

The book cover features a dark brown, textured background. A decorative black border with repeating heart-shaped motifs surrounds the central text. A circular wreath of stylized leaves and flowers frames the title.

ROMAN
BRITAIN
COLLINGWOOD

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Castor ware vase
Colchester



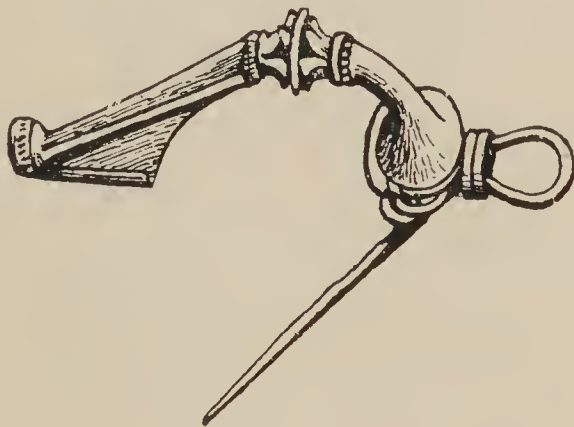
HARDKNOT CASTLE, a Roman fort in the mountains of Cumberland

The buildings are imagined as restored; below the fort is the bath; to right, the parade-ground. The road leads left to Ravenglass, right to Ambleside and Lancaster. Directly above the fort is Scafell.

ROMAN BRITAIN

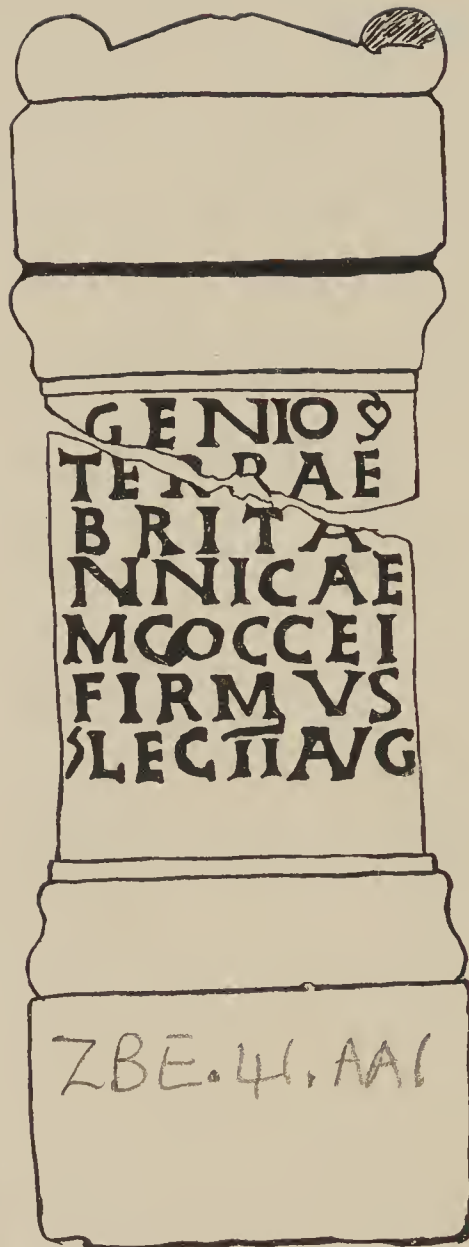
By

R. G. COLLINGWOOD, F.S.A.



LONDON
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
HUMPHREY MILFORD

1924



Altar from Auchendavy at Glasgow: 'To the Spirit of the British Country-side'.

Impression of 1924

First edition 1923

Printed in England

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PREFACE

THIS book represents a set of lectures given at the Oxford Summer Meeting in 1921. The lectures were intended to give a rapid and rather fully illustrated survey of the subject to an audience of persons who were not familiar with it beforehand; and the intention of the book is the same. For this reason, though the book contains little that has not been said before, no references have been given by which its statements might be checked in detail: such references would have been necessary in a work addressed to regular students of the subject, but in a book like this would be a useless encumbrance. For the same reason it has often been found necessary to take sides in controversial matters without pausing to argue the point.

The specialist student of Roman Britain will find here nothing that is not familiar to him; but the field covered is one which has been so intensively cultivated in detail and so seldom reviewed in broad outline that even he may have uses for a work like this, if only as a butt for criticism.

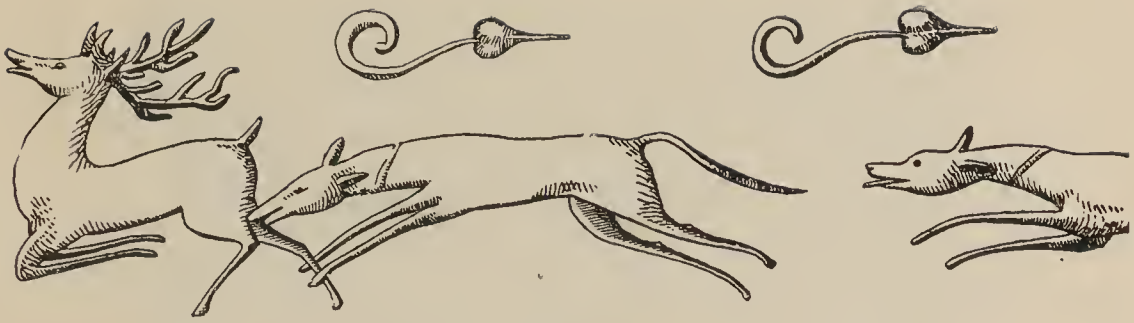
My debts are too numerous to mention in detail, but there is one which I must acknowledge because it cannot now be repaid. It was the example and advice of F. Haverfield that first led me into the serious study of Roman Britain, his friendship that encouraged me more than anything else to pursue it, and his writings and conversation that most formed my point of view towards the problems involved. If I could claim for this book any merit, I should wish it to be dedicated to his memory.

R. G. C.

July 1922.



ROMAN ROAD NEAR APPLEBY



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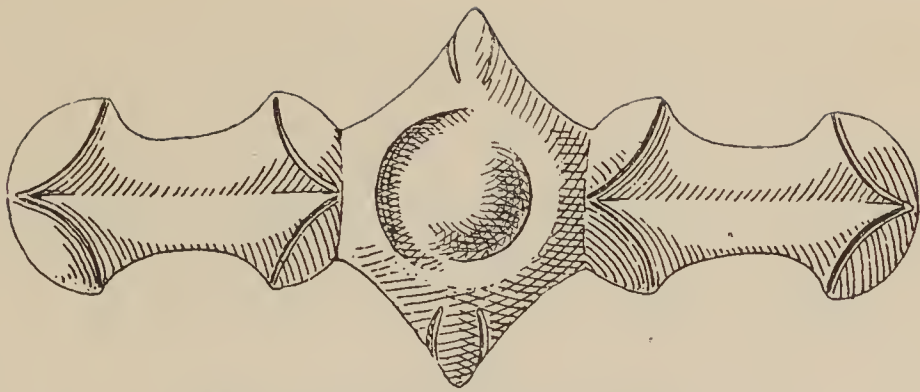
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CHARIOT-RACE (tessellated pavement)



Metal ornament, Aldborough

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I

Introduction

THERE are two sides to Roman Britain, the British side and the Roman. That is to say, it may be regarded either as an episode in the history of England or as a member of the Roman Empire. This may seem a truism ; but the balance between the two things is not easily kept. Most English students of the subject have looked at it too much from the English point of view and too little from the Roman, and this habit has given currency to a picture of Roman Britain which is in many ways quite false. It occupied the first chapter of Histories of England, and in outline it was as follows. Britain before the Romans came was a wild country of marsh and woodland inhabited by Celtic-speaking barbarians who lived in rude huts, made up in blue paint what they lacked in clothing, and spent most of their time fighting each other. They had a kind of barbaric tribal organization, and offered human sacrifices, at the instigation of Druids, in places like Stonehenge. This savage race was conquered by Rome and kept in subjection by a vast Roman army for three centuries, during which there was a considerable influx of Romans into the country : the traces of this influx may be seen in the numerous relics of their towns and country-houses or ' villas '. Finally, towards the time when Rome was sacked by the Goths in 410, the Romans left Britain. Their armies were recalled, their civilian immigrants left a country in which, in the absence of armed protection, they were no longer safe from the natives, and the Celtic barbarians once more had the island to themselves, having learnt nothing and forgotten nothing in the meantime.

The Romans came, conquered, and departed, and left no mark except the ruins of their buildings. When the Saxons landed, Britain was once more a country of Celtic tribes living in a state of barbarism and mutual warfare.

That is a not much exaggerated account of the traditional English view of the matter, which one may find implied, even if not baldly stated, in most history books more than about thirty years old. Sometimes it was tempered by the doctrine that the Romans really had in some ways influenced the Britons, and that relics of this influence were to be seen in the city life and guild institutions of the Middle Ages ; and sometimes, in such books as Gardiner's well-known history (1896), the fact that the Britons acquired a considerable degree of Roman culture is recognized, but the question of whether and why it disappeared when the Romans left is not raised at all. And the old traditional view is still predominant in such a deservedly popular book as Fletcher and Kipling's history and in Mr. Kipling's splendidly imaginative picture of late fourth-century Britain in *Puck of Pook's Hill*.

The essence of the traditional view is the notion that between Britons and Romans there was an initial cleavage of race, language, and culture which to the last was never really bridged. At the time of the original conquest there was, of course, no difficulty in deciding whether a given man was a Briton or a Roman, and it has generally been assumed that this was true to the end. The Romans, it is assumed, were a conquering race and the Britons a conquered ; one race was dark and Italian, the other fair and Celtic ; one spoke Latin and the other Welsh ; one was civilized and the other not. But this assumption is very far from true. Let us look at the facts.

A great deal of attention has recently been given to the determination of racial types by exact measurement. Differences of physical character are accompanied by differences of proportion between various parts of the skeleton ; even the skull alone,

accurately measured in a number of different ways, is a subtle index of such differences. Now a thorough investigation of all the available evidence derived from Romano-British skeletons has led to the conclusion that between a Roman from Italy and a Briton from Britain there was no regular physical differentiation whatever. The chief authority on the subject declares himself unable to discriminate Roman from British skeletons by any test. This is not so very surprising to a person who knows much of the Roman Empire. It is only surprising if one thinks of the Romans as a conquering race that overran and subdued all the known world and at the same time kept its own Italian blood scrupulously pure. But the Romans whose names we know as the great men of the Empire were many of them not Italians at all. Virgil, from the plain of Lombardy, must have been a Gaul; Seneca was a Spaniard; of the greatest Emperors, Trajan was a Spaniard and Severus (like St. Augustine) an African. Examples could be multiplied indefinitely. The 'Romans' were not a pure race but a very mixed one, and one of the chief elements in the mixture was just that Celtic strain which predominated in Britain.

So much for race. As to language, the difference between Latin and ancient Celtic is obvious enough, though they both belong to the same group of the Indo-European family and have very strong family likenesses. But the ancient world was always a polyglot world. Our great national languages, English, French, German and so on are quite modern creations; so recently as the Middle Ages they did not exist. Instead of French there was only a cluster of French dialects, and so on; and a dialect-speaker from northern France who wished to be understood by one from southern France would talk Latin. In England, the mediaeval gentleman spoke dialect-English to his tenants, Norman-French to his equals, and Latin to the abbot who came to dinner. Even nowadays, in the near East, every one knows two or three languages, and a really accomplished (though not, in our sense, educated) man will

speak as many as eight. There is no difficulty in believing that most Britons in the third and fourth centuries spoke Latin.

As for civilization, the ancient Britons had a great deal more of it than we are apt to think. We shall return to this point later ; but at present we shall make one observation, which is this. The southern Britons were not only akin to the northern Gauls in race, they were actually of the very same tribes. The tribe-names of southern Britain are in many cases the same as those of northern Gaul ; and these British tribes were sections of the Gaulish which had recently migrated across the Channel. So close was the kinship ; and if the Gauls could be regarded as already more than half civilized when Julius Caesar conquered them, if they could acquire, as they very soon did, a full share in the Roman civilization and a flourishing Romanized life of their own, if, finally, they could preserve this life in such vigour as to absorb their Teutonic conquerors and turn Franks into Frenchmen, why not their British relatives ?

In answer to these questions we shall see in the course of this book that Britain, like Gaul, became Romanized during the occupation, but that, unlike Gaul, it failed to preserve its Romanization after the early fifth century. To say that Britain became Romanized means that the Britons did not remain a mere subject race, held down by a Roman army. They became Romans ; Romans in speech, in habits, and in sentiment. But this Romanization did not involve an unnatural warping of the British character. When an Indian learns English ways, it is not certain that the change is for his good or the good of his race. It may be that the English and Indian civilizations are so unlike, separated by such a racial and cultural gulf, that a blend of them cannot be anything but artificial and sterile. Whether it is so, perhaps no one can yet say. The experiment is only now being tried. But in the case of Roman Britain the two cultures, Roman and British, were not absolutely foreign to one another, just as the two physical types were not

really distinct. One of the strongest reasons for the success of the Roman Empire is that it included a number of peoples who were so far homogeneous both in race and in civilization that they could blend into a single whole without doing violence to anything in their natures. This applies even to the Asiatic and African provinces. The Arabs and Turks had not yet invaded these countries and populated them with races wholly alien to the old Mediterranean stock; the Anatolians of the one and the Berbers of the other were by no means unlike the Greeks and Italians, and Italy stood midway between the great Celtic races of the north and west and the Mediterranean races of the south and east. The Roman, compounded of Celtic and Mediterranean elements, could claim kinship, physical and spiritual, with every one from the Tyne to the Euphrates and from the Sahara to the Rhine.

It is this that makes the Roman Empire a quite different thing from all modern empires. The empires of modern times are rent by a racial cleavage between a governing race and a governed, which are too far apart to unite into a single whole. We have barriers of colour and race and language which were absolutely unknown in the Roman world. The British Empire resembles the Roman in so far as it is a society of English-speaking dominions; but even there it is unlike the Roman in that these dominions are mostly colonies after the Greek pattern and not the fruit of imposing British ways on races near enough akin to receive them; and in so far as it includes Indian and central African possessions it is utterly unlike the Roman Empire. Hence all attempts to understand the Roman Empire by comparison with, say, the British rule in India or the French in Algeria are frustrated by a false analogy. This is the fundamental mistake of the stories in *Puck of Pook's Hill*. They are not a history of Roman Britain but an allegory of British India, and the two things go on quite different lines.

The Roman Empire was a society of peoples in which intercourse

was nowhere checked by barriers such as separate races or even nations in the world of to-day. That can be proved by the three tests of travel, residence, and marriage. In these three ways the Roman Empire was far more cosmopolitan than modern Europe. Even in the Middle Ages people travelled perhaps more than they do to-day, when travel is a privilege of the rich ; in the Roman Empire there were no obstacles of language, for Latin took you everywhere, and no vexatious crossing of frontiers, and it is probable that travel was even commoner than in the Middle Ages. The same is true of what we should call going to live abroad ; but the most convincing as well as the most easily applied test is marriage. Inter-marriage between a governing and a governed race is always exceptional and regarded with distaste ; but in the Roman Empire mixed marriages between any one people and any other were felt to be quite natural and defied no convention. One British example will suffice to show the way in which such things happened. A Syrian from Palmyra, the desert city beyond Damascus, settled in northern Britain, at the mouth of the Tyne. He married a British wife, and on her death put up a splendid tombstone to her memory, now in the museum at South Shields. Later he died a few miles up the Tyne at Corbridge, and we have his tombstone too. Now there is nothing at all to suggest that this case was unusual. There was no such cleavage between east and west as to make it impossible for Barates either to live on the Tyne or to marry a British woman.

This absence of national feeling and national exclusiveness may seem to us strange, but in reality it is natural, and it is rather our nationalism that is artificial and demands explanation. An Englishman going from Manchester to Birmingham does not feel that he is going abroad, but if he goes from Manchester to Paris he does. A Paris man going to Marseilles is still at home ; if he goes to Milan he is abroad. Why these distinctions ? They are the product of a long period, lasting from the end of the Middle Ages

to the present day, when tracts of country like England and France have been painfully and slowly welded into conscious unity. Before that process began, the unity was simply not there. A Brigantian from York had no more reason to feel away from home among the Atrebates of Arras than among the Atrebates of Hampshire. Britain, for him, was not a unit of national consciousness but simply an arbitrary division of the Roman Empire; his loyalty was divided between the Empire and his tribe or town. For this reason the very title of this book is apt to be misleading. For a citizen of the Roman Empire, Britain had no individuality of its own except a purely political individuality, like that of an electoral district. The student who approaches Roman Britain as merely an episode in English history cannot see this very simple fact. His point of view makes him forget that England herself, at the beginning of English history, did not exist, even by the name of Britain; and that England is the product of a historical process. Thus, in the history to which we have already referred, Gardiner remarks on the melancholy fact that the Britons had no patriotism, that they did not feel called upon to 'die for Britain'. Such lack of patriotism he feels to be a reproach both to the Britons and to the Roman Empire. But the fact is that, writing from the distorting point of view of a historian of England, he expects the



Tombstone of Barates

Britons to show loyalty to something which had not even begun to exist. Their patriotism, their loyalty, was directed to the Empire of which they were members ; and a Briton of the third century could say with a glow of pride, like St. Paul, ' I am a Roman '.

But when we say that the Britons, like the other provincials, became Romans, and when we lay stress on the absence of a British racial self-consciousness setting itself up against the self-consciousness of other races, we must not fall into the error, into which historians of the Empire too often fall, of imagining that there were no racial differences. They were not erected into shibboleths and battle-cries, but they existed. A Celt was a Celt and a Syrian was a Syrian even though they conspired to treat each other as brothers and to call themselves simply Romans. Here again the same thing is true in a country like England. A Cumberland man and a man from Kent are separated by definite racial differences, though they both call themselves Englishmen as unquestioningly as the Celt and the Syrian both called themselves Romans. And these differences crop out when you begin to examine the artistic products of the various provinces. This is another subject to which we shall return ; at present we merely note the fact that those racial differences which have attained self-consciousness in our modern nationalism existed, though unaware of themselves, in the Roman Empire.

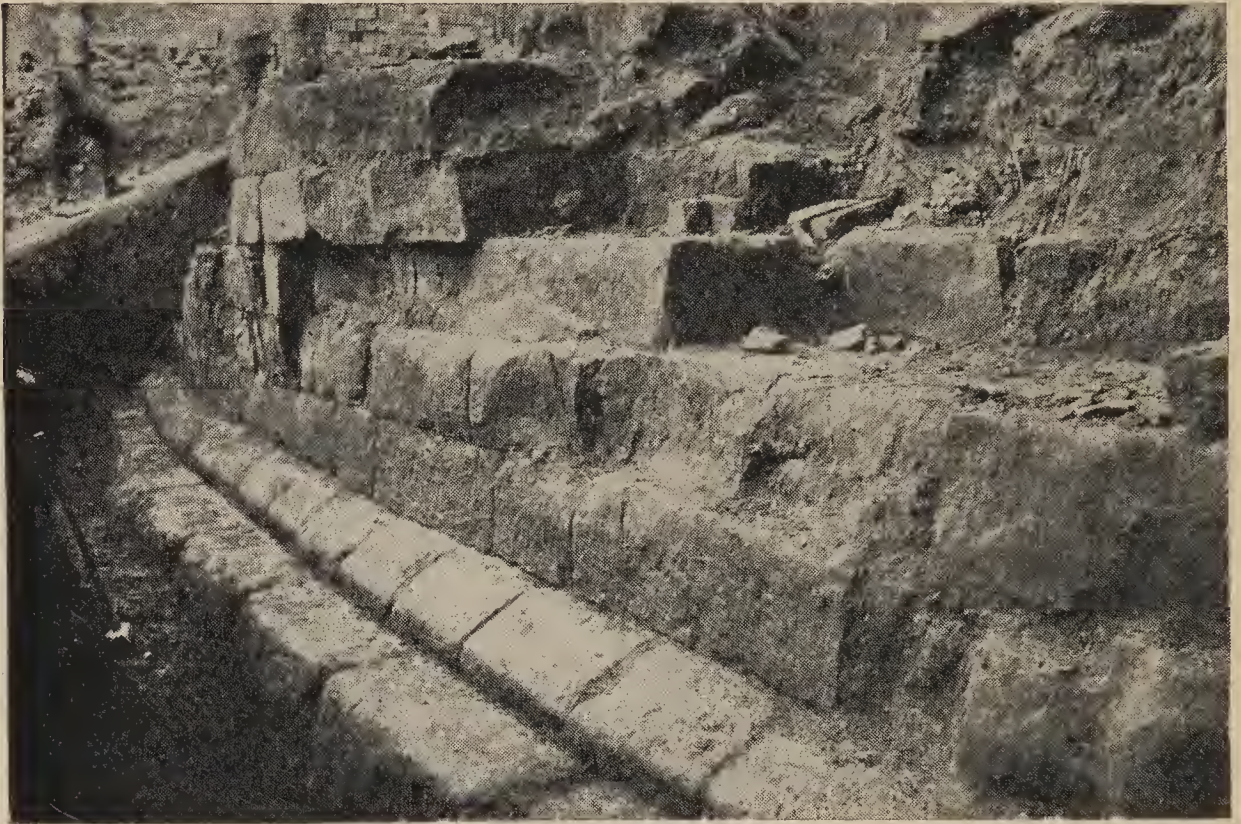
Now for our last question : why did Roman Britain not carry on its Roman tradition into the Middle Ages, as Roman Gaul did ? In a word, the answer is that Britain had more and deadlier enemies, who succeeded in destroying her civilization. Gaul defeated Attila and absorbed the Franks ; her Romanized population weathered the storm, and their Latin speech developed quietly and steadily into the dialects of French. Britain was less fortunate. Romanized though she was, she was not so thoroughly Romanized as Gaul : her civilization, it has been well said, ' like a man whose constitution is sound rather than strong, might

perish quickly from a violent shock'. The shock was administered by the triple invasions of Saxons, Picts, and Scots, enemies more dangerous, because harder to crush, than Attila himself. And, just when the danger was greatest, a succession of usurpers drained Britain of troops to support their own claims to the throne of the Empire. But for these facts England would to-day be speaking a Latin tongue, though in race she would perhaps be no less and no more Teutonic than she is.

Before proceeding to a more detailed survey of Roman Britain, her military and civil life, her arts and religions, it may be well to summarize a few of the most important facts about the Roman imperial system.

