. All but one, to which they yet tried to give an auspicious meaning. There were whispers about an altar which stood near the shrine of the Capitoline Jupiter. An offering of incense had in the morning been made there, but the smoke had risen swiftly and thickened to a cloud, that remained like a black spot upon the otherwise clear sky.

This altar had a story of its own, which priests and monks in the church of *Maria in ara cœli* still know how to tell. The Roman senate had wished to honor the emperor Augustus with the title of god, erect a temple to him, and establish for him a separate priesthood. Augustus, a man who was able without arrogance to bear prosperity and greatness, hesitated to accept such an honor, and summoned the Tiburtine sibyl, to hear her counsel. She came, fastened her dim eyes upon the emperor, mumbled a few words, and went. These same words were at the same moment whispered by the genius of inspiration to the poet Virgil, as he wrote his fourth eclogue at Naples. Their substance was, that not from earth, but from heaven, should come the god of the new order of the world. Scarce had the sibyl gone, before the emperor Augustus saw the heavens open, and the Virgin Mary with the Child Jesus in her arms, descend upon a shining cloud to earth.

Augustus rejected the title of god, and caused an altar, which was called *ara cœli*, the heavenly altar, to be built on the spot where he had seen the vision.

There, where the temple of the Capitoline Jupiter is thought to have stood, on the highest summit of the Capitoline, rises now, with columns robbed from the shrines of antiquity, the singular church of *Maria in ara cœli*, and in one of its chapels, an old altar, perhaps from the fourth century, is to be seen; upon the back of which, this tradition is delineated in relief.

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Paul, Peter and Martialis had according to agreement met upon the Roman market. They chose a place for themselves by the temple of the Dioscuri, where little could be seen, probably—as a side wall of the Julian basilica shut off the view towards the Capitol—but where on that account there were scarcely any people, and there was room sufficient for kneeling and prayer.

The apostles had sought out Simon, the day before, and together warned him to desist from his godless undertaking. Simon, who received them as a senator might receive his slaves, listened to them impatiently, reproached them with having turned the inclination of the people from him, the true prophet, and threatened them with the wrath of the emperor, if they farther dared to appear before his eyes, or speak a word to his discredit.

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Simon tarries. The multitude begins to show signs of impatience. The good-humored in the crowd, jest, explain the delay by declaring that Jove's eagle, which was to bear this new Ganymede up to the skies, has renounced the service; or that the coachmaker has not got the travelling-coach ready, as a bit of cloud that was to have been hammered out for the wheels, has broken in bending.

But hark! Grumbling and jesting are hushed. A murmur goes through the masses—"There, there!" they cry, and a stillness follows, that bears witness of intense expectation.

The apostles draw the conclusion from this, that the crowd has at last caught a glimpse of the expected magician. And Simon Magus has in fact appeared on the Capitolium. As if still farther to mock the laws of gravity, he comes arrayed in a mantle falling in heavy folds, embroidered with gold and silver, and sown with pearls of the East. The sunshine breaks in rainbow hues upon this attire, the long train of which is borne up, on one side by the servants of Isis, and on the other by the priests of Mitras, recognizable by their Phrygian caps and long beards.

Simon strides forward to the emperor's throne, kneels, and says in a loud voice that the miracle he is now about to perform, he does, not for his own merit and honor, nor yet to afford a spectacle to the emperor, senate and people, but to save Rome from those false prophets the Christians, who have sworn destruction to the city and the Roman power. It is against them, he will now bear witness.

At a sign from Nero, he rises, kisses the hand of the empress and of Helene, bows to the senators and knights, and walks with solemnly measured steps towards the edge of the Capitoline rock, where the abyss yawns above the forum. Here, he stops.

The murmur which greeted him, has died away; and he stands there, looking out over the market with its many memories, over the Esquiline and Palatine hills, over the countless multitude, Rome's people, lords of the world—who now, at the first token of his miraculous power, are ready to cast themselves in the dust before him. He looks forward to that day when these temples all shall rear their columns around his statue, and incense shall burn for him upon all these altars. At the thought, his eyes flash with the fire of arrogance, his breast is uplifted with pride. The crowd thinks him—as he stands there above it, with the fillet binding his locks, his breast half-bared, and the serpent staff in his hand—in presence and bearing like Æsculapius, Jupiter's beneficent son. It seems to see him grow to a supernatural height, so that the Capitoline rock makes but a pedestal to his mighty shape.

But the time has come, to begin. Simon mutters an incantation, and takes one step—the last—to the edge of the abyss. He extends his right foot over the side, as if to try if he have a firm foothold in the air.

The emperor rises eagerly from the throne, and the crowd is silent in breathless expectation.

But now, the murmur of a hundred thousand voices again goes up to the sky. Peter and Paul cannot see what is the cause of the astonishment of the people, but single voices rise from out the crowd: "He has left the rock!" "He floats!"

Simon had the firm ground beneath his feet no longer. He stood upon a level with the edge of the rock, but out in free space; and he adjusted the long shining mantle around him, while a light breeze played in its folds.

The emperor himself could not repress a cry of amazement. Senators and knights started from their seats, to see the wonder. Amid lively gesticulation, the aged Seneca spoke with some Greek philosophers invited to the feast, of the possible cause of the phenomenon. A Hellenic artist, who put aside all explanations, took out his pencil, and with bold strokes drew Simon's attitude as model for that of a sculptured statue, were such a form imagined without apparent foothold, floating in the air.

Paul and Peter fell upon their knees, and clasped their hands in prayer. Martialis and the other Christians formed a protecting circle around them, as they prayed.

When Simon had carefully ordered his mantle, he gave a signal, and from the roof of the temple of Jupiter, flutes, bassoons, cymbals and drums, were heard. Upon this, music instantly arose from the summit of the Palatine hill; and immediately after, from the Esquiline, the Cœlian, from the heights of the Viminal and the Quirinal, from the topmost point of Janiculus and from the more distant Vaticanus. Rome swam in a sea of tones; and through that sea, Simon slowly and solemnly rose, like the moon in her ascent, to higher spaces. It was as though invisible hands bore him, as he looked down, smiling at the people. The sun glistened upon the golden fillet on his head and the waving folds of his mantle, the breeze scattered his long locks; and ever as he rose, the air seemed more transparent, that the crowd might see his Olympian countenance long.

And the people cried: "This is the might of a god, not of a man!"

A time went by, and Simon was ever farther and farther withdrawn from the eyes that followed him. Now he seemed but a point in the blue ether. Nero, who had hitherto been sunk in contemplation, turned to Helene and said, jestingly: "If the prophet should forget his pledge to Cæsar, and remain in Olympus! Nay, he must choose between Hebe and yourself, and I am sure he will come back to earth."

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Simon found himself in the beginning, well, and satisfied with his progress. The mantle he wore, was one of those enchanted cloaks, known to many a tradition; such a one as Faust wished for, the evening he took with Wagner his memorable walk, and dreamed he floated in the flush of eternal sunset.

In itself, the cloak had no bearing power; but it was held by twelve stout spirits of the air, Simon's incantation had summoned for that service. Resting in it, as inside the softest palanquin, the sorcerer enjoyed his travel unspeakably. The nine hills of Rome lay far down beneath his feet, bathing their temples in the sunlight. The winding waters of Tiber shone as molten gold, and were at Ostia like a stream of lava, gushing into the sea. The horizon grew larger and larger. The green plains of Latium shrank together, the sail-bestrown sea expanded its boundary line, and the Sardinian mountains rose higher and higher, while on the other side, the cloud-capped steeps of the Appenines sank lower and lower.

Simon was ravished with the sight, and drunken with the thought that this world should be his, be dotted over with temples raised to him, ringing with hymns of praise lifted up to him.

When he had attained to such a height that the sweet sounds from the hills of Rome did not reach his ear, he was greeted with other and more beautiful music. Was it the harmony of the spheres? No—but he who has power in the air, sent a thousand little spirits, who floated unseen around the great magician, and sounded their æolian harps, and sang with caressing voice: "All this belongs to thee, for thou hast fallen down and worshipped our master!" And the tones, soft as they were, filled the vault of heaven, and resounded as gentle echoes from the Alpine glaciers and the primeval woods of Germany, from the deserts of Africa and the mountains of Libya.

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But alas! This pleasure was not to continue long. It was gradually more and more disturbed by an unpleasant discovery. Simon remarked that he did not rest so well in his mantle, as before. Sybarite that he was, it would have tried his patience on earth, had the cushions of his sofa not been properly ordered. So much greater reason had he now, to be uneasy and angry. Sometimes the cloak was drawn too tight; again, it flapped about loosely; and now and then, it was as if the hands that held it had not a very sure hold. Simon treated the twelve familiars to an oath, and bade them mind their business better. They answered, grumbling, that they did the work with all their might, but the air up here was thin, and mixed with vapors from other heavenly bodies. A while went by, and Simon remarked that the speed was slackening. He angrily asked the demons if they feared the neighborhood of heaven; and he threatened to imprison them a thousand years in his finger-ring, if they spared their inexhaustible strength. The familiars answered in a chorus of complaint, that they felt a strange sensation, they had never had before, in arms, fingers and claws, and that they heard two voices from the earth, that made them tremble. "Down on the forum," said they, "are two men kneeling—mayhap the voices are theirs."

Then Simon was afraid. He thought of Paul and Peter. Eager as he before had been to climb to Olympus, just as keenly he now desired to get back to earth, before the demons' strength should fail them.

But that was a dangerous descent. First one, then another familiar let go his hold, and the folds flapped like loosened sails in a storm, around the limbs of the sorcerer. Simon clutched the upper border of the cloak with both hands; he grew giddy at sight of the terrible abyss beneath him, his trembling lips spoke the mightiest forms of magic a mortal can speak, without being burnt to ashes; and meanwhile he menaced the demons with the worst kind of punishment.

But the demons complained that they felt themselves getting weaker and weaker. When their hands had grown weary, they took the mantle between their teeth, or tried to hold it fast with their cloven feet. They undeniably did their work in right good earnest—but who can be forced beyond his strength?

They were still so high up that Simon's ear could not catch an echo of the bassoons, drums and cymbals, that sounded upon Rome's hills. His situation was desperate.

Then, on rustling wings, came through the air the old dragon, Michael's adversary. "Courage!" he cried to Simon; and he lashed his familiars madly with a scourge, to warm up their limbs and soften their callous hands.

The stupefied Simon now heard a sound of drums and cymbals. Yet a few seconds, and he was sensible of the murmur of a hundred thousand human voices, like the roar of a distant waterfall. "A moment more and I am safe! A moment more, and I stand before Cæsar and bring him the greeting of the Olympian gods! A moment more, and I have conquered."

So he thought. But at the last, the decisive moment, Peter and Paul made their way through the mass of people on the forum, and cried with voices that were heard far off: "Lord! Lord! Show that his arts are vain, that this people be not led astray! And may the false prophet survive his fall, to meet his overthrow!"

Hardly had the apostles uttered this prayer, before the demons let go the magic mantle, and spiteful, ashamed or malicious, they fled in tumbling confusion to all points of the compass.

Simon was then but a few yards from the ground. He fell headlong before Nero's throne, and lay there with broken bones—fainting and bleeding.

At the very instant Simon fell, Helene disappeared. Only her forehead ornament was found, on the spot where she had been seated. But certain persons said they had seen a little serpent crawl up the shoulders of Nero and around his diadem, and hide itself in his hair.

The leading features of this tradition of Simon the Sorcerer and his ascension, are to be found already in Hegesippus, a Christian writer of the second century. He even affirms that Simon, after his fall, was conveyed to the town of Aricia, in the Alban mountains, and that he there expired.*

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* The tradition was widely known in Sweden, during the middle ages. Its memory was revived in 1652, within a small circle at least, by a pamphlet, the title of which has been communicated by a literary friend to the author.

Ecclesiastical art has by predilection made the ascension of Simon Magus its subject. The capitol and forum with their elaborate architecture, Nero and the splendor of his imperial train, the fear-inspiring beauty of Helene, the apostles praying amid the throng of people on the forum—all this was alluring to the pencil; though it was hard to give the picture dignity, as the leading group had nevertheless to be the sorcerer falling headlong, and his flying imps, with their proper outfit of horns and tails.

One of these paintings is to be found in the geographical gallery of the Vatican; another, by Vanni, over the altar of Peter and Paul, in St. Peter's church. The beautiful church of *Maria degli angeli*, originally a hall in the Baths of Diocletian, but re-created into a Christian temple by the hand of Michael Angelo, has no less than two paintings on the same subject. One of them is a copy of that in St. Peter's church, where the same tradition is also illustrated in marble.

Close to the triumphal arch of Titus, between the basilica of Maxentius and Hadrian's temple to Venus-Roma, lies the little church of Francesca Romana. Among the relics shown there, is a stone (inserted in the wall and guarded by a grating,) in which are seen impressions of the apostles' knees; for on that stone, they say, knelt Peter and Paul, when the demons carried Simon through the air. This is farther confirmed by an inscription in Italian, over the stone, which, indeed, only speaks of Peter; but a priest, versed in church writings, on the spot assured the author, that one of the prints on the stone was undoubtedly from St. Paul; and he based this opinion of his upon the *liber pontificalis* and Gregory of Tours.

IV.

PRISCA AND PUDENTIANA.

TRADITION, which is acquainted with Paul's School and the house of Martialis, has of course not forgotten where the apostle Peter, first supervisor of the Roman congregation, lived, during his many years' productive work in the capital of the world. Let us make a pilgrimage to these spots, also.

We first take our way to the Aventine hill. On the side towards the Tiber, it makes an impression of grand and awful beauty. The sheer declivities of chalk and sandstone vary in warm tones of color; the shelves of rock are shaded by dark verdure of cypress and pine; and the summit is crowned by churches and cloisters, that from below are like mediæval strongholds. The road up, is one of the loneliest in Rome. Between the high walls (shutting out all view) which on both sides follow its windings, you seldom meet a Roman; still less often one of those ruddy strangers, with Baedeker or Murray in hand, who else swarm everywhere, in the city of memories. For many centuries, a curse has rested on the Aventine. It was formerly the most populous of Rome's hills. There, amid the many temples, then lived industrious throngs of free workmen, the bone and sinew of Rome. Now it is a desert waste, and the few beings who have their abode there, try if possible to leave, when summer comes; for at that season the wind brings from the fens of the Campagna over the slopes of Aventine, *malaria*, "the evil air"—and with malaria, come fever, consumption and death.

It was on a warm day in April, I last went that way. A black-bearded fellow in a ragged cloak, enjoyed his siesta on the grassy edge of the road, in the shadow of the walls. He was the only human being I saw, until I reached the cloister of Santa Sabina. A lark trilled in the blue above me. That was the only break in the silence. In the cool colonnade of the cloister, slept a fat Dominican monk; and by his side, a half-somnolent brother of the same order, was taking a pinch of snuff. Stretched out on the stone floor at their feet, lay some ragged shapes, men, women and children, guests of the cloister, living on its alms, bred to that (in the long run) hardest of all callings—idleness. In the monastery garden, an orange-tree was shown me, which St. Dominick had planted with his own holy hand. I thought it a miserable compensation for all the wood that went to make up the pyre, his monks lighted under the martyrs to thought and a purified faith. All the more worth seeing, was the view to be had from the garden, over the Tiber, Trastevere and the Campagna. But of that, this is not the time to speak. My road carried me a little distance back again from Sta. Sabina, and so to the right, into a street or road, if possible more lonely still, which runs over the height, opposite the Jewish churchyard and the Circus Maximus, to the church of Santa Prisca, the goal of my pilgrimage. The only living creatures I saw, during this walk, were the active little lizards, beautifully marked, who darted about in the bath of sunlight, in the rifts of the wall, or peeped out between its overgrowth of vines. The isolation would have been oppressive, had it not been so instinct with feeling. Not a breath of wind moved in the tops of the pines and plane-trees, not the faintest cloud was to be descried in the deep blue sky, tinged at the horizon with violet.

