Life and Character of Tiberius
Based Upon Velleius, Suetonius and Tacitus.

THESIS

By

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In attempting a study of the life and character of Tiberius, I am not unaware of the difficulty involved. Even concerning our contemporaries our judgments vary greatly, because of our inability to comprehend all the attendant circumstances which influence the hidden springs of a man's action. In the case of a man who has lived and died in a different age and civilization, the liability to misconception is far greater. When, as in our study of Roman life and men, we are dependent entirely upon dead things, — a dead language, preserved through centuries in the hands of a few monks and lawyers, forgotten manuscripts which for scores of years have lain unheeded in dark cloisters, voiceless ruins which during the turmoil of the middle ages have remained undisturbed, and coins and monuments which after Rip Van Winkle naps of three, twelve or eighteen centuries have begun to play an important part in the study of ancient history, the practical difficulties also are very
great.

For a thorough understanding of the life and character and reign of Tiberius, a careful study of the condition of the Roman empire would be necessary. We would need to understand the nature and influence of the preceding reigns, the result of Tiberius' reign as shown after his death, the conditions of society, manner of life, ethical standards and private customs of the Roman people. In addition to this there would be required a careful reading of all contemporary matters, both Roman and foreign, for any possible details concerning Tiberius himself. Adding to this the necessary analysis and classification and compilation of material thus gathered, and the task is at once placed far beyond the limits of this paper.

In the case of Tiberius, the difficulties are increased by the preconceived ideas entertained by most of us concerning him. The very name is synonymous with tyranny. In our school histories we have read the founding of Rome in some detail, we have studied the death throes of kingly power, the birth and last gasps of the republic, the beginning of the empire and the character of Julius Caesar and Augustus. But the next two centuries we have been accustomed to sum up in one paragraph: Then followed two centuries, one of bad and wicked rulers, the other of good and just emperors. Among the bad rulers, Tiberius was very bad, although Nero was
worse. Nero set fire to Rome, and exultingly watched the suffer­ing victims. Tiberius did not do this and therefore was not quite as inhuman.

Later we have read White's "Eighteen Christian Centuries," and our old ideas were confirmed. Tiberius "built up by stealthy and slow degrees the most dreadful tyranny the world had ever seen." (1) And so in beginning this task we have had to dispossess our mind of all our old ideas and prejudices. And we must ask our reader to do the same.

I have not attempted a study of Roman life and manners, nor of the municipal government of Rome, nor of the vast complexities of the empire, nor particularly of the state policy of Tiberius. My desire has been to study the man Tiberius - the boy, the husband, the father, the emperor. Was he a frightful, rapacious, monster, given to lust and avarice and cruelty without any redeem­ing features? Was his reign one long uninterrupted series of murders and debaucheries? Have we misjudged Tiberius the man and emperor?

Tiberius Claudius Nero was born on the Palatine hill, Rome, on the 16th of November, 42 B. C. (2) His father was Tiberius Nero,

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his mother Livia Drusilla. Concerning the influence of father upon son, we have very little evidence. Tiberius Nero seems to have been a man of firm and independent spirit. He had been quaestor under Julius Caesar and a man of considerable influence. When after the assassination of Caesar, the other senators proposed to bury the affair in oblivion, he proposed to reward those who had slain the tyrant. (1) He was made praetor and then pontifex and later for various state conspiracies was obliged to flee to Sicily. Velleius remarks upon the uncertainty of human affairs and pictures the beautiful Livia, accompanied by one attendant and carrying in her arms her two year old son, fleeing by unfrequented roads, from the man, whom, before another two years had passed, she was destined to marry. (2) For strange as it seems to us, early in 38 B.C., when Tiberius was three years old, his mother Livia was amicably given up by her husband to Augustus, becoming the fourth wife of that monarch, and the development of her ambitions and her influ-

(1) "Etiam de praemiis tyrannicidarum referendum censuit." Suet. Tib. 4.

(2) "Ouis fortunae mutationes, quis dubèis rerum humanarum casus satis mirari quest? .....Livia,...genere, probitate, forma Romanorum eminentissima, quam postea conjugem Augusti vidimus, .....tum fugiens mox futuri sui Caesaris arma minus bimun hunc Tiberium Caesarem, vindicem Romani imperii futurumque eiusdem Caesaris filiwm, gestans sinu, per avia itinerum vitatis militum gladiis uno comitante, quo faciluis occultaretur fuga, pervenit ad mare et cum viro Nerone pervecta in Siciliam est. Vell. II. 74.
ence on her son who thus became stepson of the emperor, we shall presently see.

Thus the very tenderest years of our Tiberius were spent amid danger and trouble. Twice during the flight of his parents, he nearly betrayed them by crying. And once he barely escaped burning to death, a fire breaking out in a woods through which they were passing, and burning his mother's dress and hair.

We have very few details of the boyhood of Tiberius. We know he was naturally of an independent and patriotic spirit, as shown by the incident of his adoption by Marcus GalliUs the senator. Although still a young boy, he was sufficiently courageous to refuse to use the name of GalliUs, because the latter had been opposed to Augustus. (1) At the age of nine we find him delivering a funeral oration in honor of his father. At the triumph over the battle of Actium we see him, aged eleven, riding the left-hand horse beside the chariot of Augustus. He was a strong, manly boy fond of athletics, and presided over the games celebrated at that time. (2)

Naturally he was a youth prominent in the eyes of the Roman World. His position as son of Livia, wife of Augustus, made him of the royal family, and while there seemed no possibility of his

(1) Suet. Tib. 6.
(2) Suet. Tib. 6.
succeeding to the throne, yet he was a public character. He pos-
sessed oratorical abilities of no mean order and defended several
cases before the emperor. He addressed the senate and implored
relief for the Laodiceans, Thyatireans, and Chians, who had suf-
f ered from an earth quake, and successfully prosecuted Fannius
Caepio for conspiracy against Augustus. At the age of eighteen he
was made quaestor (1), and remedied the exorbitant price of provi-
sions and the scarcity of corn, a deed which, Vellelius remarks,
made it apparent how great he was to become. (2)

After assuming the manly habit, virili toga sumpta, he gave
the people an entertainment of gladiators in memory of his father
and another in honor of his grandfather, and indulged in other pub-
lic displays at the expense of his mother and father-in-law, Mar-
cus Agrippa, whose daughter he had married. He passed through the
other offices, and was first made consul at the age of twenty-nine.
In the interval between his quaestorship and consulship, he spent
most of his time on the battlefield.

His first campaign was successfully conducted in the Canta-

(1) Vellelius describes him at that time as "juvenis genere,
forma, celsitudine corporis, optimis studiis maximo-que ingenio in-
structissimus, qui protinus, quantus est, sperari potuerat visuque
praetulerat principem." II. 94.

(2) Vell. II. 94. "Per id, quod agebat, quantus evasurus
brian war in the Spanish peninsula. The province of Spain had caused more or less trouble for two hundred years and Augustus had attempted to subdue it some time before. At the age of twenty he was sent east and restored the kingdom of Armenia to Tigranes and recovered from the Parthians, the standards which had been taken from Crassus. The senate ordered a Thanksgiving to be celebrated. The year 16 B.C., Tiberius spent as governor of Transalpine Gaul. In 15, he aided his brother Drusus in subduing the Phaetians and Vindelicians, although "they were strongly protected by the nature of the country, difficult of access, abounding in numbers and of savage fierceness; yet he overcame them with more danger than loss on the side of the Romans, but with great bloodshed on that of the enemy."(1) In 13 B.C. he held his first consulship, as mentioned above.