The Roman Empire consisted of a number of provinces of which Britain was one; and Rome appointed governors to look after the various provinces in two ways. The imperial constitution was a blend of two elements: the Senate, representing the old Republican régime of the days before Caesar, and the Emperor, representing a new element of autocracy. The older provinces, with a few exceptions, remained in the hands of the Senate, and were governed by men who had filled the ancient Republican offices, especially the chief office, that of Consul. The newer provinces were controlled by the Emperor, who appointed his own nominees to govern them. This suited both parties. Senatorial gentlemen were glad to have the old provinces to govern, because they were civilized and comfortable; and the Emperor was bound to control the newer ones, because they were mostly frontier districts where a capable governor was necessary and an army had to be maintained, and it was essential to the Emperor's position that he should keep the army in his own hands. The army was permanently distributed along the frontiers. The legions or regular troops were quartered in fortresses some distance back from the actual frontier, the auxiliaries or irregulars in little forts pushed forward to the very limit

of the Roman territory. A legion was a brigade about 6,000 strong, commanded by a *legatus legionis*, who represented the Emperor as commander-in-chief; it was composed of Roman citizens, divided into cohorts and these into centuries, and officered chiefly by centurions, who rose from the ranks. The auxiliaries were only formed into cohorts (infantry) or *alae* (cavalry), which might be 500 or 1,000 strong and were organized like the



Wall of Legionary Fortress, Chester

cohorts of a legion; they were commanded by prefects or tribunes, who were very often promoted to their commands from being centurion in a legion. Auxiliaries were originally not Roman citizens, but levies raised among newly conquered tribes, and they preserved the name of the tribe from which they were originally recruited. They were not, however, always or even often employed in the territory of that tribe. Thus we find cohorts of Britons on the German frontier, and the British frontier was garrisoned by all kinds of Germans, Gauls, Spaniards, and even

Oriental. But once a Spanish or German cohort had settled down, say in Northumberland, there is reason to believe that it did not always send home to Spain or Germany for recruits. The men took wives who lived in a village outside the fort—it was not legally recognized, for only Roman citizens could contract a full legal marriage, but in practice it amounted to the same thing—and their sons probably joined the regiment, like the sons of legionaries; and other recruits were found in the neighbouring villages, so that after a generation or two a nominally foreign cohort would perhaps contain a majority of native-born men. As for the language difficulty, that did not matter, because Latin was the language of command and every one had to know it.

Britain was of course one of the Emperor's provinces, and it was governed by a man appointed by him personally and entitled *legatus Augusti pro praetore*, 'Imperial viceroy with the rank of praetor'. This legate or representative was commander-in-chief of the British army and supreme head of all departments of the government. For military matters, he had directly under him the three legates of legions at York, Chester, and Caerleon-on-Usk; for finance, there were procurators appointed by the Emperor; for local administration, there was the cantonal system by which the old tribal organization was preserved and Romanized and brought into touch with a central authority. The army at his disposal consisted at full strength of about 16,000 or 17,000 regular troops and something like 25,000 auxiliaries. That was the state of things in the second and third centuries; in the fourth century great changes came about, both military and administrative, in the Empire as a whole, and in Britain we hear of a governor called 'Vicar of Britain', having under him a 'Duke of Britain' in command at York, a 'Count of the Saxon Shore' commanding the garrisons of the south-east, themselves a new feature, a 'Count of Britain' in command of a field army, and five governors of 'provinces' into which his 'diocese' was now divided.

History of the Conquest and Occupation

THE motive of the Roman conquest was a desire for security in Gaul. The warlike and spirited tribes of the Low Countries and of north-eastern France had not been conquered by Julius Caesar without difficulty; and the existence of a large island within sight of their shores, populated by Celts of their own race and language, and standing outside the Roman empire, could only be a motive for disaffection, when any rebel might raise an army in Britain and if defeated retire to Britain to escape the hand of Rome and to recruit his forces at leisure. Julius Caesar himself made some attempt to avert this danger by showing that Rome could strike a blow on British soil; but his invasion of 55-54 B. C. was probably no more than a demonstration or a reconnaissance in force; he did not aim at conquering the country. His successors seem gradually to have faced the necessity of doing so. Augustus laid down the principle that the limits of the empire must not be extended; from jealousy of the glory attending future conquerors, says his biographer, but more probably from motives of economy. But Caligula, his next successor but one, framed designs on Britain; and the next Emperor, Claudius, carried them out. In the third year of his reign (A. D. 43), he sent Aulus Plautius with four legions, the Second 'Augusta', the Ninth 'Hispana', the Fourteenth 'Gemina Martia Victrix', and the Twentieth 'Valeria Victrix'—22,000-23,000 legionaries, not counting the usual complement of 'auxiliary' or irregular troops—to conquer the island; and the Emperor himself came over to inspect the progress of the work.

In this work the legions seem to have operated as independent units. The Second worked on the left flank of the advance, towards the west, the Ninth towards the north, and the Twentieth in the centre, north-westward. Perhaps by 45 the Twentieth had conquered as far as Shropshire and established itself at Wroxeter; probably about 50 it shifted its head-quarters to Chester, where it remained henceforth permanently quartered. The Second, after working its way down into the west, ultimately settled (perhaps A. D. 72) at Caerleon-on-Usk, attracted across the Bristol Channel by the wilder and more dangerous nature of the country and people in South Wales; the Ninth, after a temporary halt at Lincoln, took up its permanent quarters at York about 75. The English lowlands, as far as the Severn and the Humber, seem to have been conquered in the first three years.

In the wake of these advancing armies, and especially in the south-east, flourishing Roman or Romanized towns sprang into existence. In 47 Ostorius Scapula, succeeding Aulus Plautius as Imperial legate, conquered the Icenii of East Anglia; and in 61, when the Icenian queen Boudicca ('Boadicea' is a mere misspelling of her name) led a great rebellion of the tribes between the Thames and the Wash, there were already rich and populous towns of a Roman type at Colchester, Verulam, and London, all of which were destroyed by fire and massacre. The Roman legions were far away in the north and west, and Boudicca's blow was struck before they could return; when they did, her armies met them and were wiped out to the number, it is said, of 80,000, a number even exceeding the 70,000 Romans and Romanized Britons whom they had massacred.

Suetonius Paulinus, who destroyed Boudicca's army, was operating at the time in North Wales against the Ordovices; and ten years later (71) Vespasian's legate Petilius Cerialis, bringing with him another legion, the Second 'Adiutrix', to replace the Fourteenth which had been withdrawn by Nero in the troubled

year 69, embarked upon the conquest of Yorkshire and Lancashire, the country of the Brigantes. The settlement of the Second 'Augusta' at Caerleon, as we have seen, dates from this time; so, probably, does that of the Ninth at York. The Second 'Adiutrix' went into quarters at Chester, which may have been for a time a double fortress containing two legions. In 78 (or perhaps in 77) the province was taken over by Julius Agricola, a man who was not only a great soldier and a great administrator but was fortunate in having a great historian as his biographer. Supplementing the story told in Tacitus's *Agricola* with the results of digging Roman sites and dating the objects found there, we can do something towards reconstructing his series of campaigns.

Agricola began by completing the conquest of Wales. The Silures of South Wales, who under their king Caratacus had resisted Ostorius Scapula in the forties, were by now definitely conquered; but the work of Suetonius Paulinus in the north was still incomplete. A single campaign, in 78, sufficed for Agricola to finish it, and the network of forts by which Wales had been garrisoned was abandoned—a measure never found possible in the north of England—and only a few of them rebuilt at later dates to meet dangers more external than internal.

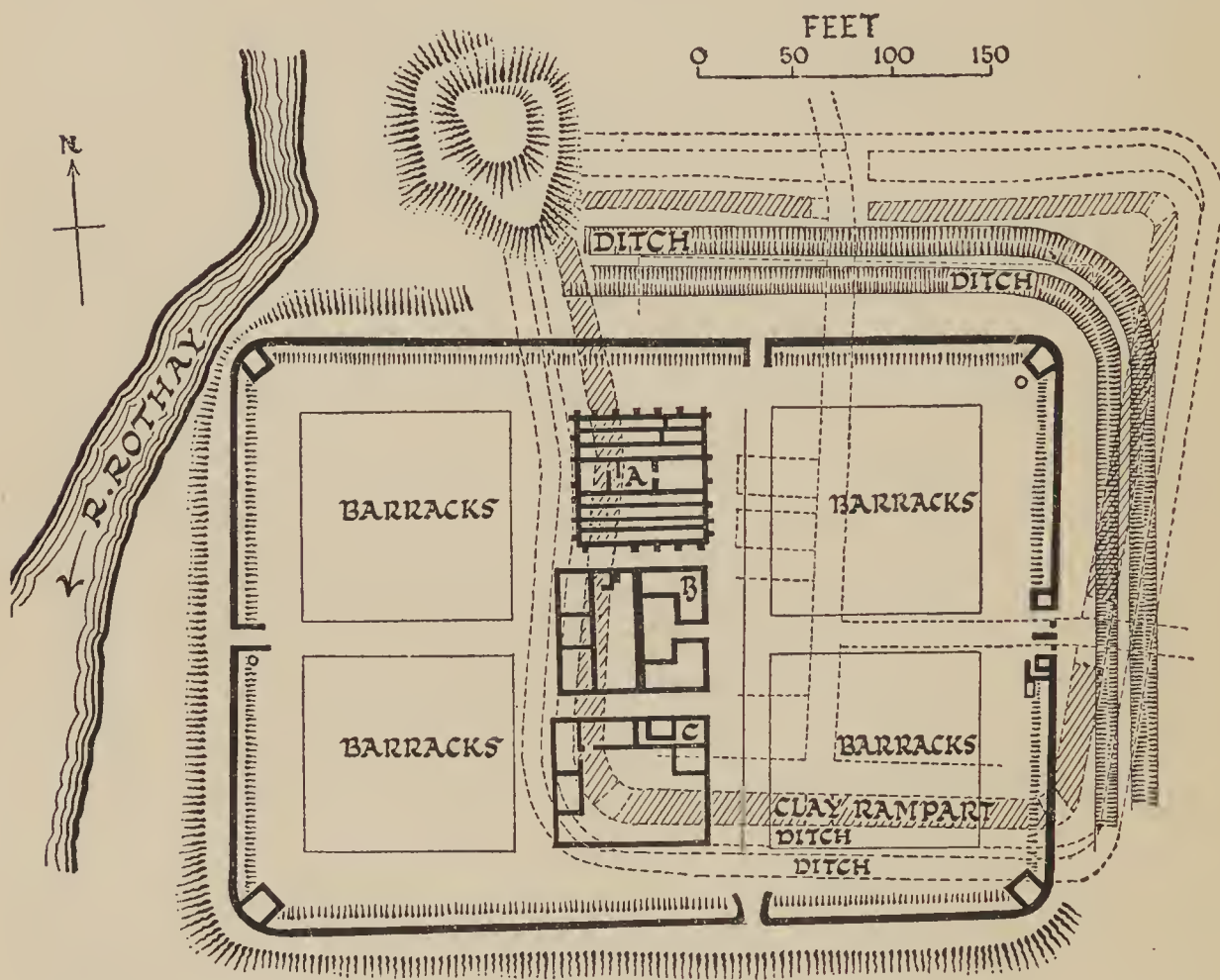
In 79 Agricola moved north from Chester and conquered and fortified the north-west of England. From Chester to Carlisle, from Carlisle eastward to Corbridge on the Tyne, and from the Tyne southward to York and Lincoln, roads and chains of forts were now constructed, except where they had already been constructed by Petilius Cerialis. The wild hill-district of the Pennine range was penetrated certainly by one road, a direct road from Chester to York, possibly by a second from York to Carlisle; but otherwise, except for a few fortified posts, it was left alone, for the Roman policy was rather to encircle and isolate such districts than to conquer them inch by inch and fortify them in detail.

The next year (80) Agricola advanced from Corbridge into

Scotland, establishing forts as he went. He found the strategic centre of the Lowlands at Melrose on the Tweed, and planted here a great fort; in the next year he built a chain of posts between the Forth and the Clyde, to isolate and secure the Lowland region much as his Tyne-Solway forts had isolated the Pennines. Intending to pursue in this way the systematic conquest of the whole Highlands, he advanced to Stirling, Perth, and beyond; and somewhere in the region north and north-east of Perth he fought the famous battle of the Mons Graupius. But his scheme was not to be carried out. The Emperor Domitian recalled him in 85 or 86, and his successors contented themselves with maintaining garrisons in the forts he had established. These lasted till late in the reign of Trajan—about 115—when a great rebellion broke out in Scotland and the north of England. Agricola's forts were swamped one by one, and the Ninth legion, moving up from York to face the insurgents, disappears from history, to be replaced under Hadrian by the 'Victorious' Sixth. The Second 'Adiutrix' had gone to the Danube about the time Agricola was recalled, and Britain had now only two legions left, the Second 'Augusta' and the Twentieth.

The insurrection probably did not extend far southward; and in the south the now secure and well-established Roman life went on as usual. In the north some kind of reorganization was carried out; Scotland was given up and a new concentration made on Agricola's Tyne-Solway line. This checked the further spread of the trouble, and soon afterwards (122) the Emperor Hadrian himself came over to construct a systematic frontier. Such a thing had not been done in Britain before; Agricola's forts were intended to cut up and hold down a conquered country while further conquests were being made, and then would have been abandoned, as had already been done in Wales. When Agricola was recalled, his scheme simply remained as he had left it, incomplete. Hadrian's lines, begun no doubt before his visit, resembled those which had already been drawn in Germany.

As a basis, he took Agricola's road between Carlisle and Corbridge, and extended it at either end almost to the sea. He then built a series of about fourteen forts at regular intervals, from two to eight miles apart, in commanding situations in front of this road and served by it. They began at Newcastle-on-Tyne and ended



A = GRANARY B = PRINCIPIA C = COMMANDER'S HOUSE

Ambleside. First-century earth fort (in broken line) superseded by second-century stone fort

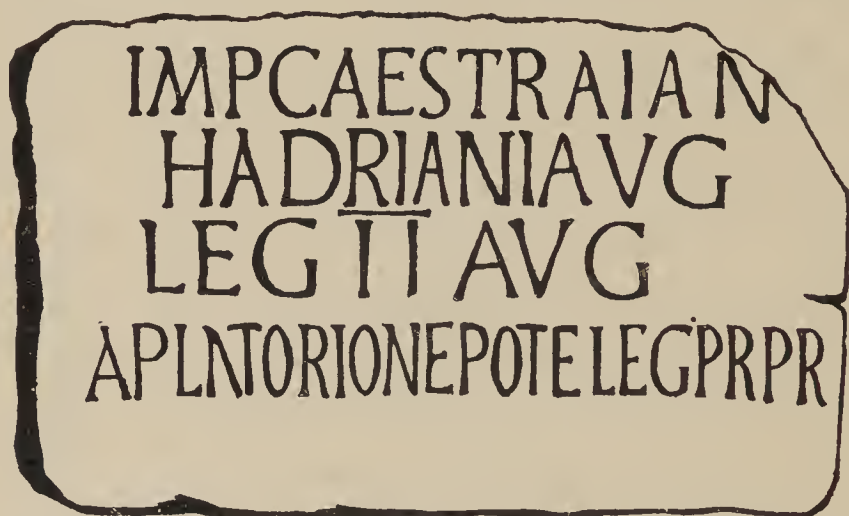
at Burgh-by-Sands, nearly five miles west of Carlisle. To mark the fact that these forts formed not merely a strategic line of military posts but the frontier of the Roman Empire, he connected them with a broad and flat-bottomed ditch running from fort to fort right across England; not a military earthwork, for its design and its choice of ground make it quite impossible to treat it as a defensive fosse, but an indelible and unmistakable line drawn

on the surface of the earth to mark the place where the civil government of Rome ended and her military occupation of hostile territory began: for Hadrian's forts were planted on the northern margin of this ditch. This is the earthwork which English antiquaries call the Vallum.

Hadrian's forts were of a type developed out of the traditional marching-camps of the Roman army. The Romans never by choice fought behind earthworks, but they always slept behind them; and whenever a force halted for the night its first duty was to dig a ditch and throw up an earthen bank round a space in which it then pitched its tents. The details of such a camp became stereotyped. When the ground permitted, it was generally rectangular, with rounded corners, because an earthwork does not lend itself to sharp angles, gates more or less in the middle of the sides—four gates or six, as a rule—the commanding officer's tent in the middle, where the two main streets crossed, and a clear space all round between the tents and the earthwork, where troops could fall in. Agricola's forts were modifications of this plan, the bank and ditch being sometimes doubled or trebled for extra security, and the tents replaced by wooden hutments; sometimes by stone buildings. In Hadrian's time it became usual to reinforce the earthen rampart with an outer facing of stone, and stone inner buildings were the rule. The general's tent developed into a square courtyard building called the *principia* (head-quarters) and containing the regimental chapel, strong-room, and offices; on one side of this was a house for the commanding officer, on the other a series of strongly built storehouses to hold the grain on which the Roman soldier chiefly lived. All Roman forts in Britain were provided with enough storage-space to keep well over a year's supply of grain for the whole garrison; a tradition due apparently to Agricola. The ranges of tents for the men developed into long narrow buildings each designed to house a century. There were also workshops, armoury, latrines and so forth in the fort, and out-

side it (very seldom inside) a bath. In such forts auxiliary regiments lived for centuries together, and each gathered round itself a little town inhabited by the men's families, tradesfolk, and the miscellaneous hangers-on of the regiment whom discipline excluded from the sacred precincts of the fort, but who might, in a hostile district, be protected by an 'annexe' or wing of earthwork thrown out from one side of the fort.

The forts were mostly, if not all, between two and three acres in extent and designed to hold an auxiliary cohort 500 strong. The business of these cohorts was partly to patrol the Vallum and pre-



Stone commemorating the building of Hadrian's Wall: 'Erected in honour of the Emperor Hadrian by the Second August Legion, under Aulus Platorius Nepos, governor of Britain.'

vent smuggling or raiding, or even unauthorized crossing of it; partly to prevent or put down further insurrections or invasions from the unconquered north. To assist them in this task outposts were thrown forward, consisting of three or four similar forts at varying distances in advance of the main line.

Such was the first scheme for a frontier. It very soon appeared that the garrisons of 500 were unable to carry out the heavy work of patrolling five miles or so of the Vallum, and in consequence many of the forts were enlarged to hold a double cohort of 1,000 men. Even this proved insufficient; and within a very few years of



HADRIAN'S WALL. Chesters : head-quarters building, showing underground strong-room

Hadrian's visit his legate Aulus Platorius Nepos decided to connect the forts by a massive wall, eight feet thick and perhaps twenty feet high, provided at regular intervals with fortlets and sentry-boxes for the accommodation and shelter of the troops which were to patrol it, pushed right to the sea at either end with new terminal forts at Wallsend and Bowness, and having a new military road running close behind it to give direct communication from fort to fort.

Thus was designed the 'Roman Wall'. To construct it all the three legions of which the regular garrison of Britain was composed were called in; for great works of military engineering were carried out not by contract but by military labour, and the legions contained artificers skilled in every kind of craft and trade. The Wall was built with a concrete core and an ashlar facing; each unit of each legion was given a certain section to build, and recorded the fact by inscribing its name on a tablet; in front a defensive fosse was dug; at regular intervals of about a mile fortlets 60-70 ft. square and known to antiquaries as 'mile-castles' were built, projecting from the south face of the wall, and capable of housing a hundred men in their hutments; and 500 yards to left and right of each milecastle a turret, fourteen feet square internally, served as a shelter, a signal-station, and a staircase. The whole Wall was thus divided up into 500-yard lengths, separated from each other by a turret, a milecastle, a turret, a turret, a milecastle, a turret, and so on; where it encountered a fort, the fort was generally made to take the place of either a milecastle or a turret. Along the top was a rampart-walk, patrolled by the sentries, and reached by stairs either at a fort, a milecastle, or a turret.

In spite of the impressive appearance of this huge fortification, seventy-three miles long, with its ditch in front and its forts behind, it was not in the ordinary sense a military work. It was not intended to stop invading armies of Caledonians, while Roman



HADRIAN'S WALL: inside Poltross Burn Milecastle. Gate leading through the Wall; fosse of wall on right in distance

soldiers lined the parapet and repelled attempts at escalade. The Roman soldier's short sword and throwing-spear were no weapons for that sort of work; they were designed for meeting an enemy in the open, disconcerting him with a volley of heavy javelins at close range, and then charging him with the short sword. No other mode of attack was open to the Roman soldier, with his highly specialized equipment, and no Roman engineer could have built the Wall intending to fight on the top of it. The Wall was an obstacle, but an obstacle not so much to armies as to smugglers and raiding parties; and the troops stationed on it were there to patrol it on the watch for such parties, not to defend it against concerted attack. If we want an analogy from modern times, we shall find one not in the continuous lines of trench warfare but in the Indian 'customs-hedge' built by the English in 1843 for the prevention of smuggling in salt, and patrolled for thirty-five years by 14,000 officers and men; an obstacle consisting of a thorn-hedge reinforced by stone walls or earthworks and 2,500 miles long.

The successive experiments which led to the finished Roman Wall took place very rapidly and the whole was complete in a few years—perhaps by about 126 or 127. But a wholly different plan was soon undertaken. In 141 and 142 Lollius Urbicus, legate of Antoninus Pius, was fighting once more in Scotland and reoccupying forts which had been first built by Agricola; and in 143 a wall, in some ways like that of Hadrian, was built by him between the Forth and the Clyde. Both walls followed strategic lines first seized upon and fortified by Agricola; but Lollius Urbicus, profiting by the experience of twenty years before, planned and executed his barrier as a single whole. The line chosen is only about thirty-six miles long, from Old Kilpatrick on the Clyde, near the ancient fortress of Dumbarton, to Bridgeness on the Forth; for its greater part it is well defended in front by low and marshy ground. The forts are much closer together than on Hadrian's Wall (there are nearly twenty and as a rule they are only about

two miles apart) and more regularly spaced ; and there is nothing to correspond with the Vallum. The Wall, instead of being built of stone and concrete, is made of turves, laid like bricks in regular courses ; and some of the forts have turf, instead of stone, ramparts.

We cannot say how far Hadrian's Wall was stripped of men to



HADRIAN'S WALL. View of a Turret (Mucklebank)

garrison the new turf wall. Several cohorts certainly were moved from the southern wall to the northern ; others were placed at forts between the two. Probably both walls were kept going, not so much as a double barrier against incursions from the Highlands, but rather in order to cut off and isolate the various not wholly pacified hill-districts from each other. The danger against which the Roman governor was trying to guard was a very real one ;

for about 155 there was a general rising of the tribes in the Lowlands and the north of England, and it seems that most of the Roman forts were destroyed. Certainly the turf wall and its forts were lost, and when three years later the governor Julius Verus repaired the damage he had to rebuild forts not only on both walls and between them but as far south as Derbyshire.