In the midst of this silence, lies the old church Sta. Prisca—commonly closed, but now by chance open. Its age is a thousand and five hundred years; but older still are the ancient columns, that support its roof, and the crypt over which it is built; for the walls and floor of this crypt, tradition declares, are remains of the house once owned by Peter's landlord and his wife, the devout couple, Aquila and Prisca, also called Priscilla. A large antique capital, hollowed out, is yet to be seen there, from which the apostle is said to have administered holy baptism. The altar-piece in the church represents Peter baptizing Prisca and her household. There is otherwise not much to see here; for the old sanctuary has in later times more than once been repaired and "improved"—that is to say, in this, as in so many other cases, marred and disfigured by a deplorable taste.

Prisca and Aquila are known to the reader, through the New Testament. "Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my helpers in Christ Jesus: who have for my life laid down their own necks; unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles. Likewise greet the church that is in their house." So writes Paul, in the sixteenth chapter of his epistle to the Romans; and already this greeting is enough to give us exalted ideas of this couple's devotion to the faith. But our respect for them still farther increases, when we recollect what Luke tells us in the Acts of the Apostles; that Apollos, namely —one of the most learned and eloquent among the first heralds of Christianity, and probably author of the Epistle to the Hebrews—sat on the disciples' bench in the house of Aquila and Prisca, and from them, but especially from the mother of the house, received deeper instruction in the teaching of salvation: "they expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly," says the Acts of the Apostles.

We know farther of Aquila and Prisca, that they were working people—that in their house on the Aventine, they followed the trade of tent-makers, the same by which the apostle Paul also earned his bread. When the emperor Claudius drove the Jews out of Rome, they too had to leave the city; for Aquila was a Jew, born in Pontus. They then removed to Corinth, where Paul became their guest, and where, as in Rome, they held assemblies at their house. They afterwards established their dwelling in Ephesus, and dwelt there until they obtained leave to return to Rome and their house on the Aventine.

If the tradition—for which a Latin inscription in the very ancient church is responsible—if the tradition be right, the house of Aquila and Priscilla was in its turn built on the remains of a temple of Diana, and that again on the site of an altar to Hercules, which the legendary Arcadian king, Evander, hundreds of years before Romulus, had built. What a train of memories, that leads us, even if with uncertain steps, back into the very night of antiquity. And while the sun sinks, and the walls of Sta. Prisca cast a longer shadow, we stay a moment longer here, and dream in the silence and solitude, and ask ourselves, what the stories and memories may be, with which coming ages shall lengthen the chain of those the past has linked to this deserted and melancholy spot?

Among the Christians who gathered around Peter and Paul, when on the Roman market they called upon God to witness against Simon the Sorcerer, was an aged man whom people greeted with respect; for he was one of the highest in rank of Rome's citizens, and the broad purple border to his toga marked his dignity as senator. His name was Pudens.

With him two fair maids, his daughters Pudentiana and Praxedes, and his two sons, Novatius and Timotheus, had come to the market. Since Prisca and Aquila had left Rome, Pudens had given Peter a free abode in his house; for the senator's eyes had been opened to the truth of Christianity, and he and his children had joyfully received baptism. The Christians often assembled for the service of God and the Feast of Love, at Pudens' house; and the man of high birth might then be seen, happy and humble in the circle of poor artisans and slaves, giving them the name of brother, and receiving the name of brother from their lips.

Pudens was in feeling an old Roman and republican. He did not hide it, and had on that account, long expected death, by the emperor's order. But Nero, whimsically indulgent in his cruelty, spared him still. Before he became a Christian, Pudens had seen with despair the ever deeper moral decline of the Roman people; and although republican, he did not believe in the possibility of a republic. *Omnia ruunt*, all things are hastening to destruction—that was his view of life. Now he again looked with certitude of victory towards the future; for he had found the only immovable groundwork of human liberty and equality—brotherhood in Christ.

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Not far from the golden glitter of the great basilica, Santa Maria Maggiore—one of modern Rome's foremost and most magnificent temples — hides itself in a side street, a little, unpretentious, but interesting church, called Santa Pudentiana, not least interesting that it is the oldest in Rome. Only the church *Pietro in vincoli* disputes with it the palm of antiquity. You go down by steps into the court in front of Sta. Pudentiana: it lies as it were in a hollow; for around it the ground has risen, in new layers, century after century.

The first time I sought it out, the most beautiful singing came sounding towards me. Curtains before all the windows of the church, shut out the light of day; candles burned upon the high altar, and in candelabra; priests in holiday vestments bent, bowed, knelt and mumbled, in the choir: and a congregation, for the most part made up of women and children, listened with delight to singing by four voices in one of the side aisles, above all to a fresh and sweet boy treble, without, so far as I observed, giving the slightest heed to the service at the altar.

The choir of Sta. Pudentiana, so named after the senator's daughter (another church in the neighborhood bears the name of her sister Praxedes) is built on the spot where the house of Pudens stood. A part of the mosaic floor in the side aisles of the church, belonged to the atrium of the senatorial palace. The walls of the crypt are remains of a bath, the son Novatius caused to be built in the home of his fathers. On the altar, in one of the side chapels of the western aisle, stands an urn, given to the church by Cardinal Wiseman. In it, are preserved such fragments as remain, of the wooden table on which the apostle Peter, in Pudens' house, celebrated his first mass, distributing the bread and wine to the faithful.

Another wooden table, wholly spared by time, which also belonged to Pudens' house, and served Peter for the same purpose, is to be found in the great Lateran church, and is yet used there, as an altar; but only the pope can perform mass upon it, and that in consequence of an especial right; for the altars of the Roman Catholic church must all, with this one exception, be of stone, in accordance with canonical law and directions of the liturgy.

If tradition be right, Pudens' richly-adorned senator's chair has also come down to posterity, though it is now withdrawn from the sight of all. For better protection, namely, against the ravages of time, Pope Alexander VII had it enclosed in the throne of gilded bronze to be seen in the choir of St. Peter's, and borne by four figures, representing two teachers of the Latin, two of the Greek, church.

The mosaics in the choir of Sta. Pudentiana are from the fourth century, and are accounted among the most remarkable, with regard to the history of art, in Rome. They portray Christ, the apostles, and the sisters Pudentiana and Praxedes, both with the crown of martyrdom in their hands. For according to the tradition, they too, had to suffer death for their creed.

V.

NERO AND HIS LOVE.

WHEN Paul had dwelt two years in Rome, the decision in his case came at last. The tribunal of Cæsar had investigated all the points of complaints against him, and found them all groundless. Paul was free.

He had often spoken with Peter, of travels in the remote West—of the duty that seemed to rest upon them, to carry the glad tidings to the farthest limits of the known world. Now that his chains had fallen, the apostles agreed to gird their loins and depart, Peter to Aquitania, Paul to Hispania. Peter appointed Linus superintendent of the Roman congregation. A parting feast of love was held at Pudens' house; and accompanied by the blessings of their brethren and sisters, they took staff in hand, and set forth.

A large brotherhood, strong in the faith, and guarded by good shepherds, they left behind them—they did not know to what a fate.

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The same day that Peter and Paul departed, by the Ostian gate, Nero sat in a wing of Caligula's palace on the Palatine, talking with his architect, Celer.

Celer was an artist after the emperor's taste. We do not know, if he had an eye for the grand and chaste, in the art of Hellas; but a sense of the pleasing, the piquant and brilliant, was his, and to this he joined an attempt at the grand in a superficial sense—at that which wakens amazement by gigantic size and mighty proportions. When his art-dreams were not cabinet pieces, they were fever fancies, the realization of which defied all human power. Palaces with roofs reaching the sky, supported by forests of pillars, bearing in their turn high up in the air, rocks shaped into statues ; vistas, losing themselves in an infinity of colonnades ; fountains, casting whole floods as drops into space ; marble basins, with isles and oared ships ; a world of gold, ivory, mother-of-pearl, of jasper and marble, adorned with the choicest works of Polygnotus', Parrhasius', and Apelles' pencils, and of the chisels of Phidias, Skopas and Praxiteles—such was the vision he conjured up before the emperor, as they looked out over the Forum, Capitolium and Esquilinus.

Nero listened with greater delight, the looser rein the artist gave his wild imagination.

" But knowest thou," continued Celer, " knowest thou, Cæsar, what I see there, high above house and sanctuary ? I see the brow of a god, on the temples of which the sunset light yet lingers, when it has gone out upon the hills of Rome. I see a giant figure, the like of which the world has never looked on yet, and by the side of which the Colossi of the Pharaohs are dwarfs. The statue is worthy my palace. The vision bears thy features. That brow, from which the sunshine will not depart, is Nero's.

" But," he added with a sigh, " all that is a dream "—

" Which shall become reality," interrupted the emperor.

" That promise I expected of thee ! " cried Celer. " I cannot dream more boldly than thou canst execute. But then, why art thou emperor, if not to do great deeds ?

A thousand houses and temples must be destroyed to make room for this one palace—Cæsar Nero's golden house—but thy will is law, and thy might, boundless."

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Some time after this—the 19th of July, in the year 64—a fire broke out in Rome, which made more than sufficient room for the projected palace imperial of Nero: for eight whole days, the capital of the world was like a huge pyre. Ten of its fourteen districts were consumed, and art treasures of priceless value were lost. The wind, which blew from the sea, drove the monstrous clouds of smoke, formed into strange shapes, towards the Appenines; and the people that saw it, said trembling, "The guardian spirits of Rome are flying hence."

That night, while the flames were raging their worst, Nero, according to tradition, stood on the pinnacles of a high tower, and enjoyed the sight.

He could not enough praise its overpowering beauty. Earth, water and sky were in flames. The towns and castles upon the slopes of the mountains enclosing the horizon of Rome, could now at midnight be more plainly seen than by day; and on the highest summits, eternal snow seemed mingled with glowing streams of lava. From the mass of houses wrapped in smoke and flames, arose the roar of millions of voices, as if in the very midst of the conflagration there were a giant struggle between Rome's legions and the collected force of all the barbarians. Drunken with the sight, Nero bade them bring the singer's cloak, the laurel crown and the cithern, and he grasped the strings, and sang with satanic enthusiasm a song of the destruction of Troy.

Between Monte Cavallo and the market of Trajan, rises a tower, the people calls *Torre di Nerone;* for there, the emperor is said to have looked down upon the fire. But this tower is from a much later time.

Could one without possessing ideality or heart be a true artist, or even a judge of art—were keen powers of observation, extended knowledge of the productions of art, perfectly refined taste and fully developed technical skill, enough for this—then would emperor Nero really have been what he made his only boast of being. He saw everything, (at last even his own death) from the æsthetic point of view. The most abstract æsthetics, barren of all ethical contents, had become flesh and blood in this man. For this reason he was a marvel.

But when the fire had been extinguished, hundreds of thousands of human beings stood without a roof over their heads; and when they found that the smoking ruins on the Esquiline hill, were removed to make room for an imperial palace, and heard that this was to cover a large portion of the quarters burned—the people aimed its suspicions of incendiarism very high. A threatening spirit sprang up that grew bolder and bolder, so that up on the Palatine, voices could be heard coming from the Roman market below, crying, "Down with the incendiary!"

Nero, however, knew a means of directing the wrath of the people to another quarter. There was a sect in Rome, of the dark and mysterious rites of which, many a strange story and report awakening distrust, were in circulation. The blame of the fire, the emperor cast upon this sect, upon the Christians. By hundreds, they were dragged before the tribunals, and although no evidence could be extorted from them, to confirm the truth of the accusation, they yet spoke such words concerning a divine visitation upon a sinful city, that they were sentenced to the most horrible of punishments. They were dressed in the skins of wild beasts, to be torn asunder by dogs; they were crucified; they were sewed into tarred sacks and hung upon lantern-poles, to light the festal orgies the emperor held in his gardens on the Vatican, or the plays he nightly gave in the circus, to keep the people in good humor. But, though bred to blood-thirstiness, and convinced of the guilt of the Christians, the people could not be brought to applaud these cruelties. It was silent. Nay, many even shed tears of compassion over the victims of Cæsar and his cowardly judges.

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Some time passed before the tidings of the burning of Rome and the persecution of its Christians reached the remote countries where Peter and Paul were sowing the seed of the Lord. This was heart-rending news for the apostles, but a message of victory, too; for the greater number of the condemned had gone tranquilly to meet the pains of death, and after the example of the Master, had prayed from a pure heart to God, for the executioners. And when the apostles, each in his own city, learned this, they heard within themselves the voice of angels, that said: "Up, to Rome! There, a crown of glory awaits you!"

They went; and their road brought them together, at one of the city gates. There, they greeted one another with the brother's kiss, and read in each other's features, the consciousness that they were going now for the last time to bear witness for the Lord—with their blood.

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One day, Nero gave a feast in his court amphitheatre, on the Vatican. The race-course, around its entire ring, was ornamented with statues; and in the centre arose the great obelisk, brought from the Egyptian city of Heliopolis, which has for three hundred years stood on the stately open place in front of St. Peter's.

Near the obelisk, in the shade of a fluttering silken pavilion, the emperor and his friends were indulging copiously in the noble wine. Nero sang, laughed, and scattered jests around him; for he, like Caligula, had a ready wit. He gave out, amid joking and laughter, military titles, prætorian and consular insignia, senatorial rank, proconsulates and governorships, to the favorites around him. The sentinels of the prætorian guard, who knew the taste of the high-born revellers, had introduced into the circus a number of the venal beauties of Rome, who were glad to collect where the emperor was, to obtain a gracious glance from his eye. These ladies sat waving fans, in their palanquins, a short distance from the imperial circle. Nero and his guests amused themselves by throwing to them all the silver and gold under which the table bent, and when the table was plundered, they took off rings, amulets and diadems, and flung them at the same mark.

"Long live virtue! Down with vice!" cried Nero.

"O thou worthy disciple of Seneca!" jested his companions.

"Long live virtue!" screamed Nero; "but I know no other virtue than sincerity, which is only a stupidly timid name for impudence. Down with vice! but I know no vice than the hypocrite's; and every other virtue than that I spoke of, is hypocrisy."

"Great philosopher!" cried the guests, laughing.

But now the emperor suddenly stopped; and his eye rested on a girl who stood with the other female spectators. She did not, however, belong to their class; for she wore a simple dress, and her features still showed the innocence of childhood. Her great black eyes looked with astonishment upon all around her.

"How fair she is!" cried Nero; "'tis a dryad from the woods of Ida. Girl, come hither!"

The emperor beckoned her to him. She came.

"What wilt thou, Cæsar?" she asked.

"What is thy name, child?"

"I am called Picerna."

"Who is thy father?"

"My father is a soldier—a centurion. But wilt thou, too, answer a question?"

"A thousand, from thy lips!"

"Art *thou* right, Cæsar, or is my father?"

"In what way, then, do mine and thy father's thoughts differ?"

"Thou sayest that there is no more than one virtue, sincerity. My father has spoken to me of many virtues; and among them, of love of country; of fealty to the flag, and to the oath, the soldier swears to Cæsar; of the warrior's courage to die upon his shield. Cæsar, if thou hold these virtues to be vices, then declare it, openly, to those who now submit to privation and death for thee!"

Nero was silent, and grew pale. He saw that the maiden's eyes expressed pity for the tyrant of the world; and he was ready to throw himself into the dust before her.

Picerna turned, and went. When she had come to her lonely and poverty-stricken home, she burst into tears. The poor girl had received a wound in the heart. She had read on the emperor's yet beautiful features, the surprise of modesty; and this truly incredible revelation, this miracle, had overpowered her. She felt that she loved the tyrant!

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It is a sad story, that of Picerna. Let us then speak of her but briefly. Clearly, Nero and she would see one another again. The emperor asked it, and her own heart, trembling, wished it. Plain is it, too, on which side the victory would be. That which a little child like her dreams of the possibility of ennobling a Nero, is but froth.

But one day, the father of Picerna returned from an honorable campaign: honorable, because in the Roman army could yet be found veterans like himself, sons in spirit of the old republic, who still harbored the republican idea, that honor is man's ornament, chastity woman's. His faithful wife was dead, his three sons had fallen all upon the field of battle—he had now only a daughter, to comfort his old age.

Scarce had he and his legions come within the walls of Rome, before one said to him: "Thou lucky man! The greatest honor awaits thee, for Picerna has found favor with the emperor."

There was a film before his eyes, as he heard the words. And when he found Picerna, "Daughter," said he, "lift a burden from thy father's shoulders. Thou knowest the rumor that is current here. Say it is a lie, and I will weep for joy, and bless thee!"

