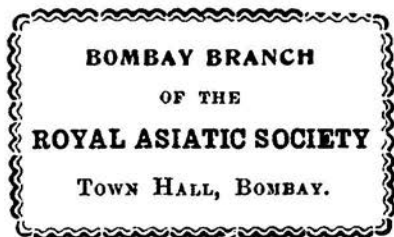


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THE  
HISTORY

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OF THE

ROMAN EMPERORS,

FROM

AUGUSTUS TO CONSTANTINE.

---

BY JOHN BAPTIST LEWIS CREVIER,  
PROFESSOR OF RHETORIC, IN THE COLLEGE OF BLAUVAIS

---

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.

BY JOHN MILL, ESQ.

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IN TEN VOLUMES.

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## A LIST

*Of the Consuls and Years comprised in this Volume.*

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### GALBA, EMPEROR.

|                        |            |
|------------------------|------------|
| C. Silius Italicus,    | A. R. 819. |
| M. Galerius Trachalus, | A. C. 68.  |
| Ser. Sulpicius Galba,  | A. R. 820. |
| Cæsar Augustus II.     | A. C. 69.  |
| T. Vinius Rufinus.     |            |

### OTHO, EMPEROR.

### VITELLIUS, EMPEROR.

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# HISTORY

OF THE

## ROMAN EMPERORS,

FROM AUGUSTUS TO CONSTANTINE.

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GALBA.

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BOOK XIII.

SECT. I.

*Reflection on the liberty taken by the soldiery to dispose of the empire. Galba receives the news of Nero's death, and of the senate's decree by which he is declared emperor. Virginius again refuses the empire, and makes his legions acknowledge Galba. The army on the lower Rhine likewise swears fidelity to Galba. Death of Capito who commanded it. Macer killed in Africa, where he was endeavouring to raise an insurrection. All the provinces acknowledge Galba. Nymphidius's intrigues to raise himself to the empire. He is killed by the Prætorians. Galba's cruelties on that occasion. He degenerates from his first taste for simplicity. He lets Vinus, Cornelius Laco, and Martianus govern him. He affects to appear formidable. Instances of his rigour. Massacre of*

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Reflection  
on the li-  
berty taken  
by the sol-  
diers to  
dispose of  
the empire.

**T**HE extinction of the family of the Cæsars is an important period in the history of the Roman emperors. Till then, though arms had been the origin, strength, and support of

of the imperial government, yet a kind of hereditary right restrained and limited the power of the soldiers, and prevented their disposing of the empire quite as they pleased. By Nero's \* death, says Tacitus, a secret of state was divulged: it was known that an emperor might be made elsewhere than in Rome; and, which was of much more consequence, that force alone was what determined the choice, and that the troops were absolute masters of that force.

The enormous reward promised by Nymphidius to the prætorians, carried the evil to its utmost height. It was quite contrary to the public good to let the soldiers dispose of the empire: they learned to sell it. Thence ensued a chain of revolutions and tragical catastrophes. Galba being neither able nor willing to comply with Nymphidius's promise, the prætorians, frustrated of their hopes, turned to Otho. The armies in the provinces pretended they had as good a right to make an emperor as the prætorians, and were for raising their chiefs to the throne. By that means, in a very short space of time, three emperors made their appearance with great rapidity, almost like so many theatrical kings. The Roman empire was a continued scene of trouble and confusion, till the wisdom of Vespasian and his first successors, Domitian excepted, restored the tranquillity and order violence had overthrown.

But the radical vice still subsisted. The troops, whose duty is obedience, were grown too sensible of their ascendant over the civil power

\* Evulgato imperii arcano, posse alibi principem quam Romæ fieri. Tac. Hist. I. 4.

HISTORY OF THE EMPERORS.

power ever to forget it. The princes, the most firmly settled on the throne, were obliged to use them very tenderly. At last they entirely gained the upper hand. The caprice of the soldiers, made and unmade emperors, and by repeated shocks, at length caused the total ruin of the empire. Such is the frailty of all human things, that they bear the seeds of their own destruction, even in what constitutes their force. But to resume the order of events.

A. R. 819.

C. SILIUS ITALICUS.

A. C. 68.

M. GALERIUS TRACHALUS.

Galba receives the news of Nero's death, and of the senate's decree, by which he is declared emperor. *Plut. Galb.*

At the time of Nero's death, which, as I have said, happened on the eleventh of June, Galba was at Clunia, in great consternation, expecting nothing but death, when Icelus arrived from Rome with news that his enemy was no more. The moment Icelus was sure of the fact, and had seen with his own eyes Nero's dead body, he instantly left Rome, and travelled with such diligence, that in seven days he reached Clunia, where he informed Galba, that the prætorian cohorts, and after their example, the senate and people had proclaimed him emperor, even before Nero's death; and likewise told him of that prince's fatal end, by which that high post was left vacant for him.

*Suet. Galb.*  
11.

At this news, joy and confidence took the place of sorrow and almost despair in Galba's breast. A numerous court of people of all ranks, each of whom strove who should congratulate him most, was immediately formed about him; and two days after, a courier bringing

bringing from the senate a confirmation of what Icelus had said, he laid aside the title of *Lieutenant to the senate and Roman people*, and took the name of *Cæsar*, which was become an indication of the supreme power, and immediately prepared to set out for Rome to take possession of it. A. R. 819. A. C. 68.

Icelus was well rewarded for his journey. His patron becoming emperor, gave him the ring of gold and made him a knight, by the name of *Martianus*, to conceal the obscurity of his first condition; and suffered him to assume a degree of power and authority, of which that servile wretch made a very bad use. Tac. Hist. I. 13.

Every thing succeeded with Galba at first; *Virginus* persisted in his plan of referring the choice of an emperor to the senate. After Nero's death, the legions of which he had the command, again pressed him to let them seat him on the throne of the *Cæsars*; and a tribune went so far as to present his naked sword, and say he should either receive the empire, or that sword in his body. Nothing could make that great man deviate from his principles of moderation: and he insisted so strongly with his troops to induce them to acknowledge the emperor the senate had chose, that at last he prevailed on them with great difficulty to swear fidelity to Galba. Virginus again refuses the empire, and makes his legions acknowledge Galba. Plut.

He did more: for Galba having sent *Hordeonius Flaccus* to succeed him, *Virginus* gave up the command of his army to that lieutenant, and waited on the emperor, who had invited him to court, as if out of friendship. He was received but coolly; and, by an expression of *Tacitus*, we find there was even Tac. Hist. I. 8.

A. R. 819. an accusation lodged against him. He suffered  
 A. C. 68. no harm from it. Galba, who without doubt  
 Plut. would have wished him more zealous in his  
 cause, could not, however, but esteem his vir-  
 tue: but was prevented from shewing that  
 esteem by those about him, who thought they  
 did a great deal, in letting a man live who  
 had so often been proclaimed emperor. Envy  
 was what induced them to strive to keep him  
 under. They were not sensible, says Plutarch,  
 of the service they were doing him, nor that  
 their ill will contributed to the good fortune of  
 Virginus, by procuring him a peaceable asy-  
 lum, whereby he was screened from the com-  
 motions and storms in which so many emperors  
 perished one after another.

The army  
 on the  
 lower  
 Rhine like-  
 wise swears  
 fidelity to  
 Galba.  
 Death of  
 Capito,  
 who com-  
 manded it.  
*Tac. Hist.*  
 l. 7.  
*Dio. Galb.*

The army, in lower Germany, likewise de-  
 clared for Galba, but it cost Fonteius Capito,  
 who commanded it, his life. He was a very  
 different kind of man from Virginus, and had  
 made himself odious by his covetousness and  
 over-bearing pride. It has been said, that he  
 aimed at the supreme power, and a circum-  
 stance mentioned by Dion Cassius seems to con-  
 firm that suspicion. A person accused, appeal-  
 ing from that lieutenant's sentence to Cæsar,  
 Capito getting on to a higher seat, said,  
 "Now then, plead before Cæsar:" and forc-  
 ing him to proceed in his defence, condemned  
 him to die. This action was very daring, and  
 might be thought to indicate ambitious views.  
 What is certain is, that Cornelius Aquinus and  
 Fabius Valius, who commanded under him  
 two legions of his army, without waiting for  
 Galba's orders, killed him under pretence of his  
 turbulent designs. It was thought by some,

See

that

that they themselves had urged him to aim at the empire, but that, not being able to prevail on him, they were willing, by his death, to get rid of a witness that might hurt them. Galba approved the murder of Capito, either from a levity of mind, which made him credulous, or because he did not dare to search too deep into so nice an affair, for fear of finding other criminals whom it might not be in his power to punish. Thus it was that Galba was acknowledged emperor by the two German armies.

Clodius Macer attempted to foment disturbances in Africa. Detested for his rapines and cruelties he judged he had no other resource left, but to try to make a little state and dominion of his own, out of the province of which he had the government. He was assisted in that design by Galvia Crispinilla, a woman as daring, as she was learned in the arts of debauchery, in which she had given Nero lessons. We have seen her accompany that prince into Greece. At the time I am speaking of she crossed over into Africa, and in concert with Macer attempted to starve Rome and Italy, by laying an embargo on the ships ready to sail with corn. But Trebonius Garucianus, the emperor's intendant, killed Macer by Galba's order, and by that means restored tranquillity to the country.

Every thing was quiet in the other provinces, and all submitted to Galba with great docility. It has been said that he took umbrage against Vespasian, at that time making war against the Jews, and sent assassins to kill him. That does not seem probable; at least it is certain

Vespasian

A. R. 819.  
A. C. 68.

Macer killed in Africa, where he was endeavoring to raise an insurrection. *Plat. Gall. Tac. Hist. v. 7. 11. & 7. 3.*

All the provinces acknowledge Galba. *Suet. Gall. c. 35.*

HISTORY OF THE EMPERORS.

A. R. 819. Vespasian was not informed of it; for he sent  
A. C. 68. his son Titus to pay homage to the new emperor.

*Tac. Hist.*

ii. 1.

Nymphidius's intrigues to raise himself to the empire.  
*Plut.*

Rome, by which city the suffrages of the provinces had been determined in favour of Galba, by a sudden turn, gave him great disturbances and alarms. The cause of that evil was, the ambition of Nymphidius, who, aspiring at the throne, had possessed himself of great authority in the city. He held Galba in contempt, as a feeble old man, hardly able to bear being brought to Rome in a litter. On the other hand he ascribed to himself all the glory of Nero's fall, and depended on being strongly backed by the prætorian cohorts, whose long affection towards him had acquired a new degree of warmth, by the immense gratuity he had promised them, and which made them look on Nymphidius as their benefactor, and on Galba as their debtor.

Full of those presumptuous thoughts, he ordered his colleague Tigellinus to resign the sword of prætorian prefect. He endeavoured to gain over the chief members of the senate, by inviting those of consular distinction, and the ancient prætors, to entertainments in Galba's name, but in reality with a view to his own interest. He had his private emissaries in the prætorian camp, who exhorted the soldiers to petition Galba, that Nymphidius might be made their sole commander for his life. The senate's abject meanness added to his ambitious frenzy. That first body of the empire stiled him their protector. The senators flocked in crowds to pay their court to him: and would have him dictate and confirm all their decrees. Puffed  
up



up with such excess of deference and regard, A. R. 819.  
he soon became formidable to those whose aim A. C. 68.  
had been to gain his favour.

The consuls had dispatched some of the public slaves to carry Galba the decree by which he was declared emperor; and had given them orders, sealed with their seals, to be supplied with horses on the road. Nymphidius took it very ill, that they had not desired some of his soldiers for that commission, nor made use of his seal. He was so angry at it, that he deliberated seriously how to make the consuls repent what they had done; and those sovereign magistrates were forced to be very submissive before he would be appeased.

With the views Nymphidius had, it was his interest to have the people on his side. He endeavoured to gain their affection, by granting them entire liberty to do whatever they pleased. He suffered the mob to drag Nero's statues about the streets, and over the body of a gladiator, who had been a favourite with that unhappy prince. Aponius, an informer by profession, was laid along on the ground, and crushed to death under a cart loaded with stones: several others, and even some who were innocent, were torn to pieces, which made Junius Mauricus, a man highly esteemed for his wisdom and virtue, say in full senate, "I wish we may not soon be forced to regret Nero."

Nymphidius, supported, as he imagined, by the people and soldiers, and treating the senators like slaves, thought he might safely push on, and take such steps as, without quite discovering himself, would, however, forward the execution

A. R. 819. execution of his designs. Not content to en-  
 A. C. 68. joy the honours and riches of supreme power, to imitate Nero in his worst of vices, and like him, to marry the infamous Sporus; nothing less than the title of emperor would serve him: and he studied to gain over the Romans to his mad project, by the means of his friends, of some senators he had bribed, and of intriguing women. At the same time he dispatched one Gellianus, in whom he confided, to Galba, with instructions to sound the new prince, and discover by what means it would be most easy to attack him.

Gellianus found things in a situation fit to make Nymphidius despair. Galba had named Cornelius Laco prætorian prefect: T. Vinius had an entire ascendant over the emperor, and nothing was done but by his orders: so that Nymphidius's emissary, suspected and watched by all, could not obtain a private audience of Galba.

Nymphidius alarmed by Gellianus's report, assembled the principal officers of the prætorian cohorts, and told them, "That Galba  
 " was a venerable old man, and full of mild-  
 " ness and moderation: but that he did hardly  
 " any thing of himself, being under the di-  
 " rection and influence of two ministers whose  
 " intentions were not good, Vinius and Laco.  
 " That therefore, before they could strengthen  
 " themselves, and insensibly acquire a power  
 " equal to that of Tigellinus, it was proper  
 " to send deputies to the emperor's camp, to  
 " represent to him, that, by removing only  
 " those two men from his person and court, he  
 " would be more beloved, and, on his arrival

“ in Rome find the hearts of the people better A. R. 519.  
“ disposed in his favour.” Nymphidius’s pro- A. C. 68.  
posal was not relished. It was thought indecent to pretend to give lessons to an emperor of Galba’s years, and prescribe to him, as to a young unexperienced sovereign just beginning to taste the sweets of command, who it was proper he should have about him.

Nymphidius then tried another trick, endeavouring to intimidate Galba by magnifying the dangers. He wrote him word, that the Romans were in a great ferment, and threatened a new revolution: that Clodius Macer (whose death I have anticipated the mention of) grew turbulent in Africa: that the Legions in Germany had their causes of discontent, which might soon break out, and that he was informed those in Syria and Judæa were not better disposed. Galba was not the dupe of these artifices, nor intimidated by a representation of things visibly exaggerated with design; but proceeded on towards Rome. Nymphidius concluding Galba’s arrival must be his ruin, resolved to prevent it. Clodius Celsus of Antioch, one of his staunchest friends, and a man of sense, dissuaded him from the attempt, assuring him that not a family in Rome would ever give the name of Cæsar to Nymphidius. But most of them laughed at his reserve; and particularly Mithridates, king of a part of Pontus, who, as I have before said, submitted to Claudius, and had remained in Rome ever since, ridiculed Galba’s bald head and wrinkled face, and said, the good old man might appear something to the Romans, whilst at a distance, but that when seen nearer, he would  
be

A. R. 819. be judged a shame to the name of Cæsar.—  
 A. C. 68. This way of thinking, so agreeable to Nymphidius's ambition, was approved; and his partizans agreed to carry him towards midnight to the prætorian camp, and there proclaim him emperor.

He is killed  
 by the præ-  
 torians.

Part of the troops had been bribed: but Antonius Honoratus, tribune of a prætorian cohort, broke all their measures. Towards the evening, he assembled those that were under his command, and represented to them what a shame it would be to them to change their minds so often in so short a time, and that without any just cause, without being influenced in their choice by any regard to the public welfare, but as if urged on from rebellion to rebellion, by some evil genius. "Our first change (added he) had a sufficient cause, and Nero's crimes justified what we did. But can we tax Galba with having murdered his mother and his wife? Are we put to the blush by our present emperor's appearing on the stage? Nor did we even for those causes abandon Nero: Nymphidius deceived us, by making us believe that prince had first abandoned us and was fled to Egypt. Is Galba then a victim to be offered up on Nero's tomb? Shall we call Nymphidius's son Cæsar, and kill a prince nearly related to Livia, as we forced the son of Agrippina to kill himself? No! let us rather make this man suffer for his iniquitous attempts, and at one blow revenge Nero, and prove our fidelity to Galba." This speech made a strong impression on the soldiers who heard it: they communicated their sentiments

to their comrades, and brought back the greater number to their duty. A sudden shout was heard, and all ran to arms. A. R. 819.  
A. C. 68.

This shout was a signal, at which Nymphidius repaired to the camp, either imagining the soldiers called him, or that he saw confusion was at hand. Accordingly he went thither lighted by numbers of torches, and having a speech ready composed by Cingonius Varro consul elect, which he had learnt by rote, to make to the body of prætorians. Drawing near, he found the gates shut, and the walls lined with soldiers. Terrified, he asked them what was the matter, and why they were under arms? He was answered by an unanimous cry, that Galba was their emperor.—Nymphidius, putting on the best face he could, joined in their acclamations, and ordered his attendants to do the like: but that artifice did not save him. He was admitted within the camp, but it was to give him a thousand stabs: and when dead, his body was enclosed in an iron cage, and exposed to the view of all the troops.

This was a lucky beginning for Galba, who, without interfering in it himself, was delivered from an unworthy rival, whose turbulent genius was to be feared. But he dishonoured by his cruelty, this favour received from the hand of fortune. He ordered Mithridates and Cingonius Varro to be killed as accomplices with Nymphidius. Petronius Turpilianus, whom Nero had chosen for his general, was likewise put to death by Galba's order: and those illustrious persons, executed in a military manner\*, and

\* *Inauditi atque indetensi, tanquam innocentes perierant.* Tac. Hist. l. 6.

A. R. 819. and without any form of law, seemed in the  
A. C. 68. eyes of the public innocents oppressed.

He degenerates  
from his  
first taste  
for simpli-  
city.

Far different things were expected from Galba's government, and every act of violence was the more shocking in him, as none had foreseen or thought of such behaviour. Already he began to degenerate from that love of simplicity with which he at first pretended to set out. Every one was charmed with the manner in which he received the senate's deputies at Narbonne. The reception they met with was quite gracious and void of all haughtiness and ostentation: in the entertainments he gave them, he would not make use of the officers and attendants that had belonged to Nero, and were sent to wait on him, but was content with his own domestics. In \* consequence of that, he was looked upon as a man of a superior way of thinking, above all that idle ostentation vulgarly called grandeur. But Vinius, who gained every day a greater ascendant over Galba, soon made him change his system, and renounce that ancient simplicity; telling him, that instead of those plain and popular ways, which were but a kind of unbecoming flattery towards the multitude, he ought to maintain his high rank, with a magnificence worthy the master of the universe. Galba therefore took all Nero's officers and attendants: his palace, equipages, table, and train, were those of an emperor.

He lets Vinius, Cornelius Laco, and Martinus govern him.

Vinius, whom we shall see for some months the greatest man in the empire, little deserved the confidence of a prince like Galba. Born of

\* Εὐδοκίμου, μεγάλουθεν ἀπὸ τοῦ περιττοῦ ἀπαιτοῦ λαλῆας φησιν ἄριστος  
Plut.

of a good family, but which, however, had never rose higher than the post of prætor, his youth had been very dissolute, and in his first campaigns he had dared to dishonour his general Calvisius Sabinus, by debauching his wife, who was brought into the camp in men's clothes. Caligula put him in irons for that crime. Being set at liberty by the revolution that followed that prince's death, Vinus fell into another disgrace, but of a different kind, under Claudius. He was suspected of having been mean enough to steal a gold cup from the emperor's table, to which he was invited: and Claudius desiring his company again the next day, ordered him only of all the company to be served in earthen ware. He got the better however of this double shame: active, ardent, and as cunning as he was audacious, he succeeded in the road to honours so far as to be made prætor: and, what is more singular, governed the province of Narbonnese Gaul with a reputation of severity and integrity. He was one \* of those characters, equally pliable to good or ill, as occasions offer, and which seldom fail to succeed in whatever they turn their talents to. Raised by Galba to a vast height of fortune, the use he made of it was, to give a loose to his vices, and especially to his love of money; and, after shining like a flash of lightning, we shall see him fall with his master, of whose ruin he was in a great measure the cause.

Though

\* Audax, callidus, promptus, & prout animus intendit: set, pravus aut industrius, eadem vi. Tac. Hist. 1. 41.

A. R. 819.  
A. C. 68. Though Vinius held the first rank at Galba's court, Cornelius Laco, prætorian prefect, had likewise great power and influence: and the \* joint union of the most cowardly of men, with the most wicked, drew hatred and contempt on the government of the prince whom they laid siege to. The freeman Icelus or Martianus, shared their authority. They formed a triumvirate of *Pedagogues* for so the Romans called them, because they never left the weak old man, but governed him as they pleased.

Almost all the faults that Galba committed ought to be laid to their charge. He certainly had no great genius, was covetous, and rigorously severe; but in the main he meant well, loved justice, good order, and the laws. Those qualities, so estimable in a sovereign, were of no use to public happiness, through the blind confidence he had in his ministers, who studied only their own ends. The prince was inclined to do good, and wished it; but evil was done, and prevailed with an unbounded licentiousness. Galba was blamed, and very justly, for the bad conduct of those who made an ill use of his authority; for † as Dion Cassius judiciously observes, it is enough for private men not to commit injustice; but those who govern ought to prevent others from committing it.—

It

\* Invalidum senem T. Vinius & Cornelius Laco, alter deterrius mortalium alter ignavissimus, odio flagitiorum operatum, contemptu inertie destruebant. Tac. Hist. 1. 6.

† Τοις μιν γὰρ ἰδίω τοῖς ἀποχρῆ μὴ δεῖ ἀδικεῖν τοῖς τὰι τὰς ἡγεμονίας ἔχουσιν ἀποχρῆ πρῶτον εὖτας ἀπὸ ἄλλου καταργεῖν ὑπὲρ γὰρ διαφέρει τι τοῖς κακῶς παχυσὶν ἔφετα αἰετὴ κακῶν. Dio. Gall.



It is of little moment to those who suffer, from what hand the ill comes by which they suffer. A. R. 819. A. C. 68.

I before observed, that Galba had already alienated the people by divers acts of cruelty against persons of great distinction. He affected too a formidable appearance, wearing the military dress, as if he had been about to commence or maintain a war, and having a dagger tied to a ribbon hanging down from his breast. In that manner he travelled almost all the way to Rome, appearing, old, infirm, and gouty as he was, much more ridiculous than tremendous. Nor did he put on the habit of peace till after the death of Nymphidius, Macer and Capito. His deeds were answerable to the menacing appearance he made. Enraged against the towns of Spain and Gaul, who had hesitated to declare in his favour, he punished some of them by laying on additional taxes, and others by demolishing their walls. Intendants and other officers were put to death with their wives and children: but nothing made him more odious, than the massacre with which he stained his entry into Rome, and made it dreadful indeed. The marines whom Nero had formed into a legion, and who, by that means had acquired a military rank more honourable among the Romans, went as far as Ponte Mole, three miles from the city, to meet Galba, and desire a confirmation of the favour his predecessor had granted them. Galba, rigidly attached to the order of discipline, put them off to another time. They readily conceived this delay equal to a refusal, and persisted in their request with disrespect, some of them even drawing their swords. Such

He affects to appear formidable. Instances of his rigour. Via-acre of the marines. *Suet. Galb.* 11, & 12.

A. R 819. insolence deserved to be punished: but Galba  
 A. C. 68. exceeded all bounds, ordering the cavalry that attended him, to cut those unhappy wretches to pieces. They were not properly armed, nor did they make any resistance; but that did not prevent their being inhumanly massacred: several thousands were killed on the spot. Some submitted, imploring the emperor's clemency, and they were decimated. This bloody execution occasioned very just complaints, and struck a terror even on those who were the ministers of it.

Instances  
 of his avarice.  
*Suet. &  
 Plut.*

His avarice was not less flagrant. The inhabitants of Tarragon presenting him a crown of gold weighing fifteen pounds, he had it melted down, and insisted on three ounces that were wanting in the weight. He broke a cohort of Germans, the ordinary guard of the Cæsars, whose fidelity had never been tainted, and sent them back to their own country without reward. Some malicious stories were told, without doubt on purpose to make him quite ridiculous. It was said, that when he saw a fine supper set on his table, he would groan out of grief and anguish: that to reward the care and fidelity of his steward, on settling his accounts, he made him a present of a dish of greens: and that a famous musician called Canus, having delighted him greatly by playing on the flute whilst he was at table, had the secret to extract from him a present of five denarij, he observing it was not out of the public money but his own. Such meannesses greatly hurt his character. And the general esteem that was shown for him at the time of  
 his

his election, was already changed into contempt when he arrived at Rome. A. R. s. 19. A. C. 68.

It was not long before he had a convincing proof of it; for at a play, or kind of comic opera that was performed, the actors beginning to sing a song at that time very common, the first words of which signified, "Here is the old miser come from his farm." The whole audience went on with it, applying it to Galba, and repeated it several times.

His behaviour did not make people conceive a more advantageous idea of him, because even the laudable measures that he took, were attended with such circumstances as either lessened their value, or robbed them of all their merit, by the scandalous proceedings of those that were about him. In order to fill his empty coffers, he ordered a strict enquiry to be made into the improper liberalities of his predecessor. They were found to amount to two hundred and fifty millions, thrown away upon debauchees, strollers, or ministers of Nero's pleasures. Galba would have all that money returned, allowing only a tenth part to those it had been given to. But \* that tenth was almost more than they had left. As prodigal of the money of others as of their own, they had neither lands nor income. All that the richest of them possessed, was only a few moveables, which their luxury and taste, for whatever appertained to vice and effeminacy, made them set a value on. Galba, who was inflexible

where

Enquiry made into Nero's liberalities. Vexations on that account. Greediness and insolence of Vinius. Tac. Hist. l. 20. Plut. Galb. Suet. Galb. 15.

\* At illis vix decumæ super portiones erant, iisdem erga aliena sumptibus quibus sua prodegerant: quam rapacissimo cuique ac perditissimo non agri, aut fœtus, sed sola instrumenta vitiorum manerent. Tac.

A. R. 919. where money was in the case, finding that  
 A. C. 68. they who had received such presents from Nero were insolvent, attacked those who had become purchasers under them. We may conceive what troubles and revolutions of fortunes, must ensue from such an operation as this, which affected no less than thirty Roman knights. Several fair purchasers were molested: every street was full of advertisements of estates to be sold. The public was \* however delighted to find those whom Nero had enriched, made as poor as those whom he had robbed.

But it was taken very ill that Vinus, who set the emperor upon enquiring into such minute things, and raising chicaneries so irksome to numbers of citizens, should riot in luxury in the sight of those he so cruelly vexed; and, abusing his credit, buy and sell every thing. He was not the only one that carried on that trade. All † Galba's freemen, all his slaves, did the same underhand, endeavouring to make hay while the sun shone, foreseeing it would not shine long. An open traffic was carried on for whatever was wanted to be purchased, establishments of duties, exemptions and privileges, impunity for crimes, and condemnations against the innocent. All the evils of the former, sprung up again under this new government, but the public was not so well disposed to bear them.

The

\* Attamen grande gaudium quod tam pauperes forent quibus donasset Nero, quam quibus abstulisset. *Tac.*

† Offerebant venalia cuncta proponentes liberti. Servorum manus subitis avidæ, & tanquam apud senem festinantes: eademque nova aulicæ mala, æque gravia, non æque excusata. *Tac. Hist. l. 7.*

The Romans very greatly hurt too by the inconsistency of Galba's behaviour, in the punishment of those who had been the instruments of Nero's cruelty. Many suffered what their crimes justly merited, such as Helius, Polycletes, Patrobius, Locusta, and others who had nobody to protect them. Such acts of justice were applauded by the people: when those notorious criminals were led to death, they cried out, that no shew, no festival could give Rome more satisfaction than that did; and that their blood was the most agreeable offering that could be made the gods: but at the same time added, that the gods, as well as men, required the death of him, who had formed Nero to so much tyranny, the infamous and wicked Tigellinus.

But that wretch had taken care to follow the usual maxims of those of his stamp, who\*, always distrusting the present, and carefully watching every alteration that may happen, take care to screen themselves from the public hatred, under the patronage of some more powerful friends: a sanction, which, whilst it guards them from punishment, hardens them in guilt. Tigellinus had long before taken measures to secure the protection of Vinius. When the troubles first broke out, he gained his friendship by saving his daughter, who, being then in Rome, and in Nero's power, was in danger of her life; and but lately he promised that

\* *Pessimus quisque, diffidentia presentium mutationem pavens, adversus publicum odium privatam gratiam parat: unde nulla innocentie cura, sed vices impunitatis. Tac.*

A. R. 819.  
A. C. 68.  
Inconsistency of Galba's behaviour towards the ministers of Nero's cruelties.  
Tigellinus spared.  
*Plut. Tac. Hist. l. 72. Suet. Galb. 14.*

A. R. 819. that favourite a very large sum, if he escaped  
A. C. 68. all dangers by his means. Measures so well  
taken could not but succeed. Vinius took him  
under his protection, and obtained from Galba  
a promise of his life.

Men were astonished when they compared  
the fate of this miscreant with that of Petro-  
nius Turpilianus, who, without being guilty  
of hardly any other crime, than his fidelity  
to Nero, had been cruelly put to death: whilst  
he who had made Nero deserve worse than  
death, and after perverting, had, like a perfid-  
ious traitor, abandoned him, was suffered to live  
happy and unmolested: a convincing proof of  
the enormous power of Vinius, and of the in-  
disputable certainty that money would make  
him do any thing.

The people were highly incensed against  
Tigellinus: in the circus, theatres, and all pub-  
lic places, they cried out he ought to be put  
to death, that to see him die would be the most  
pleasing of sights to them. All concurred in  
that wish, as well those who hated Nero, as  
those who regretted him. Galba was so obe-  
dient to Vinius's orders, that he published an  
ordinance, wherein he undertook the defence of  
that infamous wretch, and said Tigellinus was  
in so bad a state of health, that he could not be  
expected to live long. He even taxed the peo-  
ple with cruelty, and took it very ill that they  
should strive, said he, to force him to render  
his government odious and tyrannical.

Vinius and Tigellinus triumphant, insulted  
over the people's griefs. Tigellinus offered up  
a sacrifice of thanks to the gods, and prepared  
a splendid entertainment; and Vinius, after  
supping with the emperor, came with his  
daughter,

daughter, then a widow, to Tigellinus's desert A. R. 819.  
 Tigellinus made the lady a present of a \* million A. C. 68.  
 of sesterces, and ordered the sultana queen of \* 8000l.  
 his seraglio to take off her necklace, worth six † + 4800l.  
 hundred thousand sesterces, and tie it round  
 Vinus's daughter's neck. Tigellinus did not  
 long enjoy this scandalous impunity: we shall  
 soon see him suffer under Otho the just punish-  
 ment of his crimes.

A criminal of less importance than him might  
 expect impunity from Galba. The eunuch  
 Halorus, who poisoned Claudius, and had been  
 one of the chief instigators of Nero's cruelties,  
 not only escaped death, but had a rich and hon-  
 ourable intendency given him. It is not said  
 who was his patron and protector, but we may  
 safely venture to say he could not have a bet-  
 ter than his money.

Even the good actions of a prince ‡ who is Galba's  
good ac-  
tions for-  
got or  
blamed.  
 hated and despised, are misrepresented and  
 blamed, or at least no value is set on them. Tac. Hist.  
II. 10.  
Zonar.  
 Galba recalled such as were in exile: he suf-  
 fered informers to be punished, and gave up  
 ungrateful and insolent slaves to the vengeance  
 of their masters. Such actions are surely laud-  
 able; yet they were so little remarked, that  
 neither Suetonius nor Plutarch take any notice  
 of them.

Galba rewarded the Gauls who rose with Tac. Hist.  
I. 8. & 21.  
Plat.  
 Vindex, by remitting a fourth part of the  
 tributes they were to pay, and making them  
 burghers of Rome. Though it was quite natu-  
 ral for him to be grateful to those to whom he  
 owed the empire, yet it was thought those fa-  
 vours

‡ In viso semel principe, seu bene seu male facta premiunt,  
*Tac. Hist.* 1. 7.

A. R. 819. vours were purchased from Vinius, and people  
 A. C. 68. took occasion from thence to complain of, and  
 be dissatisfied with his master.

He makes  
 the soldiers  
 hate him.  
*Tac. Hist.*  
 1. 5. &  
*Plut.*

The general disposition of people's minds was, as we see, not favourable to Galba. He completed his ruin by setting his soldiers against him. His severity\*, before esteemed and praised, was now suspected: fourteen years of licentiousness and relaxation of all military discipline under Nero's government, had taught the troops to dread the old rigour so strictly observed in the army, and to love the vices of their generals, as much as they had formerly respected their virtues. An expression of Galba, well becoming an emperor, but at that time dangerous in his mouth, changed their secret grudge into implacable hatred. They expected to receive, if not so large a sum as Nymphidius had promised, at least a gratification equal to what Nero had given them on his accession to the empire. Galba being informed of it said, "it was his custom to levy soldiers and not to buy them." They were sensible these words cut off, not only all present hopes, but even future, and would be a precedent and law to Galba's successors. They flew into a violent passion, and thought their anger so much the more just, as so haughty a stile was, as we have seen, not backed by a suitable conduct. Every thing was

\* *Laudata olim et militari fama celebrata severitas ejus angebat adspernantes veterem disciplinam, et ita quatuordecim annis a Nerone adsuefactos, ut haud minus vitia principum amarent, quam olim virtutes venerabatur. Accessit Galba vox pro republica honesta, ipsi anceps, legi a se militem non eui. Nec enim ad hanc formam cetera erant.*  
*Tac. Hist. 1. 5.*



was ripe for a revolution in the beginning of A. R. 819. the year in which Galba entered on his second A. C. 68. consulship with T. Vinius.

SER. SULPICIUS GALBA CÆSAR AUGUSTUS II.  
T. VINIUS RUFINUS.

A. R. 820.

A. C. 69.

This year is remarkable in the annals of mankind for being fraught with scenes of woe, civil wars, and such violent convulsions in every state, as shook alternately each part of the universe. Tacitus, willing to inform his readers, not only of events, but of their causes too, gives us on this occasion an account of the state of the empire just before those storms broke out, and of the dispositions of the citizens, provinces and soldiers. I have borrowed from him such particularities as suited the subject I have been treating, and shall now give the rest so far as I can, without repeating what has been already said.

Nero's death gave every one joy at first, but soon produced great diversity of sentiments. The senators persisted in a way of thinking which rooted in them a detestation to tyranny. They enjoyed all the sweets of liberty with a higher relish, as they were but just delivered from a state of dreadful servitude, and were no ways cramped by a prince but just seated on the throne, and at that time absent. The most distinguished of the knights, and the more thinking part of the people, had always adopted the maxims of the senate. But the populace, the mob, accustomed to the pleasures of the circus and theatres, the most vicious of the slaves, and debauched citizens, who, after ruin-

A year of misfortunes.

State of the empire at the beginning of this year. Tac. Hist. l. 4—11.

ing

A. R. 820. ing themselves, subsisted on Nero's shameful  
 A. C. 69. prodigalities, were dissatisfied, at a loss what  
 to do, and glad to join in any clamour that pro-  
 mised a change. Even Galba's age \* was the  
 sport of the multitude, who, esteeming their  
 princes by their looks, contemptuously com-  
 pared the old emperor's bald head and infirmi-  
 ties with Nero's sprightly youth.

I have already said how the pretorians were  
 disposed. They abandoned Nero only because  
 they were deceived. Several of them had en-  
 tered into Nymphidius's views, and though  
 that chief of the revolt was dead, yet their  
 minds were soured and restless. Disappointed  
 of the reward they had been promised, and  
 seeing, whilst things remained in the situation  
 they were, no probability of doing or getting  
 much; depending, too, but little on the favour  
 of a prince raised to empire by the legions;  
 their fidelity was the less stable as they held  
 Galba in contempt, nor did they scruple open-  
 ly to reproach him with his age and avarice.

The pretorians were not the only troops  
 then in Rome. Galba had brought with him  
 his legion out of Spain: the remains of the ma-  
 rine legion formed by Nero, and the detach-  
 ments of the German, British and Illyrian ar-  
 mies, by him intended to march against Vin-  
 dex, were likewise there; and all together  
 formed a very considerable military body in  
 that city, and a great force for whoever should  
 be able to fix their fluctuating minds.

Most

\* Ipsa ætas Galbæ et irrisui et fastidio erat, assuetis ju-  
 ventæ Neronis, et imperatoris forma ac decore corporis, ut  
 est mos vulgi, comparantibus. Tac.

Most of the provinces were quiet: but the A. R. 820.  
violent ferment that reigned in Gaul and the A. C. 69.  
German armies, plainly portended a dreadful  
storm. From the beginning of the troubles  
Gaul was divided into two very unequal fac-  
tions. The greater number had sided with  
Vindex; whilst those who bordered on Ger-  
many declared themselves his enemies, and  
even made war against him. This division still  
subsisted. The old partizans of Vindex remain-  
ed attached to Galba, who had heaped favours  
on them. The inhabitants of Treves, Langres,  
and parts adjacent, being excluded those fa-  
vours, and even punished by forfeitures of part  
of their lands, added jealousy to their resent-  
ment, and were not less incensed at the advan-  
tages they saw others enjoy, than at the hard-  
ships they themselves suffered.

The two \*armies in Germany, ever ready  
to unite, and by so doing to become very for-  
midable, were both dissatisfied and uneasy: a  
disposition of mind which, in a powerful body,  
borders near upon rebellion. Proud of the  
victory they had obtained over Vindex, they  
thought Galba distrusted them, because they  
had opposed his interest. They had not been  
prevailed on to abandon Nero without great dif-  
ficulty. They had offered the empire to Vir-  
ginus, and, though piqued against that great  
man for refusing it, yet they could not be re-  
conciled to the loss of him. The situation he  
was in at Galba's court, destitute of power, and  
even accused, seemed to reflect humiliation  
and dishonour on them, for they thought them-  
selves

\* Germanici exercitus, quod periculosissimum in tantis  
viribus, solliciti et irati. *Tac. Hist.* l. 8.

A. R. 620. selves accused in him. The \* army on the up-  
 A. C. 65. per Rhine despised its commander Hordeonius  
 Flaccus, an infirm, gouty old man, incapable  
 of behaving consistently, or of acting with au-  
 thority: he was not fit to manage even an  
 army where no dissatisfaction or uneasiness  
 had been. The restless soldiers under his com-  
 mand were but the more irritated by his feeble  
 attempts to keep them within bounds. The  
 legions on the lower Rhine had long been  
 without a chief since the death of Fonteius  
 Capito, till at length Galba sent them A. Vi-  
 tellius, whom he purposely chose as a man of  
 no consequence, and of whom he could have  
 no cause to be jealous. Vitellius was in fact  
 infinitely contemptible: gluttony stood first on  
 the list of his vices. Galba therefore conclud-  
 ed he could have nothing to apprehend from  
 him: those who think so much of their bellies,  
 said he, need not be feared; Vitellius will find  
 enough to fill his in a fat rich province. The  
 event, however, shewed Galba was mistaken.

*Suet. Vit. 7.*

*Tac.*

Germany was the only province that threat-  
 ened an immediate insurrection. Spain re-  
 mained quiet under the peaceable government  
 of Cluvius Rufus, famous for his learning,  
 eloquence, and knowledge of history, but quite  
 unexperienced in war. None of the legions  
 were less concerned than those of Britain in the  
 horrors and calamities of the civil wars: either  
 because the distance they were at, and their  
 being

\* Superior exercitus legatum Hordeoncum Flaccum sper-  
 nebant, senectæ et debilitate pedum invalidum; ne quieto  
 quidem milite regimen: adeo furentes infirmitate retinentis  
 etiam accendebantur. *Tac.*

being separated by the sea from the rest of the empire, prevented the contagious spirit of sedition reaching them; or that the frequent expeditions they had to make, kept them sufficiently employed, and taught them to make a better use of their valour by employing it against the enemy. Illyria, where the legions were quartered remote from each other, intermixing neither their forces nor their vices, was, by that prudent policy, secured from all disturbances.

The East was still at peace: no symptoms then appeared of the revolution, which, at last, fixed the fate of the empire. Mucian, to whom Vespasian was afterwards \* indebted for his elevation to the throne, commanded four legions in Syria. His life was a series of vicissitudes. In his youth he had powerful friends, to whom he paid his court with all the assiduity ambition could inspire. Disappointed in his views, his expences ruined him, and he was in a very distressed condition; besides which, he had the anger of Claudius to dread, so that he thought himself well off in obtaining a trifling command in Asia. There he lived some time, in a situation as near that of an exile as his future fortune was to empire.

\* Syriam et quatuor legiones obtinebat Licinius Mucianus, vir secundis adversisque juxta famosus. Insignis amicitias juvenis ambitiose coluerat. Mox attritus opibus, lubrico statu, suspecta etiam Claudii iracundia, in secretum Asiæ repositus, tam prope ab exsule fuit, quam postea a Principe. Luxuria, industria, comitate, arrogantia; malis bonisque artibus mixtus. Nihil voluptates, quomodo vacaret; quoties expedierat, magnæ virtutes palam laudares; secreta male audiebant. Sed apud subjectos, apud proximos, apud collegas variis illecebris potens; et cui expeditius fuerit tradere imperium, quam obtinere. Tac. Hist. i. 10.

A. R. 820. pire. His character was as checquered as his  
A. C. 69. life. He was a composition of activity for labour, of voluptuousness when unemployed, and of mildness and arrogance. When idle, pleasure was his study: when busy, no man was more indefatigably assiduous: his public behaviour commanded esteem, but his private life was not exempt from blame. Conforming himself to all he had connections with, he had the art of pleasing his inferiors, equals, and colleagues, and of making himself creatures and friends every where; in short, he was fitter to give the empire to another than to possess it himself, had he had any such views.

Vespasian was making war against the Jews with three legions. He had no thoughts of thwarting Galba, and, as I before said, had sent his son Titus to assure him of his submission. Tiberius Alexander, whom I have already had occasion to speak of more than once, by birth a Jew, and nephew to Philo, governed Egypt, and commanded the troops in that province. Since the death of Clodius Macer, Africa had submitted to the stronger power, and, little pleased with the wretched master it had been ruled by, was content with any emperor. The two Mauritania's, Rhetia, Noricum, Thracé, and all the other provinces that were governed only by intendants, followed the examples of the armies that were nearest them. Italy and the unarmed provinces could expect nothing better than to become a prey to whoever should be victorious. Such was the situation of things in every part of the empire, when Galba and Vinius, joint consuls, began

began a year, the last they saw, and almost fatal to the republic. A.R. 820. A.C. 69.

Soon after the first of January, letters were received from Pompeius Propinquus, intendant of Belgia, by which the court was informed, that the legions on the upper Rhine, in contempt of their oath of allegiance to Galba, demanded another emperor, the choice of whom they left to the senate and Roman people, to give their revolt some colour. This sedition, to which Vitellius owed his elevation to the empire, will be more particularly spoken of in its proper place. On the news of the sedition of the legions in Germany, Galba adopts Piso. Tac. Hist. i. 12. Suet. Galb. 16, 17. Plut. Galb.

Galba thereupon resolved no longer to defer executing the design he had before formed of adopting a successor, thinking that the best remedy he could apply to the growing evil, and that it was less his age that emboldened them to slight his authority, than the want of an heir to succeed him. He had been considering of it some months, and consulting with those he thought his friends: it was the subject that engrossed the talk of the whole town; for all men will be politicians, or at least attempt to be so. But those vague reports were of no consequence. Galba's ministers were the men who might have had most influence in such an affair; but they were always divided among themselves, even in the most trivial matters, much less could they agree in a thing of this importance.

Vinius supported Otho, who in fact seemed the most proper person that could be thought of. I have described Otho under Nero's reign, whose favourite he was for some time, but, on account of Poppæ, was afterwards removed from

A. R. 820. from court, and sent to govern Lusitania. I  
 A. C. 69. have likewise said, that of all the governors of  
 provinces, Otho was the first that declared for  
 Galba, and that he exerted himself strenuously  
 in his cause, in hopes of being adopted by him,  
 for even then he had that in view. That hope  
 increased daily; the soldiers were devoted to  
 him, and the old court wished for him, think-  
 ing to find in him another Nero.

But Vinius's espousing Otho, set the two  
 other ministers, Laco and Icclus, against him,  
 though they themselves had not as yet fixed on  
 any one to set up in opposition. They had taken  
 care to let their master know how great an in-  
 timacy there was between Vinius and Otho;  
 that a marriage was intended between the lat-  
 ter and the consul's daughter, who was a wi-  
 dow; and that Vinius was striving to promote  
 his own son-in-law in the person of Otho.  
 Tacitus thinks Galba had likewise an eye to  
 the public good, and that he thought the em-  
 pire had been taken from Nero to no purpose,  
 if it was to be left to Otho.

The choice he made seems to confirm that  
 opinion. Virtue determined him in favour of  
 Piso Licinianus, to whose ripe years and illustri-  
 ous birth was joined so \* rigid a severity of mo-  
 rals, that the gay part of the world called him  
 a man-hater. He was son of M. Crassus and  
 Scriboniana, and had been adopted by one of  
 the Piso's, but which we know not. His father  
 and mother were put to death by Claudius,  
 with an elder brother of his called Pompeius  
 Magnus. Another of his brothers, who seems  
 to

\* *Æstimatione recta severus, deterius interpretantibus  
 tristior habebatur. Tac.*



to have been the eldest of the family, perished under Nero. Himself had been banished, and probably did not return to Rome till the revolution that seated Galba on the throne. Suetonius says, that Galba was always fond of Piso, and had long before resolved to make him heir to his riches and name. Others thought, according to Tacitus, that Piso owed his adoption to Laco, who had formerly been acquainted with him at Rubellius Plautus's, but pretended not to know him, that his recommendation might not be suspected of interested views. Thus much at least is certain, that Piso's severity gave Galba as much pleasure, as it did uneasiness to the courtiers in general. The emperor holding a council, at which, besides Vinus and Laco, Marcius Celsus, consul elect, and Ducennius Geminus, prefect of the city, were present, sent for Piso, and taking him by the hand, addressed him thus:

“ Were I but a private man and to adopt you, it would certainly be an honour to me to receive into my family the descendant of \* Pompey and of Crassus; nor would it be less glorious to you, to add to the lustre of your non-nobility, that of the Sulpicii and Catuli. The rank to which the will of gods and men has raised me, stamps a different value on my adoption. Esteem for your  
 “ virtue

\* It was probably by his mother Scribonia, that Piso was descended from Pompey, whose names were taken by one of his brothers married to Claudius's daughter Antonia, and who was called Cn. Pompeius Magnus. The reader may see the genealogy of that family in Ryckius's notes on Tacitus, *Hist. l. 14. & Ann. II. 27.*

A. R. 820. " virtue, and love of my country, are the mo-  
 A. C. 69. " tives that induce me to take you from re-  
 " tirement, and offer you that supreme power,  
 " for which the ambition of our forefathers  
 " kindled up so many wars, and which I my-  
 " self have obtained by dint of arms. In this  
 " I follow the example of Augustus, who se-  
 " cured the next immediate rank to himself,  
 " first to his nephew Marcellus, next to his son-  
 " in-law Agrippa, then to his grand-children,  
 " and lastly, to his wife's son Tiberius. But  
 " Augustus sought a successor in his own fa-  
 " mily; I seek mine in the republic. Not that  
 " I am destitute of relations and friends, who  
 " have been of service to me in the war. But  
 " it was neither ambition, nor any private  
 " views that raised me to the empire: and as  
 " a proof of the rectitude of my intentions in  
 " the choice I now make, I might alledge,  
 " not only my own connections, to which  
 " I prefer you, but likewise your's. You  
 " have a brother, older than yourself. He  
 " would be worthy the fortune I offer you,  
 " if you was not still more worthy than him.  
 " \* The flights and starts of youth are over  
 " at

\* *Ea ætas tua, quæ cupiditates adolescentiæ jam effugerit; ea vita, in qua nihil præteritum excusandum habes. Fortunam adhuc tantum adversam tulisti. Secundæ res acrioribus stimulis animum explorant: quia miseriæ tolerantur, felicitate corrumpimur. Fidem, libertatem, amicitiam, præcipua humani animi bona, tu quidem eadem constantiâ retinebis; sed alii per obsequium imminuent. Irrumpet adulationis, blanditiæ; pessimum veri affectus venenum, sua cuique utilitas. Etiam ego ac tu simplicissime inter nos hodie loquimur: ceteri libentius cum fortuna nostra, quam nobiscum. Nam suadere principi quod oporteat, multi laboris: amentatio erga principem quemcumque sine affectu peragitur.*

“ at your age. Your conduct has never stood A.R. 320.  
 “ in need of an apologist. Hitherto you have A. C. 60.  
 “ felt only the frowns of fortune. Prosperity  
 “ puts the heart to a much severer trial. Many  
 “ nobly persevere in resisting adversity, who  
 “ are seduced and overcome by the smiles of  
 “ prosperity. I make no doubt but that you  
 “ will behave with the same equal mind, be  
 “ faithful to your engagements, and open and  
 “ sincere in your friendships, in which the  
 “ greatest blessings of life consist. But the  
 “ baneful complaisance of others will attempt  
 “ to undermine those virtues in you. Flattery  
 “ and servile adulation will assail you: private  
 “ interest, that mortal enemy to all true at-  
 “ tachment, will make treacherous deceivers  
 “ of all that are about you. I tell you plainly  
 “ and sincerely what I think. Our fortune,  
 “ more than ourselves, is what courtiers aim  
 “ at: for it is thought troublesome, and often  
 “ dangerous, to give a prince good advice;  
 “ whereas flattery has an ample field to dis-  
 “ play itself, without the heart’s being at all  
 “ concerned.