The same thing happened on an even larger scale in the year 181. Both walls were destroyed, and not only were the buildings of almost all the Roman forts in Scotland and the north of England burnt, but even their walls were deliberately thrown down. This again was not a mere invasion; it was not wholly the work of foreign enemies. Foreign tribes were concerned in it, but essentially it was a general rising of natives behind the Roman frontiers rather than a successful assault on those frontiers from outside. A great part of Britain was overrun by the insurgents, and the governor himself appears to have fallen in battle; but the south and south-east were probably not affected. In the north the disaster was complete, and it was many years before the Roman frontier system was set on its feet again. The legions at York and Chester in the meantime seem to have held their ground, and about 195 we find forts in Yorkshire being rebuilt, which seems to be the first symptom of a recovery. For the third time Britain was visited by an Emperor. Severus came over in 208 and undertook a series of great campaigns in Scotland. Returning to the policy of Agricola he designed a complete conquest, and disembarking his forces at Cramond close to Edinburgh he pressed northward through Stirling and Perth as vigorously as Agricola himself. The difficulties of the campaign, especially in the swamps of the Forth, were immense, and Severus, unlike Agricola, had not the satisfaction of bringing the Caledonians to battle; for they refused to fight and merely harassed his march, cut off stragglers, and raided his communications. Severus, a man of indomitable will, pushed forward to Aberdeen and beyond; but his health broke



HADRIAN'S WALL. Milecastle on left; Vallum on right

down and he died at York in 211 without having effected any permanent conquest.

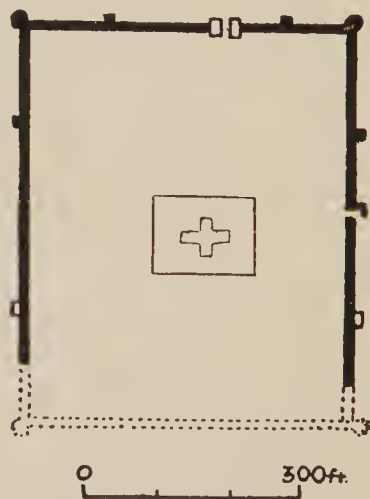
His work in the north, however, had lasting results. The records of rebuilding on and near Hadrian's Wall come thick and fast in the next fifteen years, and for sixty years the frontier had peace. The tribes of the Lowlands and of northern England were reduced and pacified, it seems, between 180 and 208; and the tribes beyond the Forth were induced by the campaigns of Severus to refrain from another great onslaught on the Roman defences. Later tradition was so much impressed by the importance of this visit of Severus in the history of the frontier, that it ascribed to him the building of the Roman Wall.

The third century was a period of peace and prosperity. In the south, the towns were growing, country-houses were springing up in greater numbers, the population appears to have been increasing probably in numbers, certainly in civilization and wealth. Towards the end of the century there were troubles. About 275 another disaster overthrew the buildings of the northern forts, and in 287 the Saxon raids on the south-east coast began. In 288 Carausius, a native of the Low Countries who had been put by Diocletian in command of the fleet in the Channel, and was condemned to death for failure to check these raids, fled to Britain and there assumed the title of Emperor. Rome, unable to suppress him while he commanded the sea, permitted him to usurp the title and to govern Britain, which he did with ability. He restored peace on the frontier and rebuilt its fortifications, but was assassinated in 294 by Allectus, one of his own officers, who was himself defeated and killed two years later by Constantius, the legitimate Emperor, who came in person to reconquer Britain.

It would be an anachronism to suppose that the independence of Britain under Carausius and Allectus corresponded with, or was supported by, any outburst of nationalist feeling. To imagine that the Britons of the third century demanded home rule or

would have been pleased by the possession of it is precisely to fall into the error against which we warned the reader in the first chapter; and the picture of Carausius as the first creator of a British independence based on British sea-power is sentimentally attractive but historically false. Carausius was not a Briton but a Belgian; he was a Roman admiral and not a nationalist leader; the title he usurped was not king of Britain but Emperor, and that by itself is enough to prove that the position at which he aimed was the headship not of a nation but of the Roman Empire.

Constantius took up his residence at York, the Roman capital of Britain, whence he pursued the successful campaigns of Carausius against the Caledonians; and his son and successor, Constantine the Great, is famous as the emperor who made Christianity the religion of the Roman Empire. The Constantinian age was again a period of peace and prosperity in Britain. The Saxon raids increased, but counter-measures were devised. From Southampton to the Wash the coast was fortified with a series of great forts, structures of a different type from the ordinary cohort-forts of two hundred years earlier; twice as large, defended by massive masonry walls instead of earthworks with a mere stone revetment, and reinforced by the newly invented tactical device of the bastion, which, combined with the growing use of archery, protected the curtain-wall against attack. The walls of these forts are ten to fourteen feet thick, and in many cases are still standing fifteen or sixteen feet high. This series of forts was placed under the command of an officer entitled the Count of the Saxon Shore.



Fort of bastioned type.
Richborough, Saxon
shore

This new system of fortification along the Saxon Shore indicates a certain shifting of military interest from the Wall to the south-eastern coast; and though the cohort-forts in the north were still held we find that after about 330 the milecastles on Hadrian's

Wall were no longer occupied. Thus reorganized, the defences of Britain seem to have been adequate to their work till after the middle of the fourth century, when a new situation arose. The Scots of Ireland (for this was before they migrated to Scotland and gave it its present name) began to move eastward across the Irish Sea, to settle in Galloway and Argyll and to raid the west coast of England. At the same time the Picts of Scotland, similarly disturbed either by the Scottish attacks or by an independent cause, began to invade Romanized Britain. These new dangers came to a head after 360; and in 367 a gigantic incursion of Picts and Scots swamped all the defences of the north and west and poured like a flood over the civilized and prosperous districts of England. It was by far the greatest disaster in the history of Roman Britain. The invaders were destructive barbarians, and nothing survived their attack except the strongest fortified towns; and when Theodosius came over in 368 to retrieve the disaster he found raiding bands of the enemy even in Kent and at the gates of London. He swept the country clear of invaders, restored peace and order, and rebuilt fortifications; but it was the beginning of the end. The invasion of 367 did permanent damage to the prosperity of the country. In happier circumstances that might have been repaired, but fifteen years later the seal was set on the ruin of Britain by the adventure of Magnus Maximus.

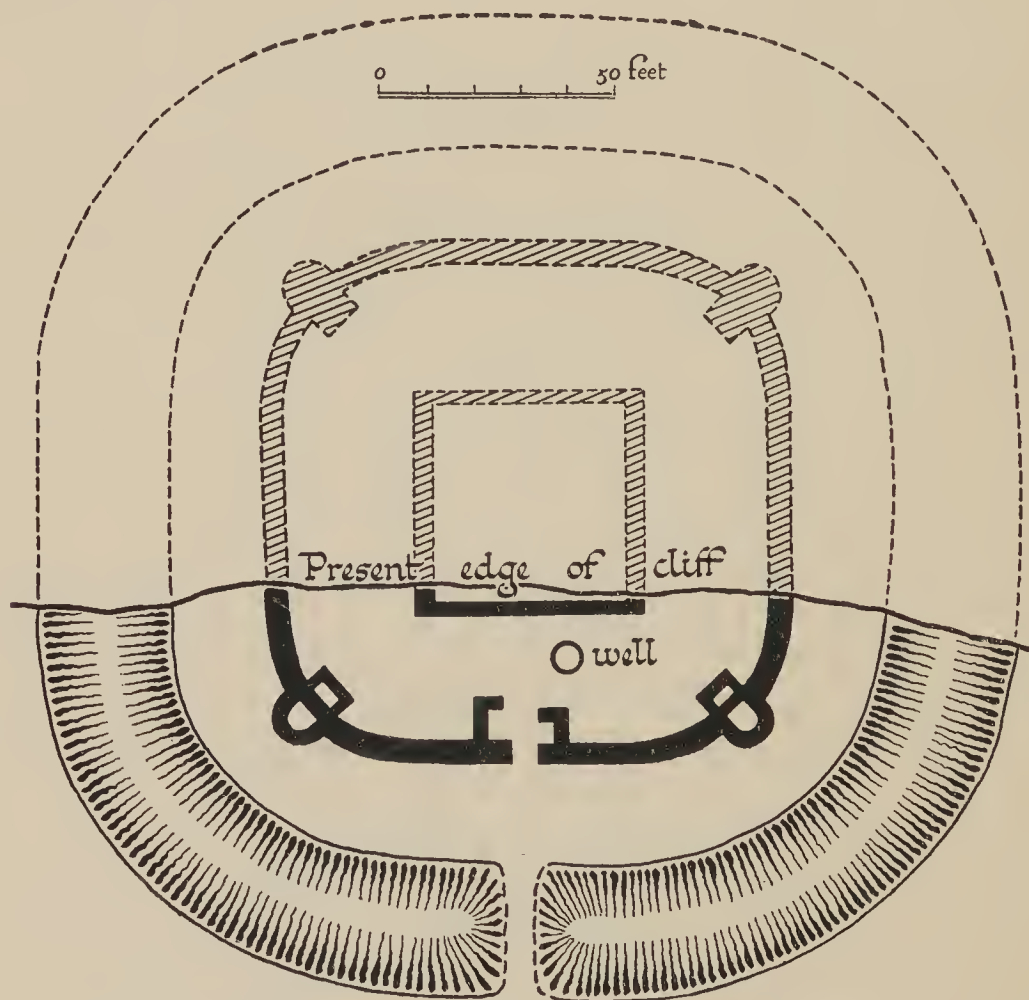
Maximus was a Spaniard who held a command in Britain and had married a British wife. He usurped the title of Emperor as Carausius had done, and in order to justify his claim to the title, and to clear himself from the reproach of a merely provincial greatness, crossed to the Continent to make a bid for the entire Empire. Nothing could more clearly demonstrate the absence of anything like a nationalistic sentiment. Had Britain desired independence, Maximus could have secured it for her; but she desired only membership of the Empire, and her ruler must be the ruler of the Roman world. So in 383 Maximus stripped Britain of troops and crossed the Channel. The Wall was probably

abandoned; at any rate, no coins have been found in its forts dating after that year, though Corbridge and Carlisle and a few neighbouring forts were certainly still held. Doubtless Maximus intended to reinforce them as soon as he could, but the time never came, for in 388 he was defeated and killed by Theodosius, the son of that Theodosius who saved Britain twenty years earlier.

We know that in 395 the great general Stilicho, after a brilliant campaign, reorganized the British army; but how he did it we cannot say. It is possible that he set up a system described in a document of about thirty years later, the *Notitia Dignitatum*. If so, the main point of his reorganization was the removal of the Second Legion from South Wales to Richborough and the concentration along the Saxon Shore of troops formerly used in the north. He may have decided no longer to garrison the Wall, and to restrict all his available troops to the Saxon Shore and the district within a radius of sixty or seventy miles of York. If he really in this way withdrew his troops toward the south and east, it can hardly have been because the Saxons were more formidable enemies than the Picts and Scots. That they were formidable we know well; the corpse-choked coastguard-stations along the Yorkshire coast, dating from this period, tell a plain story. But the Picts and Scots were certainly no less so; and we cannot yet tell whether the new movement of troops indicated a deliberate shrinking of the Roman area, the north and west being surrendered to the Picts and Scots, or whether the defence of these districts was left to the loyal Romanized Britons in (for instance) the fortified hill-top towns of North Wales.

In any case the defence did not hold out long. The disastrous adventure of Maximus was bound to be repeated, and in 407 it was repeated irrevocably. Another usurper, a common soldier named Constantine, once more drained Britain of troops and crossed the Channel to seek his fortune. It was little more than an accident that after his death the central government never regarrisoned Britain. Circumstances made it impossible for the time being; and

the continued assaults of Saxons, Picts, and Scots gradually did their work. For another generation Britain, though cut off from Rome, not only counted herself a Roman province but fought stoutly, and not unsuccessfully, in her own defence. But she was weakened by the repeated removal of all her best troops to fight the personal battles of usurpers ; she was beset on three sides by numerous and savage enemies against whom she had no power of striking a counter-blow ; and the end could not long be doubtful. The hostile raids struck deeper and deeper into the heart of the country, and the civilization of Roman Britain simply crumbled till, when at last the Anglo-Saxon settlement began, there was nothing left of it except a few distorted traditions lingering on in the minds of some Welsh Britons who still liked to think of themselves as Romans.



Coastal Signal-station at Huntcliff, Yorks

Town and Country Life

IN the Roman period there was a great difference in civilization between the south-east of England and the rest. In part this was due to differences of soil and climate; the south-east is more fertile and less wet than most other parts; but it is easy to over-emphasize these differences, and to ascribe the backwardness of the rest of Britain to a climate which if worse in some ways is better in others, to hills which are seldom continuously wild and barren, and to forests and marshes which have been much exaggerated by the imagination of historians. The plains of Cheshire, Lancashire, and Yorkshire, the wolds and the dales, the Eden and Tyne valleys, and even Midlothian, are as fertile and as rich as any part of south-eastern England and much more so than some parts.

The important difference lay less in the country than in the people. The tribes of the south-east, from Kent to the Severn and the Wash, were skilful farmers (Britain was already famous for its wheat), artistic metal-workers, commercially not negligible (they had their own coinage, which proves a high degree of commercial activity), and politically well organized under stable governments not unworthy of the respect and alliance of Rome. Their tribal districts centred round towns which it would be misleading to describe as mere collections of mud huts; doubtless they were not built of stone, but all over the south-east of England houses were built of timber and lath and plaster down to the eighteenth century, and were none the worse for that. Cogidubnus the king at Chichester and Prasutagus king of the Iceni may have lived in decency, comfort, and even luxury in houses built of the same materials. The country districts were inhabited by peasants living in villages which certainly fell short of modern housing require-

ments ; collections of round huts which may or may not have been comfortable but cannot have been luxurious. But these were only the houses of the peasants, and the large landowners who, in Britain as in Gaul, formed the aristocracy of the population, must have lived in a degree of comfort and opulence equal to that of the wealthiest town-dwellers. On the whole the country was peaceful and prosperous, and the people very unlike the horde of savages pictured in our traditional history-books.

In the north and west things were different. The plains of Somerset, the Severn valley, and Yorkshire were already cultivated ; but with these exceptions the country was rough and the people rougher. The Midlands, from the Chilterns to the Peak, were thinly populated and inhospitable, and the hill-districts of Wales and in the north and west of England were inhabited by tribes that might fairly be called barbarous ; people of a very different type from the Belgae, Atrebates, or Iceni in the south-east, who had either come recently from Gaul or were at least subject to the civilizing influences of Gaulish intercourse.

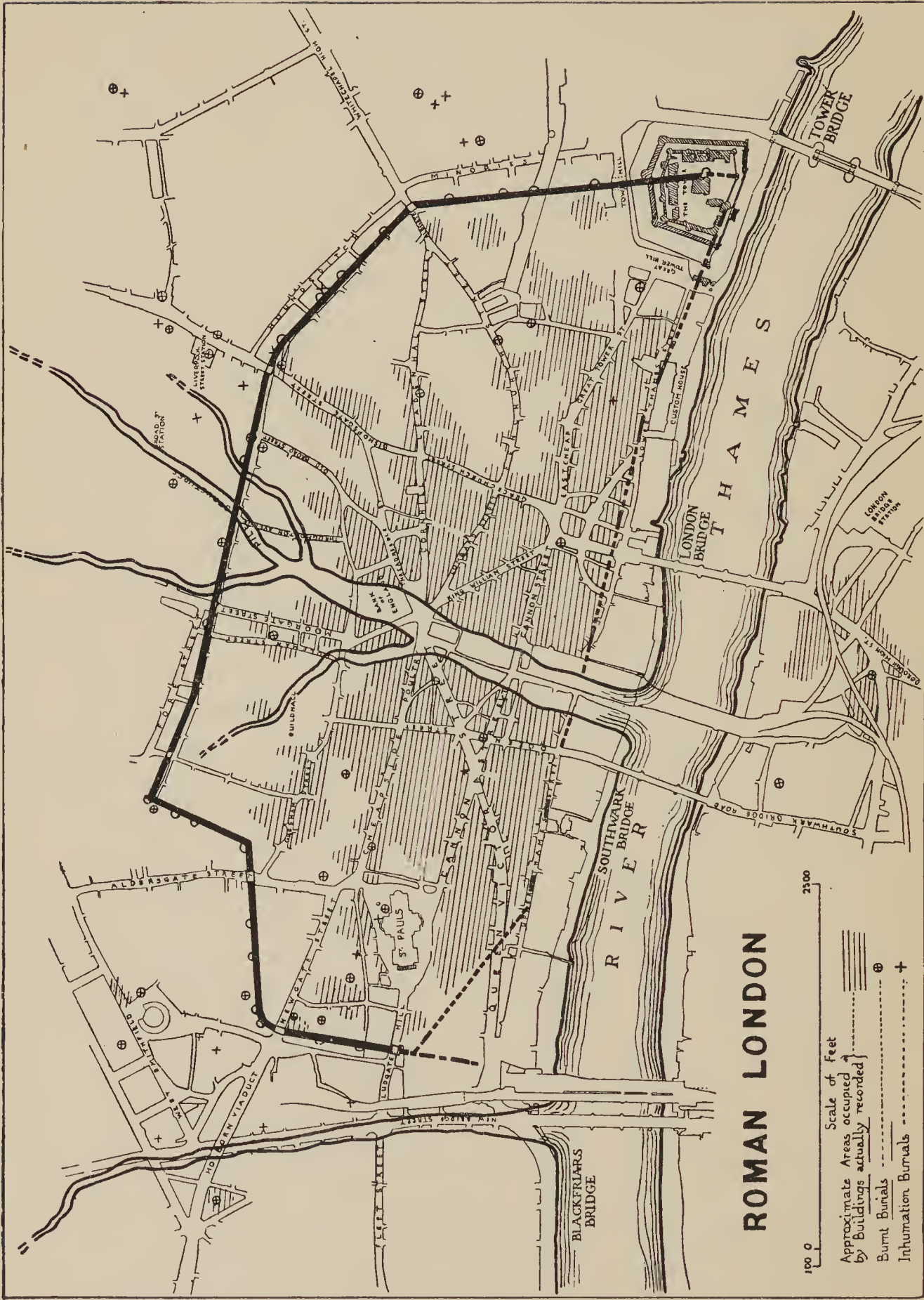
Merely to enumerate the sites of Romano-British remains, with a word on each, would take more space than the whole of this book, for the sites amount to many hundreds. All we can do is to point out where they are chiefly concentrated, and then to describe a few typical examples of towns, country-houses, and villages.

The extreme south-east is thickly planted with towns and 'villas'. Of the towns London and Canterbury are the chief ; here too were the main ports for channel traffic, Richborough and Dover. In Kent, Surrey, Sussex, and Hampshire there were numerous villas, and this region contained such towns as Silchester, Winchester, Chichester, and Bitterne. The Isle of Wight also is rich in villas. Farther west there are still villas in Dorset, but not so many ; Dorchester and Exeter were the chief towns.

A separate and very important cluster of towns and villas occupied the Cotswolds and lower Severn basin. To the towns at

Bath, Cirencester, Gloucester, and Caerwent must be added the thick sprinkling of fine country-houses in Somerset and on the dry, fertile plateau of the Cotswolds. Corresponding to this western cluster and separated from it by the Midlands is an eastern, including Verulam, Colchester—both early and flourishing towns—and Castor, the centre of a rich villa-district. Farther north we reach another pair of districts, Shropshire on the west and Lincolnshire on the east, the common characteristic of which is that they were military districts early in the conquest and turned into purely civil districts as the conquest advanced; for their centres, Lincoln and Wroxeter, seem to have been originally the cantonments of the Ninth and Twentieth legions, and to have been converted into civil towns, with a civil population in the country round them, when the legions moved to York and Chester. Next we come to the permanent legionary fortresses just named, and here the civil towns and the Romanized country population come to an end. It does not appear that at Chester there was ever very much of a town outside the fortress, and the country is no longer, as in Shropshire, studded with villas. York was more of a town, but it was always primarily a military centre, and the civilian villas of the Vale of York are very scanty.




York (or rather Aldborough, a small civil town a little north of York) and Chester once left behind, we plunge into a district where towns of the civil type and villas are unknown; a district where the Romans were not a civilizing influence altering the face of the country-side by their skill in the arts of peace, but an armed force dividing and dominating a country enclosed in the meshes of a vast net, whose knots were little fortified posts and whose cords were military roads. On the east and on the west main roads ran up the Vale of York to Corbridge and Newcastle and up the Lancashire plain and the Lune valley to Carlisle; these two roads, serving the two ends of Hadrian's Wall, were connected by cross-roads and provided with branches leading up to the hills and down



ROMAN LONDON

100 0 2500

Scale of Feet

- Approximate Areas occupied by Buildings actually recorded 
- Burial Burials 
- Inhumation Burials 

to the sea, and at the end of every day's march was a fort. Close to the Wall itself there were towns, Carlisle and Corbridge; but they were military bases and supply dépôts, not civilian communities.

From this rough sketch of the distribution of sites in Roman Britain it is clear that to acquaint ourselves with the civil population of the province we must look at a U-shaped tract of country running down the Severn valley and south through Somerset to Dorset, thence east to Kent and thence north by London and East Anglia to Lincolnshire. In this tract we shall find a large number of towns—an ancient authority ascribes fifty-nine towns to Britain, but he may have been including the forts of the north in this figure—and a vast number of country-houses; but we shall only select an example of each of the main types.

London, which ever since the Roman conquest has been overwhelmingly the greatest town in England, seems strangely enough to have been of purely Roman origin. There is no positive proof that London existed before the Romans discovered the natural advantages of the site, with its unrivalled combination of land and water communications, for a mercantile city. But once founded it leapt into prominence. Before the rebellion of Boudicca, when it was destroyed, it was already a large and flourishing settlement of Italian and Gaulish traders; unwalled and ungarrisoned; situated probably between the Tower and the Walbrook, which flowed where the Bank stands. It soon recovered from Boudicca's massacre, and extended westward till it occupied an area of 320 to 330 acres, which makes it not only one of the largest towns of the Roman Empire but gives it a population large in proportion to its size, for almost the whole area was covered with buildings. In the third century it acquired the name of Augusta, and towards the end of that century we can probably date the building of its massive walls, twenty feet high and 8 ft. 6 in. thick, whose course has been traced round almost their entire

circuit. In the fourth century it was the seat of a bishop and of a mint; and late in the century its walls were reinforced by bastions and it became the military capital. But it was never a garrison town; its importance was always commercial and economic; it had not even the status of a self-governing municipality, though as a great trading city it must always have powerfully

influenced the whole life of the province.