In 12 B.C., Agrippa the great general of Augustus, also his son-in-law died, leaving Augustus' only daughter Julia a widow. Tiberius was tenderly attached to his wife Vipsania, by whom he had one child, but was obliged to put her away and marry Julia, at this time twenty-eight years old and twice widowed, and already becoming noted for her dissolute tendencies. At the command of the emperor,

(1) Vell. II. 95. "Aditu difficillimas, numero frequentes, feritate truces majore cum periculo quam damno Romani exercitus, plurimo cum earum sanguine perdonnerunt."
he left the wife of his choice and entered into a formal betrothal with this woman already odious to him, before leaving for Pannonia, where his next campaign was conducted. Tiberius, meeting Vipsania, once after their divorce, looked after her with such streaming eyes that care was taken they should never meet again. (1)

Let us take a look at our hero now entering upon the full vigor of manhood. He was tall and large of frame, of handsome face and well-developed figure. He was left handed and so strong that he could drive his extended finger through a sound apple or wound the head of a boy with a fillip. (2) In complexion he was fair, his eyes large and peculiar, having an unusual faculty for seeing in the night and immediately after waking from sleep. His hair grew long behind, after the style affected by his family. An ungraceful fashion of walking and a peculiar way of holding his neck stiff and upright, marred an otherwise rather imposing appearance. When he spoke it was slowly and with peculiar gesticulations of the fingers, but usually he was grave and silent. His health was good, though Suetonius relates as worthy of note, that from this time he insisted on dispensing with the services of a physician and treated himself according to his own discretion, which fact would possibly explain his good health.

(1) Suet. Tib. 7. "umentibus oculis."
(2) Suet. Tib. 68.
In the war in Pannonia he was successful. "Numerous and glorious victories were gained by this consummate general." (1) In 9 P. C., while still in Pannonia, news was brought him of the death of his brother Drusus "snatched away by the cruelty of the fates" (2), and hastening off, he brought his body to Rome traveling all the way on foot. (3) He then took his brother's place as commander in the German war and transplanted into Gaul forty thousand of the enemy who had submitted and assigned them lands near the banks of the Rhine. According to Velleius he nearly reduced Germany to a tributary province. But this is an exaggeration. For these successes he was honored with an ovation and was made imperator and given the office of consul a second time.

Tiberius' position in the Roman state at this time would seem to have been an enviable one. Undoubtedly he was recognized as the greatest general of the day. But he seems to have been dissatisfied. In 6 P. C., Augustus gave him the tribunitian power for five years, but accompanied this signal honor with a command to Armenia, which had been invaded by the Parthians. Instead of accepting the command, he asked for leave of absence, alleging that

(1) Vell. II. 96. "multiplices eo bello victorias tanti imperatoris."

(2) Vell. II. 97. "Fatorum iniquitas consulem, agentem annum tricesimum, rapuit."

(3) Suet. Tib. 7. "Drusum fratrem in Germania amisit, cuius corpus, pedibus toto itinere praegrediens, Romam usque pervexit."
he was satiated with honors and desirous of rest from the fatigues of business. To this request he adhered with great pertinacity in spite of the expostulations of Augustus, even going so far as to abstain from food for several days and threaten to starve himself to death. The real reasons for this desire have been variously surmised. After his return he alleged that he had voluntarily exiled himself that he might not stand in the way of Caius and Lucius, the grand-sons of Augustus, who were now coming into manhood and had been adopted as his successors. Velleius, always the flatterer, assigns the same reason. He describes Tiberius as the partner of Augustus, the most eminent of his countrymen except one and inferior to him only because he wished to be so. (1) Suetonius mentions several possible reasons, disgust with his wife, fear of indifference of the common people caused by constant residence, hope of improving his authority in the state, desire not to interfere with the prospects of Caius and Lucius. (2) Tacitus assigns the conduct of Julia as the most cogent reason. (3) Doubtless all of these things may have influenced him to this apparently strange

(1) Vell. II. 99. "Civium post unum, et hoc, quia volebat, eminentissimus, ducum maximus, fama fortunaque celeberrimus et vere alterum rei publicae lumen et caput."

(2) Suet. Tib. X.

proceeding. He was proud of his position as leading general of the empire and of no mind to subordinate himself to the young Caesars, who were becoming prominent factors in the life at Rome. He may well have been disgusted with the eternal intriguing and plotting going on around him, no less with that of his mother Livia for him than with that of others against him. He was also, it seems to me, tired of military life and loath to accept the command in the east, evidently offered for the purpose of keeping him out of the way of the young princes and preferred voluntary exile to enforced absence with a vain show of honor. Added to this, the fact that his home life had for a long time been disgusting to him, for he had loved his first wife, and Julia, whom he had married under compulsion, had now committed all kinds of disgraceful excesses, and we are not surprised that this man was glad to retire from public life and the battle field, and cultivate philosophy in the retirement at Rhodes. Merrivale in discussing the subject makes it the idiosyncrasy of a mind compelled to endure distasteful surroundings. "The cloud was upon him; the dark humor of his race was at the moment in the ascendant, and prompted him to shake off with a peevish effort the restraints of his position, and the dire necessity of eternal dissimulation, which he loathed while he crouched beneath it." (1) At any rate he persisted in his resolve and de-

(1) Merrivale, IV, p. 207.
parted leaving Julia and Drusus his son by Vipsania behind. For the only child of the union of Tiberius and Julia had died in infancy.

Tiberius seems to have lived very quietly at Rhodes contenting himself with his books and the companionship of a very few friends. Shortly after his departure Augustus became convinced of the thorough wickedness of Julia and in a fit of rage publicly denounced her and banished her to the island of Pandatria, whither only Scribonia her mother accompanied her. Tiberius, whatever may have been his real feelings towards her, made a public protest in frequent letters to Augustus and allowed her to keep the presents he had sent her.

In the meantime, Velleius exclaims, the whole world was sensible that Nero had withdrawn from the guardianship of the city. (1) Tiberius was leading a private life in a small house without any of the attendants and formalities belonging to his high position. An amusing incident is told of how, happening to remark that he intended to visit all the sick people on a certain day, he was misunderstood, and the sick were all brought into a public portico and arranged in order according to their various illnesses. Embarrassed by this proceeding he was for some time irresolute, but at last solved the difficulty by apologizing to each one in person.

(1) Vell. II. 100. "Sensit terrarum orbis digressum a custodia Neronem urbis."
In the meantime young Caius, a youth of twenty, had been given a province in the east and sailed thither in 1 B.C. There is some doubt whether he stopped at Rhodes to visit Tiberius or the latter sought him out at Samos, but he seems to have been predisposed against his step-father by the machinations of Marcus Lollius, his companion and director. When Tiberius at the end of the five years of his tribunitian power, petitioned to return, he was peremptorily refused, and was advised to lay aside all concern for the friends whom he had been so eager to greet. (1) Through Livia's influence he received the title of Augustus' lieutenant, and remained at Rhodes, laying aside his usual occupations and also the Roman toga and asking that a spy might be placed upon everything he said and did.