“ If \* the vast body of the empire could be  
 “ kept in equilibrium, without the assistance  
 “ of one immediate hand to govern and di-  
 “ rect it, I think nobly enough of myself to  
 “ say, I would have the honour of restoring  
 “ the old republic. But the necessity of a chief  
 “ has

\* Si immensum Imperii corpus stare ac librari sine rectoris posset, dignus etiam a quo Respublica inciperet. Nunc eo necessitatis jam pridem ventum est, ut nec mea senectus conferre plus populo Romano possit, quam bonum successorem; nec tua plus juvenis, quam bonum principem. Tac.

A. R. 820. " has long since been proved. The best pre-  
 A. C. 69. " sent I can make the Roman people, is to  
 " give them a good successor; and you will do  
 " your duty towards that people, if you govern  
 " them like a good prince. Under Tiberius  
 " and the succeeding emperors, we have been,  
 " like the patrimony of one single family, pos-  
 " sessed by right of inheritance. Election will  
 " stand us in the stead of liberty: and the Ju-  
 " lian and Claudian families being extinct, a-  
 " doption is the proper way to find out the  
 " most worthy: for, to be born of a prince, is  
 " the effect of chance; it is a circumstance  
 " that excludes freedom of judgment: but in  
 " adoption there is no constraint, and the pub-  
 " lic voice will always direct how to make a  
 " proper choice.

" Let the \* fate of Nero be ever before  
 " your eyes. What was the end of that  
 " prince, bloated with pride because the Cæ-  
 " sars were his ancestors? Neither Vindex with  
 " his unarmed province, nor I with my single  
 " legion, were what ruined him. It was his  
 " own debaucheries, his monstrous cruelty  
 " that forced mankind to shake off his detest-  
 " ed yoke, and to set an example, till then un-  
 " heard of, of an emperor condemned. Even  
 " we are not to flatter ourselves with too great  
 " security. Though raised to this high station  
 " of supreme power by success of war and  
 " right of election, and though we govern with  
 " the

\* Sit ante oculos Nero, quare longa Cæsarum serie ta-  
 mentem, non Vindex cum inermi provincia, aut ego cum  
 una legione, sed sua intemperata, sua luxuria, cervicibus pub-  
 licis depulsa. Neque erat adhuc damnati principis exem-  
 plar. Tac.

“ the strictest regard to all the laws of virtue, A. R. 829.  
“ yet envy will attack us. Be not however A. C. 69.  
“ dismayed, if in this general convulsion of the  
“ world, you still see two legions restless and  
“ discontented. I did not find matters quite  
“ calm neither when I took the helm of em-  
“ pire: and so soon as the people shall be in-  
“ formed of this adoption, by which a succes-  
“ sor is appointed and secured, my old age, the  
“ only thing they now find to reproach me  
“ with, will be forgot. The bad will always  
“ regret Nero; but it must be our study, that  
“ none but the bad may have cause to regret  
“ him.

“ Time will not permit me to lay down les-  
“ sons, or expatiate on what your conduct  
“ ought to be; nor can there be occasion for  
“ it, if I have made a proper choice. I shall  
“ only \* add in one word, that your surest and  
“ shortest way to distinguish between what are  
“ good and what are bad rules of conduct, is  
“ to recollect what you yourself have wished  
“ for and desired, and what you have con-  
“ demned, in the princes you have seen: for  
“ this state is not like others, where a single  
“ family reigns and keeps a whole nation in  
“ awe and slavery. The people you will have  
“ to govern can bear neither entire liberty, nor  
“ total servitude.”

So

\* Utilissimus idem ac brevissimus bonarum malarumque rerum dilectus est, cogitare quid aut nolueris sub alio principe, aut volueris. Neque enim, hic, ut ceteris in gentibus, certa dominorum domus, et ceteri servi: sed imperaturus es hominibus, qui nec totam servitatem pati possunt, nec totam libertatem. Tac.

A. R. 820. So \* spoke Galba, as appointing an heir to  
 A. C. 69. the empire. The rest already worshipped the  
 fortune of the new Cæsar.

Piso behaved like a man quite master of himself: no sign of emotion or immoderate joy was perceived in him from the first moment of his coming in, nor for a long time after, during which the eyes of all were attentively fixed upon him. His answer was full of respect towards his father and emperor, and of modesty in what related to himself. He seemed neither elated nor insensible, and could not but be thought more deserving the empire, than desirous of it.

Galba declares his adoption to the prætorians, whose minds he alienates by his severity.

The next consideration was, how it would be most proper to declare the adoption, whether to the people, the senate assembled, or the prætorians. It was resolved to begin with the latter, as an honourable distinction granted to the troops; and it was judged, that though it might be low and dangerous to curry favour with them, by giving money or granting them unmanly indulgences, yet all becoming methods of securing their approbation were to be used. In the mean time a prodigious crowd was gathered about the imperial palace, curious to dive into this important secret; and

\* Et Galba quidem hæc ac talia, tanquam principem faceret; ceteri tanquam cum facto loquebantur. Pisonem fuerunt statim intuentibus, et mox coniectis in eum omnium oculis, nullum turbati aut exultantis animi motum prodidisse. Sermo erga patrem imperatoremque reverens, de se moderatus; nihil in vultu habituque mutatum: quasi imperare posset magis quam vellet. *Tac.*

+ Circumsteterat interim palatium publica expectatio magni secreti impatiens, et male coereitam famam suppressentes agebant. *Tac.*

and the more care was taken to prevent its transpiring too soon, the greater was the impatience of the multitude, and their eagerness to credit the reports that began to spread. A. R. 820.  
A. C. 69.

This was on the tenth of January; and the storms of thunder, lightning and rain that fell, made it a dreadful day even for that season. The Romans had always superstitiously looked upon thunder as a bad omen for elections, and when it happened, used to break up their assemblies. Galba very justly laughed at those vulgar prejudices, and proceeded in what he was about. The event was against him, and of course confirmed the credulous in their belief.

His speech to the soldiers was not long. Being naturally given to few words, and affecting a \* brevity becoming his rank, he declared his adoption of Piso, agreeable to the example of Augustus; adding, that, according to the old military † custom, he had made choice of a companion in case any extraordinary occasions should require his assistance. He likewise added a word or two concerning the sedition in Germany, for fear his silence on that head should be thought mysterious, and give room to think it more serious than it really was. He said, that the fourth and eighteenth legions, stirred up a few turbulent men, had not however proceeded farther than words, and would soon return to their duty.

Galba

\* Imperatoria brevitate. Tac.

† Examples of that custom are not uncommon in the Roman History. The reader will find it practised by the Samnites. *Hist. of the Roman Republic, Tac. III.*

A. R. 820. Galba did not qualify the laconic dryness  
 A. C. 69. of his speech with any soothing expressions, any gifts of money, or promise of it: yet the officers and soldiers that were nearest his tribunal, applauded him with seeming satisfaction. The rest observed a heavy mournful silence, vexed at losing in a revolution brought about by dint of arms, the rewards they had used to be entitled to even in peace. Tacitus \* is positive that a small liberality, could he have brought his rigid œconomy to grant it, would have secured Galba the affection of all. His austerity, which might have suited the old times, but did not those in which he lived, was what ruined him.

The adoption notified to the senate.

From the camp, Galba proceeded to the senate, where his harangue was neither longer nor more studied. Piso expressed himself in a modest obliging manner, and the senators † were disposed to favour him. Many of them sincerely approved of his adoption: those who disliked it applauded however, and even more warmly than the rest: but the greater number, quite indifferent, and taking no farther concern in any public affairs, than what was necessary for their own private views and interests, were ready to pay homage to any rising fortune.

Galba hurls himself more and more.

In the meantime the news from Germany encreased the terrors and apprehensions of the whole

\* Constat potuisse conciliari animos quantulacumque parci ænis liberalitate. Neceit antiquus rigor & nimia severitas, cui jam pares non sumus. Tac.

† Et patrum favor aderat: multi voluntate: effusius qui noluerant; mediæque plurimi, obvio obsequio, privatas spes agitantes, sine publica cura. Tac.



whole city. The danger seemed great, and in fact it was. The senate was for sending a deputation of some of its members to appease the sedition. In the prince's council it was proposed to send Piso at the head of that deputation, that the name of Cæsar, added to the authority of that first body of the state, might strike an awe on the mutineers. Some proposed sending the prætorian præfect with Piso; and that was what quite disconcerted the plan, Laco not thinking it adviseable for him to run the hazard of such a commission. Even the senate's deputation did not take place. Galba, to whom the choice of deputies was left, named them, then admitted the excuses of several, and appointed new ones in their stead. Some were willing to go, whilst others declined it, according as they were influenced by hope or fear. From all those changes and variations resulted such a neglect and want of dignity and decency, as made the old emperor appear more contemptible than ever.

At the same time two tribunes of the prætorian cohorts were broke, with one belonging to those in the city, and another of the patrol or watch. The thing intended was, to make such examples of some, as should intimidate others who remained in place: but instead of having that effect, it served only to incense them more. They concluded they were all suspected, and that it was intended to destroy them one after another.

This disposition of theirs was extremely favourable to the ambitious views of Otho, who, enraged to see his hopes frustrated, had no other

Otho's  
wicked de-  
signs.

A. R. 820. other thoughts than how he might bring about  
 A. C. 69. by guilt, what he had not been able to effect by  
*Tac. Hist.* art. His bad conduct had reduced him to a \*  
 i. 21. necessity either of perishing or being emperor.  
*Plut. Galb.* He made no secret of it, but owned his debts,  
*Suet. Oth.* which amounted to two † hundred millions of  
 4. sesterces, were so great, that it was indifferent  
 † Sixteen to him whether he fell in battle by the enemy's  
 hundred sword, or by the prosecutions of his creditors,  
 thousand and the sentence of the judge. Living in such  
 pounds. luxury ‡ as must have ruined an emperor, and  
 reduced to greater indigence than even the  
 lowest private man could have borne, hating  
 and detesting Galba, and envying Piso, he  
 forged new fears and dangers, still more to  
 heighten his desires. He would say to him-  
 self: " He had been a burden to Nero : that,  
 " to wait for a new exile under an honourable  
 " name, was now out of the question. That  
 " princes never fail to suspect and hate the  
 " man whom public opinion destines to be  
 " their successor ; that that idea had already  
 " hurt him in the opinion of an almost decrepid  
 " emperor : what effect then must it have on  
 " a young prince naturally rigid and morose,  
 " and soured by a long exile ? That he could  
 " expect nothing less than death, and conse-  
 " quently ought to stick at nothing at a time  
 " when Galba was tottering, and Piso not  
 " yet settled. That a change of government  
 is

\* *Neque dissimulabat nisi Principum, se stare non posse: nihilque referre, ab hoste in acie, an in foro sub creditoribus caderit.* Suet.

† *Othonem . . . multa extimulabant: luxuria etiam principi onerosa, inopia vix privato toleranda; in Galbam ira, in Pisonem invidia fingeat et metum, quo magis concupisceret.* Tac.

“ is a favourable moment for great enterprises ; A. R. 820.  
 “ and that circumspection is out of season A. C. 69.  
 “ where repose is more dangerous than teme-  
 “ rity. In short, that since by the common  
 “ law of nature all must die, the only diffe-  
 “ rence is, either to be buried in oblivion, or  
 “ gloriously recorded to posterity : and that if  
 “ his fate was to be the same, whether inno-  
 “ cent or guilty, a man of spirit ought rather  
 “ to seek that fate, than coward like, to wait  
 “ its coming.”

These sentiments \* were backed in Otho by a firm and resolute courage, no ways resembling the effeminacy of his manners ; and all that were about him spurred him on. His freemen and slaves, accustomed to live as voluptuously as their master, was ever reminding him of the pleasures of Nero's court, the luxury and licentiousness that reigned there, and the advantages that supreme power affords to gratify the passions ; adding, that he might hope to enjoy them all if he did but dare ; and that it was low and unworthy him to leave the possession of them to others. Such exhortations were quite agreeable to his taste ; and his pleasing expectations were confirmed by astrologers †, a set of men, says Tacitus, whose trade it is to deceive the great, to feed their false hopes, and who, though condemned by all laws, yet

\* Non erat Othoni mollis & corpori similis animus. Et intimi libertorum servorumque, corruptius quam in privata domo habili, aulam Neronis, & luxus, adulteria, matrimonia, ceterasque regnorum libidines, avido talium, si auderet, ut sua ostentantes, quiescenti ut aliena exprobrabant. Tac.

† Genus hominum potentibus infidum, sperantibus fallax, quod in civitate nostra & vetabitur semper & retinebitur. Tac.

A. R. 820. yet are always retained in the service of cupi-  
 A. C. 69. dity.

Otho had long before began to consult them. He had that weakness in common with Poppææ, who had several in constant pay, and secretly confided in those impostors, so \* dangerous to be near an empress. One of them called Ptolemy, had foretold Otho, when he set out for Spain, that he would survive Nero. That prediction proving true, Otho conceived a great opinion of the astrologer; and Ptolemy growing bolder, ventured a second prophecy, whereby he promised him the empire after Galba. The circumstances of things and public report, might give him room to form that guess with some probability. But Otho †, as is natural to weak minds, apt to credit whatever is extraordinary and most obscure, was thoroughly satisfied of his fortune-teller's great skill, and made no doubt but that this oracle was dictated by his profound penetration into futurity. After Piso's adoption, Ptolemy ‡, unwilling to be thought a false prophet, resolved, since things did not come round of themselves, to help them, and advised sticking at no crime: a natural consequence of such expectations and desires as Otho had conceived and flattered himself with.

It is however uncertain, whether the design of conspiring against Galba's life should be dated

\* Pessimum principalis matrimonii instrumentum. Tac.

† Cupidine ingenii humani libentius obscura \* credendi. Tac.

‡ Ne durat Ptolomæus, jam & sceleris instinator, ad quod facillime ab ejus modi voto transitur. Tac.

\* The text says *oreis*, but commentators are of opinion it should be *credendi*.

dated from this time only, or whether it was formed before; for Otho had long studied to gain the affection of the army. It is most likely that wanting to be emperor at any rate, he would rather have chosen to ascend the throne by licit means; but that, rather than fail, he was determined to make use of any other. He would take particular notice of the old soldiers, calling them by their names, and saying they were all his comrades, for that they had served together under Nero: he enquired after those he did not see; helped such as were in distress; gave them money, saying how much he pitied them, and dropped ambiguous expressions concerning Galba, with whatever else was most proper to make impression on such people; and dispose them to mutiny.

In that manner did he practise on the troops himself, whilst his second, one Mævius Pudeus, an intimate of Tigellinus's, was not idle. He was charged with the detail; and knowing which were the most turbulent, which the most fickle characters, and which were most in want of money, he took care to bring them together, and secretly made them presents; till at last he was audacious enough, every time the emperor supped at Otho's house, to give every man on guard there a \* hundred sesterces, pretending it was done out of regard to Galba, whom it was in fact calculated to ruin. We may readily conclude he acted by Otho's order, and in his name; and he himself was so little cautious to conceal his seditious steps, that a soldier having a dispute with his neighbours about the limits of a field, Otho bought the whole adjoining field, and made a present

A. R. 820. present of it to the soldier. The præfect La-  
 A. C. 69. co, stupidly negligent, saw nothing of what was  
 going forward; he was equally ignorant both  
 of what was privately done, and what was  
 publicly talked of.

His last  
 steps to in-  
 vade the  
 empire.

Otho having resolved to throw off the mask  
 and attack Galba, charged Onomastus, one of  
 his freemen, with the conduct of the crime.  
 It is incredible to think how weak the means  
 were that he made use of in an enterprise of  
 such importance. A million of sesterces, that  
 is to say, about eight thousand pounds of our  
 money, which he had lately received from one  
 of the emperor's slaves, for an employment he  
 had procured him, was his whole treasure:  
 and Onomestus bribed by presents and pro-  
 mises, Barbius Proculus and Veturius, two \*  
 serjeants of the guards, cunning enterprising  
 fellows, and who had a knack of managing the  
 minds of the lower class. Two soldiers †, says  
 Tacitus with astonishment, undertook to de-  
 throne an emperor and make another, and suc-  
 ceeded.

It is true they had only to set fire to a train  
 ready laid. Among the prætorians still re-  
 mained some creatures of Nymphidius's: others  
 regretted Nero, and the licentiousness in which  
 they had lived under that emperor: and all  
 were incensed at having received no gratifica-  
 tion from Galba, and afraid of being reduced  
 from prætorian cohorts to legions, whose ser-  
 vice

\* So I render the titles of *Optio & Tesserarius*, to which  
 we have nothing exactly corresponding in our troops.

† *Suscepere duo manipulares imperium populi Romani  
 transferendum, & transtulerunt. Tac. Hist. l. 26.*

vice was much harder and less profitable. Bar-<sup>A. R. 820.</sup>  
bius and Veturius however communicated their <sup>A. C. 69.</sup>  
plan only to a few of the most resolute, sowing  
amongst the rest such seeds of sedition, as  
would be ready to shoot up at a moment's  
warning.

I have already observed, that besides the præ-  
torians, there were at that time in Rome, le-  
gions and detachments of legions, brought  
thither from different provinces on account of  
the late disturbances. They too caught the  
infection, imitating the example of their se-  
ditionous comrades in Germany: and matters  
were so easily and expeditiously prepared, that  
the day after the ides, which was the 14th of Ja-  
nuary, the conspirators would have taken Otho  
as he was returning home from supper, and  
proclaimed him emperor, had they not feared  
the accidents that might happen in the dark,  
or from the drunkenness of most of those who  
were to be employed, and the difficulty of col-  
lecting together the soldiers of the several  
armies, dispersed over all the city. The tu-  
mult would undoubtedly have been great: but  
that was not the consideration that withheld  
villains, ready to murder their prince in cold  
blood. They were afraid the legionary sol-  
diers, but lately come from the provinces, not  
knowing Otho personally, might mistake some  
other for him. The execution of their plot  
was therefore deferred to the next.

It was not possible for all this to be carried  
on so privately but that something must tran-  
spire. Galba was informed of it, but Laco  
prevented his minding what was said. That  
prefect was a blundering obstinate man;

not

A. R. 820. not <sup>2</sup> in the least acquainted with the temper  
A. C. 69. of the soldiers, and always ready to contradict  
every sentiment but his own, though never so  
just and proper.

Execution  
of the con-  
spiracy. The fifteenth of January, the day fixed upon  
for the execution of the plot, Otho, according  
to custom, waited on the emperor and was re-  
ceived as usual; after which he attended Galba  
to offer up a sacrifice, and with great joy heard  
the priest who consulted the entrails of the  
victims, declare, he found signs of the anger of  
the gods, and of imminent danger from a do-  
mestic enemy.

At that instant his freeman Onomastus came  
to tell him that the architect and masons wait-  
ed for him. That was the signal agreed on to  
signify that the conspirators were ready, and  
that the soldiers began to assemble. Otho with-  
drew, and being asked why he went, answered,  
that he was about purchasing an old house, but  
wanted first to have it examined. Leaning on  
his freeman's arm, he reached the military pil-  
lar in the Forum, where he found three and  
twenty soldiers, who saluted him emperor. Ter-  
rified at their small number, he was for return-  
ing back, if we may credit Plutarch, and re-  
nouncing an enterprise that seemed too boldly  
concerted: but the soldiers would not let him.  
Putting him immediately into a chair, they  
carried him to the camp, holding their drawn  
swords in their hands. On the road they were  
met by as many more soldiers; some of them  
already informed of what was doing, but most  
led

\* Ignarus militarium animorum, consilique quamvis  
egregii, quod non ipse afferret, inimicus, & adversus peris-  
tos pervicax. Tac.



led thither by curiosity and surprize: they accompanied Otho, some drawing their swords and making a great noise, whilst others were silent, waiting the event before they would declare themselves. The tribune, who guarded the camp gate, either disconcerted by the novelty of so strange an event, or apprehending the contagion might have reached within the camp, and that it would be equally dangerous and useless to attempt opposition, let them pass without resistance: and the other officers following his example, preferred present safety to honour attended with danger: so that \* this horrid deed was undertaken by only a handful of villains; though wished for by more, and tolerated by all.

Galba † was still busied with his sacrifice, and, as Tacitus says, teasing the gods, already declared in favour of his rival. A report was spread, that a senator, whose name none could at first tell, was carrying to the prætorian camp: Otho, was soon known to be the man. At the same time, those who had met the rebel troops, running back to the city, some of them increased the terror by magnifying objects, whilst others made slight of it, not forgetting to flatter, even in that critical moment. A council was held, in which it was resolved to sound the dispositions of the cohort then on guard. Piso was ordered to do it: Galba being reserved as a last resource, in case the evil required stronger remedies. The new Cæsar, assembled

\* Isque habitus animorum fuit, ut pessimum facinus audent pauci, plures vellent, omnes paterentur. Tac.

† Ignarus interim Galba, & sacris intentus, fatigabat alieni jam imperii deos. Tac.

A. R. 820. assembled the cohort before the gates of the  
A. C. 69. imperial palace, and addressed them thus from  
a balcony.

Piso's  
speech to  
the cohort  
on guard  
before the  
palace.

“ This \* is the sixth day, my brave fellow  
“ soldiers, since, without knowing what the  
“ event might be, nor whether I ought to  
“ wish or fear a title, which raises me next to  
“ empire, I have been named Cæsar. The  
“ success is in your hands: on you depends  
“ the fate of our family, and of the republic.  
“ Do not, however, imagine I fear for myself  
“ personally; any fatal consequence. I have  
“ been long accustomed to adversity, and now  
“ find, that the highest fortune is not the least  
“ exposed to danger. But I lament the fate  
“ of my father, the senate, and the empire, if  
“ we must perish to day; or, which must be  
“ equally grievous to such as are friends to  
“ virtue, purchase our safety at the expence of  
“ blood. It was no small comfort to us, in the  
“ last revolution, to find it accomplished with-  
“ out the death of any. My adoption seemed  
“ to guard against all apprehensions of a civil  
“ war, even after Galba. An audacious man  
“ dares to frustrate those pleasing hopes.

“ I will not boast either my birth or life.  
“ Virtues need not be mentioned where Otho  
is

\* Sextus dies agitur, commilitones, ex quo ignarus futuri,  
& sive optandum hoc nomen, sive timendum erat, Cæsar ad-  
scitus sum: quo domus nostræ aut reipublicæ fato, in vestra  
manu positum est. Non quia meo nomine tristiorem casum  
paveam, ut qui adversa expertus, quum maxime discam ne  
secunda quidem minus discriminis habere. Patris & sena-  
tus, & ipsius imperii vicem doleo, si nobis aut perire hodie  
necesse est, aut, quod æque apud bonos miserum est, occi-  
dere. Tac.

“ is concerned. His vices, for which only he A. R. 820.  
 “ is famous, ruined the empire, when he was A. C. 69.  
 “ but the emperor’s favourite. Is it for his  
 “ indolence, his languishing air, and effeminate  
 “ dress, that he is thought worthy of the  
 “ throne? those \* who take his luxury for li-  
 “ berality are mistaken. He will know how to  
 “ dissipate, but not how to give. What are  
 “ his thoughts now taken up with, but parties  
 “ of debauch, adultery, and women void of  
 “ honour? Those are what he thinks the pre-  
 “ rogatives of supreme power: the shame and  
 “ ignominy of the empire is his pleasure. How  
 “ † should he think otherwise? He that attains  
 “ sovereignty by crimes and guilt, will never  
 “ be governed by the maxims of virtue.

“ The power of the Cæsars was given Galba  
 “ by the unanimous consent of all mankind:  
 “ and, with your approbation, Galba has ap-  
 “ pointed me to succeed him. If the republic,  
 “ senate and people, be no longer but empty  
 “ names, at least it is your interest, my dear  
 “ comrades, not to let the very worst of sol-  
 “ diers give you emperors. The legions have  
 “ been known to rebel against their chiefs.  
 “ But hitherto the fidelity of the prætorian co-  
 “ hort has been inviolable. Even Nero was  
 “ not abandoned by you: it was he himself  
 “ that forsook you. What! shall less than thir-  
 “ ty vagabonds, who would not be permitted  
 “ to chuse even a centurion or a tribune, be  
 “  2  suffered

\* Falluntur quibus luxuria specie liberalitatis imponit. Perdere iste sciet, donare nesciet. *Tac.*

† Nemo unquam imperium flagitio quæsitum bonis artibus retinuit. *Tac.*

A. R. 820. “suffered to dispose of the empire? Would you,  
 A. C. 69. “by your inaction, give a sanction to them?  
 “Would you be abettors of their crimes, and  
 “partakers of their shame? their daring licen-  
 “tiousness will reach the provinces: we shall  
 “be the first victims of it, and the scourge of  
 “the wars that must ensue, will light on you.  
 “After all, what you are to have for murder-  
 “ing your prince, is no more than you may  
 “acquire with innocence: you shall receive  
 “from us as a reward for your fidelity, as much  
 “as is offered you to commit so detestable a  
 “crime.”

Galba tries  
 the sol-  
 diers.

Piso's speech had its effect. The soldiers he harangued were not prejudiced by any impression contrary to their duty; and, accustomed to revere the orders of the Cæsars, they drew up in arms, and displayed their standards. But their fidelity, as we shall see, was very slender. Marius Celsus, known to the legions of Illyria, in which he had formerly had a command, was sent towards the detachment of that army, then encamped in Agrippa's portico. In another quarter were some companies of veterans of the German legions, whom Nero had sent to Alexandria, and suddenly recalled. They were sent for by two first captains of legions: and though their fellow soldiers had already proclaimed Vitellius emperor, yet they shewed more fidelity and attachment to Galba, than any other body of troops, out of gratitude for his kindness towards them, and the care he had taken to procure them proper refreshments after the fatigue of a long voyage.

Suet. Galb.  
 20.  
 Tac. Hist.  
 l. 31.

They excepted, all the military people in Rome sided with Otho. The legions of marines

rines was incensed against Galba, for the cruelty with which he had used them on his arrival in the city. The prætorians would not listen to, and even used very roughly, three tribunes, who attempted to dissuade them from their wicked design. The Illyrian soldiers, instead of hearing Marius Celsus, turned the points of their swords against him.

The people seemed well affected to Galba. An infinite multitude filled the palace, and with loud cries demanded Otho's death, and that his accomplices might be banished, making as great an uproar as if they had been asking for some new diversion in the circus, or theatre. But \* esteem and real attachment had no share in it, for the day was not ended, before they expressed as tumultuously, quite different sentiments: a habitude of flattering whoever held the supreme rank, an empty shew, and a love of noise and disturbance, was all that animated them.

In the mean time Galba was deliberating, whether he should shut himself up in his palace, or go out and meet the seditious. Vinus was for his keeping within doors: he advised the emperor to arm his slaves, fortify the avenues of the palace, and not expose himself to the fury of the rebels. " Give, said he, " the wicked time to repent, and the good, " time to concert measures among themselves. " Crimes † require dispatch: but virtuous coun- " cils

A. R. 820.  
A. C. 69.

The people  
make an  
idle shew of  
affection for  
him.

Galba re-  
solves to  
meet the  
rebels.

\* Neque illis iudicium aut veritas, quippe eodem die diversa pari certamine postulaturi: sed tradito more quem cunque principem adulandi licentia acclamationum, & studiis inanibus. Tac.

† Scelera impetu, bona consilia mora valescere. Tac.

A. R. 820. "cils are strengthened by reflection. After  
 A. C. 69. "all, if it be proper for you to shew yourself,  
 "you will still be at liberty<sup>d</sup> to do it; if you  
 "go out, it may not be in your power to  
 "return."

Others thought it was best to make haste, before a growing conspiracy should acquire additional strength. "By our activity, said they, we shall disconcert Otho, whose sly and precipitate steps speak his weakness.— He slunk away by stealth, presented himself to a multitude that knew nothing of him, and is taking advantage of the delay our indolence grants him, to learn to act the emperor. Is it proper to wait till, having united and confirmed the whole camp in his favour, he takes possession of the Forum by force of arms, and shews you Cæsar in the capitol? whilst you, courageous emperor, with your brave friends shall lock and bolt yourself up, with a view undoubtedly to sustain a siege? your slaves will be of great service indeed, if the zeal and ardour the people now shew for you, if this first spurt of their indignation, which always is the hottest, be suffered to cool. The \* least honourable is therefore the least safe resolution. If we must perish, let us brave the danger: at least Otho will be more hated, and we more esteemed for it."

Vinius strongly opposing that advice, Laco was so furious as to menace him. A deadly hatred subsisted between them, which the free-  
 man

\* Proinde intuta quæ indecora: vel si cadere necesse sit, occurrendum discrimini. Id Othoni invidiosius, & ipsi honestum. Tac.

man Icelus took care to encrease; and they A. R. 820.  
 obstinately \* persisted in sacrificing the public A. C. 69.  
 good to their personal enmities. Galba, who  
 wanted neither courage nor dignity of senti-  
 ments, was not long before he determined in  
 favour of the nobler means: only it was thought  
 a proper precaution to send Piso beforehand to  
 the prætorian camp, to prepare matters for the  
 emperor's reception. They were of opinion,  
 that the great name of that young prince, the  
 recent splendour of his adoption, and the idea  
 the public had of his hatred to Vinus, univer-  
 sally detested, would render him agreeable to  
 the soldiers.

Piso had hardly left the palace, when a re-  
 port was spread, that Otho had just been killed  
 in the camp. At † first it was only a vague  
 rumour: but soon, as generally happens in all  
 lies of importance, several attested the fact,  
 assuring they were present and had seen it. The  
 vulgar believed it; some because they wished  
 it might be so, and others, because they did  
 not think it worth their while to examine fur-  
 ther. Many were of opinion, that those reports  
 were not spread without design, but that they  
 were set on foot by Otho's private emissaries,  
 who, mixing with the crowd, gave them out  
 with an intent to draw Galba from the palace.

The ‡ credulity, not only of the people, but  
 of a great number of senators and Roman  
 knights

\* *Privati odii pertinacia in publicum exitium. Tac.*

† *Vagus primum & incertus rumor: mox, ut in magnis mendaciis, inter fuisse sequidam et vidisse affirmabant: credula fama, ut inter gaudentes, & incuriosos. Tac.*

‡ *Tum vero non populus tantum & imperita plebs in plausus & immodica studia, sed equitum plerique ac senatorum,*

A. R. 820. knights seconded the views of Galba's enemies.  
A. C. 69.

Free from fear, and thinking themselves no longer under a necessity of keeping any measures, each vied with the other, who should express most joy. The barriers of the palace were forced, they ran into the apartments, all wanted to shew themselves to Galba, lamenting their having been robbed by the soldiers, of the honour of revenging him. The most noisy were, as generally happens, the greatest cowards, and most disposed, as the event proved, to fly from even the appearance of danger: proud and haughty in words, and brave in talk, none of them was, nor could be certain of the fact, though they all assured it: so that Galba, deceived by the universal error, put on his armour, and got into his litter. At that instant, a soldier, called Julius Atticus, met him, and shewing his bloody sword, boasted he had killed Otho. "Friend, said Galba to him, who ordered thee?" An \* expression well becoming a prince who wanted to keep the soldiers within due bounds. Threats could not dismay, nor flattery enervate him.

Fine answer of Galba's to a soldier who boasted he had killed Otho.

Ardour of the soldiers for Otho. Tac. Hist. l. 36.

The situation of things was in fact very different from what he imagined. The whole camp acknowledged Otho, and such was the ardour of the soldiers, that not satisfied with forming

natorum, posito metu incanti, refractis palatii foribus, ruere iutus, ac se Galba ostentare, preceptam sibi ultionem querentes: ignavissimus quisque, & in periculo non ansurus, nihil verbis, lingue feroces: nemo scire, & omnes affirmare. Donec inopia veri & consensu errantium victus, sumpto thorace Galba . . . sella levaretur. Tac.

\* Insigni animo ad coercendum militarem licentiam, minantibus intrepidus, adversus blandientes incorruptus. Tac.



forming a rampart about him with their bodies, A. R. 820.  
 the prætorians placed him in the midst of their A. C. 69.  
 standards, on an eminence where but just before, was seen a golden statue of Galba. Neither tribune nor centurion was suffered to approach; even the soldiers warned him to guard against their officers. The air was rent with shouts of joy and mutual exhortations, far unlike the empty cries of impotent flattery uttered by the city mob. As fast as any soldier came in, the others took him by the hand, held their arms over him, carried him to Otho, and dictated the oath he was to take, sometimes recommending the soldiers to the emperor, and sometimes the emperor to the soldiers. Otho on \* his side acted his part perfectly well; saluting some with his hand, holding it out to others to kiss, expressing by signs his regard for, and submission to the multitude; and doing every low trick that he thought could please. But † above all he took care to promise great matters, repeating it over and over, that he desired nothing more for himself than what the troops should please to give him.

So soon as he knew the legion of marines He harangues them.  
 had declared in his favour, he began to confide in his own strength: and, having till then acted only as a seducer, who wants to make himself creatures, he now thought it time to proceed as head of a party, and one who had  
 a num-

\* Non deerat Otho protendens manus, adorare vulgum, jacere oscula, & omnia, serviliter pro dominatione. *Tac.*

† Nihil magis pro concione testatus est, quam id demum se habiturum quod sibi illi reliquissent. *Suet. Oth. 6.*

A. R. 820. a numerous and powerful body under his com-  
A. C. 69. mand. He assembled the soldiers, and harangued them as follows. " I know not, fellow  
" soldiers, on what footing I ought now to ad-  
" dress you. I am not at liberty to speak to  
" you as a private man, since you have made me  
" emperor; nor as an emperor whilst another  
" enjoys the empire. It is uncertain too, what  
" title should be given you, whilst it remains  
" a doubt, whether it be an emperor or an  
" enemy to the Roman people that is harbour-  
" ed in your camp. Do you hear the cries  
" by which my death and your punishment are  
" demanded? so sure it is that your fate and  
" mine are inseparably united, and that we  
" must either perish or triumph together. Even  
" Galba, mild and clement as he is, has per-  
" haps already granted what has been request-  
" ed. None can be surprized at it, after hav-  
" ing seen so many innocent thousands mas-  
" saced by his orders, though no body desired  
" it. I shudder with horror whenever I recol-  
" lect Galba's fatal entry, and the inhuman  
" barbarity with which he decimated at the  
" city gates, the unhappy soldiers who trusted  
" to his mercy; the only exploit by which he  
" has signalized himself. For what other me-  
" rit has he brought with him to the throne,  
" but the murders of Fonteius Capito in Ger-  
" many, of Macer in Africa, of Cingonius  
" Varro on the road, of Petronius Turpilianus  
" in Rome, and of Nymphidius in your camp?  
" Where is the province, where the army in  
" which he has not violently shed innocent  
" blood, or which, as he calls it, he has not  
" purged

“ purged and reformed? What is a \* crime in A. R. 820.  
 “ others, he calls a remedy: cruelty in him is A. C. 69.  
 “ wholesome severity, avarice good economy,  
 “ the punishments and insults he makes you  
 “ suffer, maintaining of discipline.  
 “ Nero has been dead but seven months,  
 “ and Icelus had already plundered more than  
 “ ever Vatinius, Polycletes, and Helius ever  
 “ did. Vinius † would not have dared to give  
 “ so great a loose to his licentiousness and avi-  
 “ dity, even if he had himself been emperor,  
 “ as he has done whilst only minister: He has  
 “ vexed and harrassed us like people over  
 “ whom he could rule, without thinking of  
 “ sparing us because we belonged to another.  
 “ The house of that man is alone sufficient to  
 “ pay you the gratification you never yet re-  
 “ ceived, though you are continually reproach-  
 “ ed with it. And ‡ to cut off all hopes of your  
 “ ever having it, even from his successor,  
 “ Galba singles out a chosen exile, as the per-  
 “ son, who, of all men is most like himself  
 “ for moroseness and avarice. You saw, my  
 “ dear companions, in what manner the gods  
 “ declared by a violent storm their dislike of  
 “ this ill-fated adoption. The senate and Ro-  
 “ man people think the same. Your valour  
 “ is expected to give the signal; you are the  
 “ soul

\* Nam quæ alii scelera, hic remedia vocat: dum falsis nominibus severitatem pro severitia, parcimoniam pro avaritia, supplicia & contumelias vestras disciplinam appellat. Tac.

† Minore avaritia aut licentia grassatus esset Vinius, si ipse imperasset. Nunc & subjectos nos habuit tanquam suos, & viles tanquam alienos. Tac.

‡ Ac nequa saltem in successore Galbæ spes esset, accessit ab exilio quem tristitia & avaritia sui simillimum judicebat. Tac.

A. R. 820. " soul of all great and noble enterprizes, which,  
 A. C. 69. " without your assistance, could never be  
 " brought to bear. It is not that war is in the  
 " case, nor that any danger can threaten you.  
 " The arms of all the troops in Rome are join-  
 " ed to yours. One only cohort, and that but  
 " \* half armed, serves Galba, less as a defence  
 " than as a guard that keeps him for us. The  
 " moment those soldiers see you, the moment  
 " I order them, no other conflict will remain,  
 " but to try who shall shew the greatest zeal.  
 " But let us hasten: all † delays are hurtful to  
 " an enterprize, best praised when crowned  
 " with success."

After this speech, Otho ordered the arsenal to be thrown open, and all took the first arms they found, without distinction of prætorian or legionary, national or foreign troops. No ‡ tribune, no centurion was seen, but every man was his own officer, and commander; animated by the grief of the good, a powerful incentive to the bad.

Galba is  
 massacred  
 in the Fo-  
 rum by O-  
 tho's party.

Things were in this situation when Piso, sent as I have said by Galba, drew near the prætorian camp. The shouts and tumultuous noise he heard, obliged him to return back, and he met Galba going towards the Forum.

At

\* The Roman soldiers were never completely armed but for battle. When on guard they had only a sword and lance, and their dress was the toga, as Tacitus expressly says in this place, *una cohors togata*. Even in camp they had not their full armour, as appears by Otho's order after his speech to open the arsenal for the soldiers to arm themselves.

† Nullus cunctationi locus est in eo concilio quod non potest laudari nisi peractum.

‡ Nullo tribunorum centurionumve adhortante, sibi quisque dux & instigator, & precipuum pessimorum incitamentum, quod boni crebant. Tac.

At the same time Marius Celsus brought bad tidings of the Illyrian soldiers. Galba was extremely perplexed. Some were for having him return to the palace; others advised his securing the capitol; and many were of opinion he had best mount the tribunal for harangues. The greater number was content to refute whatever was proposed: and, \* which is always the case, where unsuccessful counsels are given, things past were called to mind and talked of, and what it was now too late to put in execution was thought the best step that could have been taken.

The mob † that filled the Forum bore Galba from one side to the other, without his being able to resist their torrent. The temples, basilics, and other places were full, and sorrow was painted in every countenance. Not a shout, nor hardly a whisper from that vast multitude, attentively waiting what would be the event: a melancholy silence, offspring of fear and despair, reigned throughout the whole.

News was brought Otho that the people were taking arms, on which he ordered those about him to run instantly and prevent the danger. Thus, ‡ says Tacitus, did the Roman

\* Quum—ut evenit in consiliis infelicibus, optima videntur quorum tempus effugerat. Tac.

† Agebatur huc illuc Galba turba fluctuantis impulsu, completis undique basilicis & templis, lugubri prospectu. Neque populi aut plebis ulla vox, sed attoniti vultus, & conversæ ad omnia aures, neque tumultus neque quies, quale magni metus & magne iræ silentium est.

‡ Igitur milites Romani quasi Vologesen aut Pacorum avito Arsacidarum solo depulsuri, ac non imperatorem suum æthernem & senem trucidare pergerent, disjecta plebe, proculcato

A. R. 820. man soldiers, as if they had been to dethrone  
 A. C. 69. Vologeses, or Pazorus, or the whole race of  
 the Arsacidæ, and not massacre their weak,  
 unarmed and venerable emperor, disperse the  
 mob, tread the senate under foot, rush sword  
 in hand into the Forum: and neither the sight  
 of the capitol, nor respect for the temples that  
 surrounded them, nor the majesty of empire,  
 were able to awe them, nor prevent their com-  
 mitting a crime, they were sure to suffer for,  
 under whoever should succeed the murdered  
 prince.

The moment that armed troop appeared,  
 the ensign of the cohort that was with Galba,  
 tore off that prince's image from his standard,  
 and threw it on the ground. His insolence  
 was a signal to the soldiers who all declared in  
 favour of Otho; the Forum was cleared in an  
 instant by the flight of all the people, or if any  
 still hesitated, the seditious, sword in hand  
 soon brought them to. Thus was Galba aban-  
 doned by all: and the veterans detached from  
 the German armies, who alone were well dis-  
 posed, and were marching to his assistance,  
 arrived too late, because, not knowing the  
 streets, they had taken a round-about way.  
 Those that carried Galba, frightened out of their  
 senses, overturned his litter, and threw him  
 on the ground, near a part of the Forum call-  
 ed the lake † Curtius. His last words have  
 been

*Suet. Gall.*  
*c. 20.*

*culeato senatu, truces armis, rapidis equis forum irumpunt. Nec illos capitolii adspectus, & imminentium templorum religio, & priores & futuri principes terrere, quo minus fasserent scelus cujus ultor est quisquis successit. Tac.*

\* For the origin of this name see M. Rollin's *Rom. Hist.* T. III. p. 53. \*\*

been differently told, according as those who have recorded them, liked or disliked him. A. R. 820.  
A. C. 69. Some say, he asked in an humble manner what crime he had committed, and promised to satisfy the soldiers, if they would but grant him a few days delay. Others, in greater number, assure us, that he boldly presented his throat to the murderers, exhorting them to strike if they thought the good of the state required it. But whatever he might say, could have little weight with such wretches. Their barbarity was so great that, after stabbing him in the throat and killing him, after even cutting off his head, they hacked and mangled his arms and thighs, the rest of the body being covered by his cuirass. The soldier, who cut off his head, at first wrapt it up in his cloaths, there being no hair at all to hold it by; till, exhorted by his comrades, to shew the trophy of their guilty exploit, he thrust his fingers into the mouth, and so held it up in the air, till a pike was given him, on which he stuck it.

Vinius could not escape death. It was but a few moments since the præfect Laco, either out of policy or hatred, was going to kill him without telling Galba, but did not find a convenient opportunity. He was no sooner out of that danger, with which perhaps he never was acquainted, then he fell into the hands of Otho's partizans. The circumstances of his death, are likewise variously told. Some say he was so terrified that he could not utter a word; others, that he cried out, Otho did not mean his death: which was thought a proof of intelligence between him, and his master's enemy and murderer. Tacitus has so bad an Death of  
Vinius.  
Tac. Hist.  
l. 39, 42. opinion

A. R. 820 opinion of him, that \* he is inclined to think  
 A. C. 69 him an accomplice in the conspiracy, of which  
 he was the cause, and his crimes the pretence.  
 However that may be, Vinius was first wound-  
 ed in the knee in his flight, after which a sol-  
 dier belonging to the legions, ran him through  
 the sides with his lance.

Death of  
 Piso.

No body had attempted to assist either Galba  
 or Vinius. But Piso found a defender in the  
 person of Sempronius Densus captain of his  
 guards. That generous officer, the † only one  
 worthy the name of Roman, whom, the sun,  
 to make use of Plutarch's expression, saw in  
 that day of guilt and horror, drawing his dag-  
 ger, went up to the assassins, and, upbraiding  
 them with their perfidy, turned their efforts  
 against himself, by the blows and approbrious  
 language he gave them; and, at the expence  
 of his own life, procured Piso, who was  
 wounded, means to take shelter in the temple  
 of Vesta. One of the public slaves received  
 him there; and, moved with compassion,  
 concealed him in his little room; where Piso,  
 protected, not by the sanctity of the asylum,  
 but because the place of his concealment was  
 unknown, prolonged life for a few moments:  
 but was soon found by two soldiers, expressly  
 ordered to kill him, who dragged him out, and  
 butchered him at the door of the temple.

The heads of the three victims of his am-  
 bition were carried to Otho, who examined  
 them

\* Huc potius ejus vita famaue inclinât, ut conscius scele-  
 ris fuit, ejus causa erat. Tac.

† Οὐ μόνον ἥλιος ἐπέειπεν ἐν μυριάδι τοσαύταις ἀλίων τῆς Ρωμαίων  
 ἀγαθονίας. Plut. Galb.



them attentively. But \* above all he could not cease looking eagerly on Piso's. Whether it be that, then freed from all apprehensions, his mind was sufficiently easy to taste joy and satisfaction; or that, still respecting the imperial majesty in Galba, and remembering how intimate he had been with Vinus, the sight of them touched his conscience, hardened as it was in guilt: whereas he saw in Piso only an enemy and a rival, from whom he could without scruple relish the pleasure of being delivered.

A. R. 820.  
A. C. 69.  
The heads  
of Galba,  
Piso, and  
Vinius car-  
ried to O-  
tho, and  
stuck each  
of them on  
a pike.

Every sentiment of humanity was extinct.—The three heads, stuck on pikes, were ostentatiously borne, among the standards near the eagle; and those who pretended, either truly or falsely, to have had a share in those horrid executions, gloried in it, and shewed their bloody hands. After Otho's death upwards † of a hundred and twenty petitions were found among his papers, claiming rewards for signal services done that fatal day. Vitellius made strict search after all whose names they bore, and put them to death, not out of regard to Galba, but in consequence of the standing maxim of princes, who are willing by such examples to secure

\* Nullam eadem Otho majore lætitiæ excepisse, nullum caput tam insatiabilibus oculis perlustrasse dicitur: seu tum primum levata omni sollicitudine mens, vacare gaudio cœperat: seu recordatio majestatis in Galba; amicitia in T. Vinio, quamvis humilitum animum imagine tristi confuderat: Pisonis, ut inimici & æmuli, cœde lætari, jus fasque credebat.

† Plures quam CXX libellos præmia exposcentium, ob aliquam notabilem illa die operam. Vitellius postea invenit; omnesque conquiri & interfici jussit, non honore Galbæ, sed tradito principibus more, munimentum ad presens in posterum ultionem.

## HISTORY OF THE EMPERORS.

A. R. 820. secure their own safety, or at least to revenge  
 A. C. 69. the injury done to majesty.

Laco and  
 Icelus put  
 to death.  
*Tac. Hist.*  
 l. 46.

Otho took care not to let the præfect Laco, nor Icelus, escape with impunity. Under pretence of banishing the first to an island, he had him killed in his way thither. Less precaution was necessary with Icelus, who being but a freeman, was executed publicly.

Otho permits those  
 he had put  
 to death to  
 be buried.

Otho's cruelty towards those whom his ambition had made his enemies, did not however extend beyond their death. He suffered Verania, Piso's wife, to pay the last duties to her husband; and Crispina, Vinus's daughter, to do the same for her father. They each of them purchased from the soldiers, still more covetous than cruel, the heads of persons so dear to them, and joined them to their bodies.

Piso was but thirty-one years old when he perished, leaving behind him a name much fairer than his fortune had been happy. After suffering the greatest misfortunes in his family and person, the supreme rank to which Galba's adoption should have raised him, vanished in four days, and served only to hasten his death. I have said enough of Vinus, and shall only add that \* his will did not take place, on account of his immense riches, whereas Piso's poverty secured the execution of his.

*Phil. &  
 Suet. Galb.*

Galba's body remained a long time exposed to every insult, without any one's attempting to take care of it, till at length Helvidius Priscus with Otho's leave carried it off, and delivered it to one of Galba's slaves called Argius, who gave it a homely burial in the gardens belonging

\* Testamentum T. Vinii magnitudine opum irritum. Pisonis supremum voluntatem paupertas firmavit. *Tac.*

longing to his family. His head, after being long the sport of the lowest creatures in the army, was purchased for a hundred pieces of gold, by a freeman of Patrobius's, to take on it a low revenge, to appease the manes of his patron, a freeman of Nero's, put to death by Galba. He used it with the utmost indignity before the tomb of Patrobius, and it was the next day before Argius could get it, when he burnt it, and added the ashes to those of the body.

Such \* was the fate of Galba when seventy three years old, after enjoying under the reigns of five succeeding princes a constant series of prosperity: happier far whilst others reigned than when he himself was emperor. His family was one of the most noble in Rome, and very opulent. Himself was no great genius; he was rather exempt from vice than endowed with virtue: though still it must be owned, that if he had not those vices which are destructive of society, he had his personal faults, the shame and infamy of which are sufficient to sully his memory. Though not indifferent to praise, he avoided ostentation. The riches of another

A. R. 820,  
A. C. 69:  
Tac.

Galba's  
character.

Suet. Galb.  
22.

2

could

\* Hunc exitum habuit Ser. Galba tribus & septuaginta annis, quinque principes prospera fortuna emensus, & alieno imperio felicior, quam suo. Vetus in familia nobilitas, magnæ opes: ipse medium ingenium, magis extra vitia quam cum virtutibus. Famæ nec incuriosus, nec venditor. Pecuniæ alienæ non appetens, sive parvus, publicæ avarus.— Amicorum libertorumque, ubi in bonos incidisset, sine reprehensione patiens: si mali forent usque ad culpam ignarus. Sed claritas natalium, & metus temporum obtentui, ut quod segnitia orat, sapientia vocaretur . . . Major privato visus, dum privatus fuit, & omnium consensu capax imperii: nisi imperasset. Tac.

HISTORY OF THE EMPERORS.

A. R. 820.

A. C. 69.

could not tempt him : he took care of his own, and was covetous of the public money. His friends and freemen governed him. If they were honest, his docility did not hurt his reputation : but if they were knaves, his complaisance for them rendered him despicable. But his high birth, and the badness of the times in which he lived, were foils to his weaknesses, and made that be thought wisdom, which in fact was imbecility. I have already said that he acquitted himself with honour of the several employments through which he passed. Universally esteemed, the condition of a private man, so long as he was such, seemed beneath him ; and every one would have judged him worthy of the empire, had he never been emperor.