Its inhabitants were fully Romanized in manners and language. Nowhere else in Britain do we find such a profusion of imported works of art in the best Roman style, or so many evidences that Latin was the language of the common people. In size, in wealth, and in culture, London could challenge comparison with any of the great Romano-Gaulish towns; though the evidences of its greatness have to be pieced together

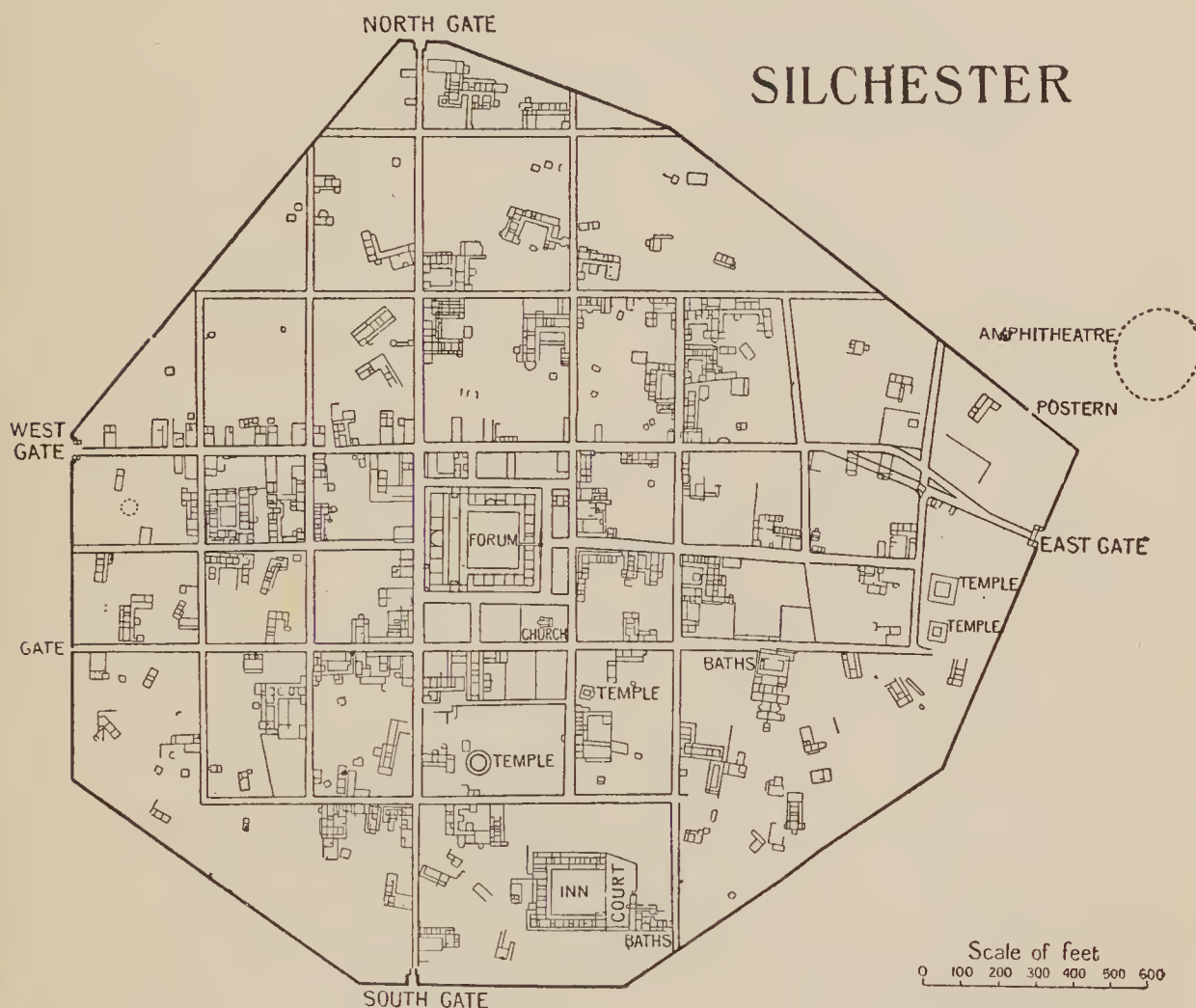


RIVER-GOD from London. Imported work

from small and almost fortuitous finds, and do not strike the eye of every visitor like the undestroyed Roman buildings of southern France. For the disasters which closed the Roman era in Britain seem to have included the destruction of London, soon after the year 400, and when, generations later, a new London arose it preserved no vestige of the character of the old.

At the opposite pole from the commercial and cosmopolitan

London is the quiet little county town of Silchester. It was a county town in the sense that it was the centre of a tribe—‘ Calleva of the Atrebates ’—a market town for the neighbouring parts of Berkshire and Hampshire, and a centre of local government. For the country districts of Britain were governed not by a Roman



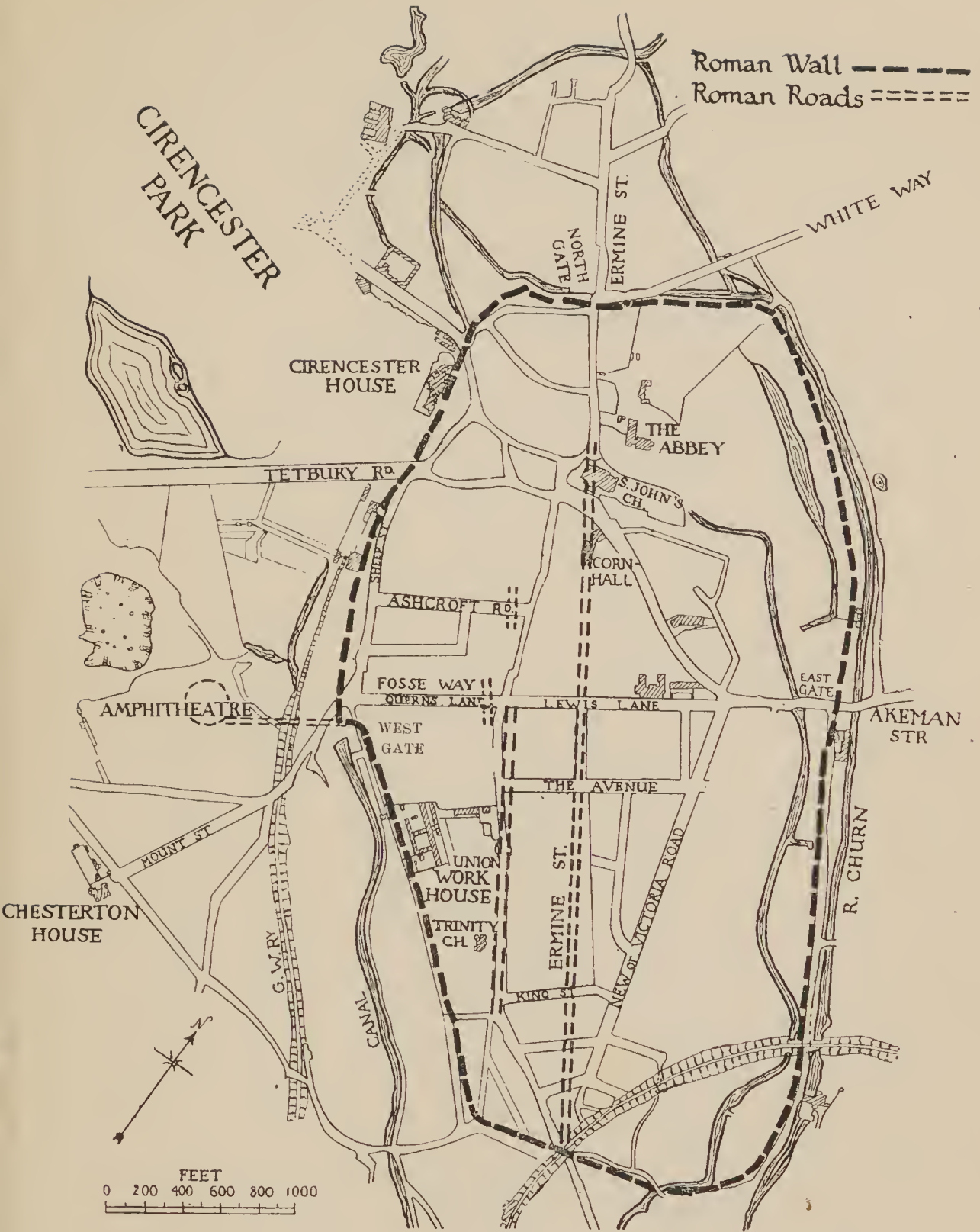
civil service but by their own native chief men, the successors of the pre-Roman landed aristocracy, formed into local councils and administering what must have been a mixture of Roman law and local custom. These councils were called by Latin names and no doubt did their business in Latin; but they were not Romans from Italy administering a ‘ district ’ of alien Britons. They were Britons themselves, and not only Britons but Atrebates, for even the old tribes were preserved intact and bore the official title of

‘Republics’; the tribal organization was indeed the channel through which Rome governed the British country-side.

In this sense, then, as the head-quarters of a tribal canton, the seat of justice and administration as well as commerce and trade for the tribe of the Atrebates, Silchester may be called a county town; and we know of a dozen like it.

Silchester is 100 acres in extent, less than a third the size of London; but its population must have been a very small fraction of London’s, because of the way it is built. The houses of London in its great days were packed closely together; those of Silchester were scattered freely and at haphazard over spaces which were mostly open gardens. Indeed, there are only eighty houses altogether, which allows an acre or more of ground to each. And these houses are built at all angles not only to each other but to the rectangular street-plan; so much so that we are almost driven to the conclusion that some of the houses existed before the streets, though, no doubt, not before the conquest. The fact seems to be that many years before the Romans came Silchester was a flourishing town and capital of the British Atrebates, as Arras was capital of the Gaulish. It already imported Italian pottery, and (probably) struck its own coins; in short it was a thoroughly civilized Celtic town. The conquering Romans did not burn it, or even raze its houses to the ground and rebuild a town in the Italian style: they allowed it to develop along its own lines, till some one, perhaps Agricola (for the dates fit, and we know that Agricola was interested in this kind of thing) induced the Atrebates to go in for a town-planning scheme, to lay out a chess-board street-plan and to build a square forum, two acres in extent, in the middle. The forum was a market-square surrounded by colonnades containing shops, and giving access to a fine county hall with what we should call county offices attached.

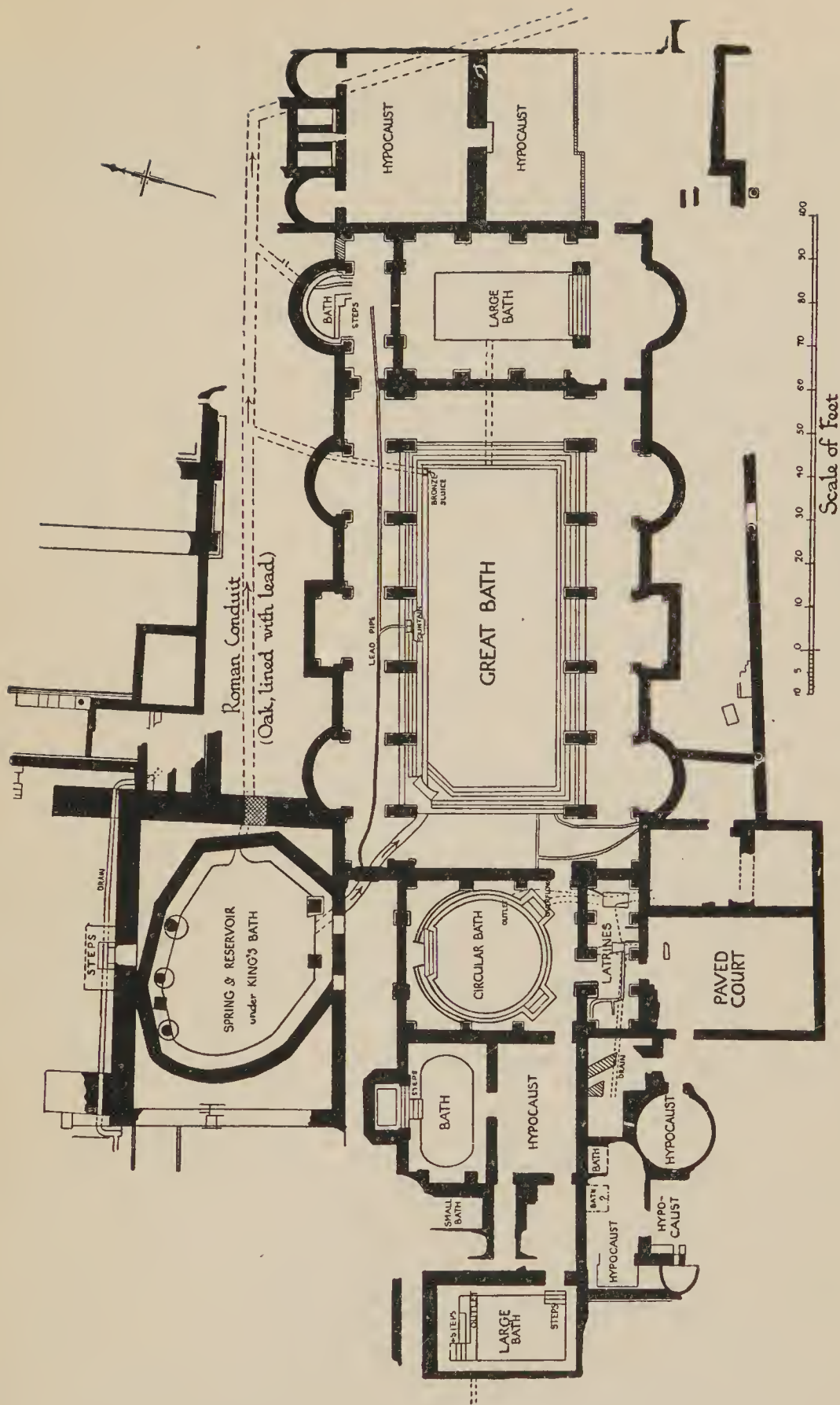
What had been a big cluster of British country-houses thus developed into a town on the Roman plan; and later on,



CIRENCESTER

perhaps in the troubles of the end of the third century, it provided itself with walls like London. But it always remained something of a garden city; its houses were always country-houses standing in their own grounds, never the regular buildings of a city street. Its urbanization did not go very far. Its end is mysterious. There are no traces of a general conflagration and destruction, but an 'ogam' inscription dating perhaps from the fifth century suggests that raiding Scots or at any rate some Goidelic Celt from the west had reached the place and settled down there for a time unopposed. Whether before that date or after it, the Romanized Atrebates must have had news of a Saxon raid coming up the Thames, or some similar danger, and fled from their city never to return.

We may glance at another tribal capital which became a Roman centre, this time on account of its size and intrinsic importance, although, unlike Silchester, it has never been excavated. Cirencester is now a picturesque Cotswold town, well known for its splendid mediaeval church; there is nothing visible to suggest that one is on the site of the Romano-British city second only to London. 'Corinium of the Dobuni' was 240 acres in extent, over two-thirds the size of London and equal in area to such important Roman towns as Cologne. The walls were two miles round, the shape of the town being a long narrow oval lying north and south. The remains show that it was not only a large town but a rich and splendid one. Forty or fifty different mosaic pavements have been found, the plan of a great town hall 320 by 70 feet has been laid down, and sculptural and architectural fragments of unusually fine quality give an impressive idea of the artistic development of Romanized British taste. The explanation of this great town is that Cirencester was the capital of the Cotswolds, and the Cotswolds were perhaps the richest part of Britain, if judged by the quantities of fine country-houses which they contain; it was also an important road-junction, standing at the meeting-



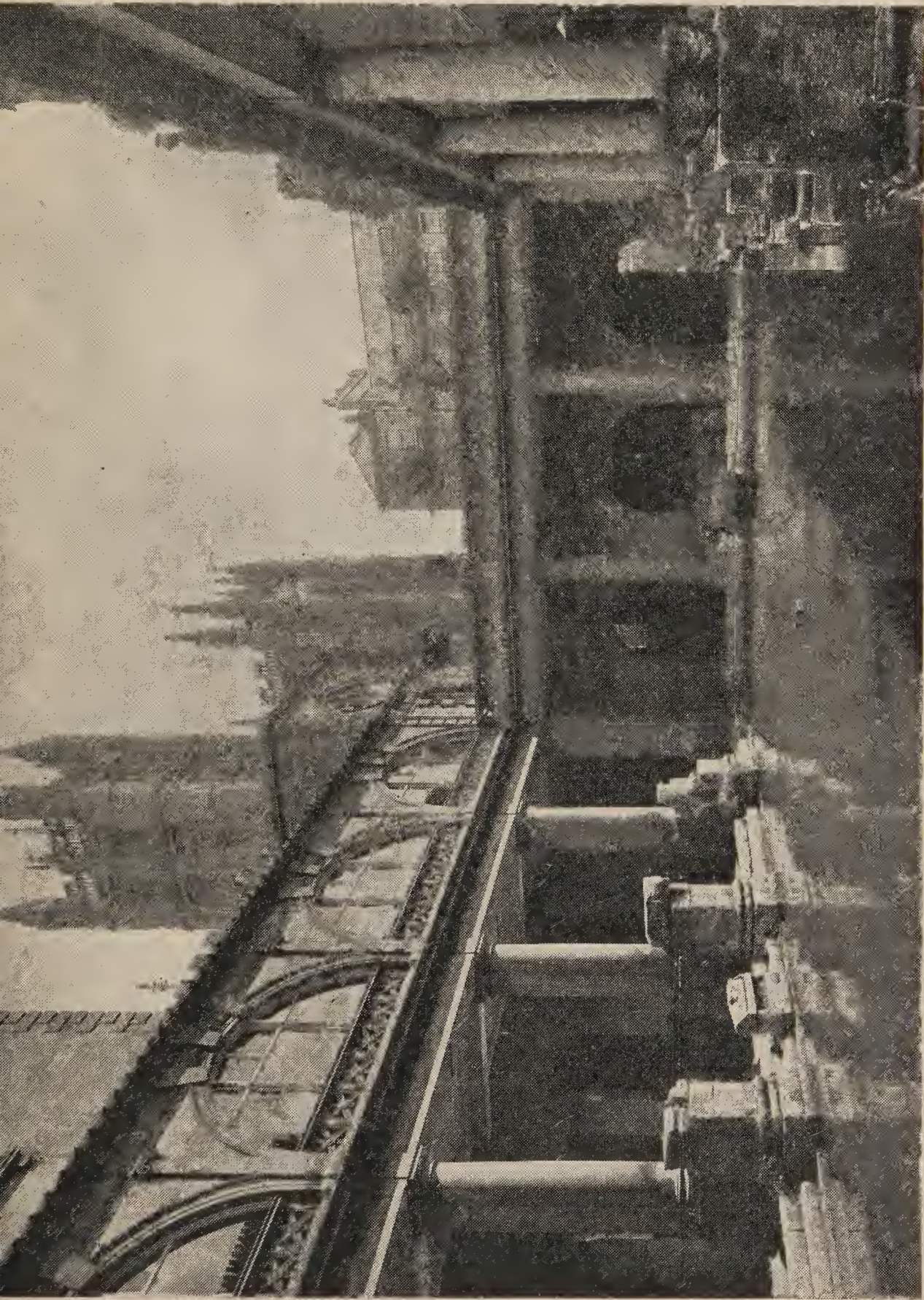
BATH: Plan of Roman Baths

place of direct lines to Bath and Exeter, Gloucester, Leicester and York, Bicester, and Silchester.

In Bath we have a quite different kind of town. Everything goes to prove that Bath was a watering-place and nothing more. Its size must have been about twenty-three acres, too small to admit of a real town population except for the people necessary to carry on the business of the spa ; and it does not seem to have contained any important buildings except the baths and temples. The goddess of the waters, Sul or Sulis, had a British name ; but there is no definite proof of a pre-Roman town, though its existence is far from impossible. The Roman town of Aquae Sulis certainly began its existence early, between A. D. 50 and 60, and enjoyed a long and flourishing career till about 400.

Bath is the only place in England where the visitor can see a Roman civil building in such a state of preservation that he can form some idea of its character and architectural merits. The great Roman baths somehow got buried in soil and rubbish instead of being overthrown, and within the last half-century they have been unearthed and so far repaired and restored as to be intelligible to all comers, not only to the practised eye of the antiquary. With their massive and graceful architecture they can hardly fail to impress any visitor ; and the antiquary observes that they are exceptionally large—they covered originally about an acre and a half—and are in many ways a remarkable example of a type of building well known all over the Roman Empire. Hardly less interesting than the baths themselves are the inscriptions and other votive offerings left by people who had found health there.