After nearly eight years absence he returned to Rome, having promised not to take any part in public affairs. Upon his return to Rome he introduced his son Drusus into the forum and immediately resigned himself to private life. The plans of Augustus were now seriously changed by the deaths of both Caius and Lucius, within three years of each other, and feeling the cares of state heavy upon him, he again called Tiberius to the tribunitian power, and adopted him as his son, at the same time adopting Agrippa Postumus, the only remaining son of Agrippa and Julia, and requiring Tiberius

(1) Suet. Tib. 11.
to adopt his nephew Germanicus. It was on the 27th of June, 4 A.D that the public ceremony of adoption took place. Velleius ex-
claims at length upon the joy of that occasion, "the concourse of all ranks of men, the prayers offered by people stretching their hands, as it were, up to heaven itself, the hopes then conceived of perpetual security, etc. I must be content with observing that he was all in all to everyone. Then shown forth to parents a certain hope of security for their children, to husbands of pro-
visions for their wives, to landowners of retaining their patrimony, and to all men of safety, quiet peace and tranquility."(1)

In the adoption of Tiberius, Augustus used these words: "This I do for the good of the Commonwealth," but we may well imagine that he heaved a sigh for the young princes on whom he had hoped to place the succession.

Almost immediately Tiberius undertook a third expedition to Germany. This important campaign which is dismissed in a few sen-
tences by Suetonius is quite fully described by Velleius. First the Caninefates, Attuarii and Pructeri were subdued. The Cherusci

(1) Vell. II. 103. "Laetitiam illius diei concursumque civi-
tatis et vota paene inserentium caelo manus spemque conceptam per-
petuae securitatis aeternitatisque Romani imperii..., contenti id unum dixisse quam ille omnibus faustus fuerit. Tum refulsit certa
spes liberorum parentibus, viris matrimoniorum, dominis patrimonii, omnibus hominibus salutis, quietis, pacis, tranquillitatis, adeo ut
nec plus sperari potuerit nec spei responseri felicius."
were again received in submission, and the river Visurgis, the modern Weser was crossed.

The campaign opened in the summer of A.D. 4, and was continued until December when Tiberius returned to Rome. His filial affection drew him to Rome, although the Alps were almost impassable in winter. In the beginning of the spring he returned to the source of the river Lupia which had been his winter quarters. The next summer all of Germany was traversed and unknown nations conquered, among them the Longobardi, and the standards of the Romans were carried further than ever before, even to the Elbe river.

Velleius relates an incident concerning Tiberius which even if not strictly true illustrates the general fear inspired among the barbarians by the Roman army. While they were encamped on the banks of the Elbe a chief from one of the tribes, of many years and extraordinary stature, advanced to the middle of the stream in a skiff, and asked permission to see Caesar without danger to himself. The request was granted. Having gazed in silence for some time, he exclaimed, "Our young men are certainly mad: they worship your divinity in your absence: yet, in your presence, choose rather to dread your arms, than to trust your faith. For my part, Caesar, I have this day, by your permission and favor, seen the gods, of whom I had before only heard, and I never in my life either wished

(1) Vell. II. 105. "pietas."
for or experienced a day of greater happiness."(1) At the close of this year Caesar again returned to Rome. The most formidable tribe remaining in Germany was the Marcomanni. These people had left their first home and now dwelt in the plains surrounded by the Hercynian forest where, under Maroboduus, a man of bold and daring spirit and extraordinary intellect they were a menace to all the tribes around. The army of Maroboduus, consisting of seventy thousand foot soldiers and four thousand horse, was organized after the plan of the Roman army, and the general conducted himself with great haughtiness towards the Romans. For the purpose of subduing these people Tiberius planned an attack which for courage and bravery as well skill deserves to be recorded as worthy of the greatest general. He directed Sentius Saturnius to cut a passage through the Hercynian forest and march his legions through to Poiohoemum (the country of Maroboduus), while he led an army thither from Illyricum where he had gone to take command, by Carnuntum, the nearest town in Noricum. Everything was ready for the climax of this bold and skillfully planned campaign. His own army was within five days march of the enemy and that of Saturnius an equal distance on the other side, when news of a revolt in Pannonia and Dalmatia was brought to Caesar. Realizing that the opportunity was one favorable to the revolting tribes and that Rome was in danger,

(1) Vell. II. 107.
and too much of a patriot to endanger his city, he deliberately withdrew from what might have been the most glorious of all his campaigns. Returning he found more than eight hundred thousand men in revolt, two hundred thousand foot, and nine thousand horse, commanded by able leaders. Already Macedonia had been reduced by arms, and the territory laid waste. Even Augustus was terrified. New troops had been levied and the people were clamoring for Tiberius as leader. Velleius here lapses into fulsome flattery for his old commander under whom he served. The wisdom of Tiberius in exhausting the forces of the enemy, consulting the convenience of his own men, selecting winter-quarters, surrounding the enemy and depriving them of provisions are fully expiated upon.

After collecting an army of ten legions, more than ten auxiliary cohorts, fourteen squadrons of horse, more than ten thousand veterans, a great number of volunteers and numerous cavalry, the general, thinking such an army too large to handle, sent it back to Siscia (now Sisseeck), for winter quarters. Velleius also expiates largely upon Tiberius' treatment of his soldiers. In health or sickness his care for them was untiring. A carriage was always ready for their use. Physicians, proper food and warm baths were at their disposal. Yet he was not lacking in dignity for the general alone rode on horseback and sat at meals. "In all his great war in Germany I could observe nothing more noble, nothing more de-
serving of admiration, than that the general never thought any opportuni-
ty of success so attractive as to justify a squandering of the lives of his soldiers; he ever judged the safest means the most honorable, and preferred the approbation of his conscience to the acquisition of fame, nor were the counsels of the general ever swayed by the feelings of the army, but the army was always guided by the wisdom of the general."(1) The next summer Pannonia begged for peace, and in autumn the troops again went into winter quarters. The following summer the Dalmatians were subdued, Germanicus, son of Drusus, receiving his first commission and acquitting himself very creditably.

The glory of Tiberius as a commander was greatly increased by these successes. It was proposed to grant him the surname "Pannonius," "Invincible" or "Pius," but Augustus objecting the project was abandoned.(2)

Just at this time the Roman world was shaken to its very center by the destruction of the three legions under Quintilius Varus in the Teutoberg forest. On account of this the triumph of Tiberius was postponed, but he entered the city in a triumphal robe and sat with Augustus between two consuls, while the senate gave them attendance standing. The battle in the Teutoberg forest was one

(1) Vell. II. 115.
(2) Suet. Tib. 17.
of the most terrible in the annals of history and the destruction of the Roman army was nearly complete. The situation was one of peril. Had the success of Arminius occurred a few days earlier, the victorious Germans would doubtless have united with the Pannonians and Dalmatians, incited the previously subdued Gauls to revolt, and the very foundations of the empire would have been in danger. As it was the resources of Rome were taxed to the utmost. Tiberius hastened to Rome and Augustus bestirred himself to strengthen the city and raise troops. A year was spent in preparation the Germans meantime refusing to assume the offensive. In the beginning of 11, Tiberius advanced into Germany, using every possible precaution. It is related that he thought it necessary to be guided by the advice of a council of war, whereas ordinarily he had been his own council. He was unusually severe in his discipline and took extraordinary precautions, at one time refusing to allow the wagons to cross a river until he had searched them to be sure they carried no extra baggage. (1) His superstitious nature is shown in the fact that he trusted more confidently when the night watches failed and went out of themselves. (2)

The campaign was on the whole bloodless and in 12 A.D. he returned to Rome to celebrate his long delayed triumph. Velleius speaks boastfully of the modesty of Tiberius, relating that while

(1) Suet. Tib. 18.
(2) Suet. Tib. 19.
he deserved seven triumphs, he only celebrated three. (1) At the
time of his triumph he gave a dinner to the people at a thousand
sesterces, and to each man thirty sesterces.