"Father," said Picerna, and fell at his feet, "thy daughter is guilty. Forgive her!"

"I forgive thee, but I cannot survive it," said the old soldier. "Woe is me, that a race whose men have all been brave and whose women all chaste, should end like this!"

And he shook from his knees the arms of his weeping daughter, forbade her to follow him, and went forth.

The same evening, they found him upon the Ardeatine Way, a little space from the grave of his wife—a sword through his heart.

After Picerna had seen him again, dead, she wandered all night, like one mad, through the streets of Rome. When she had for some time wandered unsteadily around, without aim and without reflection, she stopped and drew breath, at the door of an unknown house.

There within, a voice like that of one reading was heard, and she caught the words:

"Our Lord Christ saith: 'Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden! See, my yoke is easy, and my burden light!'"

Picerna heard the words, but they lost themselves in her bewildered brain. She wandered on. The morning dawned; and chance brought her again to the same door. Again she heard the same voice, which said: "The Lord Jesus Christ hath a cure for ailing hearts. He raiseth the fallen, and forgiveth sinners."

Now, the street was filled with the sound of arms and the noise of hoofs. Nero, who was returning from an excursion to the Alban mountains, rode by, with a brilliant train. He saw Picerna, reined in his horse, stretched out his arms, and cried:

"My love!"

At that moment, too, the door of the unknown house opened, and on its threshold stood Paul.

The girl looked at him, and looked at Nero. She seemed to waver—until she hastily turned to the stranger Jew, and said:

"Is it thou who knowest him that hath cure for ailing hearts, who raiseth the fallen and forgiveth sinners?"

"It is I."

"Then, in mercy, save me!" And the girl clasped the apostle's knees.

"Picerna!" broke out the emperor, "What means this? Thou dost not hear me?"

"Save me!" cried the girl, and hid her face in the apostle's cloak.

"Cæsar," said Paul, with commanding voice, "this child is sick. Put not thyself between her and the Healer!"

And the apostle leaned over the unhappy girl, and whispered: "Jesus Christ shall restore peace to thy heart!"

VI.

LORD, WHITHER GOEST THOU?

A FEW days after the scene above described, armed officers of the law came to the dwellings of Peter and Paul, seized the apostles and dragged them, with stripes and blows, to the Mamertine prison.

In Rome, many a rumor was in circulation among the people, of the horrors of that prison; and those who knew something of it, did not disprove this talk.

The Mamertine prison, or the Tullianum, as it was also called, was and yet is situated at the foot of the Capitoline rock, near the Roman market. The way of the sorrowful that led thither, ascended the height a little distance, by stairs, to an iron door, which, once closed behind the prisoner, seldom opened for him, until he was conveyed to the place of execution—if he had not previously died in the jail, by strangulation or hunger.

Through this door, the apostles were led into a room, around the cold stuccoed walls of which, were stone benches; and on these walls were modest frescoes, painted by some journeyman, who had probably not thought of the cutting contrast in which the merry subjects he had chosen for his pencil, stood, to the spirit of the place and the humor of its unhappy denizens. In the middle of the floor was a square hole, through which the prisoners were by a ladder taken down into a dark and humid prison vault, the actual Mamertine jail, as it was called—

constructed, as people think, in the time of the Roman kings, about seven hundred years before Christ. Here, another like hole in the floor confronted them, which yawned above the frightful Tullianum, a low and narrow vault, "horrible," says the historian Sallust, "with dirt, darkness and stench." Among the many who drew their last breath in that cavern of death, the annals of Rome tell of Jugurtha, the African king, and Catiline's fellow-conspirators, Lentulus and Cetegus.

Nine long months were the apostles to dwell in this same hole, while they awaited the death-sentence. They were not alone, there. More than forty other unhappy men shared their lot. Among them were many great criminals; but many innocent, too, who had fallen victims to the suspicions of Nero, or his favorites' hate.

It was a wretchedness unspeakable, the apostles found about them. The prisoners, chained to walls, pillars, or floor, filled the dense darkness with sighs, lamentations, tears and curses. Under the mute despair to which others gave themselves up, agonies of the soul no less terrible were gnawing. But—what no one outside these walls could dream of—the horrors within were changed by degrees into patience, peace, gladness, joy.

The apostles had spoken strengthening words to their fellow-prisoners, taught them the ways of God, exhorted them to pray with them; and the power of prayer scattered gradually the shadows of death that had gathered upon their souls. With every new day, more and more of them united in the submissive "Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven," and the hopeful "turn thy countenance to us, and be merciful unto us;" and at last there was not one who did not feel himself free, in his fetters, when he lifted his voice with the others, to praise Him, the God of freedom.

The jailors—their names were Processus and Martinianus—heard, with amazement, from the pestilential pit, joyful psalms of Christ who had conquered death, arise. They had Peter and Paul summoned and scourged, as punishment, because they had changed the worst of all dungeons to the home of peace and hope. One of the wretches struck Peter's head violently against a stone wall; and where this happened, a mark in the wall like that of a human face, is yet shown. It was not long, however, before Processus and Martinianus, even they, were seized by the Holy Spirit, issuing from the apostles, and took part in the captives' songs of praise. From the floor of the Tullianum, close to the pillar to which Peter and Paul were chained, leaped up a cool spring, in which they baptized their guards and fellow-prisoners.

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The Mamertine prison—a subterranean passage from which, leading under the market of Trajan, has lately been discovered—is best known to the Roman people under the name of *S. Pietro in carcere.* If you go from the Roman market past the triumphal arch of Septimius Severus, you will see on the left hand near the end of the Via Marforio, a chapel, over the door of which a grated window is painted, and behind this, the two apostles, with their customary symbols: Peter, with the keys, Paul, with the sword. This little chapel is at the same time the crypt of a church, *S. Giuseppe de' Falegnami*, which rises directly above it, at the end of the Capitoline rock. Often my way took me past this place, and I never was inside of it, without finding in the vestibule of the chapel, women upon their knees. An iron grating divides the vestibule from the inner part; and I saw its darkness, on one solitary occasion, if not dissipated, at least diminished, by the light of some wax candles burning upon the altar, as a still mass was there being celebrated. This is the upper prison vault, the Mamertine. From the vestibule, a ladder leads down to the lower vault, the Tullian. At the place of descent, is a Latin inscription from the time of the emperor Augustus. The vaults are built of immense blocks of travertine, with mortar; and especially the way in which the Tullian is built, with horizontal stones, projecting one above another, bears witness of very great age. Antiquaries believe that the Tullianum was once a reservoir, or well, connected with the most ancient fortifications of Rome, intended to assure fresh drinking-water to the Capitoline quarter. The spring below, then, should be much older than the time of the apostles. But it is with the pious tradition, incorporated into the belief of the church, we have to do, not with the investigations of the learned. Once a year, immediately after midsummer, namely, when the great eight days' festival in honor of Peter and Paul, is held in the leading churches of Rome, this old-time dungeon, too, resounds with beautiful song. A mass by Palestrina is performed there by the papal choir, in the presence of a great number of prelates, in holiday vestments; and to the faithful, water from the holy spring in the Tullian vault is dealt out, to drink.

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Peter, the man of faith firm as a rock, had, as we all know, moments when his spiritual courage entirely forsook him. It happened to him in the presence of Jewish friends, that he was ashamed to sit at table with Greek brethren in the faith: nay, he even denied his own Master, as he once saw himself environed by people, to whom the Saviour was a demagogue, and His teaching folly. Thousands upon thousands do as he did, when to find favor with, or from fear of, men, they deny the ideals of their heart or mind; but how many are there who, like the apostle, weep bitterly over their weakness, find in tears of repentance a bath to strengthen the soul, and from defeat go forward, with hardened will, to fight and suffer for their conviction?

After a lapse of nine months, the sentence was passed. Paul and Peter, as chiefs of the pretended party of incendiaries, were condemned to death; Paul by the sword, for he was a Roman citizen, and as such exempt from a shameful execution, but Peter, to suffer the dishonoring punishment of crucifixion—dishonoring in the eyes of the Romans, but encircled by a halo of glory to the Christians, ever since the Lord gave up his life upon the cross.

The night before the day when the servants of the law, who were to bring the sentence, were expected, Peter lay awake, a prey to restlessness, and leaned his fevered brow against the pillar to which he was chained. Paul, who had slept a while, had wakened, and was holding his friend's hand in his. Suddenly, the jailors Processus and Martinianus stood before them, unloosed their chains and said to them: "Fly! The doors are open! To-morrow it will be too late. To us and all our brethren your lives are too dear, that the tyrant should take them. The angel of the Lord freed you before, from chains and imprisonment. In the name of the Lord, ye are free, even now!"

When Peter heard this, he arose. "Fly!" he heard around him; "fly!" said his own trembling heart. The fear of death bewildered his senses—and when he again came to himself he found himself on a deserted street, far from the prison, with a cloudy night sky above him, from which the rain, hunted by strong gusts of wind, streamed down in rapid showers, while the storm spirits seemed to repeat the warning—"Fly! fly!"

"Brother Paul!" Peter called, with muffled voice; but no one answered. Paul was not with him. Had he remained in the prison, and given up the offered freedom, or had he fled to another quarter? Peter knew not—and his fevered brain, his. beating heart, denied him further reflection. Driven onward by the instinct of self preservation, and unhindered by the sores the prison chains had made upon his limbs, he had hastened over the Roman market and Velia, and into the valley path between the Palatine and the Cœlian hills. A street now lay before him, that led to the Porta Capena and the Appian Way. A few minutes more, and he would have the city walls behind him. The storm, the beating rain and the darkness, favored his flight. The streets were deserted, the sentinels seemed to have given the safety of the slumbering city in ward to the angry forces of nature.

Peter was hurrying past a temple of Isis, when a cloth bound around his wounded leg, loosened, fell, and was carried by the storm to a thorn hedge; where, according to the tradition, it was observed next morning by a Christian woman, one of Peter's disciples. The place where this happened, is also shown. In the lonely Via di Porta San Sebastiano, near the huge ruined walls of emperor Caracalla's baths, on the site of an old-time temple of Isis, stands, forgotten by Romans as well as foreigners, but nevertheless remarkable and essentially pleasing, a very ancient little church, S. S. Nereo ed Achilleo; which contains, among other things, the episcopal chair of Gregory the

Great. In the most ancient annals, this church is called *Titulus fasciolæ*, in remembrance of the bandage, (*fascia*) the apostle Peter lost here. The martyrs after whom it was afterwards called, are not buried here, but in the subterranean chapel of Flavia Domitilla, which was discovered on the Ardeatine Way, and which was in course of excavation, when the author of these lines was in Rome.

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When Peter had at last gotten outside the city walls, he slackened his pace. The rain had stopped, the driving clouds collected in the East; and from the cleared portion of the sky, a faint starlight glimmered upon the tombs that on both sides bordered the Appian Way.

He had accomplished about twelve minutes' walk from the city, when he thought he perceived a strange light, moving along the road, and slowly approaching him.

It was not like the light of torch or lantern. It had its own radiance, that might be compared to full starlight, to the sheen of the Milky Way in a northern sky; and it formed a half-ring, like the glory around a hallowed head.

Peter stopped, in surprise.

As the glory drew nearer, it ever lost its brightness, but more and more plainly, the outlines of a human form grew visible, that was going on the way to the city.

The form, which was clad in a mantle, walked on the side of the road opposite that on which Peter stood, and seemed to stride past, without having noticed him.

But when the unknown had taken a few steps farther, he turned. Peter, whose eyes could not stir from the object before him, recognized the movement. Thus had

Jesus turned and looked on him, the night when in the high priest's house he denied his Lord and Master for the third time.

The apostle hurried forward. His eyes were opened, and before them he saw Him, his teacher and his salvation, such as he had seen Him when together they wandered through the land of Judah, and Galilee. He knew again the same sorrowing and reproachful expression, the same eyes shining with divine goodness, that after the third denial had ineffaceably fastened themselves in his soul. Feelings unspeakable came rushing over him. He caught the mantle of Jesus, and cried:

"*Lord, whither goest thou?*" (*Domine, quo vadis?*)

Jesus answered:

"*I go to Rome, to be crucified again.*"

Peter sank at his feet.

"Forgive me, Lord!" said he, "Thou knowest my weakness. This night, I have again denied thee. Lay now thy hand upon my head, and let me weep myself out at thy feet. Then shall the horror of death, that overwhelmed me, vanish, and I shall show myself worthy the crown, Thou of thy grace wilt give me."

And Peter was suffered to weep out his grief before his best friend, and felt His hand, with the glorious power of blessing, and imparting peace, rest upon his head.

When the apostle, strengthened and calmed, arose, Jesus was to be seen no more. The storm had sprung up anew, and drove dark troops of clouds from the sea over the Tiber valley. The rain was again falling, in swift showers. But the apostle knew that the Lord, though invisible, was with him; and this feeling of comfort left him no more.

Peter turned his steps back to the city, and the Mamertine prison. He knocked at the iron doors, until the jailors opened, and he said to them: "Friends, give me my chains again! It is not for me to fly from the reward of victory."

When the morning came, he slept in his bonds peacefully, in the circle of his fellow-prisoners.

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Domine, quo vadis? Lord, whither goest thou?

So is the place yet called to-day, to which tradition assigns this event. Opposite the tomb of Priscilla, on the Appian Way, a little round chapel is to be found, badly treated by time, through the grated door of which, over the altar, may be seen a bas-relief, that represents the meeting described here, between the Saviour and Peter. A few yards from it, stands a church called *Maria delle Piante*, in which is preserved a marble impression of the prints, the feet of Jesus are said to have left upon the lava-stone of the Appian Way, as the apostle knelt before him.

VII.

THE DEATH OF THE APOSTLES.

FEW, doubtless, are the strangers in Rome, who have not made an excursion to the church of *S. Paolo fuori le mura.* Everyone knows that, if St. Peter's is Rome's largest Christian temple, the church of St. Paul is its most magnificent. If the immense size of the former cannot at once be grasped by him who enters—for the standard of measurement is so to speak already lost in the vestibule—the solemn splendor of the latter, on the contrary, makes itself fully felt at the first view. From the dusty and sun-scorched road to Ostia, one finds himself transported, as if by the enchanter's wand, into an architectural garden, from the ground of which, clear as a mirror, rises a grove of graceful granite columns, and in the cool vaulting of which, shining with gold and mosaics, daylight struggles with the broken lights from the stained glass of the side windows.

Under the high altar is the grave of the apostle Paul, and the road leading to and past this church, is the road he went, to receive the martyr's crown.

When one has left the half-ruined old Roman towers of the *Porta S. Paolo* behind, and the beautiful group that the Cestius pyramid and the city walls make with the pines, cypresses and marble tablets of the Protestant cemetery, one comes, after a quarter of an hour's walk to the Chapel of the Farewell. Small, unpretending, and hardly mentioned by the ordinary handbooks of travel, it doubtless arrests but seldom the attention of strangers driving and riding by. But a pedestrian, who is not a niggard of his time, and is no slave of the stars in his guide-book, will certainly stop before the lonely building, if that happens to him, which happened to the writer of these lines: that just as he arrives there, the sun breaks forth from a cloud and casts a magic light upon the only adornment the outside of the chapel displays. This adornment is a sculpture, representing the apostles Peter and Paul falling into each other's arms. The sheaf of sunbeams which rested upon them, while the wall around them lay in a subdued and dusky shadow, seemed to issue from their own faces. An inscription explains more definitely the meaning of the sculpture, and shows what place the Chapel of the Farewell takes in the wreath of traditions woven around the memory of the apostles. The inscription is as follows:

"*On this spot, Peter and Paul parted, when they went to martyrdom. And Paul said to Peter: 'Peace be with thee, thou founder of the church, thou shepherd of all the lambs of Christ!'*

And Peter, to Paul:

'Go in peace, thou proclaimer of good tidings, thou guide of the righteous to salvation!'"

The words are quoted from an epistle to Timothy, in the supposed writings of Dionysius, the Athenian senator.