Wroxeter, like Silchester, is a Roman site which has never had upon it a post-Roman town. Viroconium may have been founded about A. D. 45 at the gates of Wales, as a legionary fortress to quell the Ordovices of the mountains ; in any case it commands one of the chief roads into north and central Wales, at the same time controlling the natural route between north-west and south-west



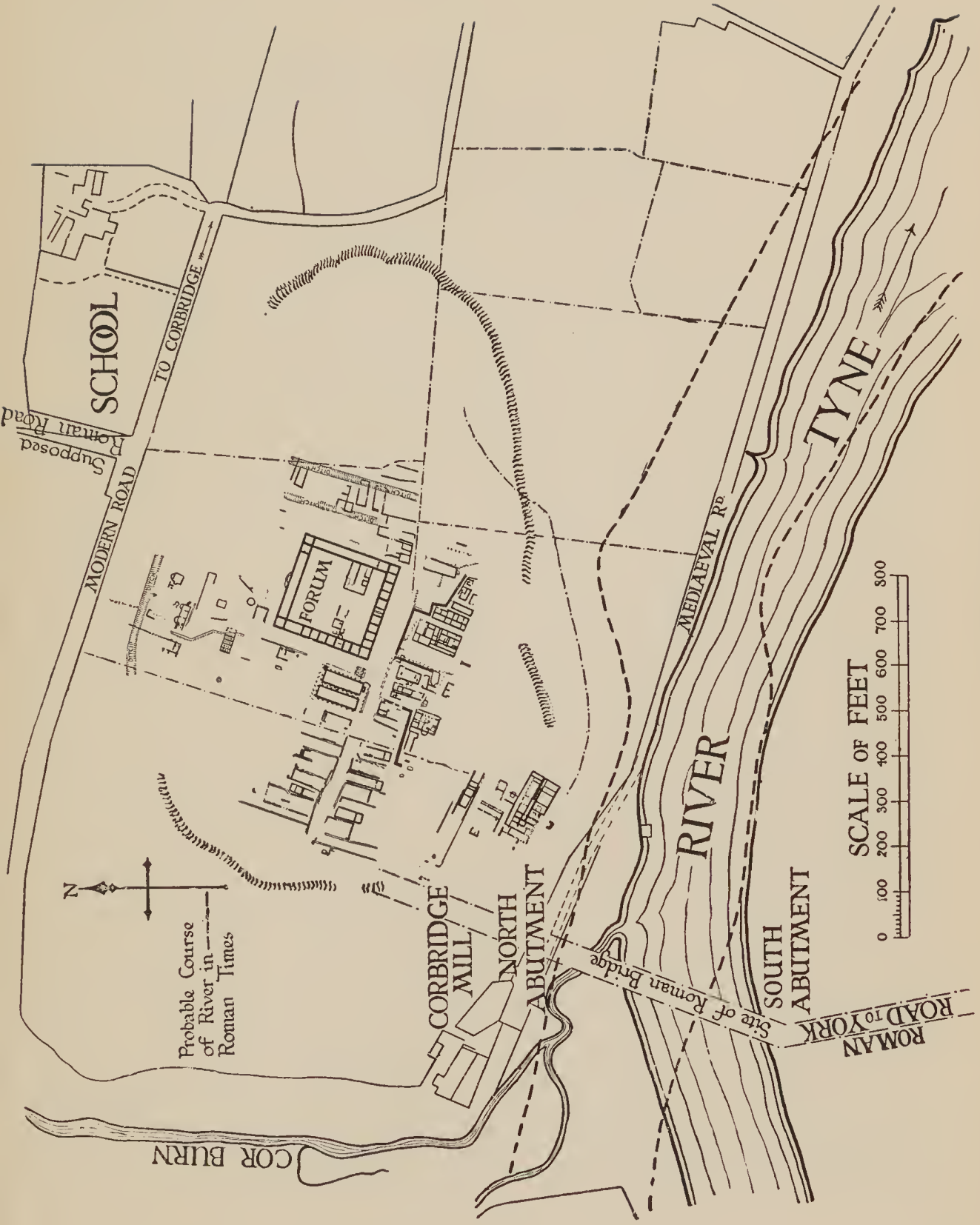
BATH: View in the Roman Baths

England. In mediaeval times its importance passed to Shrewsbury, better suited to the tactics of the Middle Ages but too confined for the quarters of a Roman legion.

Viroconium was 170 acres in extent ; its walls, roughly oval in shape, were three to four miles long. The excavations of recent years have taught us a good deal about its houses, but have revealed as yet no great buildings to match the town hall and baths already known. The town hall is remarkable for the massive fragment of brick wall still standing high above ground ; the baths for their symmetrical plan, two independent suites of bath buildings, as it might be for men and women, opening right and left off a central court, and also for the discovery of skeletons huddled inside the heating-arrangements beneath the floors, evidence of the violent fate which overtook the town in some raid about the end of the fourth century.

Lincoln, even more certainly than Wroxeter, was a legionary fortress, finely placed on a strong hill-top, which became a civil town. It was occupied probably before 50 by the Ninth legion, and when that legion, perhaps about the year 75, moved on to York, the *colonia* which had grown up round the fortress continued to develop. There is little that can here be said about Lincoln ; we mention it chiefly to call attention to the Roman arched gateway, the Newport Arch, of which enough has remained intact down to modern times to give a good idea of the whole.

As an example of an almost wholly military town York may be mentioned. Here on the site of the old English town, clustered round the Minster, was the fortress first of the Ninth and later of the Sixth legions ; across the Ouse, where the railway station stands, was the *colonia* of Eburacum. A *colonia* was a settlement of veteran soldiers who were given allotments of land and maintained with the double object of forming a potential garrison and providing for the ' ex-service man '. In Britain, beside York, there were colonies at Lincoln, Gloucester, and Colchester. The



SCHOOL

TO CORBRIDGE

Supposed Roman Road

MODERN ROAD

FORUM

MEDIAEVAL RD

TYNE

RIVER

SCALE OF FEET



Probable Course of River in Roman Times

CORBRIDGE MILL

NORTH ABUTMENT

SOUTH ABUTMENT

Site of Roman Bridge

ROMAN ROAD TO YORK

COR BURN

CORBRIDGE

inhabitants at York were thus mostly legionaries on the left bank of the Ouse and ex-legionaries on the right, and the military element was everywhere predominant.

Lastly we may mention Corbridge, a town of almost wholly military character but yet not a fortress. Agricola planted a fort here in 79; it was held for another twenty or thirty years, and later its site was occupied by a town of forty acres in area, a base and supply-dépôt for the Wall and for the Roman forces beyond it. Its so-called forum was a massive building, with a court in the middle and rooms all round, but these were Government stores rather than shops, and the usual functions of a forum were probably not required of it. There were also large granaries, strongly built and capable of holding many hundred tons of wheat; one house was found to be a pottery store in which different kinds of ware had been kept sorted separate. The great days of Corbridge fell in the second century; in the troubles that marked the latter part of that period it was wholly destroyed, and, when Severus rebuilt it, it took the form no longer of a great dépôt but of a comparatively insignificant village. This again was destroyed soon after the middle of the fourth century, and, though it seems to have been rebuilt by Theodosius about 369 and was occupied as late as 395, it never regained the importance which it enjoyed under Hadrian and Antoninus Pius.

Before leaving the subject of Roman towns the question ought to be asked, to what extent if at all did these towns survive into Anglo-Saxon, mediaeval, and modern times? Many historians have believed that our mediaeval towns, with their urban institutions, magistrates, and guilds, are directly descended from their Roman predecessors. But this position becomes very difficult to maintain on further examination. In Italy and Gaul it is no doubt true. The history of towns like Florence and Cremona and Lyons and Nimes is continuous from the Roman period to the present day. But at Wroxeter we have seen a Roman town violently perish and



A TOWN GATEWAY
Colchester, Balkerne Gate

never revive ; at Silchester the town mysteriously dies out with an equal finality, and its site, like the sites of other towns such as Caister-by-Norwich and Verulam and Corbridge and Caerwent has lain permanently waste. In northern England and in Scotland it is exceptional for Roman forts to become the sites of mediaeval strongholds, and, though this did sometimes happen, the rule is the other way, and the great majority of such forts are desolate to this day ; so much so that it has been seriously argued that the Anglo-Saxon settlers avoided Roman sites from religious or superstitious motives.

Still, there are many cases—London, York, Carlisle, Chester, Gloucester, Leicester, Lincoln, Colchester, Cirencester, Bath, Exeter, Canterbury, Chichester, to mention the most conspicuous—in which a modern town stands on a Roman site, sometimes though not often with a recognizable continuity of name. Most of the baker's dozen quoted show some such continuity. Are we to suppose that in all or any of these cases the history of the town has been continuous ?

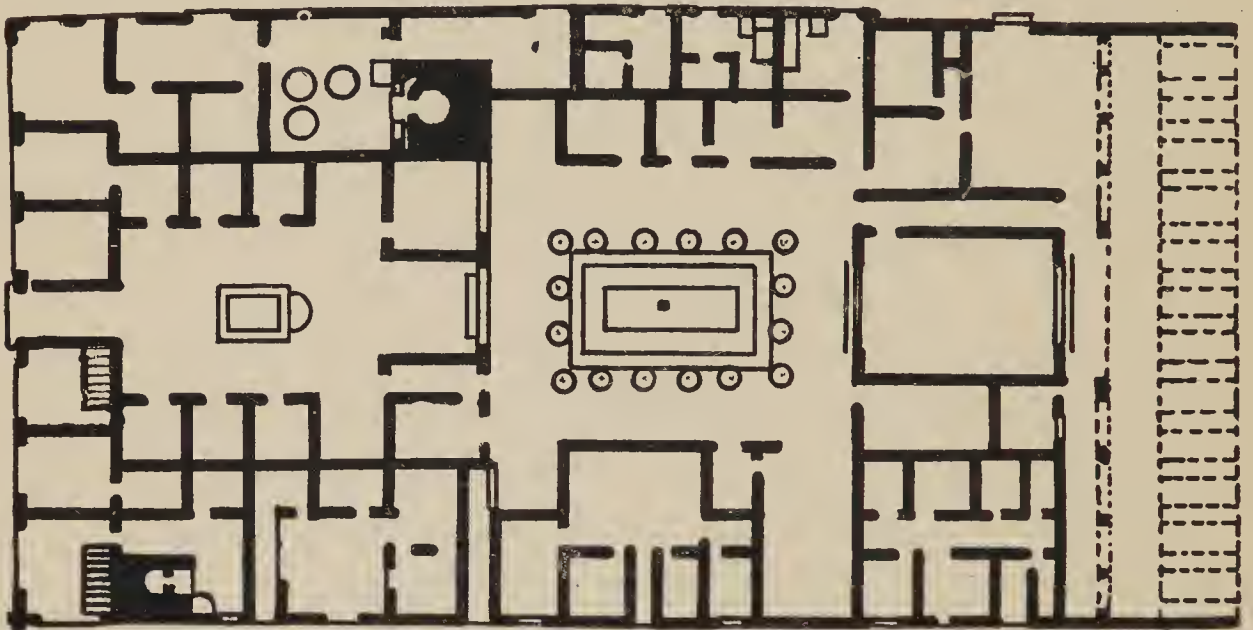
There appears to be no single case in which such continuity can be as yet demonstrated. The towns of Roman Britain seem as a rule to have perished more or less violently about the beginning of the fifth century, and when, some time later, the Anglo-Saxon settlements gradually began, the towns were mostly, perhaps all, blackened and silent ruins. Nor were the new settlers quick to rebuild them ; for they were not by habit or inclination town-dwellers, but country people and farmers. There is evidence that in many cases the deserted Roman town-sites were first sought out by the conscious antiquarianism of Christian missionaries such as Paulinus in the north and Augustine in the south, who wished to regain touch with Imperial Rome and to reclaim for the Church the heritage which the Empire had lost two centuries earlier. Such was the origin of York, of Canterbury, and doubtless of other modern towns on Roman sites. In several cases, evidence of

a direct kind is lacking ; but in the absence of a single case of proved continuity we can only assume that the discontinuity which in many cases is proved was the general rule. It ought to be noticed, too, that a change of name such as from Ratae to Leicester or from Regnum to Chichester proves a break in the history of a town much more conclusively than a continuity such as Lincoln from Lindum Colonia proves the reverse ; for a tradition in the neighbourhood might preserve or antiquarian study (of which there was plenty in Anglo-Saxon England) recover a name, whereas if the history of the town were continuous its name would hardly be changed beyond recognition. The view that our towns can trace their history directly back to those of Roman Britain is certainly groundless and probably as false universally as it is in all the cases in which it can be tested.

The ' villas ' or country-houses come next in order. There are hundreds of these scattered over the more civilized parts of Roman Britain, and scores whose plan and arrangements are known to us. Our historians have generally assumed that they were the houses of real Romans from Rome, foreigners with civilized tastes who lived in Britain because Government service or commercial openings brought them, and built themselves houses rather like those they were accustomed to at home, adding ' hypocausts ' (hollow floors with heating-flues below them) by way of protest against the British climate. This is more than a mere assumption, it is a positive error ; and the only argument adduced in proof of it, the heating arrangements which are taken to prove the presence of occupants used to warmer climates, is valueless. The existence of fireplaces or hot pipes in a modern English house does not prove that its owner is an immigrant from Italy or even a retired colonel of the Indian army ; and what the British climate demands now it demanded sixteen centuries ago.

Before the Romans came, the Britons had their own landed gentry ; as did their cousins in Gaul, one of whose houses dating

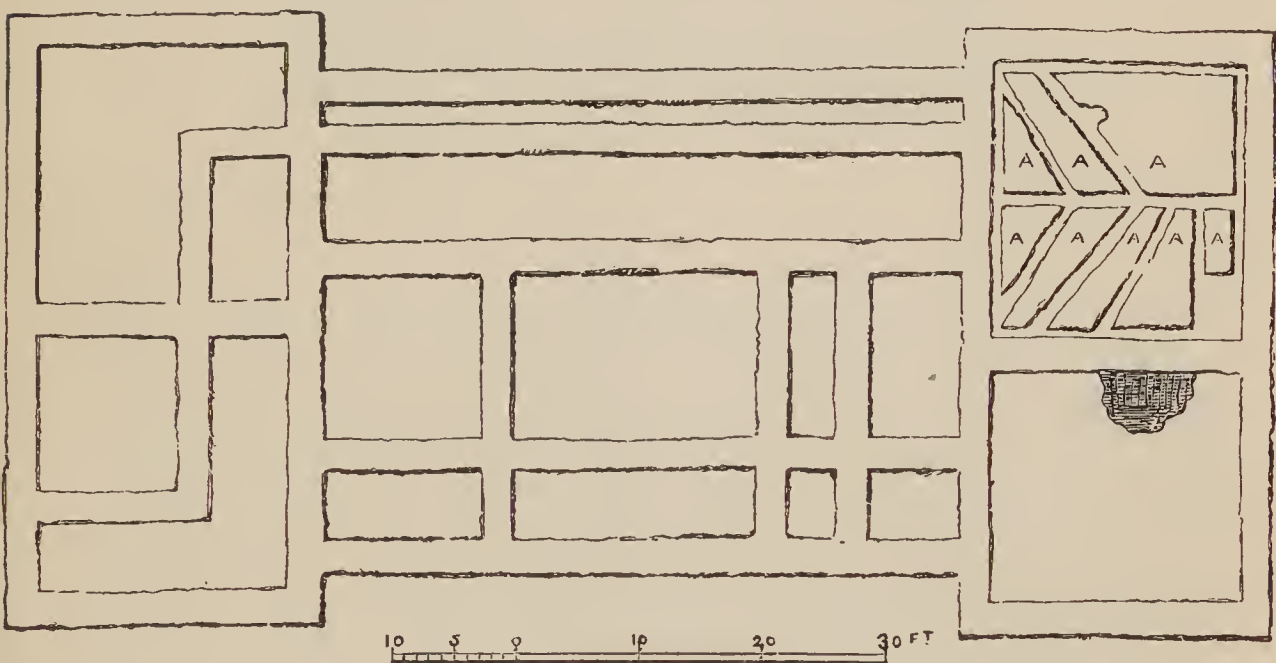
from before Julius Caesar has been excavated at Mont Beuvray and is not unlike one of our 'Roman villas'; and it is probable that houses much like the 'villas' of the Roman period were inhabited by the British landed gentry before ever they became Romanized. And if so, it is pretty clear that when we find houses of just the same pattern built after that event, they were built by and for the same landed gentry; for there is no reason to suppose that this class died out or had its lands confiscated by their Roman conquerors and every reason to suppose the reverse.



Plan of an Italian house

The Romano-British villa is not the least like Italian types of house. It is North European; it belongs to a type that is familiar all over the north of Gaul, and is very possibly of Celtic origin. The Italian house consists of a courtyard with rooms opening into it, a house that faces inward upon itself. The 'villa' house consists of a corridor with rooms opening off it in series. The corridor was probably an open penthouse or veranda, with a roof supported on posts. The largest rooms were generally at the two ends, and projected beyond the rest so as to come out to, or even beyond, the outside of the corridor; so that one of the commonest types is narrow in the middle and furnished with projecting wings at either

end. If it was desired to enlarge the house one of these wings might be extended into a second range of rooms, giving an L-shaped plan ; sometimes, in very large houses, both wings are so extended, and the house encloses three sides of a square ; and the fourth side of the square might then be walled across or even filled in with a fourth corridor and range of rooms. When that happens you have a courtyard house with a colonnade or passage all round its inside, and this may be mistaken for the Italian courtyard house ; but it is really quite unlike it. In the Italian house the courtyard was

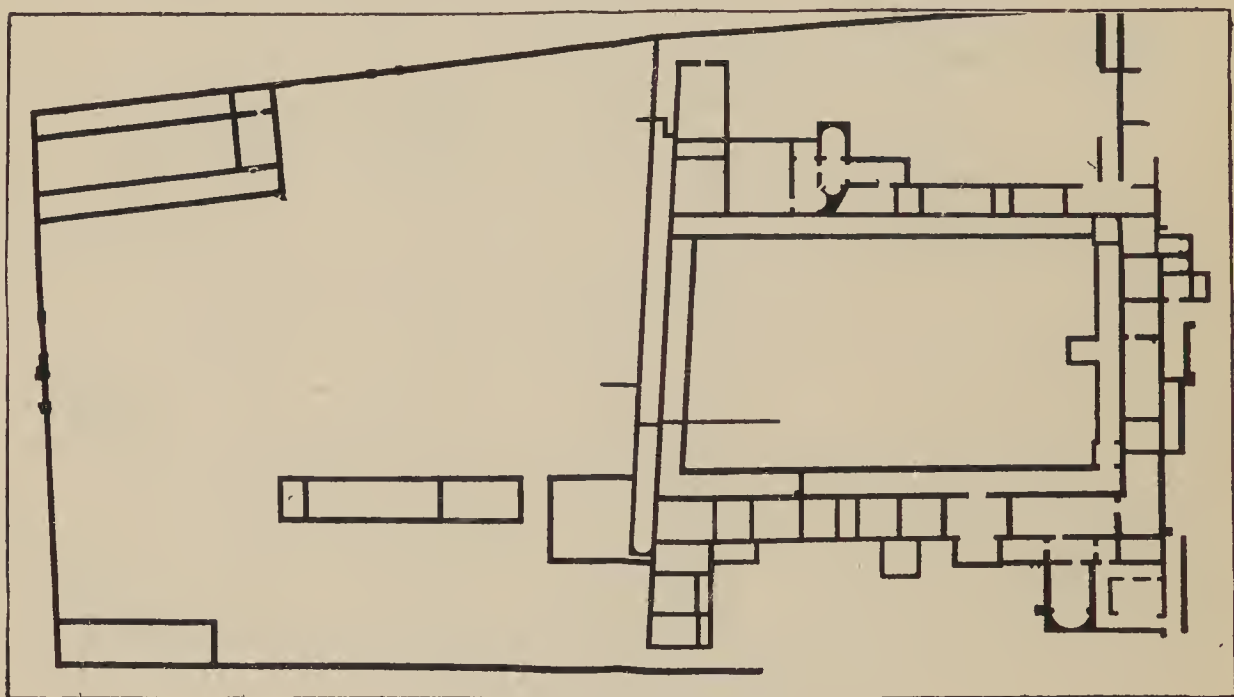


Corridor house

small, and was essentially still—as at first it had simply been—a hall with a hole in the roof to admit light ; in the Romano-British villa of the courtyard type the courtyard was not an enlarged hall but a piece of country enclosed by the wings of the house, which has developed into this shape as it were by accident, instead of starting from it as a first principle.

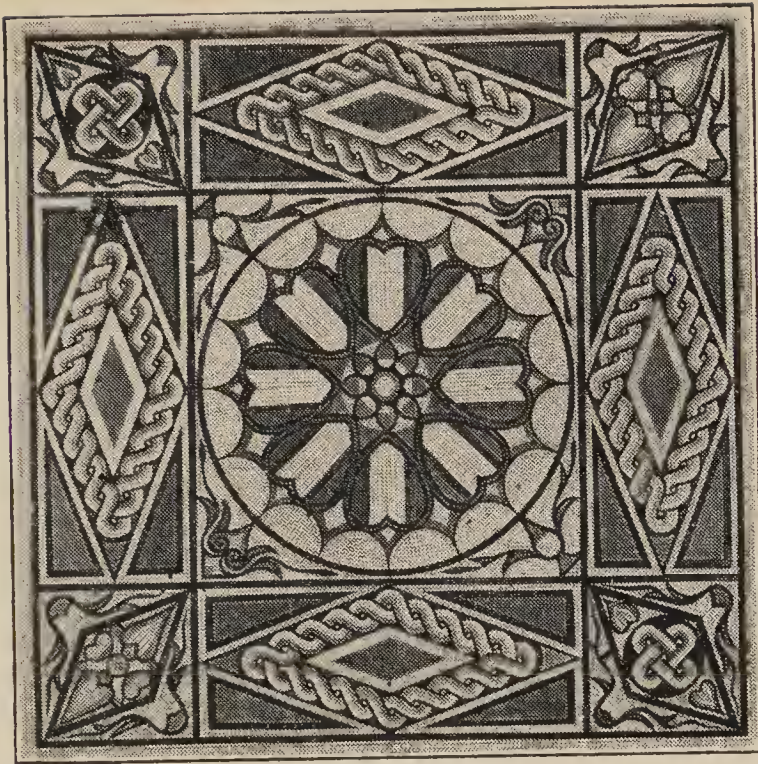
The chief living-rooms of these country-houses, even of quite unpretentious ones, were heated by hypocausts and had ornamental mosaic floors. These mosaics ran in a limited series of conventional patterns, and they are not works of high art ; they

take the place of the modern carpet, and are artistically about on a level with it and with our wall-papers. There is not the least reason to suppose that such tessellated floors were made by foreign workmen; the designs were so stereotyped that any duly qualified British master builder could have produced one that would pass muster; and the same is true of the wall-paintings which were universally required by the ordinary standards of comfort. As for warmth, the hypocaust was probably as efficient as any modern central-heating plant.