He is the last emperor of a noble and ancient family.

I cannot help observing here, that Galba was the last Roman emperor descended from an ancient family. All his successors were but upstarts, whose ancestors do not appear in the annals of the republican government. Four succeeding emperors had made it their study during sixty years to extirpate every great name : and the few that escaped their cruelties, endeavoured to stifle the dangerous splendour of their birth, by the obscurity in which they lived.

## O T H O.

## SECT. II.

*Universal eagerness to flatter Otho. He saves Marius Celsus from the fury of the soldiers. Prætorian prefects and city prefect named by the soldiers. The senate decrees Otho all the titles of supreme power. Terror of the Romans on account of two such pretenders to the empire as Otho and Vitellius. Otho's good actions. He ranks Marius Celsus among his friends. Death of Tigellinus. Otho eludes the desires of the people who demanded the death of Galvia Crispinilla. The consulships settled. Priesthoods properly distributed. Favour judiciously granted by Otho to the soldiers. Otho's excessive facility in some things. He restores the statues of Poppæa, and seems to intend to honour the memory of Nero. Advantage gained in Mæsia over the Rhazolan Sarmatians. Sedition caused by the rash and indiscreet zeal of the soldiers for Otho. Otho's speech to the seditious. Two of the ring-leaders put to death. Terrors and alarms in the city. Pretended prodigies. Overflowing of the Tiber. Origin of the emperor Vitellius. His character, vices, and way of life, till he was sent by Galba into Germany. The German legions disposed to revolt. Vitellius is received by the Germanic legions with infinite*

*finite joy. Characters of Valens and Cæcina, chief authors of the revolt in favour of Vitellius. The evil is still increased by some nations of Gaul. Preparations towards a speedy revolt. The oath taken to the senate and Roman people. Vitellius proclaimed emperor. Several officers sacrificed to the fury of the soldiers. Others screened from their rage by art. The troops near the German armies join Vitellius's party. Contrast between the ardour of the troops and Vitellius's indolence. Plans of war formed by Vitellius's generals. Valen's march to the Cottian Alps. Cæcina's march. Disaster of the Helvetic nation. Cæcina crosses the Pænine Alps. Otho and Vitellius sound and lay snares for each other. The families of Otho and Vitellius preserved. Strength of Otho's party. Otho's plan of war. He confines Dolabella to Aquinum, and sets a guard over him. Trouble and uneasiness in Rome at the approach of war. Otho's haste to set out. He takes leave of the senate and does an act of goodness and justice. He harangues the people. Servile adulation of the multitude. He sets out, being preceded by a body of troops destined to defend the passage of the Po. He suffers great fatigue. Exploits of Otho's fleet. Otho's land forces and Vitellius's begin to skirmish. Ostentation of Cæcina and his wife. He besieges Placentia to no purpose, and retires to Cremona. Otho's troops distrust their leaders. Great advantages gained by Otho's generals over Cæcina. Furious sedition in Valen's army. Ardour of Valen's troops to join Cæcina. Jealousy between Cæcina and Valens. Comparison of Otho and Vitellius. Otho resolves to venture a battle*

*a battle contrary to the advice of his best generals. Reasons of Otho's haste to engage. Otho retires to Brixellum before the battle. Engagement in an island in the Po, wherein Vitellius's troops have the advantage. Otho's army badly governed. Motions of that army to seek the enemy. Battle of Bedriac in which Otho's army is defeated. The conquered submit and swear allegiance to Vitellius. Otho kills himself. His funeral. The soldiers regret him, and after his example several of them kill themselves. His character. False Nero. One informer punished at the suit of another informer more powerful than him.*

**I**T never appeared more plainly than at Galba's death, how little the attachment of a multitude, ever ready to submit to the law of the strongest, is to be depended on. The change was so sudden and total, that you would have \* thought, says Tacitus, another senate, and another Roman people had sprung up. All ran to the camp, striving who should be there first. Galba was highly censured, the judgment of the soldiers praised, and Otho's hand kissed by every one. The more these demonstrations were insincere, the more pains were taken to make them seem the effect of real zeal. Otho on his side studied to be affable and pleasing to all: he endeavoured, both with his voice and action, to calm the angry menacing

A. R. 820.  
A. C. 69.  
Universal  
eagerness  
to flatter  
Otho.  
*Tac. Hist.*  
I. 45.

\* *Alium crederes senatum, alium populum. Ruere cuncti in castra, anteire proximos, certare cum præcurrentibus, increpare Galbam, laudare militum judicium, exoculari Othonis manum; quantoque magis falsa erant quæ fiebant, tanto plura facere.* *Tac.*

A. R. 820. menacing soldiers, and affected a mildness, not  
A. C. 69. less deceitful perhaps than the homage that  
was paid him.

He saves  
Marius Cel-  
sus from  
the fury of  
the soldiers.

On this occasion he preserved from great danger Marius Celsus consul elect, who, to the last extremity had remained faithful to Galba. The furious soldiers demanded his death with loud cries, hating \* his virtues and accomplishments as much as they ought to have hated vice. Besides the atrocious injustice of such a proceeding, the example was terrible, and might have been a prelude to the murder of the most honest men, and perhaps to laying waste and plundering the city. Though Otho's † authority was not yet sufficiently established to prevent crimes, yet he had power enough to order them. He commanded Marius to be put in irons, as if to reserve him for some great punishment, and by that feint saved him from a death otherwise inevitable.

Troitorian  
prefect and  
city prefect  
named by  
the soldiers.

The caprice of the soldiers began to dictate laws. Of their own authority they chose for prefects, Plotius Ferinus and Licinius Proculus. Plotius formerly but a private soldier, and afterwards commander of the city watch, was one of the first that declared for the new emperor. Proculus was familiarly intimate with Otho, and thought to have been of service to him in the execution of his designs.—The soldiers named a city prefect too, making choice of Flavius Sabinus, who had held that post under Nero. The great regard many had

\* *Industriae ejus innocentiaque, quasi malis artibus, infensi. Tac.*

† *Sed Othoni nondum auctoritas inerat ad prohibendum scelus: jubere jam poterat. Tac.*



had for his brother Vespasian, at that time A. R. 820. making war in Judea, was a powerful recom- A. C. 69. mendation in his favour.

The \* crimes with which this fatal day was sullied, were terminated by rejoicings, which added to the heinousness of them. The city prefect, become head of the senate by the death of the two consuls, convened that assembly, in which adulation was lavished beyond measure. The magistrates and senators running thither in a great hurry, decreed Otho the power of tribune, the name of Augustus, and all the titles of supreme authority, vying with each other to wipe off, by their immoderate praises, the injurious reproaches with which they had so lately loaded him. Their policy was rewarded, none could perceive that Otho, when emperor, retained the least resentment for affronts offered him when a private man. His reign was so short, that it might be difficult to say, whether he had really forgot them, or only deferred his revenge. Otho, acknowledged by the people and senate, left the camp, went to the forum, which still swam in blood, and crossing it amidst the heaps of dead bodies, ascended to the capitol, and from thence repaired to the palace.

There is no occasion to say, that whilst he was applauded in appearance, he was secretly dreaded and detested: and as the news of Vitellius's revolt, which had been suppressed whilst Galba lived, now began to be publicly known, there was not a citizen who did not pity the hard fate of the republic, destined to

The senate decrees Otho all the titles of suprema power.

Terror of the Romans on account of two such pretenders to the empire, as Otho and Vitellius. Tac. Hist. be l. 30.

\* Exacto per scelera die, novissima malorum fuit letitia. Tac.

A. R. 820. be a prey to one or other of these two unwor-  
 A. C. 69. thy rivals. Not only the senators and knights,  
 whose rank obliged them to take some concern  
 in the public affairs, but even the lower peo-  
 ple were grievously afflicted to see those two,  
 the most detested and contemptible of men for  
 their infamous debauches, cowardice, and dis-  
 soluteness, raised, and, as it were, purposely  
 chosen by some ill fated destiny to ruin the  
 empire. They called to mind, not recent ex-  
 amples of cruelties, exercised by princes over  
 private persons during peace, but general dis-  
 asters of civil wars, the city of Rome taken  
 and retaken by its own citizens, the desolation  
 of Italy, the provinces laid waste, Philippi,  
 Pharsalia, Perousa and Modena, names famous  
 for bloody battles fought by Romans against  
 Romans. “ The universe, said they, was on  
 “ the brink of ruin, even when the supreme  
 “ rank was disputed by rivals of superior me-  
 “ rit. But yet the empire subsisted under  
 “ Cæsar and Augustus, as the republic would  
 “ have done, if Pompey \* or Brutus had gain-  
 “ ed the day. But to † which of these shall  
 “ we wish success? Vitellius or Otho? Our  
 “ prayers for either of them would be impious  
 “ and detestable. What choice can be made  
 “ between two men, the event of whose war  
 “ can

\* We are to understand this as the sentiment of the mul-  
 titude, not of Tacitus. It is very uncertain whether Pom-  
 pey, had he been victorious, would have let the old form of  
 government subsist: Tacitus rather thought the contrary, as  
 may be seen c. 38. b. ii. of his Hist.

† Nunc pro Othone, anpro Vitellio, in templa ituros?  
 utraque impias preces, utraque detestanda vota, inter duos  
 quorum bello solum id scires, deteriorem fore qui vicisset.  
*Tac.*

“ can be no other, than to shew us how much A. R. 920.  
 “ the conqueror excels in vice?” A. C. 69. Some cast  
 their eyes on Vespasian. But that was a dis-  
 tant hope, and even if it could take place, they  
 were not sure of finding in Vespasian so good  
 a prince as the event proved him.

Otho's conduct however deceived every one. Otho's  
good ac-  
tion.  
 He did not give himself up to idleness or plea-  
 sure: he was active, careful of the public in-  
 terest, and maintained the dignity of his rank,  
 with a care and assiduity worthy an emperor.  
 None indeed depended on that change: It was  
 thought he only suspended his pleasures, and  
 concealed his passions; and it was feared,  
 \* those affected virtues, would soon give way  
 to his natural vices.

He was sensible that nothing could do him He ranks  
Marius  
Celsus  
among his  
friends.  
 more honour than mildness and clemency, of  
 which he made a well-judged use with regard  
 to Marius Celsus. Having screened him, as I  
 have said, from the fury of the soldiers, he  
 sent for him to the capitol. Celsus † gener-  
 ally confessed his constant fidelity to Galba, and  
 made a merit of it to Otho, who might hope  
 to find in him as true a friend. Otho, far  
 from speaking in the stile of an offended prince,  
 instantly admitted Celsus into the number  
 of his friends, and soon after appointed him  
 one of his generals in the war against Vitellius.  
 Celsus ‡ adhered to Otho, as if his fate had  
 been to be always faithful and always unfor-  
 tunate

\* *Eoque plus formidinis afferebant falsæ virtutes, et vitia  
 reditura. Tac.*

† *Celsus constanter servatæ erga Galbam fidei crimen con-  
 fessus, exemplum ultro imputavit. Tac.*

‡ *Mansitque Celso velut fataliter etiam pro Othone fides  
 integra et infelix. Tac.*

A. R. 820: tunate. The nobleness with which Otho behaved towards Celsus made a great noise. A. C. 69. The first men in the city were delighted at it, the multitude praised and celebrated the deed, and even the soldiers were not displeas'd: their first fury subsiding, they could not help \* admiring his virtues, though they could not love them.

Death of Tigellinus.

The death of Tigellinus gave the public not much less satisfaction. We have seen how much the people were incens'd against that odious and abominable minister of Nero's. The hatred he so justly deserved himself, join'd to that which the protection of Vinus had likewise brought upon him, broke out anew on Otho's accession to the throne. The forum, circus, and theatre resounded with the cries of those who demanded his death: and the new prince was willing to gain the affection of the multitude, by the sacrifice of a wretch worthy the greatest punishment. He, therefore, sent Tigellinus orders to die. Tigellinus had retired to a place near Sinuessa, having first taken care to have ships always ready to sail, and carry him off in case of danger. The order prevented him; forced to obey it, he cut his throat with a razor, in the presence of his concubines, who never left him.

Otho includes the desires of the people, who demanded the death of Galvia Crispinilla. Tac. Hist. Oth. Tac.

The people likewise demanded the death of Galvia Crispinilla, a bold intriguing woman, governante to the infamous Sporus under Nero, and after that an accomplice with Clodius Macer in his revolt in Africa, and instigatress of the project of starving Rome. But Crispinilla found a better protection than Tigellinus

\* Eandem virtutem admirantibus cui irascuntur. Tac.

gellinus. Sporus was one who stood her friend A. R. 820.  
 with Otho. Besides which, the immense riches A. C. 69.  
 that woman had heaped up by a thousand ex-  
 tortions, had made her find an honourable  
 match with a man of consular dignity. Otho,  
 giving too much way to these considerations,  
 eluded the demands of the people under va-  
 rious pretences, and though an ill-timed indul-  
 gence, invented subterfuges, which did him no  
 honour. Galvia Crispinilla escaped the effects  
 of public hatred under this reign, and likewise  
 under Vitellius; and under Vespasian attain-  
 ed a high degree of credit in Rome, because  
 \* she was rich and had no children. A situa-  
 tion, says Tacitus, that always will command  
 regard and deference under good as well as  
 bad princes.

It was usual, as I have often observed, for The con-  
 new emperors to be consuls. Accordingly sulships  
 Otho named himself consul, with his brother settled.  
 Salvius Titianus, who held that post under Tac. Hist.  
 Claudius, in the room of Galba and Vinius. I. 71.  
 They were to remain in office till the first of  
 May. Otho behaved with great moderation in  
 settling the consulships for the rest of the  
 year. Those who had been appointed by  
 Nero and Galba, succeeded in their turns:  
 of them, the most worthy observation, are  
 Marius Celsus, and Arrius Antoninus, who  
 seems to have been grandfather by the mother's  
 side, to the emperor Antoninus Pius. A po-  
 litical reason induced Otho to give Virginius  
 Rufus a share in the consulship. His design

III

\* Potens pecunia, et orbitate, quæ bonis malis quo vest-  
 poribus juxta valent. Tac.

A. R. 820. in so doing was, to please the German legions,  
 A. C. 60. who had always revered that great man; and  
 by that bait, to gain them over if possible.

Priest-  
 hoods pro-  
 perly dis-  
 tributed. The care he took to promote to the dignities  
 of augurs and pontiffs, some illustrious old  
 men, to whom nothing was wanting but those  
 titles to attain the summit of honours, was  
 greatly pleasing to the Romans. Nor were  
 they less delighted with his kindness towards  
 the young nobility, several of whom, lately re-  
 turned from exile, received from him priest-  
 hoods, which had formerly been in their fa-  
 milies.

Favour ju-  
 diciously  
 granted by  
 Otho to the  
 soldiers.  
*Tac. Hist.*  
 l. 40. I rank amongst Otho's laudable actions a  
 favour he granted the soldiers, but with pru-  
 dence and judgment, immediately after Galba's  
 death. They complained of a kind of tri-  
 bute they were obliged to pay their centurions,  
 in order to be exempted from certain military  
 labours. It was a settled custom, or rather  
 abuse, productive of many inconveniencies,  
 contrary to the good order of discipline. Otho,  
 who thought the soldiers complaints very just,  
 but was unwilling to indispose the minds of  
 the centurions, by depriving them of a per-  
 quisite they thought their due, declared he  
 would pay out of the imperial treasure, what  
 the soldiers had been used to allow their cap-  
 tains; a useful institution constantly observed  
 by his successors.

Otho's ex-  
 ceuse fac-  
 ility in  
 pun-  
 ishing.  
*Tac. Hist.*  
 l. 11. To these actions, by which Otho deserved  
 the public applause, he added others not easi-  
 ly excused but by the necessity of circum-  
 stances. Three senators condemned under  
 Claudius or Nero for extortion, were restored

to their dignities. What \* was the punishment of unjust and tyrannical avarice, was called persecution for pretended crimes of high treason: an odious word, the justly detested iniquity of which, abolished even good and wholesome laws.

Tacitus likewise disapproves of the liberalities and privileges he lavishly bestowed on various cities and nations; the colonies of Seville and Merida, recruited by the addition of several new families; the Demesnes of Bœtica increased, by annexing to them several cities and territories in Mauritania; and the right of Roman burgessy granted to the people of Langres. Otho was naturally fond of giving, and strove to make himself friends and creatures every where.

But what can admit of no excuse is, his return of tenderness for Poppæa, and his shew of veneration for the memory of Nero. By a decree of the senate, Poppæa's statues were set up again, when the best thing that could have happened to her was to have been forgot.

Herestores the statues of Poppæa, and seems to intend to honour the memory of Nero. *Suet. Oth. 7.*

He likewise suffered private men to restore Nero's statues, and make a shew of the pictures of him: the intendants and freemen who had been employed by him, were again provided for. The first order on the imperial treasury which he signed, was for fifty † millions of sesterces, destined to finish the golden palace: he did not reject the acclamations of a vile mob who saluted him by the names of

*Nero*

\* *Placuit ignoscentibus, verso nomine, quod avaritia fuerat, videri majestatem: cujus tum odio etiam bonæ leges peribant. Tac.*

† Four hundred thousand pounds.

A. R. 820. *Nero Otho*: and it is affirmed, that he himself  
 A. C. 69. added the name of Nero to his signature to  
 letters sent to some governors of provinces.  
 But when he perceived how much the chief  
 and best men in Rome were displeas'd at those  
 attempts to revive the memory of so detested  
 a tyrant, he was prudent enough to go no far-  
 ther.

Advan-  
 tages gain-  
 ed in Mæ-  
 sia over the  
 Rhoxolan  
 Sarmatians.  
*Tac. Hist.*  
 l. 79.

The beginning of Otho's reign was marked  
 by an advantage gained over the Rhoxolan Sar-  
 matians. What is most interesting to us in that  
 event, in itself but trifling, is the description  
 Tacitus gives of the Sarmatian manner of fight-  
 ing. It is \* very singular, says that historian,  
 that all the strength and vigour of those people,  
 should be, as it were, out of themselves. No-  
 thing so weak and cowardly as they are when  
 a foot; but on horseback, and in squadrons,  
 they are scarce to be resisted. Their arms are  
 a pike and long sword, which they wield with  
 both hands: they have no shields: their chief  
 men wear heavy cuirasses, proof against arrows,  
 but when once beat down, they cannot rise a-  
 gain under the weight. A body of nine thou-  
 sand horse, of those Rhoxolan Sarmatians,  
 finding the frontiers of Mæsia badly guarded,  
 every one being intent on preparing against a  
 civil war, broke in upon that country in the  
 winter season, and carried off a great booty.  
 The third legion, backed by its usual reinforce-  
 ment of auxiliaries, marched against them,  
 and a thaw happening which made the whole  
 country a perfect bog, easily defeated them. The  
 Sarmatian

\* Mirum dictu, ut sit omnis Sarmatarum virtus velot ex-  
 tra ipsos. Nihil ad pedestrem pugnam tam ignavum, nisi  
 per turbas advenere, vix ulla acies obstiterit. *Tac.*



Sarmatian horse sticking in the mud, and not able to stir, the Romans had hardly any thing more to do, but to kill their almost defenceless enemies. Otho prided himself greatly on this victory. He rewarded M. Apronius, governor of Mesia, with a triumphal statue, and his three lieutenants with the ornaments of consul. His ambition was to be thought a prince fortunate in war, and under whose auspices the Roman arms acquired a new degree of lustre.

We cannot refuse him the merit of being extremely beloved by the troops. Their zeal for him knew hardly any bounds, and was the occasion of a sedition that was near proving fatal to the city.

Otho had ordered a cohort that was at Ostium, to come to Rome, and Crispinus, the prætorian præfect, was directed to see the men armed. That officer, the better to execute his orders, chose the evening as the most quiet part of the day, and, opening the arsenal, loaded the proper arms on the waggons belonging to the cohort. The soldiers took umbrage at the very precautions intended to avoid all disturbance; they suspected every thing: and \* most of them already heated by wine, grew quite furious at the sight of the arms. They accused their officers of treason, and taxed them with a design to arm the senate's slaves against Otho. In an instant the report was spread about; all flocked together, some without any bad intent, and drunk as they were, not knowing what they did; the

\* *Visa inter tomulentos arma, cupidinem sui movere.*  
*Tac.*

A. R. 820. bad out of hopes of plunder; and the gene-  
 A. C. 69. rality, as is natural to the mob, because they  
 saw a crowd gathered, and wanted to know  
 what they were doing: the good had taken  
 to their tents, it being their hour to retreat.  
 The tribune and strictest of the centurions,  
 attempting to oppose the seditious, were killed  
 on the spot; and the impetuous soldiers taking  
 possession of the arms, drew their swords, and  
 mounting their horses, rode full speed to the  
 city and palace. Otho was giving a great en-  
 tertainment to eighty magistrates and senators,  
 several of whom had brought their wives with  
 them. The consternation was extreme: it  
 seemed doubtful whether it was some sudden  
 fit of madness that had seized the soldiers, or  
 a piece of treachery in the emperor: none  
 knew whether they had best go or stay: the  
 more they affected to seem unconcerned, the  
 more their trouble betrayed their inward ter-  
 ror: but above all they examined Otho's coun-  
 tenance, whose \* fears for himself encreased  
 theirs. He did not deserve to be suspected.  
 As much concerned at the danger to which  
 he saw the senate exposed, as if it had been  
 intended against himself, he sent the prætorian  
 prefects to calm the soldiers, and desired his  
 guests to retire as quick as they could. All  
 fled in disorder; the magistrates throwing a-  
 way the badges of their respective dignities,  
 and taking with them none of their attendants  
 by which they might be known; old men and  
 women wandered about the streets in the dark.  
 few returned to their own houses, but thought  
 themselves

\* Utiq; evenit, inclinatis & mel ad suspicionem menti-  
 bus, quoniam timeret Otho, timebatur. Tac.

themselves safer with their friends, who, the A. R. 820.  
more obscure they were, were thought most A. C. 69.  
proper to conceal them with safety.

Even the barriers of the palace could not stop their impetuous rage; but wounding a tribune and a centurion who endeavoured to check them, they penetrated as far as the hall in which the entertainment was given, and insisted on seeing Otho. They exclaimed against their officers and the whole senate; and, unable to point out any one in particular, their rage extended to all. Otho, obliged to stoop from the majesty of his rank to prayers and even tears, could not appease them without great difficulty. They returned unwillingly to their camp, without accomplishing their design, though they did enough to render themselves criminal.

The city \* looked the next day as if it had been taken by the enemy. All the houses were shut up, hardly any would venture into the streets, and the few who did shew themselves, seemed quite terrified and alarmed. As to the soldiers, they put on sorrowful faces, though there was no great repentance in their hearts. The two prætorian prefects took them by bands, not daring to assemble them in a body, and spoke to them, each according to his character, with more or less mildness or severity. The harangues were closed by a distribution of five \* thousand sesterces to each man; after  
which preliminary, Otho ventured into the  
camp. The tribunes and centurions imme-  
diately

\* Postera die, velut capta urbe, clausæ domus, rarus per vias populus, mæsta plebs, dejecti in terram militum vultus, ac plus tristitiæ quam pœnitentiæ. Tac.

A. R. 620 diately surrounding him, pulled off the badges  
A. C. 69. of their posts, and begged to be dismissed with safety. The soldiers were sensible of the odium that request must throw on them, and behaving with great composure and submission, invoked even the emperor's severity against the authors of the sedition.

Otho's \* mind was agitated by various thoughts. He saw the soldiers were divided in their sentiments, that the good wished a speedy stop could be put to such licentiousness, but that the greater part, fond of seditions, and not able to bear any other than a weak and feeble government, would readily be led into a civil war by the hopes of prey and plunder. Reflecting on himself, he readily conceived, that the ancient virtue and severity, would but ill become a prince who had attained the supreme rank by the blackest of crimes. On the other hand, the danger the city and senate were in, made a deep impression on him. At last, taking his resolution, he spoke to them as follows :

Otho's  
speech to  
the sedi-  
tious.

“ I come not here, my dear fellow soldiers,  
“ to encourage your bravery, nor animate  
“ your zeal to serve me: you possess those  
“ sentiments to a degree even beyond what I  
“ would wish, and all I have to desire on that  
“ head is, that you will moderate them. Cu-  
“ pidity,

\* Otho quanquam turbidis rebus, & diversis militum animis, quum optinus quisque remedium presentis licentiae proceret, vi gus & plures, seditionibus & ambitioso impetu turbus & raptus facilius ad civile bellum impelleretur: tamen reputans non posse principatum seclere quaesitum, subita modestia, & prisca gravitate retineri, sed discerere urbis & periculo senatus auxilium, postremo ita discessit. Tacit.

" pidity, hatred, or fear of danger, are the mo- A. R. 320.  
 " tives that generally occasion disturbances in A. C. 69.  
 " armies. Nothing of that kind was the case  
 " in the tumult you lately made : it proceeded  
 " only from your too strong attachment to your  
 " emperor, and your zeal, which on that occa-  
 " sion, you consulted more than your prudence.  
 " But \* the best of motives, if not directed by  
 " wisdom, will be productive of pernicious con-  
 " sequences.

" We are setting out for war. Must the  
 " dispatches of every courier be read before  
 " the army? Must every council be held in  
 " public? Would that suit the welfare of the  
 " state, or the rapidity with which it is neces-  
 " sary to seize some occasions? There † are  
 " things which a soldier ought not to know,  
 " as well as others of which he should not  
 " be ignorant. The authority of a general,  
 " and the severity of discipline often require,  
 " that even officers should not be acquainted  
 " with the reasons of the orders they receive.  
 " If every one was allowed to examine and  
 " ask why an order is given, all subordination  
 " would be at an end, and the prerogatives  
 " of supreme command must end with it.  
 " Will any one when we are at war, presume  
 " to take up arms in the middle of the night?  
 " Shall one or two wretches (for I cannot  
 " think the authors of this sedition more nu-  
 " merous)

\* Nam sæpe honestas rerum causas, ni iudicium adhibeas, perniciosi exitus consequantur. *Tac.*

† Tam nescire quædam milites, quam scire oportet. Itæ dicam auctoritas, sic rigor disciplinæ habet, ut multa etiam centuriones tribunosque tantum juberi expediat. Si cur jubantur, quærere singulis liceat, periculis ob quietem etiam imperium intercidit. *Tac.*

A. R. 820. "merous) one or two madmen heated by wine,  
 A. C. 69. "imbrue their hands in the blood of their  
 "officers, and force their emperor's tent? It is  
 "true you did it out of affection to me. But  
 "in such an uproar, in the dark, in so gene-  
 "ral a confusion, evil-minded persons may  
 "take advantages against me. What other  
 "sentiments, what other disposition could Vi-  
 "tellius with his satellites wish us, if it were  
 "in his power? Would he not be charmed  
 "to find discord and misunderstanding reign  
 "among us? that the soldier should no lon-  
 "ger obey his centurion, nor the centurion  
 "his tribune: that mixing and confounding  
 "together horse and foot, without rule, or-  
 "der, or discipline, we might rush on to in-  
 "evitable destruction. It is by \* obedience,  
 "my dear comrades, that an army must sub-  
 "sist, and not by an indiscreet curiosity to pry  
 "into the general's views and orders. That  
 "army which is most moderate and submissive  
 "before action, is always most brave and  
 "courageous in it. Arms and courage are  
 "your province: mine, to consider and di-  
 "rect your valour. Few of you are guilty;  
 "two only shall be punished: let every other  
 "man banish from his thoughts the horrors  
 "of that guilty night: and let these audacious  
 "cries against the senate, never more be  
 "heard in any army. To demand the extir-  
 "pation of a body of men who preside over  
 "the

\* *Parendo potius, commilitiones, quam imperia ducum  
 acriter do, res militares continentur: & fortissimus in ipso  
 discrimine exercitus est, qui ante discrimen quieti in me.  
 Vobis arma animus est: mihi consilium & virtutis vestre  
 regimen relinquite. Tac*

" the empire, who are the flower and elect of A. R. 820.  
 " all the provinces, is what even the Germans, A. C. 69.  
 " Vitellius is now arming against us, would  
 " not dare to do. And would the children of  
 " Italy, youths truly Roman, proceed to such  
 " bloody rage against that august order, the  
 " splendour of which gives us so noble a su-  
 " periority over the ignoble vileness of Vitel-  
 " lius's party? Vitellius has nations on his  
 " side. He has a body of troops that looks like  
 " an army: but the senate is on our side; and  
 " therefore the republic is so too. Our ad-  
 " versaries are consequently enemies to the re-  
 " public. What! \* do you imagine this great  
 " and lofty city consists in its houses, build-  
 " ings and heaps of stones? Those mute and  
 " inanimate beings are easily destroyed and  
 " renewed, and the consequence not great.  
 " But it is the senate that is its soul, and on  
 " the preservation of that body depend eter-  
 " nity of empire, the peace of the universe,  
 " and your welfare as well as mine. That  
 " body was instituted under happy auspices  
 " by the father and founder of this city; it  
 " has subsisted from the king's crown to the  
 " emperors, still flourishing and immortal: it  
 " is our duty to transmit its majesty to our  
 " descendants, as unsullied as we received it  
 " from our ancestors. For, as from you sena-  
 " tors are born, so are princes formed by the  
 " senate." This

\* Quid? vos pulcherrimam hanc urbem, domibus & tectis, & congestu lapidum stare creditis? Muta ista & inanimata intercidere ac reparari promiscue possunt. Aeternitas eorum, & pax gentium, & mea cum vestra salus, incolumitas senatus firmatur. Tac

A. R. 820. This speech, a mixture of severity and indulgence, calculated to check, and at the same time, flatter the soldiers, was extremely relished and applauded. They were highly pleased too, that Otho would be content to punish only two of the ringleaders, for whom none interested themselves; by which means, if their mutinous indocility was not cured, it was at least appeased for a time.

A. C. 69.  
Two of the  
ringleaders  
put to  
death.  
*Phil. Oth.*

Tears and  
sighs in  
the ci-ty.  
*Tac. Hist.*  
I. 85.

The city was not yet restored to peace. The preparations that were making for war, kept up troubles and disturbances in it: and though the soldiers attempted nothing in a body contrary to the public peace and quiet, yet they spread themselves about in the houses like spies, laying aside their military dress, the better to be disguised, and maliciously took notice of whatever was said by those whose nobility, rank and riches, made them most liable to suspicion. It was even thought that some of Vitellius's emissaries had crept into Rome, and secretly watched and sounded the dispositions of the inhabitants: so that all were full of distrusts, and the citizens thought themselves safe no where, but within their own houses. In public the trouble was still greater. Every news that arrived (for Vitellius's army had long been in march, and was drawing near Italy) made every man alert, and compose his looks and behaviour for fear of seeming either to despair of the event, if the report was bad, or not to rejoice enough at the success, if good. But \* especially the senators,  
when

\* Coacto vero in curiam senatu, ardens rerum omnium modum, ne contumax silentium, ne suspecta libertas.



when assembled, knew not what turn to give A. R. 820.  
 their speeches, nor how to behave, so as not A. C. 69.  
 to lay themselves too open. Silence might be  
 imputed to ill humour, and liberty be suspect-  
 ed: whilst Otho, their new emperor, but lately  
 raised from a private station, could not be ig-  
 norant of what was flattery. The senators  
 therefore studied to screen themselves under  
 ambiguous meanings and vague talk, calling  
 Vitellius an enemy and a parricide, and load-  
 ing him with reproaches, in which the most  
 prudent took care not to particularize any  
 thing: Some indeed hinted at positive facts,  
 but it was when several were talking loud at  
 the same time, and they themselves made such  
 a noise, and muttered so, that none could hear  
 half of what they said.

The public alarms were increased by pre-Pretended  
 tended prodigies, which \* formerly, says Tac-prodigies.  
 citus in times of ignorance, were taken notice  
 of in profound peace, but which now obtain  
 little more credit than what some present dan-  
 ger gives them. A sudden overflowing of the  
 Tiber, was a real disaster. The flood came Overflow-  
 with such impetuosity, that it bore down the ing of the  
 wooden bridge and the quays, and spread not Tiber.  
 only to the lower parts of the city, but even to  
 those where none would have thought such an  
 accident

tas. Et privato Othoni nuper, atque eidem dicenti, nota  
 adulatio. Igitur versare sententias, et huc atque illic tou-  
 quere, hostem et parricidam Vitellium vocantes: pro ciden-  
 ti-siris quisque, vulgariis conviciis; quidam vera prohibe-  
 re, in clamore tamen, et ubi plurimæ voces, aut tum ulta  
 verborum sibi ipsi obstrepentes. Tac.

\* In plebs alia, rudibus seculis etiam in pace observata,  
 que nec tutum in metu audiuntur. Tac.

A. R. 820. accident could reach. It came so suddenly;  
 A. C. 69. that none could guard against it. Several were swept away by the waters in the streets, others in greater number surprized in their shops, and even beds. A great quantity of corn was lost in the market place where it was exposed to sale. The consequence was a great dearth, labouring men could not work; and the waters, keeping up a considerable time, ruined the foundations of several buildings, which fell when they subsided. The people, ever superstitious, thought it a bad omen for Otho, who was just then preparing to set out for the war against Vitellius, that the height of the waters should prevent his marching through the Campus Martius and Flaminian way, which were his direct road.

Otho's departure reminds me, that I ought to give some account of the enemy he was going to fight, and of the steps by which Vitellius rose to the empire, together with the events that ensued thereon, to the time when his troops entered Italy.

Origin of  
 the conspiracy  
 for Vitellius.  
 Num.

If the family from which the emperor Vitellius descended, was as ancient as that name is in history, it ought to be ranked amongst the first nobility of Rome. For \* we find in the year, in which the kings were expelled, two brothers Vitellius, who seem not to have acted over fine parts, since they were condemned and executed as accomplices in the conspiracy of the Tarquins; though they held a considerable rank in the city, being nephews to Collatinus, and sons-in-law to Brutus. I wonder

\* See the Hist. of the Rom. Rep. T. 1. b. 11.

der that those, who Suetonius tells us set about A. R. 820. illustrating the origin of that family, instead of A. C. 69. searching into fabulous stories, did not rather Suet. Vit. l. 3. take this fact so famous and averred; unless it be that they did not think a nobility, derived from traitors and enemies to their country, an honourable descent. However that may be, the pedigree of the emperor Vitellius cannot with certainty be traced any higher up than his grandfather P. Vitellius, a Roman knight, intendant under Augustus, and father of four sons, of whom the two most remarkable were P. Vitellius, the friend and avenger of Germanicus, and L. Vitellius, thrice consul and censor, and still more known by his mean flatteries, than by the great dignities he possessed. The latter had two sons, A. Vitellius the emperor, of whom we are speaking, and L. Vitellius, who was consul the same year as his elder brother, as we have observed.

A. Vitellius, one of the most unworthy men that ever disgraced imperial majesty, was born the seventh, or according to others, the twenty-fourth of September, in the second year of Tiberius's reign. The last years of his infancy, and the first of his youth, were spent at Caprea, a place, the bare mention of which sufficiently implies what kind of life he led there: and it is thought that his dishonour was the price of the favours Tiberius conferred on his father, in making him consul, and governor of Syria. His whole life was of a piece with that shameful beginning: and his distinguishing characteristics are, debauches of every kind, and such habitual excess of gluttony, that he constantly made himself vomit to have the pleasure of eating again.

His character, vices and way of life, till he was sent by Caligula into Germany.

Suet. Vi. l. 13.

A. R. 820. again. His name procured him an entrance at  
 A. C. 69. court, and he pleased Caligula by being a good  
 coachman, and Claudius, by being a gamester.  
 The same qualifications recommended him to  
 Nero, whose favour he gained entirely by a  
 very singular service, quite agreeable to that  
 prince's taste. Nero passionately wished to ap-  
 pear on the stage as a musician, but some little  
 remains of shame still prevented him. Strongly  
 pressed by the cries of the people, who urged  
 him to sing, he even withdrew, as if to avoid  
 their too great importunities: but would have  
 been very sorry to have been taken at his word.  
 Vitellius, who presided over the games at which  
 this farce was acted, appointed himself deputy  
 from the spectators to beg of him to return  
 and be prevailed on; and Nero thought him-  
 self highly obliged to him for using that pleas-  
 ing violence. By that means it was, that Vi-  
 tellius, beloved and favoured by three succeed-  
 ing princes, went through all the offices of ma-  
 gistracy, and was even invested with the most  
 honourable priesthoods, joining every dignity  
 to every vice.

Suet. Vit.  
 1.

One however I must except which he had  
 not, and that was avarice. Africa had no  
 cause to complain of being harrassed or plun-  
 dered by him, during the two years that he  
 governed it, first as proconsul, and afterwards  
 as his brother's lieutenant. But the indigence  
 to which his profusions reduced him, forced  
 him at last to be unjust: and when charged  
 with the care of the public buildings, he was sus-  
 pected of sinking the offerings and ornaments  
 of the temples, substituting pewter in the room  
 of silver, and gilded brass instead of gold.

Covetousness

Covetousness having once taken possession A. R. 820.  
of his soul, caused him to be cruel to his own A. C. 69.  
blood. He had a son by his first wife Petronia,  
from whom he was separated, and who soon  
after marrying Dolabella and dying, made that  
son her heir, on condition that his father whose  
prodigal temper she was well acquainted with,  
should \* emancipate him. Her design in tak-  
ing that precaution was to preserve her wealth  
for her son, but, in fact, it was the occasion of  
his death. Vitellius emancipated him; but  
after having compelled him to make a will in  
his favour, poisoned him, spreading a report  
that his son had attempted his life, and that  
out of shame and rage to find himself discover-  
ed, he had taken the poison destined for the  
parricide.

The contempt in which Galba held Vitel-  
lius, was, as I have said, the reason why that  
emperor trusted him with the important com-  
mand of the legions in Lower Germany. When  
obliged to set out, he had not money enough  
for the journey, but was obliged to pawn a  
diamond ear-ring belonging to his mother  
Sextilia, a lady of uncommon merit. He like-  
wise let his house, sending his wife Galeria  
and his children to lodge in a garret. His  
creditors, and particularly the inhabitants of  
Sinuessæ and Formiæ, whose money he had ap-  
propriated to his own use, opposed his going,  
and stopt his baggage. He carried it with so  
high a hand, that he got the better of that  
difficulty. A freeman to whom he was in-  
debted,

\* By the Roman emancipation, the son was dispensed  
from all obedience to his father so that he was entirely  
master of his own person and fortune.

A. R. 820. debted, being more troublesome than the rest,  
 A. C. 69. Vitellius commenced a criminal process against  
 him, pretending he had struck him; and it  
 \* 400L. cost the poor creditor fifty \* thousand sesterces  
 more to prevail on his debtor to drop all pro-  
 ceedings. This example intimidated others,  
*Tac. Hist.* and Vitellius set out for Germany. He arriv-  
 ed at the camp towards the first of December,  
 c. 52. the year before Galba's death, and found the  
 legions in a great ferment, waiting only for an  
 opportunity to revolt.

The Ger-  
 man le-  
 gions dis-  
 posed to  
 revolt.  
*Tac. Hist.*  
 l. 51.

That army was quite elated with the victory  
 over Vindex: great honour and plunder gain-  
 ed without fatigue or danger, were powerful  
 motives that induced the soldiers to prefer war  
 to peace, and the hope of riches to a quiet uni-  
 form service. They were the more † confirm-  
 ed in that way of thinking by the hardships  
 they had long suffered in an almost savage  
 country, and under a severe discipline, never  
 relaxed even in times of peace; whereas civil  
 dissensions could not but soften it by the op-  
 portunities they offer of changing sides, and  
 the impunity with which, in such cases, per-  
 fidy is sure to pass. The Germanic legions  
 formed all together a very powerful body: but  
 till the last expedition, each soldier knew no-  
 thing more than his own company: the legions  
 had their separate quarters; the two armies  
 were pent up within the limits of two different  
 provinces. When united against Vindex, they  
 made a trial of their own strength, and of the  
 weakness

† *Diuque infructuosam et asperam militiam exercitus to-  
 leraverat, ingenio loci cœlique, et severitate discipline, quam  
 in pace inexorabilem discordiæ civium resolvunt, paratis  
 utrumque corruptoribus, et perfidia impunita. Tac.*

weakness of the Gauls; and encouraged by A. R. 820. the success they met with on that occasion, all A. C. 69, they wished for was a new war and fresh disturbances, no longer considering the Gauls but as conquered enemies.

The Gauls bordering on the Rhine, encouraged that spirit of animosity, and being connected with the legions by the same sentiments and interests, spurred them on against Galba's partizans, for so they had the assurance to call those who entered into the league with Vindex. The soldiers irritated more and more by their insinuations against the Seguani, Eduans, and all the richest people of Gaul, and measuring their hatred by the plunder they expected to make, their thoughts dwelt on nothing but taking of towns, laying waste lands, and heaping up treasures of gold and silver. Their greediness and arrogance, the usual vices of such as are strongest, were still heightened by the pride of the Gauls, boasting the immunities and rewards they had received from Galba.

To so many causes of disturbance, add the wicked reports that were maliciously spread about by evil-minded people, and to which the soldier rashly gave credit. It was said that Galba intended to decimate the legions, and break all their best officers. Bad news was brought from every quarter. From Rome, nothing was heard, but what inspired aversion, and even contempt for Galba; and those disadvantageous impressions were magnified and envenomed by going through Lyons, a city still obstinately attached to Nero's memory, and at enmity with the then government. But  
the

A. R. 820. \* the source the most productive of turbulent  
 A. C. 69. indiscreet and vague reports was the army itself, alternately agitated by hatred, fear, and a presumptuous confidence in its own strength.

Vitellius is received by the Germanic legions with infinite joy. *Suet. Vit. 7.* Such was the disposition of the soldiers' minds, that a commander of an illustrious name, whose father had been thrice consul, and who had himself attained that age at which maturity is still supported by vigour, and who was of an easy generous disposition, was received as a present from heaven. No notice was taken of the meannesses his whole conduct was full of, and of which he had given frequent instances on the road: for he did not meet a soldier but he would kiss him on both sides of the face: in the inns where he stopt, he was indecently familiar with the servants and hostlers, never † failing every morning to ask them whether they had breakfasted, and producing from his own stomach a proof that he was not fasting.

*Tac. Hist. 1. 82.* It must however be owned, that the manner in which he behaved on his arrival at the army, deserves commendation. He visited carefully the winter quarters of the legions. A slothful indulgence, and a desire to please and flatter, was not the only motive that induced him to restore to their posts, the officers who had been degraded from them, and to efface the marks of ignominy, with which their names had been branded. Reason and justice were sometimes

*Sed plerum ad fingendum credendumque materies in opis certis, odio, metu, &, ubi vires suas respexerant, securitate Tac.*

† *Ut non eum in gulos janne sentassent sciscitaretur, seque fecisse ructu quoque ostenderet. Suet.*



sometimes consulted. But above all he gained A. R. 820.  
honour by shunning the shameful avarice of A. C. 69.  
his predecessor Fonteius Capito, who sold employments, and weighed the merit of men by their money. His behaviour in that respect was prized much above its just value; it was according to the ideas of the multitude, a behaviour worthy an emperor, and not a consul only. Disinterested judges would have thought Vitellius mean and low. The soldiers prejudiced in his favour, called that goodness and liberality, which was an excessive facility of giving without choice or measure, not only his own, but often the wealth of others; and his vices were by them thought virtues.

There were undoubtedly in the two armies, some good men, fond of peace and quiet; but the number of those in whom a turbulent pernicious spirit reigned, was by much the greatest. Of them none were more remarkable for their unbounded cupidity, and rashness equal to the most desperate attempts, than Alianus Ciccina and Fabius Valens, commanders of legions, the one in the army on the upper Rhine, under Hordeonius Flaccus, the other under Vitellius, in the army in lower Germany.

Valens was an old officer, who, after having tried to ingratiate himself with Galba, by giving him private intelligence against Virginius, Character of Valens and Ciccina, chief authors of the revolution in favour of Vitellius.

\* Et Vitellius ut apud severos humilis, ita comitatum  
Constititque faventes vocabant, quod sine modo, sine judicio, donis et sua, largiretur aliena . . . ipsa vitia pro virtutibus interpretantur. Tac.

\* B. H. B. S. E. and the authority of Frischlin, as indicated in the margin of the text.

A. R. 820. nius, and endeavouring to persuade him, that  
 A. C. 69. he had delivered him from a dangerous enemy,  
 by the death of Fonteius Capito, not receiv-  
 ing for those pretended services so great a re-  
 ward as he expected, taxed Galba with ingra-  
 titude, and his false zeal became real and vio-  
 lent hatred. He encouraged Vitellius to think  
 of the throne. "Your name, said he to him,  
 "is known throughout the whole empire;  
 "the soldiers are devoted to you; Flaccus  
 "Hordeonius is too weak to stop you; Britain  
 "will join us; the German auxiliaries will fol-  
 "low the other legions: the provinces are not  
 "fond of the present government; an old  
 "man is seated on the throne of the Cæsars,  
 "where his power is precarious and near its  
 "end: you have only to open your arms to  
 "fortune, who steps forward to meet you.  
 "Virginus's \* want of resolution had a just  
 "cause. He was only the son of a knight,  
 "and by his birth beneath the empire had he  
 "accepted it, and secure from danger by re-  
 "fusing it. The case is very different with  
 "you. Your father's three consulships, the  
 "censorship which he likewise held, and the  
 "honour he had of being Claudius's colleague,  
 "are titles that call you to the throne, and do  
 "not suffer you to remain with safety in a  
 "private station." Such strong exhortations  
 roused Vitellius from his indolence. He did  
 not

\* Merito debita-que Virginium, equestri familia, ignota  
 pte; imperium si recipere. Imperium, tutum si recusasset.  
 Vitellius equestri-que nobilitate, censuram, collegium Cæsaris,  
 inponere periculum imperatoris dignationem, et auferre  
 potestatem. *On the other hand, he says, "You are not  
 a private citizen, you are a knight, Tac.*

not yet dare to hope, but began to wish: for till then he had never conceived a thought of that kind. Dion Cassius says, that some astrologers having long before that foretold him he would be emperor, he used to laugh at them, and mention that prediction as a proof of their ignorance or knavery.

Cæcina was not less active in the army in upper Germany than Valens was in the other, both animated by the same motives. Being quæstor in Bœtica at the time of the revolution, by which Galba was raised to the throne, he had been one of the most forward to embrace that party, and the command of a legion was the reward of his zeal; but he behaved ill, and was convicted of purloining the public money. Galba, who was inexorable in that point, ordered him to be prosecuted for it. Cæcina, as highly incensed as if he had been injured, resolved to embroil matters, and plunge the republic \* into as great dangers as he himself was personally threatened with. He had every qualification necessary to seduce the soldiers; youth, a fine person and unbounded courage and ambition. His speech was strong and animated, his carriage bold, and his eyes full of fire. No body could be more fit to lead to the greatest extremities, an army so ill disposed as that in which he had so great a command.

Every thing concurred to encrease the evil. The people of Treves, Langres and other cities of Gaul, who, having taken part against Vindex, had felt Galba's severity, joined their complaints to those of the soldiers spread a-

\* *Privata vulnera reipublicæ in dis operire statu't. Tu*

A. R. 820. among them, and frightened them even with ima-  
 A. C. 69. ginary dangers. Things were carried so far,  
 that the deputies of Langres, who came ac-  
 cording to ancient custom, to bring the legions  
 the \* emblems of hospitality and friendship  
 were very near raising a sedition in the army  
 by their speeches: and Hordeonius Flaccus,  
 having ordered them to retire privately in the  
 night, a report was spread that he had mur-  
 dered them: in consequence of which, those  
 legions greatly alarmed, united for their mu-  
 tual defence, and entered into a private league,  
 in which they were joined by the auxiliary  
 troops, who, till then, had been at variance  
 with them. For †, says Tacitus, the bad agree  
 in war, much more easily than they preserve  
 concord in peace.

Prepara-  
 tion to-  
 wards a  
 speedy re-  
 volution.  
 The oath  
 taken to  
 the senate  
 and Roman  
 people.

Things were in this situation when the first  
 of January came round, on which day the  
 oath of fidelity to the emperors was annually  
 taken. The legions in lower Germany who  
 were under Vitellius's command, took it, but  
 with great difficulty, and manifest reluctance.  
 None but the chief officers pronounced the  
 words of the oath: the rest ‡ were silent, each  
 watching his neighbour's motions, and all  
 ready, as is frequently the case in critical af-  
 fairs, to execute with ardour what none dare to  
 begin. The spirit of mutiny was universal,  
 though some legions shewed it more than others.  
 The first and fifth carried their insolence so far  
 as

\* A representation of two right hands joined together.

† Faciliore inter malos consensu ad bellum, quam in pace  
 ad concordium. Tac.

‡ Ceteri silentio, proximi ejusque audaciam expectantes.  
 insita mortalibus natura prope sequi quæ piget inchoare  
 Tac. .

as to throw stones at the images of Galba: the A. R. 820. fifteenth and sixteenth only murmured and A. C. 69. menaced.

In the army on the upper Rhine the fourteenth and eighteenth legions did not hesitate to declare against Galba, whose images they broke to pieces: and to avoid being taxed with open rebellion against the empire, the soldiers took the oath to the senate and Roman people, names long since disused, and almost forgot. In such a disturbance, some could not but be more audacious than others, and they were the leaders and promoters of the sedition. None, however, harangued in form, nor got on to any eminence or high place to speak to the soldiers, because \* they had not yet fixed on any body, with whom they could make a merit of such a service.