Tradition tells that, when Peter and Paul were taken out of the Mamertine prison, to be put to death—Paul on the place of execution outside the Ostian gate, Peter on Janiculus—Peter asked leave to go with his friend a little distance upon his way, and that this was granted by the captain of the watch. And so they walked, side by side, hand in hand, comforting and cheering each other, until they had come half way between the city gate and the field where the church of St. Paul now rises, or in other words to the point where the Chapel of the Farewell now stands. There, they gave each other the greeting of peace, as mentioned above, and after a tender embrace, parted.

A few steps from the Chapel of the Farewell, stood a weeping woman. Some say she was called Lemobia; others, that she was Plautilla, a matron belonging to the afterwards imperial Flavian stock, and mother of Flavia Domitilla, the martyr.

Paul, who recognized in her a beloved disciple, stopped and said: "Sister, rejoice in the faith, that death does not part us! And give me thy veil; so shall I give thee a token of that faith!"

The woman gave him the veil, which Paul, when he had come to the place of execution, bound over his eyes before he knelt and received the death-blow. Several days after this, (so says tradition,) Paul appeared to his sister in the faith, and gave her again the bloody bandage he had used for his eyes.

After a march of a quarter of an hour more, the procession of death strode past the field on the border of the Tiber, where the magnificent church now rises in honor of the poor and devoted Gentile apostle.

After this, its road led over the hills, with a glorious view of the neighboring Campagna, among which, in our day, runs the Via Ardeatina and past a villa belonging to Salvius Otho (the same who was successor to Nero on the imperial throne,) and at last led out upon the enclosed field of blood.

The placid joy with which Paul spoke to the guard, and the happiness that shone forth from his features, had astonished and struck many of the soldiers. And when the executioner's sword had fallen, and the next instant three springs welled up from the sloping mound of grass—all bloody with the head of the victim—some of the soldiers threw themselves upon their knees and cried, "This was surely a righteous man, for God himself hath witnessed to the truth of his words!"

Three of them, Longinus, Alcestes and Megistus, stretched out their hands and cried: "Cast us, also, into chains, and deliver us up to the judge and death; for of that of which Paul of Tarsus was guilty, we are guilty, too, as we say; We believe in one God, our Creator and Father, and in his son, Jesus Christ!"

Two days after, Longinus, Alcestes and Megistus suffered martyrdom on the same spot as Paul.

On the Salvian field of blood, now stands the Trappist monastery *Abbadia delle tre Fontane*, with its three churches. In one of them, *S. Paolo alle tre Fontane*, are shown the three springs named above, and a column, to which Paul is said to have been bound, when he obtained the martyr's crown. The springs lie on different levels above the ground, and are graced with structures of marble, like tabernacles.

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Peter was executed the same day as Paul. After taking leave of the latter, he was conveyed back to the city, and over the Sublicius bridge, through the Trasteverine quarter, up to Janiculus; on the highest summit of which, the cross awaited him.

In Rome there is a story, also found in the old writers of the Roman church, that the Ararat, on which Noah's ark, the church's emblem rested, when the waters of the deluge sank, was not the Armenian mountain of that name, but Mt. Janiculus, at Rome; and that Peter's cross was raised upon the very spot whereon the progenitor of the new race of men set his foot, as he stepped out of the ark. The rock on which the ship of salvation remained standing, and the rock on which the church was built, are thus brought into relation with each other.

Peter prayed to be crucified with his head downwards, as he did not esteem himself worthy to die in the same position as that in which his Lord and Master had died. The executioners granted his wish. Thus a miracle occurred here, too. Angels were seen floating down from heaven, and encircling the martyr in his death-struggle. They dried the sweat of terror from his brow, whispered soft consolation into his ear, and did not leave the cross, until the apostle's spirit, freed, went up with them to joy eternal.

In the church *Sta. Maria in Trastevere* there is at the side door a marble slab (built into the wall) which is said to have lain by Peter's cross, and in which marks like footprints, are to be found. The sacristan of the church repeats the old story, that these marks were left by the angels that stood around the dying Peter.

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The road up to the Roman Golgotha on Janiculus, is in our day one of the liveliest in Rome. Long lines of carriages, with Roman ladies and gentlemen, or with English and American strangers, are to be seen at the fine season of the year, rolling on upon the Via Garibaldi, rising by terraces. In all the larger Italian cities, now, one of the finest squares or streets bears the name of young Italy's spotless hero. The hill offers sights, too, that are never to be forgotten: the most enchanting view of the valley of the Tiber, that Rome—so rich in magic views—possesses; and besides this, the remarkable church, *S. Pietro in Montorio;* the waterfall of Acqua Paola, gushing noisily out between antique columns; the Pancrazio gate, in the neighborhood of which, marks of balls and bombs are still visible, from the treacherous attack of Louis Bonaparte on Rome, in the year 1849; the tract between the Pancrazio gate and Belvedere where Joseph Garibaldi, at the head of an ill-equipped band of Roman gray-beards men and boys, put the French army under Oudinot to flight; and the Villa Doria-Pamfili, with one of the stateliest parks, and fairest flower-gardens, in all Italy.

In the middle of the cloister-court, at the church of *S. Pietro in Montorio*, stands a small circular temple, erected by Bramante, and reckoned among the purest creations of the renaissance of Italian art. Within the temple is an altar, with a figure of Peter; and underneath, a chapel crypt, in which a monk, by the light of a lamp ever burning, shows the stranger that hole in the earth, in which Peter's cross is said to have stood; and is very ready to offer him, as a remembrance of the place, a few grains of the shining yellow sand which he takes up out of it. The hole forms, with the nicest exactness, the centre of the circle of columns, Bramante has thrown around this spot, hallowed by tradition.

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After the death of the apostles, the Christians who were from the East, assembled—Greeks, Israelites and Syrians—and agreed that, as Peter and Paul had been their fellow-countrymen, the East had the first right to their remains. They took, therefore, the bodies of the martyrs, enclosed them in stone sarcophagi, and bore them away. But in a writing of Gregory the Great, it is mentioned that when they had reached the second mile-post on the Appian Way, there arose a storm of great violence. A furious whirlwind blew towards the city; darkness like that of a winter night, fell upon the vale of Tiber; the thunder rolled; and from both sides, flashes of lightning hissed close to the very road, as if cherubim had crossed their flaming swords to block the way, and hinder the East from taking possession of treasures that alone the capital of the world and centre of its history was worthy to contain. For a new Rome should one day be accounted the work of Peter and Paul; and in the book of the future it was written, that the apostles should vanquish the Cæsars. As a sign of this victory, the bronze statue of Peter has stood for centuries upon the column of triumph of the emperor Trajan, and Paul's upon that of Marcus Aurelius; and while the mausoleums of the Cæsars lie in ruins, or like Hadrian's, stand stripped of their splendor and serve other uses, the churches of Peter and Paul rise like gigantic monuments over the dust of the fisherman and the tent-maker.

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Here we close these traditions. It is needless to remind Protestant readers that tradition and matter-of-fact must not be taken for one and the same thing; and that as far as credibility is concerned, there is a vast difference between that which we know of the apostles through their own writings, as these are before us in the New Testament, and that which has come down to our time in the form of ecclesiastical hearsay. It is in general hard, even in our critical day, to shut out from the bed of the stream of chronicles those tributaries that take their rise in the fertile fields of poetic imagination. In the times from which these sagas date, no effort was even made, to do so. To wander over the ground which had been trodden by those they had learned to love and prize above all others, to breathe the same air and see the same sights these had breathed and seen, but know little or nothing of the tenor of the last years of their lives—how could believers endure this, without seeking to fill the void with pleasing pictures, especially as they were convinced, the heavenly radiance that had shone around the known portion of the earthly life of these holy men, had certainly followed them to the brink of the grave, and beyond? Thus, many of these stories, from an invisible seed planted by pious longing in imagination's fruitful soil, have sprung up, during the lapse of ages, and ripened into church tradition. Others have arisen in a different way. A single instance of this.

There is an old book, the Clementine Homilies, assumed to have been written by the Roman bishop Clemens, in the generation immediately following that of the apostles. The unknown author belonged to the Jewish Christian party, which strove against Paul's higher conception of Christianity, and made Peter, whether rightly or wrongly, their advocate against the Gentile apostle. The author does not, however, dare attack Paul openly, but thrusts forward in his place Simon Magus, the sorcerer and false prophet, puts the teaching of Paul partly into his mouth, and makes Peter, among other things, reprove Paul with these words, obviously directed against the Gentile apostle: "Why should Christ have lingered a whole year with His apostles, and have been obliged to instruct them, if one by a mere vision can be qualified as a teacher? But if you really did, through an instantaneous revelation, receive instruction and calling to be an apostle, proclaim the Word of Christ, love His apostles, and do not strive with me, who long was His companion."

This author it is, who published in wider circles the story that Simon Magus came to Rome, strove with the apostles, and undertook an ill-fated ascension. Although none of imperial Rome's chroniclers, otherwise so avid of anecdotes and wonders, have said anything of Simon Magus, his relation with Nero, or his miracles in Rome, the story won much credence; and even Justin Martyr seeks to prop it up, by the assurance that he himself, during a visit to Rome, had seen on the Tiber island a statue to the magician, with the inscription *Simoni Sancto*, (to Saint Simon.) A stronger proof that Simon Magus had been in Rome, could hardly be brought forward. But on the Tiber island, as we know, both in the days of the republic and under the empire, stood a temple dedicated to the Sabine god Semo Sancus; and this had a statue with the inscription *Semoni Sanco*, to Semo Sancus. It was this figure, the credible and truth-loving Justin saw, and this inscription he, a stranger from the East, had pardonably enough misunderstood.

Entirely without historic substance, however, these stories probably are not. Especially may one or another told of Paul, rest on actual memories, and it is certainly not improbable that he suffered martyrdom in the manner and on the spot given by the tradition. But in that case, truth and fiction have so grown together, that the whole resembles that chain which on solemn occasions is shown in the church of *S. Pietro in vincoli*, and of which the following is narrated, at Rome. Bishop Julian in Jerusalem presented the empress Eudoxia with this chain, which Peter wore when prisoner in that city. The empress sent the gift to Rome. The bishop there wished to liken the chain from Jerusalem with that which Peter had worn in the Mamertine prison; and when he laid one upon the other, their links at once grew together, so that they formed a single chain, in which it is impossible to discover where the one ends, and the other begins!

But of beautiful and touching traits, these stories contain not a few. Perhaps for that reason, one or another reader may have been able to follow them with a little of that friendly feeling with which the author, in the places themselves, heard them and wrote them down.

PENCIL SKETCHES IN ROME.

I.

ECCLESIASTICAL ROME, AND ITALIAN.

ALL who have had a chance to compare papal and ecclesiastical Rome with that of Italy, have but one opinion on the point—that the city during the last four years,* has altered much to its advantage. I except of course the Catholic priests, to whom Rome ceased to be Paradise when it ceased to be the capital of ignorance and dirt. I do not mean by this to say that dirt is as necessary a condition as ignorance, to an abstract Eden; but the former, like the latter, had prescriptive right in its favor, and a priestly government loves no novelties. Even cleanliness, when it is something hitherto untried, may to such a government seem perilous to society. Moreover, clerical noses are tuned to a different and higher pitch of smell, than those of other mortals. The French Jesuit Louis Veuillot, has written two thick volumes about "Les *Odeurs* de Paris" and "Les *Parfums* de Rome." To his thinking, the censers around the king of high priests gave even to the exhalations of the Ghetto a scent of newly blossomed roses.

It is now probably about ten years, since the author of *Pictures from Italy*, my friend Carlino, drank from the Fontana Trevi the desire to see the holy city again and the pledge that his desire should be fulfilled. If he now return to the seven hills, it will at his very entrance within the old city walls, be made clear to him, if it have not been so before, that a leaf has been turned in the voluminous annals of Rome. The wretched station by the Porta Portese, the woodshed where he sat under arrest, while papal familiar spirits spelled through his passport and smelled in his carpet-bag after the New Testament and other revolutionary works, has gone the way of all flesh. The traveller now gets out at an imposing station on the Piazza de' Termini, close by the baths of Diocletian; and no objection will be made even if he bring with him the whole collection of books that the congregation has put on the black list, from Galileo's *Dialogo* to Gladstone's pamphlet on papal infallibility, and the impossibility of a good Englishman's being a good Catholic. The time when Vilhelm Bergsöe the Danish naturalist was unable to flush a Cuvier in the bookstores of Rome, seems as far back as the deluge, although it was but a few years since. Now, the windows of the bookshops on the Corso are crammed with new works on philosophy and physical science. On the Spanish stairs, where formerly Beppo king of the beggars had his place, the New Testament is now sold. On the Via della Scrofa, directly opposite a cardinal's palace, a small sign is to be seen, with the inscription "Evangelical Bookstore," and a window, among the books exhibited in which is one that on its very title-page proclaims the heretical assertion, "*Peter never was bishop of Rome!*" and allows every passer-by to draw, if he will, the conclusion: so the pope is not Peter's successor in office!

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* These sketches were written, I believe, in 1874.—C.

If the traveller have left his passport at home, it is of no consequence. New Rome receives without mistrust and without opposition all into her embrace: Jews and proselytes, Greeks and Arabians. If the traveller, as he has the baths of Diocletian directly before him, will peep inside of their ruined walls, he will find the beautiful church of Santa Maria degli Angeli and the hundred pillars of the Carthusian cloister still standing unmoved, as a pledge that this, and all that he found worthy of study, love and admiration in glorious Rome, has in no wise suffered by the change that has taken place. Quite the contrary: he will find the memories of ancient greatness more numerous and more instructive than ever, thanks to the continued excavations. But the Carthusian monks who were domiciled next to Maria degli Angeli—those are now gone. The Italian government has suppressed a number of convents; and no one whose brain has not been twisted by maudlin romantic sentimentality, can do otherwise than congratulate society, that these strongholds of darkness have been broken up. Yet I will not deny that I would like to allow the friendly Franciscans of San Bonaventura up on the Palatine, whose guest I was one day during the Carnival, to remain until their dying day in their little cloister, and enjoy their siesta in the pleasant colonnade that opens upon their garden, with its lofty palms and beautiful view. And the monks of Sant' Onofrio, too! Long before I came to Rome, had I heard mention of the pleasant Hieronymites of the convent on the steep slope of Janiculus, as the only liberal Christian monks in the whole Catholic world. Think, once: near as they lived to the Vatican, this neighborhood could not infect them with belief in the papal infallibility, which they denied under the very nose of the Vatican œcumenical council! And when I now stood within the walls of Sant' Onofrio, and found that the pious guardians of Tasso's grave and the fresco of Leonardo da Vinci had been forced to abandon their peaceful home, I was heartily sorry for the old men. They formed the "extreme left" in the Catholic church: they belonged, in other words, to the side which is never right, but which in course of time almost always gets it.

But back to our traveller! Whithersoever he may wish to steer his course—towards the Porta Pia, or the old prætorian camp, or the church of Maria Maggiore—over the whole north-eastern part of old Rome, which a few years since was made up of wooden houses or waste land, he will find streets laid out or being laid out, rows of houses built, or the ground dug out for the foundations. The new houses are large, but remind us—alas, far too much!—of those immense Haussman bee-hives that parade in the most tiresome monotony along the boulevards of Paris, and which would be called insignificant, if they did not constantly remind us that building lots in the French capital are very dear. The new quarters of Rome promise us straight and broad streets, and houses with many and regularly placed rows of windows; but if they are to be filled with these "*maisons bourgeoises*," that fancy they outshine palaces, because they overtop them in height, it will be but a sorry piece of Rome, with the single merit of making elder Rome, with its narrow winding streets, its proud grave palaces, and its many small markets with their purling fountains, so much the dearer to the stranger.

Our traveller will look in vain, but probably without any sense of loss, for the papal zouaves with their impudent and defiant look, and their red French trousers, who formerly made an element so striking in the swarm of people in the streets. As much hated as those priestly jailors with every reason were, so much beloved and cherished is the armed force now in Rome, for these are Italy's own sons, its "people in arms;" and the Italian in uniform is the same natural, kind and open-hearted creature as the Italian in garb of peace. We constantly meet the stout little dark-skinned *bersaglieri*, with elastic step and waving plumes; or the tall grenadiers, usually of fair complexion, who when we see them in companies, with their fair mustaches and their honest look, remind us so strongly of the Swedish soldiers, that we must involuntarily remember that Longobards, Eastern Goths, Herules, and other kinsmen of us dwellers in the North, have given a large tributary stream to the blood of the Italian race.