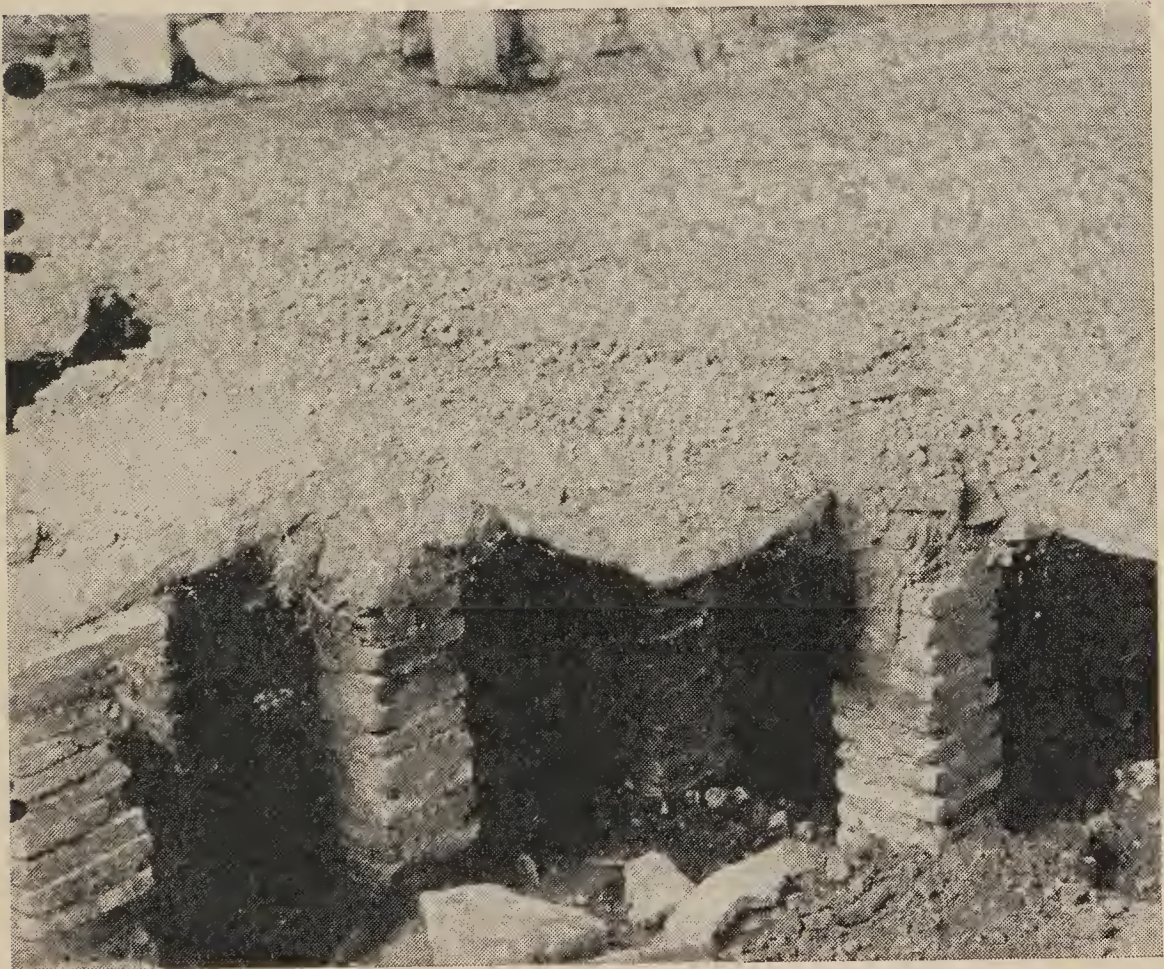


Courtyard house, Bignor

Every 'villa' of any size and any claim to gentility had its suite of baths; sometimes more than one suite. This consisted of a range of rooms heated in varying degrees, hot and cold baths, dressing-rooms, and stoke-hole. As every town had its public baths and every garrison had a bath-house attached to its fort, so every gentleman had his private baths. In this, as in the general standard of the size and comfort of country-houses, their choice of situation for convenience and for pleasantness of appearance and outlook, the number, size, and habitability of their rooms, and in short the qualities which make up a comfortable and handsome



TESSELLATED FLOOR at Castor



THE HYPOCAUST, Northleigh villa, Oxon.

country-seat, the better ' villas ' of the Romanized British gentry were far in advance of anything that the Middle Ages could show, and were equal to the finest Elizabethan and Jacobean mansions in everything but their baths, in which they immeasurably outstripped not only them but all their successors down to the present day; for the bath-room of a modern gentleman's house is as inferior in comfort and efficiency to the baths of an Ancient Briton in A.D. 300 as his roads and carts were inferior to our railways.

Of course there were many differences between the largest villas and the smallest, and not all the buildings which go by that name were the stately homes of British landed gentlemen. Some were small and simple farm-houses; some were the residences of men who managed Imperial demesnes, for there were certainly many of these in Britain as elsewhere. Such demesnes were run by a manager and farmed by *coloni*, serfs; and the mines of Britain—e. g. in the Mendips, in Derbyshire, and later in Cornwall—were worked in the same way, as Imperial property.

If even the smallest independent farm-houses of the period were Celtic in type with developments and improvements learnt from Rome, the same is true of the villages in which the peasants and labourers lived. It has sometimes been thought that Roman fashions were a veneer which affected the wealthier classes of the British population only; but this is not wholly true. The poorest peasants showed such traces of Romanization as their poverty allowed. In the huts of native villages in the south of England rude hypocausts, evidently modelled on the ordinary Roman pattern, and painted stucco wall-decorations derived from the same source have been found; and if these are rather unusual, that is only because such structural and decorative refinements were beyond the purse of most peasants. What they all could do and did was to adopt Roman pots and other household utensils. The native Celtic pottery of pre-Roman types disappears even



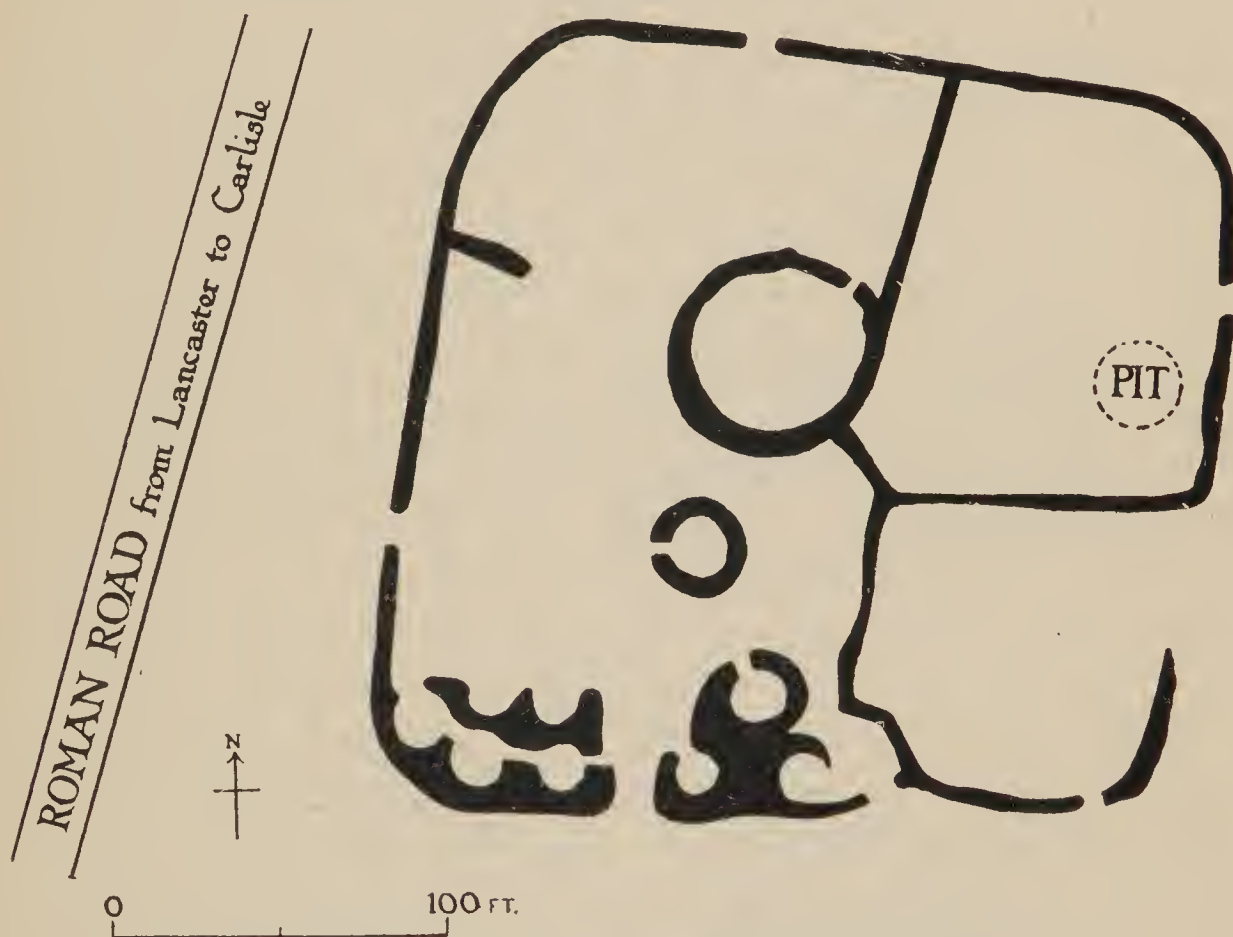
CHESTERS : View in the Bath-house

from the rudest and remotest village sites, and its place is taken by 'Samian' ware—the bright red glazed fabric made in Gaul and used as a higher-class pottery all over the Empire—and by wares of a rougher type identical with those used by the rich and by the army for cooking and so forth. In the kinds of pottery used there is no distinction whatever between rich and poor, Roman and Briton, country and town, or hut and villa. Indeed, this adoption of Roman fashions in pottery spread outside the limits of the Empire; and in Scottish hill forts beyond the frontier Samian and other Roman wares are frequently found.

Even in the planning of native villages, far beyond the limits of the higher Romano-British civilization, Roman influences strangely affected British fashions. As an example of this it is interesting to study the plan of a British village built beside the Roman road which crosses Shap Fells almost on the line of the London and North-Western Railway. Here, high on the moors of Westmorland, far from towns and civilization, was a village rude enough in building and furniture, but in plan quite clearly meant to recall the rectangular design of a little Roman fort, with a gate centrally placed in one side, a single large building in the middle, and other smaller dwellings in the remaining space. No one who compares the plan of the British settlement at Ewe Close with the straggling irregular plans of earlier British villages can fail to see that its builders were trying to be like the Romans, and translating into their own spiraliform Celtic idiom a design borrowed from the forts of the occupying army, in whose ranks their own relatives were doubtless serving.

The conclusions of this chapter are easily summarized. The town and country life of Roman Britain shows no cleavage between Roman and Briton. British civilization was not wiped out to give place to Roman, nor did it subsist side by side with the imported culture. In London alone we come near to finding an imported and purely Roman culture, a culture devoid of distinctively

British traits and one which might have been found in other provinces of the Empire; for London was a cosmopolitan town and had comparatively few roots struck into British soil. But as soon as we get outside London we find a quite individual civilization which is not British and not Roman but Romano-British: a



Plan of British village at Ewe Close, Westmorland

compound of elements which can in many cases be separated by analysis, but were never separate in fact. This Romano-British civilization was not an urban civilization; its most characteristic towns were more like collections of country-houses than real towns, and to see its most characteristic expression we must look at the life of the country districts. Here the evidence seems to point towards a social order of Celtic pattern, pre-Roman, acquiring a Roman colouring; houses of Celtic type acquiring new characteristics from Roman building-construction,

Roman art, and Roman manners, but never losing their Celtic stamp or becoming Romano-cosmopolitan instead of Romano-British. This is true of the great house and the small; the interpenetration of a Celtic substratum and a Roman elaboration of it extended through all strata of the population. This, perhaps, was the secret of the peace and prosperity that reigned in the riper periods of the Roman rule. There was no division between a Romanized upper class and a peasantry or town proletariat that clung stubbornly to its Celtic traditions; the two traditions blended more or less harmoniously in all classes of the people, and all classes derived benefit from the blend. It has been suggested that the invasions of the Picts and Scots were reinforced by peasant risings in the civilized parts of Britain; but this conjecture is based on assuming that the British peasant would be likely to make common cause with the invaders for the sake of their untainted Celticism rather than stand by his Romanized neighbour up at the great house. That is improbable to the verge of impossibility. The Brythonic Celt who had learnt to build a hypocaust in his cottage and to use Samian ware, warlike though he was, could hardly be expected to see an ally in a naked Goidelic raider whose very language was less intelligible to him than the Latin of which he had learnt a smattering, and who was not likely to discriminate between him and his slightly more Romanized landlord.

Art and Language

IN the preceding chapter we found evidences of the existence of a Romano-British civilization which was neither merely provincial nor merely cosmopolitan, neither Celtic nor Roman simply,



LATE CELTIC POTTERY

but a fusion of the two. In this chapter and the next we shall trace the same thing in art, language, and religion.

The art of which we have most relics is pottery, and it is convenient therefore to begin with this. Pottery was skilfully made in Britain long before the Romans came; and the pre-Roman British or so-called Late Celtic civilization had developed a style

of its own with certain very well-marked characteristics. The accompanying illustrations will show three points which are especially worth noticing. First, as to shape, the prevalence of jars with a bulging body, a constricted neck, and an outward-turned lip. Second, as to decoration, the frequency of straight parallel lines arranged in lattice-work or other patterns, drawn upon the soft clay with a blunt instrument. Third, another decorative feature often combined with the last-named, an almost universal use of curvilinear designs of a formal kind, circles, spirals, festoon-shaped swags, all drawn with very strong feeling for graceful swinging curves. When combined with such curved designs, the straight-line motive is often used as a kind of 'shading' to diversify the ground of the pattern and make one part stand out from the rest. These three features are characteristic of Late Celtic pottery.

Now let us turn to the types of pottery which the invading Romans brought with them. They fall into two classes, 'Samian' and 'coarse pottery'. Samian ware—the name rests on a confusion of this pottery with a kind of ware which, ancient writers tell us, was made at the Greek island of Samos; but other names which are sometimes used are less convenient and not really more accurate—is a finely finished product, bright red in colour and highly glazed, which was being made especially in the second century at factories in the south of France. The industry began at Arezzo in Tuscany, but the southern Gauls soon took it up, and later on some inferior stuff was turned out in the north-east of France, in Alsace and Lorraine; but the chief factories were in the Auvergne district, near Vichy and Clermont-Ferrand. As with so many industries, its progress was a deterioration. The earliest Aretine wares were ornamented in relief with beautifully executed designs, human figures, animals, birds, and floral patterns in the purest classical style; in the hands of the South Gaulish imitators a good deal of this delicacy and severity was lost, and the manu-

facture tended to become a mere sprinkling of ready-made units of design, stamped from moulds, over the surface of the bowl. In the north-eastern factories a further deterioration took place, and the relief designs became sometimes excessively clumsy and ill-modelled.

The coarse pottery consisted largely of jars not unlike the Late



Group of SAMIAN POTTERY

Celtic jars in general shape, but without ornament, and often thinner and harder in fabric and having a distinctively shaped lip, set on at a sharp angle to the shoulder of the vessel. Without going into subtle details of difference we can say that to an experienced eye there is no difficulty in distinguishing Roman coarse pottery of about A. D. 40 from Celtic coarse pottery of the same period.

When the Romans first came to Britain we find their armies using these imported kinds of pottery. The wares used in Agricola's garrison forts even forty years after the original invasion are of the same kind; they are Roman and not British. But early in the second century a great revolution took place in this respect.

About A. D. 130 we find the older Roman coarse wares disappearing and their place taken by a new style, which is in some ways like the Roman wares, but in others resembles Late Celtic ware much more closely than Roman. Three features are especially striking; the style of fabric (that is, the kind of clay used, the way it is mixed, the thickness of the wares, and the finish of their surface and the character of the firing) is Late Celtic and not Roman; the



CASTOR POTTERY

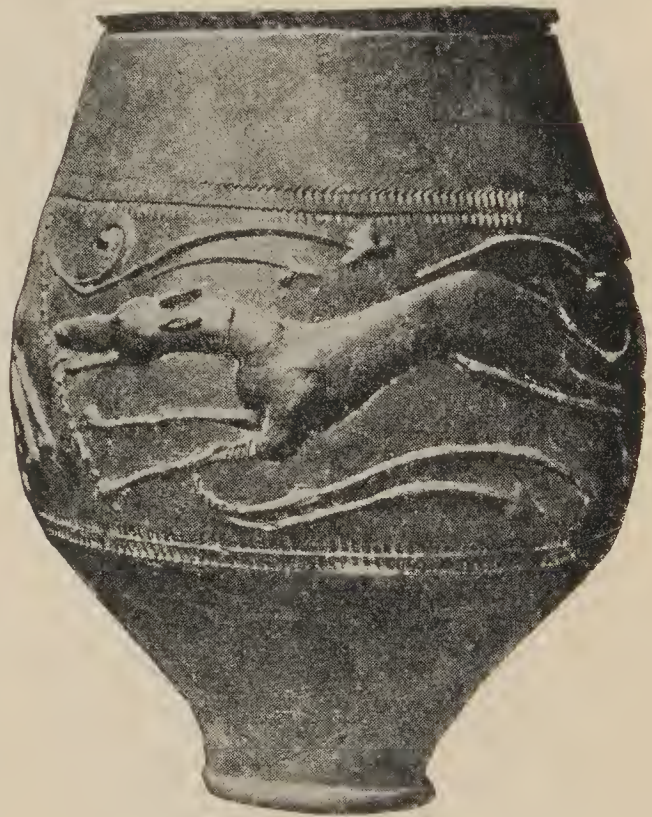
characteristic sharp-angled lip of Roman coarse ware is replaced by the more open curve of the Late Celtic lip; and a lattice-work and curvilinear style of ornament comes in, executed with a blunt tool. All these features are normal in the coarse wares of Romano-British sites all through the late second and third century; and even in the fourth century, when new types came in, they were types whose affinities were Celtic. Indeed, expert archaeologists have been known to mistake fragments of late

Romano-British coarse ware for pre-Roman Late Celtic. This change from Roman types of coarse pottery to a new type of combined Roman and Celtic character did not only take place among the poor or among people out of the way of trade. We find it with perfect definiteness exactly where it is most surprising to find it, in the army. The forts built by Agricola about 80 contain only potsherds of the Roman type; those built by Antoninus Pius about 140 contain only those of the new Romano-Celtic type; and those built by Hadrian about 120 contain, in

their earliest deposits, evidence of the transition actually in progress.

The imported Samian ware did not die out ; it continued to be imported in large quantities, providing incidentally a remarkable instance of a trade in a bulky and brittle commodity which the Romans carried on apparently without any difficulty. But it provoked the British manufacturer to compete and to put on the market a style of pottery which

resembled it in having ornament in relief and a highly glazed surface. Thus was produced what is known as Castor ware. It was made at and near Castor (Durobrivae) in Northamptonshire, and the manufacture was carried on very extensively, to judge by the quantities of ware found in almost all Romano-British sites. It was not confined to Britain—in this, as in most things, the Celt of South Britain and the Celt of North Gaul were brothers and de-



CASTOR POTTERY

veloped along the same lines—but it is none the less characteristically Romano-British. If now we examine a mass of Castor ware and compare it with a mass of decorated Samian we find that the patterns on Castor are obviously derived from those on Samian. There are the same animal groups, especially hunting scenes ; the same floral scrolls ; and (rarely, because the human figure demands a specialized artistic training) the same human figures. The ornament is arranged in the same way round the body of the vessel, leaving the top and bottom

blank. These resemblances leave no doubt as to the origin of Castor decoration. But the differences between Castor and Samian are equally striking. The shapes of Castor vases recall not classical but Late Celtic models. The ornament is executed not by stamping from dies but in 'barbotine' or wet clay squeezed



Late Celtic Metal-work : mirror-back from
Desborough, Northants

through a funnel like the patterns on an iced cake, suggesting that though the Castor potters had seen Samian ware they had not seen Samian potters working, and invented their own means of imitating them. And finally, the style of the decoration, in its curvilinear sweeping lines and its energetic feeling, is purely Celtic. It recalls the decoration on pre-Roman vases much more than the stiff and frigid grouping of the true Samian ornament. It has been said that classical art represents repose and modern art movement ; if

that is so, Samian ware is classical and Castor ware modern.

Thus Roman and Celtic styles in pottery fuse into one another and bring out wholly new styles derived from both alike, as two chemical compounds join and produce two new compounds, each drawing something from both the originals. The Celtic incised lattice-work, curved lines, fabric, and shape unite with the Roman relief-technique, glaze, and distinction between superior (Samian)

and inferior (coarse) ware, and produce two styles of Romano-British pottery; Castor, with its glaze and relief ornament, its Celtic shapes and its curvilinear design, and coarse ware with incised lattice-ornament and shapes intermediate between Late Celtic and Roman. A more perfect fusion of two cultures can hardly be imagined.

The Britons were skilful and artistic metal-workers, and in this craft something of the same kind can be detected. We can distinguish easily enough between Late Celtic and Roman fashions in such things as brooches; and on the whole the result of the Roman conquest was to introduce Roman fashions and spread them over the greater part of Britain. But the Celtic patterns did not altogether die out. Some of the brooches used in Roman Britain were manufactured abroad; but many were made in the country, and in these we can often detect Late Celtic



Dragon Fibulae

characteristics, especially the use of enamel and of spiral and curvilinear ornament. Indeed, certain patterns of brooch are peculiarly Romano-British, and though well enough known in this country are seldom or never found out of it. Two types of this kind may be specially quoted. One is the 'Brough' type, which is distinguished from others of the 'harp-shaped' class by having an ornamental knob in the middle of the bow, and seems generally to have been worn in pairs, connected by a chain attached to a ring in the head of the brooch. Such a pair were found together, though

their chain was missing, in the British hill-fort of Traprain Law in Haddingtonshire, a site which is especially remarkable as a case of Roman influences affecting a native community not actually under Roman rule. These brooches are believed to have been manufactured at or near Brough-under-Stainmore in Westmorland and are especially found in the north of Britain.¹ The other peculiarly Celtic type is the 'dragon' brooch, an S-shaped object representing a conventionalized writhing dragon, often magnificently inlaid with enamel and recalling in its vigorous design and curvilinear motives all the essential qualities of Late Celtic art. Thus the native Celtic tradition of metal-work continued under Roman rule to flourish and to produce types which were not merely Roman but recognizably Celtic.