Let us now turn our attention to Rome and see what had occurred
there while Tiberius was fighting in the north. Agrippa, a
person "destitute indeed of liberal accomplishments and a man of
clownish brutality with great bodily strength, but convicted of no
heinous offense," (2) had been banished soon after his adoption.

Livia was deep in machinations for the succession of her son
Tiberius to her husband Augustus. The health of the latter was
beginning to fail and the people of Rome were exercised over the
question of the succession of the succession. In 18 A.D. a law
was carried by the consuls appointing Tiberius colleague with the
emperor in the administration of the province and taking of the
census, which Augustus now proposed as a fitting end to his illustrious reign. The whole Roman populace was excited. Sorrow at
thought of losing Augustus was mingled in some with fear of Tiberi­
us, in others with desire of a change. The relations of the two
men and desires of Augustus concerning the succession were eagerly

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(1) Vell. II. 122. "Sed in hoc viro nescias, utrum magis
mireris, quod laborum perculturumque semper excessit modum, an quod
honorum temperavit."

corporis stolidis ferocem, nullius tamen Flagitii compertum."
discussed. Certainly he intended Tiberius to be his successor though it is possible he would have preferred Germanicus, had not the youth of the latter precluded the possibility. Agrippa was still in banishment though the rumor was current that Augustus had visited him and parted from him with great show of affection. (1) The letters of the emperor to his step-son were full of affection. "Whenever" he says "anything happens that requires more than ordinary consideration or I am out of humor upon any occasion, I still, by Hercules, long for my dear Tiberius." "When I hear and read that you are much impaired in health by the continued fatigues you undergo, may the gods confound me if my whole frame does not tremble...... It matters nothing whether I be well or no if you be not well, I pray heaven preserve you for us and bless you with health both now and ever, if the gods have any regard for the Roman people." (2) Yet others credited the rumor that once when Tiberius quitted the room after a private conference, Augustus exclaimed: "Ah, unhappy Roman people, to be ground by the jaws of a slow devourer." It seems to me however that Augustus was content or at least resigned to the succession, for even Suetonius believes that he judged the virtues of Tiberius to far outweigh his vices. (3)

At any rate Tiberius setting out for Illyricum after comple-

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(2) Suet. Tib. 21.
(3) Suet. Tib. 21.
ing the census, was recalled to Nola by the illness of Augustus, and hastening back found the palace carefully guarded by Livia, in order that the people might not learn of the death of the monarch before the return of his successor. (1) There is some doubt whether he arrived in time to receive the last embrace of Augustus. (2)

Put on the nineteenth of August, 14 A.D., the Roman world was shaken by the simultaneous announcement of the death of Augustus and the accession of Tiberius. More fiercely than before the discussions of the common people broke forth. They were divided in their hopes and fears, some dreading that Tiberius naturally cruel and harsh would be ruled by the intrigueing Livia and thus a woman's caprices control the lives of men. (3) Velleius declares he voices the public sentiment in saying that although they had dreaded the total ruin of the world they did not perceive the slightest shock. The only struggle was to persuade Tiberius to accept the symbols of authority. (4)

There has been much speculation concerning the death of Postumus Agrippa which took place almost immediately after that of Augustus.

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(4) Vell. II. 124. Taudem magis ratione quam honore victus est, cum quidquid tuendum non suscepisset.
Tacitus boldly charges it to the schemes of Tiberius and Livia, though when news of the deed was brought to Tiberius he denied having commanded it. Suetonius hints that the order may have been left by Augustus, though this seems improbable. On the whole I am inclined to think that Agrippa met his death either through the order of Tiberius, or that of Livia with the knowledge of her son. But judged by the standards of the time this act does not prove innate cruelty of nature.

Tiberius at this time fifty-six years old, a cold reserved distrustful man, but not naturally cruel was about to assume a position full of trouble and anxiety. He must have realized to the full the dangers and burdens, the responsibility of organizing and maintaining the limits of the empire, and the probability of plots and treachery. Doubtless also he realized his personal unpopularity and it is perhaps not to be wondered at that he should find it necessary to dispose of the rival to his throne. In answer to this it might be urged that the brains and character of Agrippa were not such as to warrant fear from Tiberius. But the subject of our thought seems to have been singularly self-distrustful. He had spent most of his time upon the march; his married life had been rudely broken up and his loved wife replaced by the odious Julia, who had constantly shamed him by her debaucheries; he had lost his brother for whom he had felt real affection; he had spent
seven years at Rhodes, alone or in company with astrologers and philosophers. All these had combined to make this naturally proud and reserved man still more austere and gloomy. Yet we do not believe as does Niebuhr that Tiberius was wholly cruel, lustful and deceitful nor that he had "no faith in virtue because he himself was destitute of it."(1) It is true that all possible wickedness, cruelty and hypocrisy have been attributed to him even by Tacitus, but we hope to show that he has been too severely treated. Eutropius writing in the fourth century sums up this reign in four phrases: "Tiberius distinguished his reign by great indolence, excessive cruelty, unprincipled avarice and abandoned licentiousness."(2) As examples he cites the fact that Tiberius himself never appeared on the battle field after coming to the throne and that at one time he refused to allow certain kings to return who had been sent to him, and that he seized the kingdom of Cappadocia and changed the name of the principle city to Caesarea. But these charges are almost entirely false for at least the first sixty-five years of his life and the first nine of his reign. It is true that after his coming into power he never visited a battle field but we must remember that he had spent twenty-two years in campaigns, and even

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(1) Niebuhr's Lectures, III. 177.
(2) Eutropius, VII. 2. "Tiberius ingenti socordia imperium gessit, gravi crudelitate, scelestae avaritiae, turpe libidine."
Tacitus calls him a distinguished captain. He was not by nature cruel and not until very late can any specific acts of cruelty be charged to him. He was not avaricious of money as will be shown later. Doubtless he was licentious as was nearly every Roman of his time, but I am inclined to think that in this respect his standard was much above the average.

Vellelius describes in glowing terms the joy of the people at the accession of Tiberius and doubtless there was both rejoicing and dissatisfaction. His policy seems to have been at first very vacillating and full of dissimulation, possibly induced by the fear of opposition, for there was no Roman law which made the right of succession hereditary. He therefore desired the government to be offered to him rather than to seem to grasp it. His tribunitian power gave him authority to call the senate together and this he did immediately and assumed command of the praetorian guards. (1)

The first day of the senate nothing was done except the voting of the funeral honors for Augustus and the reading of the will which began: "Quoniam atrox fortuna Gaium et Lucium filios mihi eripuit, Tiberius Caesar mihi ex parto dimidia et sextante heres esto." The next day he made a speech to the senate claiming that he was already familiar with the onerous duties belonging to the head of the government and that they were too grievous for one person to en-

dure. He hoped therefore that in a state supported by so many patriots they would not cast the whole administration upon one. He caused the imperial register to be read which contained a full statement of the resources of the Roman empire. The senate broke into supplications, and prayers and vows. Tiberius happening to remark that he would take any part of the government which they assigned him, Asinius Gallus was tactless enough to inquire what part of the government he desired. Nonplused, he replied that it ill became his modesty to choose or reject any particular branch of government, when he desired to be excused from the whole. (1) This unfortunate speech together with the fact that Gallus had married Vipsania, divorced wife of Tiberius, placed him in disfavor with the head of the government. Quintus Hatertius also incurred displeasure by asking, "How long Caesar, wilt thou suffer the commonwealth to remain destitute of a head?" Gradually however Tiberius assumed control of all the affairs and became the nominal as well as real head.