If our traveller go into the quarter where the Northmen of to-day incline to make their abiding-places—on the Via Felice, Via del Tritone, Capo le Case, Via de' due Macelli, and others—he can now tread a good stone pavement and broad sidewalks. The Corso and the Via Condotti are no longer the only streets that can boast of such. Numberless houses have been brushed up, many measures taken for the advance of cleanliness. Even the Ghetto, the old Jewish quarter, from which a Jewish removal and into which a Christian immigration are gradually taking place, has begun to shoot up, and no longer gives reason for the name of being the slovenliest hole in Europe. And the results are already apparent in the tables of statistics of mortality. Rome, a few years ago one of the unhealthiest of cities, is now not even in summer a dwelling-place very dangerous to health. And when once it has advanced so far—but it seems to delay very, very long—that free peasants plant the beneficent ploughshare in the ground of the Campagna, then shall the malaria fly, and the deserted Aventine hill again be covered with homes for sturdy men, fair women and ruddy children.

The old proverb, that Rome is "the paradise of priests, the purgatory of pedestrians and the hell of horses," has, as appears from the above, become obsolete with regard to the first two thirds, since that memorable September day in the year 1870, when the Italians stormed the breach near the Porta Pia. That Rome has ever been the pedestrian's purgatory I find it anyhow hard to believe, for here there is so much to see and enjoy, that one can cheerfully walk the roughest pavement. But the proverb's remaining third is unhappily even to-day a truth, and is valid as such not only for horses, but for all other domestic animals, except the cat, who shares the advantage his two-legged peers in agility possess, of being able without much thrashing and without much respect to slip through the tight places of life. Schopenhauer the philosopher accuses Christendom of not having taken animals under its protection. The reproach is false, as far as Christendom itself is concerned, but it is true with regard to the Christian peoples, who towards animals are the most cruel of all. Above all, is this true of the Catholics. By chance, I was forced to see how they maltreated a poor horse who at a hill fell under his heavy load. Among the spectators stood two priests. I took the liberty of representing to these holy men that it was their duty to stop the tormenting spirits, but got nothing but astonished looks and open mouths, in answer. To try to arouse their sympathy for a tormented creature, was clearly trouble thrown away. Then I took to reasons to which I thought them more amenable: I reminded them, that Christ had made domestic animals sacred, since he had suffered himself to be born in a manger in their very midst; and that Saint Francis of Assisi had been the friend of animals. And now, at last, one of the prospective infallibles — a little, stout, flat-nosed fellow with a dull air—lifted up his voice and entertained me with some nonsense about the yearly feast of Sant' Antonio Abbate and the holy water that was then sprinkled upon horses, oxen, asses, goats and poultry, for their comfort and edification. With this, he probably thought the church had fulfilled all righteousness towards the animal creation. The answer one otherwise becomes used to receive, is that "animals are not Christian." That they have hardly any feeling, is a belief said to be generally current among the more ignorant classes; and this explains, in some degree, how such kindly, and at the bottom noble, men as the Romans are, have been able to fall into the low and shameful sin of cruelty to animals. But that does not excuse the priests, who have for a thousand years had the education of this people in their hands, and have done all that lay in the power of man to blot out everything great and good that is native to its character. Meantime the Italians had not long been masters of Rome, before a society for the protection of animals, with the Princess Margaret at the head, came into existence; and those who have been acquainted with Rome for a long period, assure us that the efforts of this society, warmly sustained as they are by the liberal journals, have already borne some fruit.

Of the care the priests gave popular education, one can still get an idea, from the living pictures, admirable to the eye of the figure-painter, that the streets of Rome yet occasionally present. As I once came out of the chapel S. Pietro in Carcere—the old Mamertine prison which I described on another occasion—the first sight that met my glance was a group of little boys playing cards, who had settled themselves down on the steps of the church of S. S. Martino e Luca, diagonally opposite. By the side of them stood a black-bearded fellow, as buried in the progress of the game as if he never in the world had seen anything more fascinating. Now the door of the church is opened, and two priests come forth, who have maybe just before been saying mass within. One of them very nearly fell over the smallest of the little ones, who sat at his very feet with both hands full of dirty cards; and I expected that our worthy would, if for no other reason, out of pure vexation, urge the little vagabonds to leave the church steps. But no: they had now three spectators instead of one. The gentlemen of the priestly gown stopped, took out their snuff-boxes, mustered the situation on the field of battle, and for a short time followed with about the same eagerness as the fellow with the beard did, the battle constantly going on between hearts, diamonds, clubs and spades.

On one of my visits to the church of Santa Maria in Cosmedin, I came quite unexpectedly into the very midst of a school of the old Roman kind. This century-old basilica, with its beautiful Roman towers, lies at the foot of the Aventine, facing the Tiber, in a district that with its antique buildings and its memories of the combat of the Gracchi, has something especially eloquent and fitted to awaken romance. My intention was again to look at the admirable mosaics in the basilica, which have however far less contributed to its renown than the round colossal mask, which stands on the left in the vestibule, and which under the name of the "Mouth of Truth" (*la bocca della Verità*) has been the theme of all sorts of traditions among the people. Formerly, it is said, the mask stood in a hall of judgment. Those who had to clear themselves by oath, were to put their hands into the mouth of the mask; if they swore falsely, it bit off the hand. Long after this custom had ceased, and after the strange thing had found its present place, it happened that an Englishman, ridiculing the tradition, put his hand into the yawning orifice of the mask, but drew it back with a cry. A scorpion had stung him. Before he died, he confessed that he had been guilty of perjury in his own country. So much for *la bocca della Verità:* now, to the school, where legends of saints, and doctrines with a more equivocal moral than that of those traditions, are inculcated in children. When I entered the little church, I found it transformed into a kind of primary public school. In the left side-aisle, were the boys; in the right, the girls. Each class formed a ring, seated around an under-master or a nun. Of books or slates there was not a trace. To teach children to read, lay entirely outside of if not directly contrary to the purpose of this school. The monitor repeated a bit of the Roman catechism, or whatever it might be, and the child had to say it after the teacher, by heart. During this time, the priestly head-master, the "curato" of the flock, walked to and fro in the nave. The girls sat still, and seemed attentive. But all the more disorderly were the specimens of black-haired boyhood in the left aisle. Whenever a monitor looked to the left, he had a skylarker on the right of him, and if he looked to the right, the mischief flitted quick as lightning to the left. I do not lay the blame of this upon the boy's black locks that I spoke of, for a little light-haired rascal, with big blue eyes, was the worst in the ring. Twice, in hardly two minutes, his sallow monitor in the caftan, punished him with a sounding box on the ear, that flooded his cheeks with tears; but these were hardly dry, before his naughty humor came back. Babbling, reading aloud, laughter, fisticuffs and cries, followed one another in a right picturesque manner. The "curato," used to this uproar, was not disturbed by it in his peripatetic thoughts. With his eyes fastened on the floor, he seemed to be continually admiring its fine mosaic-work. At last he gave a sign: the babbling and the uproar ceased, and he began in the easy style his listeners required, an explanation of the doctrine of *satisfactio vicaria*, larded with an endless number of *heys!* or *heys?* for they sometimes seemed to be a pure interjection, sometimes a kind of interrogation mark, inserted in the text. He spoke of the great gratitude, bad children—"or aren't you bad, hey! can you deny you are a bad boy, Davidde, hey! or do you think you are much better, Giacomina, hey?" ought to have, to the kind saints, who with their works of supererogation, mend the holes that wicked youngsters have made in their robes of righteousness. After I had listened a while to this lecture, I bowed to the "curato," thanked him for what I had seen and heard, and withdrew.

Under the new government, Rome is continually getting new public schools, managed by laymen, and at which children learn to read and write, and even gather some knowledge of the history and geography of their country. On the birthday of King Victor Emanuel, I saw several of these schools, with their own music at their head, march through the streets. It was a pleasure to remark the intelligent look and the orderly dress of the youth composing them.

II.

THE CARNIVAL. THE CLOISTER OF BONAVENTURA. ADVENTURES ON THE CORSO.

IT was one of the last and liveliest days of the carnival. At noon the streets were already thronged with masks, who roved about through the city in expectation of the time for the general meeting on the Corso. They usually assembled by groups, with laughter and jests. On the Campo di Fiore the reader's servant was stopped by a small gathering of this kind. In the midst of the crowd, two Punchinellos were disputing as to which had the more majestic nose; and before I knew a word of it, the affair was submitted to my decision. I had a hard time to extricate myself. The parties, sustained by eager advocates, surrounded me, with gesticulations, as if they called all the powers of heaven and hell to witness in their suit, and they rivalled each other in stroking their immense noses caressingly against my shoulders, to convince me of the eminent qualities of these features. When I had finally pronounced judgment, the loser fell with a sigh of despair into the arms of those around him, while he whose *naso* now had the stranger's testimony that it was *il più maestoso*, embraced me, and wished me a far, far longer nose than his own.

Further on, upon the same square where the people's dentists are accustomed to pull up, in their wagons pasted all over with blatant placards, stood a mask of Dulcamara, with a giant flask in one hand and a pair of tongs in the other, and was just trying to convince a spectator furnished with a head of Serimner, that the latter had a toothache in one of his grinders, when a girl dressed in the costume of a peasant of the Abruzzi, whom I had seen before among the models on the Spanish Stairs, pushed, with her little brother by the hand, through the surrounding crowd to the real dentist, who stood unmasked and dressed like a common mortal by his wagon, laughing at his chance rival in the business, with the full-bottomed wig. The Abruzzan hat, gay with ribbons and flowers, sat so jauntily on the dark locks that fell over the boy's forehead ; but there was no question of a carnival jest, here : his great eyes were wet with tears, and he pressed his hand to his cheek. The seventeenth century Dulcamara had hastily to clear the ground for him of the nineteenth. The latter hopped into his wagon, lifted the little martyr to toothache up to him, looked at his mouth, and—one, two, three—proudly displayed the extracted tooth ; while the boy, who seemed to be pleasantly astonished to have escaped the pain, under the bravos and caresses of the masks was handed from arm to arm, until he reached port at the side of his beautiful sister.

From the Campo di Fiore, I went through the narrow streets that lead by the nearest way to the market of Trajan. Here, music sounded in my ear, as I came along. I succeeded in getting a place on the mound by the iron railing that surrounds the column of victory, and could thence see the sight which called forth lively cries of approbation from dense crowds of spectators. Girls, and men masked as seamen, were executing a pantomimic dance that represented a shipwreck. The dancers floated in undulating lines around each other, with motions of hoisting and hauling-in, executed to the snapping measures of the guitar, until these lines broke into a confused mass of heads, ducking and coming up, and forming again in rows that swimming reach the shore, and in joy at the rescue, unite in a giddy round dance. What St. Peter, who stands up there on top of the column, with the keys of the heavenly kingdom in his hand, thought of the matter, I do not know ; but the dance had begun again, when, amid the waves of Punchinello hats and other head-gear, I discovered some of the black broad-brimmed, dogmatically stiff hats—as twisted as church logic—which belong to the priesthood, and under them, faces with the sour looks that also belong to the Roman priestly habit, ever since the bersaglieri stormed the Porta Pia, and the unlucky holy father was laid a prisoner on that world-renowned straw bed of his. There is scarce a pious old woman in France, probably, who has not bought her a few straws from that bed, and fastened them in a graceful knot above the photograph of Pius IX : and that this article, so much sought after at the fairs, may be from the Vatican, (that is, from the pope's prison,) I no longer doubt, since I have with my own eyes seen persons reverently pick up the straw that had been thrown out of the papal court stables.

The owners of the twisted brims vanished within the door of a *trattoria*, and as it remained for me, too, to dine, I followed them, convinced that however modest the place might otherwise be, I should at a dinner-table where priests sit down, find a well-prepared meal and good wine ; and therein I was not mistaken.

The sour faces cleared, when a savory "*bistecca*" was brought in; and when their owners had emptied a "*mezza foglietta*" of innocently stimulating wine of Velletri, they seemed rather to belong to the church triumphant, than the church in tribulation; and they talked jovially together of all sorts of things, among others of the sermon that had the day before been preached in the church of Il Gesù, against the carnival. Such a sermon is no rarity, however: on the contrary, it is thundered out regularly once a year in Il Gesù against this worldly festival, or rather, this jolly way of approaching the holy season of Lent; but oddly enough, the lectures are always deferred until one of the last days of the carnival, when admonitions come to late. And they were never until within these last years seriously meant. He who really set the carnival frolic going, the true patron of all *Pulcinelli* was himself a pope: cheery Paul II, who turned church festivals into popular merrymakings, transformed the Roman calendar into a bill of the play and music, and thought that happy men are easier to govern and easier to lead to salvation, than surly. Only since the year 1870, does the church look with wrathful eyes upon the carnival; for so long as the pope is a captive, Rome, not to speak of the rest of the world, should go in sackcloth and ashes, and not allow herself to be jolly.

A few paces from the trattoria, and I stood on the Forum Romanum. The sun poured floods of light upon its antique columns and the marble floor of the Julian basilica; it was silent and void of people, there; the excavations were stopped for the day, and no stranger was to be seen wandering there, with guide-book before him and cicerone by his side. But in the streets that surround the forum and mount towards the Capitol, as everywhere, was visible a throng of masks. In front of me arose the beautiful rock of Palatine with the ruined walls of the Cæsars' palace, like an island of stillness from out a sea of boisterous merriment. I was seized with a longing after solitude among the memories there above. The way thither goes through the gate of Vignola, through the grating of which, the terrace stairs that lead to the Farnesian garden and the imperial palace, shone as invitingly as ever; but the gallooned guard whom Signor Rosa, director of the Palatine excavations, had stationed at the entrance, informed me that the Palatine was for the day closed. I was resolved to get there, nevertheless. I knew that near the triumphal arch of Titus a street ends, which free to all, leads up over the declivities of that rock where the herdsman Faustulus nursed a kingdom, and the emperor Augustus, an empire. But what purpose this street actually served, I did not know. I hoped it would at least offer a fine view.

High garden walls shut it in, on both sides. Behind that on the left, lies the field where according to tradition Saint Sebastian, bound to a tree, suffered martyrdom by the arrows of Numidian bowmen—one of the few legends of martyrs that have proved themselves adapted to artistic handling, and which has given the theme for more than one beautiful picture, that has in the person of the saint united youth, beauty, the might of faith, and heavenly ecstasy. But these garden walls never end. Higher up, the street turns at a right angle, but only to show me a continued stretch of whitewashed wall. It is silent here, it is lonely here; only as a muffled murmur does the roar of the carnival reach this spot. In the walls, I find at certain intervals, niches with paintings that recall steps heavier than the heaviest a traveller, eager to see sights, ever took upon a steep hill. These paintings, in respect of art entirely without pretension, have power, nevertheless, to attune the soul to a key strangely discordant with the carnival rejoicing. They represent the rests—"the stations" as they are called—in Jesus' walk from the house of Pilate to Golgotha. Here, he bears his cross. I know that in the next niche I shall see him sink under it—that farther up I shall see the tree of life raised by the executioners, outline itself against a cloud-covered sky—and seized by feelings I shall not describe, I hasten my step. Who has not increased the burden upon those shoulders? We all have done so. And now, I am finally come to the end of the street.

It leads out into a little square, if I may so call a deserted place, hedged in on all sides by windowless walls. In that on the right, is a gate bolted and locked with a mighty lock. It is, indeed, "Villa Mills," the French nunnery, that hides itself behind; the cloister under the walls of which, the key to the entire topography of the Palatine yet lies concealed. In the wall opposite me a little door is to be seen, and in front of it a figure, dressed in a brown cloak with a collar and cap. The bald head is crowned with a thin circle of hair, a rope girds his loins, sandals are the covering of his feet. So, a Franciscan monk.

We bow, and he opens the door with a gesture of friendly invitation, to which I respond. And now I stand in a dark corridor. On the right and left, yet darker corridors, leading to cells, where he who lately bathed in the radiant sunlight scarce can distinguish the wooden benches, their only furniture, or the images of Christ, sole ornament of the naked walls. The cells are vacant, except one, where two monks sit talking in whispers. To my question as to where I am, my friendly companion answers: "In the cloister of St. Bonaventura."