But the artistic evidence is most remarkable when we come to the case of sculpture. Roman sculpture is not so well known as it deserves to be; much of it is like enough to an imitation of Greek work to encourage students in dismissing it as merely derivative, an inferior imitation of Greek art and not worthy of independent study. But Roman sculpture has very decided qualities of its own; and if we read the Latin poets in spite of the existence of the Greeks, we have no reason for refusing an equal attention to Roman plastic art. The Romans struck out at least two new lines in sculpture, namely naturalistic ornament—floral scrolls, birds, and animals—and portraiture; the former quite unknown to the Greeks, the latter never by them developed beyond a very elementary stage, and both brought by the Romans to a high pitch of perfection. The provincial sculpture of the Roman Empire was therefore not an imitation of an imitation; it was the free reflection in the various provincial temperaments of an original and by no means contemptible artistic impulse. Historians often speak of the provincial life of the Roman Empire as if its civilization was a stagnant and uniform flood that swamped every vestige

¹ A specimen from Newstead is figured on the title-page.

of racial individuality in the various provinces and presented a face everywhere the same, everywhere the dead level of a cosmopolitan mediocrity. That this view is profoundly false in the case of Britain we have already seen ; and any one who wishes to convince himself of its falsehood as applied to the Empire in general need only examine photographs of a representative series of provincial sculptures ; that is, if he has an eye for sculpture, which perhaps some historians have not.



Relief from the ALTAR OF PEACE

Here we can only give a few examples to illustrate the point. First an example of pure Italian work, a fragment from the 'Ara Pacis Augustae', the great work which celebrated the birth of the Empire and the end of the long and terrible civil wars ; a work inspired by the purest and most honourable patriotism, that of a nation which felt its mission to be one not of self-glorification or dominion, but of putting an end to war and violence and initiating the reign of peace. In that mood Virgil sang of the new

Empire in verses which mediaeval readers could only interpret as a prophecy of the reign of Christ; and the calm and sweet music of the Virgilian hexameter is pitched in the same key and develops the same motive as the tender yet dignified sculptures of the Altar of Peace. Here, in a sense, the whole art of the Roman Empire takes its rise, and the note is one that Greece never sounded.

From the Ara Pacis, with its floral and animal details, its mythological groups and its sacred processions, much of the Roman provincial sculpture is evidently derived, but we cannot here trace the derivation or even choose examples definitely illustrating it; we are in search of something different, namely the provincial colouring which the tradition of sculpture received when it left Italy. Our second example will be a statue from Gaul. This is Roman enough; Gaul was a highly Romanized and highly civilized province. But there is a quality in it which is quite unlike the Ara Pacis or other purely Italian works. The feeling in the lines of the drapery is something new; and it is not merely new but Gaulish, as any one can see who recalls the figure-sculptures that adorn the French cathedrals. The tradition of a Gaulish school of sculpture does not, of course, run unbroken from Roman days to the eleventh century; but some native Gaulish way of handling stone awoke to life under Roman tuition, and awoke once more in the mediaeval Frenchmen who carved the stones of Chartres.

An even more obvious modification of the original Roman style is seen in the Trophy of Trajan at Adamklissi in the plains of the Dobruja. Here, as often in Roman work, we get the motive of a mass of people, half crowd and half procession; but one has only to look at the people's faces to see how far we have travelled from Italy. No Italian-born sculptor imagined these men with flat, spade-like faces and features looking almost as if they had been incised on the slab with a V-tool. Western European sculpture has never produced anything the least like it; but anybody who has followed the fashions in art in the last few years will



ROMANO-GAULISH SCULPTURE (SENS)

say, when he is shown a bit of detail from Adamklissi, ‘ Meštrović, of course ! ’ So clearly has the art of the upper Balkan region preserved or reasserted the same idiom from A. D. 100 to the present day.

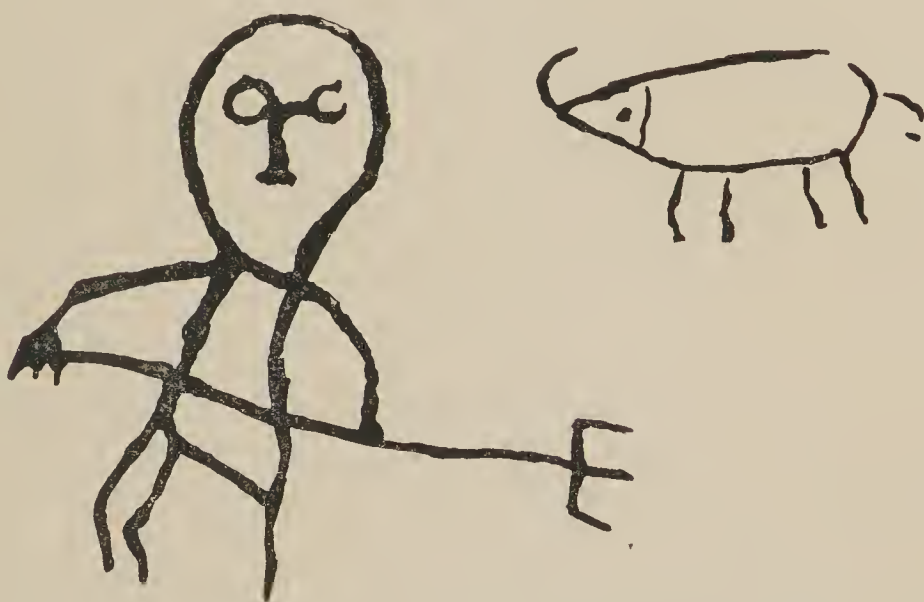
Other provinces would show a no less decided individuality ; in each we should find Roman motives refracted through a medium



Sculptures from the Trophy of Trajan at Adamklissi

with a very definite character of its own. But it is time we turned to Britain. Here, as elsewhere, we find a good deal of imported sculpture, purely Italian in character ; this mostly in London, and we have already illustrated an example of it. We also find a good deal of work executed on the spot but showing no trace of anything that we can call British ; work that might quite well have been imported, and may have been done by foreign or foreign-trained artists. This is especially found in connexion with the

legions; a good example is the fine tombstone of a centurion at Colchester. There is also a large class of works that are so rude and unskilful that we should analyse them in vain for expressions of this or that racial character, for they hardly express anything at all. But there is a fourth class of work which has character and is done with skill and decision, which knows what it wants and gets it, and yet is very far removed from the classical art of the Italian school—no less decisively removed than Adamklissi itself.



Sporting or Gladiatorial Scene. Pigsticking, amateur sculpture (Chesters)

It expresses something which is not Roman, and this something we can identify as British.

In the first place we shall glance at the decoration of the temple of Sul at Bath. Many fragments of this temple remain, including a finely designed frieze, part of the dedicatory inscription, and some fluted pilasters; but the most remarkable relic is the central portion of a pediment or gable-end, ornamented with a great roundel, meant no doubt to represent a shield, bearing on its centre a colossal Gorgon head, the attribute of Minerva, with whom a Romanizing religion identified the local goddess. This Gorgon head is, so far, classical; and it is classical, too, in its snaky hair and terrifying appearance. But beyond this the style and

feeling of it are as unclassical as anything could well be. The conventional Gorgon head is female ; this has a beard and moustaches all tangled up in its snaky locks, and the whole composition is alive with a fierce vigour, a ferocious violence, which no classical art ever attempted to express. Classical artists knew that a Gorgon head ought to terrify ; but this is the only one in existence that does it. Hidden away as it now is in a dark basement, its power is gone ; but imagine it blazing with colour in the Late Celtic style and thrown into light and shade by the sun, and you can guess its effect. Some antiquaries have fallen into the trap of thinking that because the Bath Gorgon is fierce and violent in expression, therefore it is the work of a barbarian artist and expresses the uncivilized character of the Roman Briton's mind. That is an elementary mistake. The artistic representation of fear or anger is beyond the power of a terrified or angry man ; a passion cannot be expressed till it has been mastered. The Bath sculptor was a man of high education, deeply versed in the technique of his art and coolly skilful in the execution of it. Only a person ignorant of the very rudiments of artistic work could fail to see that. It is barbaric for the same reason that Caliban is barbaric—because its creator was a highly skilled artist and wanted to make it barbaric, and succeeded. What an artist will observe about the Bath Gorgon is not only its fierceness, but something much more important, its decorative power. The filling of a space richly with ornament that never looks flat or thin is a thing that the Greeks and Romans may not have aimed at doing ; but whether they aimed at doing it or not, they did not do it. The Parthenon sculptures and the Ara Pacis are dignified and beautiful, but they are not decorative ; they are not the work of men whose first object is to fill a space in a satisfying manner. Their purpose rather is to tell a story. But all Celtic art and all Anglo-Saxon art and all Gothic art is decorative ; and that is true of all the art that is characteristically Romano-British.

Greatly inferior in skill and dignity, more than half-way in fact from the sublime to the ridiculous, but yet showing the same qualities at bottom, the Corbridge Lion may next be considered.



BEARDED GORGON, BATH

This really is barbaric, inasmuch as it hardly commands the skill to carry out its intention; yet the skill is sufficient to show that the intention is parallel to that of the Bath sculptor both in the vigour and fierceness of the design and in the obviously decorative

character of the composition. Primarily the sculptor wanted to decorate a fountain; secondarily he wanted to carry out an example of the common classical motive of a lion devouring a stag. He did not know much about lions, but he knew they were fierce, and so he made it fierce.

A third example may be taken from the wide range of sepulchral



THE CORBRIDGE LION

carvings. Here, in the small and remote border-town of Carlisle, we have a common motive of Roman sculpture illustrated; a lady seated beneath an arched canopy. But the way in which the lady's figure and dress, the fluted circular fan she carries, and the child at her knee fall into a rich and full decorative harmony is not classical. It is another case of the Celtic decorative faculty.

Finally we turn to a purely formal religious sculpture; a work as stereotyped as a modern crucifix or figure of the Virgin. It is



TOMBSTONE OF A ROMANO-BRITISH LADY (CARLISLE)

a group of the three Mother-goddesses, of whom we shall have more to say in the next chapter. They are represented sitting side by side, holding baskets of corn, apples, grapes or the like, emblems of fertility. Such groups are very common in Britain and on the Continent, and their production was part of a sculptor's regular routine work. But in this group from Cirencester there are un-



Bas-Relief of Deae Matres, Cirencester

usual features, all of which can be covered by saying that the sculptor felt the neglected decorative possibilities of such a group and tried to bring them out in a way that had, perhaps, not been done before. Generally the goddesses are simply sitting three in a row, the dullest possible way of grouping them; here they are diversified in height, head-dress, and attitude in such a way as to bring the composition together into a harmonious whole,

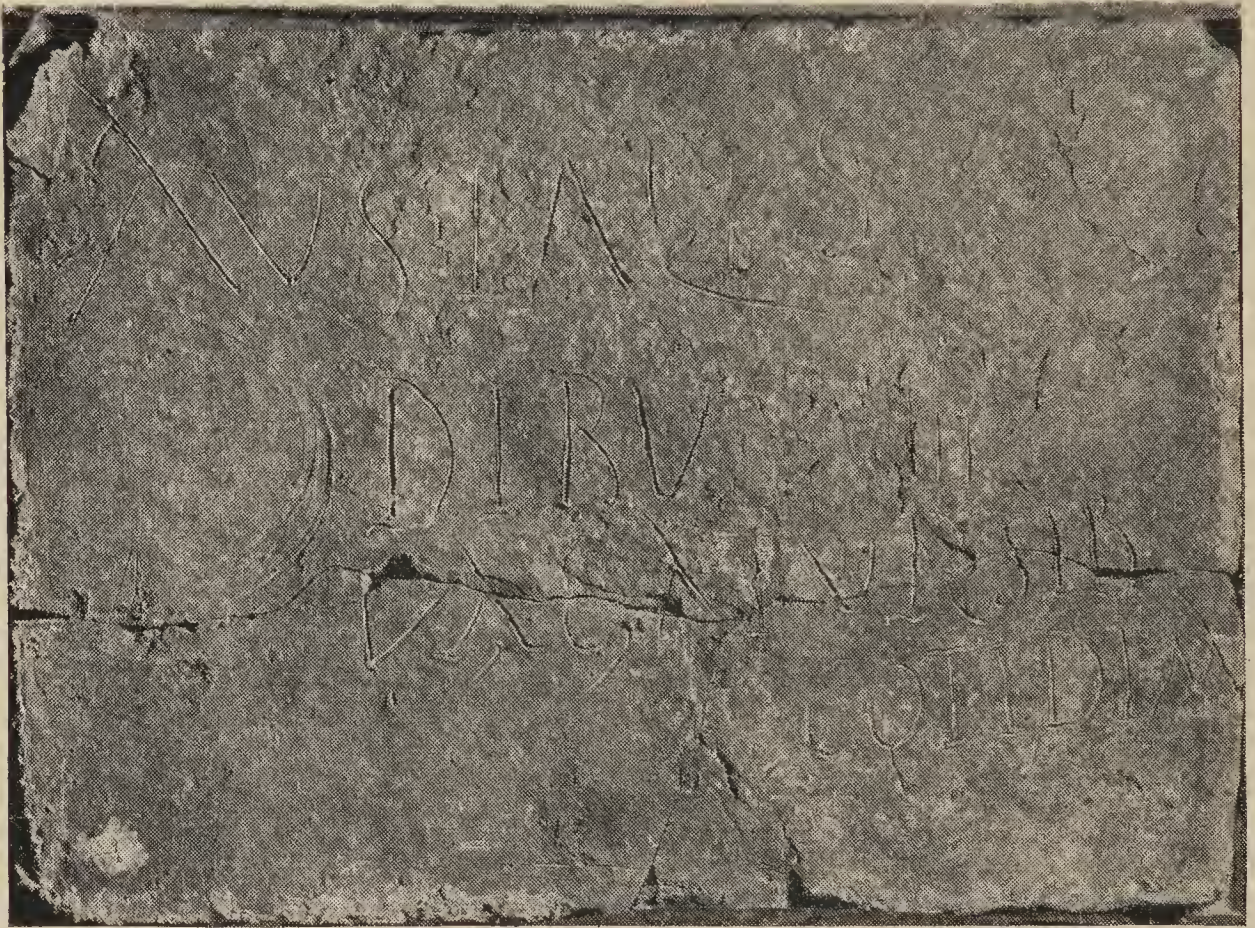
and put under a gable-topped canopy so as to accentuate their difference of stature.

Only lack of space prevents our quoting other examples; for there are plenty of works showing the same general character. What this character is cannot be doubtful, for the same qualities appear in the sculptures which we have already seen, on Castor ware, and in the dragon-brooches. Roman Britain possessed a highly developed art, not on a level with other provinces in the actual bulk of good work produced, but in quality remarkable. This art

was classical in its motives and often in its technique; but its spirit was always more British than Roman. And since the word 'spirit' may seem vague we must add that its British character appeared in a development and expansion of that same decorative impulse which marked the pottery and metal-work of the Late Celtic period. The Roman Briton had behind him a groundwork of exhaustive training in the decorative manipulation of pure lines and masses, and the classical influence grafted upon this stock produced something quite individual and unique—Romano-British art.

Of literature and language there is less to say. Most provinces contributed something of importance to Latin literature; indeed, the literature of the Empire is for the most part not Italian but provincial. But Britain gave the Empire no great poet or prose writer whose name is known to us. This is one of the many indications that the civilization of Britain, high as it was, did not attain the same height as that of Gaul or Spain or Africa. As to language, the native Welsh of the country must have continued in use, but it was never written down. In Gaul we have a few Celtic inscriptions, in Britain none that have been yet recognized as such. When a Roman Briton wanted to write he wrote in Latin. This implies that he was bilingual; and we are rather apt to think that bilingualism is a feat requiring a very high education and a good deal of initial 'gift for languages'. But that is a mistake. There are and always have been plenty of countries where bilingualism was universal, and if you start learning languages early enough it seems to be no harder to learn two than one. Latin was the language of command in the army, the language of the courts, the language of polite society, the language of all official business, and the language of every kind of document; and there is a large body of evidence to show that knowledge of it was not confined to officials and soldiers and the 'upper classes'. This evidence consists of scratchings on pottery, scrawls on tiles and so forth,

done obviously by servants and workmen. They are definite enough in character and large enough in bulk to prove that the great bulk of the population, at least in the towns, not only spoke Latin but even wrote and read it. That, indeed, is what one would expect from the general state of education in the Roman Empire. The Romans were no more ignorant of education than of hot and cold water-pipes. How we are to square these facts with our belief in progress and in our own superiority to all our predecessors is another question ; but there the facts are.



TILE WITH GRAFFITO

Austalis dibus xiii (?) vagatur sib(i) cotidim. 'Augustalis goes off on his own every day for a fortnight.'

Religion

THE fusion of native and imported elements into a complex Romano-British culture was specially facilitated in religion by finding what may be called a ready-made machinery for its expression. The Romans were not now making a first experiment in such fusions; they had themselves absorbed much both from the Greeks and from Oriental races, and had thus built up a complex culture of their own long before they invaded Britain. An important weapon in this process was the identification of Roman gods and goddesses with Greek: Jupiter with Zeus, Venus with Aphrodite, Minerva with Athene, and so forth. This process of identification had ended by producing a Graeco-Roman religion in many ways extremely unlike the old Roman cults and beliefs which it largely superseded. And the principle of identifying the gods of one race with those of another is a powerful instrument in the fusion of two different cultures.

The Romans were thus quite ready to identify their own gods with those of the Britons, and the result is that a very great part of Romano-British religion consists in the worship of double-named gods and goddesses, having a Roman name followed by an equivalent or supposedly equivalent Celtic one. We have already seen that Sul at Bath was identified with Minerva; and the Bath Gorgon expresses a double identification, for Minerva herself only acquired the gorgon shield through her identification with the Greek Athene. Elsewhere we find Minerva identified with another water-goddess, Coventina of the sacred spring at Carrawburgh on Hadrian's Wall. In the same way Apollo was identified with Maponus, a youthful Celtic sun-god whose name, Mabon in Welsh, means 'child', and with Grannus, the tutelary god of the

medicinal springs at Aix-la-Chapelle. But the god most often identified with local deities was Mars. Him we find bearing all sorts of Celtic names; Toutates, Rigisamus, Loucetius, Ocelus, Corotiacus, Cocidius, Barrex, Belatucader. Many of these names occur also by themselves; thus the two commonest, Belatucader and Cocidius, occur almost equally often as complete names and in conjunction with Mars. These Celtic words are thus not mere epithets qualifying a deity worshipped under a special aspect, like Jupiter Stator or Fortuna Redux or Our Lady of Loretto. They are more than that; they are the names of real individual gods who were identified with a Roman god. Their worshippers must sometimes have been puzzled by the relation between Mars Cocidius and Mars Belatucader, because in so far as each was Mars they were clearly the same, but in so far as one was Cocidius (the god, perhaps, of the river Coquet) and the other Belatucader they were quite different. We can trace such a problem and a bold attempt to solve it in an inscription to 'Mars Lenus or Ocelus', recording an effort at a yet further identification of Lenus, a deity of the Moselle valley, with the British Ocelus, by a foreigner settled in Britain.

A similar conflation of Roman and Celtic ideas is afforded by the way in which local deities are as it were adopted into the Roman pantheon by the conferring upon them of such a title as 'nymph'. This happened in the case of Brigantia, the goddess of the country of the Brigantes, to whom we find a dedication 'To the Nymph Brigantia'. Elsewhere she dispenses with the title, and an altar in the Tyne valley is dedicated *caelesti Brigantiae*, which might be literally translated 'in honour of heavenly Yorkshire'. Another method of fitting a local cult into the categories of Roman religion was to worship the 'Genius' of a place; dedications 'to the Genius of this place' are quite common.

Even where deities with purely Celtic names are worshipped, as often happens, the style of their cult is largely Roman. Some


British temples are Roman in design, others appear to represent a native pattern of building; but the inscribed altars and other relics show that the worshippers, even if they did not Romanize their gods, were themselves Romanized in their fashions of worship. Such was the case with the Mother Goddesses, the *Deae Matres*, whose cult, originally Celtic rather than Roman, was strong in many parts of Gaul and even in Italy itself, and may have reached Britain from abroad rather than grown up here as one of the indigenous worships. The cult of the Mothers is a curious example of the way in which a fact which affects millions of men and women may never find its way into literature. Few religions were more widespread in the Roman Empire; but there is no mention of it by any writer. Partly this is because it was one of those things which affected Rome less than the provinces, for our ancient historians know hardly anything of provincial life; partly it is no doubt a mere accident, but it is significant that such accidents can happen. The Mothers are often given titles that indicate the wideness with which their worship was diffused; they are called the 'African, Italian, and Gaulish Mothers', the 'Italian, German, Gaulish, and British Mothers', the 'Mothers of all nations', the 'Mothers from overseas', and so forth; sometimes a worshipper dedicates an altar to 'his own Mothers', meaning to distinguish the Mothers of local religion in his own home from those of other parts; and once an attempt is made to identify this Celtic female triad with a female triad of classical religion, in an inscription *Matribus Parcis*, 'To the Mother Fates'.

The only cases in which imported religions flourished much without undergoing confusion or identification with local cults were two: first, in the official worship of the army, and secondly, in the religions imported from the intolerant East. Even at Rome in the days of the Republic the Oriental worship of Isis or Cybele had never been identified with Roman cults, as was that

of the Greek gods : and in the same way the eastern religions which enjoyed such popularity in the Empire kept themselves to themselves, and did not rub shoulders with the cults they found rooted in the soil. One of these was the worship of Jupiter Dolichenus. Jupiter seems never to have been identified with a local British god ; but in the East he had condescended to a union with the tutelary god of Doliche on the Upper Euphrates, and thenceforth Jupiter Dolichenus became one of the most popular deities of the Empire, especially in the army, and quite a fair proportion of the British altars to Jupiter are dedicated to him. A much more important Eastern cult was Mithraism. This, like the last-named, was especially a military religion ; it flourished on the Wall and in the legions, but in the purely civil districts it was little practised. It was a development of the ancient Persian sun-worship, and its deity was addressed as the Invincible Sun-god Mithras. The strong individuality of Mithraism coloured everything it touched. It had its own type of temple, not a building raised on a massive plinth, but an underground cave reached by a winding passage. It had its own elaborate symbolism, centring round the carved figure of Mithras himself, in tunic, trousers, and peaked cap, slaying the Bull, attended by the Dog and Scorpion, supported by torch-bearers, and framed by the signs of the Zodiac. Its worshippers were more than a congregation, they were a community enrolled according to prescribed forms and marshalled in grades with mysterious titles. Such a religion appealed powerfully to minds weary of an easy-going polytheism, and Mithraism seemed at one time to be an equal competitor with the Christianity which in some ways it resembled.