One of his first acts was the change of the election of the magistrates from the Campus Martius to the senate. Yet so dulled was the heart and voice of the Roman people that this deprival was effected with scarcely a murmur. (2)

(2) Tac. Ann. I. 15. "Neque populus ademptum jus questus est nisi inani rumore."
The adulation shown to the emperor by all classes was extravagant. To Livia, too, the extremest flattery was given. But Tiberius not an advocate of woman's rights urged that "public honors to women ought to be cautiously adjudged" (1), and refused to allow even a lictor to be decreed her.

He asked the proconsular power for Germanicus and sent him into Germany. Drusus was already consul-elect.

Almost the first thing to engage Germanicus' attention was a mutiny of the conquered tribes in Germany, and Panninia. He exerted himself very vigorously to quell the rebellion and threatened to leave or fall upon his own sword rather than allow the mutiny to increase. Realizing that the danger was imminent, he made many promises in the name of Tiberius. The soldiers still remaining dissatisfied, he paid them money belonging to himself and friends. His wife, Agrippina, also aided her husband by appearing among the soldiers and presenting to their protection, Caligula, her little son, the plaything of the soldiers. Germanicus was successful in entirely crushing the revolt.

In the meantime Tiberius was blamed for his dilatory policy, and when the news of Germanicus' success came, he was both rejoiced and tortured. In a speech to the senate he praised the actions of Germanicus and Drusus, and confirmed their concessions, but as Tac-

itus says, spoke at greater length of Germanicus but more sincerely of Drusus.(1) About this time Julia who, as before said, was a prisoner at Pandateria died. But the emperor seemed very little affected by the news.

For convenience we shall divide the reign of Tiberius into two periods, the first embracing the first nine years of his reign to 23 A.D., the next continuing up to his death in 37 A.D.

The relations of Tiberius and Germanicus form an important part of the narrative of Tacitus and we shall first discuss them. The next year after the rebellion Germanicus conducted a campaign in Germany against the Chattians for which Tiberius gave him the title of imperator. During this campaign Agrippina incurred the anger of Tiberius by going about among the soldiers and distributing medicines and clothes gratuitously. At one time she stood at the head of a bridge and bestowed praises and thanks upon the returning legions, and in various ways strengthened the hold of her husband upon the soldiers. After a successful issue Germanicus advanced into the Tentoberg forest, and gained a victory over Arminius, first burying the remains of Varus’ legions which lay whitening in the sun. He erected the inscription, "That the army of Tiberius Caesar having subdued the nations between the Rhine and the Elbe consecrated these memorials to Mars, to Jupiter and to

Augustus.(1) The inscription was too boastful in proportion to the extent of territory really conquered. Germanicus attempting to convey his troops into winter-quarters by ship, lost a great many of them, and in his despair over this nearly killed himself. The Germans again taking heart, he gathered together his forces and defeated them. Tiberius now called him home to celebrate his triumph and to enter upon his consulship. But Germanicus, flushed with success, asked permission to remain one year more. He was however obliged to go to Rome and receive the shouts and applause of all the populace. Tiberius distributed in the name of Germanicus three hundred sesterces a man and made him consul. Almost immediately he was sent into the east, and Drusus was given command in Germany. At the same time Cælius Piso was sent into Syria as governor. Germanicus, having accomplished the assigned mission, spent a year in travel in Egypt thereby further increasing the displeasure of Tiberius. Unaware of this, he sailed up the Nile, enjoying the ruins of Thebes and stone statue of Memnon, the pyramids and other things still of interest to the modern traveler. Returning from Egypt, he found his commands neglected and Piso his avowed enemy. He was also the victim of some disease which he thought to be caused by slow poison administered by the arts of Piso. In 19 A.D., at the age of thirty-four he died, full of rage against Piso,

(1) Tac. Ann. II. 22.
and conjuring his wife to remember the manner of his death and avenge it.

The sorrow and indignation at Rome was extreme. Agrippina returning with the ashes of her husband was met by crowds of weeping people. Tiberius failed to attend the funeral. Piso was recalled and put on trial for the death of Germanicus. The emperor was greatly blamed by the people for his hesitation in the prosecution of the trial, but Piso finally becoming discouraged stabbed himself.

The questions arise: Was Tiberius jealous of Germanicus? Was he in any way instrumental in his death?

Without doubt, I think, he was jealous of the great popularity of his young and handsome nephew. Germanicus not only had the love of the soldiers and the common people, but a faithful wife and a large family of boys and girls. "Conscious of unpopularity himself, Tiberius became jealous of every mark of popular favor toward others..... Such was the inconsistency of his character that he was keenly alive to the popular opinion which he allowed himself so wantonly to outrage."(1) He was censured for not attending the funeral. "Put the lightness and frivolity of the Italian Character, enfeebled as it now was by moral and sensual indulgence, its vehement gesticulations, its ready laugh or sigh, its varying smiles and tears, he despised with cynical indignation.....There

(1) Merrivale, V. 75.
was moreover a dogged obstinacy about him which forbade him in this case to yield to the wishes and expectations of the people. He was in fact one of those very unamiable men who subject their conduct to harsh interpretations from mere perverseness of temper, and the dislike and distrust they create in the breasts of those around them." (1) Put that he was in any way instrumental in the death of his nephew is impossible, and his conduct during the trial of Piso was, it seems to me, just and impartial as became the emperor. The question of Piso's guilt, it is not necessary for us to decide. But as Merrivale has well expressed it, the time has not come to dip the brush in the sable colors which must eventually be used.

In considering the laws of this reign, we must remember that Rome was at this time rich and populous, and full of sensuality and corruption of all kinds. The acts of Tiberius seem on the whole to have been wise and just.

His activity was unwearied. Not only did he assist in the judicial proceedings of the senate but sat in the ordinary court of justice, occupying the corner of the tribunal in order not to dispossess the praetor of his chair. And as even Tacitus says, many just decisions were given in his presence in opposition to the intrigues and solicitations of powerful citizens. Though he qualifies this praise by saying that while the interests of justice

(1) Merrivale, V. 74.
were consulted, liberty was undermined. (1)

Adultery had become so frequent, and was practiced so brazenly, that even noble women were beginning to publicly declare themselves as prostitutes, in order that they might continue their nefarious practices under cover of the law. For at that time a woman who publicly declared herself a prostitute was exempt from the usual punishment. These dreadful things, Tiberius sought to lessen, and many of these people were banished or permission given to their relatives to punish them. (2)

Very soon after his assumption of the government, a new college of priests of Augustus was established, and twenty-one leading Romans, among them Tiberius, Drusus and Germanicus, were constituted the members. (3)

Augustus had encouraged the performance of pantomimes and had even attended the shows, but Tiberius, though not daring to rescind an act of Augustus refused them countenance, and crippled them as much as possible. He refused to attend them himself and several lives having been lost in the riots connected with the theaters, decrees were passed to reduce the expense and to restrain the licentiousness of their partisans: "that no senator

(2) Suet. Tib. 35.
should enter the houses of pantomimes; that Roman knights should not
attend them when they went into the street; they should exhibit no-
where but in the theater; and the praetors should have power to
punish the excesses of the spectators with exile."