Well, then, since I have so unexpectedly made port from the carnival, in the quiet of a cloister, I will enjoy it for a time. I throw myself down upon a bench in one of the corridors, and the monk reaches me, in welcome, a goblet of fresh water. The name Bonaventura carried me back to the times when I dipped into the mystic and magical writings of the middle ages. Is the man whose name this cloister bears, the same who as a boy was absorbed in the Areopagitic manuscripts, and became a link in the chain of the mystic thinkers who opened to the drying stream of new Platonism a subterranean vein in the deep ground of Christianity?

Yes, he is the same. The monk who has seated himself by my side, knows that the patron saint of his cloister was really called Johannes Fidanza, before the founder of his order, St. Francis of Assisi, made the youth object of one of his many miracles, and called him Bonaventura. He knows, too, that Bonaventura himself worked many miracles, and finally died the most honorable death a Franciscan monk can wish for: he died namely of voluntary privation. As far as that, the dwellers in this cloister have not carried self-mortification; but strict rules they are subject to, stricter than those of most of the other Franciscans. And now the talk falls upon the deserts of his order, at the hands of the church. They are great: the Franciscans had in advance of all others come to a conviction of the immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary, and had also been compelled to suffer much ignominy for this their conviction; but now through Pius IX they have won a splendid victory. I had seen, of course, the Immaculata monument on the Piazza di

Spagna; that is the Franciscans' monument of victory. But victory has not made them proud: now and always they consider themselves the least of all the brethren, willing servants of the Jesuits and Dominicans.

This conversation accorded so well with the twilight around me—but I must admit that I began to long again after the sunlight and the nineteenth century, which clearly had stopped outside the doors of St. Bonaventura. I stood up, and took another turn through the chief corridor of the cloister. I stumbled upon a door with the inscription *Bibliotheca*, and with the additional notice that Pius IX had richly augmented the collection of books. I wished to go in, in the hope of seeing one of those old ornamental manuscripts with richly-colored miniatures and rubrics, that enchant the eyes even of non-connoisseurs. But no: the library was a sacred room; there, only the superior of the convent might set his foot. But my companion believed that all Bonaventura's writings were to be found there: even his "The Soul's Guide to God" and his "Conversation with Myself." But—added the monk—they are hard to read, even for those who know Latin; some of the thoughts can scarcely be understood without special illumination.

Now, as I was about to say farewell, the monk opened a door opposite to that through which I had entered, and I stood as spell-bound by the sight that met me here. In the sunlight, two of the fairest palm-trees I had up to that time seen, arose towards the deep blue sky; beneath me lay, adorned with clinging vines, mighty remains of ancient palaces of emperors; and outspread before me, Rome and the Campagna, with glorious melting colors in a frame of azure or violet-shimmering mountains. I stood in the little, well-kept convent garden, with its beds of kitchen vegetables and flowers. How still it was, here, and how peaceful, and at the same time how magnificent and grand!

In the middle of the garden stood an urn, on which a monk, skilled in the art of stone-cutting, was at work with the chisel so zealously, that the sweat dripped from his forehead. We exchanged a few words. "One can thrive, up here." "Most certainly," replied the old man. "But one can find peace down there, too," I intimated, and pointed down towards the city. "Yes, in the very midst of the carnival," answered the old man, with a friendly nod, but stopped short, as if he had uttered a heresy. And with this, I said a grateful farewell to the convent of St. Bonaventura and its occupants.

Down by the forum, I found a cab, and decided to drive through the Corso, where the masquerade must now be at the height of its animation. At the Piazza di Venezia the coachman stopped, turned around and looked musingly at my hat, something that I should have paid but little heed to—for the hat was new and bought a few days before on the Corso—had not a crowd of masks also collected around the carriage and cried "*il capello! il capello!*" Astonished, I took off my hat, amid peals of laughter from the masks, mustered it on all sides, found it perfectly in order, and pressed it down again upon my forehead. Another very serious and musing glance from the coachman, who seemed to look upon my head-gear with a deep philosophic consideration, then a thoughtful shake of the head, and finally a shrug of the shoulders, after which he again set his horse in motion. Hardly had we entered the Corso with its indescribable crowd and its quite as indescribable din, hardly had I raised my eyes to all those balconies, towering one above another and adorned with beautiful women and many colored draperies, hardly had I caught a passing glimpse of the billowing multitude, before I found myself the object of a blinding rain—not of *confetti* which begin to belong to the domain of history but—of plaster in every form, from the finest plaster dust, to plaster in the shape of pebbles; and the rain turned into the wildest hailstorm, and in my ears all other cries were drowned in the shriek, "*il capello!*" With horror, I now remembered a story that on a certain evening during the carnival no high hat could show itself upon the Corso. The story was true, and I had never dreamed of it, for the whole of the evening before, I had passed on the Corso, in the midst of the maddest masquerade gayety, and not a creature had troubled himself about my hat. "Drive fast!" I called to the coachman. Useless warning! We had, in that press of carriages and people, to go step by step. Now came a plaster avalanche and swept my hat off. I put it on again. "Drive into a cross street!" Useless warning! At the ends of the cross streets the crowd was worse, if possible, than on the main thoroughfare. Again the hat was knocked off. I allow it to lie, take my overcoat off, and throw it over my head. But even at my feet, this unlucky specimen of Roman hatting is object of the Roman's frenzy. Plaster heaps itself up in drifts in the cab. At last we stop on the Piazza del Popolo. The coachman, who from top to toe looks like a miller, puffs, and swears by at least seven saints, by San Giovanni, and San Giacomo, by Santa Petronella and our own Santa Brigida, and others, that this is the very worst tour he has ever been out on; and he takes the liberty of wondering at my obstinacy, to wish to appear in a high hat on the Corso, on such an evening, in spite of all his courteous signs of dissuasion. I allowed him to believe in my obstinacy, and parted from him after a satisfactory settlement, to pass the rest of the evening, under my poor mutilation of a hat (that might now well have suited the mask of a beggar) on the splendidly illuminated Piazza Navona.

III.

THE COLOSSEUM. WHO WERE THE BARBARIANS? THE DESCENDANTS OF THE COLOSSEUM. PLAYS. THE ROBBER DRAMA, "LAUREOLUS." THE MONK TELEMACHUS. SIGNOR ROSA'S EXCAVATIONS.

ALTHOUGH I have seen the Colosseum not only when the sun shed its splendor over the yellow-red travertine, but also by moonlight and torchlight, nay, even by the light of Bengal fires and the "light of history" besides, I have not the smallest intention of tiring my readers with an attempt to describe the impression that giant building made upon me. They have all heard of the Colosseum and have swallowed more than enough of written wonderment over it. I myself had in advance had so much of this, that at first sight of the great work, I found it hard to be astonished enough.

The claims of the Flavian amphitheatre to surprise and admiration, are based, however, on the oldest prescriptive right. The poet Martialis begins the line of its panegyrists. When the "clement" Titus consecrated the theatre with a hundred days' massacre—now 1794 years ago—Martialis sat among the spectators. And he strung his lyre and bade all that the human hand and human art had hitherto created, humble itself before the amphitheatre of the Cæsars. But that the pyramids and the temples at Memphis obeyed his bidding, may be doubted.

About three hundred years thereafter, came the historian and commander Ammianus Marcellinus to Rome. He is known as a conscientious writer of history; but in presence of the Colosseum, he could not restrain his oriental imagination. He assures us that the walls are so high, the eye grows weary in following them on their way to storm the heavens. The truth is, that the outer wall has a height of about two hundred feet; and that is a very pretty height, too—Haga church tower,* for example, does not reach a hundred and sixty.

Let us flit farther, three or four hundred years nearer to our own day. During the time we thus fly over, barbarians and earthquakes had time after time visited Rome. But while mountains yielded under volcanic shocks, the Colosseum stood fast. And therefore our Northumbrian kinsman, the church historian Bede, could utter this prophecy: "As long as the Coliseum stands, Rome shall stand; when the Coliseum falls, Rome will fall; when Rome falls, the world will fall." †

And here—since I happened to use the word "barbarians"—let me be allowed to call attention to what Ampère long since pointed out: that our Germanic forefathers and kinsmen are greatly wronged, when it is thought that it was especially they who destroyed the magnificent buildings and art treasures of Rome. Cardinal May has discovered a noteworthy document, written by a monk, Zacharias, in the year 540, which mentions that Rome then possessed seventeen thousand and ninety-seven palaces, thirteen thousand and fifty-two fountains, eighty large statues of the gods, in gilded bronze, sixty-six in ivory, three thousand seven hundred and eighty-five bronze statues representing emperors and other great men ; and besides, twenty-two colossal equestrian statues of bronze, thirty-one theatres, eleven amphitheatres, nine thousand and twenty-six baths, and so forth. The Byzantine chronicler Procopius tells us that the Forum Romanum was in his time filled with statues, among which were to be seen works of Phidias, Lysippus and Myron ; and that when Theodoric the Ostrogoth "barbarian" ruled over the world's metropolis, he took the antique buildings and works of art under his protection, against the Romans' own indifference or lust for destruction. The real barbarians have been the Romans themselves. They have, too, a proverb that in some measure confesses it : " What the barbarians spared, the Barberines sacked." The Barberini are a princely Roman family. But the proverb is true of the middle age barons of Rome, collectively. Of the twenty-two bronze horsemen, a single one only, now remains—Marcus Aurelius, on the Capitoline square ; and he was spared by the Romans of the middle ages and the papacy, only because the work was thought to be a statue of Constantine, founder of the state's Christianity. The ivory statues have all disappeared. Of the eighty gilded statues of the gods, only two have come down to our day : one of them was dug out in the year 1864, under the Biscioni palace, near Campo di Fior.

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* Haga—the celebrated summer palace of Gustavus III.—C.

† Gibbon's translation. [*Quamdiu stabit Colyseus, stabit et Roma, quando cadet Colyseus, cadet Roma; quando cadet Roma, cadet et mundus.*]—C

Four hundred years after the time of Bede, the Colosseum was a fortress in the hands of one of the noble families who fought for the domination of Rome. In this, it shared the fate of all the larger buildings yet remaining from the antique time. Barons with names like Frangipani, Orsini, Colonna, and so forth, strove for dismantled Rome like vultures for a corpse. In the Colosseum, the Frangipanian birds of prey had their lurking-place. All around them was a desert. Robert Guiscard's Saracens had at the appeal of pope Gregory VII stormed Rome and ravaged it with lance, the edge of the sword, and fire. Then were the Aventine and the quarters between the Lateran and Esquiline, seen to form one immense pyre. But the walls of the Colosseum had withstood even the flames.

But—there came a power that they were powerless to defy: the power that had given them existence, the hand of man. Three hundred years again, and the Colosseum had become a stone-quarry. Now Rome again began to be adorned with splendid palaces, for which the old amphitheatre must give a great part of the building material. The fortress-like Palazzo di Venezia that lies at the opening of the Corso, the mighty Cancelleria, Bramante's stately work, and the noble Palazzo Farnese, adorned with Michael Angelo's renowned frieze, descend both in the body and the spirit from the Colosseum, for not only the latter's blocks of travertine, but even something of its Roman style did they appropriate to themselves. We have therefore no right to unmingled complaint of the vandalism that befell the giant work of the Flavians—the less so, that chance has so strangely guided the hand of devastation that the two-thirds still remaining of the structure, give us a complete picture of the appearance of the whole, and at the same time something more: something romantic and seductive to the pencil, that the amphitheatre in its pristine splendor and magnificence never possessed. It is as though devastation would not seize upon the amphitheatre itself, but on its grim recollections; as if the punishment that had overtaken it, would even in this case bring with it an expiation. Its ruins, as they now bathe in the moonlight and silver mists, seem to wash themselves clean from traces of blood, to give the beholder an unmingled enjoyment of their mournful grandeur.

Let us imagine a wall high as a tower, curving in an ellipse of the circumference of nearly eight hundred paces, pierced by eighty door-arches and ornamented with four rows of pilasters placed one above the other, lowest a Doric then an Ionic and two Corinthian; let us farther imagine that marble statues adorn the arcades of the second and third storeys, and bronze shields the space between the windows of the fourth storey; that gilded poles, between which a tent is stretched, rise above the top of the wall, and that the whole varies in the warm tints of the travertine—and we have an idea of the exterior of the Flavian amphitheatre, as it was once.

Its interior rises in terraces, from which, when a pageant is given, eighty-seven thousand spectators, divided on five rows of benches, look down, with feverish tension in their features and bloodthirstiness in their eyes, upon a plain of sand, where lions and tigers, elephants, hippopotamuses, fight with each other or with men condemned to death; where gladiators in the most different arms and equipment, from the naked net-caster to the steel-clad myrmillon, march in, with the cry; "*Cæsar, these consecrate to death salute thee!*" and fight, to fall and be dragged out dead, by figures in masks of Hades; where fountains, palms and rocks rise as if by enchantment from the earth; where the clang of arms, the plaints of the wounded, the roar of the wild beasts, and the acclamations and applause of the spectators stun the ear, while the eye growing giddy, sweeps over a sea of heads and of white shining togas, an unutterable wealth of marble, gold and gay-colored dresses, until again it rests, on the magnificent box, from which crowned Cæsar looks upon the pageant.

That was the amphitheatre above ground. But it had, too, a subterranean division, with vaulted passages and chambers, machine-room, reservoirs of water, and waste channels—all this walled into the depth of the artificial lake Nero had caused to be dug, and which only a few years before the amphitheatre stood complete, had mirrored his brilliant barques.

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Waste channels the amphitheatre needed, in truth, not only for the waters of the Cœlian and Esquiline hills, which collected in the hollow where it stands, but also for the blood that was poured out on the arena. Sometimes this liquid literally flowed in streams. On the day of dedication, Titus sacrificed nine thousand wild beasts and tame, and on another occasion, two hundred lions were seen within the barriers of the ground tearing one another to pieces. At the thousandth anniversary festival of Rome, two thousand gladiators fought for life or death. Among the spectators, invisible, sat Nemesis, and devoted the realm that so celebrated the day of its birth, to destruction.

Emperor Domitian, a zealous friend of the "sports" of the amphitheatre, understood how at far less cost to produce surprising and nerve-tickling sights. One day was performed the robber play written by Catullus the mimograph, *Laureolus :* so called after its hero, whose adventures, combats, imprisonment and death on the cross, formed the contents of the mimic poem. The emperor had caused a proposal to be made to a condemned criminal known for his ability as an actor, that he should play the part of Laureolus; and the man had gladly agreed to it, in the hope that after successful acting, he should obtain the intercessions of the spectators and the emperor's grace. So he played with a power and truth to nature, that brought him stormy acclamations from the Roman people and encouraging smiles from the emperor —who shared his attention between him and the scarlet-clad dwarf who always went with him to the theatre, and there sat at his feet. So came the closing scene, which represented the punishment of Laureolus, and always called forth applause, when the executioner's men accomplished their task so well, that the crucifixion, without harm to the actor's limbs, had a delusive likeness to a real one. But Domitian favored "the realistic in art" carried to its extreme point, and he thought to surprise, as the tiger does from his ambush. The cross is borne in, the imprisoned actor's arms outstretched—and at a sign from the imperial box, the executioners drive the nails through his hands and feet, and lift on high the tree of death, deluged with the blood of the shrieking victim. The spectators sit a moment mute with horror: they see an actually not a seemingly crucified Laureolus. But it was dangerous not to find a jest of Cæsar good. The senators clap their hands, the knights also, and the people joins with them. That time, too, the poet Martialis sat among the spectators. Returned home, he wrote one of those elegant epigrams which were titbits for his contemporaries, and in it, praised the emperor's taste and love of truth in art. The court poet crowned the abject baseness of the emperor. But he who thus made himself poet of the court, could not be far-sighted. To the ill-luck of Martialis, but the advantage of the

Roman realm, it happened that the imperial crown after Domitian's death was assumed by men of republican virtue and republican principle. They did not feel themselves honored by panegyrics from Domitian's literary friend, who had prostituted his genius: burdened by their contempt, he left Rome.