There were other imported cults from nearer home which never fused with the native British religion, but these were of much narrower importance. The Germanic tribes from whom various irregular cohorts were raised brought with them to

Britain a number of gods whose worship did not spread beyond the precincts of a fort or two. Among these were Mars Thincsus, Mars identified with the German Tiu and attended by the 'Two Alaisiagae, Beda and Fimmilena'¹; the 'Unseni Fersomari'; the goddess Garmangabis; and others, most of them only known from a single dedication. Only one of these Teutonic cults spread, and that through a curious misunderstanding. The Tungrian garrison of Housesteads, and other Teutonic regiments on the Wall, sometimes dedicated altars *Deo Huitri* or *Vheteri* or



MATRIB PARC PRO SALV
SANCTIAE GEMINAE

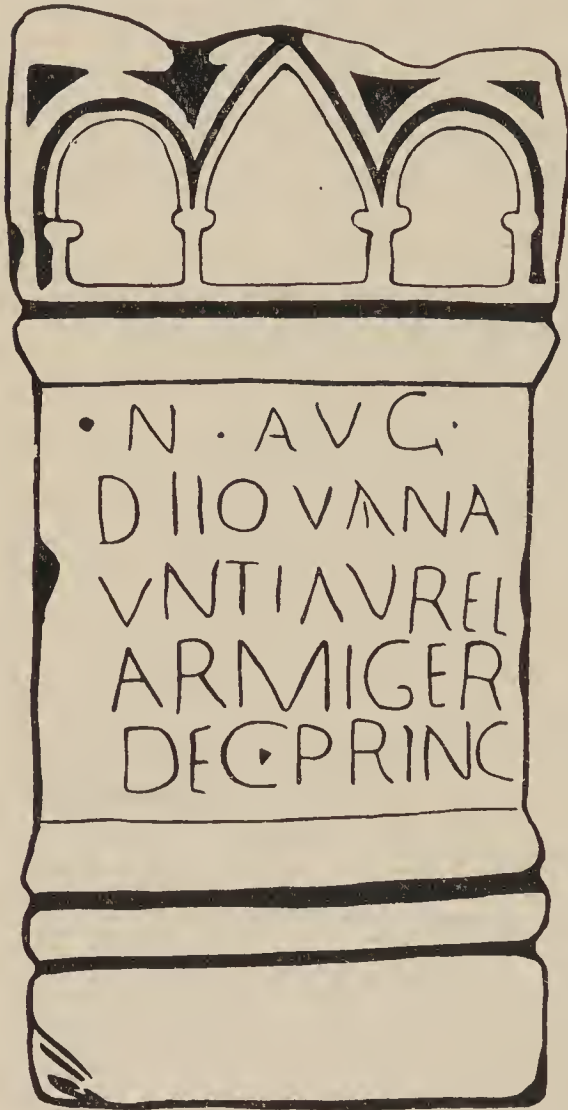
Dedication to the Mother Fates, for the welfare of Sanctia Gemina (⅙)

Hueteri; implying a Germanic god Hueter or some such name, though philologists find difficulties in the word. Their neighbours seem to have thought that they were trying in their illiterate way to write *Deo veteri*, 'To the Old God,' which struck them as a reasonable enough style of dedication; and the Old God, or Old Gods, became in consequence rather fashionable for a time in Northumberland. Some antiquaries have seen in the fashion a protest of expiring paganism in the age when Christianity was conquering the Empire, and that is not altogether impossible, but primarily the dedication seems to have been a confusion between a Teutonic name and a Latin adjective.

There was also the official Imperial religion, the worship of the

¹ Since this was written a rival pair of Alaisiagae, Baudihillia and Friagabis, has been discovered.

strictly Roman gods without any contamination of Celtic cults, of Rome, of the deity of the Emperor, and of the standards and genius of the regiment. This is, on the whole, as purely Roman as the legionary tombstone at Colchester, and for the same reason.



Altar combining native and official cults ('to the Deity of the Emperor and the god Vanauns, by Aurelius Armiger, senior decurion')

But the same men who on church parade, so to speak, offered incense to the Emperor and the Genius of the Fort, would go straight off afterwards to a Mithraic mystery or a private sacrifice to Cocidius or Viradecthis. The official religion did not strike deep into the heart even of the army, and the rest of the population it hardly touched. There are only three or four British dedications to Rome; one to the Fortune of the Roman People; one to 'the god Romulus'. Altars to the deity of the Emperor are commoner, especially in such a form as 'to Jupiter greatest and best and the deity of the emperor'; but they are confined almost entirely to forts, where they are expressions of official orthodoxy rather than of spontaneous feeling. The same is true of dedications to such attri-

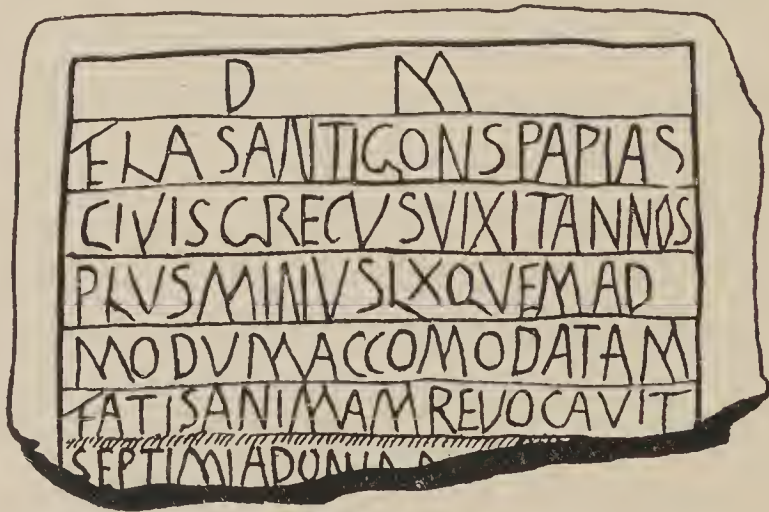
butes as 'the Discipline of the Emperor', of which we have some examples. Outside the army we find curiously few dedications to purely Roman gods, and the exceptions sometimes go to prove the rule, as in the case of the fine early slab at Chichester which records the dedication by 'King Tiberius

Claudius Cogidubnus, Imperial Legate in Britain ' of a temple to Neptune and Minerva, for the point here is that Cogidubnus, king of Chichester at the time of the Claudian conquest, was trying to be as Roman as he could possibly be in the first flush of loyalty to his conquerors.

It remains to consider the place of Christianity in Roman Britain. In the middle of the fourth century Christianity became the official religion of the Empire, and we should have expected to find signs of it here. The result of a search is disappointing. At Silchester there is a tiny building south of the Forum which seems to be a Christian church ; and in villas at Frampton and Chedworth, and engraved on a silver cup of foreign manufacture at Corbridge, we find the Chi-Rho monogram that stands for the name of Christ. But this and other evidence of the same kind proves very little, the Corbridge cup because it is not British, and the Frampton mosaic because of its association with scenes from pagan mythology in the same composition. As early as 314 it is said that Britain sent three bishops to the Council of Arles, from London, York, and the ' Colony of Isca ' ; but there was no colony at Isca (Caerleon-on-Usk), and Lincoln is probably meant.

On the other hand there are several tombstones which we are on fairly safe ground in ascribing to Christian communities. The ordinary Roman tombstones begin with the formula *Dis Manibus*, ' To the Divine Departed ' ; and this pagan formula, though often preserved by force of habit in Christian epitaphs, is generally supplanted by *Hic Jacet*, ' Here lies '. A second test is that whereas pagan tombstones very often reckon the age of the deceased in years, months, and days, Christian epitaphs take a certain pride in ignoring detail and use the formula *plus minus*, ' more or less ', in giving the age. Both these peculiarities may be seen on Romano-British tombstones. At Chesters is a stone rudely inscribed *Brigomaglos iacit hic*, marking the tomb of a Briton (his friends or relations did not even trouble to Latinize

the termination of his name) who must have been a Christian ; at Carlisle a long and in some ways obscure epitaph records one Flavius Antigonus Papias, giving his age as ' more or less ' sixty, and a similar stone built into a passage-way in the thickness of the wall in the Norman keep of Brougham Castle uses the same formula. There are several others. But on the whole the evidence is scanty. Christianity probably did not flourish very much till after the accession of Constantine, and not very long after this Britain began to be swept by such raids as must have destroyed its prosperity and made it barely habitable. The period when Christianity might have flourished in Britain was a period of disaster and destruction when nothing could flourish. As for the conjecture that Christian communities may have lingered on continuously from the fourth century to the period when the Anglo-Saxons received Christianity, there is little to be said for such an idea and much to be said against it. What happened is rather that Christianity survived in the extreme west, where the Anglo-Saxons did not penetrate, and thence, by way of Ireland and Iona, came back to England.



Christian tombstone: Carlisle. 'In memory of Flavius Antigonus Papias, a Greek; he lived about 60 years, at which limit he gave up (?) his soul resigned to its fate. Set up by Septimia Domina (his wife?)' ($\frac{1}{12}$)

Conclusion

AT the beginning of the fifth century, we all know, 'the Romans left Britain'. Such is the way in which our older history-books state the matter. What truth lies behind the phrase?

It is obviously misleading. It implies a belief that Roman Britain consisted of two things, a British population and a Roman army and government. Had that been so, it is easy to see how the Roman governor and civil service and army might have been withdrawn, leaving the British population just as it was. But this belief is groundless, or rather, the ground on which it rests is a mistaken analogy. The British population was Romanized, that is to say not only did it count itself Roman but it had learnt Roman manners and had in three centuries built up a civilization for itself which, as we have seen in detail, was a true blend of Roman and British elements. The 'departure of the Romans' is something that could not have happened without a migration of the whole British population.

None the less the old phrase, bad as it is, expresses a truth, namely, the occurrence of something, some 'departure', whose effect was to close the Roman era in Britain and to undo its work. The departure in question is really a complex event; first the withdrawing of the armies by Maximus in 383, then their second withdrawing by Constantine in 407, and lastly the fact that, owing to barbarian incursions in Gaul, the central government was unable as before to replace them and to send out imperial legates to govern the country. Had the affairs of Britain not stood just then at a grave crisis, the interregnum would have been tided over, Britain would have had her troops and her governors again

(according to her own historian Gildas, who preserves some tradition of this period, she earnestly desired it and repeatedly begged Rome to gratify her wish) and her history would have been like that of Gaul, the history of a Romanized Celtic province absorbing its foreign conquerors and Romanizing them in their turn. The Saxons, like the Franks and later the Normans, would have become conscious heirs of the Roman Empire. But this did not happen, not because Britain desired to break away from the Empire, but because at this moment she was beset on three sides by enemies against whose combined attack she was unable to defend herself, and whose incursions were so destructive that all the elements of her civilization crumbled before them. If the succession to the throne of the Roman Empire had been so secured that it was not possible and almost necessary for any ambitious man with an army behind him to attempt to seize it, Maximus and Constantine would not have eaten up the British armies in their selfish wars, and Britain would have been saved. If Agricola had conquered Scotland as he had already half done, and gone on to conquer Ireland as he meant to do, the Picts and Scots would have had their teeth drawn, and again Britain would have been saved. Even if Caracalla and Geta had obeyed the dying command of their father Severus to press home the conquest of Scotland at all costs, the same result might have been gained. As it was, the delay in regarrisoning Britain after 407 was fatal, and under a cross-fire from three sides Roman Britain perished.

Of the details of this destruction we know very little. About 360 the country-houses seem to have been mostly destroyed and not rebuilt; twenty years later the Wall was probably abandoned; by the close of the century most of the chief towns lay in ruins. Even then, when the most fully Romanized elements must have perished, Roman Britain retained enough life to put up a fight for perhaps thirty years. The enemies whom she feared most were probably the Picts and Scots. A later tradition represents a British

prince as trying to play off one enemy against the other by engaging the Saxons as allies against the Picts and Scots, which implies that of two evils the Saxons were the less. Much later again appears the tradition of a Romano-British leader who after the departure of the Romans kept up the war against the Saxon invaders from his fastnesses in Western Britain. The Arthurian legend is probably a mediaeval perversion of traditions concerning the Danish invasions, crossed with Celtic mythology, and has little to do with the latter end of Roman Britain; for the west, where the legends lie thickest, was not only ravaged with great thoroughness but to some extent perhaps even settled by Scots from across the sea.

But the Arthurian legend may, like the 'departure of the Romans', be taken to stand for a fact: namely that, isolated and crippled as she was, Britain preserved for a time her Roman character and went down fighting. It has been thought that during the fifth century the Roman element died out of the Britons and they reverted to their original Celticism. This theory is a survival of the 'old view' of Roman Britain which we discussed in the first chapter, and the evidence for it is too slender for the weight that has been put upon it. In Wales and Cornwall, it is true, not Latin but Celtic survived; and that these districts were partly Romanized is certain. They even preserved a knowledge of Latin after the separation of Britain from the Empire, as is proved by the quite large group of post-Roman Welsh tombstones with bilingual inscriptions in Latin and ogams, and by the Roman colouring of the work of Gildas in the sixth century. This Welsh semi-Romanism did perhaps die out and give way to a complete Celticism. But this was only in Wales and Cornwall, where the Romanization was never more than very slight. One is tempted to fancy that the Celts who in Wales forgot their Roman culture were refugees from the south-east, civilized Romano-Britons driven from their homes by the Saxon invaders. But that is more than doubtful. The fully Romanized Britons were not

driven into Wales and Cornwall by invaders from the east, they were caught between the eastern invaders and the western and destroyed where they stood. Nor must the Celtic name of the chief who, according to the later story, welcomed Hengist and Horsa to Kent be taken as evidence that the Kentish Britons had lost their Romanism by 450. Even if the story is true and the chief's name was Vortigern, that proves nothing, for Romanized Britons often bore Celtic names; and anyhow we must not forget that his successor's name is given as Ambrosius Aurelianus. The names of both these British chiefs may quite well be historical, as may the implication of the whole story, that the Picts and Scots were more formidable enemies than the Saxons; it is only the names (Horse and Mare) of the foreigners that put a strain on our credulity.

The facts probably are that the Romanized part of Britain was harried to such an extent that its civilization was wiped clean out; and that the Welsh and Cornish, who to some extent survived, survived precisely because, not being civilized, they were not worth harrying. The distribution of Celtic-speaking peoples in the early Anglo-Saxon period depends not on the pushing of Romanized Britons out of their homes but on their extinction, and the survival only of the non-Romanized in the west and north. By extinction I do not mean that the population was literally wiped out. I mean that the towns were destroyed and left desolate, the country-houses looted and burnt, and the population driven into the forests, there to subsist as best it could. The raiders wanted loot rather than blood, and though impoverished and in danger of starving the great mass of the Britons must have survived. But the most Romanized classes perished utterly, and those who survived can only have been the villagers, who were not Romanized enough to rebuild the Romano-British civilization again from the foundations.

A direct continuity between Roman Britain and Anglo-Saxon

England must not be looked for. But on the other hand the old idea that the present English race, however compounded of 'Saxon and Norman and Dane', contains no British blood is certainly false. There is much evidence of a mixed population in the Anglo-Saxon period, a population containing a British strain strong enough to influence the character of the whole. The sudden blossoming of the Anglian kingdom, with its splendid school of decorative art, is comprehensible only if we suppose that the Anglian settlers interbred with natives in whom the Late Celtic decorative gift and the temperament that produced Romano-British art were not extinct.

Can we go further and claim for ourselves a real kinship with the Roman Britons, as the modern French rightly claim continuity with the Romanized Gauls? It may seem fantastic, but I cannot resist the impression that the qualities I have analysed in Romano-British art are qualities especially English, qualities re-expressed in all the great English artists and valued by English people more than by others. I should expect Englishmen to understand and prize Romano-British sculptures in a way that I should not expect of Frenchmen or Germans. There may even be a kinship less intangible than that. Look at any Continental caricatures of English people, and then turn to the picture of the Cirencester *Matres*. Can those three heads belong to any nation except our own? The civilization vanished, but the race remained, and its character, I venture to think, has reasserted itself—mental and physical character alike.

BOOKS FOR FURTHER STUDY

FOR the general character of R. B., HAVERFIELD, *The Romanization of R. B.* (Oxford, 7/6), and the same author's posthumous *R. Occupation of B.* (Oxford, 18/-). For the Roman Empire in general, MOMMSEN, *Provinces of the R. Empire*, English translation (badly translated, and the views on R. B. sometimes ill-founded and now out of date, but the standard work on the Empire). WARD, *R. B. Buildings and Earthworks*, contains much useful archaeological detail, but is very inaccurate. The S.P.C.K. *Early B.* series contains two volumes on *R. B.*; the earlier is out of date, the later unsatisfactory. That in the same series on *R. Roads in B.* is unequal. WINDLE, *The Rs. in B.*, is untrustworthy. For military matters, HAVERFIELD, *The R. Army in B.*, in TRAILL, *Social England*; *Military Aspects of R. Wales* (Honourable Soc. of Cymmrodorion, 1910); MACDONALD, *The R. Wall in Scotland*; CHEESMAN, *The Auxilia of the R. Army*; ANDERSON, edition of Tacitus's *Agricola*. For inscriptions, HÜBNER, *Corpus Inscr. Lat.*, vol. vii; BRUCE, *Lapidarium Septentrionale*; articles in *Ephemeris Epigraphica*, iii, iv, vii, ix; catalogues of various museums. For pottery, OSWALD and PRYCE, *Terra Sigillata*. For sculpture, STRONG, *R. Sculpture*. For museum objects generally, the British Museum *Guide to the Antiquities of R. B.*

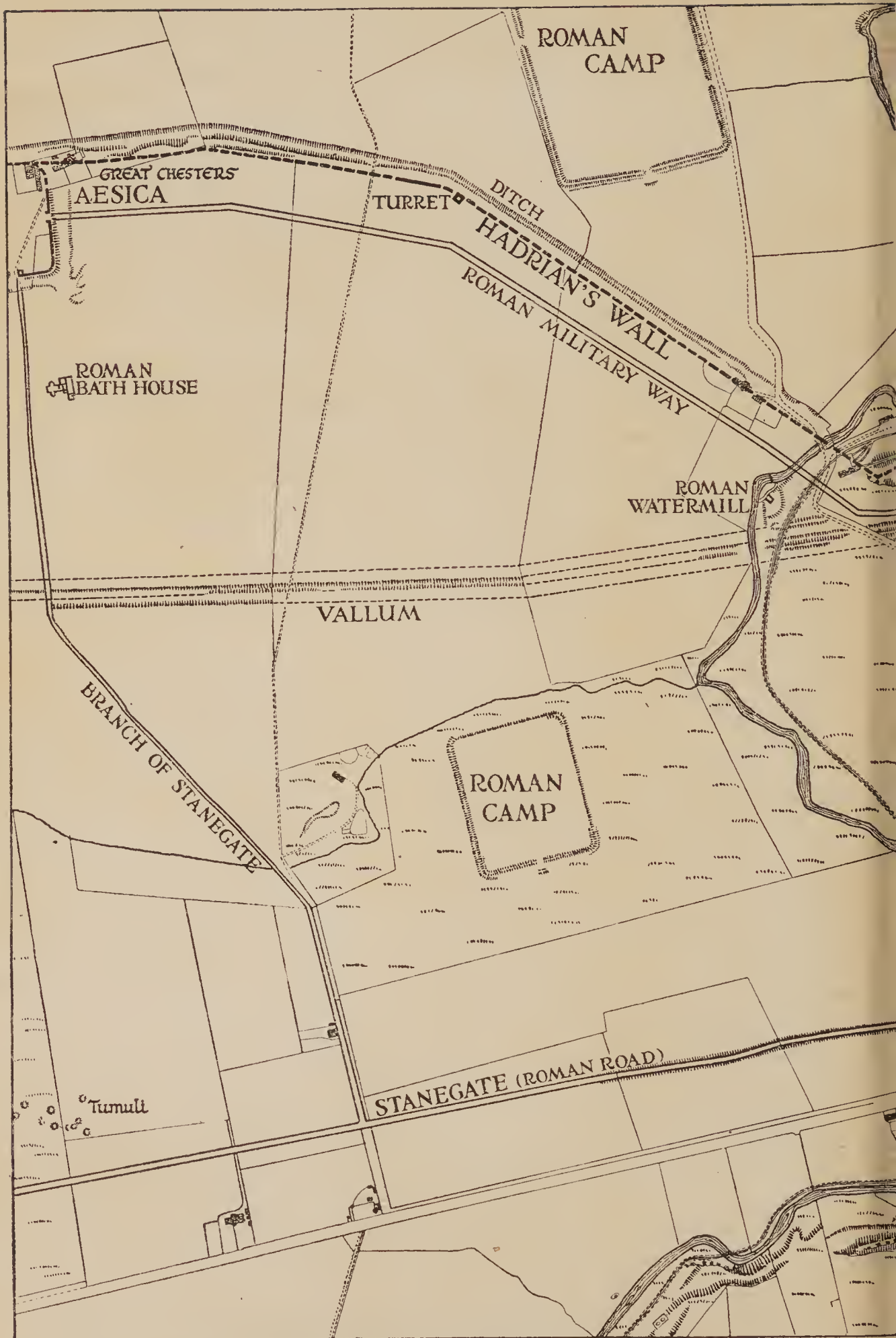
By far the greatest part of the information is contained in the volumes of Proceedings issued by various societies; such as *Archaeologia* (especially on the excavations at Silchester and Caerwent), *Proc. of the Soc. of Antiquaries of Scotland* (excavations of Scottish sites, &c.), *Archaeologia Aeliana* (for Northumberland), *Trans. of Cumberland and Westmorland Antiq. and Archaeol. Soc.* (contains all the recent work of importance about Hadrian's Wall), *Yorks. Archaeol. Journal*, *Chester Archaeol. Soc.'s Journal*, *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, and other local journals; also such periodicals as *Journal of Roman Studies*, *Archaeological Journal*, *Numismatic Chronicle*, *English Historical Review*. The *Victoria County History* contains a number of monographs on the R. antiquities of separate counties which practically exhaust the subject; especially full and valuable are those on Somerset and Hampshire. This scattered information is the more important because hardly any general books on R. B. exist, and no one has put together the whole material available since HORSLEY'S *Britannia Romana* (1732), the greatest work that has ever appeared on the subject, and (though of course out of date) still valuable to the student.

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Based on O.S. 25 inch N. LXXXIX. 10, with the sanction of the Controller of H.M. Stationery Office

ROMAN FRONTIER WORKS NEAR HALTWHISTLE

EVOLUTION OF THE FRONTIER:- 1. Stanegate built by Agricola (c.79). 2. Stanegate fortified (one fort shown: c.115). 3. Vallum constructed, with forts reached by branches from Stanegate (branch shown: c.120). 4. Wall built (quarries opened S. of Stanegate: Vallum breached every 45 yds. for transport of stone; working parties housed in temporary camps: Military way linking up mural forts, milecastles and turrets and sometimes encroaching on Vallum.) c.125.