At different times there were complaints in the senate, con-
cerning the extravagances of dress and eating practiced by many of
the Romans. Various sumptuary laws were proposed, but failed of
passing. Tiberius, in an address to the senate, refused to assume
the odium and responsibility attached to such laws, but warned the
Roman people that the remedy for all such excesses lay in their own
breasts.

He himself practiced economy and absteniousness, and Suetonius
even tells that he caused left-over food to be served up at his own
table. (2)

The condition of the provinces under his rule was very much
improved. His civil service reform policy was productive of good
in its results, for it was his custom to continue persons in the
same military authority or civil employments for a lifetime. Tac-
itus ascribes various sinister motives for this procedure, but in
my opinion he deserves credit for the policy. (3) This habit of
Tiberius is confirmed by two independent Jewish historians, Philo

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(2) Suet. Tib. 34.
and Josephus. The latter says: "No ambassadors were dispatched away as governors or procurators of the provinces, that had been formerly sent unless they were dead. For though he was emperor twenty-two years, he sent in all but two procurators to govern the nation of the Jews. Nor was he in one way of acting with respect to the Jews, and in another with respect to the rest of his subjects."(1)

He also secured the public peace against robbers and increased the number of military stations throughout Italy.(2)

Great odium has been attached to this reign because of the revival of the law of majestas or treason. Up to this time treason had referred only to actions, words being free. Now libels of any kind were counted as treason and punished as such. Gradually the thing was carried to such an extent that men, "delatores" or informers made a business of acting as spies and collecting information concerning the speech of any public man. For a number of years however no cases of remarkable injustice occurred. Many times the punishment was deserved, and several times Tiberius softened the rigor of the decree by the use of his power of pardoning. He insisted strongly that delations by private persons should be rewarded and out of this came many evils and injustices, but as both

(1) Joseph. XVIII, VI. 4.
(2) Suet. Tib. 7.
Peesly and Prof. Allen have pointed out, the system of delations was an essential part of the Roman judicial system. Unless accusations were brought by private persons, criminals went unpunished and the emperor was obliged to enforce the law. The fault lay in the Roman system of judicature and the weakness of Tiberius is shown in his inability to provide a better system rather than in his enforcement of already existing laws.

Many instances of the liberality of Tiberius can be cited. At one time Pius Aurelius the senator, whose house had yielded to the pressure of the public roads and aqueducts and fallen, prayed to the senate for relief. Tiberius, against the opposition of the praetors, ordered him the price of his house, and Tacitus as usual putting an illiberal construction upon his acts, says: "For he was fond of being liberal upon fair occasions, a virtue which he long retained, even after he had abandoned all others." (1)

Upon Propertius Celer, another senator, about to resign his office on account of poverty, he bestowed a thousand great staterooms, when convinced that the cause was a worthy one. (2)

The provinces of Achaia and Macedon praying for relief from public burdens were discharged of their proconsular duties and

(1) Tac. Ann. I. 75. "Errogandae per honesta pecuniae cupiens, quam virtutem diu retinuit, cum ceteras exueret."
(2) Tac. Ann. I. 76.
made imperial provinces, the latter being much less oppressed by rapacious officers than the former. (1) At another time twelve cities of Asia were overwhelmed by an earthquake and to all of these Tiberius sent aid, to some money and to others exemption from tribute for five years. (2)

He was not only economical of the public money, and at the same time liberal in needy cases, but he was not avaricious in increasing his private income. It was the custom for rich men dying, to bequeath their estates to the emperor, but these he usually rejected. "Nor did he ever accept any man's inheritance but where friendship gave him a title; the wills of such as were strangers to him, and of such as from pique of others had appointed the prince his heir, he utterly rejected." (3) He also degraded from the senate certain spendthrifts who had become poverty-stricken through their misconduct.

Still another time when the people murmured at the oppressive price of corn, he settled the price of it with the buyer and undertook to pay two sesterces a measure to the corn-dealers.

And later two other cities of Asia which had suffered from an earthquake were relieved of tribute for three years.

And even after the time when, according to Tacitus, he had become cruel and rapacious instances of generosity are not wanting.

(1) Tac. Ann. I. 76.
(2) Tac. Ann. II. 47.
The year of his retirement to Capreae, a terrific fire entirely consumed Mount Caelius and he bestowed on each sufferer money to the extent of his damage. (1)

He was rather severe in his treatment of foreign religions, and suppressed the rites of Isis, apparently because of the shameful trick played upon Paulina, a virtuous woman of gentle descent, by the priests of that religion. (2) Four thousand Jews were also banished from Rome. (3)

Unlike Augustus Tiberius did not spend money in the erection of buildings in the eternal city. He seems to have had little ambition for anything of the kind. Suetonius says that he only began two and left those unfinished. (4)

During all the first part of his reign he seems to have been content with the real power and to have cared very little for mere titles and honors. He several times rejected the title of father of his country nor would he allow swearing upon his acts, though voted by the senate. (5)

He sharply rebuked such as spoke of his "divine occupations"

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(1) Tac. Ann. IV. 64.
(2) Joseph, Antiq. Jud. XVIII, III.
(4) Suet. Tib. 47.
and called him "Lord." (1) He usually entered the senate unattended and showed great modesty in addressing the knights and senators. Of course all this was attributed by his enemies to pretense, and probably was due to the inherent self-distrust which always characterized him and which afterwards developed into cruelty and hypocrisy.

I thus believe and have attempted to show that if Tiberius had died in 23 A.D., in the ninth year of his reign or even at the time of his retirement to Capreae in 27 A.D., we should have considered him a wise and just ruler, not a preeminent statesman, not a genial man with a capacity for making friends, but a man of integrity and right intentions, liberal in relieving distress, economic in the administration of public and private affairs, Cato-like in his sternness, silence, frugality and simplicity, yet withal neither cruel nor rapacious. The elder Pliny called him the gloomiest of mankind, and certainly he was not pleasant and affable. Yet he was not without a certain sense of the humorous as is shown by an anecdote. Diogones, a grammarian, was wont to hold public disquisitions at Rhodes every Sabbath day and once during Tiberius' stay on that island, refused him admittance because he had come out of course, but sent a message by a servant, postponing his admission until the next seventh day. Later, Diogones coming to Rome,

(1) Tac. Ann. II. 87.
and waiting at the door to pay his respects to the emperor, was refused admittance and asked to come again in seven years. (1)

Nor was he without some religious tendencies for he dedicated several temples at various times. He was however very superstitious and depended largely upon astrologers.

He was also capable of bold and manly action as shown by one incident in which he played a highly honorable part. Letters were read in the senate from a prince of the Chattians, undertaking to destroy Arminius, the feared enemy of Rome, if poison were sent for the purpose. But the answer was returned "that the Roman people took vengeance on their foes not by fraud and covert acts, but armed and in the face of the sun. And in this Tiberius gained equal glory with our ancient captains." (2)

And thus up to the ninth year of his reign all his biographers are agreed. As one says: "He assumed the sovereignty by slow degrees and exercised it for a long time with a great variety of conduct though generally with a due regard to the public good. At first he only interposed to prevent ill management." (3) And Tacitus also says at the beginning of the fourth book of the Annals.