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It is the belief of the church that many Christians suffered martyrdom in the Flavian amphitheatre. Tertullian testifies that the cry, "Cast the Christians to the lions!" was common during the times of persecution. But in this, the most ancient traditions of the martyrs are in strange contradiction with each other; from which one would involuntarily come to the conclusion that the persecutors must soon have ceased this cruel means of punishment, as it proved itself powerless—since the wild beasts, however much their thirst for blood and their fury were incited, could never be induced to stain their teeth with the blood of bodies consecrated as temples of the Holy Spirit. Water, too, refused to kill them: flames, as well; out of the waves into which they were thrown, and the pyre that had been lighted under them, almost always the martyrs issued unharmed before their amazed executioners. Only iron and the noose could infallibly end their earthly life. No legend expresses this as a common and well-known experience; but when one compares the mass of stories of the martyrs one with another, he comes to this conclusion, and must ask himself if some hitherto unperceived idea be not hidden beneath it. The observation is anyhow not new. Among the "curiosa" of literature that the street booksellers of Rome spread out on the bridge by the Forum Romanum—those products of a terrible learning which has written thick Latin tomes about the robes of the Virgin Mary, and such matters—the reader's servant found an essay written by Del Rio, the cruel judge of witches, on the question, wherefore the divine barrier that guarded the martyrs against fire, water and wild beasts, was withdrawn from them, when their executioners seized the iron; and he tries to explain it by this, that "the iron is the legal means of punishment." A Frenchman has recently taken the same question into consideration, and given answer on it, that an old unchristian prejudice lies at the bottom of the church traditions about it: the prejudice, namely, that the soul, being of the nature of fire, is extinguished in water, and the resurrection of the flesh is made impossible, if the body is burned or enters as food into the bodies of animals.

But to return to the Flavian amphitheatre. It is both possible and probable, that its sandy ground has drunk the blood of Christians; but full historic certainty, we have only of *one* martyrdom in that place, and then the executioners were themselves—Christians. Rome's conversion to Christianity did not hinder the bloody games of the amphitheatre from continuing long. One day, about the year 450, among the spectators sat a stranger, a monk from Syria, by the name of Telemachus. He had wished to see the much talked-of splendor of the amphitheatre, and the pleasures to which his Christian brethren there gave themselves up. The good monk, who in the Oriental cloister has lived more in pious dreams than in reality, cannot believe his eyes when the gladiators march into the arena, to divert the people with combats for life or death; but when the ground is deluged with their blood, and the spectators are jubilant, when a "secutor" thrusts his sword through the breast of a fallen net-thrower, the monk starts from his chair and down the stairs, and despite the efforts of the guards to stop him, rushes in upon the arena, into the very midst of the corpses and the victors, lifts his hand towards the senators, knights and people, bursts into tears, but represses the tears, and cries with a voice that is heard by all: "Brothers! Christians! Has John, then, in vain admonished us; children love one another! Has Jesus, then, in vain suffered for us on the cross!" His words were drowned in cries of fury. Eighty thousand frenzied men seize everything that can be used as a missile and hurl it down upon him, until he lies a corpse by the side of the fallen gladiators.

Some years after this, gladiatorial games were prohibited by emperor Honorius.

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In the middle of the eighteenth century, the Colosseum was placed under church protection, and consecrated to the suffering Jesus, in memory of the martyrs' blood that had flowed there. Ever since that time, and until last spring, an iron cross, kissed by the lips of countless pilgrims, stood in the centre of the arena. This cross was taken away while I was in Rome, and the commotion over the proceeding was great. The papal journals launched out in hot accusations against the Italian government, and tried to persuade the Romans that the cross had been taken away to insult the faith and the church. But the Romans did not trouble themselves farther about it, except that they flocked to the Colosseum, curious to see how the matter stood. All the greater was the stir within the foreign Catholic world; and a whole crowd of old ladies who believe in the "Civiltà cattolica" and the "Osservatore Romano" as in the Bible, had it in mind to go in a solemn procession, with psalms, to the desecrated place, there before their contemporaries and posterity to protest against the violation of the sacred object. But a preliminary notice that the Italian police would strike in without mercy, cooled off their zeal.

The matter stood simply thus: Signor Rosa, director of the excavations which on the part of the Italian government and for the good of science are being carried on in Rome, had assembled his working forces in the Colosseum, to discover its subterranean secrets, and the excavation which was undertaken straight across the arena, in the direction of the little axle of the ellipse, required the removal of the cross. That the cross, after the close of the investigations, will take its old place again, admits of no doubt: the great talk about insult to the faith, was only an outburst of the papal party's ill-will. This was, for all who wished to see, so plain, that the worthy Trasteverines who, draped in their cloaks, assembled in the Colosseum, shrugged their shoulders at such an attempt to hoodwink them, and thought that "*Il Capitale*," their favorite newspaper, was right in its continual warnings against "dark stratagems."

The excavations go on still, and promise a respectable harvest for knowledge of the past. On the south-eastern side of the sand plain, they had discovered, during the last days I was in Rome, the lowest and original bottom of the amphitheatre, about sixteen feet below the present arena. I saw vaults and corridors that crossed each other and among them two that lead far into the foundation walls of the amphitheatre, and concerning the purpose of which, disputes are likely to arise. Signor Rosa who favors the view received in the guidebooks as indubitable, that the Flavian amphitheatre was also used for naval fights, and has seen within its walls oared boats with contending gladiators, seems to find in these vaults and what he has struck there, reasons for his opinion; while other investigators, on the contrary, sustaining their theory on the finding of carbonized beams and mighty blocks of travertine bored through, suppose that the vaults in question have also belonged to the machine-room of the amphitheatre. Among other discoveries made in these depths, are stones carved with designs, representing wild beasts and fighting gladiators.

And herewith we take leave of the Colosseum.

IV.

LA CAMPAGNA DI ROMA.

ROME lies enwreathed with villas, parks and vineyards. Along the city walls, especially on the west and south, woods of pine, cypress, maple, elm, evergreen oak and laurel, succeed each other, and gardens, surrounding palaces or castle-like country-houses, in the halls of which the remnants of the marble folk of ancient Rome have appointed a tryst. The Villa Doria-Pamfili, the Vatican gardens, the Villa Borghese, the Monte Pincio, the Villa Medici, the Villa Ludovisi, the Villa Albani, are world-renowned. Who that has been there, does not dream himself back amid their fountains and statues, their shady walks and shining beds of flowers?

But back of these, and sometimes even skirting the outer wall of the villa, a wilderness stretches out in all directions—to the azure slopes of the Appenines, to the Alban mountains and the sea. The contrast between the magnificence of nature and art that charms us in the Roman pleasure-gardens, and the desert there outside, is at first overwhelming, and one is ready to believe in an illusion, called up to hide from the capital of Catholicism the alarming reality that surrounds it—hide the prophecy of the fate that should befall the intellect of mankind, if the power that so long held the sceptre over this region, could stretch her sway as far as she aims. It is the funeral state bed of a great power departed, this waste Campagna di Roma; and under the impression of a first view of her, Rome is a corpse, around the brow of which has been woven a chaplet of green.

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The western limit of the Campagna is the sea, from Civita Vecchia to Terracina; a strip of coast about sixteen Swedish miles in length. Towards whatever quarter one goes out from Rome, he must travel more than two Swedish miles to find a spot that can be called peopled. Something that stands for a country-house, a tenant's dwelling, he may indeed meet with, here and there; but during the summer and autumn, the door of the "casale" is commonly as inaccessible as its iron-barred windows: the tenant and his immediate family have during the malaria and fever fled to Rome or up to the mountains. Mount Soracte, which on the north marks its zigzag lines against the sky, lies about four miles* away from Rome. From Rome to Albano is two miles and a half, to Tivoli three, to the mouths of the Tiber about three, to Civita Vecchia more than seven, and to Terracina over nine. These districts, one may during certain months of the year travel over, almost without meeting a human creature.

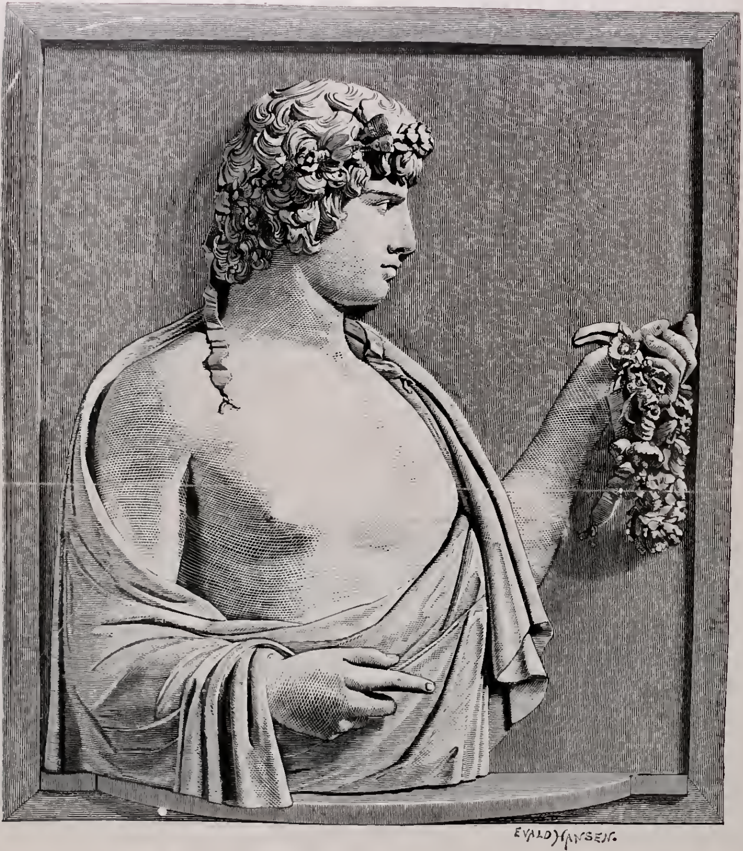
Yet here lay formerly more than twenty cities, more than fifty populous, self-governed settlements. One could look from the walls of one city to those of the other, over farm after farm, field after field. What is now a wilderness, once embraced the Latium of history, where in the cabins of a free peasantry grew that strength, and that feeling for law and discipline, which later, when Rome became leader of the Latin confederacy, created an empire of the world. Here, the plough, high in honor,

* Swedish miles.

cut its furrow from mountain to sea; here, the statesman and the commander shared the simple lot of the laboring husbandman; here, under protection of the yeoman's arms, flourished that prosperity and happiness, which in the imagination of a later race mirrored a golden age, when Saturn the peaceful king held sway over Latium.

What a change! Now, at the dangerous season, the farmer who dwells in the neighborhood of Rome seeks his shelter within the city walls, when evening comes. And the "fattore" who has tarried until sunset on the plain, wraps himself up to the eyes in his mantle, and pricks his long-maned horse, to reach the mountains and escape the fever, that out of the earth stretches its arms of blue-gray vapor after him, to clasp him in a deadly embrace. So he gallops on, over the billowy ground, past the monuments of the greatness of antiquity that are strewn over the Campagna like gravestones over a churchyard; past the fires around which the poor fellows who are forced to spend the night here, have gathered together, enveloped in the sheepskin of the Campagnolo or the cloak of the Abruzzan or Sabine tiller of the soil; and he does not breathe freely, nor checks the career of his fleet-footed horse, until he has reached the olive-yards on the slope of the mountain.

Now grows death more abundantly than the wheat, in the furrows of the Saturnian earth, and the malaria is queen of the land. It cannot be denied that she holds her power by the oldest prescriptive right, older even than the golden age of Saturn. When the Italic tribes that came down from the mountains or came over the sea, first set foot in this region, it was filled with hardened streams of lava, moist woods, fever-breeding fens, and with lakes that had formed in the craters of extinct vol-


EVALD HANSEN.

THE ANTINOUS RELIEF IN THE VILLA ALBANI.

canoes. How long were the struggles necessary, before the colonists completed its change into a healthy and populous land, is not known; that is a question that lies on the other side of history; but the temples that most ancient Rome raised to Fever and Mephites, were memorials of the victory of the plough over an enemy terrible still, in his overthrow.

It is probable that the marsh fever, quite as much as the hostile tribes around, worked towards the clinching of the Latin confederacy. Whenever discord among the small communities of Latium caused the implements of agriculture to rest, the malaria raised its head. A disused drain, in which under the burning sun weeds rotted in stagnant water, mixed with the mire of the volcanic soil, carried fever and death into the nearest houses. Thus neighborly friendship found its mightiest advocate in the fever, which well deserved a temple by the side of that to peace. To the patron of neighborly friendship, Jupiter, the Latins built a shrine on the highest summit of the Alban chain, on the brow of the extinct fire mountain, Monte Cavo. Once a year, from all the villages of Latium, a procession in holiday garb moved along the sacred way up to this spot, to celebrate the feast of the confederacy, and sacrifice to Jupiter; and delegates from them all, assembled in the beautiful valley adorned with evergreen oaks, down by Marino, to settle by the Ferentine spring their disputes, and take council together touching their common affairs. A hundred years ago, venerable remains of the very ancient temple of the confederacy were yet standing. In the year 1783, they were torn down by the last Stewart, cardinal bishop of Frascati, who out of the fragments built a Passionist convent. With this achievement did *that* royal race go into its grave.

During the first four centuries of the Roman republic's existence, Latium was yet a home for peasant life and peasant freedom. Its cultivators formed the kernel of the armed force of Rome. But in the same measure that Rome extended its power, and its great men grew rich, the little cottages gave way to great properties, the independent workmen to slaves, the simple habits to an audacious manner of life and moral rottenness. In vain did a Cato strive to sustain old Roman virtue, when the foundation of it was melting ever more and more. The gracious picture of his wife laying the nursling of the slave woman upon her own breast, would cajole us with a semblance of the patriarchal; but the semblance is annulled by his own heartlessness towards the old workman who had worn out his strength in Cato's service. The many little homes, with strong men, virtuous women and sturdy children, disappeared more and more, and with every new levy for a campaign, fewer and fewer free men were found in Latium, to bear arms. The yeomen's descendants removed inside the walls of the cities, and were there by degrees changed into a lazy, proud and restless rabble. The idyll of country life had veered around to a really satanic condition. Round about the magnificent country-seats, that each and every one had cost the fall of hundreds of peasant houses, and in the halls of which, festal orgies and wild bacchanals were held, thousands of slaves chained in iron, worked in field and meadow, until after sunset they were driven into their comfortless sleeping-pens, that were fortified with bolted doors and grated loop-holes. They fattened the soil with curses more than with sweat, and the soil bore fruit accordingly. The malaria again appeared, and increased with every year. The care that petty agriculture gives, so to speak, to every molehill, had of itself been able to to check and repress the marsh fever; but when the tiller of the soil was thrown into chains, the malaria could shake off its own, and it throve well in the wide-stretching, shady pleasure grounds and deer parks, into which the former arable land had been transformed, and in the undrained pastures, that spread in the same measure that the increased importation of grain from Africa, and the imperial distributions of corn, made Italian agriculture superfluous and attended with loss. Many emperors tried to combat this change. They saw that Italy languished for want of blood, since the peasant class had gone its way; that slavery corrupted master and slave, that the proud castles in the country, formed wastes around them, and that the fever let loose upon the villages was ever making greater havoc among the once so flourishing cities; but all their statutes could accomplish nothing, since the evil was not attacked at its root. Roman statesmen in the days of the republic had foreseen it, nevertheless; and the law proposed by Licinius in the fourth century after the foundation of the city, decreed that no one should own more than five hundred (Swedish) acres of land, or hold more than one hundred large cattle or five hundred small cattle. But the law was not respected, even by its own authors. In Cicero's orations, much testimony is to be found, that Latium in his day was growing poorer and poorer in men and in hands to cultivate the earth, and already the writers of the Roman empire speak of the pestilential and deadly air that during the summer months made Rome a dangerous place of sojourn.

Thus we find that the causes which created the lonely Campagna lie far back in time, and stand in relation to social problems which even to our own day are of deep importance.