Hordeonius Flaccus †, who commanded in chief, did not attempt to check the fury of the seditions, nor to keep within bounds those who as yet only hesitated, nor even to encourage the well-affected; cowardly, timid, and exempt from vice, because he had not resolution enough to be victor, he remained a quiet spectator of a disturbance: it was his duty to prevent. The particular commanders of legions and the tribunes, imitated the indolence of their chief. Only four centurions dared to shew the least attachment to Galba, or defend his images against the insults of the rebels, and they only added to the fury of the soldiers, who

\* Neque enim erat adhuc cui imputaretur. Tac.

† Spectator flagitii Hordeonius Flaccus consularis leuatus aderat, non compescere ruentes, non retinere dubios, non cohortari bonos ausus, sed sequens, pavulus, et socordia innocens. Tac.

A. R. 820. who seized and loaded them with chains. After  
 A. C. 69. that example, no trace remained of fidelity to  
 Galba, nor of the oath of allegiance taken to  
 him; and \*, as it happens in all seditions, the  
 greater number soon absorbed the rest, and be-  
 came the only party.

Vitellius  
 proclaimed  
 emperor.  
*Tac. Hist.*  
 I. 56.

In the night preceding the second of Ja-  
 nuary, the ensign who carried the eagle of the  
 fourth legion, came to Cologne where Vitellius  
 was, and finding him at table, told him that his  
 legion, and the eighteenth had renounced obe-  
 dience to Galba, and sworn fidelity to the se-  
 nate and Roman people. That oath being a  
 visible illusion, it was resolved to lay hold on  
 fortune while she was yet undetermined, and  
 no doubt was made, but that Vitellius ought  
 to offer himself to the troops who wanted an  
 emperor. Accordingly he dispatched couriers  
 to the legions that obeyed him, and to their  
 commanders, telling them, "That the army  
 "on the upper Rhine no longer acknowledged  
 "the authority of Galba. That of course, if  
 "they thought that was rebellion, a war must  
 "be undertaken; or if peace and unity were  
 "preferred, a new emperor chosen. And in  
 "that case, he insinuated there was much  
 "less danger in taking one whom they had un-  
 "der their eyes, than there would be in seek-  
 "ing for a stranger at a great distance."

The first legion was nearest at hand, and  
 Fabius Valens, the most ardent of all the ge-  
 neral officers. He came to Cologne the next  
 day, with a detachment of horse, and saluted  
 Vitellius emperor. The hurry and precipita-  
 tion

\* Quod in seditionibus accidit, unde plures erant, omnes  
 fuere. *Tac.*

tion with which he was proclaimed, might have excused the indecency of it, had the new emperor's behaviour been less mean and contemptible. He let the soldiers take him from his apartment in his common dress without any badge of dignity, and carry him from street to street, holding in his hand a drawn sword, which was said to have been Julius Cæsar's, and was preserved as such in the temple of the god of war at Cologne. After the ceremony, instead of returning to his head quarters, Vitellius sat down to table in a house where an entertainment had been provided for him, and did not stir till forced by a fire that broke out in the room. The whole company was alarmed at the accident, and thought it a bad omen. "Never fear, said Vitellius, it is only a light that comes to light us." And that, according to Suetonius, was all he said to the soldiers on so important an occasion.

A behaviour so unbecoming imperial majesty, did not however prevent his being immediately acknowledged by all the legions of the lower province: and the army in upper Germany too, forgetting the names of senate and Roman people, of which a parade had been so lately made, swore allegiance to Vitellius: a \* manifest proof that during the two preceding days, the republic had been only a pretence, and not an object of sincere attachment.

The people of Cologne, Treves, and Langres, were as zealous as the armies, offering troops, horses, arms and money. Every town, every

\* Scires illum (exercitum) priore biduo non penes rempublicam fuisse. Tac.

A. R. 820. every man, vied with each other who should  
 A. C. 69. be most forward: their emulation was not confined to heads of colonies and chief officers, who being at their ease, might make such offers without hurting themselves, and who had likewise room to expect great rewards after victory: but companies, and even private soldiers, brought their little savings, and those who had not money, gave their belts, military ornaments, and silvered arras out of a kind of fury and madness, or rather out of avidity, and in hopes of being amply rewarded.

*Tac. Hist.*  
 I. 62.  
*Suet. Vit.*  
 8.

Vitellius having made an effort to praise the zeal of the soldiers, received from them the name of Germanicus: but for whatever reason it might be, he would not be called Cæsar, and deferred accepting the title of Augustus, though he did not absolutely reject it. He took some measures proper enough at first. Roman knights were charged with several offices which the emperor's freemen had used to perform. He granted the soldiers the same indulgence we have already observed and praised in Otho, ordering the kind of tribute the centurions levied on their companies to be paid out of the public treasury.

Several officers sacrificed to the fury of the soldiers. Others screamed from their rage by art.

The multitude, ever furious in Revolutions wherein they are concerned, were for putting numbers of people to death. It is something in a prince like Vitellius, not to have always given way to such bloody desires, and to have sometimes eluded them by art, and by only putting in irons those whose deaths were demanded: for \* nothing prevented his being openly

\* *Apud savientes occidere palam, ignoscere non nisi fallendo poterat. Tac.*



openly cruel amidst such a crew; but he was <sup>A. R. 820.</sup> obliged to deceive them in order to be hu- <sup>A. C. 69.</sup> mane. By that means he saved Julius Burdo, admiral of the fleet, on the Rhine. He had been instrumental in the ruin of Fonteius Capito, which the soldiers capriciously pretended to revenge, though they had had no great reason to love him during his life. Vitellius ordered Burdo to be arrested, and some time after, when old animosities were forgot, set him at liberty. Civilis, that famous Batavian, who afterwards gave the Romans so much uneasiness, was likewise screened on this occasion from the resentment of the soldiers, who probably looked upon him as a traitor to the empire. Fonteius Capito had suspected him of projects of rebellion, in consequence of which <sup>Tac. Hist.</sup> he was sent to Rome in Nero's reign, and ac- <sup>iv. 13.</sup> quitted by Galba. Vitellius spared him out of policy, not to irritate a haughty nation, where Civilis held a great rank. The most remarkable of those whose deaths the new emperor granted the soldiers, are the four centurions who opposed the revolt against Galba. Their \* fidelity was a crime not to be pardoned by rebels.

Vitellius's party, already very strong of it- <sup>The troops</sup> self, was soon increased. The German armies <sup>near the</sup> were a signal to the neighbouring provinces. <sup>German</sup> Valerius Asiaticus, who commanded in Bel- <sup>armies</sup> gia, and Junius Blæsus, governor of the Ly- <sup>join Vitel-</sup> onnoise, acknowledged Vitellius. The troops <sup>lius's party.</sup> that guarded Rætia did the same. Those in Britain, at variance among themselves, and with

\* *Damnatos fidei crimine, gravissimo inter desciscentes.*  
*Tac.*

A. R. 820. with their general, united however in favour  
 A. C. 69. of the new emperor. They were commanded  
*Top. Hist.* by Trebellius Maximus, an indolent inexpe-  
*I. 60. &* rienced man, who, besides being despised for  
*Agr. 16.* his cowardice, was hated for his avarice and  
 extortions. Roscius Cælius, commander of  
 a legion, fomented the discontent of the sol-  
 diers, and the sedition grew to such a height,  
 that Trebellius \* was obliged to fly, and hide  
 himself to avoid death. He returned how-  
 ever, and was received by his army, who suf-  
 fered him to resume a shadow of command,  
 and by a kind of compact between them, the  
 general's safety was the price of the soldiers  
 licentiousness. But even that shameful agree-  
 ment did not subsist long. Trebellius, was  
 forced to fly again, to cross the sea, and seek  
 shelter with Vitellius. That army had no  
 great share in the civil war, but its name gave  
 a credit to the party; and Vitellius, finding  
 neither provinces nor troops left behind, but  
 what were friends, formed his plan to carry  
 his design into execution, and by dint of arms  
 establish his authority in the centre of the  
 empire.

Contrast  
 between  
 the ardour  
 of the  
 troops, and  
 Vitellius's  
 indolence.

The ardour of the troops spurred him on to  
 dispatch, for nothing could be more different  
 than Vitellius and his army. The soldiers,  
 with loud cries, demanded to be armed, whilst  
 the Gauls were struck with a panic, and Spain  
 still hesitated what cause to espouse. The ri-  
 gours of winter were no obstacle to them. Ene-  
 mies to all delay, they wanted to be instantly  
 led

\* Trebellius fuga ac latebris vitata exercitus ira, indecorus  
 atque humilis, precario mox præsuit: ac velut pacti exerci-  
 tus licentiam, dux salutem. *Tac. Agr.*

led on to attack Italy, and take possession of Rome. They said, that diligence was of infinite consequence in all civil discords, and that it was better to act than deliberate. On the other hand, Vitellius was buried in indolence. To live in an idle luxury, and have his table profusely covered, was, in his opinion, enjoying empire. Weltering in his fat, and every day drunk by noon, he absolutely neglected all kind of business: but his bad example did not affect the soldiers, whose zeal was as ardent, as if an alert emperor had encouraged them by the strongest exhortations. So that when I said Vitellius formed his plan of war, I would be understood to mean, that his chief officers did it for him.

It was resolved, therefore, that two divisions of the army, the one consisting of forty, the other of thirty thousand men, should go before, under the command of Valens and Cæcina, and that the emperor should follow them with still greater forces. Valens was ordered to make the Gauls declare for Vitellius, or to lay their country waste if they refused, and to enter Italy by the way of the \* Cottian Alps. Cæcina was to go a shorter way, and cross the † Panine Alps. The moment those resolutions were known, the soldiers pressed strongly for orders to march; nor could any time have been lost, since they were actually on the road when they received the news of Galba's death, who, as I have said, was killed the fifteenth of January.

Tacitus

\* Tarpebat Vitellius, & fortunam Principatus, inerti luxu ac prodigijs epulis præsumebat, medio diei temulentus, & sagina gravis. Tac.

Plan of war formed by Vitellius's generals.

\* Towards mount Cœnis.  
† Towards great St. Bernard.

A. R. 820. Tacitus records, as a good omen, the appearance of an eagle at the head of Valens's army, when setting out, and which accompanied it for some time. If any thing be worthy observation in this story, true or false, it is the superstitious credulity of the historian.

A. C. 69.  
Valens's  
march to  
the Cottian  
Alps.  
*Tac. Hist.*  
I. 62.

Valens crossed the territory of Treves without precaution or danger, the people there being well affected to Vitellius; but at Divodurum, now Metz, though well received, the soldiers were on a sudden seized with an unaccountable panic: they immediately ran to arms, not to plunder the town, but to massacre the inhabitants, and that without any motive or pretence, but out of downright rage and frenzy. The cause being unknown, it was the more difficult to apply a remedy. At length the soldiers were appeased by the entreaties of their commanders, and the city saved from total ruin, though not till it had cost four thousand men their lives. So dreadful an example filled the Gauls with such terror and consternation, that wherever the army passed, whole towns and cities came out to meet them with their magistrates, the women and children prostrating themselves on the ground before them; and in short, doing all that the weak can to move the compassion of the angry strong.

Valens was in the country of the Leuci, now the Diocese of Toul, when he received the news of Galba's death, and Otho's promotion to the empire. This change made little impression on the soldiers, to whom it was indifferent whether they were to fight Otho or Galba.

Galba. However it \* determined the Gauls, A. R. 820.  
 Otho and Vitellius were equal by odious to them, A. C. 69.  
 but Vitellius was dreadful, and that motive  
 turned the scale.

After that the army crossed the territories of  
 Langres, in the same interest. The troops  
 were well received there, and behaved with  
 good order and modesty. But it was a short-  
 lived joy. In the country were eight cohorts  
 of Batavians, destined to follow the fourteenth  
 legion as auxiliaries, but had separated on ac-  
 count of the disturbances that preceded Nero's  
 death. They were returning to Britain whilst  
 the fourteenth legion was in Dalmatia. Valens, Tac. Hist.  
 who found those cohorts at Langres, having ii. 11, §  
 joined them to his army, the Batavians qua- 27.  
 relled with the legionaries; and the other sol-  
 diers taking part, some with one side, and  
 others with the other, a general battle was very  
 near ensuing. Valens was forced to exert the  
 authority of commander, and by putting to  
 death a few Batavians, reminded others of  
 what they seemed to have almost forgot, the  
 respect and obedience due to the majesty of the  
 empire.

He sought in vain a pretence to attack the  
 Eduans. He demanded money and arms from  
 them, which they not only supplied him with,  
 but likewise made him a present of provisions.  
 Fear was what made them act in this manner.  
 The people of Lyons did the same, but wil-  
 lingly and out of affection. Their hatred to  
 Galba had long since determined them in fa-  
 vour of Vitellius. Valens found at Lyons the  
 Italic

\* Gallis cunctatio exempla: & in Othonem ac Vitellium  
 odium par, ex Vitellio et metu. Tac.

A. R. 820. Italic legion, and a body of horse, which we  
 A. C. 69. should call, according to our way of express-  
 \* *Alia Tur-*  
*rina.* ing ourselves, the Turin\* regiment, and took  
 them with him. Tacitus observes how like a  
 courtier the general acted on this occasion.  
 The Italic legion was commanded by Manlius,  
 who had deserved well from Vitellius's party.  
 Valens†, who probably was jealous of him,  
 undermined him by private accusations, whilst  
 at the same time, to prevent his distrust, he  
 praised him highly in public. The artifice  
 took effect, and Vitellius set no value on an  
 officer, to whom he already had obligations,  
 and who could be still of farther service to  
 him.

I have observed elsewhere‡, that the cities  
 of Lyons and Vienne were rivals, and looked  
 on each other with a jealous eye. The affec-  
 tion of the Lyonnese for Nero, had made the  
 Viennese as zealous for Galba. In consequence  
 of that enmity, they had fought several skir-  
 mishes, and laid waste each other's lands with  
 such animosity, as plainly shewed they were  
 spurred on by some other motive than the bare  
 interest of Galba, or of Nero. Galba be-  
 coming master, punished Lyons, and reward-  
 ed Vienne: a new cause for reciprocal hatred,  
 still more enflamed by their vicinity. The  
 Lyonnese thought Valens's arrival with a pow-  
 erful army, the most favourable opportunity  
 they could wish for to satisfy their revenge.  
 They endeavoured to communicate to the troops  
 all

† Secretis cum criminationibus infamaverat Fabius igna-  
 rum, 8, quo incautior deciperetur, palam laudatum. Tac.

‡ *Hist. of the Rom. Rep. T. xv. p. 66.*

all the hatred their own minds were tainted with, and succeeded so well, that the soldiers were bent on sacking Vienne, and laying it even with the ground, and that their commanders did not think it in their power to curb their fury. The inhabitants of Vienne greatly alarmed, had recourse to supplications, throwing themselves at the soldiers feet, and with tears imploring their mercy. At the same time Valens gave them three hundred sesterces a man. That made them somewhat more tractable: the antiquity and splendour of the colony of Vienne, then made some impression on them, and they seemed disposed to listen to their general's remonstrances. The Viennese were however disarmed, and almost ruined themselves in presents and supplies of every thing for the use of the troops, though they thought themselves well off to escape even at that price. The common report was, that they had purchased Valens's protection with a large sum of money: and it seems probable. That \* officer, who had long been but in bad circumstances, growing rich on a sudden, could not well conceal his change of fortune. Indigence had only whetted his passions, to which when rich, he gave an entire loose: after struggling with poverty in his youth, he became prodigal in his old age.

He marched slowly cross the country of the Allobrogi and Vocontians †, making a shameful

\* *Is diu sordidus, repente dives, mutationem fortune male tegebat, accensis egestate longa cupidinibus immoderata, & inopi juventa senex prodigus. Tac.*

† The chief towns of the Vocontians were Vaison, Luc, and Die.

A. R. 820. ful traffic of his marches and halts with the  
 A. C. 69. proprietors of the land that lay in his way ;  
 and behaved in so tyrannical a manner, that  
 he was going to set fire to the town of Luc<sup>s</sup>,  
 in the territory of the Vocontians, if the sum  
 he demanded had not been immediately brought  
 him. Where no money was to be had, the  
 honour of their wives and daughters was what  
 he exacted from the people, at the price of  
 his clemency. In that manner he reached the  
 foot of the Alps.

Cæcina's  
 march.  
 Disaster of  
 the Helve-  
 tic nation.  
*Tac. Hist.*  
 i. 97.

Cæcina took his rout through the country of  
 the Helvetians, who then retained hardly any  
 thing more than the bare name of the courage  
 and bravery of their ancestors. They were  
 ignorant of Galba's death, and therefore re-  
 fused to submit to Vitellius. Besides, an inci-  
 dent of no great consequence bred a quarrel  
 between them and the Roman soldiers; and  
 Cæcina, fond of plunder and bloodshed, was  
 glad to improve it into a war. The Helve-  
 tians finding themselves warmly attacked, as-  
 sembled their forces: but unaccustomed to  
 fight, not knowing their ranks, nor how to  
 make use of their arms, they were soon cut to  
 pieces, their lands laid waste, and their capital,  
 called Avenche, threatened with a siege. Not  
 being able to resist, they submitted to the con-  
 queror, who caused the head of Julius Alpi-  
 nus, one of their chiefs, to be struck off, and  
 reserved the fate of the rest to be determined  
 by Vitellius.

The

\* This town, built on the Drome, has been laid under  
 water for many ages. A village of the same name has been  
 since built near it.



The Helvetian deputies found the emperor and legions extremely prejudiced against them. The soldiers demanded the utter extirpation of that nation, and held up their fists and naked swords at the deputies. Vitellius himself spared neither reproaches nor menaces. The eloquence of Claudius Cossius, speaker \* of the deputation, was what saved his country. Trembling, disconcerted, and shedding tears, he made a speech suitable to his grief and anxiety, and moved the multitude, ever ready to run from one extreme to another, and to be as soon touched with pity as carried to the greatest violences. The soldiers, thus charged, joined their tears to those of the supplicants, and insisting on clemency still more strongly than they had before on rigour, prevailed on Vitellius to pardon the Helvetians.

Cæcina staid in the country waiting the emperor's decision and orders. Being informed what they were, just as he was preparing to cross the Alps, he learned that a body of horse, which had formerly served under Vitellius in Africa, and which Nero had ordered back to Italy for the project I have mentioned of an expedition into Egypt, espoused the cause of their old general, and had sworn allegiance to him. Those troops were then near the Po; and not content to side with Vitellius themselves, had determined four important cities to declare

Cæcina  
crosses the  
Prenine  
Alps.

\* Claudius Cossus, unus ex legatis, notæ facundie, sed dicendi artem apta trepidatione temperans, atque eo validior, fallitis animum mitigavit: ut est mos vulgo, mutabili subitio, & tam prono in misericordiam, quam immodicum sævitia fuerat. Effusis lacrimis, & meliora constantius postulando, impunitatem salutemque civitati impetraveré. Tac.

A. R. 820. declare for him, Milan, Novara, Yvrées and  
 A. C. 69. Verceil. Cæcina overjoyed at so fine a beginning, and readily conceiving that a body, which at most did not consist of above a thousand horse, could not be able to keep so large an extent of country, immediately dispatched a considerable detachment of horse and foot, whilst himself with the main army, crossed the Pænine Alps still covered with snow.

Otho and  
 Vitellius  
 sound, and  
 lay snares  
 for each  
 other.  
*Tac. Hist.*  
 l. 74.

Whilst Vitellius was making such formidable preparations for war, he often received letters from Otho, inviting him to think of peace, offering him money, an honourable rank, and whatever place he should pitch upon himself to retire to, there to spend his days in ease and plenty. Vitellius answered in the same stile: and this ridiculous and unbecoming commerce lasted some time on both sides: till at last invectives succeeded flattery and compliments, and their letters were full of upbraidings of each other's infamous deeds, in which both said nothing but truth.

Otho was likewise desirous to sound the disposition of his enemies troops, to which end he got the senate to depute some of their members towards the two German armies. The deputies remained with Vitellius, into whose service they entered so readily, that they did not even save appearances. The officers of the guards, whom Otho had taken care to send at the same time, as if to do honour to the deputies, and compose their train, were sent back before they could form any intimacies or connections with the legions. Valens gave them letters from the German armies to the prætorian and city cohorts, wherein the strength of Vitellius's party was blazoned

blazoned out; an offer was made to live in harmony and good intelligence with them; and their giving Otho the empire, of which Vitellius was first in possession, was complained of. Promises and menaces were likewise used to shake their fidelity, by representing how unequal their forces were for war, and at the same time assuring them they should lose nothing by peace. But the prætorians were too strongly attached to Otho to be moved.

Secret snares succeeded more open attempts to corrupt. Both Vitellius and Otho sent assassins to murder each other. Those employed by Vitellius easily concealed themselves in Rome, but Otho's emissaries were soon discovered. New faces could not but betray themselves in a camp where every one knew each other.

Vitellius's mother, wife and children, were then in Rome. He wrote to Salvius Titianus, Otho's brother, that his and his son's heads should answer for whatever ill happened to them. The \* two families were preserved. But the glory of clemency was on Vitellius's side; for Otho's mildness may be ascribed to fear, which could not be the conqueror's case.

Hitherto I have spoken only of the strength of Vitellius's party. Otho was not less well supported. Besides Italy, the prætorian and city cohorts, he had on his side the legions of Dalmatia, Pannonia and Mæsia, who swore fidelity and obedience to him. That was his real and solid strength. The provinces beyond sea, with all the East, Egypt and Africa had likewise

\* Et stetit utraque domus: sub Othone, incertum an metu. Vitellius victor clementiæ gloriâ tulit. Tac.

A. R. 820. likewise taken the oath to him. But it was not  
 A. C. 69. out of affection for his person: the name of  
 Rome and the majesty of the senate had great  
 weight and influence in those remote pro-  
 vinces, where every one was naturally disposed  
 to acknowledge for emperor whoever was ac-  
 knowledged such in Rome. Besides, Otho  
 was the first whose promotion was notified to  
 them, and in whose favour they were conse-  
 quently pre-engaged.

Vitellius too reckoned in his party, provin-  
 ces which had been determined in his favour  
 by the circumstances of things more than any  
 real attachment. Aquitania, Spain, and Nar-  
 bonne, declared for him only out of fear: nay,  
 Spain at first declared for Otho and Clavius  
 Rufus, Proconsul of that province, was com-  
 mended for it by a public declaration of Otho's  
 in Rome, but a moment before he was known  
 to have changed sides. Aquitania underwent  
 the same change. On the whole, the forces of  
 Otho and Vitellius were pretty equal, and the  
 success of either party very dubious.

Otho's  
 plan of  
 war.  
*Tac. Hist.*  
 l. 87.

Otho's plan of war was as follows. As he  
 knew the passes over the Alps were already  
 occupied by Vitellius's troops, he resolved to  
 attack Narbonnese Gaul by sea, and to that  
 purpose fitted out a fleet, manned with his most  
 zealous and best affected troops, such as the  
 remains of the marine legion, so cruelly treated  
 by Galba, together with the city cohorts and a  
 detachment of prætorians, on whose fidelity  
 Otho depended so much, that he considered  
 them as checks upon even their own command-  
 ers, who were two first captains of legions, and  
 a tribune, broke by Galba, but restored by him.

They

They had the command of the troops. *Oscus*, A. R. 820. a freeman, had the management of the ships; A. C. 69. an employment far above his station: but *Otho* thought he could trust such a man much better than one of higher birth and rank.

Himself, heading his land army, prepared to march against *Vitellius's* lieutenants. He chose for commanders under him the greatest generals that Rome then had: *Suetonius Paulinus*, whose exploits we have already spoken of; *Marius Celsus*, an able and active warrior; *Annius Gallus*, an experienced officer: though he did not entirely depend on their attachment to him, but placed all his confidence in *Licinius Proculus*, one of the two prætorian præfects, an excellent \* officer for a guard, but unexperienced in war: a cunning subtle calumniator, who knew how to give a bad turn to the best deeds and qualifications of others, and dexterously fill the prince's mind with distrusts and fears of those who, together with frankness and modesty, possessed superior talents.

Before *Otho* set out, fearing his absence might occasion disturbances in Rome, he thought proper to take some precautions, in which he did not always consult the strictest rules of justice. *Dolabella* gave him umbrage; not that he had ever shewn any tendency towards ambition or intrigues, but on account of the name he bore, one of the most illustrious of the ancient nobility, of his being related to *Galba*,  
and

He con-  
fines *Dola-  
bella* to  
*Aquinum*,  
and sets a  
guard over  
him.

\* *Is urbane militie impiger, bellorum insolens, auctoritatem Paulini, vigorem Celsi, maturitatem Galli, ut cuique erat, criminando, quod facillimum factu est, pravus & calidus, borgos & modestos anteibat. Tac.*

A. R. 820. and because he had been one of the persons  
 A. C. 69. proposed to be adopted by that emperor. Otho  
 thought those sufficient reasons to justify his  
 securing Dolabella's person. He confined him  
 to Aquinum \*, and there set a guard over him.  
 For the same reasons he carried with him several  
 of the magistrates, and many of those who  
 were of consular dignity, not to assist him with  
 their swords or counsels, but to have them under  
 his hand, and in his power. Of that number  
 was L. Vitellius, whom he distinguished in no  
 shape from the rest, neither treating him as an  
 emperor's brother, nor as brother to his enemy.

Trouble  
 and uneasi-  
 ness in  
 Rome at  
 the ap-  
 proach of  
 war.

Preparations for war were quite a novelty in  
 Rome. Since the calm restored by Augustus,  
 the Roman people had known none but distant  
 wars, the uneasiness as well as honour of which,  
 interested only the head of the empire. The  
 evils of a tyrannical peace were all they had  
 felt under Tiberius and Caligula. Scribonia-  
 nus Camillus's attempt against Claudius, was  
 stifled in its birth before any could be alarmed  
 by it. Nero was destroyed by the bare news  
 of the revolt of two provinces, more than by  
 arms. Whereas they now saw legions march-  
 ing, fleets fitting out, and, which they had never  
 before heard of, the prætorian and city cohorts  
 going to war.

Such was the general uneasiness and distur-  
 bance in Rome, that no one order of citizens  
 was exempt from it †. The heads of the se-  
 nate

\* Aquino, in the Terra di lavoro in the kingdom of Na-  
 ples.

† Nullus ordo metu aut periculo vacuus. Primores  
 Senatus, ætate invalidi, & longa pace desides, seguis &  
 oblitæ

nate, grown old, and by a long series of peace, A. R. 820.  
 accustomed to a quiet life; the nobility ener- A. C. 69.  
 vated, and having forgot the art of war; the  
 knights quite unexperienced, having never  
 made a campaign; all trembled and betrayed  
 their fear, even when they strove most to con-  
 ceal it. Some however were of a quite different  
 way of thinking. War awaked their ambition;  
 but it was an ill-judged ambition, the object of  
 it being to make a shew by their expences.  
 They provided themselves with rich arms, fine  
 horses, and magnificent equipages. The de-  
 light of others was a splendid table; for which  
 whatever appertains to luxury, and is proper  
 only to irritate the passions, was provided by  
 way of provisions for the war. Wise men la-  
 mented the loss of the public tranquillity, and  
 consulted the interests of the state; whilst  
 flightier minds, thinking of the present only,  
 without considering what might ensue, buoyed  
 themselves up with idle hopes. Tumult and  
 disorder suited many, whose fortunes and cre-  
 dit being lost, dreaded peace, and had no re-  
 source but in a general confusion. The multi-  
 tude, whose narrow views never reach beyond  
 what immediately concerns themselves, began  
 to

*oblita bellorum nobilitas, ignarus militie Eques, quanto  
 magis occultare ac abdere pavorem nitentur, manifestius  
 pavidi. Nec deerant e contrario, cui ambitione stolidi, con-  
 spicua arma, insignes equos, quidam luxurioso apparatus  
 conviviorum et irritamenta libidinum, ut instrumenta belli,  
 mercarentur. Sapientibus quietis et Reipublicae cura: levis-  
 simus quisque et futuri improvidus, spe vana tumens. Multi  
 afflicta fide in pace, ac turbatis rebus alacres, et per incerta  
 tutissimi. Sed vulgus et . . . communium curarum experte  
 populus, sentire paulatim belli mala, conversa in militum  
 usum omni pecunia, intentis alimentorum pretiis. Tac.*

A. R. 820. to feel the consequences of war, by the scar-  
 A. C. 69. city of money and dearness of provisions. No-  
 thing of that kind had been felt in Vindex's  
 insurrection, which was terminated within the  
 province where it began, between the German  
 legions and the Gauls.

Otho's  
 haste to  
 set out.

Otho did all that was in his power to remedy  
 those evils by coming to a speedy decision. He  
 could not bear delays, which he said had been  
 the ruin of Nero; and Cæcina's diligence, in  
 having already passed the Alps, spurred him  
 on still more to hasten his departure and take  
 the field.

He takes  
 leave of the  
 senate, and  
 does an act  
 of goodness  
 and justice.

The fourteenth of March, he convened the  
 senate to recommend the republic to their care.  
 At the same time, being desirous to please by  
 an act of goodness and justice, he granted to  
 such as were returned from exile, and whose  
 estates had been forfeited, what still remained  
 unpaid to the exchequer of the nine tenths of  
 Nero's liberalities reclaimed by Galba. The  
 gift was well bestowed, and sounded great, but  
 the produce of it was trifling, on account of the  
 strict searches already made by the officers of  
 the exchequer, who had left but few outstand-  
 ing arrears.

He ha-  
 rangues the  
 people.  
 Servile  
 adulation  
 of the mul-  
 titude.

Otho harangued the people too, and in his  
 speech vaunted the dignity of the capital, and  
 the august suffrages of the whole senate in his  
 favour. He spoke with modesty of Vitellius's  
 partizans, whom he taxed rather with prejudice  
 and ignorance, than ill will and audaciousness:  
 and as to Vitellius, he said not a word of him.  
 Tacitus doubts whether such great circumspec-  
 tion ought to be imputed to Otho himself, or  
 to the person who composed his speeches, which



was generally thought to be Galerius Trachalus, a celebrated orator, of whom I have spoken elsewhere. The \* applauses of a multitude, accustomed to flatter, were as great, as they were false and deceitful. Nothing more could have been done, no stronger affection shewn, had the dictator Cæsar, or the emperor Augustus been setting out for war: to so low a state had habitual servitude reduced the Roman people, now a nation of mere slaves, consulting nothing but their own private ends, and not valuing in the least what became of the public welfare and glory. Otho appointed his brother Salvius Titianus to officiate for him in the city, and govern the empire in his absence.

He sent forward a considerable body of troops composed of five prætorian cohorts of the first legion, and some horse. To them he added two thousand gladiators, a reinforcement not over-honourable to the party that made use of it, but which, however, the most rigid generals had employed in civil wars. The command of those troops was given to Annius Gallus and Vestricius Spurinna, who were ordered to dispute the passage of the Po, the enemy having already passed the Alps. Otho followed them himself at a small distance, with the rest of the prætorian cohorts, and all the forces he had at hand. He did not wait the arrival of four legions who were coming from Dalmatia

He sets out, being preceded by a body of troops destined to defend the passage of the Po. Tac. Hist. II. 11.

\* Clamor vocesque vulgi, ex more adulandi, nimie et falsæ. Quasi dictatorem Cæsarem, aut Imperatorem Augustum prosequerentur, ita studiis votisque certabant: nec metu aut amore, sed ex libidine servitii: ut in familiis, privata cuique stimulatio, et vile jam decus publicum. Tac.

A. R. 820. Dalmatia and Panonnia, three of which were  
 A. C. 69. old corps; particularly the fourteenth legion  
 had gained great glory in Britain under Suetonius Paulinus, and for that very reason had been pitched upon by Nero for the expedition he was meditating just before his death: a preference by which the courage of those soldiers was greatly elated, and the affection they had conceived for Nero, reflected on Otho. Those four legions, preceded by a detachment of two thousand men, were on their march, but proceeded so slowly, that the dispute was ended before they arrived.

He suffers  
 great fa-  
 tigue.

Otho on \* leaving Rome † seemed to have left behind him all relish for luxury and effeminacy. Armed with an iron cuirass, he marched on foot at the head of the troops, covered with dust, neglecting his person, and quite the reverse of what, till then, he had seemed to be. He knew how to suit himself to circumstances, and what his interest required.

Exploits of  
 Otho's  
 fleet.

Fortune seemed to favour Otho at first, and to give him pleasing hopes. His fleet, though very badly managed, reduced to obedience the whole

\* *Nec illi segne aut luxu corruptum iter: sed lorica ferrea usus est, ante signa pedester, horridus, incomptus, facineraeque dissimilis. Tac.*

† The character Tacitus here gives of Otho is very different from Juvenal's, when he reproaches him with being effeminate and luxurious even in his preparations for a civil war, a looking-glass being part of his equipage.

*Res memoranda novis annalibus, atque recenti  
 Historia, speculum civilis sarcina belli.*

*Juven. Sat. II. v. 112.*

I think the authority of the satyrist not to be compared with that of the historian.

whole coast of Liguria and Narbonnese Gaul. A. R. 820. A. C. 69.  
 It was commanded, as I have said, by a tribune and two centurions. The soldiers, badly disciplined, put their tribune in irons. One of the two centurions had no manner of authority; and the other, called Suedius Clemens, rather paid his court to, than commanded them. But, though fitter to corrupt than to maintain discipline, he wanted neither bravery, nor an ardent desire to distinguish himself.

A fleet wherein the soldiers were masters, could not fail to commit strange disorders: They made several descents on the Ligurian shore, and behaved in such a manner, that none would have taken them for national troops coasting their own country. They acted like enemies, and cruel ones too; plundering, laying waste, and putting all to fire and sword. The mischief they committed was the greater, as none suspected, or were guarded against them. The \* country was covered with the rich produce of the earth; the houses open; the inhabitants with their wives and children, came out to meet the soldiers, with all the security peace can inspire, but met with all the calamities of war. No part was more severely treated than the \* Maritime Alps, which Marius Maturus, intendant of that country, attempted to defend with what mountaineers he could collect together. But † regular troops  
 soon

\* Pleni agri, apertæ domus: occursantes domini juxta conjuges ac liberos securitate pacis et belli malo circumveniebantur. *Tac.*

† A small province extending from the sea to mount Viso, where the Po rises.

‡ Primo impetu cæsi disjectique montani, ut quibus temere collectis, non castra, non ducem noscantibus, neque in victoria decus esset, neque in fuga flagitium. *Tac.*

A. R. 820. soon dispersed a multitude of barbarians, who  
 A. C. 69. had no notion of discipline, and were as insensible of the glory of conquering, as of the shame of flying. No booty could be expected from a poor nation, nor even prisoners from so alert a people, who would skip up to the top of their mountains in an instant. The victors fell upon the city, then called *Albium Intemelium*, now *Vintimille*, where they reeked their vengeance on the unfortunate inhabitants.

Their injustice and cruelty, already odious in themselves, became still more so by the brave example of a Ligurian woman, who had concealed her son. The soldiers, thinking she had hid her gold with him, endeavoured by torturing her to force that unhappy mother to discover where her son was. Shewing them her breasts, she told them, they must seek in that asylum, him whom their rage so barbarously pursued: nor could the severest punishments inflicted on her, even till she died under them, extort any other than that resolute answer.

*Tac. Agr.*  
 l. 7.

Agricola's mother, who was then at a seat she had in Liguria, was killed by those inhuman wretches.

*Tac. Hist.*  
 li. 27.

The Narbonnese Gauls, alarmed at the approach of Otho's fleet, requested succours from Valens, who was still on their side of the Alps. He sent them a numerous detachment of horse and foot, between whom, and Otho's people, who landed, two smart battles were fought immediately after one another, and quite on the sea shore. Vitellius's party was worsted in

\* *Nec ullis deinde terroribus, aut morte, constantiam vocis egregie amutavit. Tac.*

in both engagements, but it cost the victors A. R. 820.  
 much blood; and by a kind of tacit agreement A. C. 69.  
 both sides reciprocally withdrew and retired,  
 the conquered to Antibes, and Otho's people  
 to Albingaunum, now Albinga, on the Genoese  
 coast.

The news of the success Otho's fleet had met  
 with, kept the islands of Corsica and Sardinia  
 in his interest. Some disturbances however  
 happened in Corsica, occasioned by the rash-  
 ness of the intendant Decimus Pacarius, a man  
 of an uneasy turbulent disposition, who, to shew  
 his zeal for Vitellius, was for backing him with  
 the poor assistance, the little island of which  
 he had the government, could afford. He suf-  
 fered the penalty of his foolish enterprize; for  
 the Corsicans, fatigued and harrassed by the  
 levies and military exercises to which he sub-  
 jected them, watched his time of bathing, and  
 killed him in the bath. The murderers carried  
 his head to Otho; \* were neither rewarded by  
 him, for whom they committed the crime, nor  
 punished by Vitellius when conqueror. Greater  
 crimes and more important objects made that  
 be forgotten.

Otho's land forces gained still greater ad-  
 vantages than those we have just related of his  
 fleet. The first beginning indeed did not fa-  
 vour him; I mean a body of horse on the Po,  
 who declared for Vitellius. That cavalry,  
 backed by a strong detachment sent by Cæcina,  
 had, without difficulty brought over all that  
 country between the Po and the Alps: not  
 that

Otho's  
land forces,  
and Vitel-  
lius's begin  
to skir-  
mish.  
Tac. Hist.  
ii. 17.  
 † Neque eos aut Otho præmio affecit, aut punivit Vitel-  
 lius, in multa colluvie rerum majoribus flagitiis permixtos.  
*Tac.*

A. R. 820. that \* its inhabitants were fond of Vitellius,  
 A. C. 69. nor did they interest themselves for Otho, but quite enervated by a long peace, it was equal to them which of the two was their master.

All this was done before Otho's troops arrived; and they too suffered some small repulse at first. A cohort of Pannonians were made prisoners near Cremona: a hundred horse and a thousand marines, had the same fate between Placentia and *Ticinum*, now called Pavia. The Batavians and Germans detached by Cæcina, animated by that success, passed the Po over against Placentia, and carried off some stragglers; and so unexpected an attack spreading the alarm, gave rise to a report that Cæcina was arrived with his whole army.

Spurinna was in Placentia with three prætorian cohorts and a thousand veterans. Like a prudent and experienced officer, he gave no credit to the false reports spread by a parcel of terrified creatures, for he was sensible he had only a garrison, and not an army with him; and that though his forces might be sufficient to defend the place, they would not do to take the field. He therefore resolved to shut himself up within the walls of Placentia. The soldiers, who had never seen war, and who for that very reason were the more intractable, ran to arms, snatched up the standards, and presented the points of their swords to Spurinna, scorning to hear the centurions and tribunes commend the prudence of their chief, who endeavoured

\* Nullo apud quemquam Othonis favore, nec quia Vitellium mallent: sed longa pax ad omne servitium cregerat, faciles occupantibus, et melioribus incuriosos. Tac.

deavoured to check them. They even accused them of treason and intelligence with Cæcina. A. R. 820. A. C. 69. Spurinna, \* forced to yield to the rashness of his troops, thought it was most prudent to seem to enter into their ways of thinking in order to preserve his authority, and bring them back to their duty whenever their seditious humour should be over. What he foresaw, happened.

When in the field, night drawing on, re-trenchments were of course to be made. That work, quite new to the prætorians, began to cool their courage. The most sensible of them then opened their eyes, saw their error, and represented to the rest, to what danger they should be exposed, if in an open country so small a number as they were, should be surrounded by Cæcina's whole army. Their reflections were very just, and the officers backing them, all agreed their general judged wisely in choosing a strong and well fortified colony for the seat of war. At last Spurinna ventured to speak to them without disguise; not to upbraid them with their fault, but to make them sensible of his reasons. He succeeded: and leaving only a few scouts to bring intelligence of the enemy, marched back to Placentia, with the rest of his troops, now become more tractable and obedient. He repaired and strengthened the fortifications of that place, provided a sufficient quantity of arms, and every thing necessary to sustain a siege, and restored a proper discipline and subordination among his

\* Fit temeritatis alienæ comes Spurinna, primo coactus, mox velle se simulans, quo plus auctoritatis ineeset conillit, si seditio mitesceret. Tac.

A. R. 820. his troops, the only advantage wanting to  
 A. C. 69. Otho's party, in which there was courage and  
 bravery enough.

Ostenta-  
 tion of Cæ-  
 cina and  
 his wife.  
*Tac. Hist.*  
 U. 20.

In the mean time Cæcina drew near, keep-  
 ing his troops as much within bounds, since  
 their entrance into Italy, as he had permitted  
 them to be licentious before. The singular  
 accoutrement and ostentation of the general,  
 displeased and shocked the inhabitants of all  
 the countries through which he passed. Those  
 people, who wore the toga, were surprized to  
 see a Roman general with a mantle of various  
 colours, and the rest of \* his dress, borrowed  
 from the fashions of the barbarians. His wife  
 Salonina † was with him, mounted on a horse  
 magnificently caparisoned; and that ostenta-  
 tion which in fact hurt nobody, excited how-  
 ever a general indignation. It is a natural fail-  
 ing in all men to look with envy on a recent  
 fortune, and even though the strictest modesty  
 be observed, not to be able to forgive the ele-  
 vation of those who were their equals.

He be-  
 sieges Pla-  
 centia to no  
 purpose,  
 and retires  
 to Cro-  
 magna.

Cæcina, having passed the Po, first tried to  
 gain over his adversaries by fair words and great  
 promises, to which they returned the same.  
 After making use on both sides of the specious  
 names of Peace and Concord, and with as  
 much deceit in one party as in the other, war  
 was at last to determine the difference; and  
 Cæcina

\* Breeches, after the manner of the Gauls and Germans.  
 † Uxorem ejus Saloninam, quamquam in nullius injuriam  
 insigni equo ostroque veheretur, tamquam læsi gravabantur;  
 insito \* mortalibus natura, recentem aliorum felicitatem ægris  
 oculis introspicere, modumque fortune a nullis magis exi-  
 gere, quam quos in equo videre. *Tac.*

\* The text says *insito*. I follow Lipsius's conjecture.



Cæcina affecting every thing that could inspire A. R. 920.  
 terror, prepared to besiege Placentia. \* Being A. C. 69.  
 sensible of what consequence the success of a  
 first enterprize is, and how far it influences over  
 all subsequent ones, not in the least doubting  
 the superiority of his forces, he attempted to  
 storm the place, without taking any of those  
 precautions which the art of war has invented  
 to cover the besiegers. The soldiers, as pre-  
 sumptuous as their leader, having filled them-  
 selves with victuals and drink, attacked the  
 walls. They met with a much warmer recep-  
 tion than they expected, and were repulsed  
 with great loss. In this first fray was burnt  
 a vast and magnificent amphitheatre built in  
 the suburbs, and of which the inhabitants of  
 the city bitterly lamented the loss, when they  
 had no greater dangers to apprehend.

The night was spent in mutual preparations  
 for an attack in form, and a stout resistance.  
 Vitellius's partizans prepared hurdles, galle-  
 ries, and battering rams, and Otho's got ready  
 long poles, with enormous masses of stone,  
 lead, and other metals, to pierce through and  
 break the works of the assailants, and crush  
 those that should be under them. Each † ani-  
 mated his companions in the strongest manner,  
 saying, what an honour it would be to con-  
 quer,

\* *Gnarus, ut initia provenissent, famam in cetera fore.*  
*Tac.*

† *Utrunque pudor, utrinque gloria; et diversæ exhorta-*  
*tiones, hinc legionum et Germanici exercitus robur, inde*  
*urbani militiæ et prætoriarum cohortium decus, attolentium.*  
*Illi, ut segnum ac desidem, et circo ac theatris corruptis mi-*  
*litem, hi, peregrinum et externum increpabant. Simul O-*  
*thonem ac Vitellium celebrantes culpantesque, uberiusque*  
*inter se probis quam laudibus stimulabantur. Tac.*

A. R. 820. quer, and how shameful to be worsted. On  
A. C. 69. one side, the invincible strength of the Germanic legions was vaunted, and on the other, the glory and pre-eminence of the prætorian cohorts, the emperor's own guard. The legionaries treated the prætorians with the utmost contempt, as a raw militia bred up in idleness, and corrupted by the circus and theatres; whilst they in their turn called their adversaries strangers whom Rome did not acknowledge. The names of Otho and Vitellius were *often mentioned*, but both sides had a much more ample field to accuse him against whom they made war, than to praise him for whom they fought.

The day had scarcely began to dawn, when the walls were covered with defenders, and the plain filled with shining arms. The legions closing their ranks, and the auxiliary troops more extended, and covering a larger space of ground, divided the attack between them. The latter, consisting of Germans, threw darts and stones against the strongest and best guarded places; and wherever any part of the walls seemed either to be neglected or in bad order, those barbarians ran up to it without any precaution, and, as was their custom, half naked, not covering themselves with their shields, but with horrid shouts, brandishing them out of a vain ostentation. The prætorians had infinite advantages over them, they beat them down with showers of arrows, and killed numbers, without being hardly hurt themselves. Nor did they defend themselves less well against the legionaries, who, sheltered under their galleries, endeavoured to mine the walls. The vast  
stones,

stones, of which the besieged had plenty, falling from a great height on the roofs of the galleries, soon broke them to pieces, put all in disorder, and rendered that attack abortive. The legionaries crushed to death, and the auxiliaries annoyed by the arrows, retreated with shame, after losing the reputation they had brought with them. Cæcina raised the siege after two fruitless assaults, and retired to Cremona.

A. R. 920.

A. C. 69.

Spurinna being informed of the road the enemy had taken, immediately dispatched a courier to Annius Gallus, letting him know that the siege was raised, and what rout Cæcina had taken. Gallus was on the way, marching to succour Placentia with the first legion. On the news received from Spurinna, the legion was for marching after the enemy, and their desire to fight was so violent, that they even grew seditious. However, Gallus with great difficulty got the better, and stopped at Bedriac, a village \* between Cremona and Verona, famous in history for two battles fought there within a month by Romans against Romans.

2

About

\* Cluvier justly observes, that this is a very vague position. The distance between Verona and Cremona is considerable, and Bedriac ought to have been much nearer the latter than the former of those cities. According to him, Tacitus would have expressed himself much better, had he placed Bedriac between Cremona and Mantua. But though Cluvier very properly points out an inaccuracy in the Roman historian, he has not so well determined the true situation of Bedriac, which he supposes to have been the present *Canceto*, a large village on the left of the Oglio; whereas Bedriac must have been on the right hand side of that river. M. D'Anville, to whose judgment I readily submit, thinks Bedriac the place now called *Cividate*.

A. R. 820. About the same time Martius Macer, who  
 A. C. 69. commanded the two thousand gladiators, of whom I have spoken, on a sudden passed the Po with them near Cremona; and falling on a body of Cæcina's auxiliaries, cut part of them to pieces, and put the rest to flight. But he did not pursue his advantage, for fear the enemies, recovering themselves, might call in fresh succours, and soon be superior to him.

Otho's  
 troops dis-  
 trust their  
 leaders.

His prudent precaution \* made the troops of Otho's party, ever ready to put a bad construction on the conduct of their leaders, suspect his. The greatest cowards were, as always happens, the most insolent: and in their speeches attacked not only Macer, but the chief generals of the army, Annius Gallus, Suetonius Paulinus, and Marius Celsus. The murderers of Galba were above all the most turbulent and noisy. Stung by remorse of conscience, and the dread of a just punishment, they sought for safety in tumult and confusion. They sowed the seeds of discord, either by promoting sedition openly, or by conveying private intelligence to Otho. Whilst that prince, ready to lend an ear to the reports of the meanest creatures, because he dreaded honest men, knew not what to resolve on; ever fickle and fluctuating

\* *Suspectum id Othonianis fecit, omnia ducum facta prave aestimantibus. Certatim ut quisque animo ignavus, procerax ore, Annium Gallum, et Suetonium Paulinum, et Marium Celsum . . . variis criminibus incessebant. Acerriam seditionum ac discordiæ incitamenta, interfectores Galbæ, scelere ac metu vecordes, miscere cuncta, modo occultis ad Othonem literis. Qui humiliamo cuique credulus, bonis metuens, trepidabat, rebus prosperis incertus, et adversis melior. Tac.*

fluctuating whilst in a prosperous state, and never so wise and prudent as when in adversity. At length he resolved to send for his brother Titianus, and to give him the general command of the army. Before he arrived, Paulinus and Celsus gained a very considerable advantage over the enemy.

Cæcina was piqued at not succeeding in any one of his enterprizes, and at finding his arms fall daily into greater disrepute. The raising of the siege of Placentia, the defeat of the auxiliaries, and the skirmishes between both parties, in which his men were almost always worsted, were things that gave him great uneasiness: and fearing lest Valens, who was drawing near, should be more successful, and eclipse his glory, he set about retrieving his honour with more warmth than prudence. With that view he laid a plot for an ambuscade to catch the generals of the adverse party: but they, being apprized of it, turned his artifice against himself, and he fell into the snare he laid for them.

Great advantages gained by Otho's generals over Cæcina.

Otho's horse, commanded by Celsus, did wonders, and broke the enemy's ranks. Paulinus with his infantry did not come up time enough to back him. He was \* naturally a temporizer; and as the ground where both armies were engaged was pretty rough and uneven, he wanted first to fill up the ditches, and widen the roads, to give his army a more extensive

\* Cunctator natura, et cui cauta potius consilia cum ratione, quam prospera ex casu placerent, compleri fossas aperiri campum, pandi aciem jubebat, satis cito incipi victoriam, ubi provisum foret ne vincerentur. Tac.

A. R. 820. A. C. 69. tensive front, thinking it would be time enough to begin to conquer after he should have taken all proper precautions to prevent being conquered. By that delay, Cæcina's men got into some vineyards and a little wood, where they had time to recover their spirits, and form their ranks again. From thence they returned to the attack, killed some prætorian horse, whom the heat of victory had carried too far, and wounded king \* Epiphanes, who fought valiantly for Otho. Paulinus then falling on with his infantry, crushed the enemy's troops with so much the greater ease, as Cæcina committed a fault in not sending up at once a strong reinforcement, but only one cohort after another, who, as fast as they came, were either routed by the conquerors, or borne down by the torrent of the fugitives.