(1) Suet. Tib. 32.
(2) Tac. Ann. II. 88. "Oua gloria aequabat se Tiberius priscis imperatoribus.
(3) Suet. Tib. 33. "Paulatim principem exeruit praestititque etsi varium diu, commodiorem tamen saepius et ad utilitates publicas proniorem. Ac primo eatenus interveniebat, ne quid perperam fieret."
"When C. Asinius and C. Antistius were consuls, Tiberius was in the ninth year of his reign, during the whole of which he saw the state undisturbed by commotion, and his family flourishing (for he regarded the death of Germanicus as one of the lucky events which had befallen him); but now, on a sudden, fortune began to work confusion and trouble, Tiberius himself to tyrannize or encourage others in tyrannical proceedings." (1)

One incident which has been cited by writers as showing the cruelty of Tiberius perhaps ought to be mentioned. I refer to the execution of the slave of Agrrippa Postumus. We have seen that whether the death of the latter was at the command of Tiberius or not, it was necessary to secure the throne from conspiracies. The very year of Augustus' death, Clemens, a slave of Postumus Agrippa, conceived the design of releasing his master and fomenting a rebellion. Sailing to Planasia, he found Agrippa already executed. He then originated a more daring plot and hiding until his hair and beard were grown long, he went about among the towns, never making a very public appearance, and always vanishing at the first rumors, until gradually the report was spread around "that by the bounty of the gods Agrippa was preserved." (2) Tiberius bewildered and permitted the affair to continue for some time, but finally caused

(1) Tac. Ann. IV. I. "cum repente turbare fortuna coepit, saevire ipse aut saeventibus vires praebere."
(2) Tac. Ann. II. 40
him to be taken prisoner and executed in a secret part of the palace. It would seem unnecessary to us that a poor slave imposter should thus be put out of the way of the emperor of the Romans. Put when we consider the success which has attended similar attempts in other countries we will conclude that the death of the offender was necessary to the welfare of the state.

And so we have before us a picture of a fairly wise and good man and emperor — autocratic in his rule, but lacking the cruelty and avarice necessary to make a first class tyrant. Yet on the whole the picture is not a pleasing one. You will observe that sternness, silence and self-distrust, while not crimes in themselves, may easily lead to cruelty, hypocrisy and jealousy.

And just here we come to the most difficult problems of our subject.

Wherein comes the change in affairs and in the character of Tiberius? Is it possible, that a man of sixty-five, after living a comparatively pure life and reigning nine years with justice and liberality should be so completely changed in character as to become the cruel depraved monster whom we know as Tiberius? On the other hand is it possible that then for the first time his true character was developed, that during all the years of his life, a policy of dissimulation had been successful and that the events of a few years caused him to throw off a cloak of deceit, and appear...
in his true character? The latter was certainly the judgment of Tacitus, who at every point questions the motives of deeds which even he allows to have been just and wise. And by Tacitus, the final downfall is attributed directly to Sejanus, of whom we shall presently speak.

My own judgment is a middle one. I believe that up to about the ninth year of his reign Tiberius was actuated by good motives, by a desire to extend the best interests of Rome. His own interests were also prominent in his mind, but he realized that upon a liberal policy of government rested his future good name. In a speech before the senate he defined his policy and I hold that in the main it was an honest expression of his mind and heart. "For myself, conscript fathers, that I am a mortal man; that I am confined to the functions of human nature; and that, if I well supply the principle place among you, it suffices me, I solemnly assure you, and I would have posterity remember it. They will render enough to my memory, if they believe me to have been worthy of my ancestors; watchful of your interests; unmoved in perils; and, in defense of the public weal, fearless of private enmities. These are the temples I would raise in your breasts; these are the fairest effigies, and such as will endure. As for those of stone, if the judgment of posterity changes from favor to dislike, they are despised as no better than sepulchres. Hence it is I here invoke the gods, that to the end of my life, they would grant me a spirit
undisturbed, and discerning in duties human and divine; and hence too, I implore our citizens and allies, that, whenever my dissolution comes, they would celebrate my actions and the odor of my name with praises and benevolent testimonies of remembrance."(1)

Put there is no denying, whatever may have been the cause, that in the last years of his life were developed those qualities which his detractors have found even in his good acts.

This change I have ascribed to three causes:

1. His inordinate self-distrust. He almost entirely lacked that self-confidence which is characteristic of the really great leader.

2. His desire to control all details. Augustus always depended upon great generals and advisers. Tiberius feared the greatness of others too much to depend upon it. As a result of this, his chief minister was a man of low and jealous disposition and to Sejanus, who was at this time plotting, we shall give much of the blame.

3. The loss of his friends. Shortly before his departure from Rome, Drusus his son died. The same year one of the twin sons of Drusus died; also Lucilius Longus, a friend of the emperor, of whom we know nothing except the mention of Tacitus - "the inseparable companion of all the vicissitudes of his fortune prosperous and adverse; and of all the senators, the only one who accompanied

(1) Tac. Ann. IV. 38.
him in his retirement at Rhodes. (1)

Elius Sejanus, who from this time, had such an influence over the ruler of thousands had all the reserve and coldness of Tiberius combined with an inordinate desire for power and an unscrupulous conscience. Tacitus calls him at once fawning and imperious; with an exterior of assumed modesty, his heart insatiably lusted for supreme domination. (2) It is easy to see how a man of this stamp obtained control over Tiberius. Doubtless he realized and felt keenly the effect of his peculiar disposition upon the Roman people and powerless to stem the disfavorable tide of public opinion he naturally trusted a man of low rank rather than one who might have a reasonable hope of succession and therefore temptation to usurpation. To be friend and confidant of the emperor was not sufficient for a man of Sejanus' nature. He aspired to the kingdom and plotted continuously against the emperor's family. Drusus and the three sons of Germanicus all stood in his way. Through Lidia, wife of Drusus, he obtained possession of the secrets of her husband and by his command poison was administered to the emperor's son by Lydgus the eunuch, in such a way that death seemed natural, and not until eight years later did the real cause of his death be-

(2) Tac. Ann. IV. 1. "Juxta adulatio et superbia; palam com-positus pudor, intus summa apiscendi libido."
come known. Tiberius then commended to the senate, the young princes, Nero, Drusus and Caius, sons of Germanicus. Against these the wiles of Sejanus were not so easily successful. Agrippina, their mother, was of firm mind and unimpeachable character, and very desirous that the rights of her sons be kept before the public. Sejanus filled the mind of Tiberius with dark hints about the influence of Agrippina among the common people. At one time she suffered a severe illness and the emperor, paying her a visit, she implored him to give her a husband, that in the cares of married life her solitude might be relieved. But Tiberius realizing what power in the state was involved in her request refused. Sejanus, through emissaries, then poisoned her mind with the suggestion that "poison was prepared for her and she must avoid eating at her father-in-law's table." (1) And so when dining with him she resolutely refused to touch any food and still further incensed him.

Infatuated with success Sejanus now proposed to marry Livia, formerly wife of Drusus and addressed a written request to Tiberius. This was refused and he next turned his arts towards persuading Tiberius to retire from Rome, thinking that then he could pursue his plots more successfully. In A.D. 26, Tiberius went to Campania under the pretext of dedicating some temples, and in 27 retired to

(1) Tac. Ann. IV. 54.
Capreae, and never again returned to Rome. The reasons for this action are hard to determine. Tacitus ascribes it to his desire to practice abominable sensualities in secret. He hints also that in his old age he was ashamed of his person, for he was "exceedingly emaciated, tall and stooping, his head bald, his face ulcerous and thickly patched with plasters." (1) He may have fretted at the constant intervention of his mother Livia, who during the whole reign had striven to be the power behind the throne. And to my mind it is apparent that even then he was beginning to chafe at the increasing power of Sejanus.