In the beginning of the fifth century, Alaric with his Visigoths advanced on Rome. After them, in the course of seven centuries, came Vandals, Ostrogoths, Longobards, Normans and Saracens. It is said that these hordes in fact ravaged the Campagna; but already for a generation before the migration of the people began to set towards the walls of Rome, it stood almost bare of folk, and the fine castles, the stately monuments that bordered the roads, lay as in a desert. That the barbarians turned the castles into stables, ransacked the graves in search of treasure, broke off the aqueducts, and hewed down the woods for barricades and camp-fires, is quite certain. But these scourges were but whirlwinds, the traces of which might quickly have been blotted out by the industry of peace, if the conditions for such industry could have been met with. But they were entirely wanting, and during the middle ages the "dead hand" of the church, and the feudal system, were in no wise adapted to call them into existence.

Had new tribes of agriculturists who knew nothing of either, of church or barons, as in the olden time descended from the mountains or landed on Latium's coast, the Campagna, after a longer or shorter period, would again have been a blooming land oversprinkled with peasants' houses, and out of the simple conditions of the new settlements, could as aforetime the seed of a rational order of society have sprung up.

But the burdening heritage of many centuries' misery lay and yet lies upon the beautiful region, and prevents it from bearing the harvests, the fertile soil yearns to bring forth. Garibaldi wishes now to crown his life by lifting this yoke from it. The thought presupposes a belief like his, that nothing which ought to be done, is too heavy for the unselfishly devoted will, and that every good thing has within itself the pledge of success; but it will be harder yet to free the Campagna from depopulation and marsh fever, than it was to cleanse Italy from great and little tyrants.

But a few years ago, more than half of the *Agro Romano*—that is to say, the Campagna between the Sabine mountains and the sea, and between the Alban mountains and Soracte—was still in the hands of the church, and more than a third, in those of certain families of the Roman nobility. Not only from habit and inertness, or want of impelling force, but on pure principle, had these owners preferred waste land to arable. The commonwealth must always see its best riches in the number of its well-educated, healthy and well-to-do citizens, in the number of its arms to work, brains to think, and hearts to love the fatherland: the individual land-owner, on the contrary, who only looks at the rents his possessions yield, may ask himself whether these many little tenant homes, when what their own mouths need and what the state and village law for their ends claim from them has been subtracted, have as much remaining for the purse of the land king, as the wide-stretching pastures bring in, when their spontaneous growths feed as many cattle and as few of human kind as possible. Whether, now, the ecclesiastical or princely land-owners have reckoned rightly or not, must be left untouched; but the result to which they have come, is that *they* are better off, if the Campagna be allowed to remain as it is.

Their property now causes them no other trouble than that of receiving annually in ringing coin the established land-rental from the farmers of the Campagna, except that now and then the nuisance recurs, of making new contracts with those gentlemen who, under the name of *mercanti di Campagna* and to the number of forty, form a guild by themselves, and feel themselves safe in the consciousness of money power and union.

One of these forty, I once had the pleasure of meeting, during his tour around among his tenants. He was one of the stoutest men I ever saw. The small, low wagon, well polished and shining, in which he travelled behind two swift horses, trembled under his weight, and was hardly able to contain the breadth of his ample body. His features almost vanished under the fat masses of his cheeks: his nose, though large and crooked as the beak of a hawk, could not assert its right against these expansive neighbors. His paunch was worthy of the abbot in Buergers ballad. To judge from the beef displayed in the Roman trattorias, not one of the large-horned quadrupeds that browse upon classic ground could boast of flesh like his. The man was a noteworthy but not inexplicable exception to the gaunt human shapes one otherwise meets on the Campagna.

Under the *mercante* is the *fattore*, the steward who lives in the lonely tenant's house, until the malaria drives him away. The fattore's next man is the chief herdsman, who has supervision of the picturesque band that mounted and afoot tends the herds of oxen, buffaloes, horses and goats. These herdsmen are for the most part born sons of the plain, the real *campagnoli*, the most characteristic figures in the living accessories of the immense picture. Those who tend the horses and oxen, have nothing of the idyll about them. They are weather-beaten, black-bearded, sinewy and spare fellows, with half savage glances, and sit high in the saddle, in their dress of leather breeches, cloak and peaked hat, with lance at the pommel, gun over the shoulder and knife in the belt. If one have ever seen a *buttero* pursue and catch a young horse to be tamed, or the oxherd, with lowered lance, drive with wild cries his herd before him, he will not forget that sight. More peaceful seems the shepherd's life, when his charges feed in scattered flocks around the antique monuments, while the curly-headed, dark-eyed, half naked boy who watches them sits, staff in hand, gathered up on a grave-stone, or upon the ruins of an old-time villa, sunken in dreams, or calling forth mournful notes from his pipe. Towards summer, the herds go higher and higher up into the mountains. In the autumn they come down again, in numbers even to ten thousand, led and driven by the herdsmen and their aids,—the shaggy white Campagna dogs, which are admirable at their work, but are looked on with no favor by strangers making excursions out on the Campagna, on account of the white teeth and the angry bark with which they greet every one who is not clothed in sheepskin, or in the peaked hat and leather breeches.

Here and there on the plain, is to be seen a small pyramidal building with a cross on the top. The hut is built of reeds over a light wooden frame, and held together by hempen ropes. A rude bed of boards with a few skins, a basket, from which a little new-born campagnolo reaches its arms out towards the man, a gun on the wall, a few cooking utensils and a milk-pail on the floor, are the usual contents of the herdsman's home. But not infrequently does a hole in the red brown tufa, with a hearth on which the fire is seldom extinguished, do duty in place of a hut. Life, and the conditions of living, here make their appearance in the neediest form, and few are they who do not find the lot of the campagnolo hard and his fate lamentable; but happiness cannot be measured with the rule the stranger lays upon the wants of life, and the herdsman who by day has roved about on horseback over the wide moor, and at evening is received by wife and children at the hearth of his reed cabin, knows perhaps more joy in his existence than the bulk of those who pity him.

Not on the Campagna only, but even in Rome, may one make acquaintance with this people of herdsmen. One day when I had passed several hours in the Museo Capitolino, and hungry and thirsty asked a sergeant of police after the nearest trattoria, he pointed with a dissuading shrug of the shoulders down towards a lane in the neighborhood of the Piazza Montanara. I knew what that shrug boded: a chill cellar, guests presenting types of the Italian people, a redoubtable cook, but possibly far better wine than one can get at the most gorgeously gilded "restaurants," if one, that is, will taste the grape of the land itself. I found the place; it was called *Trattoria dell' Agricultura*, a strange name to meet in that part of Italy, where the ploughs can be counted and "agriculture" is a tradition, but indicating in any case the kind of steady customers who here assembled. And they were farmers who made something of a figure, in their proudly draped cloaks, their leather boots and mighty spurs; men who turned up the soil more with the horses' hoof and the point of the lance, than the ploughshare. It must be owned that they looked as unwashed as the table-cloth over which they consumed their *presciutto* and buffalo cheese; but the stately bearing, the noble gestures, and the language that sounded so beautiful from their lips, stamped them, nevertheless, as finer gentlemen than Messieurs the Americans and Englishmen with whom I had the day before had the somewhat long-drawn-out pleasure of eating dinner in the show-room of the Albergo Nazionale. And this impression was in no wise lost upon nearer acquaintance, for the inborn tact and delicacy of the Italians, which do not belie themselves even in the most repulsive class of the Romans—the pomatumed dandies on the Corso, dressed out in their French Sunday clothes—were present in rich measure, and gave an air of nobility to the chill of the place. And when a spotless white cloth was spread over one corner of the table, and eggs and southern fruits set forth, and a golden *vino bianco* was handed me, in a decanter rinsed clean under the stream of the nearest fountain, I thought I had no reason to grumble at the fate which led me to the Trattoria dell' Agricultura. The wall opposite me, was adorned in fresco by a very modest painter with a scene out of Rome's latest history: the storming of the Porta Pia by the Italians, in September, 1870. On which side the artist had in feeling stood, in the struggle, one could see by the predilection with which he had represented papal zouaves impaled upon the bayonets of the charging bersaglieri. Perhaps it was this picture which had led the talk of the campagnoli upon Garibaldi. Whatever else they may know of the legends of saints—probably the only thing in which they have any instruction—one saint they have, above all other saints, and that is Garibaldi. Never have I heard a Roman praise him for his heroic courage and his achievements, but always for his justice and unselfishness. He has won kingdoms by arms, he has been master of the treasures of Naples and Sicily; but although he has squandered nothing, but has on the contrary incessantly worked, as the peasant does, in the sweat of his brow, he is now an old man, poor; and this poverty of his, to the campagnolo sheds a shining halo around his head, before which the glories of the church martyrs grow pale. Brave men are not uncommon, says the campagnolo; all the more so, unselfish are; but Garibaldi has shown that Italy can bring forth even men of that stamp.

The same observation with regard to the campagnolo's idea of Garibaldi, I made one day during a ramble with the poet B. B., on the Via Appia. On the way back we went into a "casale," under the trellis of which we washed down the dust of the road with a flask of wine, brought by the host's blooming daughter. Here, too, a specimen of the people's painting was offered for admiration. One of the walls of the casale displayed a fresco, representing on one side Italy, as a modern dame with a crown on her head, on the other side Rome, draped in the antique fashion and with Minerva's helmet on her head, both extending wreaths to a bearded old man dressed in a red shirt, over whose head was to be read: "*Giuseppe Garibaldi, the just man.*" The fattore's brother had served under Garibaldi's banner. He said not a word of his hero's proofs of manhood on the battlefield, nor yet of his own, but he remarked with emphasis: "my capitano is a man of honor and wishes the welfare of the people." Unluckily, the people has not the same language for Italy's other statesmen.

When any cultivation of the soil takes place on the campagna, the fattore hires workmen, who, driven by hunger from their homes among the mountains, have come down upon the plain at seed-time. Between the sowing and the harvest, they go up to the olive-yards, and engage themselves to work there. They come in bands, with spades, hoes or scythes over their shoulders. Some of them also bring along the "cornamusa," the bagpipe, the tones of which are to console them for the want of home, but which only increase their longing to go back. The earth is turned up in the greatest haste, the seed sown, and when the corn is ripe, it is reaped with the same quickness as marked the sowing. But commonly the malaria, too, makes its harvest, among the harvesters. As the tenant's house is usually too small to shelter them, they spend the night under the open sky or in a tufa hollow, around a fire, and wrapped up over the head in their cloaks, try to shield themselves as well as they can from the cold and the poisonous vapor. But many a poor youth from the Sabine mountains, or the Abruzzi, never again sees home and the dear ones for whom he risked his life on the deadly moor; and when he has been mown down, soon no one can longer point out his grave.

V.

THE BEGGARS IN ROME.

THE first Roman I met, as I stepped out of the vestibule of the "Albergo Nazionale" (adorned with columns) on my first day in Rome, was a boy of twelve years, dressed in a torn hat and a garment of uncertain color, draped like a cloak. I asked him after a street. He on his side asked me what o'clock it was, and when I had enlightened him on that point, he said: "*al vostro servizio!* I have time to go with you." And he went with me a long way, and did not leave me before he had satisfied himself that I stood before the number of the house sought for. I thought I should show him my thankfulness by a little gratuity, but I cannot describe the gesture, at once courteous and proud, with which he repelled without looking at it the proffered money; after which, with a musical *addio*, he lifted his hat, at parting, and throwing the right end of his cloak over the left shoulder, withdrew, draped like an antique statue.

Convinced as I was, that at the very first step on a Roman street I should be surrounded by beggars, I felt a pleasant surprise at this meeting. It seemed as if I had seen in this proud boy a descendant of the old Quiritians, who formerly dwelt on the hills of Rome, and a good presage of the new race that shall there grow up, under the colors of free and progressive Italy.

It was not long, however, before I became acquainted with members of the begging brotherhood of Rome. They have, by practice, a wonderfully developed faculty of knowing among strangers those who are "green;" and it really takes some time for a green person to mature to hardness against the arts by which they know how to wheedle from him his tribute to their laziness. During the first days, one is deeply moved by their sorrowful petition, "I die of hunger," which sounds so real, even when it comes from children with cheeks as fat and blooming as those of the grotesque church cherubs, that I was positively ashamed for my domesticated fellow-countrymen, when I observed that they could pass by so wretched a bit of humanity without either seeing or hearing him. Meanwhile, after a lapse of a few days, strong doubts of that imminent death from starvation begin to arise, and one feels himself more and more impervious to the tragic side of the art of begging. Harder it is to protect one's self against the merry kind, against those beggars who know how to give their *buon giorno* greeting with the most affable and freshest morning face, and stretch out their hands in such a way that it seems as if in return for a copper farthing, they could assure us a whole year of cloudless days and good humor. They are, and continue to be, almost irresistible. Regular stages are however to be remarked, in the stranger's relation with the guild of beggars. At first, he gives without any farther thought, and gives to all. Then he gives to some, and thinks he can rid himself of the others with a short *no*. But that is a terrible mistake. Even the stiffest and most resolute "no" is to the Roman beggar nothing but a notification that one wishes to surrender, and will give up if he is persevering. Such a "no' pricks him on to the most incredible exertions; he follows you up the street and down the street, and you must be a man of stout principles, if you do not at last think that he ought not to be permitted to give himself so much trouble for nothing. The last stage is that of unbreakable silence. But not even is that an unfailing remedy. For it may chance you have something in the eye or the look that speaks: this something may be angry, fierce, irritated, something that swears by all the rivers of the underworld that you never will give in—all the same, the beggar interprets it as an invitation to argue the subject, and he follows you. The fourth stage is that of the walking statue. You do not see the beggar, you do not hear him, he is not within the circle of your powers of perception. That helps, in some measure. At last, you reach the fifth stage, that of signs. Your friendly landlord informs you that there is a certain sign, that works with magic power upon even the most importunate of the guild. The sign is this: you bend the right arm so that the hand comes upon a level with the shoulder, extend the forefinger and the middle finger and describe with the hand about an eighth of the circumference of a circle. The language of signs has reached a high state of cultivation in Italy, and one can express much with it, for which the spoken language lacks words; but I had never expected the sign just described could possess such irresistibly decisive eloquence. Whenever I made it, the beggar at once gave up his suit as lost. The usual promise that I should escape the pains of purgatory for a *soldo*, died on his lips, his face expressed utter hopelessness, and he turned away to seek prey in other quarters.

The present government of Rome does much to check, if not uproot, begging, and this latter, though still a scourge, is far from so heavy a one as before. The most shameless and most dangerous in the guild, they who stood on the confines of brigandage, and had their favorite haunts in the most deserted quarters of the city, where they in particular stopped unaccompanied women with their threatening "I die of hunger," have been swept away by the new police: the last and best known of the race, who had long succeeded in hiding from the authorities, was seized while I was in Rome, and this event was mentioned as pleasant news in all the journals of the city. Rome's beggars have every reason to curse, with the priests, the day the Italians entered Rome. And so they belong to the clerical party, and the "*Viva Pio Nono!*" one finds scribbled here and there upon the walls, is undoubtedly for the most part an outpouring of the heart of some scribe belonging to these vermin. The most powerful hindrance to checking pauperism, is the countenance it has from the priests. The clerical newspapers daily shudder at the attempts of the godless Italian government to stop this "wellspring for the exercise of Christian compassion:" they do not blush to express disapproval of the efforts to educate the children of the poorer classes to industry and a sense of human dignity; they boast that Monsignore X or Y whose place is with the princes of the church is a "good friend and acquaintance" of the honest beggar Z, and hold this out as a trait of Christian equality; the churches must still serve, to-day, as refuges for importunate beggars; and children who are truants from the public school are encouraged at the few remaining convents, with food and drink, in their idleness. For centuries, begging has been systematically cherished by the church government. It was an experience of history that whenever industry flourished in the city, and a well-to-do class of citizens in easy circumstances had been developed, a republican spirit began in Rome, as in the other cities of Italy, to bestir itself, and claims for an independent burgher government, to arise, claims which sometimes appeared in such force, that the pope found it safest to remove to another spot. It was found, therefore. to agree best with the advantage of the church, to have a Roman people divided into three classes —priests, princes and beggars ; for Rome's quality as capital of the Christian world could always make it possible to live without work. Under such circumstances, and as the new government, only a few years old, had to struggle with an evil that has the roots of centuries, one must not wonder that Rome still overflows with beggars —but rather, that poor people in numbers are to be found, who are ashamed of this trade, and love to labor.

THE END.

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Author Rydberg, V

Title Roman days

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