The very soldiers saw their commander's error, and were highly incensed, thinking treason was at the bottom of it: for which reason they put in irons Julius Gratus, præfect of their camp, as having an understanding with his brother Julius Fronto, who was a tribune in Otho's army, and had likewise been put in arrest for the very same reason.

The terror was so great and general among Vitellius's troops, and such the confusion, occasioned by the mixture of those who fled from battle, with those who came from the camp to succour them, that it was agreed on both sides, Cæcina's army must have been entirely destroyed, if Paulinus had not sounded a retreat.

He

\* Ryckius, in his notes on Tacitus, thinks this prince was son of Antiochus of Commagene, of whom Josephus speaks, *l. vii. de B. Jud. c. 27.*

He alledged in his excuse, that he was apprehensive, if he continued the pursuit, his troops, fatigued by a hard battle, and having no body of reserve to back them in case of danger, would be exposed to too great hardships from what enemies might come fresh out of their camp. But few approved his reasons: the multitude was not satisfied with him, and consequently he was distrusted. On the other hand, the event of that battle was a lesson to the conquered. Without being intimidated by it, they took it as a warning to be more cautious and circumspect for the future. *Cæcina's* troops were not the only ones admonished by it; and, desirous to clear themselves of the imputation their general laid to their charge, of being the cause of their own defeat, by behaving with an arrogance more like sedition than battle: but *Valens's* troops too, then arrived at *Pavia*, learning not to despise the enemy, and bent on retrieving the honour of their party, became more orderly and submissive: for till then the same intractable spirit had reigned among them too, and had excited a furious sedition on the road, of which *Valens* was very near being the victim. The occasion of it was as follows.

The eight cohorts of *Batavians*, overtaken by *Valens* at *Langres*, and joined to his army, were, as I have said, originally destined to follow the fourteenth legion. In the revolution, by which the empire and mankind were delivered from *Nero*, the legionaries and *Batavians* had divided, the former espousing the prince's cause, and the others declaring against him. *Nero's* fall was a subject of vanity and triumph

A. R. 820.

A. C. 69.

Furious sedition in Valens's army. Tac. Hist. II. 27.

A. R. 820. triumph to the Batavians. They would not  
 A. C. 69. go with the fourteenth legion into Dalmatia,  
 but resolved to return to Britain, from whence  
 they came. On meeting Valens's army they  
 changed their minds, and embraced Vitellius's  
 party, to which they carried all their pride and  
 haughtiness, boasting incessantly to the legions  
 with which they marched, that they had re-  
 duced the fourteenth legion, and deprived Nero  
 of the empire: in a word, assuming the whole  
 honour of the decision of that great quarrel,  
 and stiling themselves the arbitrators of the  
 fate of princes and event of war. The sol-  
 diers of the legions did not at all like their  
 boastings; the general himself was nettled at  
 them: all discipline was broke through by  
 their continual wrangles, from which blows,  
 and even battles might easily ensue: in short,  
 Valens feared lest the Batavians should proceed  
 from insolence to infidelity.

Struck with that reflection, Valens laid hold  
 on the pretence furnished him by the defeat of  
 the troops he had sent to succour Narbonnese  
 Gaul against Otho's fleet. Under colour of  
 defending Vitellius's allies, but in reality with  
 a view to separate a body too powerful when  
 united, he ordered a part of the Batavians to  
 the Narbonnese. The Batavians were afflicted  
 at it, and the legions took it ill, complaining  
 that they were deprived of a great support by  
 the removal of those excellent troops. "What!  
 "said they, those old soldiers, victorious in  
 "so many wars, are taken, as it were, from  
 "the field of battle, at the very moment when  
 "we are drawing near the enemy! if a single  
 "province be preferable to the capital, and to  
 "the



“ the welfare of the empire, let us all go to A. R. 920.  
 “ Narbonnese Gaul. But if Italy be our main A. C. 69.  
 “ object, if that be the term and fruit of our  
 “ victory, what can be more senseless, than to  
 “ weaken ourselves when we are just entering  
 “ there, and to cut off from our body, strong  
 “ and healthy members that would be of great  
 “ service to us.”

These speeches being spread over all the camp, Valens sent his lictors to put a stop to them, and prevent the growing sedition. But the mutinous, attacking him too, and throwing stones at him, obliged him to fly; they pursued, upbraiding him with the spoils of Gaul, with which he had enriched himself, and the gold he had received from the Viennese; and, imagining he had concealed treasures acquired by their labours, they plundered his baggage, ransacked his tents, and sounded the earth with their spears, whilst their unfortunate general gained time by their avidity, to take shelter with an officer of the horse, where he remained concealed in a slave's dress.

Their fury beginning to abate, Alphænus Varus, præfect of the camp, thought of an expedient to make them sensible how much they stood in need of their chief. To that end he left them entirely to their own conduct, laying aside all that order by which discipline is maintained in an army. He forbid the centurions going their rounds, and the trumpets sounding to tell the watches of the night. So unusual a \* calm quite disconcerted the mutineers,

\* Igitur torpere cuncti, circumspicere inter se attoniti:  
 & id ipsum quod nemo regebat paventes, silentio penitenti-  
 tia,

A. R. 820. neers, they remained in a kind of lethargy,  
 A. C. 69. looking at each other, not knowing what to do, because no body attempted to direct or command them. They strove to obtain pardon by a modest silence, by every mark of repentance, and at last by prayers and tears. Valens chose that moment to leave his retreat, and appeared before them like an humble suppliant, bathed in tears. The soldiers, who had concluded him dead, were extremely moved and overjoyed at seeing him again, so contrary to their expectations; and, as is usual with the multitude, passing from one extreme to another, loaded him with praises, surrounding him with their eagles and standards, and bore him to his tribunal. Valens behaved with a moderation suitable to the circumstances he was in. He required the death of none; though he could not help complaining of some, for fear an absolute silence might give room to suspect he only concealed his resentment. He was very sensible, that in civil wars soldiers will prescribe laws to their commanders.

Ardour of  
 Valens's  
 troops to  
 join Cæ-  
 cina.

The sedition was very near breaking out again, when drawing near Pavia, Valens's army learnt the defeat of Cæcina. Vexed at not having come up in time to be at the battle, the soldiers imputed it to the slowness and perfidy of

of  
 tia, postremo precibus ac lacrymis veniam quærebant. Ut vero deformis & flens, & præter spem incolumis, Valens processit, gaudium, miseratio, favor; versi in lætitiâ, ut est vulgus utroque immodicum, laudantes gratantesque, circumdatum aquilis signisque in tribunal ferunt. Ille, utili moderatione, non supplicium cujusquam poposcit: ac ne dissimulans suspectior foret, paucos incusavit: gnarus, civilibus bellis plus militibus, quam ducibus licere. Tac.

of their general. But reflection soon changed <sup>A. R. 820.</sup> that inconsiderate passion into ardour against <sup>A. C. 69.</sup> the enemy. The soldiers would take no rest, but, without waiting for orders, hastened on, hurrying their standard-bearers, whom they often got before, till they overtook Cæcina.

His troops were overjoyed at receiving so considerable a reinforcement, but at the same time feared being despised by them, and taxed with want of courage, because they had been beaten. For which reason, to justify themselves, and flatter the new comers, they extolled their force and strength, complaining that Valens had, by his delays, deprived them of so great an assistance, and left them exposed to all the dangers of the enemy's fresh troops. Though Valens was the oldest commander, and had the most numerous army under him, yet the \* soldiers in general preferred Cæcina, whose youth, good mien, and liberality, had gained their hearts, at the same time that his vain boastings blinded their eyes.

Thence arose a strong jealousy between the <sup>Jealousy</sup> two commanders. Cæcina despised his col- <sup>between</sup> league for his low avarice: and Valens ridicu- <sup>Cæcina</sup> led Cæcina for his arrogance and presumption. <sup>and Va-</sup> Concealing however their mutual hatred, they <sup>lens.</sup> united in the common cause, and in concert wrote letters full of bitter reproaches against Otho, keeping no measures, nor fearing to forfeit all hopes of pardon, in case their enterprise did not succeed: whereas Otho's generals abstained

\* Studia tamen militum in Cæcinam inclinabant, super benignitatem animi qua promptior habebatur, etiam vigore ætatis, proceritate corporis, & quodam inani favore. Tac.

A. R. 820. abstained from all invectives against Vitellius,  
A. C. 69. ample as the field was for them.

Compari-  
son of Otho  
and Vitel-  
lius.

As vicious as those two princes were, the public then made a difference in favour of Vitellius, whose \* indolent voluptuousness seemed less to be feared than Otho's violent passions. By the murder of Galba, the latter had greatly added to the sentiments of terror and hatred the people had long conceived: none imputed the cause and beginning of the war to the other. Vitellius, a glutton and a slave to his belly, seemed no man's enemy but his own: Otho's luxury, cruelty and audaciousness endangered the republic. Such are the observations Tacitus makes; notwithstanding which, I shall venture to say, that if Otho was most criminal, yet most good might be expected from him. His conduct, from the time of his invading the empire, deserves praise in many respects; whereas all Vitellius's actions deserve the highest contempt: his stupid facility, was an opening to every evil, and cut off all hopes of good.

Otho re-  
solves to  
venture a  
battle con-  
trary to  
the advice  
of his best  
generals.  
*Tac. Hist.*  
II. 31.

By the junction of Cæcina and Valens, they were in a condition to offer battle, nor did any thing hinder a general action if Otho was willing. He held a great council to deliberate whether it were best to protract the war, or try his fortune. Suetonius Paulinus was for temporising: and as he was thought the most experienced

\* Minus Vitellii ignavæ voluptates, quam Othonis flagrantissimæ libidines timebantur: addiderat huic terrorem atque odium cædes Galbæ: contra illi initium belli nemo imputabat. Vitellius ventre & gula sibi ipsi hostis: Otho luxu, sevitia, audacia, reipublicæ exitiosior ducebatur. *Tac.*

experienced officer in the empire, he judged it becoming his reputation to back his opinion by profound reasonings and reflections, which embraced the whole plan of the war. A. R. 820.  
A. C. 69.

Accordingly he represented, “ That all  
 “ Vitellius’s forces were arrived, and there  
 “ was no danger of their receiving any addi-  
 “ tional strength, the Gauls being in such a  
 “ ferment, and the Germans so daunted, that  
 “ they could not leave the Rhine unguarded.  
 “ That the Britannic legions were sufficiently  
 “ employed by the barbarians they had to  
 “ fight, and separated by the sea. That Spain  
 “ had but few troops. That Narbonnoise  
 “ Gaul was sufficiently kept in awe by Otho’s  
 “ fleet, and terrified by the bad success of the  
 “ battle Vitellius’s men had ventured to fight.  
 “ That Transpadane Gaul, enclosed between  
 “ the Alps and the Po, having no communi-  
 “ cation with the sea, and being harrassed by the  
 “ passage of the troops through that country,  
 “ would not be able to furnish the enemy with  
 “ necessary provisions, and consequently they  
 “ must soon want. That the German auxili-  
 “ aries, who made so formidable an appear-  
 “ ance, were far from being as stout as they  
 “ seemed, and, if the war lasted till summer,  
 “ would be overcome by the bare change of  
 “ climate. That \* armies, whose first effort  
 “ would have been thought capable of bearing  
 “ down all before them, had often seen their  
 “ strength vanish, and been reduced to nothing  
 “ by delay. We, on the contrary, added he,  
 “ have infinite resources, on which we can  
 “ absolutely

\* Multa belli impatu valida, per tædia & moras evanuisse.  
 Tac.

A.R. 820. " absolutely depend. Pannonia, Mæsia and  
 A.C. 69. " Dalmatia, are ready to assist us with their  
 " powerful armies. We have on our side  
 " Italy\*, Rome, the capital of the empire,  
 " the senate and Roman people, awful names,  
 " whose authority can never be abolished,  
 " though it may suffer a transitory eclipse. The  
 " riches of the public, as well as of private per-  
 " sons, are at our command, and it is well  
 " known that money will do more than the sword  
 " in civil wars. Our soldiers are used to the  
 " climate of Italy, and able to bear its heat.  
 " Before us are the Po, and several well forti-  
 " fied towns, properly provided with troops and  
 " provisions, and of which not one, as we may  
 " hope, after what we have seen Placentia do,  
 " will yield to the enemy's attacks. What  
 " forces us to fight? we cannot but gain by  
 " protracting the war. In a few days the four-  
 " teenth legion, whose reputation none is un-  
 " acquainted with, will be here with the troops  
 " of Mæsia. We will then consider farther  
 " of this matter: and if a battle be thought  
 " adviseable, at least we shall fight with a very  
 " great additional strength."

Marius Celsus agreed with Paulinus. An-  
 nius Gallus, whose opinion was sent for, he  
 being confined to his bed by a fall from his  
 horse, was of the same opinion: but Otho in-  
 clined to think differently. His brother Ti-  
 tianus, and the prætorian præfect Proculus,  
 bold

\* Italian, & caput rerum urbem, senatumque & populum  
 Romanum; nunquam obscura nomina, etsi aliquando obum-  
 brentur; publicas privatasque opes, & immensam pecuniam  
 inter civiles discordias ferro validiorem. Tac.

bold through inexperience, strongly insisted, A. R. 820.  
 that the gods and Otho's fortune would direct A. C. 69.  
 the battle; and to prevent contradiction had re-  
 course to flattery. Their sentiments prevailed,  
 and the rashness of their adulation got the bet-  
 ter of the wisdom of more prudent men.

It is proper however to observe, that Otho Reasons of  
 had several reasons for wanting to engage. Be- Otho's  
 sides his not being able to bear the uncertainty haste to  
 he was in, and that his vivacity and impatience engage.  
 made him sink under his uneasiness, and chuse Tac. Hist.  
 rather to hasten a decision at the hazard of II. 37.  
 whatever might ensue; the ardour of the præ-  
 torians to engage the enemy was likewise a law  
 to him. Those troops, unaccustomed to the  
 fatigues of war in the field, longed to return  
 to their peaceable service in the city; and pre-  
 sumptuously thought too they could not but  
 conquer whenever they engaged, and that a  
 general action would be decisive, and enable  
 them to return instantly to the sweets of Rome,  
 the object of their incessant regrets.

Another, and still stronger motive urged  
 Otho, if it be true, as several have pretended,  
 that the two armies were disposed to be re-  
 conciled and agree, not to cut each other's  
 throats for a quarrel between two of the most  
 worthless men on earth, but rather to sacrifice  
 them both, and chuse a person capable of  
 doing honour to the empire, or even leave that  
 choice to the senate. If things were to take  
 that turn, Suetonius Paulinus, a man of known  
 merit, and the oldest of all of consular rank,  
 might conceive great hopes; and that, accord-  
 ing to this account, was the secret cause why he  
 advised delay.

A. R. 820. Tacitus thinks there is no manner of probability in this conjecture, and refutes it with warmth. Can \* any one, says he, believe that Paulinus, whose consummate prudence is very justly celebrated, could ever hope, that in so corrupt an age, a multitude of armed men could have moderation enough to renounce war for the sake of peace, after having broken that peace for the sake of war? Can it with any appearance of truth be supposed, either that armies composed of so many different nations, whose language and manners had no affinity with each other, could have concerted such a scheme; or that the chief officers and leaders, most of them given up to luxury, over head and ears in debt, and capable of any crime, should consent to acknowledge a prince, who was not as bad as themselves, and indebted to them for his elevation? Ambition, adds he, has stained even the best times of the republic with bloodshed and slaughter. The legions did not part without drawing their swords, either at Pharsalia, or in the plains of Philippi; much less were Otho's and Vitellius's armies capable of such heroic moderation and wisdom.

One can hardly resist the strength of this reasoning. But Tacitus himself owns, it is possible that the worthlessness of the two emperors, for whom they were contending, may have

\* Neque Paulinum, qua prudentia fuit, sperasse corruptissimo seculo, tantum vulgi moderationem reor, ut qui pacem belli amore turbaverant, bellum pacis caritate deponerent; neque aut exercitus linguis moribusque dissonos in hunc consensum potuisse coalescere, aut legatos aut duces, magna ex parte luxus, egestatis, scelerum sibi conscios, nisi pollutem obstrictumque meritis suis principem passuros.  
*Tac.*



have made the most sensible and judicious of A. R. 820.  
 the soldiers think of peace. Suetonius Pau- A. C. 69.  
 linus and Marius Celsus, chief officers of Otho's  
 army, were honest men and good citizens, who  
 might be pleased with such an idea, though they  
 found it difficult to execute: at least Otho  
 might suspect they were, and that suspicion  
 was sufficient to determine him to suffer no  
 delay.

Battle being resolved on, the only remaining Otho re-  
 tires to  
 Brixellum  
 before the  
 battle.  
 Tac. Hist.  
 II. 33.  
 question was, Whether Otho should be present,  
 or secure his person. A wrong step was again  
 taken in that respect, at the instigation of the  
 same flatterers who prevailed in the council.  
 They affected on this occasion an extraordinary  
 zeal for the prince's safety; the consequence of  
 which was, that Paulinus and Celsus, already  
 disgusted with the affront put on their first ad-  
 vice, were not disposed to give a second, by  
 which Otho might seem to be endangered. It  
 was therefore resolved that the emperor should  
 retire to Brixellum\*. Tacitus sets down that  
 day as the epoch of Otho's ruin. In the first \* Brevell.  
 place he carried with him a part of the præto-  
 rian cohorts and of his best troops; and se-  
 condly, those that remained behind had no  
 longer the same courage, because they suspec-  
 ted their commanders; and Otho, in whom  
 only the soldiers had confidence, and who him-  
 self had confidence in none but them, had left  
 the generals and army to their mutual suspi-  
 cions, and consequently in a situation in which  
 they could not act in concert; a proof of  
 which was soon manifest.

Vitellius's generals were perfectly well in-  
 formed of the state of Otho's camp. Nothing

A. R. 820. is more common in civil wars than deserters ;  
 A. C. 69. and spies by endeavouring to draw the secret  
 Engagement in an out of others, are often apt to betray their  
 island in the Po, own. Cæcina and Valens, as quite and easy  
 wherein as their enemies were hot and impetuous, wisely  
 Vitellius's troops have the advantage. turned to their own advantage the imprudent  
 rashness of those they had to deal with, and  
 attentively watched the first proper opportunity  
 that should offer to fight. In the mean time  
 they employed their soldiers in building a  
 bridge of boats over the Po, opposite to the  
 spot guarded by Otho's gladiators commanded  
 by Macer.

In the middle of the river was an island, to  
 which the gladiators frequently passed over in  
 boats, and the Germans swam. Macer engaged  
 there in a skirmish, in which he was beaten,  
 a great number of his gladiators killed or  
 drowned, and his boats sunk or taken by the  
 enemy. This engagement happened in the  
 sight of both armies : and Otho's troops, spec-  
 tators of their companions defeat, were so in-  
 censed against Macer, that his life was in dan-  
 ger. One of them struck him with his lance,  
 and several more rushing on him sword in hand,  
 would have killed him, if the tribunes and  
 centurions had not ran in, and taken him from  
 them. Otho approved what the soldiers had  
 done, and broke Macer, to succeed whom, he  
 sent Flavius Sabinus \*, consul elect. The mu-  
 tinous † troops were always glad to change their  
 commanding

\* This consul elect is not to be confounded with Vespasi-  
 an's brother, an ancient consul, who bore the same names,  
 and was prefect of Rome at the time we are speaking of.

† *Leto milite ad mutationem ducum, & ducibus od  
 erebras seditiones, tam infestam militiam asperrantibus. Tac.*

commanding officers; who on their side quitted with pleasure a service, in which they were continually exposed to seditions, and had as much to fear from their own men, as from the enemy. A. R. 820. A. C. 69.

From the time of Otho's leaving the camp, his brother Titianus had the title of commander in chief: but in fact the power resided in the praetorian prefect Proculus. All the prudence and experience \* of Paulinus and Celsus were of no use, because none would listen to their advice; and their empty names of generals served only to make them in some measure answerable for the faults of their imprudent colleague, who usurped their authority. The officers were uneasy and full of distrusts, seeing how far bad counsels prevailed over good. The soldiers did not want ardour, but it was of an untractable kind, chusing rather to interpret their general's orders, than to follow them. A general action, and Otho's ruin were drawing near. Otho's army badly governed.

Vitellius's army was encamped near Cremona, and Otho's at Bedriac, as I before said. Proculus, resolving to seek the enemy, marched from Bedriac, leaving however his camp subsisting with what troops were necessary to guard it; and advancing about four miles, formed a new one, on a spot of ground so ill chosen, that in the month of April, and in a country full Motions of that army to seek the enemy.

\* Celsus et Paulinus, quum prudentia eorum nemo uteretur, inani nomine ducum, alienae culpae pretendebantur. Tribuni Centurionesque ambigui, quod spreto melioribus deterrimi valebant. Miles alacer, qui tamen iussa ducum interpretari, quata exsequi mallet. Tac.

A. R. 820. full of rivers, his troops were distressed for  
 A. C. 69. want of water. There a council was again held, to consider whether they should offer battle. On one side, Otho's repeated orders were to fight; on the other, the soldiers wanted to see their emperor at their head; many were for calling in the troops beyond the Po, on the right hand side of that river. It is difficult, says Tacitus, to determine what would have been best. Thus much at least is certain, that worse steps could not have been taken than those that were took.

It was resolved to march to the spot where the Po and Adda join, which being above Cremona where the enemy was encamped, Proculus's design seems \* to have been to enclose Vitellius's army between his and the body of troops which Otho had at Brixellum. But in order to do that, he must have filed off before the enemy and exposed his flanks; which must have been the reason why Paulinus and Celsus disapproved of that step, saying it would expose their troops, already fatigued by a march of several miles, and embarrassed with their baggage, to be attacked by the enemy fresh out of their camp, and having with them only their arms, and what was necessary for battle, by which they would have a great advantage. Titianus and Proculus could make no objections to those reasons: but exerting the authority of the command in chief, with which they were vested, alledged the

\* I express myself thus because I must own this is only my conjecture, grounded on the position of the places and the motions of Otho's generals, and not on any thing Tacitus says.

the emperor's orders. In fact another courier arrived from Otho, with orders still more urgent and positive than the former, together with complaints and reproaches against the timidity and slowness of the generals. Otho wanted to see an end of the war: he was tired \* of delays, and could no longer bear to fluctuate between hope and fear. Accordingly all were obliged to resolve to march, and run the risk of the worst concerted enterprize that ever was.

The enemy did not expect them. At their approach, Valens, who was left in the camp, gave the signal for battle: and Cæcina immediately complying, left the bridge he was building, where he was just then hearing the proposals of two tribunes of the prætorian cohorts. The conversation was interrupted by the necessity Cæcina was under of running to the battle, by which means the purport of it was never known.

Battle of Bedriac, in which Otho's army is defeated.

Whilst the legions, in consequence of a custom I think worthy of observation, were drawing lots, what rank each should be in during the battle, the horse attacked the enemy. But unable to bear the shock of Otho's, though inferior in number, they would have been drove with great disorder and danger back to the retrenchments of the camp, if the Italic legion had not forced them sword in hand to rally and return to the fight.

This first disorder was attended with no bad consequence. Vitellius's army was drawn out quietly and without confusion. In Otho's, the

\* *Æger morâ, et spei impatiens.*

A. R. 820. the commanding \* officers were on the con-  
 A. C. 69. trary struck with a bad presage, and the sol-  
 diers indisposed against their leaders: all was  
 mixed pel-mel, combatants, servants, and car-  
 riages; and the road, bordered on each side by  
 deep ditches, would have been too narrow even  
 for an army to march peaceably. Many sought  
 their standards from which they had strayed;  
 all was in tumult and confusion, none knew  
 their posts, for the generals and officers had  
 not assigned any, but each man, according as  
 he was more or less bold, placed himself in the  
 front or rear.

To this confusion, so unfit to strengthen  
 their courage, was added a false joy, by which  
 the edge of it was entirely taken off. On a  
 sudden a report was spread in Otho's army,  
 that their adversaries having changed their  
 minds, were forsaking Vitellius's interest. It  
 is not known from whence that report pro-  
 ceeded, whether from an indiscreet levity of  
 some of Otho's partizans, or designedly spread  
 by Vitellius's secret emissaries and friends.  
 However that may be, the foremost ranks of  
 Otho's troops, thinking it true, drawing near  
 their enemies saluted them as friends, in return  
 to which they were answered by menaces, and  
 at the same time suspected of treason, by their  
 comrades in the rear, who could put no other  
 construction on so singular a behaviour.

In

\* Apud Othonianos pavidi duces, miles illicibus infernus,  
 mixta vehicula et lixæ, et, præruptis utrimque fossis, viâ  
 quieto quoque agmîni angusta. Circumsistere alii signa sua,  
 querere alii: incertus undique clamor, accurrentium, vocif-  
 erantium: et, ut cuique audacia aut formido, in primam pos-  
 tremamve aciem prorumpbant, vel revocabantur. Tac.

In the mean time the battle was begun by Vitellius's troops, who, in good order, closing their lines, and superior both in number and strength of combatants, charged them vigorously. Otho's men, though fewer in number, divided into small bodies, and fatigued by a long march, defended themselves bravely. The general action was subdivided into numbers of particular ones. In places embarrassed by trees and vines, some fought close, others at a distance; some in battalions, and others in companies. On the high way, which Tacitus elsewhere calls the Posthumian way, they fought man to man. The combatants, seeing each other, and being seen by all, used their utmost efforts to have the honour of deciding the whole quarrel by their bravery. Neglecting their javelins, which were to be darted from afar, they had recourse to swords and hatchets, to cut through their opponents armour and helmets, and beat each other, till at last the weakest were obliged to give way.

Between the Po and the high way was a plain, in which two legions fought valiantly, the first, for Otho, the twenty-first for Vitellius. The latter was an old corps used to victory: the other had never before seen a battle: but brave and courageous, and ardently wishing to gain honour, had at first the advantage, and cutting to pieces the first line of the one and twentieth legion, took its eagle. The old soldiers, incensed at that affront, collected all their strength, and fought with such fury that they put their adversaries to flight, after killing the commander of the legion Orphidius Benignus.

A. R. 820.  
A. C. 69.

Tac. Hist.  
III. 21.  
II. 42.

A. R. 820. Benignus, and taking most of the colours and  
A. C. 69. standards.

*Tac. Hist.*  
II. 54, &  
55.

In another place the thirteenth legion had the same fate as the first. A detachment of the fourteenth, (for the whole legion was not at the battle) was likewise surrounded, and all their valour could not withstand superior numbers. Thus Otho's party was worsted every where, and what completed their defeat was, a body of Batavians commanded by Alphenus Varus, who, after having cut to pieces on the borders of the Po, the gladiators so often mentioned, attacked Otho's army in flank, and breaking through it, put the finishing stroke to that day's contention. The conquered had no resource but flight, and accordingly strove to reach Bedriac which was at a great distance from them: but in that too, they were hindered by the heaps of dead bodies of men and horses with which the roads were covered, by which means numbers of them were slain: for the Romans took no prisoners in their civil wars, because, as they could not make slaves of them, they would only have been a burden to the conquerors.

The generals and chief officers of Otho's army, behaved differently in what related to themselves personally. Paulinus and Licinius Proculus avoided the camp for fear of the soldier's fury, and sought a remote retreat, where to wait the event of things. Vædus Aquila, commander of the thirteenth legion, suffered for not taking the same precaution. Entering the camp before night, he was assailed by a troop of the seditious, who sparing neither re-  
proaches



proaches nor blows, \* called him a deserter and traitor : not that they could tax him with any particular fault : but the multitude is always ready to father its own shame on another.— Tacitus does not tell us what became of that officer. It seems reasonable to think he was saved by Annius Gallus, who alone of all the generals, seems on this occasion to have preserved any authority over the soldiers. He prevailed on them by prayers and remonstrances, not to add to the misfortune of their defeat, by their intestine furies ready to make them cut each other's throats ; but to be assured that at all events, whether the war was ended, or they were to fight again, their only safeguard was union and concord. The soldiers were appeased, calm was restored amongst them, and centinels and guards set agreeable to military discipline. Titianus and Celsus arriving at the camp in the night, found things in that situation and were in no danger.

The conquered troops were quite dispirited. The prætorians only, who Plutarch says behaved ill during the battle, imputed their defeat to the treachery of their officers, and not to the superiority of the enemy. They said, " The victory had cost their enemies dear ; " " that their horse had been routed ; that they " had lost the eagle of one of their legions ; " " that Otho was still on the other side of the " Po, with a great army ; that the Mælian " legions would soon arrive ; that a great " part

The conquered submit, and swear allegiance to Vitellius. *Plut. Oth. Tac. Hist.* II. 44.

\* Non probis, non manibus abstinent : desertorem proditoremque increpant, nulla proprio crimine ejus sed, more vulgi, suum quisque flagitium aliis objectantes. *Tac.*

A. R. 820. " part of the army had staid behind in the  
 A. C. 69. " camp at Bedriac; that all those troops at  
 " least had not been beaten; and, that if fate  
 " had decreed their fall, it was most honoura-  
 " ble to fall in battle." The prætorians talked  
 no longer in this style the next day. The re-  
 flections they made during the night, cooled  
 their courage, and they with the rest agreed to  
 submit to the conqueror.

Vitellius's army stopt five miles short of  
 Bedriac, and consequently a mile from the  
 camp from whence Otho's set out for the battle.  
 They did not entrench \* themselves; their  
 arms and victory made that precaution need-  
 less. But great as their confidence was, they  
 did not attack the enemy's camp, either fear-  
 ing not to succeed in that attempt, or hoping  
 for a voluntary submission.

*Phil. Otho.*  
 † *Tac.*

Nor were they disappointed in the latter.  
 Marius Celsus and Anniius Gallus came the  
 next day to sue for peace, offering to acknow-  
 ledge Vitellius for their emperor. The nego-  
 ciation was neither long nor difficult: all parties  
 were agreed in a moment, and the deputies  
 returning to the camp, all the entrances to it  
 were thrown open, and those who so lately had  
 fought for Otho, swore allegiance to Vitellius.  
 The conquerors and conquered joining, em-  
 braced each other, shedding tears, and with a  
 mixture

\* *Expeditis, & tantum ad prælium egressis, munimen-  
 tum fuere arma & victoria. Tac.*

† *Tum victi victoresque in lacrymas effusi, sortem civili-  
 um armorum misera lætitia detestantes. Iisdem tentoriis,  
 alii fratrum, alii propinquorum vulnera fovebant. Spes &  
 præmia in ambiguo: certa funera & luctus. Næc quisquam  
 adeo nulli expers, ut non aliquam mortem mureret. Tac.*

mixture of joy and grief, detested the horrors of A. R. 820.  
civil wars. Each found in the opposite party a A. C. 69.  
brother or a friend wounded, whose situation re-  
quired their care, and excited their tenderness.  
The rewards with which they had flattered  
themselves, were still uncertain: to see their  
relations wounded or slain was all they had  
hitherto gained. Orphidius's body was sought  
for, to give it funeral honours. Some others  
were likewise buried by their friends. The  
rest of the bodies lay rotting on the earth.

Otho waited quietly at Brixellum the event Otho kills  
himself.  
of the battle, having previously resolved what Suet. Oth.  
10. & Dio.  
to do in case he lost it: a low and melancholy  
murmur first announced his misfortune, which  
soon after was confirmed by a soldier arrived  
from the fight, who finding he could hardly  
gain credit, and that some called him a rogue,  
and others a coward for flying before the battle  
was over, stabbed himself at the emperor's  
feet. So great was the affection of the troops  
for Otho, and so ardent their zeal, that they  
did not wait his explaining himself. A general Tac. Hist.  
II. 46.  
shout exhorted him to take courage. It was  
represented to him that he had great forces  
still remaining untouched, "And we our-  
selves, added the soldiers, are ready to un-  
dertake and suffer any thing for your ser-  
vice." Nor was it out of flattery that they  
spoke. Seized with a kind of enthusiasm,  
battle and an opportunity to retrieve their for-  
tune was all they wished. Such as were at a  
distance from Otho, stretched out their arms  
towards him, whilst those who were near em-  
braced his knees.

A.R. 920. Plotius Firmus the prætorian præfect, was  
 A.C. 69. still more zealous than the soldiers. Suspect-  
 ing Otho's design, he earnestly begged of him  
 not to abandon so faithful an army, which had  
 deserved so well from him. He represented  
 to him, "That \* there was more real courage  
 " in bearing adversity, than in sinking under it.  
 " That brave men should struggle against for-  
 " tune, and spite of her frowns still hope and  
 " wish for better times, and that it was the  
 " business of cowards only to be pusillanimous  
 " and despair."

This passed in sight of the army; and ac-  
 cording as Otho seemed either moved or con-  
 firmed in his resolution, shouts of joy, or  
 groans were heard from all. The prætorians,  
 personally attached to Otho, were not the only  
 ones who shewed that zeal. The Mælian le-  
 gions, lately arrived at Aquilæa, had sent be-  
 fore hand deputies to assure him he might  
 depend on the same resolution and fidelity in  
 them: so that it cannot be doubted but that  
 Otho might easily have renewed a violent and  
 bloody war, the success of which would have  
 been uncertain between the conquerors and  
 conquered.

But he had always been extremely averse to  
 civil wars. We are told that the very names  
 of Brutus and Cassius made him shudder; and  
 that he never would have undertaken what he  
 did against Galba, had he not been convinced  
 it might be done without war. Persisting in  
 the

\* *Majore animo tolerari adversa, quam relinqui. Fortes  
 & strenuos, etiam contra fortunam, spei insistere: timidos  
 & ignavos ad desperationem formidine properare. Tac.*

the same sentiments he desired silence might A. R. 820.  
 be made, and spoke as follows. " My \* life A. C. 69.  
 " would be purchased to dear, if to preserve  
 " it, that faithful and virtuous courage you  
 " shew for me, was to be exposed to new  
 " dangers. The more you give me room to  
 " hope, the more glorious my death will be.  
 " I have tried fortune and am satisfied. Do  
 " not you consider how short a time that for-  
 " tune has lasted: it is most difficult to use  
 " moderation in a state of prosperity, when  
 " one does not expect to enjoy it long. Vi-  
 " tellius began the civil war. To his charge  
 " must be laid, the necessity we were under  
 " of fighting for the empire. It will be an  
 " honour to me to have been the cause of  
 " only one battle. By that it is that I would  
 " have posterity judge of Otho. Vitellius  
 " will enjoy his brother, wife, and children, I  
 want

\* Hunc animam, hanc virtutem vestram ultra periculis  
 objicere, nihil grande vite mee pretium, puto. Quanto  
 plus spei ostenditis, si vivere placeret, tanto pulchrior mors  
 erit. Experti invicem sumus, ego ac fortuna. Nec tempus  
 computaveritis. Difficilius est temperare felicitati, qua te  
 non putes diu usurum. Civile bellum a Vitellio cepit, & ut  
 de principatu certaremus armis, initium illic fuit. Ne plus-  
 quam semel certemus penes me exemplum erit. Hinc Otho-  
 nem posteritas aestimet. Fruetur Vitellius fratre, conjuge,  
 liberis. Mili non ultione, neque solatiis opus est. Alii  
 diutius imperium tenuerint: nemo tam fortiter reliquit.—  
 An ego tantum Romane pubis, tot egregios exercitus sterni  
 rursus & reipublice eripi patiar? Eat hic mecum animus,  
 tanquam perituri pro me fueritis: sed este superstites. Nec  
 diu moremur, ego incolumitatem vestram, vos constantiam  
 meam. Plura de extremis loqui, pars ignaviae est. Praeci-  
 puum destinationes meae documentum habite, quod de ne-  
 mine queror. Nam incusare deos vel homines, ejus est qui  
 vivere velit. *Tac.*

A. R. 820. " want neither revenge nor comfort. Others  
 A. C. 69. " will have the advantage over me, of having  
 " reigned longer, but none can have renounced  
 " empire more generously. Shall I suffer the  
 " flower of the Roman youth, such flourishing  
 " armies, to be again cut to pieces, and the re-  
 " public robbed of them for my quarrels?—  
 " I have the comfort of carrying with me  
 " a lively proof of your zeal: but though  
 " you would sacrifice your lives for me, my  
 " glory forbids me to accept the offer. Let  
 " me be no longer an obstacle to your safety,  
 " nor you to my fixed resolves. To talk  
 " much of death is the part of a coward.—  
 " The best proof I can give you, how firmly  
 " I am bent on executing what I have deter-  
 " mined is, that I complain of no man: for  
 " he that accuses the gods or man wishes to  
 " live."

This speech, which Tacitus puts in Otho's mouth, strongly expresses all the fanaticism of suicide. Love of glory is the prevailing motive, the public welfare has the least share in it, and seems to be brought in only out of decency. I will be bold to say that Plutarch has given a better colour to Otho's resolution, by making his love for the republic his chief and essential motive. " If I have been thought  
 " worthy \* of the Roman empire, says Otho  
 " in

\* Εἰ τῆς Ῥωμαίων ἡγεμονίας ἀξιούμι γίνεσθαι, δεῖ με τῆς ἐμοῦ ψυχῆς ὑπὲρ τῆς πατρίδος ἀφιδίω· οἶδα γὰρ οὐκ εἶναι τοῖς πλείοσι ἀδικήσιαι ἢ διχρημαῖον ἔσθαι. . . ἀλλ' ἅκ' ἔτι πρὸς Ἀντώνην, ὑδὲ Πύρρον, ὑδὲ Κιμῆρον, ὁ πολίτευμα ὑπὲρ τῆς Ἰουδαίας· ἀλλὰ Ῥωμαίων πολιτικῶν ἀρεθῶν, τῶν πατρίδα καὶ νεκρῶν ἀδικήσιαι καὶ ἰκαρμάται· καὶ γὰρ πο σέβασθαι καὶ κρατεῖν καὶ ἐκείνην παρὰ ἑστέ. . . δύναται κάλλιον αὐτοδαιεῖν ἢ ἀρχειν.

" in the Greek historian, I ought to sacrifice A. R. 690  
 " myself to the good of my country. I know A. C. 69.  
 " our adversaries are not sure of victory. But  
 " it is not against Hannibal, Pyrrhus, or the  
 " Cimbrians, that we are fighting for Italy.  
 " We are making war against Romans; and  
 " whether conquerors or conquered, equally  
 " hurt our country: for what is good to the  
 " victor, is a detriment to the republic. Be  
 " assured that it is more honourable for me  
 " to die than to command the universe: for  
 " I do not see how I can be so serviceable to  
 " this nation by gaining the victory, as by sa-  
 " crificing my life to peace and concord, and  
 " preventing Italy's seeing a second day like  
 " that of Bedriac." If Otho thought, as Plu-  
 tarch makes him speak, he deserves to be  
 ranked with a Decius and a Codrus: but I  
 greatly fear what Tacitus makes him say,  
 is nearer the truth. The impatience of his  
 character, and that prejudice which made him  
 think self-murder the surest and shortest way  
 to glory, seem to have been the principles on  
 which he acted: for, how else can we recon-  
 cile a horrid parricide with the sublime heroism  
 of sacrificing his own life to the good of his  
 country?

In the last hours preceding his death, Otho  
 shewed the same flegma, and the same concern  
 for others, as Cato, whom in other respects  
 he was so little like, had done before him.

Checking

ὁ γὰρ ἦν τε ταχέστερον θάνατον ἠθέλησεν ἵσταναι ἑαυτὸν, ἢ νικῆσαι τοὺς  
 Ἕλληνας ἐν τῇ Ἰταλίᾳ, ἵνα τὸ μετὰ ταῦτα οὐκ ἔσται  
 πάλιν τῆς Ἰταλίας. Plut. Oth.

A. R. 820. Checking the tears and unseasonable complaints of those about him with a serene countenance and steady voice, he spoke \* to them all with mildness, exhorting or praying them, according to their several ranks and ages, to depart quickly, and not irritate the victors wrath by their stay. He ordered boats and carriages to be provided for them, and burnt the letters and memorials he had received, in which too great a zeal for him, or too strong an aversion to Vitellius, was expressed. He distributed money, but with prudence and discretion, and not like a man who minds not what he does because he is going to die.

Perceiving his nephew, young Salvius Cocceianus, trembling and sorely afflicted, he endeavoured to comfort him, praising the goodness of his heart, and blaming his fears. " Vitellius, said he to him, whose whole family, I have preserved, cannot be so ungrateful, and merciless as not to spare mine. I deserve the victor's clemency by my readiness to rid him of a rival: for I do not wait the last extremity; but whilst I have an army ready and desirous to fight, save the republic the loss of Roman blood. I †  
" have

\* Ut cuique ætas aut dignitas, comiter appellatos, irent prope, non remorando iram victoris asperarent, juvenes auctoritate, senes precibus monebat: placidus ore, intrepidus verbis, intempestivas suorum lacrymas coercens. Tac.

† Satis mihi nominis, satis nobilitatis posteris quesitum. Post Julios, Claudios, Sulpicios, ac primum in familiam novam imperium intulisse. Proinde erecto animo capesseret vitam, neu patrum sibi Othonem fuisse, aut oblivisceretur unquam, aut nimium meminisset. Tac.



" have acquired a name great enough : so mo- A. R. 920.  
 " dern a family as mine, is sufficiently illu- A. C. 69.  
 " trated by my having brought the empire  
 " into it, next after the Julii, Claudii, and Sul-  
 " picii. Take courage : fear not for your life,  
 " and remember that to be nephew to an em-  
 " peror, is an honour you ought never to for-  
 " get, but of which you ought likewise not to  
 " think too much."

Otho wrote his sister a letter of consolation : Suet. Otho.  
 and recommended his ashes to Statilia Messali- 10.  
 na, Nero's widow, whom he intended to marry.

He then took a little rest : but just when he Tac. Hist.  
 was thinking of death, a sudden uproar of the lib. 49.  
 soldiers, who rienced the senators in their re- Suet. Oth.  
 treat, required his attention. " Let us add, lib. 12.  
 " said he, one night more to our life." He Plu. Oth.  
 stept out, and severely reprimanding the au- Dio.  
 thors of the sedition, gave audience to those  
 who came to take leave of him, till every thing  
 was got ready for their departure.

Towards evening he drank a glass of water,  
 and ordering two daggers to be brought, ex-  
 amined them carefully, and put one under his  
 pillow. He spent the night very quietly ; the  
 servants who attended him, said, he even slept  
 sound. At break of day, he called his favourite  
 freeman, whom he had charged to take care of  
 the departure of the senators and other persons  
 of distinction ; and being told by him that all  
 was safe and well, " Haste thee out then, said  
 " he to him, for fear the soldiers should think  
 " thee an accomplice in my death, and punish  
 " thee for it." The freeman being gone, Otho  
 stabbed himself under the left pap. The groans  
 forced from him by pain, being overheard, his

A. R. 820. slaves and freemen, with Plotius Firmus, the  
 A. C. 69. prætorian prefect, entered his room, and he  
 died in their presence of the single wound he  
 had given himself.

His fu-  
 neral.  
 The sol-  
 diers re-  
 gret him,  
 and after  
 his exam-  
 ple, sever-  
 al of them  
 kill them-  
 selves.

His obsequies were immediately celebrated, as he himself had earnestly requested they should, for fear his head should be cut off after his death, and made the sport of his enemies. His body was borne by the soldiers of the prætorian cohorts, who loaded him with praises, shedding tears over him, and kissing his wound and hand. Some killed themselves near his funeral pile, not that they thought themselves more guilty than others, nor out of fear, but merely because they loved their prince, and were desirous to imitate his, they thought glorious, death. Suicide was at that time a kind of epidemical disease: Bedriac, Placentia, and every place where troops were, furnished instances of it. A monument was erected to Otho near Brixellum, the plainness of which secured its duration. Plutarch says, he saw it several ages after, with only the bare inscription of Otho's name. He died the fifteenth or sixteenth of April, in the thirty-seventh year of his age, after reigning three months. He was born the twenty-eight of that month in the year of Rome seven hundred and eighty-three.

His cha-  
 racter.

His character was an uncommon mixture of good and ill; with this difference however, that his vices, his excessive debauchery, and the crime he committed in murdering his prince are certain and notorious facts; whereas the moderation and mildness, which do honour to his reign, are liable to doubt, and a bad interpretation, on account of the short duration

of

of his fortune, and the continual peril in which he was. It is however true, that during his government of Lusitania, he shewed himself capable of behaving well, when he could lay aside his pleasures and apply to business. I leave it to Tacitus to praise his death. His effeminacy, which was so great, that he was as nice in his dress as any fine lady could be, plucking the hairs out of his beard, and washing his face with crumbs of bread soaked in water, to make his complexion fair and smooth, has been deservedly blamed by all. The justest idea that can be formed of him, is perhaps to consider him as a man extreme in all he did, from whom every thing might have been dreaded, had he followed his first bent; and every thing hoped, if his vivacity had taken a virtuous turn.

I must now give an account of two events, which I could not have inserted in their proper places without interrupting the thread of my narration. Tacitus relates them one after the other, before Otho's departure for the war.

A false Nero disturbed Asia and Greece. A freeman, or, as some say, a slave, taking advantage of the various reports concerning Nero's death, and of the doubt many were in whether he really was dead, undertook to personate that emperor. His features were like Nero's: he was a musician, in which too he resembled him; and had a sufficient stock of impudence to carry on the deceit. He picked up, and gained over by fine promises, a great number of deserters, vagabonds who fled from place to place, to avoid punishment, and were reduced to the utmost misery. With them he

A. R. 820.  
A. C. 69.

A False  
Nero.  
Tac. Hist.  
II. 8.

R. 820. embarked; and being cast by a storm on an  
 C. 69. island called Cythnus in the Egean sea, he  
 there gave himself out publicly for Nero, drew  
 over to his party several soldiers returning  
 from the east, causing such as refused to ac-  
 knowledge him, to be killed, and plundering  
 the trading ships that used those seas, made use  
 of the booty he got from them to purchase  
 arms, which he distributed among young ro-  
 bust slaves who had attached themselves to  
 him. Nay more, he ventured to attack a cen-  
 turion who was carrying a symbol \* of friend-  
 ship and alliance from the Syrian legions to  
 the prætorian cohorts. Sisenna, that was the  
 centurion's name, discovering the imposture,  
 and fearing his violence, could protect himself  
 only by flight, and left the island privately.  
 This incident ought to have undeceived those  
 who had been his dupes; but, on the contrary,  
 it added to the general terror. All they con-  
 sidered was, the power of a man armed and  
 guarded, whom they feared: and the just in-  
 dignation with which the present state of the  
 empire, disputed by Otho and Vitellius, in-  
 spired every man, proneness to change, and  
 love of novelty, induced the vulgar to espouse  
 a great name, without enquiring whether it  
 was usurped or not.

\* Two  
 right  
 hands join-  
 ed together.

A lucky accident discovered the impostor,  
 whose strength increased daily. Calpurnius  
 Asprenas being appointed governor of Galatia  
 and Pamphylia, by Galba, sailed from Italy  
 with two galleys of the Misenum fleet, and  
 stopt at the island of Cythnus. The captains  
 of the galleys were immediately ordered to at-  
 tend Nero. They went, and the rogue com-  
 posing

posing his countenance, and putting on a sorrowful look, reminded them of the allegiance they had formerly sworn to his name, and begged them to carry him over to Syria or Egypt. Whether they too were imposed on, or did it only out of cunning and artifice, they said, they would acquaint their soldiers with his request, and after preparing them to receive him properly, return and let him know. But instead of that, they told Asprenas what had passed. He, at the head of the soldiers belonging to his two ships, attacked the impostor, who defended himself bravely, and was killed in the fight. After his death he was examined, and none knew him: only something was observed in his eyes though set, in his hair, and ghastly looks, ferocious and well suited the audaciousness of his attempt. His body was carried to Asia, and from thence sent to Rome.

About the same time a great debate arose in the senate. As the frequent change of princes gave an opening, not only to liberty, but likewise to licentiousness, factions increased, and the most trivial affairs made great noise and disturbance. Vibius \* Crispus, who, by his riches, power and talents, had acquired a great name, rather than a good reputation, sued for justice from the senate, against Annius Faustus, a Roman knight, and a dangerous informer under Nero's reign. Crispus wanted to revenge his brother Vibius † Secundus formerly accused by Annius; and took advantage of a late decree, by which all informers were ordered

One informer punished at the suit of another informer, more powerful than him.

† See the end of Book x.

\*Vibius Crispus, opibus, potentia, ingenio, inter claros magis quam inter bonos. Tac.

A. R. 820. to be proceeded against, and \* which, like a  
 A. C. 69. true cobweb, stopt the weak, but was broke  
 through by the strong. Annius happened not  
 to be one of those strong, which his adversary  
 was, who accordingly was so favoured by the  
 judges, that a great many of them were ready  
 to condemn his opponent without hearing  
 him. Some however there were, with whom  
 nothing pleaded stronger in favour of the ac-  
 cused, than the too great power and influence  
 of the accuser. They were for giving Annius  
 time, for drawing up the informations in due  
 form, and for hearing his defence, however  
 odious and guilty he might be. They prevailed  
 at first, and had judgment respited to another  
 sitting: but at last Annius was condemned,  
 to the great regret of many, who remembered  
 having seen Crispus follow the same trade,  
 and grow rich by it. Annius's \* punishment  
 was thought the just reward of his crimes, but  
 the avenger was odious to all.

The order of time brings me to Vitellius's  
 reign.