Merrivale justly remarks that the presence of the emperor was not necessary but his absence seemed terrible to the Roman people, for it showed the complete establishment of the monarchy when the ruler could thus leave the city and retain autocratic power. (2)

By a regular system of couriers, he was kept in possession of full information of all the happenings in the city and by frequent letters to the senate caused his wishes to be executed.

And in this manner he passed his time until his death, often announcing his intention of visiting the city, but never entering it, though on one or two occasions he went almost to the walls.

Upon the island, he caused to be built a series of twelve villas,

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(1) Tac. Ann. IV. 57. "Quippe ille praegracilis et incurva proceritas, nudus capillo vertex, ulcerosa facies ac plerumque medicaminibus interstincta."
(2) Merrivale, V. 200.
in which he lived. There is something intensely pitiful in the picture of this strong man, weakly hiding himself and living in constant fear of assassination.

Shortly after the retirement, Sejanus was the means of saving the emperor's life, and thereby greatly increased his influence. As they stood together in the mouth of a cave at a villa called Spelunca, the roof caved in and the attendants, coming up later, found Sejanus standing in a bent and uncomfortable position, thus protecting Tiberius from injury.

The dreadful stories of the private life of Tiberius upon this island cannot be passed by in silence. Suetonius relates in detail, horrible stories of debaucheries and unnatural lusts. I am inclined to think, though, that they are exaggerated. The seclusion in which Tiberius wrapped himself would naturally call forth tales of every kind of secret evil.

One of the first acts of the Caprean rule was the dispatching of letters to the senate, accusing Agrippina and Nero, the one of "haughty looks and a turbulent spirit," the other of the "love of young men and of lewdness."

It is unfortunate that the narrative of Tacitus for the years 29, 30 and 31 is lost.

During this time Agrippina was banished to Pandateria where she
finally starved herself to death, and Nero was sent to Pontia, and Drusus put in prison, where he died after three years of incarceration.

In 29 A.D. Livia, the empress mother, died. It was evident that Tiberius felt no personal regret, for he did not even leave his retirement to attend the funeral. From this period says Tacitus "his government assumed a character of furious and crushing despotism." (1)

About 30 A.D. Tiberius seemed to become aware of the plots of Sejanus, and we can scarcely wonder that he plotted in return. But he continued to heap honors upon his supposed favorite in order not to awaken suspicion. "Sejanus became so intolerably insolent in spirit and in sense of power that to speak briefly he seemed in good sooth to be emperor, and Tiberius a petty island king by reason of his continually living at Capreae." (2)

The fate of Sejanus was worthy the despicable part he had played through life. Summoned into the senate, under the pretense of receiving the tribunitian power, a letter from Tiberius was read accusing him of unfaithfulness, and commanding him to prison. And all the pent-up hatred of his fellow senators found full outlet and

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(2) Dio Cassius. XVIII. 5.
they willingly voted his death. No excuse can be found for the horrible execution of the son and daughter of Sejanus, which was done at the command of the senate. And because it was impious to execute a virgin, the girl was first deflowered by the executioner.

The people then turned their adulation towards Macro and Laco the new tools of the emperor, but they wiser than Sejanus, refused to accept flattery.

Tiberius at this time again refused the appellation of the father of his country.

The picture which Dio Cassius gives of the times immediately following the death of Sejanus is revolting in the extreme. The number and character of the accusations increased, some of them now seeming to be instigated by the poor prisoner at Capraea. "From this time he was less anxious to moderate the excessive flatteries of the senate or intercede between its servile flattery and the wretched victims of the delators."(1)

That he was restless and discontented in mind is shown by the opening sentence of a letter written by him to the senate. "What to write you, conscript fathers, or in what manner to write or what altogether not to write, at this juncture, if I can determine, nay all the gods and goddesses doom me to worse destruction than that

(1) Merrivale, V. 208.
by which I feel myself consuming daily."(1)

The picture is a sad one as we imagine this man of high birth, large brain, wise judgment, liberal education and kind inclinations but keen self distrust and jealous disposition, thus so warped and perverted by loss of friends, increase of power and treachery of subordinates, that seeking in solitude relief from the lowering suspicious looks of the people, he finds even there no rest or peace.

Yet in the midst of the gloom and darkness of the picture, there are a few faint gleams which enlighten the scene. Through the usurious practices of the nobles, current money had become very scarce and many were plunged into utter ruin, when Tiberius placed with the brokers a thousand great sesterces, with liberty to borrow for three years without interest, provided the debtor gave security to the people to double the value in lands. Credit was thus gradually restored.

Death came to the poor old man in his seventy-ninth year in 37 A.D. Tacitus states emphatically that, having revived after the announcement of his death had been made, and Caligula was about to enter upon the power, he was smothered to death by Macro. This seems improbable however as he was known to be very near to the

(1) Tac. Ann. VI. 6. "Quid scribam vobis, patres conscripti, aut quo modo scribam aut quid omnino non scribam hoc tempore, di me deaeque peius perdant quam perire me cotidie sentio, si scio."
end, and there would seem to have been no necessity for the deed.

What then are we to decide concerning this man upon whom we have bestowed our thoughts? Has he been maligned by his biographers? Was he a very monster of wickedness, cruelty, avarice and lust, or was he as Beesly would have us believe, a wise, humane, good ruler, unjustly persecuted by all succeeding ages?

I have tried to show that our opinion must lie between the two extremes. Certainly Tacitus, not advisedly making incorrect statements, but making insinuations and drawing conclusions, warps our judgment, has warped the judgment of most of the historians, and left an impression of crimes of which Tiberius was not guilty. Beginning, too, as he does, with the accession of Tiberius to the throne in his fifty-sixth year, we are left entirely in the dark concerning his early life and character. By attributing to Tiberius also all the crimes which resulted from faults in the imperial system at Rome, he has blamed him for things which were the result rather of the accident of his not being the wisest statesman of any age, rather than of inordinate greed and cruelty.

Yet alike we disagree with Beesly. Tiberius was not a saint. He was a Roman, living in Rome in a time of dissipation and oppression. That he had not the financial insight of a Hamilton or far-seeing policy of a Napoleon was due to a lack in his constitution
for which he can hardly be blamed. That under the peculiar cir-
cumstances of his early life and accession to the throne, with his
naturally reserved and suspicious and self-distrustful nature he
did not become a rapacious Nero is to his credit. That in spite
of his efforts to the contrary he did fall in the last eleven years
of his life, after the death of his son and mother and the rise of
the scheming Sejanus is deplorable, and no pitying eye can excuse
some of the deeds of this part of his reign.

Yet there is something in the man - in his love for his broth-
er, his manly attitude towards Julia, when he had been obliged to
put away his loved wife and marry a woman hateful to him, his mil-
itary skill and foresight, his care of his soldiers, his refusal to
submit to indignities and his retirement to Rhodes, his wise and
just treatment of the provinces, his unfailing liberality and lack
of desire to accumulate private fortune, something that demands
outstanding interest and sympathy and makes us conclude that by nature he
was lacking in most of the faults we are accustomed to attribute
to him.