\* *Id senatus consultum varie jactatum, & prout potens  
 vel inops reus inciderat, infirmum aut validum. Tac.*

† *Nec pœna criminis, sed ultor displicebat. Tac.*

## VITELLIUS.

## BOOK XIV.

## SECT. I.

*The conquered troops in vain offer the empire to Virginius. Extreme danger to which the senators brought from Rome by Otho, and left in Modena, are exposed. Vitellius is acknowledged in Rome without disturbance. Italy laid waste by the conquerors. Vitellius receives in Gaul the news of his victory. He makes his freeman Asiaticus a knight. He is acknowledged by the whole empire. He receives an imperial retinue from Blesus. He gives his son the name of Germanicus. His clemency towards the chiefs of the conquered party. He causes several captains of that party to be killed. A troop of Fanatics dispersed. Vitellius's gluttony. He causes Dolabella to be killed. Modesty of Vitellius's wife and mother. Cluvius accused, obtains the punishment of his accuser. Vectius Botanus is sent to command the legions in Britain. Vitellius separates the conquered legions, and removes them from Italy. He breaks the Prætorians. Corrupt discipline among the victorious troops. Sedition among them, and a bloody battle. Seditious insurrection against Virginius. Vitellius disbands a great many of his troops. He visits the field of battle at Bedriac. Vitellius honours Nero's memory. Order forbidding*

ding Roman knights to fight as gladiators. Another order against astrologers. Their insolence. Emptiness of their art. Valens and Cæcina appointed consuls. Desolation of the countries through which Vitellius passed. A great number of the common people butchered by the soldiers. Terror and confusion in Rome. Vitellius's entry into Rome. He harangues the senate and people. An instance of his stupid negligence. He affects to be meanly popular. He attends the senate assiduously, and behaves there with great modesty. Enormous power of Valens and Cæcina, and their jealousies. Vitellius's order in favour of the nobility recalled from exile. The discipline of the victorious legions entirely corrupted by their abode in Rome. Sixteen Prætorian and four city cohorts formed out of the German troops. The soldiers demand the death of the most illustrious chiefs of the Gauls. Foolish extravagance. Misery of Rome. Vitellius's cruelties. Birth and first employments of Vespasian. He sends his son Titus to Rome to pay homage to Galba in his name. Titus learns Galba's death on the road, and returns to his father. Titus consults the oracle of Paphos. Pretended presages of Vespasian's elevation. Prophecies relating to the Messiah applied to Vespasian. Secret negotiations between Vespasian and Mucian. The legions in the east grow warm in favour of Vespasian. He is for waiting the decision of the quarrel between Otho and Vitellius. Vespasian still hesitates after Otho's death. Mucian's speech to Vespasian. Vespasian is prevailed on to accept the empire. His weakness in giving credit to divination. He



*is proclaimed by the legions of Egypt, Judea and Syria, and acknowledged throughout all the east. A great council held at Beryta. Preparatives for war. Vitellius's first motions weak and languid. He at last makes the German legions take the field. Cæcina takes measures to betray Vitellius.*

**O**THO'S death would not have ended the war, nor put Vitellius in quiet possession of the empire, if the conquered troops had found any one to back their ardour. Immediately after Otho's funeral, they applied to Virginius, whom they had kept in Brixellum by a furious sedition; and renewing on that occasion all their rage, would absolutely proclaim him emperor, pressing him, even with menaces, to consent. Virginius had too much sense to accept the empire from a conquered army, after having refused it when offered by victorious legions. The seditious demanded he would at least undertake to negotiate their peace with Cæcina and Valens; but that he could not do without exposing himself to great danger, hated as he was by the German armies, who thought he despised and held them in contempt. He endeavoured therefore to elude their urgent solicitations, and was lucky enough to find an opportunity of escaping out at a back door. The mutineers finding they were abandoned, at last resolved to submit to the conqueror.

The war was consequently at an end; but a calm was not yet restored, and a great part of the senate brought by Otho from Rome, and left in Modena, was exposed to imminent danger.

A. R. 820.  
A. C. 69.  
The conquered troops in vain offer the empire to Virginius.  
*Tac. Hist.*  
ii. 51. &  
*Plut. Oth.*

A.R. 820.  
A. C. 69.  
Extreme  
danger to  
which the  
senators  
brought  
from  
Rome by  
Otho, and  
left in Mo-  
dena, are  
exposed.  
*Tac. Hist.*  
ii. 52.

ger. When the news of the battle of Bedriac, and of Vitellius's victory, reached that city, the soldiers who were in it, refused to credit the report; and imagining the senators were enemies to Otho, watched and observed all their discourses, put a bad construction on all their steps and actions, and endeavoured to pick a quarrel, under colour of which they might fly to their arms, and shed more blood. The senators were by that means in great danger: and on the other hand they feared, if they were not expeditious in acceding to the fortunate party, the victor might accuse them of coldness and indifference towards him. In that perplexity they \* assembled, none of them well knowing what to determine, but each thinking to make his own fault less, by dividing it among a number of companions. Their uneasiness was increased by a deputation in form from the senate of the colony of Modena, to pay their ill-timed respects to them, calling them conscript fathers, and offering them arms and money. Nothing could be farther from their thoughts than to accept of such offers. But they knew better what they should not do, than what ought to be done; and after deliberating and debating a long time without coming to any resolution, they determined to adjourn to Bologna, to hold a new council and gain time.

Their

\* *Trepidi & utrimque anxii coeunt, nemo privatim expedito consilio, inter multos, societate culpæ tutiores. Onerabat paventium curas ordo Mucinensis, arma & pecuniam offerendo, appellabatque patres conscriptos, in tempestivo honore. Tac.*

Their first study was to try to get farther A. R. 820. intelligence; to which end they dispatched A. C. 69. people every way, to bring them the freshest accounts they could. One of Otho's freemen told them, he had just left his master still alive, but bent on death, and thinking of nothing but posterity. This report, at the same time that it filled the senators with admiration, fixed their uncertainty; and they thought they might without danger declare in favour of Vitellius. They were already complimenting and giving joy to the new emperor's brother, when Cænus, Nero's freeman, came with an impudent lie, and plunged them again into their former uneasiness. Passing through Bologna, he gave out for certain that the fourteenth legion coming up after the battle, and being joined by the troops at Brixellum, had attacked the conquerors, cut them to pieces, and brought fortune back to Otho's party. Cænus's intention in inventing a falsehood, so criminal under such circumstances, was no other than to facilitate his return to Rome, and make the post-masters respect Otho's orders which he had for horses. He suffered for his rashness in a few days, being put to death by Vitellius's command. But just at that time, Otho's soldiers thinking what Cænus said was truth, the senators were in more danger than ever. What added to their fear was, the step they had taken in leaving Modena, as if by general consent; by which Otho, had he been alive and victorious, would have had a right to treat them as deserters. They met no more, each thinking of nothing but his own safety, till a letter from Valens put an end to their anxieties; besides which, Otho's  
death

A.R.820. death was attended with such remarkable cir-  
 A.C. 69. cumstances, that it was impossible the news  
 of it should not soon be spread and certainly  
 known.

Vitellius is  
 acknow-  
 ledged in  
 Rome  
 without  
 distur-  
 bance.

Not the least tumult or disturbance happen-  
 ed in Rome. The games in honour of Ceres,  
 were celebrating at that very time. The mo-  
 ment it was known in the theatre that Otho  
 was dead, and that Flavius Sabinus, the city  
 præfect, had made all the troops under his com-  
 mand take the oath of allegiance to Vitellius,  
 the new emperor was approved of and ap-  
 plauded: the people carried Galba's images,  
 adorned with flowers and branches of laurel, to  
 all the temples, and a pyramid of crowns in  
 form of a tomb, was raised near the lake Cur-  
 tius, on the spot where that prince had been  
 murdered.

The senate, by one decree, granted Vitellius  
 all the honours and privileges preceding em-  
 perors had not acquired but in a course of  
 many years. Praises and thanks were likewise  
 decreed the German armies, and deputies ap-  
 pointed to pay homage to Vitellius in the se-  
 nate's name, and congratulate him on his ac-  
 cession to the throne. A letter from Valens  
 to the consuls was read, couched in modest  
 terms; but Cæcina's silence was judged still  
 more modest.

Italy laid  
 waste by  
 the con-  
 querors.

Rome, as we see, did not at that time see  
 the calamities of the war: but Italy suffered as  
 much as if it had been a prey to foreign ene-  
 mies. Vitellius's troops, dispersing themselves  
 over the municipal towns and colonies, robbed,  
 and plundered all, sparing neither sacred nor  
 profane, adding to those excesses the most out-  
 ragious

ragious debauch. Not content to satisfy the various passions, which of themselves hurried them on to all sorts of crimes, they afforded their cruel ministry to whoever was willing to purchase it; and under colour of such universal licentiousness, citizens giving themselves out for soldiers, killed their own private enemies, whilst the soldiers who knew the country, concerted schemes to ransack rich estates and opulent houses, with a resolution to hew down all before them in case of resistance. Their \* officers, weak, and absolute dependants on them, did not dare to oppose their violence. Cæcina, less covetous than his colleague, was more vain, and more disposed to flatter the soldier: Valens, noted for his own rapines, winked at the faults of those who only followed his example.

Vitellius did not learn his victory till he was in full march advancing towards Italy. He had with him all the forces that had been left on the Rhine, after the departure of Valens and Cæcina, adding to them considerable recruits raised in Gaul to keep up the appearance and names of the legions, in fact reduced to a small number of old soldiers. He joined to his German troops a body of eight thousand men levied in Britain, and set out, charging Hordeonius Flaccus with the care of guarding the borders of the river, and preventing the inroads of the Germans. After marching some days he received the news of the battle of Bedriac,

Vitellius receives in Gaul the news of his Victory.

\* *Obnoxiiis ducibus, & prohibere non ausis. Minus avaritiæ in Cæcina, plus ambitionis: Valens ob lucra & questus infamis, eoque alienæ etiâ culpæ dissimulatur.*  
*Tac.*

A. R. 820. driac, and of Otho's death. His army being  
 A. C. 69. assembled by his order, was informed of what  
 had passed, and the highest praises were given  
 the troops to whom he was indebted for so  
 signal a victory.

He makes  
 his free-  
 man Asia-  
 ticus a  
 knight.  
*Tac. Hist.*  
*ii. 57.*  
*Suet. Vit.*  
*12.*

His freeman Asiaticus, who had a great ascendant over him, took advantage of that fortunate circumstance to lay the foundation of his future fortune. Some soldiers, gained over by his intrigues, and backed by all the rest, requested Vitellius to give him the golden ring. He had long been a favourite with his master, and that favour was originally founded on a reciprocal commerce of most execrable debauchery. The slave was first disgusted, and fled. Vitellius finding him again at Puzzola, put him in irons, and afterward sold him to a fencing-master, who travelled from town to town, amusing the people with combats of gladiators. Vitellius soon took him back from his new master, and being made proconsul of Germany, gave him his freedom. Such was the man for whom the Roman army requested the order of knighthood. Vitellius was himself ashamed of it, and vowed he would not dishonour the body of knights by giving them so unworthy a member. But weak, and void of resolution and principles, the very same day at table, he granted, at the intercession of his guests, what he had refused to the desires of his whole army. Asiaticus, thus raised from the meanest obscurity, made an insolent abuse of his power, and by his exactions, became one of the chief instruments of the public misery, till his master's fall pulled him down, as we shall observe in its proper place.

The

The whole empire acknowledged Vitellius. A. R. 820. A. C. 69. He is acknowledged by the whole empire. Tac. Hist. II. 73.  
 The legions of the east commanded by Mucian in Syria, and by Vespasian in Judea, swore allegiance to him. There was only a slight insurrection in Mauritania, where the intendant Luccius Albinus, finding himself at the head of a considerable body of troops, gave way to his ambition, and projected making himself master of the province, of which he had only a precarious government. Already his views extended to Spain too: but his vanity in aiming at the royal purple, and assuming the name of Juba, alienated the minds of all, and he was assassinated by his own partizans. Vitellius, content with that, made no farther enquiry about it. Incapable \* of serious application, he would hardly bestow a moment's attention, even on the most important affairs.

So soon as he was informed of his victory, He receives an imperial retinue from Blæsus. he left his troops to continue their march, and himself embarked on the Saone, without any retinue like an emperor, no officers of his household following, and being taken notice of for the indulgence of his first fortune more than for any thing else. Junius Blæsus, governor of the Lyonnoise, a man of great name, magnificent in his manners, and very rich, remedied the princes unbecoming situation, and brought him a train suitable to his rank. Vitellius, low and envious, instead of thinking himself obliged to Blæsus for that service, conceived an aversion to him, which however he concealed under ignoble fawnings and flattery.

Soon

\* *Brevi auditu quamvis magna transibat impar curæ gravioribus Tac*

A. R. 820. Soon after his arrival at Lyons he was re-  
 A. C. 69. joined by his army, which he ordered to go  
 He gives and meet his son, a child, then coming from  
 his son Rome to him. He received him in the camp,  
 the name and in the presence of all the soldiers, took him  
 of Germanic on his knees, wrapped him up in his military  
 nicus. dress, and gave him the name of Germanicus,  
 with a train becoming the son of an emperor:  
 momentary honour, feeble compensation for  
 the dire disgrace, both father and son were  
 doomed to suffer within a few months.

His clemency towards the chiefs of the conquered party.

Vitellius found in Lyons the generals of his victorious armies, and the chiefs of the conquered party. He loaded Valens and Cæcina with honours, and seated them on each side of his curule chair. Suetonius Paulinus, and Licinius Proculus, did not obtain audience till after several delays and refusals; and when they were admitted, humble and trembling, they made such a defence, as the character of the conqueror seemed to them to require, and forfeited their honours, to save their lives. They accused themselves of infidelity, and pretended they had contributed towards Vitellius's victory, by bringing up to battle Otho's troops whilst fatigued by a long march, and embarrassed by their equipages and carriages. Vitellius \* took their words for it, and fidelity was pardoned under the mask of perfidy. Salvius Titianus, Otho's brother, was in no danger: his being so near a-kin, and his want of capacity were his safeguards. Nor does Marius Celsus seem to have met with greater difficulty. Perhaps Vitellius thought himself obliged

\* Vitellius credidit de perfidia, & fidem absolvit. Tac.



obliged to him for the steps he had taken with the conquered legions, to appease their heat, and dispose them to a ready submission. He even continued him in his nomination to the consulship, to which Celsus had been destined by Nero or Galba, and confirmed in it by Otho. Galerius Trachalus was accused, but found a protectress in Galeria, Vitellius's wife; who seems to have been related to him

Vitellius did not treat the subaltern officers with the same indulgence as he did their chiefs. He caused several captains, who had distinguished themselves by their zeal to Otho, to be killed. That severity did him great hurt, by adding to the disgust already conceived against him by the Illyrian legions, who soon after were the cause of his fall. However, he did not distress the families of those who were enemies to him, by forfeiture of their estates: what was left by such as died in battle, fighting for Otho, went to their heirs, or whoever they had named their executors.

Vitellius behaved in the same manner with regard to a rebellious multitude of fanatics, collected together in the country of the Boians, by one Marius, a man of the lower class of the people, who took upon him the titles of Deliverer of the Gauls, and God the Saviour. That enthusiast, having assembled about eight thousand of his countrymen, spread his seduction as far as among the Eduans, and prevailed on some of their nearest cantons, to join his revolt: but the nation of the Eduans, one of the most powerful and illustrious in Gaul, stopt the progress of the evil, and with what troops

A.R. 820  
A. C. 69.

He causes  
several  
captains of  
great duty  
to be kill-  
ed.

A troop of  
fanatics  
dispersed.

A.R. 820. they raised of their own, together with a reinforcement of some cohorts sent by Vitellius, easily dispersed a confused crowd of ill-disciplined peasants. Maricus was taken prisoner, and exposed to wild beasts, who, not falling on to devour him, the silly vulgar already looked upon him as a man protected by the gods and invulnerable: but he did not prove such against the soldiers lances, with which he was ran through in Vitellius's presence. The death of the chief, put an end to the disturbance, and none of his followers were afterwards molested.

Vitellius's  
gluttony.  
*Zonar.*

Vitellius was not tyrannically greedy after money. He remitted the remainder of the imposts that had not yet been paid, and made no search after those who had received gratifications from his predecessors, but suffered them to enjoy what they had got in peace. Nor did he retain any hatred to the memory of Galba and Otho who had been his enemies, but let their coin, as well as Nero's, remain current. So far his conduct was not amiss, had he not disgraced all he did by a mixture of the meanest actions, and particularly by gluttony, his favourite passion, which he carried \* to the greatest excess. He thought himself emperor only to eat. He made four meals regularly every day, and all of them very hearty ones; emptying, as I have said, his stomach by vomiting, that it might be always ready

*Tac. Hist.*  
v. 62.  
*Suet. Vit.*  
13.  
*Dio.*

\* *Epularum feda atque inexplebilis libido. Ex urbe atque Italia irritamenta gulæ gestabantur, frequentibus ab utroque mari itineribus. Exhausti conviviorum apparatusibus principes civitatum: vastabantur ipsæ civitates. Tac.*

ready to receive more. Every corner of the earth and sea was ransacked to find dainties for him. The countries through which he passed were ravaged; the chief inhabitants of the cities ruined by the excessive expences they were forced to be at to receive him. The day's expence was however divided among several; he dined with one and supped with another: but still it was a heavy tax upon them, for, an entertainment could not be offered him, that cost less than four \* hundred thousand sesterces. \* 3200*l*. The companions of his feastings could not resist that kind of life; and Vibius Crispus falling ill, by which he was dispensed from being at those murderous entertainments, congratulated himself on it, saying, 'I should have been a dead man if I had not fallen sick.'

That I may have done with what relates to his monstrous gluttony, I shall add here a few instances out of Suetonius, and Dion Cassius. L. Vitellius gave the emporor his brother, an entertainment in which two thousand fish, and seven thousand of the nicest and most uncommon fowl were served up. The emperor himself made a solemn dedication of a silver dish, calling it on account of its prodigious size, Minerva's shield; and filled it with livers of a very scarce fish, brains of peacocks and pheasants, tongues of a red feathered bird, by the ancients called phænicopterus, and roes of lampreys. That dish was kept as a remarkable monument, till the time of the emperor Adrian, who melted it down. The expence of such a table must have been enormous, as may be easily judged; Dion Cassius values it

A. R. 820. at nine \* hundred millions of sesterces, which  
 A. C. 69. make about seven millions two hundred thousand pounds of our money, for the eight months that Vitellius reigned. One would think his own table might have sufficed him, and that he need not have eat but at meals. But all times were alike to him. At sacrifices, he was ready to snatch the flesh of the victims and the sacred cakes off the coals. If he saw any cold broken victuals exposed to sale in the streets, he would lay hands on it, and eat as he went along. Discipline could not but be corrupted under such an emperor. The soldier, † imitating his example, at the same time that he despised his person, gave himself up to licentiousness, preferring pleasure to fatigue and valour.

That hatred might be added to contempt, Vitellius joined cruelty to his meanness. Tacitus seems to hint, that it was not out of inclination at first, but that ‡ he was induced to it by his brother's councils, and the lessons of tyranny given him by his courtiers. But he was of himself too susceptible of such impressions. Almost as stupid as Claudius, he had not his instinct of goodness; and his too grovelling soul was as prone to hatred as to fear.

He causes  
 Dolabella  
 to be killed.

Dolabella was the first instance of it. Heir to a great name, and related to Galba, by whom some thought he might have been adopted, he was for those reasons, as I have said

\* Tacitus speaks of the same sum, Hist. II. 95. but includes in it all Vitellius's mad expences.

† Degenerabat a labore ac virtute miles, assuetudine voluptatum, & contemptu ducis. Tac.

‡ Adventu fratris, & in repentibus dominationis magistris superbiior & atrocior. Tac.

said, obnoxious to Otho, who banished him to Aquinum. Dolabella thinking himself at liberty by Otho's death, returned to Rome. Plautius Varus, an ancient prætor, and one of his most intimate friends, was base enough to accuse him on that account before Flavius Sabinus, præfect of Rome, and to tax him with having set himself at liberty, with a view to shew the conquered a chief ready to head them. He charged him likewise with having attempted to bribe the cohort that guarded Ostium. Those allegations were destitute of all proof, and the accuser himself, touched with remorse of conscience, retracted his calumnies, and endeavoured, but too late, to repair the mischief he had done. Flavius Sabinus was greatly perplexed, and knew not well what step to take. Triaria, wife of L. Vitellius, a woman more imperious and violent than is usual with her sex, terrified him by her talk, and made him sensible of the danger to which he would expose himself, by attempting to shew his lenity at the expence of the prince's safety. Sabinus, \* naturally humane, but weak and easily frightened, pushed him down the precipice, by greatly exaggerating the circumstances of his affair in the account he gave of it to the emperor, in order to avoid all suspicion of favouring Dolabella.

I have already said, that Petronia, first married to Vitellius, but parted from him, was afterwards married to Dolabella. Vitellius owed him an old grudge for that: he likewise feared

\* Sabinus sumpto ingenio mitis, ubi formido incassisset, facilis mutata, & in alieno discrimine sibi pavens, ne alluisse videretur, impulit ruculentem. Tac.

A. R. 820. feared him, and therefore resolved to get rid  
 A. C. 69. of an odious and formidable rival. He sent  
 for Dolabella, and gave private instructions to  
 the officer who was to bring him, to carry him  
 round by Interamna, and kill him in that  
 town. The assassin, thinking that too great a  
 delay, murdered him in the first inn where  
 they stopt. This act of cruelty gave a bad  
 idea of the new government, which already  
 began to take such steps.

Modesty of  
 Vitellius's  
 wife and  
 mother.

Triaria \* bore a great share of the public  
 indignation. Her audaciousness was the more  
 shocking, by the contrast between it, and the  
 mildness of Galeria the emperor's wife, who  
 carefully avoided every thing that could add  
 to the misery of the unfortunate: and Sextilia,  
 Vitellius's mother, was likewise admired for  
 her virtues, worthy the best of times. The  
 first letters she received from her son, when  
 emperor, being signed with the name Germanicus,  
 she said, she had never born a Germanicus,  
 and that her son's name was Vitellius. Nor  
 could the high rank to which she was raised,  
 nor the assiduity with which all Rome paid  
 court to her, ever make her forget the  
 modesty of her station. Inaccessible to joy,  
 she felt nought but the misfortunes of her  
 family.

Cluvius

\* Triaria licentiam modestum ex propinquo exemplum  
 ostendebat, Galeria imperatoris uxor, non minax tristibus:  
 et pari probitate mater Vitelliorum Sextilia, antiqui moris.  
 Dixisse quin etiam ad primas filii sui epistolas ferebatur,  
 non Germanicum a se, sed Vitellium genitum. Nec ullis  
 postea fortune illecebris, aut ambitu civitatis in gaudium  
 ducta, domus suae tantum adversa sensit. Tac.

Cluvius Rufus, proconsul of Spain, joined A.R. 320, Vitellius who had left Lyons. He was not A.C. 69. without uneasiness, well knowing attempts had Cluvius accused, been made to blacken and render him suspect- obtains the ed, as having balanced and been in doubt be- punishment of his tween the two contenders for the empire, with accuser. a secret design to form himself an independant Tac. Hist. establishment in Spain. Cluvius was a man of II. 65. sense and talents, he was rich and powerful; and prevailed so far, that he obtained the punishment of his accuser who was one of the prince's freemen. However, he was not sent back to his government; which would make one suspect, if Tacitus did not positively assure the contrary, that some doubt still remained in Vitellius's mind. However that may be, Cluvius remained near the emperor, and governed Spain some time longer without residing there.

Trebellius Maximus, commander of the legions in Britain, was not treated so honourably. His army having rebelled, he had been forced to fly, and lay his complaints before Vitellius. They were not heeded, and he was succeeded by Vectius Bolanus, a man little able to restore discipline among seditious troops, but \* exempt from vice, an enemy to all injustice and oppression, and who, if he did not know how to make his authority be respected, at least made his person beloved.

The haughtiness of the conquered legions gave Vitellius uneasiness. Their forced submission seemed only to wait for an opportunity to shake off the yoke of constraint, and rebel. To leave those troops together might have been

Vectius  
Bolanus  
sent to  
command  
the legions  
in Britain.

Vitellius  
separates  
the con-  
quered le-  
gions, and  
removes  
them from  
Italy.

\* Innocens Bolanus, & nullis delictis invisa, caritatem paraverat loco auctoritatis. Tac. Agr. 16.

A. R. 820. been dangerous: accordingly they were separated. The fourteenth legion, which seemed the most intractable, and even pretended not to have been conquered, because in fact only a detachment of it was engaged in the battle of Bedriac, was sent back to Britain from whence Nero had drawn it. The others were likewise removed from Italy, and sent to various remote parts; the thirteenth excepted, which was ordered to build amphitheatres at Cremona and Bologna, for combats of gladiators, which Valens and Cæcina were to give in those two cities. For \* Vitellius was never so much taken up with business, as to forget pleasure. The Batavian cohorts, who were almost at open war with the fourteenth legion, were at first ordered to march with it: the design was, that their frequent wranglings might bring on some opportunity of taming its haughtiness. They acquitted themselves but too well of their commission; for in Turin, an accident reviving the mutual hatred between them and the legion, the quarrel was very near being decided by arms. It was therefore necessary to separate those troops, and the Batavian cohorts were sent to Germany, where we shall find them become the chief support of Civilis's rebellion. As to the prætorians, who had been strongly attached to Otho, Vitellius broke them, but without ignominy, for fear of irritating them too much: though that did not prevent their taking arms afterwards in favour of Vespasian, to whose party they added a considerable strength.

Vitellius

\* Nunquam ita ad curas intenta Vitellio, ut voluptates obliuisceretur. Tac. Hist. II. 67.



Vitellius behaved very properly with regard A.R. 820.  
 to the conquered legions: but the licentious- A.C. 69.  
 ness in which his own armies were indulged, Corrupt  
 was the cause of infinite evils. Their \* chief discipline  
 being perpetually drunk, and minding nothing among the  
 but eating and drinking, all his attendants victorious  
 were like Bacchanalians, his officers imitated troops.  
 his example, and the soldiers that of their offi-  
 cers. Thence arose all manner of outrages, Suet. Vict.  
 committed by these licentious troops in all the 10.  
 countries through which they passed; people  
 were carried off by force, lands plundered, and  
 every act of violence and cruelty that could be  
 thought of was perpetrated; at all which Vi-  
 tellius only laughed when he was told of it. Tac. Hist.  
 But at last the fury of the undisciplined soldiers II. 68.  
 turned against themselves. A violent sedition  
 broke out on Vitellius's arrival at Pavia: the  
 first occasion of it was a meer frolic, but it  
 soon became a bloody battle. The thing hap-  
 pened thus.

One of the legionary soldiers, and a Gaul Sedition  
 belonging to the auxiliary troops, challenged among  
 each other to wrestle, by way of exercise. them and a  
 The Gaul throwing his adversary, insulted bloody bat-  
 over his fallen enemy, and the spectators, who tle.  
 were numerous, interfered. They soon grew  
 hot, and each side running to arms, the legion-  
 aries cut to pieces and exterminated two co-  
 horts. The slaughter would not have stopt  
 there, had not a cloud of dust, and a body of  
 armed

\* Legati tribunisque ex moribus imperatorum severitatem  
 amulantur, vel tempestivis convivis gaudent. Perinde  
 miles intentus, aut licentur agit. Apud Vitellium omnia  
 indisposita, temulenta, pervigilie et bacchanalibus, quam  
 discipline et castris, propiora. *Tac.*

A. R. 820. armed men been descried at a distance coming  
 A. C. 69. towards them. They concluded it was the  
 fourteenth legion returning back to attack the  
 camp, and give them battle. The common  
 danger calmed both parties, and separated the  
 combatants. They found their mistake, after  
 it had produced that salutary effect: what they  
 had taken for a body of enemies, proved to be  
 only the rear-guard of the army.

Seditious  
 insurrec-  
 tion against  
 Virginius.

The insuperable and restless ardour of the  
 soldiers, only changed its object. Vitellius  
 was at table with Virginius, when on a sudden  
 the mutineers took it into their heads to ac-  
 cuse a slave they met with, belonging to the  
 latter, of having been posted there to kill the  
 emperor, and with loud cries demanded his  
 master's death. As suspicious as Vitellius's  
 cowardice made him, he could not form the  
 least doubt of Virginius's innocence, and yet  
 could not without difficulty screen him from  
 the danger he was in. Virginius was the butt  
 of every sedition. The \* soldiers admired and  
 respected his virtue, but could not forgive the  
 pretended affront he had put upon them, in re-  
 fusing to accept the empire from their hands.

Vitellius seemed to invite them to continue  
 their rage. For the next day, after giving au-  
 dience to the senate's deputies, whom he had  
 ordered to wait for him at Pavia, he went to  
 the camp; and instead of blaming the excessive  
 audaciousness of the soldiers, praised their zeal  
 and attachment to him; to the great mortifica-  
 tion of the auxiliary troops, who were grieved  
 to

\* Manebat admiratio viri et fama; sed oderant, ut fasti-  
 dii. Tac.

to see the arrogance of the legionaries encouraged by impunity. A. R. 820. A. C. 69.

The war seeming to be quite at an end, Vitellius thought of disbanding his troops, of which he had a prodigious multitude, whose maintenance exhausted the public funds, and disabled the emperor from paying the gratifications he had promised. In the first place he dismissed all the Gaulish militia, raised, as Tacitus thinks, rather to make a shew, than to be of any real service. He afterwards reduced the old corps, both legions and auxiliaries, to a smaller number: he forbid recruiting, and offered leave to quit the service, to whoever chose it. Tacitus blames that management \*, as hurtful to the republic; whose strength was thereby diminished; and disagreeable to the soldiers, whose fatigue it increased, because the same duty being to be done by a smaller number, each man's turn came oftener round. What was saved by it, does not seem an equivalent, to that historian, who appeals to the old maxims, according to which, valour, and not money, was thought the support of the state.

From Pavia, Vitellius went to Cremona, where Cassina had prepared a feast and combat of gladiators for him. His barbarous curiosity wanted to enjoy another sight, to which end he went to the plains of Bedriac, to feast his eyes He visits the field of battle at Bedriac.

\* Exitiabile id reipublice, ingratum militi, cui eadem munia inter paucos, periculaque ac labor crebrius redibant: et vires luxu corrumpebantur: contra veterem disciplinam, et instituta majorum, apud quos virtute, quam pecunia, res Romana melius stetit. *Tac.*

A. R. 820. eyes with the proofs of his victory: And \* a  
 A. C. 69. dreadful sight it must have been, to behold,  
 forty days after the action, a field of battle covered with scattered limbs, headless bodies, arms, legs, horses and men rotting all together, the earth stained with black and callous blood, fertile lands laid quite waste, trees cut down, and the harvest destroyed. In the midst of those dismal and hideous ruins, the Cremonians, as if to insult humanity, had strewed the ways with roses and branches of laurel, and erected altars from space to space, burning incense on them, and offering up victims: but their great joy, their fervent congratulations, were soon turned into bitterness of grief and tears. Valens and Cæcina accompanied Vitellius every where, and shewed him the most remarkable parts of the field of battle. "Here the legions fought: there, the cavalry: and on that side the auxiliary troops coming up, charged the enemy's flank." The officers, speaking of their own exploits, strove to outboast each other, exaggerating what was true, and adding many falsities. The soldiers giving way to their noisy tumultuous joy, ran to have another sight of the spot where they had fought, and beheld with admiration the heaps of arms and dead bodies. Some † however, could

\* *Fœdum atque atrox spectaculum, intra quadragesimum pugne dies, lacera corpora, trunci artus, putres virorum equorumque formæ, infecta tabo humus, prostrata arboribus atque fragilibus, dira vastitas. Nec minus inhumana pars viæ, quam Cremonenses lauro rosisque constraverant, extructis altaribus, casisque victimis, regium in morem: que læta in præseis, mox perniciem ipsis fecere. Tac.*

† *Et erant quos varia sors rerum, lacrymarque, et misericordia*

could not help being moved and shedding A.R. 820.  
 tears at so strong an image of the instability of A. C. 69.  
 human grandeur. But Vitellius shewed not  
 the least sign of compassion: his eyes wander-  
 ed over every part of the dreadful scene: he  
 felt no emotion at the sight of so many thou-  
 sand citizens deprived of burial. So far from Suet. Vit.  
 it, that when some who were with him com- 10.  
 plained of the stench of the dead bodies, he  
 chid them, saying, the smell \* of a dead enemy,  
 and especially of a citizen, was a perfume. He Tac.  
 was ignorant of the fatal destiny that awaited  
 himself within a few months, and by his con-  
 duct then, prevented mankind from pitying  
 him afterwards. Full of ideas of prosperity  
 and triumph, he offered up sacrifices to the  
 guardian gods of the place. He likewise visit-  
 ed Otho's tomb, which he found plain and mo-  
 dest enough to be spared: and looking on the  
 dagger with which his enemy had killed him-  
 self, as a trophy of his victory, he sent it to  
 Cogn, with orders to consecrate and hang it  
 up there in the temple of Mars.

Valens in his turn treated Vitellius at Bo- Tac.  
 logna, with a combat of gladiators brought  
 from Rome. The nearer he drew towards the  
 city, the more that emperor's court was cor-  
 rupted by a mixture of actors, eunuchs, and all  
 the train that had been subservient to Nero's  
 pleasures, who thought they had found ano-  
 ther Nero in Vitellius: for he professed great  
 admiration

*cordia subiret. At non Vitellius flexit oculos, nec tot vili-  
 insepultorum civium exhorruit. Lætus ultro, et tam pro-  
 pinque sortis ignarus, instaurabat sacrum diis loci. Tac.*

\* Optime olere occisum hostem, et melius civem. *Suet.*

A. R. 820. admiration for Nero, whose madness after mu-  
 A. C. 69. sic and theatrical entertainments he had flatter-  
 ed, not of necessity, as many others had done,  
 Vitellius but out of a low, grovelling meanness. His  
 honours Nero's veneration for that monster was so great, that  
 memory: on his arrival in Rome, he, with the priests of

*Tac. Hist.*  
 II. 95. &  
*Suet. Vit.*  
 11.

Order for-  
 bidding  
 Roman  
 knights to  
 fight as  
 gladiators.  
*Tac. Hist.*  
 II. 62.

Augustus's college, made for him the solemn offerings with which it was customary to honour the dead.

His behaviour on that occasion proves it was not out of any sincere regard to decency, that he had some little time before forbid, under severe penalties, the Roman knights frequenting the schools of gladiators, or appearing in that character. Preceding princes had often even forced some, who disliked so dangerous an ignominy, to fight publicly: and that bad example had spread like a contagion, from the capital to other cities. The abuse was great and abominable: but it ill became Vitellius to act the part of a reformer: and indeed, the order of which I am speaking, must rather be imputed to the advice of others, or to the care every new government never fails to take, to get a good character at first.

Another  
 order a-  
 gainst  
 astrologers.  
 Their in-  
 solence.  
 Emptiness  
 of their art.  
*Tac. Hist.*  
*Suet. Vit.*  
 14.  
*Dio.*

From the same source undoubtedly proceeded an edict of Vitellius's against astrologers, though he was himself extremely credulous, and addicted to believe in their predictions. The insolence of those impostors was so great, that they ventured to post up a placart against the prince's order. The edict commanding them to leave Italy before the first of October, they in return, commanded him to leave the world before that day. The emptiness of their art was as flagrant on that occasion, as their impudence;

pudence; for Vitellius was not killed till the month of December was far advanced.

Valens and Cæcina well deserved from Vitellius the honour of being consuls. But though the exercise of that high office was then limited to a very short space of time, it was not easy to find room for them, the whole year being taken up with Nero's, Galba's, and Otho's nominations. Three of those who had been appointed, were deprived of their right under various pretences; and the vacancies, occasioned by their removal, filled up by Valens and Cæcina who were consuls together, and by Cecilius Simplex whom we shall find in that station at the time of Vitellius's death. Those \* whose nominations were set aside, did not however fail to return the prince thanks for the injustice he did them; so great was the ascendant servitude had gained over them.

Vitellius advanced towards Rome but slowly, stopping at every town, and pretty country seat he met with, to enjoy all the pleasures he could, making himself every day more despicable, by the stupid idleness to which he devoted himself. Whilst he thought only of diverting himself, he spread desolation wherever he passed. He was followed by sixty thousand armed men, who knew neither order nor discipline, and dragged after them a still greater number of servants, who always are more insolent and audacious than their masters. The general officers, and Vitellius's friends, had numerous trains of attendants, whom it would have been difficult to keep within bounds, had they been watched with ever so great care.

To

\* Actæ insuper Vitellio gratiæ, consuetudine servitiî. Tac.

A. R. 820

A. C. 69.

Valens and

Cæcina

appointed

consuls.

Tac. Hist.

II. 71.

Desolation

of the

countries

through

which Vi-

tellius

passed.

Tac. Hist.

II. 87.

A. R. 820. To this multitude were added, the senators  
 A. C. 69. and Roman knights who came to meet the  
 emperor, some out of fear, more out of flattery,  
 but all, that a bad construction might not be  
 put on their staying behind whilst others went.  
 Add \* to these, a crowd of the lowest class of  
 people, who, by their profession, consecrated  
 to pleasure, had formerly been unbecomingly  
 intimate with Vitellius, strollers, comedians,  
 and coachmen. He received them graciously,  
 and took a pleasure in prostituting the name  
 of friend to those wretches, the very know-  
 ledge of whom was enough to dishonour him.  
 One may judge what waste must have been  
 committed by such a troop in the towns and  
 countries where they passed, at a time when  
 the harvest was just ready to be gathered in.  
 An army of enemies would have been less for-  
 midable.

A great  
 number of  
 the com-  
 mon people  
 butchered  
 by the sol-  
 diers.

The soldiers had several quarrels on the  
 road. The legions and auxiliary troops had  
 never agreed since the affair of Pavia, except  
 when they were jointly concerned in plunder-  
 ing towns, or molesting such as were not sol-  
 diers. The greatest havock was made about  
 seven miles from Rome. Vitellius distributed,  
 contrary to custom, wine and victuals to each  
 soldier, and the city mob was spread all over  
 the camp. Among that crowd, brought thi-  
 ther by an idle curiosity, were some jokers, who  
 diverted themselves with disarming the soldiers,  
 privately cutting their belts, and then asking  
 whether they had got their swords. Too hot  
 and

\* *Aggregabantur e plebe, flagitiosa per obsequia Vitellii  
 cogniti, scurræ, histriones, aurigæ, quibus ille amicitiarum  
 de honestaudentis mire gaudebat. Tac.*



and brutal to understand raillery, and taking for an insult, what was meant only as a jest, they fell, sword in hand, on the people, who had neither swords nor any thing else to defend themselves with. Several of them were killed, among whom was the father of one of the soldiers. He was known after his death. The most furious were ashamed of what they had done; and, recollecting themselves, spared an innocent multitude.

They occasioned too some trouble and confusion in Rome, whither they ran in small detachments from the main army, out of curiosity to see the spot where Galba had been murdered. Their appearance was so savage one could not look at them without shuddering. Their great long pikes, and the skins of beasts with which they were clothed, made them look more like barbarians than Roman soldiers. Not being used to the city, they could not tell how to avoid the crowds, and if by slipping on the stones, or justling against any one, they chanced to fall, they immediately drew their swords, and fell on whoever was next them. The tribunes and other officers, who purposely went through the streets with proper guards, could not appease the tumult, but rather added to the general terror.

Vitellius made a solemn entry into Rome. He set out from Ponte-mole, mounted on a fine horse, and completely armed. His design was to enter the city, as a place taken in war, as he had done in the other cities through which he passed. His friends dissuaded him from so foolish and odious a thought: he laid aside the military dress, put on the robe prætexta,

A. R. 820.  
A. C. 69.

Terror and confusion in Rome.

Vitellius's entry into Rome.

See, P. II. 10. 20.

A. R. 820. texta, and marched with a warlike pomp in-  
A. C. 69. deed, but without any menacing appearance.

First marched the eagles of four legions, with numbers of colours and standards on each side of them. Next followed the Roman infantry, then the horse, and last of all four and thirty cohorts of auxiliary troops, their various armour distinguishing their several nations. The prefects of the camp, general officers, tribunes, and chief centurions preceded the eagles in white robes. The other centurions were at the head of their companies, dressed in their finest armour, and decked with the military ornaments each of them had acquired. The soldiers too displayed the sashes and gorgets they had received as rewards for their bravery. A great \* and noble sight! a fine and magnificent army, worthy to be commanded by a better man than Vitellius! In that manner he marched to the capitol, where he found his mother: whom he embraced, and gave her the name of Augusta.

He har-  
augures the  
senate and  
people.

The next day † he harangued the senate and people, sounding his own praise with as much confidence, as if none who heard him knew what he was: boasting his activity and temperance in the most pompous terms, whilst every one present, as well as all Italy, through which he

\* *Deora facies, & non Vitellio principe dignus exercitus!*  
*Tac.*

† *Postera die, tanquam apud alterius civitatis senatum populumque, magnificam orationem de semetipso prompsit, industriam temperantiamque suam laudibus attollens: consilia flagitiorum ipsis qui aderant, omnique Italia, per quam somno & luxu pudendus incesserat. Vulgus tamen vacuum cavis, & sine falsi verique discrimine, solitas adulationes edoctum, clamore & vocibus adstrepebat.* *Tac.*

he had travelled either sleeping or drunk all the way, had been witnesses to the shameful meanness of his behaviour. They applauded however; and the populace, to whom it is equal whether a thing be true or false, accustomed to echo the flatteries to which they had been trained up, clapped their hands, redoubled their acclamations, and at last prevailed on him to accept the title of Augustus, with as little reason as he had had to refuse it before.

Vitellius having taken possession of the high priesthood, issued according to custom, an edict concerning the public worship and religious ceremonies, and dated it the fifteenth of the calends of August, or eighteenth of July, a day always thought unfortunate, being that on which Cræmerus and Allia were defeated. We well know what an idle superstition that of fortunate and unfortunate days is; but the Romans thought otherways: and that date was looked upon as a bad omen. It might easily have been foreseen and prevented, but Vitellius \* did not attend to it. Profoundly ignorant of all laws, both human and divine, he had a parcel of friends and freemen as indolent and negligent as himself, and his council seemed to be composed of nothing but drunkards.

He affected to be extremely popular. At elections for magistrates, he went with the candidates as their friend and solicitor. At the theatres, he was sure to favour such actors, as he thought most agreeable to the mob. In

A. R. 820.  
A. C. 69.

An instance of  
stupid negligence.

At He affects  
to be mean-  
ly popular.  
At Theat. Hist.  
II. 91.

\* Adeo omni humani divinique juris expert, pari amicorum libertorumque socordia, velut inter temulentos agibat. Tac.

A. R. 820. the circus he espoused the blue faction, as warmly  
 A. C. 69. ly as he had done when but a private man. A  
*Suet. Vit.* conduct \*, says Tacitus, which, had it been  
 14. directed by judgment, might have pleased, as plain and simple : but the remembrance of his past life made it seem mean and indecent.

He attends the senate assidu-  
 ally, and behaves there with modesty.  
*Tac.* He attended the senate assiduously, even when no affairs of moment were to be debated. Helvidius Priscus, with his usual freedom and liberty, strongly opposed Vitellius's opinion on some occasion : the prince was piqued at it ; but however only called the tribunes to back his authority so contemned. Helvidius's friends, fearing Vitellius would never forgive it, strove to appease him. He answered, that it was neither new nor surprising for two senators to be of different opinions ; and that he himself had often contradicted Thrasea. Various constructions were put on that answer. Some thought it impudent in Vitellius to compare himself to Thrasea : others commended him for having chosen, since he would give an example, a senator so respectable for his virtue, and not one of fortune's favourites.

Enormous power of Valens and Caccina, and their insolence. Valens and Caccina shared † all the power, and left Vitellius only the shadow of it. Of the

\* Quae grata saepe & popularia, si a virtutibus proficerantur, memoria vitæ prioris indecora & vilia accipiebantur. *Tac.*

† Inter discordes Vitellio nihil auctoritatis: munia imperii Caccina ac Valens obibant, olim anxii odii, quæ bello & castris male dissimulata, pravitas minorum, & secunda signuibus inuicitiis civitas auxerat, dum ambitu, comitatu, & uniuersis salutantium agminibus contendunt, comparantque, varia in hunc aut illum Vitellii inclinationibus. Nec unquam satis fida potentia, ubi nimia est. Simul ipsam Vitellium, subita offensis aut intempestivis blanditiis, mutabunt, contentebant, metuebantque. *Tac.*

the two prætorian prefects whom he named, A. R. 820.  
P. Sabinus, and Julius Priscus, the one was A. C. 60.  
protected by Cæcina, and the other by Valens.  
In that manner they counterbalanced each other on all occasions. Their jealousy, which began during the war, in the camp, and was even then so badly disguised, that none were deceived, at last broke out in the city, where they were more at leisure to lend an ear to the malicious speeches and envious reports of those who called themselves their friends; and where they could not but have frequent opportunities of thwarting each other. Add to that, their emulation for shew and ostentation, their attempts to surpass each other in the magnificence of their equipages, the number of their dependants and the immense multitude of those who made court to them. Rivals in every thing, each strove to bring the emperor over to his side, whilst he, a poor weak idol, obeyed sometimes the one, and sometimes the other. Their situation was consequently as precarious, as it was brilliant; and as they well knew the least sudden start of pleasure, or on the contrary, a flattery, however absurd and ill-timed, was capable of making Vitellius change at once, so they despised and feared him equally. It was an additional motive to them to strive to grow rich as fast as they could whilst in favour. They possessed themselves of houses, gardens, and lands, belonging to the imperial demesnes, whilst numbers of nobles, recalled from exile by Galba, languished in indigence, without receiving any assistance from the prince's liberality.

A. R. 820.

A. C. 69.

Vitellius's  
order in fa-  
vour of the  
nobility re-  
called from  
exile.*Lisp. ad  
Tac.**Tac.*The disci-  
pline of the  
victorious  
legions en-  
tirely cor-  
rupted by  
their abode  
in Rome.  
*Tac. Hist.  
II. 93.*

All that Vitellius did for those unfortunate men, was to restore them to their prerogatives over their freemen. Those prerogatives were considerable. If the master or patron wanted the necessaries of life, the freemen was obliged to keep him, and to leave him at his death, half of what he was worth. Vitellius's law was extremely applauded by all ranks of people, but the freemen found out ways to evade it. Those servile creatures thought of various tricks to conceal their riches, putting their money out under borrowed names. Some of them getting into the emperor's household, became more powerful than their old masters.

The discipline of the victorious legions had already been greatly impaired, but their abode in Rome corrupted them entirely. The soldiers, too numerous to be well contained within the camp, over-run the city. They strutted about in the streets, porticos, and temples: they had no longer any notion of repairing to their head-quarters to take orders from their chief officers: no exactness in their military duties, no exercise was used to keep them employed. The \* pleasures of the city, and all manner of excesses into which they gave, impaired their strength, and enervated their courage. At last neglecting even such precautions as were necessary for their health, several of them pitched their tents in the Vatican, an unwholesome place, where the badness of the air, occasioned sicknesses of which many died. Strangers, and especially the Germans and Gauls, who never could bear the climate of

Italy,

\* Per ubi illecebras & inhonesta dictu, corpus otio, animam libidinibus imminuebant. *Tac.*

Italy, were greatly hurt by drinking the water of the Tiber, which they did to excess, when over-heated. A. R. 920.  
A. C. 69.

One only way remained to ruin that army completely, which was, to lessen the number of soldiers of which it was composed; and that was most imprudently done. I have already said that Vitellius broke the prætorians, and it appears he did the same with the troops more particularly destined to guard the city. The question was how to replace them. To that end the emperor ordered sixteen prætorian and four city cohorts, each consisting of a thousand men, to be raised. Every one strove to get into that service, which was less troublesome, and at the same time more lucrative than that of the legions. Favour, or the caprice of the generals, was what determined the choice of those who were to be admitted. Valens in particular, assumed the chief authority to the prejudice of Cæcina, over whom he had the ascendant with the soldiers who imputed to him the victory they had gained, and the flourishing condition of their party, which was but in a bad way before his arrival. Cæcina's jealousy knew no longer any bounds, and from that hour his fidelity began to waver.

But if Vitellius let the generals take so great a power, he granted still more to the licentiousness of the soldier. Every man placed himself as he pleased: worthy or not worthy, all that chose to enlist in the prætorian or city cohorts were received: those who liked better to remain in the legions or auxiliary troops were likewise at liberty so to do; and some preferred those corps, to avoid the intempera-  
ture

A. R. 820. ture of the climate, and danger of being sick.  
 A. C. 69. The result of that operation was, that the army was considerably weakened; and the prætorian as well as city cohorts, who, till then had been honoured and esteemed for their excellence, lost that noble distinction, and became a confused medley of all sorts of people. The soldiers audaciousness was such, that they thought they might do any thing. They had even the assurance to demand with loud cries, the death of three of the most illustrious chiefs of Gaul, because they had sided with Vindex in his insurrection just before Nero's death.— Vitellius, besides his being naturally weak and cowardly, had a very strong reason to flatter the troops. The time was drawing near when he was to reward their zeal by giving them a sum of money, which not having, he thought it best to indulge them in every thing else.— So Tacitus says, giving us by that to understand, that those whose deaths the soldiers required were delivered up to their fury.

The soldiers demand the death of the most illustrious chiefs of the Gauls.

Profligate extravagance

A tax was laid on the freemen, whose enormous riches was an insult to the public. But that was a poor resource for a \* prince who thought of nothing but squandering away his money, building stables for the horses belonging to the Circus; giving incessantly combats of gladiators and fights of wild beasts; who in a word threw his riches away, as if there could have been no end to them. Cæcina and Valens followed his example, and celebrated his birthday with such splendour and expence as had never

\* Ipse sola perdendi cura, stabula aurigis extruere; circum gladiatorum ferarumque spectaculis opplere: tanquam in summa abundantia pecunie illudere. Tac.



never before been heard of. They hired gladiators to fight in all the streets of Rome to amuse the people.

A. R. 820.  
A. C. 69.

Rapine and extravagance went hand in hand. Four months \* had not yet past since the victory, and the freeman Asiaticus already equalled the odious fortunes of the richest of Nero's freemen. Not one in this court valued himself on honour or honesty. The only way to attain power and authority was, to feed with all that luxury and the most monstrous prodigality could invent, the insatiable gluttony of Vitellius, who thought of nothing but enjoying the present moment. The city of Rome, not more great and powerful than unhappy, in the course of one single year, fell into the hands of Otho and Vitellius, and became a prey to a Vinus, an Icelus, a Valens, and an Asiaticus, one after the other: and they, says Tacitus, were soon succeeded by other, but not better men, a Mucian, and an Eprius Marcellus.

Misery of  
Rome.

They were in fact the chief ministers under Vespasian's government. But though they were by no means blameless, I fear Tacitus has carried things too far in comparing them to Galba's and Vitellius's ministers and freemen.—Vespasian, a wise and careful prince, on whom even

\* Nondum quartus a victoria mensis, & libertus Vitellii Asiaticus, Polyetes, Patrobios, & vetera odiorum nomina sequabat. Nemo in illa aula probitate aut industria certavit. Unum ad potentiam iter, prodigijs epulis, & sumptu generaque satiare inexplebiles Vitellii libidines . . . . Magna & misera civitas, eodem anno Othonem Vitelliumque passus, inter Vinios, Fabios, Icelos, Asiaticos, varia & pudenda sorte agebat: donec succedere Mucianus & Marcellus, & magis alii homines, quam alii mores. Tac.

A. R. 820. even our historian bestows great praises, un-  
 A. C. 69. doubtedly bore a great deal from Mucian, to  
 whom he was indebted for the empire: per-  
 haps too, he confided over much in Eprius  
 Marcellus: but he never would have suffered  
 either of them to be guilty of the enormities  
 practised under preceding reigns.

Vitellius's  
 cruelties.  
*Suet. Vit.*  
 14.

To so many evils which threatened the speedy  
 ruin of the republic, Vitellius added cruelty  
 against private persons. Old friends, with  
 whom he had been intimate from his infancy,  
 men of great names whom he had invited to  
 be with him, promising almost to share the  
 empire with them, met with nothing but fraud  
 and deceit, to which they fell victims. He  
 spared no one of his creditors, nor of those  
 who had formerly molested him in any shape  
 whatever, for payment of what he owed them.  
 One of them waiting on him to pay his court,  
 was directly ordered to be taken away, and put  
 to death. As he was carrying off, Vitellius  
 called him back: and, whilst every one was  
 praising his clemency, ordered the unhappy  
 man to be stabbed before him, saying, he  
 would feast his eyes with the sight of an ene-  
 my's blood. Two sons beseeching him to  
 spare their father's life, were put to death with  
 him. A Roman knight cried out to him as  
 they were dragging him to execution by his  
 order, "I have made you my heir." Vitellius  
 ordered the will to be brought, and finding by  
 it one of the testator's freemen was made co-  
 heir with him, he ordered them both to be kill-  
 ed. If any spoke loud against his favourite  
 faction, he blew, in the Circus, he called it  
 treason,

treason, and several citizens lost their lives for A. R. 820.  
no other reason. A. C. 69.

It was time Vespasian should come to put a stop to all those horrors, and save the empire by reigning over it. The schemes he had long meditated, at last succeeded in the manner I am about to relate, after taking some notice of his birth and first employments.

His birth was far from promising the high Birth, and first employments of Vespasian. fortune to which he attained. T. Flavius Pentro, a burges of Rieti, his grandfather by his father's side, took to the army in his youth, Suet. Vesp. 1-4. but never rose higher than the rank of centurion: and quitting the service after the battle of Pharsalia, in which he fought for Pompey, spent the rest of his life in the little town where he was born, setting up a business like that of our brokers and auctioneers. Vespasian's father, T. Flavius Sabinus, farmed the impost of the \* fortieth penny in Asia; and behaved in that ticklish employment with such lenity and integrity, that several towns would have his picture, under which they put this inscription, *Κατὰ τελευτήσασιν, To the honest publican.* His mother, Vespasia Polla, was of an honourable family of † Ursia, and had a brother a senator.

He was born at a village near Rieti, the seventeenth of November in the year of Rome 760, five years before Augustus's death. A surname taken from his mother's name was given him, so that he was called T. Flavius Vespasianus. He had an elder brother, called after his father T. Flavius Sabinus: he was brought

\* A tax or duty levied on all kinds of merchandise.

† Still called by its old name Noccia in Umbria.

A. R. 820. brought up by his father's mother Tertulla, at  
 A. C. 69. an estate she had near \* Cosa in Tuscany. He was always fond of the places where he had spent his infancy. He often paid them a visit when emperor, and let the little farm-house subsist just as it was, being unwilling to make any alteration in objects the sight of which gave him real joy. He had always the highest veneration for the memory of his grandmother, and on high days drank out of a silver cup that had been her's.

His brother set out in the road to preferment, and succeeded; for he was made consul, and afterwards prefect of Rome under Nero, Otho, and Vitellius. As to Vespasian, he had no ambition; and, could he have followed his own inclination, would have avoided all dignities and promotions: but forced by his mother, who, to her counsels and earnest entreaties added strong and bitter reproaches, calling him his brother's footman, he set about obtaining an entrance into the senate. It was not without great difficulty, and after being refused, that he was made edile; but he obtained the prætorship with ease and honour.

The strides he took in that career, were very different from what might have been expected from the reluctance with which he entered it. He was guilty of every meanness in order to gain Caligula's good graces. He desired leave to treat the people with a feast and games to celebrate that prince's chimerical victory over the Germans. When Lepidus's conspiracy was discovered, he proposed depriving the criminals

\* The Corn of the ancients was not far from Porto Hercule.

criminals of burial, besides putting them to death. He made a speech before the whole senate, for the honour he had received in being admitted to the emperor's table. So difficult it is for merit to make its way without stooping to some things not quite compatible with strict virtue and dignity of sentiment.

It was at that time that he married, and therein made a choice more suitable to the obscurity of his birth, than the rank he was then in. He married Domitia, a cast off mistress of a Roman knight, and generally thought to have been originally a slave. She was however declared by sentence of the judge, free by birth, and a citizen: having been acknowledged by her father Flavius Liberalis, register to the office of quæstors. Money must have been what induced Vespasian to contract such an alliance. He had by her Titus and Domitian, and a daughter called Domitilla, who died before him. He buried his wife, and did not marry again, but took Cænis, Antonia's free-woman and secretary, whom he had formerly loved; and even when he was emperor, kept her with him, almost on the footing of a lawful wife. Cænis dying, several mistresses succeeded her, for chastity was not the favourite virtue of the Pagans.

Vespasian advanced himself greatly under Claudius. He was protected by Narcissus, and by his means got the command of a legion with which he served, first in Germany, and afterwards in Britain, where he behaved with great distinction. The ornaments of triumph, a double priesthood, and at last the consulship, were his reward.

He

A. R. 820. He lived retired and inactive during the first  
 A. C. 69. years of Nero's reign, studying only how to be  
 forgot, because he feared Agrippina, who hated  
 all Narcissus's friends. He was made proconsul  
 of Africa in his turn. His behaviour there  
 seems to have been a mixture of good and ill;  
 for Suetonius and Tacitus speak very differently  
 of it. According to Tacitus, he was hated by the  
 people, and gained a very bad character there. Suetonius  
 says, he governed them with great dignity, and the  
 utmost integrity. The latter owns however, that there  
 was a sedition at Adrumetum against the proconsul,  
 and that the mob pelted him with turnips. A  
 magistrate, whose administration was irrefragable,  
 would hardly have been insulted in that manner.

*Tac. Hist.*  
 11. 97.

What is certain is, that he did not return rich from his province. On the contrary, he was so much in debt, that he was forced to mortgage what estate he had to his brother. His distress was such that he did not mind how he got money. He stooped to traffics much beneath his rank, for which he was insultingly called a Horse Jockey. He was likewise taxed with getting two \* hundred thousand sesterces from a young man, for whom he procured the dignity of senator against his father's will. These are proofs that Tacitus was in the right to say \* Vespasian's character was not spotless when he was raised to the empire, and that he may be ranked among the very small number of those of whom prosperity ever made better men.

\* 1600l.

He

\* Ambigua de Vespasiano fama: solusque omnium ante  
 ac principum in melius mutatus est. *Tac. Hist.* 1. 50.

He accompanied Nero in his expedition to Greece, and his indifference for that prince's fine voice, which had very near been his ruin, as I have already said, drew another misfortune upon him. Tired of hearing Nero sing, he would often either go away or fall asleep. The emperor highly offended at it, forbid him his presence. Vespasian retired to a small remote town, expecting nothing but death, when the commission of emperor's lieutenant for the war against the Jews was brought him. That war was beginning to be of consequence, and it was thought proper to entrust the management of it to a man of judgment and merit, who at the same time should not be great enough to give umbrage. The obscurity of Vespasian's birth, and his experience in war, qualified him exactly for that important trust, and accordingly the court pitched on him.

He answered all that was expected from him. Ever \* vigilant and active, the object he had in view was what he thought of day and night. He marched at the head of the legions; went himself to reconnoitre proper places for encampments; and equally brave and intelligent, exerted both his head and arm. The plainest food was what best suited him. His dress and equipage was hardly superior to that of a common soldier. One might, says Tacitus, have compared him to the old generals

\* *Vespasianus acer militie, anteire agmen, locum castris capere, noctu diuque consilio, ac, si res posceret, manu honestibus obniti, cibo fortuito, veste habituque vix a gregario milite discrepans, prorsus, si avaritia abesset, antiquis ducibus par.* Tac. Hist. II. 5.

A. R. 620. rals of the republic, had he not been tainted  
A. C. 69. with avarice.

He sends  
his son Ti-  
tus to  
Rome to  
pay ho-  
mage to  
Galba in  
his name.  
*Tac. Hist.*  
*II. 1-7.*  
*Suet. Tit.*  
*3-5.*

The circumstances of things, and the persuasion of others, rather than his own ambition, was what induced Vespasian to think of the empire. He had no concern in the revolution which deprived Nero of the throne and life: and was so far from thinking of forming a party against Galba, that he sent his son Titus to pay homage to him in his name. Politicians talked a great deal about that journey. Wherever Titus passed, the public immediately made Galba adopt him: and indeed he well deserved it. His comely and majestic countenance; his happy turn of mind, fit for every thing, and cultivated with great care; the ease and dignity with which he spoke and wrote Greek and Latin either in prose or verse; his dexterity at all manly exercises, and especially those that relate to war; the proofs he had given of his valour in Germany and Britain, and particularly in the war against the Jews, in which, having an important command under his father, he had gained battles, and taken towns; but above all, his remarkable goodness, generosity and humanity, joined to the vigour of youth (for Titus was then entering into his twenty-eighth year) prove that Galba could not in fact have made a better choice. But he had no thoughts of it, as appeared by the event; and was killed before Titus arrived at Rome.

Titus  
learns Gal-  
ba's death  
on the  
road, and  
returns to  
his father.

Vespasian's son was at Corinth when he learned that Galba and Piso had been killed, and that the empire was like to be disputed by Otho, acknowledged in Rome, and Vitellius, whom the German armies had proclaimed.

This



This news changing the whole system of his A.R. 820.  
 conduct, he consulted with a few friends, what A. C. 69.  
 steps were most proper for him to take. To  
 continue his journey to Rome, would have  
 answered no end; nor could he expect, that  
 whoever he found in possession of the empire,  
 would be pleased at his having undertaken  
 that journey for another: besides that, he fear-  
 ed being kept as hostage either by Otho or  
 Vitellius. On the contrary, if he returned,  
 the conqueror, whoever he might be, would  
 certainly take it ill. On the whole, that in-  
 convenience seemed the least, because victory  
 was still doubtful, and Vespasian's espousing  
 the victor's cause, would palliate his son's in-  
 discretion. If Vespasian aimed at higher  
 things, and himself aspired at the empire,  
 guarding against distrusts and umbrages, would  
 then have been out of season, since in that case,  
 war only could decide it. This last party was  
 that which Titus was inclined to take: and  
 after weighing the reasons for hope and fear,  
 hope prevailed, and he resolved to return to  
 his father. Some were of opinion, that his  
 passion for Berenice greatly influenced that  
 determination. It \* is true he loved that  
 queen, and in general was given to pleasure  
 during his youth, though when emperor he was  
 much more reserved than during his father's  
 life: but even before that time, his attachment  
 to Berenice never interfered, as Tacitus ob-  
 serves, with his duty and the business of the  
 state.

\* Neque abhorrebat a Berenice juvenilis animus: sed  
 gerendis rebus nullum ex eo impedimentum. Latant  
 voluptatibus adolescentiam egit, suo quam patris imperio  
 modestior. Tac.

A. R. 820. state. Titus returned towards the east, his  
 A. C. 69. thoughts entirely taken up with great views.  
 Passing by the island of Cyprus, he visited the  
 temple of Paphos, where Venus was worship-  
 ped under the odd symbol of a cone \* of white  
 marble. In that temple was an oracle which  
 Titus consulted, first about his voyage, and  
 afterward concerning his future fortune. The  
 priest, after having answered his questions  
 publicly, gave him the highest expectations  
 in a private conference.

Titus con-  
 sults the  
 oracle of  
 Paphos.  
 Pretended  
 presages of  
 Vespasian's  
 elevation.

One might at that time have ventured to  
 foretel that Vespasian would be emperor,  
 without recurring to supernatural knowledge.  
 His merit compared to the worthlessness of  
 Otho and Vitellius, the forces, of which he had  
 the command, the success he had already had  
 in the war against the Jews, and the example  
 of three emperors chosen and seated on the  
 throne by the soldiers, were sure presages of  
 the grandeur to which Vespasian rose. No-  
 thing was talked of but prodigies by which it  
 was foretold him. I shall not trouble myself,  
 nor my readers, with copying the list Suctoni-  
 us and Dion Cassius give of them; but be con-  
 tent with Tacitus's judicious remark. "The  
 event, says † that philosophic historian,  
 made us all very wise. After seeing Vespas-  
 ian's elevation, we soon concluded it fore-  
 told

\* In several countries the first objects of idolatry were  
 stones consecrated to some divinity, and which were  
 thought to represent or contain it. M. Duguet gives  
 several instances of that kind of worship in his explanation  
 of Genesis, c. 28. v. 10.

† *Occulta lege fati, & ostentis ac responsis destinatum  
 Vespasiano liberisque ejus imperium, post fortunam cre-  
 didimus. Tac. Hist. l. 10.*

“told by heaven, by various presages.” In the same manner we may judge, that the predictions of the priest of Paphos were founded on public report, and the probability of the event.

An absurd interpretation of our sacred oracles, famous throughout all the east, gave an additional weight and credit to that same opinion. The prophecies, by which it was foretold, that the chief and deliverer of nations should arise in Judea, were applied to Vespasian. Tacitus has fallen into that mistake, not to be wondered at in him. But what we cannot help being surprised at is, that a worshipper and priest of the true God, the historian Josephus, should have made so shameful an abuse of the scriptures. “Blind, says M. Bossuet, blind indeed, so to give away the hopes of Jacob and of Judah, to strangers, by seeking in Vespasian the son of Abraham and of David, and ascribing to an idolatrous prince, the title of him whose light was to convert the Gentiles from idolatry.”

Titus on his arrival found his father in appearance determined for Otho, to whom he had made his legions take the oath of fidelity. Vespasian, prudent and circumspect, proceeded slowly, and was in no haste to declare what had long been privately negotiating between him and Mucian, at that time governor of Syria. At first they were at variance together; the vicinity of their provinces having occasioned, as frequently happens in those cases, jealousy and discord between them. When Nero died, they were reconciled, and concerted measures together, first by means of their friends,

Prophecies relating to the Messias, applied to Vespasian. Tac. Hist. v. 13.

Jos. de B. Jud. iv. 14. vii. 12. Hist. Univ.

Secret negotiations between Vespasian and Mucian. Tac. Hist. ii. 4.

A. R. 820. and afterwards with the assistance of Titus,  
 A. C. 69. who became the bond of their union, for  
 which his character, and the care he took to  
 gain Mucian's favour, made him extremely  
 fit. Vespasian and Mucian were very different  
 men: the one was a warrior, and the other  
 qualified for negotiation. Vespasian delighted  
 in simplicity and economy: Mucian was fond  
 of shew and magnificence, living more like a  
 prince than a private man. The former shone  
 in action, the latter in words. An\* excellent  
 prince, says Tacitus, might have been made  
 out of them both, could their good qualities  
 have been blended, and their bad ones taken  
 away.

The first councils they held together were  
 attended with no great consequences. They  
 both submitted sincerely to Galba: only tak-  
 ing more care than before, to make the officers  
 of their armies love them; to that end pleasing  
 the good by laudable means, and inspiring  
 them with a virtuous emulation; and the bad  
 by indulging their licentiousness, and love of  
 pleasure.

The legions in  
 the East,  
 grow warm  
 in favour  
 of Vespasian.

The seeds thus sown sprung up, and it was  
 not long before their fruits were reaped: for,  
 when two rivals, such as Otho and Vitellius  
 were seen distracting the republic by their  
 wars, the end of which could be no other than  
 to make vice triumphant, the legions in the  
 East began to take fire. "Why, said they,  
 " must others decide the fate of the empire,  
 " and engross every reward, whilst eternal ser-  
 " vitude is our lot?" The troops examined  
 their

\* *Egregium principatus temperamentum, si, demptis  
 utriusque vitis, solæ virtutes miscerentur. Tac. Hist. ii. 5.*

their strength, and began to take confidence in it. Three legions were in Judea, four in Syria: the former inured to all the difficulties of an obstinate war, and the latter animated and encouraged by the brave examples set them by their neighbouring army: Egypt with its two legions was near them. On one side they had Pontus, Cappadocia, and the troops that bordered on Armenia; on the other, all Asia Minor, a rich and populous province; all the island down from the Egean sea; and the distance at which they were from the centre enabled them to mak all their preparations with ease and safety.

The two generals were well acquainted with the disposition of their troops, Vespasian had a little time to breathe in the Jewish war, to end which nothing remained but to take Jerusalem. Titus, a most useful and precious help, arrived at that time. The heads of the enterprize resolved however to wait the event of the war between Otho and Vitellius. They were not afraid of seeing both parties unite under the victor, well knowing \* that no reconciliation is ever sincere between the conquerors and conquered, and that it was of little importance to them which of the two rivals prevailed. " Prosperity, said they, turns even the best and ablest heads: but as to these vile slaves to effeminacy and voluptuousness, their vices render their ruin infallible: war will

*He is for waiting the decision of the quarrel between Otho and Vitellius.*

\* Victores victosque nunquam solida fide coalescere. Nec referre Vitellium an Othionem superstitem fortuna faceret. Rebus secundis etiam egregios duces insolere. Discordiam his, ignaviam, luxuriam: & quismet vitis alterum bello, alterum victoria periturum. *Tac.*

A. R. 820. " will deliver us from one, and the other will  
A. C. 69. " be undone by victory."

Such was the plan concerted between Vespasian and Mucian, sure of being backed by their armies the moment they should give the signal. The ardour was universal. Good \* men desired a change for the sake of the republic: hopes of plunder and riches were an inducement to many, whilst others thought to retrieve their shattered fortunes. So that all, good and bad, wished for war with equal ardour, though with different views.

Vespasian  
still hesi-  
tates after  
Otho's  
death.  
*Tac. Hist.*  
ii. 74.

Vespasian still hesitated after the strife was ended by the battle of Bedriac, and death of Otho. He even went through the ceremony of swearing allegiance to Vitellius: himself pronounced the formulary of the oath, adding to it vows for the happiness and prosperity of the new emperor: but the soldiers, whose intentions were quite different, hard him in silence. It may be presumed he was not greatly displeased at the reluctance his army shewed to imitate him on that occasion. Every thing encouraged his wishes. Besides Mucian and the Syrian legions, Tiberius Alexander, prefect of Egypt, was likewise in his interest. He depended too on the third legion, but lately drawn out of Syria, and sent to Mœsia, where he then was; and with reason flattered himself, that the other legions in Illyria would follow the example of the third: for all those armies were incensed against the arrogance of the German

\* Optimus quisque amore reipublice. Multos dulcedo prædarii stimulabat, alios ambigue domi res. Ita boni malique, causis diversis, studio pari, bellum omnes quærebant. *Tac.*

man legions, who despised the others as greatly inferior to them. To all those reasons, which success seemed to be in a manner certain, Vespasian opposed in his own mind, the difficulty and danger of so great an enterprize. "What \* a day, said he, will that be, in which a father, threescore years old, shall expose himself, with his two sons, in the flower of their age, to all the dangers and hazards of war! Those whose views do not extend beyond a private station, may recede from what they do; they can either push or stop their fortune as they please. But he that aims at empire, has no medium between the highest elevation, and the lowest fall." He considered the strength of the German armies, which a warrior, like him, could not but be well acquainted with. His legions could fight well against foreign enemies, but they had never contended with Romans: and he feared he should find in Ottho's troops, of which he was the support, more noise and clamour than real courage. Treason, so common in all civil wars, alarmed him, and he could not think without concern, on the danger of being assassinated. He called to mind the example of Camillus Scribonianus, murdered in Claudius's time by Volaginius, a common soldier, who for that deed was raised to the highest honours and greatest command in the army: a strong temptation to others to be traitors too. "Batal-  
" lions

\* Quis ille dies foret, quo sexaginta ætatis annos, & duos filios juvenes bello permitteret! Esse privatis cogitationibus regressum; & prout velint, plus minuisse summi ex fortuna. Imperium cupientibus nihil medium inter summa aut præcipitia. Tac.

A. R. 820. " lions and squadrons are a vain defence, said  
 A. C. 69. " Vespaſian, againſt perils of that kind. It is  
 " often eaſier to defeat whole armies, than the  
 " ſecret ſnares of one man."

Mucinn's  
 ſpeech to  
 Veſpaſian.  
 His chief officers and friends endeavoured  
 to diſſipate the fears that prevented his coming  
 to a reſolution: and at length Mucian, in a  
 pretty numerous aſſembly, compoſed however  
 of none but ſelect friends, made a ſpeech, pur-  
 poſely prepared with a view to determine him.  
 " Whoever conceives a great deſign, ſaid he,  
 " ought to conſider whether what he under-  
 " takes is uſeful to the republic, honourable to  
 " himſelf, and eaſy, or at leaſt not over  
 " difficult, to be put in execution. The perſon  
 " who adviſes ſuch an enterprize, ought like-  
 " wiſe to be conſidered: it is proper to exa-  
 " mine whether he engages himſelf in it, whe-  
 " ther he ſhares the danger, and above all,  
 " whether his views are diſinterreſted, and his  
 " motive ſelf-love, or regard for him he would  
 " have to act. When I invite you, Veſpaſian,  
 " to take the reins of government, I adviſe  
 " you to do a thing as ſalutary to your coun-  
 " try, as it is glorious to yourſelf. It is an  
 " eaſy enterprize: next to the gods, ſucceſs  
 " is in your own hands. Think not this ſi flatter-  
 " tery. To ſucceed Vitellius, is rather a bleſ-  
 " miſh than an honour.

" We have not to fight againſt the conſum-  
 " mate prudence of Auguſtus, nor the politi-  
 " cal cunning of Tiberius, nor a right of in-  
 " heritance conſecrated by long poſſeſſion, by  
 " which Caligula, Claudius, and Nero were  
 " ſeated on the throne. You yielded even to  
 " the ancient nobility of Galba's birth. To  
 " remain



" remain \* any longer in inaction, and leave  
 " the republic exposed to shame and inevita-  
 " ble ruin, would be insensibility, it would be  
 " cowardice, even though servitude were as free  
 " from danger as it is full of shame for you.  
 " The time is past in which your designs  
 " might be buried in secrecy. The throne  
 " must be your asylum, rather than the object  
 " of your ambition. Have you forgot Cor-  
 " bulo's violent death? It is true, his origin  
 " was more illustrious than ours: but then  
 " Nero too was in that respect infinitely above  
 " Vitellius. Whoever is able to make another  
 " fear him, will always seem great enough to  
 " him that fears. Vitellius knows by his own  
 " experience, that an army can make an em-  
 " peror. To the troops he owes all that he  
 " possesses, for he never deserved any thing by  
 " his own military exploits, nor by any repu-  
 " tation acquired by him in feats of arms.  
 " Hatred to Galba, was what recommended  
 " him. If he triumphed over Otho, let not  
 " that be imputed either to the skill of the ge-  
 " neral, nor the strength of his army. What  
 " conquered Otho was, his own precipitate de-  
 " spair: and Vitellius has taught us to regret  
 " him. He abuses insolently the victory he  
 " gained: he disperses the legions in distant  
 " countries, breaks and disarms the prætorian  
 " cohorts, as if his design was to lay a founda-  
 " tion for the war that will soon break out  
 " against

\* *Tempere ultra, & pollendam perdiditque rempub-  
 licam relinquere, sopor & ignavia videretur, etiam si tibi,  
 quam inhoneste, tam tata servitus esset. Abiit jam  
 & transiectum est illud tempus, quo posses videri concu-  
 pisse. Confugiendum est ad imperiam, Tac.*

A. R. 820. " against him. Whatever spirit and ardour  
A. C. 69. " his troops might once have, now degenerates  
" from day to day, and is enervated by wine,  
" by debauches of every kind, and by too faith-  
" ful an imitation of their prince. Shall his  
" situation be compared to your's? Judea, Sy-  
" ria, and Egypt, together offer you nine vi-  
" gorous legions, weakened by no battles, cor-  
" rupted by no licentiousness or discord; but  
" all brave soldiers, enured to the fatigues of  
" war, and victors over a stubborn and rebel-  
" lious nation. Add to them an equal number  
" of auxiliary troops, naval forces, kings allies  
" and friends, and above all, your own great  
" experience.

" As to me, I hope none will accuse me of  
" arrogance, if all I desire is not to be in a  
" lower station than Cæcina and Valens. Do  
" not however slight Mucian for a friend, be-  
" cause he is not your rival. I think myself  
" better than Vitellius, but not so good as  
" you. The triumphal purple has adorned  
" your name: you have two sons, one of  
" whom is already fit to reign, and in his first  
" campaigns has gained honour even with the  
" German armies. It would be quite absurd  
" in me not to give up the empire to him  
" whose son I should adopt were I myself em-  
" peror. The good or bad success of this en-  
" terprize cannot be equally shared between  
" us. If we conquer, I shall hold the rank  
" you may be pleased to allot me; but our  
" misfortunes, should we miscarry, would be  
" the same. Or rather let me bear the greatest  
" share of danger. Remain you here with

“ your legions, and let me go before and try  
 “ the fate of war and battle. A. R. 820.  
A. C. 69.

“ A better discipline \* now reigns among  
 “ the conquered than the conquerors. Indig-  
 “ nation, hatred, and thirst after revenge, now  
 “ animate the former to glorious deeds. The  
 “ latter are bastardised by the contemptuous  
 “ scorn and insolence with which prosperity  
 “ inspires them. The wounds of the victo-  
 “ rious party are at present scabbed over by  
 “ their good fortune; but not yet healed.  
 “ They are sores palliated by peace, which  
 “ war will soon burst open again. I may say  
 “ with truth, that I do not more confide in  
 “ your activity, good conduct, and prudent  
 “ circumspection, than I do in Vitellius’s bru-  
 “ tishness, ignorance, and cruelty.

“ After all, none can doubt but that our  
 “ cause must be better in war than in peace:  
 “ for to deliberate whether we shall revolt, is  
 “ in fact revolting.”

All that heard Mucian’s speech joined with  
 him, in pressing Vespasian more strongly than  
 ever to come to a resolution; and particularly  
 insisted on the presages which, said they, called  
 him to the empire. The motive they then  
 urged suited Vespasian’s way of thinking, for  
 he believed in every branch of divination, so

Vespasian  
is prevail-  
ed on to  
accept the  
empire.

His weak-  
ness in giv-  
ing credit  
to divina-  
tion.

much, Tac. Hist.  
ii. 78.

\* *Acriore hodie disciplina victi quam victores agunt. Hoc ira, odium, ultionis cupiditas ad virtutem accendit. Illi per fastidium & contumaciam hebesunt. Aperiet & recludet contexta & tumescuntia victricium partium vulnera bellum ipsum. Nec mihi major in tua vigilantia, parsimonia, sapientia, fiducia est, quam in Vitelli torpore, inselitia, & vitia. Sed et meliorem in bello quam in pace causam habemus. Nam qui deliberant, desciverunt. Tac.*

A. R. 820. much, that when emperor he kept publicly an  
 A. C. 69. astrologer called Seleucus, whom he consulted  
 about futurity. At the instant I am speaking  
 of, those pretended presages, some of which had  
 happened long before, occurred to him. He  
 thought \* them fulfilled in the unexpected  
 grandeur he had already attained, in enjoying  
 the ornaments of triumph, the consulship, and  
 the signal honour of having reduced Judea.  
 When in possession of all his glory, he inter-  
 preted them into a promise of the empire.

*Jos. de. B.  
 Jud. iii.  
 14.  
 Suet. & Dio.  
 Vespas.*

Josephus boasts of having foretold it him  
 whilst Nero was yet alive: and that fact is at-  
 tested by Suetonius and Dion Cassius. Was  
 the Jewish priest a deceiver, or himself deceiv-  
 ed, in that his absurd and sacrilegious interpre-  
 tation of the sacred prophecies? That might  
 be difficult, and is of no importance to deter-  
 mine. Tacitus says, that Vespasian likewise  
 consulted an old oracle on mount Carmel, to  
 which no temple, but only an altar, had been  
 built: a circumstance that seems to agree pretty  
 well with the high places so much talked of in  
 the scriptures, and where in the times of the  
 kings of Judah, sacrifices were offered up to the  
 true God, though contrary to the law by which  
 public worship was permitted in the temple  
 only. If there be any foundation for this con-  
 jecture, we must infer from thence, that idola-  
 trous customs were, in process of time, intro-  
 duced into the worship, originally established in  
 that place in honour of the God of Israel: for  
 Tacitus speaks of a priest called Basilides, who  
 con-

*Tac.*

\* Sed primo triumphalia & consulatus, & Judaicæ vic-  
 toriæ decus, implere fidem omnis videbantur. Ut hæc  
 adeptus est, portendi sibi imperium credebat. *Tac.*

consulted the entrails of victims, to be informed of what was to happen; a downright Pagan superstition. However that may be, the answer given by that priest, added greatly to Vespasian's expectations; and, full of those ideas, he at last yielded to the solicitations of those about him, and came to a resolution, though without declaring himself openly as yet. When Mucian and he parted, to return each to his province, the one to Antioch, and the other to Cæsaria, their resolutions were taken; and soon after they were put in execution.

Alexandria was the first place where Vespasian was acknowledged and proclaimed. On the first of July, Tiberius Alexander, at the head of his legions, swore allegiance to him, and that day was afterwards reckoned the first of Vespasian's reign, though his own army did not take the oaths till the third of that month. The troops were so impatient, that they did not wait for Titus's return from Syria, where he was gone to concert with Mucian how it were best to put their designs in execution. The soldiers had long been ready: but a proper time and place had not yet been agreed on, nor who was the most proper person to speak first and set them on, which is generally one of the most difficult parts in such enterprizes. The troops could not brook those delays. In the morning, a small number waited on Vespasian at his house, to salute him according to custom as their general, but saluted him emperor the moment they saw him: All the others immediately joined them, calling him Cæsar and Augustus, and giving him every title belonging to the supreme power. Thus

He is proclaimed by the legions of Egypt, Judea, and Syria; and acknowledged throughout all the East.

A. R. 820. was that grand affair transacted. From that  
 A. C. 69. moment not the least trace could be perceived  
 in Vespasian, of the timidity which had made  
 him hesitate so long, but he yielded to his for-  
 tune with a good grace. Nor did he, on the  
 other hand, \* shew the least pride or arrogance:  
 his new state made no alteration in his behavi-  
 our. The vast multitude that surrounded  
 him, being quieted and put in some order, he  
 harangued them in a plain military stile with-  
 out flattery or ostentation.

Mucian waited only for Vespasian's declar-  
 ing himself, to make the troops under his com-  
 mand take the oaths to him, which they did  
 with the utmost readiness and zeal. He after-  
 wards proceeded to Antioch, and going to the  
 theatre, where it was the custom of the Greek  
 towns for the people to hold their assemblies,  
 he harangued the inhabitants who flocked to-  
 gether in crowds, and heard him with trans-  
 ports of joy. Mucian † spoke Greek with  
 great ease and eloquence; and delivered him-  
 self with an air of dignity, which gave an addi-  
 tional weight to all he said. One circumstance  
 that he mentioned, made a great impression on  
 the people: he told them Vitellius's design was  
 to send the German legion into Syria, to re-  
 ward them for what they had done, by allot-  
 ting them a mild and quiet service in that rich  
 province; and that, on the other hand, the Sy-  
 rian legions were to be removed to Germany,  
 a rigorous climate, and inhabited by barbari-  
 ans,

\* In ipso nihil tumidum, arrogans, aut in rebus novis  
 novum fuit. Tac.

† Satis decorus etiam Græca facundia, omniumque quæ  
 diceret atque ageret arte quadam ostentator. Tac.

ans, with whom they would be forced to be at continual war. Such a change could not but greatly alarm the Syrian troops, nor were the inhabitants of that province less concerned. The legions had been used to have their departments fixed and allotted them, and generally settled for life in the provinces where they were quartered. By that means they formed connections with the inhabitants, out of friendship, for society, or by intermarriages: so that they thought themselves in a manner banished by being removed, and the people too were afraid of losing friends and relations when they went.

Vespasian was acknowledged emperor by all Syria, before the fifteenth of July, and that example was soon followed by the whole East. Soæmus, whom Nero had made king of Sophæna, declared for the new emperor, together with Antiochus king of Commagena, descended from the Seleucidæ, and the richest of all the kings tributaries to the Romans. The younger Agrippa, king of the Jews, receiving private intelligence from his friends, left Rome before Vitellius was informed of what was doing in the East, and offered his service to Vespasian. His sister Berenice was not less zealous: the prudence and judgment of that princess, were equal to her beauty; and she had not only made Titus love her, but had even pleased Vespasian by the magnificent presents she made him. All the provinces of Asia Minor, Pontus, Cappadocia, and the neighbouring countries as far as Armenia, followed the torrent. But as those countries were disarmed, they were rather an addition of credit and  
eclat,

A. B. 820. eclat, than of real strength to the party they  
A. C. 69. espoused.

A great  
council  
held at  
Beryta.  
Prepara-  
tives for  
war.

A great council was held at Beryta in Phœnicia, to consider of proper measures for the war. Vespasian and Mucian brought with them the chief officers of their armies with the flower of their troops: and that great number of horse and foot, together with the concourse of kings, who came in pomp to pay homage to the new emperor, formed a court, which already began to answer to the majesty of the supreme rank.

The first care was to order the troops to be levied, and old soldiers to be called back to their standards. Arsenal's were established in the chief cities, and gold and silver money ordered to be coined at Antioch. Intelligent and vigilant dictators were chosen for these operations, and Vespasian \* had an eye over them himself. He visited the places where they were at work by his orders, caused an exact account to be given him of every thing, commended and encouraged those who did their duty, and roused the negligent by his own example, chusing rather to wink at faults, than not take notice of the good qualities of those who served him. He rewarded such as he was well satisfied with, by giving them good employments, or making them senators. Most of them did honour to his choice, and turned out great men. But the best of princes cannot always guard against deception, and some of those

\* Ipse Vespasianus adire, hortari, bonos laude, segnes exemplo incitare scripsit quam coercere, vitia magis amittentium, quam virtutes dissimulans. Tac.



those, whom Vespasian promoted, proved to have no other merit than their riches.

A. R. 820.  
A. C. 69.

It was a settled custom for new emperors to give a sum of money to the troops. Vespasian did so: but he engaged to give for a civil war, no more than his predecessors had given in times of peace. He behaved \* with great firmness towards the soldiers, who became better troops by not being flattered. There was reason to fear, that by sending the legions to make war in Italy, the Parthians and Armenians might take advantage of that opportunity, to molest the provinces bordering on the Euphrates. Ambassadors were sent to the kings of those two nations to keep them quiet. The war in Judea was likewise not to be neglected. Titus was charged with that. As to Vespasian, it was agreed he should go to Alexandria, in order, if necessary, to distress Italy by want of corn, their chief supply of which the Romans received from Egypt. A part † of the troops under Mucian's command, with the name of Vespasian, and their confidence in the decrees of fate, by which whatever was ordained must be brought to pass, were thought sufficient against Vitellius. Letters were sent to all the armies of the empire and their commanders, notifying the election of the new emperor, and inviting them to confirm it; and measures were likewise taken to gain the prætorian broke by

Vitellius

\* *Egregie firmus adversus militarem largitionem, eoque exercitu meliore. Tac.*

† *Sufficere videbantur adversus Vitellium pars copiarum, & dux Mucianus, & Vespasianii nomen, ac nihil arduum satis. Tac.*

A. R. 820. Vitellius, by giving them hopes of being again  
A. C. 69. received into the service.

Departure  
of Mucian.  
and his  
plan of  
war.

Mucian made all the haste he could to set out with some light troops, freed from all incumbrance of baggage. He concerted his march so as to avoid \* a slowness that might have been imputed to fear; and too great a diligence, that fame might have time to magnify and encrease his strength. As the forces he carried with him were but few, too near a view would have been disadvantageous to them. The sixth legion and several detachments, composing together a body of thirteen thousand men, followed at some distance: and in order to transport those troops to Europe, Mucian had directed the fleet of Pontus to be ready in the port of Byzantium. His first design seems to have been to gain Mæsia, the legions of which province he very justly thought were well affected to Vespasian. But that was a tedious way to Italy; and he was in some doubt whether he should not do better to march all his land forces directly to Dyrrachium in Epirus, from whence the passage to Italy is very short; and by which means he would be able to keep Brindium and Tarentum in awe on one side, whilst on the other, his fleet extending itself in the Ionian sea, would cover Greece and Asia, and at the same time be a check on Vitellius, by making him apprehend attacks on Italy from several quarters at once.

The

\* Non lento itinere, ne cunctari videretur; neque tamen properans, gliscere famam ipso spatio sinebat, gnarus modicas vires sibi, & majora credi de absentibus. Tac.

The preparations for this enterprize, put all the provinces beyond sea in motion. They were obliged to furnish arms, ships, and soldiers; but nothing harrassed them so much as the raising of money. Mucian was perpetually saying, that money was the sinew of civil war, and he acted accordingly, setting no bounds to his power, and behaving more like the emperor's associate, than his minister and general. He made no scruple to commit injustice: informers were well received and encouraged by him: he paid no regard to the truth of facts, nor innocence of persons, the rich were always guilty. The necessity\* of war was a kind of excuse for these intolerable vexations: but the effect of them subsisted long after the peace. Vespasian, the beginning of his reign, lent ear to all just remonstrances; but afterwards, spoilt, says Tacitus, by his good fortune, and the bad lessons of politicians, with whom the prince's interest is the supreme law, injustice grew familiar to him, and was even authorized. So deplorable is the condition of sovereigns, who, though sincerely fond of virtue, find it very difficult to practice on account of those that are about them. Mucian contributed out of his own money too, towards the expence of the war, but he well knew how to repay himself with usurious interest. Several others imitated his generosity, but few

2 had

\* *Quæ gravia atque intoleranda, sed necessitate armorum excusata, etiam in pace mansere. ipso Vespasiano, inter imperii, ad obtinendas iniquitate, haud perinde obstinato: donec, indulgentia fortunæ, & pravis magistris didicit aususque est. Tac.*

A. B. 820. had the same means of getting back what A. C. 69. they advanced.

The event of all these preparations was singular enough. They were of no use towards the decision of the war which was ended before Mucian had time to draw near Italy.

All the legions of Illyria declare for Vespasian. Character of Antonius Primus. *Suet. Vit. 18. Tac. Hist. 11. 85.*

The person to whom Vespasian was chiefly indebted for so speedy and happy a success, was Antonius Primus, a native of Toulouse, and probably of Gaulish extraction, his surname in his infancy having been *Becco* or *Bee*, a Celtic word, still retained in the French language. His character was an odd composition of good and bad. Branded under Nero by sentence of a court of justice; and condemned for forgery, he recovered, as many others not more deserving than himself did, the rank of senator, by means of the revolution which placed Galba on the imperial throne: and that emperor gave him the command of the seventh legion quartered in Pannonia. He offered his service to Otho, who neither employed, nor took any notice of him. When \* Vitellius's affairs began to wear a bad aspect, Primus was one of the first that declared for Vespasian, who acquired in him a brave officer, an eloquent man, and one who knew how to manage and turn the minds of others as he pleased. It must be owned he often made a bad use of those talents, stirring up discords and seditions, calumniating, doing violence to others,

\* *Labantibus Vitellii rebus, Vespasianum secutus, grande momentum addidit, strenuus manu, sermone promptus, ferendæ in alios invidiæ artifex, discordiis & seditionibus potens, raptor, largitor, pace pessimus, bello non spernendus. Tac.*

others, and being dangerously generous: he A. R. 820.  
was a bad citizen in peace, but a most va- A. C. 69.  
luable warrior.

He could not wish a fairer opportunity to satisfy his ambition and make his fortune, than what was offered by the rebellion in favour of Vespasian, already acknowledged and proclaimed by the three legions in Mæsia: for they were the first that declared for Vespasian in the west. One of them arriving in Syria, as I have said, towards the end of Nero's reign, gave the two others a great idea of Vespasian's merit: besides which, their attachment to Otho, in whose cause they had first been engaged, disposed them the more readily to favour Vitellius's enemy. Some artful men took care to improve those sentiments, by handing about a letter, true or false, from Otho to Vespasian, desiring him to come and succour the republic, and revenge his wrongs. In short, they had offended Vitellius; for, learning Otho's defeat whilst they were marching to his assistance, they used those that brought them the news, very ill, tore the colours on which Vitellius's name was inscribed, and plundered and divided among them the money of the military chest. Those were crimes with regard to Vitellius, but might be a means of recommending them to Vespasian. For these reasons, they espoused his cause with such warmth, that they endeavoured to bring over the legions of Pannonia too, making use to that end, not only of invitations, but likewise menaces. Antonius Primus backed the desires of the Mæsiæ army with all his might, and succeeded with so much the less difficulty

A. R. 820. difficulty as he had to deal with troops who  
A. C. 69. having been at the battle of Bedriac, had not yet forgiven Vitellius their defeat. The Mæsiæ and Pannonian armies joining together, obliged the Dalmatian to do the same, by which means all Illyria was on Vespasian's side.

It is very remarkable that neither of these three armies, was influenced by its general in this new choice. Aponius Saturninus, who commanded the Mæsiæ troops, far from favouring their insurrection, sent word to Rome of the desertion of the third legion. But his zeal for Vitellius, not being very great, when he saw it was out of his power to govern his soldiers, he joined them himself, and took advantage of that opportunity to satisfy his own private animosities, under pretence of serving the common cause. He hated Tertius Julianus, an ancient prætor, who had the command of a legion, and sent a centurion to kill him, as being too strongly attached to Vitellius. Julianus being informed of the danger he was in, crossed over mount Hæmus which divides Mæsiæ from Thrace. From thence he set out, as if with a design to go to Vespasian: but taking care not to expose himself to new dangers, he waited the event of things, and according to the intelligence he received, either hastened or slackened his march, by which means he had no concern at all in the civil war.

The commanders of the Pannonian and Dalmatian armies were T. Ampius Flavianus, and Poppæus Silvanus, rich old men, unfit to make a figure in those disturbances. But  
Pannonia

Pannonia \* had an intendant who acted a great part. Cornelius Fuscus, for that was his name, was a young man of a noble family, and full of heat and fire, though he had some years before resigned the dignity of senator, out of a sudden desire to live private and retired: but that proved only a momentary fancy; Fuscus was cut out for action, and the disturbances that preceded Nero's fall, rousing him from his lethargy, he distinguished himself in Galba's cause, and was made intendant of Pannonia. There he espoused Vespasian's interest, and became one of the chief promoters of the war, liking † danger for the sake of danger, much more than for the reward he might expect from it, and preferring new hopes attended with hazard and uncertainty, to a fortune already fixed and established. Joining with Antonius Primus, they endeavoured in concert to improve and stir up every seed of discord, and uneasiness in whatever province it was to be found. They wrote to the fourteenth legion in Britain, and to the first in Spain, because both of them had held out for Otho against Vitellius. They sent letters to every part of Gaul, and in a moment, things were ready for a general revolution, the

\* Tacitus leaves us to guess whether it was Pannonia or Dalmatia that Fuscus was intendant of, or whether his commission extended to both those provinces. This last supposition does not seem probable. Being under a necessity of chusing one or the other, I have preferred Pannonia, because the army of the province marched with Fuscus, whereas the Dalmatians did not stir till long after.

† Non tam premiis periculorum, quem ipsis periculis letus, pro certis & olim partis nova, ambiguo, antipitia malebat. *Tac.*

A. R. 820. the Illyrian armies being fully and openly bent  
 A. C. 69. on war, and the others ready to follow their  
 example.

*Vitellius's first motions weak and languid.*  
*Tac. Hist.*  
 11. 73. Nothing less could have awaked Vitellius from his lethargy: it was the situation the most natural of any to his indolent soul: but it is not to be conceived with what haughty security, and prodigious additional indolence he was filled, at hearing that all the East had sworn fidelity to him; for till then the name of Vespasian, who it was strongly reported would be made emperor, had given Vitellius some uneasiness. When he thought he had nothing more to fear from that quarter, he and his army knew no longer any bounds, but gave themselves up to all manner of cruelty, rapine, and tyranny.

*Tac. Hist.*  
 11. 69. The news of the revolt of the third legion in Mæsia, was what first began to rouse Vitellius, and make him sensible he had formed a wrong judgment of Vespasian. However he was not much alarmed at it. Aponius Saturninus, from whom that intelligence came, had not represented the danger so great as it really was, and the flatteries of the courtiers made it still less. They said it was only a seditious insurrection of a single legion, and that all the other armies would remain faithful. Vitellius talked in the same style when he acquainted the soldiers with it, complaining of the inconsiderate rashness of the prætorians lately broke, who took a pleasure in spreading false reports. He assured them there was no danger of a civil war, taking particular care not to mention Vespasian, and distributed soldiers in every part of the city.



to prevent people from getting together to talk of news and politics: useless and even hurtful precautions, which served only to give greater credit to the reports he wanted to stifle.

He sent orders however, to Germany, Britain, and Spain, for troops to come to him: but they were couched in a soft and almost indifferent style, far from insisting on a strong and speedy assistance; and they to whom those orders were directed, executed them with the same remissness and indifference. In Germany, Hordeonius Flaccus, already uneasy at the revolt of the Batavians, of which we shall have occasion to speak more fully hereafter, was afraid of having soon a considerable war to carry on. Vectius Bolanus could not expect the Britons, ever uneasy, and enemies to the yoke, would remain quiet; nor were either of those commanders ever strongly attached to Vitellius's party. Spain was without a head, Cluvius Rufus, being, as I have said, detained at court; and the particular commanders of the three legions, each equal to the other in authority, and who, if Vitellius's affairs had been in a flourishing situation, would have strove who should shew the greatest submission and obedience, were in no hurry to share his dangers and ill fortune. Africa alone stirred for him, because Vitellius had left a good character behind him there, whereas Vespasian was not esteemed by them. But Valerius Festus, who commanded in that province, did not back the zeal of the people and soldiers, seeming rather to waver and wait the event.

A. R. 820. By this means Vitellius was badly served  
 A. C. 69. every where: and besides that, laboured under  
 the disadvantage of having very imperfect intelligence of his adversaries designs and preparatives; whilst his own were publicly known to all. He was too negligent to make exact enquiries; whilst Vespasian's emissaries in the West worked privately, and what by their own address, and the fidelity of their friends, remained in general concealed: a few of them only were discovered and taken in Rhætia and Gaul, and sent to Vitellius who put them to death. As to the East, it was difficult to receive news from thence, either over land, because the passes of the Pannonian \* Alps were guarded by the Illyrian soldiers; or by sea, on account of the † Etesian winds which then blew, and prevented ships sailing from Syria and Egypt towards Rome and Italy. At last, however, the danger of a sudden irruption, which the Illyrian legions seemed to threaten, and the bad accounts received from all hands, forced Vitellius to order Cæcina and Valens to prepare to take the field. Cæcina set out first. Valens was but just recovering from a fit of sickness, which kept him some time longer in Rome. As to Vitellius, he continued his pleasures and diversions as usual, and gave at that very time, games, in which he intended to bring on the stage, and the infamous Sporus, who, at last grew tired of the course of infamy, he had gone through so many years, and killed himself, if we may credit Dion Cassius.

The

He at last makes the German legions take the field.

\* That part of the Alps nearest to the Adriatic sea.  
 † Winds which constantly blow Northwest, about the time of the summer solstice.

The German armies were so altered by their abode \* in Rome, that they were not to be known again when they left it. Their strength of body and courage were quite wasted: their march was slow and lazy, their ranks thin, their arms in bad order, and their horses quite enervated and unfit for service. The soldier complained of the sun, the dust, and change of weather, and was grown as disobedient and seditious, as he was unable to bear the least fatigue. The general too, contributed to spoil that army, already so fallen from its first glory. Cæcina, who had always made it his study to please the troops, by commanding them in a weak and feeble manner, was of late grown still more languid and indolent: either from the natural effect of the luxury and pleasures to which he had given himself up, or because he had reasons for being so, and even then meditated a perfidy, in consequence of which, he thought proper to weaken the troops under his command.

His fidelity was thought to have been got the better of, by Flavius Sabinus, prefect of Rome, and brother to Vespasian, who became security for performance of covenants; and Rubrius Gallus was the person suspected of negotiating the affair. The more effectually to bring him over, they took advantage of the jealousy between him and Valens, telling him, that as he could not equal his rival's credit

A. R. 820.  
A. C. 69.

Cæcina  
takes mea-  
sures to be-  
tray Vitel-  
lius.

\* *Longe alia proficiscentis ex urbe Germanici exercitus species. Non vigor corporibus, non ardor animis, lentum & rarum agmen, fluxa arma, segnes equi: impatiens solis, pulveris, tempestatum, quantumque hebes ad sustinendum laborem miles, tanto ad discordias promptior.* Tac.

A. R. 820. dit with Vitellius, his best way was to found  
 A. C. 69. his fortune on the favour of the new prince.

What seems certain is, that Cæcina had already formed his plan of treason when he left Rome; though he still concealed it, and when he took leave of Vitellius, received the kiss and all possible marks of regard and esteem.

He sent a detachment of his horse to secure the important post of Cremona. His own troops and Valen's marched with him. The latter wrote to the army he had before commanded to wait for him where he and his colleague had agreed. But Cæcina pretended those measures were altered, as being contrary to the good of the service, which required them to march against the enemy with all their forces. He was on the spot, and his authority prevailed. The army divided according to his order, into two bodies, one of which went to Cremona and the other to Hostilia\*.

For his part, he went to Ravenna, under pretence of visiting the fleet there, and encouraging the men to do their duty: but his true reason was, to concert measures with Lucilius Bassus, prefect of the Ravenna and Misænum fleets. Though Bassus had received that double command from Vitellius, yet dissatisfied at not being made prætorian prefect, his unjust resentment sought revenge in a shameful perfidy. They went to Padua to be alone and more at liberty to concert their measures. Tacitus † does not say which of the two was the

\* Ostiglia in the Mantuan territories on the Po.

† Nec sciri potest, traxeritne Cæcinam, an (quod evenit inter malos, ut & similes sint) eadem illos pravitas populerit. Tac.

the seducer : but as bad men are nearly akin, A. R. 820. he thinks they might both be equally disposed A. C. 69. to treason. Those who wrote the history of this war, during the reigns of Vespasian and his children, ascribed honourable motives to those two traitors, love of the public welfare, and a desire to see a happy peace succeed the horrors of civil wars. A language dictated by flattery. Their own interest was the principal on which they acted. They had already betrayed Galba ; and a second treason could be no difficult thing to such grovelling souls as theirs. Fearing to be eclipsed by the ascendant others might gain over Vitellius, they resolved to ruin him. Accordingly Cæcina returning to his army, made use of every artifice he could invent, to wean the hearts of the centurions and soldiers from Vitellius, to whom their fidelity and attachment was strongly rooted. Bassus found less difficulty to prevail on his marines who had but lately fought for Otho.

## SECT. II.

The heads of Vitellius's party in Illyria hold a council about the plan of war most proper for them to follow. Speech of Antonius Primus, who proposes entering Italy directly. His advice is followed. He executes himself what he had advised. His first exploits. Cæcina purposely misses an opportunity of crushing Antonius Primus. The two consuls who gave umbrage to Antonius Primus, removed by two seditions. Bassus, who commanded the Ravenna fleet for Vitellius, brings it over to Vespasian. Cæcina's treason. His army puts him in irons. Primus goes to attack Vitellius's two legions in Cremona. They march out of the city. Battle in which they are defeated. The conquerors want to attack Cremona for the sake of plunder. They are prevented by the arrival of the six legions, which Cæcina had in vain attempted to debauch. Battle by night in which they are defeated. A father killed by his son. The camp that surrounded Cremona taken. The conquerors prepare to attack the town. It surrenders. The conquered legions evacuate the place. Sack of Cremona. The city rebuilt. Primus's first cares after his victory. Vitellius's stupid indolence. Flattery of the senators. A Consul for a day. Vitellius causes Junius Blæsus to be poisoned. Valens's slowness and dissolute conduct. He misses an opportunity to join the army. Valens's bold design. He is taken prisoner. Vespasian is acknowledged by a great part of Italy, and all the western provinces. Inconsistency of Primus's conduct after the battle of Cremona. He advances towards

wards Rome. A soldier demands a reward for killing his brother. Quarrels between Primus and Mucian. Vitellius endeavours to stifle the news of the battle of Cremona. Extraordinary resolution of a centurion. He sends troops to secure the passes of the Apennine mountains. Remaining in Rome, he is taken up with other thoughts than war. He goes to his camp, but soon returns to Rome. The Misenum fleet declares for Vespasian. Terracina taken possession of by the soldiers of the fleet and their associates. Momentary zeal of the city of Rome in favour of Vitellius. The cohorts opposed against Primus are forced to submit. Valens is killed at Urbino, by order of the conquerors. Vitellius disposed to abdicate. He settles the conditions with Flavius Sabinus. Vain remonstrances made by Vitellius's most zealous partizans. Vitellius abdicates. The people and soldiers oppose it, and force him to return to the palace. Battle in which Sabinus is worsted. He retires to the capitol. The capitol besieged and taken by Vitellius's soldiers. The temple of Jupiter burnt. Domitian escapes the enemy. Death of Sabinus. His character. The town of Terracina surprized and burnt by L. Vitellius. The victorious army did not make haste enough to Rome. Causes of the delay. On the news of the capitol's being besieged, the army marches forward. Vitellius's deputation rejected. The city taken. Strange mixture of licentious dissensions and cruelty. The praetorian camp forced. Vitellius's tragical death. Death of his brother and son. Vespasian marries off his daughter

A. R. 820. *ter. The freeman Asiaticus suffers the death*  
 A. C. 69. *ordained for slaves.*

The heads  
 of Vitel-  
 lius's party  
 in Illyria,  
 hold a  
 council  
 about the  
 plan of war  
 most pro-  
 per for  
 them to  
 follow.  
*Tac. Hist.*  
 III. 1—5.

**I**N Vespasian's party all remained true, and fortune answered their desires. The chief officers of the Pannonian troops met, to hold a council at Petau on the Drave, where the thirteenth legion had its winter quarters, being returned back to its provinces after having finished the amphitheatres of Cremona and Bologna before mentioned, Tacitus calls three of those officers, T. Ampius Flavianus, Antonius Primus, and Cornelius Fuscus.

Ampius who had been consul, and was commander in chief of the Pannonian legions, was most eminent in dignity, but least in credit of the three. The soldiers distrusted him because he was allied to Vitellius, and suspected him of wanting to betray the party he pretended to serve. And in fact the conduct of that old man, at once timid and ambitious, gave room to form that judgment. When the legions first began to stir, he was terrified and fled from Italy: but in hopes of gaining honour and distinction, was afterwards prevailed on to return to his post by Cornelius Fuscus, who indeed did not expect to find any great resource in his talents, but very properly judged, that the name of a man of consular dignity, would be a sanction to an infant party.

I have already described Antonius Primus. He had gained the confidence of the troops by his decisive manners, and an audaciousness that set all at defiance. When Vespasian's letters were read to the Pannonian army, most of the  
 officers



officers were cautious what they said: they weighed their words, and expressed themselves ambiguously, fluctuating between the two parties, and studying subterfuges to answer all events. Primus's declaration was clear and positive; and the soldiers were delighted to find he did not separate his interest from theirs, but embarked with them, and prepared to share their disgraces, or the glory of success. He behaved with the same haughtiness on all occasions. And by that means, though no more than commander of a legion, acquired a more than consular authority. The next to him in point of esteem was the intendant Cornelius Fuscus, who, keeping no measures with Vitellius, but perpetually lashing him severely, left himself no room for hopes, in case their enterprize should miscarry.

The three I have been speaking of, being assembled, held, as I said, a council with several others, to deliberate on the plan of war it was most proper for them to follow. Two methods might have been taken: the one, to guard closely all the passages of the Pannonian Alps till the troops they expected from the East should arrive: the other, to go on, seek the enemy, and dispute the possession of Italy. Those who were for temporizing, laid a great stress on the strength and reputation of the German legions, to which Vitellius had added the flower of the British. They represented, "That as to them, they could not depend on equalling the number, \* nor even courage

\* *Ipsis nec numerum parem pulcrarum nuper legionum; & quanquam ferociter loquerentur, minorem esse apud victos animum. Tac.*

A. R. 820. " of their adversaries. That their legions, but  
 A. C. 69. " lately beaten, talked indeed of great things ;  
 " but that the conquered are always fearful in  
 " the presence of their conquerors. Whereas,  
 " by making a rampart of the Alps, Mucian  
 " would have time to come up with a power-  
 " ful reinforcement ; whilst Vespasian, by re-  
 " maining behind, had infinite resources in the  
 " sea, the fleets, and the affluence of the richest  
 " provinces of the empire, which would enable  
 " him to double his forces, and, as it were,  
 " be ready for a second war. In a word, that  
 " great advantages might be gained, but no  
 " dangers run, by a prudent deliberation."

Speech of  
 Antonius  
 Primus,  
 who pro-  
 posed en-  
 tering Ita-  
 ly directly.

Antonius Primus was too ardent to approve  
 a counsel, which to him seemed the effect of  
 fear ; and therefore undertook to prove, that  
 diligence and activity could not but be of ser-  
 vice to them, and hurtful to Vitellius. "Vic-  
 tory, said he, has inspired those we are go-  
 ing to attack, less with a noble courage than  
 a weak security : for they have not been  
 kept within a camp, nor subject to military  
 exercises. Used \* to idleness in every town  
 of Italy where they have been, formidable  
 to none but their hosts, the more their man-  
 ners were barbarous and savage before, the  
 more they plunged themselves into pleasures,  
 till then unknown to them. The circus,  
 theatres, and other diversions of the city  
 have enervated, and sickness has weakened  
 them. But if you give them time, war will  
 recover their strength, and they will receive  
 " succours

\* Per omnia Italiæ municipia desides, tantum hospitibus metuendos, quanto ferocius ante se egerint, tanto cupidius insolitas voluptates hausisse Tac

" succours from every quarter. Germany is A.R. 820.  
 " not far distant; Britain is separated but by A. C. 69.  
 " a narrow arm of the sea; the Gauls and  
 " Spain will supply them with men, horses  
 " and money: Italy itself, and the riches of  
 " Rome, are great advantages to them: and if  
 " they should want to come to us, they have  
 " two fleets at their command, and the Illyrian  
 " sea open to them. Of what use will the bar-  
 " riers of our mountains be to us then? What  
 " shall we have gained by deferring the war  
 " from year to year? From whence shall we  
 " in the mean time receive money and provi-  
 " sions? If we reckon the number of soldiers  
 " rather than of legions, the greater strength  
 " is on our side, and ours are less disorderly  
 " and licentious: even the shame of having  
 " been defeated, has made us more attentive,  
 " and observe a stricter discipline. As to our  
 " cavalry, that was not conquered even in the  
 " unfortunate day of Bedriac, but had, even  
 " though our troops were worsted, the glory  
 " of breaking the enemy. If two regiments  
 " of horse could put Vitellius's army in con-  
 " fusion, we now have sixteen: and what may  
 " we not expect from their valour? Our ad-  
 " versaries, who have quite forgot the art of  
 " war, will not be able to bear their shock,  
 " but, surrounded by them, as by an immense  
 " cloud, will, men and horses, be instantly  
 " crushed to death. I myself \* will, if per-  
 " mitted,

2

\* Nisi quis retinet, idem suavor, auctorque consilii ero.  
 Vos, quibus fortuna in integro est, legiones continete:  
 mihi expeditæ cohortes sufficient. Jam reseratam Italiam,  
 impulsas Vitellii res audietis. Juvabit sequi, & vestigiis  
 vincentis insistere. *Tas.*

A. R. 820.<sup>a</sup> "mitted, execute what I now advise. Do you,  
 A. C. 69.<sup>a</sup> "who think you have stronger reasons to take  
 "care of yourselves, remain here with the le-  
 "gions: all I want is a few cohorts, and not  
 "to be troubled with any baggage. You shall  
 "soon hear the passages into Italy are open,  
 "and that Vitellius trembles on his throne. It  
 "will be easy for you to follow me, and march  
 "in the victorious steps of one, who will pre-  
 "pare the way for you."

His advice  
 is followed.

Whilst Primus was speaking thus, his eyes darted fire, and he raised his voice in order to be heard at a distance; for the centurions and several soldiers had got into the council chamber. So bold and vehement a speech took effect. Even those who most valued themselves on prudence and circumspection, could not but yield to it. The soldiers in general, seized with a kind of enthusiasm, praised nothing but Primus, and looked on him with admiration, as the only man of courage, and the only person fit for command: they taxed all others with cowardice, and judged them deserving of the highest contempt.

A resolution being taken to carry the war into Italy, letters were dispatched to Aponius Saturninus to hasten with the Masian legions. That the provinces which were going to be left unprovided with troops, might not be exposed to the incursions of barbarians, the Roman generals prevailed on the princes of the Jazygan Sarmatians to go with them to the war, that their subjects, being without a chief, might not be in a condition to undertake any enterprize. Those princes offered to carry with them some troops of cavalry, for that  
 nation

nation never fought but on horseback. How-  
 ever it was thought most prudent not to rely  
 so far on them, but to have them alone and  
 without attendants, rather as hostages than as  
 allies. On the contrary, the succours brought  
 by Sido and Italicus, kings of the Suevi, were  
 gladly received, for they had given proofs of  
 an unshaken fidelity, and their nation was  
 thought more capable of real attachment. Some  
 disturbance was likewise feared from Rhætia,  
 the intendant of which province Porcius Septi-  
 mius, was a staunch and incorruptible friend  
 to Vitellius. Sextilius Felix was opposed to  
 him, with orders to guard the river Inn with a  
 regiment of horse, eight cohorts, and what  
 troops had been raised in Noricum. By that  
 means every thing was kept quiet in those  
 parts, whilst the fate of the two contending  
 parties was to be decided in Italy.

Antonius Primus kept his word, and shewed  
 in action the same boldness that he had done  
 in council. He formed in haste a small body  
 of horse and foot, with which he immediately  
 set out. He took a companion like himself,  
 a brave warrior, but not the most strictly vir-  
 tuous of men. Arrius Varus, for that was  
 the name of the officer we are speaking of, had  
 served with distinction under Corbulo in the  
 Armenian wars. It is assured that he had en-  
 deavoured to prejudice Nero against his gen-  
 eral, in hopes of advancing himself, by falsely  
 slandering and aspersing his character; and that  
 he was indebted \* to that villanous trick for  
 the rank of first captain of a legion: a fine  
 beginning

He ex-  
 cutes him?  
 self what  
 he had ad-  
 vised.  
 His first  
 exploits.  
*Tac. Hist.*  
 III. 6.

\* *Infamī gratia primum pilum adeptus, licta ad pres-  
 ens male parva, mox in perniciosum vertere. Tac.*

A. R. 820. beginning of fortune, as he thought, but which A. C. 69. served only to bring ruin upon him. He was now triumphant, and shared with Antonius Primus the glory of Vespasian's party's first success in Italy.

• Oderzo.  
† Tour  
d'Altino.  
‡ Este.

The first thing they did was to take Aquilæa; from whence advancing forward, they were received in the cities of Opitergium\*, Altinum†, Padua, and Ateste‡. At this last place they learnt, that three cohorts and a regiment of horse held for Vitellius the place then called *Forum Allieni*, now Ferrara; and that having thrown a bridge there over the Po, they kept but a bad look out. The opportunity seemed favourable to attack them. Primus and Varus surprized them at break of day, and finding most of them unarmed, easily got the better. They had ordered no blood to be shed, except of such as should make an obstinate resistance, and to force the others by terror to change sides. In fact, some submitted at once, but the greater number breaking down the bridge prevented the conquerors pursuing them.

This fortunate beginning, gave a reputation to Primus's arms, who at the same time received a strong reinforcement by the arrival of two legions from Pannonia at Padua. He was willing likewise to do honour to the cause he defended, by replacing, in all the cities of which he became master, the statues of Galba, a prince incapable of governing, as we have seen, but whose name was become an object of veneration when compared with Otho and Vitellius

The

The next thing considered was, where to form their magazine of arms, and fix the center of the war. Verona was pitched upon as a powerful colony, the conquest of which would be of great advantage in itself; and, being surrounded by extensive plains, seemed particularly to suit an army superior to their enemies in horse. The work was immediately set about, and by the way Vicenza was taken; a place of small importance, but which being the town where Cæcina was born, was on that account remarkable at that time, and a kind of trophy gained over the general of the adverse party. Verona did not cost Primus much more trouble, though it was of far greater consequence. Besides the advantages I have already mentioned, that place was by its situation one of the keys of Italy, and when in possession of Vespasian's troops, cut off all communication between Cæcina and Rætia and Germany.

All this was done without Vespasian's even knowing of it, and indeed contrary to his intentions: for he had ordered the Illyrian legions to stay at Aquilæa till Mucian joined them. He even entered into a detail of the reasons why he gave those orders; telling them, that as he was master of the richest provinces, and especially Egypt, the granary of Italy, he hoped to end the war without bloodshed, and to force Vitellius's legions to submit for want of money and provisions. Mucian backed him, sending letter after letter to the same purport. He did not cease representing the beauty of a victory gained without bloodshed; concealing under that his true motives, which were no other than jealousy, and a desire to

engros.

A. R. 820. engross the whole honour of the war. But  
 A. C. 69. orders and councils from so great a distance  
 always came too late, and did not arrive till  
 things were done.

Cæcina  
 purposely  
 misses an  
 opportunity  
 of  
 crushing  
 Antonius  
 Primus.

Primus being master of Verona, attacked  
 the enemies advanced guard; the skirmish was  
 but slight, and no advantage gained on either  
 side. Cæcina pitched his camp between Osti-  
 lia, and the marches of Tartaro, where he  
 entrenched himself. The post was a good one;  
 his rear being covered by the river, and his  
 flanks by the marches. If Cæcina had intended  
 to serve his emperor faithfully, he might, by  
 collecting together all Vitellius's troops, have  
 crushed the two legions in which Primus's  
 whole strength then consisted, and have forced  
 them to abandon their conquests by a shameful  
 flight, and leave Italy: but by \* studying de-  
 lay he gave the enemy the greatest advantages  
 that can be given in war, time and opportu-  
 nity, amusing himself with writing letters of  
 reproach to those whom he might have driven  
 away by force, till he had agreed on the terms  
 on which he was to betray his trust. In the  
 mean time Primus received a fresh reinforce-  
 ment. Aponius Saturninus governor of Mæ-  
 sia, brought him a legion commanded by the  
 tribune Vipstanius Messala, an officer † of dis-  
 tinguished birth and great personal merit,  
 who following the example of the old Romans,  
 joined

\* Cæcina per varias moras, prima hostibus prodidit tem-  
 pera belli, dum quos armis pellere promptum erat, epis-  
 tolis increpat, donec per nuntios pacta perfidie firmaret.  
*Tac.*

† Claris majoribus, egregius ipse, & qui solus ad id bel-  
 lum artes bonas attulisset. *Tac.*



joined a knowledge of the liberal arts to the profession of arms, and was the only officer in this war whose views were honest and upright.

Notwithstanding this reinforcement, Primus was still greatly inferior to Cæcina. But the latter, instead of taking advantage of the enemy's weakness to give them battle, wrote them a letter, in which he taxed them with being rash and inconsiderate, in attempting to revive a party already conquered. He boasted of the formidable strength of the German army, speaking modestly and but little of Vitellius, and making use of no one disrespectful expression towards Vespasian. In short, his letter contained nothing that could neither corrupt or intimidate the enemy.

The chiefs of the adverse party answered in a very different style. They took no notice of the article relating to the defeat of their legions when they fought for Otho: but expressed a noble confidence in the justice of their cause, and a full assurance of success: they spoke of Vespasian in pompous terms, called Vitellius an enemy, and concluded with trying the fidelity of the officers, to whom they promised the same ranks they enjoyed under Vitellius, and pretty plainly invited Cæcina to join them. Cæcina's letter and their answer were read to a general assembly of the legions, and proved an additional encouragement to the troops, whose hearts were elated when they compared Cæcina's low and humble style with the haughty confident language of their own leaders. They no longer doubted being victorious. Two other legions joining them soon after, they thought they might venture to shew their

A. R. 829.  
A. C. 69.  
*Anct. de  
Causis  
Corr. eleg.  
Tac. Hist.  
III. 9.*

A. R. 820. their strength, and accordingly marching out  
 A. C. 69. of Verona, formed their camp under the walls  
 of that city.

The two  
 consuls  
 who gave  
 umbrage  
 to Anto-  
 nius Pri-  
 mus, re-  
 moved by  
 two sedi-  
 tions.

The pre-eminence in this army belonged of right to Ampius Flavianus, and Aponius Saturninus, both of them being of consular rank: so that though Antonius Primus had the real command, yet he had not the honour of it, and might be cramped in the exertion of his power by an indispensable deference, at least in appearance, for those who by their titles and dignities were superior to him. Two seditions, which closely followed each other, delivered him from both those objects of his jealousy: and if he who reaps the fruit of a crime may be thought the author of it, it would be difficult not to believe Primus the secret promoter and instigator of the insurrection, though he omitted nothing to prevent its going to extremes.

Flavianus was attacked first. On a false alarm, which made a few distant squadrons of their allies horse be taken for a body of enemies, one of the Pannonian legions ran to arms, accused Flavianus of treason, and demanded his death. There was no manner of proof nor indication of treachery, but the seditious cried out, it was not fit to let live a man related to Vitellius, a traitor to Otho, and unjust to the soldiers, at whose expence he enriched himself. No prayers or entreaties could avail. In vain did Flavianus, prostrate on the earth, hold out his suppliant hands towards them, rend his garments, and shed tears of anguish. The soldiers, bent on his destruction, took even those marks of fear, for proof of his remorse of conscience.

Aponius

Aponius Saturninus ran to his colleague's assistance; but a menacing murmur and turbulent clamour stopt his mouth the moment he attempted to speak. Primus was the only one the soldiers were disposed to hear. Finding their rage run high, and that they were just ready to proceed from words to deeds, having their hands already on their swords, he ordered Flavianus to be seized and put in irons. The seditious, seeing through the artifice, and dispersing the guards that surrounded the tribunal, prepared to satisfy their revenge themselves. Primus did not desire Flavianus's death, for that would have rendered his own ambition too odious. He ran towards the furious soldiers, and presenting his neck, and drawing his sword, protested he would die either by their hands or his own: and wherever he saw any one he knew, who had distinguished himself by his bravery, and merited military rewards, he called him by his name, and begged he would join him. Then turning towards the eagles, and the images of the gods supposed to preside over war, he beseeched them to send such fury and fatal discord to their enemies, but to avert it from them. The rage of the troops began at last to subside, and night coming on, each retired to his tent. Flavianus set out that very night to go to Vespasian, from whom he received letters on the road bidding him be easy, and assuring him that his innocence could admit of no suspicion.

The contagious spirit of sedition, without doubt privately encouraged by Primus, spread from the Pannonian to the Mælian army, which rose against its general Aponius, on account

A. R. 820. of some pretended letters from him to Vitellius handed about the camp. This sedition was more furious than the former, because it did not break out in the evening, a time, when soldiers are pretty well spent with the fatigues of the day, but at noon. The two armies seemed to rival each other in petulance and frenzy. The Mæsians demanded the assistance of the Pannonian legions, in return for the service they had been of to them against Flavianus; and the latter, thinking their comrades' sedition justified theirs, were glad of an opportunity to commit the same fault over again. Aponius was at a country-house near the camp: thither the seditious ran, and if he escaped the death they intended him, it was more owing to the obscurity of the place where he hid himself, than to the efforts of the commanders of the legions, with Primus at their head. He concealed himself in the stove of an old bath; and when the danger was over, got to Padua without noise, or any of his lictors to attend him.

Flavianus and Aponius being thus forced to retire, Antonius remained sole commander of the two armies, none of his colleagues daring to rival him, because the troops had confidence in none but him.

Bassus, who commanded the Ravenna fleet for Vitellius, brings it over to Vespasian. *Tac. Hist. l. 12.*

The ferment was not less violent in Vitellius's party, and the consequences of it were still more fatal, because it proceeded from the treachery of the chief officers, and not from the caprice of the soldiers. Lucilius Bassus, had long been tampering with, and endeavouring to corrupt the fidelity of the Ravenna fleet, of which he had the command; and what helped

helped him to succeed the more easily in that design was, that numbers of his men had been raised in Dalmatia and Pannonia, both which provinces were in Vespasian's interest. When he judged matters ripe, he chose the depth of night for the execution of his treason; and after ordering all that were in the plot, to meet in the great square within the camp, he, like a cowardly traitor, shut himself up in his house, waiting the event: the captains of the ships broke to pieces Vitellius's images, without much resistance; and the small number of those who attempted to revenge their emperor being immediately killed, the rest readily declared for Vespasian. Lucilius then appeared, and the enterprize having succeeded, ventured to own himself the author of it.

He had no great room to rejoice in what he had done, for he lost the command of the fleet, every man insisting on having Cornelius Fuscus for admiral. Fuscus repaired thither with all haste, and setting a guard over Bassus, with orders however to treat him honourably, he sent him by sea to Adria\*, where the commanding officer used him with much more rigour and put him in irons; till a freeman of Vespasian's, called Hormus, who was likewise a general officer, came there and set him at liberty.

Cæcina waited only for Bassus's defection to declare himself. Having taken the precaution to remove under various pretences those whom he most distrusted, he assembled the chief centurions and some soldiers, and haranguing them, exalted Vespasian's eminent merit, and the superiority of his forces. He observed, that

A. R. 820.  
A. C. 69.

\* *Atet in  
the upper  
Abruzzo.*

*Cæcina's  
treason.  
His army  
puts him  
in irons.*

A.R. 820. that on the contrary, the revolt of the Ravenna  
 A. C. 69. fleet, deprived Vitellius's party of the absolutely necessary means of being supplied with provisions of any kind; that Spain and Gaul were estranged, and every thing ready in Rome for a change of government: in short he omitted nothing that could give a bad idea of Vitellius and his situation. Those who were in the secret applauded the speech, and immediately swore allegiance to Vespasian: the rest, surprized at so unexpected a novelty, followed their example.

An account of what was doing being brought to the camp, the soldiers ran in crowds to the head quarters, where they saw Vespasian's name set up, and Vitellius's images thrown down. Surprize and grief made them motionless at first; but all, animated with the same spirit, soon broke out, "What! said they, has the  
 " Germanic army so degenerated, that we,  
 " without fighting, without even drawing our  
 " swords, should deliver up our arms, and  
 " hold out our hands to chains! What are  
 " the legions opposed against us, but those  
 " we have already conquered? And even they  
 " are now destitute of what was their main  
 " strength and support in Otho's army, the  
 " first and fourteenth legions, which however  
 " we likewise put to flight, and cut to pieces.  
 " Shall then the fruit of our victory be, to be  
 " sold with our arms like a troop of slaves, to  
 " a Primus, a man void of honour, and stigmatized with banishment? Shall vile \* marines dictate laws to eight legions? So Cæcina

\* The Romans thought the sea service inferior to the land.

"cina and Bassus have ordained ; base ungrate-A.R. 820.  
 "ful traitors, who after plundering their prince, A. C. 69.  
 "and stripping him of his palaces, gardens,  
 "and riches, would now rob him of his sol-  
 "diers too. No ! Were we to submit to so  
 "shameful a bargain ; were we, unhurt by any  
 "check, and not having lost one drop of  
 "blood, cowardly enough to bend to the yoke,  
 "those we should acknowledge for masters  
 "could not but hold us in the utmost con-  
 "tempt. What answer should we be able to  
 "make, if asked what was become of our  
 "former glory, our past success, and the con-  
 "stancy with which we have so often borne  
 "the frowns of fortune."

Such were the speeches indignation put in  
 the mouths of one and all. At last the fifth  
 legion, setting the others an example, exalted  
 Vitellius's images again, put Cæcina in irons,  
 and chose Fabius Fabullus, commander of the  
 fifth legion, and Cassius Longus, prefect of the  
 camp, to head them. So great was their rage  
 and fury, that the unfortunate marines, who  
 had no concern in the defection of the fleet,  
 happening to fall into their hands, were mas-  
 saced without pity. They left their camp,  
 broke down the bridge they had thrown over  
 the Tartaro, marched back to Ostiglia, and  
 took the road to Cremona, in order to join the  
 two legions Cæcina had sent thither with part  
 of the horse.

Antonius Primus resolved to prevent their Primus  
 junction, and attack the enemies whilst their goes to at-  
 forces were separated, and their minds sour- tack Vitel-  
 ed by a spirit of discord, before their new ge- lus's two  
 nerals could acquire much authority, or the legions in  
 soldiers Cremona.  
See, Hist.  
iii. 15.

A. R. 820. soldiers be accustomed to obey them. Other  
 A. C. 69. motives too induced him to make haste. He knew that Fabius Valens, a man incapable of infidelity, and by no means ignorant in the art of war, was already set out from Rome, and would certainly proceed with all possible diligence, so soon as he should hear of Cæcina's treason. He likewise feared Vitellius might receive succours from Germany by the way of Rætia: that the Gauls, Spain, and Britain, might send him more: and that, when collected, they would together compose a formidable army, which it might be very difficult to resist. He therefore justly concluded that victory depended on dispatch; and accordingly set out from Verona with his whole army, in order to attack the legions in Cremona, and in two days arrived at Bedriac.

The next day he fortified this post; and, whilst the legions were forming the camp, gave orders to the auxiliary cohorts, to make a general forage on the Cremonian territories, with a view, \* says Tacitus, to accustom his soldiers to plunder the citizens, and give them a relish for ill-got booty. Himself advanced eight miles beyond Bedriac with four thousand horse to cover his foragers, and sent out scouts to bring him intelligence of the enemy's motions.

Towards the fifth hour of the day, that is to say, an hour before noon, a horseman arrived full speed, with news that the enemy was drawing near, preceded by a detachment of cavalry; and that the noise, and murmur of a great multitude was heard at a distance.

Whilst

They  
 march out  
 of the city.  
 Battle, in  
 which they  
 are defeat-  
 ed.

\* Ut specie parandarum copiarum civili præda miles imbueretur. Tac.



Whilst Primus was consulting what he had best to do, Arrius Varus, eager to signalize himself, flew like lightning with a few others, brave and determined as himself, and attacked Vitellius's troops with such impetuosity, that he immediately put them to flight. But fortune soon changed, and the fugitives receiving a reinforcement, rallied, returned to the charge, and by the superiority of their numbers, forced Varus and his troop to fly in their turn.

Primus foresaw what would happen. He exhorted his men to behave well; opened his squadrons to receive Varus and his horse in the centre; sent orders to the legions to arm, and made a signal to the foragers to leave off plundering, and come to the battle. Varus and his troop arrived in inexpressible disorder, spreading round them the terror they were struck with: their ranks were broke, every one was dismayed, and Primus in danger of being totally defeated.

All that could be done by the ablest of generals, and best of soldiers, was performed by him in this dangerous crisis. He encouraged the fearful, comforted the dubious, was every where, and in the hottest parts of the battle: such was his ardour, that he killed with his own hand an ensign who was flying, and snatching up his standard, turned it against the enemy. About an hundred horse, ashamed to abandon so brave a commander, stuck close to him, and were favoured by the situation of the ground. They were in a narrow road, where the ruins of a bridge, formerly built over a stream that crossed the plain, their uncertainty of the depth of the several currents

A. R. 820. formed by those ruins, and the steepness of  
A. C. 69. the banks, were so many obstacles to flight. The happy necessity they were under of standing their ground saved the army. Primus with this handful of men, received in good order the conquerors so hot in their pursuit that not a man of them kept his rank, but all was in confusion; and finding such a resistance as they were far from expecting, began in their turns to be troubled and disconcerted. Primus perceiving it, charged them with all his might, and in a moment the scene was a second time changed, and fortune declared decisively for Primus. The victorious shouts of his men brought back the fugitives, who rejoined their comrades, and after escaping the danger, returned to share the success with them. Thus were the horse, that preceded the legions who left Cremona, entirely defeated.

Those legions, animated by the first advantage their horse had gained, were advanced about four thousand paces from the city. They might, had they been well commanded, either have made fortune turn once more, or at least put a stop to Primus's victory. But they had no general by whose orders to direct their motions. They did not open their ranks to receive their horse pursued by the victor, nor march up to the enemy, nor take advantage of their superiority over Primus's men, fatigued by a hard battle. Fluctuating and not knowing what to do, they waited for them, and were vigorously attacked. At the same time the tribune Messala, brought up the Mæssian auxiliaries, who, by observing a strict discipline, were grown as good soldiers as the legions

legions themselves. The victorious horse, A.R. 820.  
backed by that infantry, broke the two le- A. C. 69.  
gions, who made the less resistance, as Cremona was near, to which place they could again return and take shelter there. They did so, and Primus did not think proper to pursue them; well satisfied with having ended so happily a battle so ill begun, and in which his whole troop, men and horses, were wounded and quite spent.

Towards evening all Primus's forces got together again. The legions he had sent for were arrived at Bedriac, and his foragers had had time to return. This multitude of soldiers, full of confidence, and having under their eyes the traces of recent victory, concluded the war over, and wanted to be led on to Cremona to complete that victory, by the submission, either voluntary or forced, of the conquered. That was the specious pretence under which they concealed their real motive, which they dared not to own, desire of plunder. But they said among themselves, "That a town, situated in a plain, might easily be carried by storm: that if they got into it that night, they would be at full liberty to plunder; whereas if they stayed till the next day, offers would be made to surrender and capitulate: and that the only reward of their fatigue and wounds would then be, the empty honour of clemency; whilst their officers would have all the solid profits of the Cremonian spoils. That \* the plunder of a town taken by storm belonged

The conquerors want to attack Cremona, for the sake of plunder.

\* *Expugnatae urbis praedam ad militem, dedit ad dices pertinere. Tac.*

A. R. 820. "of right to the soldiers; and that of such as  
 A. C. 69. "capitulated, to the officers." The tribunes  
 and centurions remonstrated all they could  
 against their rash design; but the soldiers  
 would not listen to them, and made a din and  
 clattering with their arms, to prevent their be-  
 ing heard; in short, they were ready to take  
 orders from themselves, if none else would  
 give them such as they liked.

Primus was the only one that could obtain  
 audience; and even he was forced to wave his  
 authority, and proceed by way of insinuation.  
 He approved and commended their readiness  
 to fight; but desired them to consider, it was  
 the business of their generals to lead them on to  
 battle; and that if a soldier's \* glory consisted  
 in his eagerness to brave danger, a prudent  
 slowness was not less requisite in their chief.  
 He then represented to them, how rash it would  
 be to attack in the night a town, to which they  
 did not know the ways of access, by which the  
 hazard of snares, favoured by the dark, would  
 be joined to the other perils of a difficult en-  
 terprize. He asked them, addressing himself  
 to some in particular, whether they had got  
 hatchets and other instruments necessary for a  
 sap; and on their answering they had not,  
 "What! (added he) do you then think to  
 "break down walls with your swords and  
 "spears? Let us wait the return of day.  
 "The night shall be employed in bringing all  
 "things

\* Divisa inter exercitum ducesque mania. Militibus  
 cupidinem pugnandi convenire: duces providendo, con-  
 sultando, cautatione sapius, quam temeritate, prodesse.  
*Tac.*

“ things necessary from the camp, and to-mor-  
 “ row Cremona is ours.”

A. R. S 20.

A. C. 69.

Accordingly Primus ordered a detachment of horse to go with the followers of the army to Bedriac, and bring from thence every thing necessary for the attack of the place. But so great was the obstinacy of the soldiers, and so little did they know how to obey, that they would have proceeded to a sedition, had they not that moment received news that stopt them. Some horse advancing near the walls of Cremona, made prisoners of some of the inhabitants whom they met with, and learnt from them that the six legions, and all the troops posted near the Tarato, being informed of their comrades defeat, were expected instantly, and had that very day marched thirty thousand \* paces, with a firm resolution to fight and retrieve the honour of their party. This danger got the better of the soldiers obstinacy, and disposed them to listen to their commander's advice, in consequence of which they drew up for battle.

They are prevented by the arrival of the six legions, which Cæcina had in vain attempted to debauch.

\* Thirty miles.

Primus had five legions. He placed the third, of which we have often made mention before, precisely on the causeway of the Postumian way. The four others were posted on the right and left, two on each side. Such at least was the order in which the eagles and standards were ranged: for as to the soldiers of the legions, all confounded together pell-mell in the dark, they took their posts wherever chance directed them. The prætorians, whom Vespasian had called back to their standards, were near the third legion; the auxiliary cohorts next the wings: the horse covered the flanks and rear of the army; and the kings,

Battle by night, in which they are defeated.

Sido

A. R. 820. Sido and Italicus, with the flower of their  
A. C. 69. Suevi, formed the first line.

Vitellius's legions ought to have gone into Cremona to rest and refresh themselves, and the next day have attacked their adversaries, who, perished with hunger and cold, would not have been able to resist them: but they had no man of sense or prudence to direct them, and, about the third hour of the night, began to skirmish with their adversaries, who waited their coming, and who, being old troops, and used to war, placed themselves of their own accord in as good order as the darkness of a winter night would permit, for this happened towards the end of October. The soldiers of the legions, but lately defeated, joined those that arrived from Ostiglia, and ranked under their standards.

The two armies fought in the dark, with success as various as the confusion was horrid. Courage, strength, and skill, were useless where they could not see each other. Both sides were armed alike: the word, by being so often given and returned, was as well known by foes as friends: their very standards were mixed, according as a party on either side got the better, and forced them one way or the other.

One of the legions on the left of Primus's army suffered greatly, losing six of its best captains, and some standards. The eagle was however saved by the extraordinary valour of Atilius Verus, first captain of that legion, who lost his life in defence of it. Primus made the prætorians advance to back the troops who began to give way there; and they at first repulsed the enemy, but were afterwards driven  
back

back themselves, not being able to resist the showers of darts Vitellius's troops poured upon them from their engines placed on the causeway, where being well served, and having nothing about them to embarrass their operations, they dealt sure destruction round.

One engine in particular greatly annoyed Primus's army, sweeping away whole ranks with the enormous masses of stone, it lanced upon them with prodigious force. The slaughter would have been dreadful, if the admirable valour of two soldiers had not stopt it. Covering themselves with their shields, they made their way up to the dreadful machine without being perceived, and cutting the ropes by which it was worked, rendered it useless. They were killed instantly, and their names perished with them: but the remembrance of so brave a deed survived, and well deserved not to be buried in oblivion.

The night was already far spent, and the fate of the battle still uncertain, when the moon rose, and enabled the combatants to distinguish objects, but with a very important difference to the two armies. Primus's troops had their back turned towards it, and consequently their shadows being thrown forward, deceived their enemies, who took those shadows for bodies, and aimed their darts at them accordingly. On the contrary, the light shining in the faces of Vitellius's soldiers, they were easily distinguished, and could not guard against blows proceeding from the dark.

Primus redoubled his activity the moment he was able to see and be seen. He went through every rank, varying his exhortations  
and

A. R. 820. and motives of encouragement, according to  
 A. C. 69. the different situation of those to whom he  
 spoke, rousing up the courage of some by  
 reproaches, and praising and commending  
 others, but presenting the most flattering  
 hopes to all. If he addressed himself to the  
 Pannonian legions who were conquered fight-  
 ing for Otho, he asked them why they had  
 taken up arms again. He told them, the plains  
 on which they were then fighting, were the  
 very same where they had been seen to fly, and  
 that they could not wish for a fairer opportu-  
 nity to efface their shame and retrieve their ho-  
 nour. Then stepping to the Mælian legions,  
 he represented to them, that it was they who  
 had given the signal for war in favour of Ves-  
 pasian, and that it was in vain for them to  
 bid defiance to Vitellius's party in words only,  
 if, when they came to action, they were unable  
 to cope with them. He heaped praises on the  
 third legion, which, for a century past, had  
 always behaved with distinguished bravery, and  
 reminded those troops of their exploits, under  
 Anthony, against the Parthians; under Cor-  
 bulo, against the Armenians; and, but lately,  
 against the Sarmatians \*. The prætorians gave  
 room for reproaches, nor did he spare them.  
 " Soldiers (said he to them) unworthy that  
 " name, if you do not gain the victory now,  
 " what hopes have you left? Broken, and  
 " again restored, to what other emperor will  
 " you have recourse, if you are beaten now?  
 " Into what other camp can you think to be  
 " received? Your standards and arms are in  
 " the enemy's hands: either win them back,  
 " or expect inevitable death. I say nothing  
 " to

\* See Book  
 xviii.



“ to you of your infamy, for that can make  
“ no impression on you ; you have no feeling  
“ left.” Loud shouts and cries were heard  
on all sides, and the sun rising just then,  
the soldiers of the third legion saluted it, as  
was customary in Syria, where they had always  
served till of late years.

A report, the author of which was unknown,  
or which perhaps was purposely spread by  
Primus, contributed not a little to the victory.  
On a sudden it was given out through every  
rank, that Mucian was arrived. Encouraged  
by the thoughts of so strong a reinforcement,  
Primus's troops advanced upon the enemy,  
whose ranks began to be thin, because that  
army having no commander in chief, every man  
in it consulted his own bravery or cowardice,  
and accordingly chose the front or rear of the  
battle. Primus, perceiving them give way,  
pressed still more closely, till at last he broke  
and put them in such confusion, that they  
could not rally again, on account of the car-  
riages and machines of war, with which they  
were incumbered. The conquerors had no-  
thing more to do but to pursue and kill.

A very tragical event happened in that  
slaughter: a son killed his father. The fol-  
lowing are the circumstances of that shocking  
deed. Julius Mansuetus, a native of Spain,  
entered into the service of the German legions,  
leaving a young son at home. That son,  
growing up, was enlisted into a legion raised  
by Galba in Spain: and that legion espousing  
Vespasian's cause, the father and son were en-  
gaged in different parties. The son meeting  
him in the battle I am speaking of, and not  
knowing

A father  
killed by  
his son.

A.R. 820. knowing him, felled him with his sword, and  
 A. C. 69. whilst he was stripping him, was known by, and  
 knew his own father. He cried, lamented,  
 and embraced his dying parent, and with a  
 mournful voice beseeched him to forgive an un-  
 designed parricide: "Impute it \* (said he) to  
 "the guilt of civil war, and not to me. What  
 "I do is but a small part of what is perform-  
 "ed by multitudes. What is a single soldier  
 "to a whole army?" Those who were near  
 observed what passed: they told it to others,  
 who reported it again, and the whole army  
 was soon informed of it. Each † strove who  
 should express the greatest grief, indignation  
 and horror against so cruel a war: though even  
 whilst they were talking in that manner, it did  
 not prevent their stripping their own relations  
 and friends, killed in the same battle. They  
 complained of the impious crime committed  
 by one, but at the same time all imitated it.

The camp  
 that sur-  
 rounded  
 Cremona  
 taken.

Primus's troops, encouraged by their suc-  
 cess, were indefatigable. After fighting all  
 day and all night, they thought nothing done  
 whilst any thing remained still to do, and  
 wanted to attack Cremona, where the fugitives  
 had taken shelter. That was no easy enterprize.  
 In the war against Otho, the German legions  
 had formed a camp round the town, and that  
 camp was defended by a ditch and parapet, to  
 which fortifications other works had been lately  
 added.

\* Publicum id facinus: & unum militem quoram ci-  
 vilium armorum partem? Tac.

† Hinc per omnem aciem miraculum, & questus, &  
 servitium belli execratio. Neo eo segnius propinquos,  
 affines, fratres truculatos spoliant. Factum esse scelus  
 loquuntur, faciuntque. Tac.

added. The chiefs of the victorious army A. R. 820. hesitated greatly, fearing it would be too rash A. C. 69. in them to attempt to force the lines, and after that a place surrounded by strong walls, with their fatigued and harrassed troops. To take any other step, had its inconveniencies too. If they returned to Bedriac, it was a long and painful march, and their victory became useless. To encamp within sight of the enemy, was exposing themselves to brisk sallies, by which they might be incommoded, and perhaps afford the conquered an opportunity of taking revenge. The ardour of the soldiers decided the question. They \* feared danger much less than the least delay. They suspected all prudential measures; the rashest schemes were those that pleased them most: wounds, blood, and slaughter, were held at naught, when compared with the plunder they greedily expected to make. Primus yielded to their desires, and led them on, to attack the camp.

The engagement began with shooting their arrows and darting their lances at each other. But the assailants had greatly the disadvantage in that kind of fight, because their adversaries shot down from their ramparts with greater force than they could upwards. Primus gave each man his post, and formed three attacks, in order to excite emulation among the legions, and by that to add to their courage. There was a necessity of waiting, till they could procure proper implements from the country round about

\* Miles periculi, quam moræ patientior. Quippe ingrata que tuta, & ex temeritate spes; omnisque cædes, & vulnera, & sanguis, aviditate prædæ pensabantur. Tac.

A. R. 820. about, such as pick-axes, hatchets and shovels,  
 A. C. 69. with which some brought scaling-ladders too.  
 When all was ready, Primus's men clapping  
 their bucklers over their heads to form the  
 tortoise, marched up to the gates of the camp  
 and foot of the ramparts. Each side fought  
 with great intelligence, for both had learned the  
 same discipline. Vitellius's soldiers threw en-  
 ormous stones upon the tortoise, and thrust  
 their lances and long poles between the open-  
 ing of the shields, till they so far broke their  
 connections, that the assailants were uncovered,  
 when showers of arrows and stones were poured  
 down upon them.

Repulsed with loss of many of their men,  
 their courage began to fail. Their chiefs per-  
 ceiving it, shewed them Cremona, and pro-  
 mised the plunder should be theirs. Tacitus  
 does not know to whom to impute that base  
 expedient, which caused the ruin and desolation  
 of one of the finest cities of Italy. Some laid  
 it to the freeman Hormus's charge; but, ac-  
 cording to others, Primus was the author of  
 it. Which ever of the two it was\* (says  
 Tacitus,) their shame and guilt in that was of  
 a piece with the rest of their conduct.

The soldiers, animated with hopes of a rich  
 booty, no longer knew difficulty or danger.  
 Spite † of their wounds and the streams of  
 blood

\* Neque Antonius, neque Hormus, a fama sua, quam-  
 vis pessimo flagitio, degeneravere. Tac.

† Non jam sanguis, neque vulnera morabantur, quin  
 subirent vallum, quaterentque portas, innixique hume-  
 ris, & super iteratam testudinem scandentes preheuserent  
 hostium tela brachiaque. Integri cum sauciis, semineces  
 cum expirantibus volvuntur, varia pereuntium forma, &  
 omni imagine mortium. Tac.

blood that ran, they sapped the foot of the rampart, and beat the gates with great fury. The boldest getting upon their comrades shoulders, or on the tortoise, which they had formed again, and being by that means on a level with their enemies, seized and wrenched their arms from them. Wounded and unwounded, live and dead, fell back together, and tumbled into the ditch. This dreadful assault afforded instances of every kind of death.

The third and seventh legions were engaged in the same attack, and disputed with each other the honour of beginning the victory, and making the first breach in the camp. Primus had posted himself in the same place, and backed them at the head of a select troop. Their obstinate fury at length got the better, and Vitellius's men, finding all resistance vain, and that their arrows only glanced over the tortoise, threw down the vast machine, with which they lanced showers of darts upon the assailants: so great a weight crushed all it fell on, but, at the same time broke down the battlements and head of the rampart. A breach was likewise made in a tower hard by; and whilst the soldiers of the seventh legion were striving to enter it, those of the third broke open the gate with their swords and hatchets. C. Volusius, a soldier belonging to that last legion, was the first who entered, and getting upon the rampart, cried, the camp was taken. All fled in hurry and confusion: the conquerors broke in on every side, and in a moment the space between the camp and town was covered with blood and heaps of slain.

Another

A. R. 820. Another work still remained to do : Cremona  
 A. C. 69. held out ; and the victors, after all they had  
 suffered, still saw before them high walls, stone  
 towers, gates secured with plates of iron, and  
 soldiers on the walls, presenting the points of  
 their arms. The inhabitants were numerous,  
 and firmly attached to Vitellius. A great fair,  
 held just at that time, had brought thither  
 a vast concourse of people from every part of  
 Italy, which proved no small additional strength  
 to the besieged, and a strong incentive to the  
 greediness of the besiegers, who considered how  
 much more valuable their plunder must be on  
 that account.

The con-  
 querors  
 prepare to  
 attack the  
 town. It  
 surrenders.

Primus ordered the best houses in the suburbs  
 to be set on fire, to intimidate the Cremonians  
 by the loss of their possessions. In the build-  
 ings next the walls, some of which over-looked  
 them, he placed his bravest men, who, with  
 stones, tiles, pieces of timber they broke up,  
 and burning torches, cleared the wall, and  
 suffered none to appear on it. The legions  
 had already began to form themselves in tor-  
 toises, and showers of stones and arrows flew  
 about, when at length the obstinacy of Vitel-  
 lius's party gave way to reflection and fear :  
 those especially who had any considerable rank  
 in the army, thought it imprudent in them to  
 struggle against fortune, for fear that if Cre-  
 mona was taken by storm, they would have no  
 hopes of pardon left, and all the wrath of the  
 conqueror might fall, not only on a poor  
 wretched multitude, but on the centurions and  
 tribunes too, whose spoils would be of more  
 value. The common soldier, not thinking  
 or minding what might happen, but brutish-  
 ly

ly indifferent, had no idea of surrendering \*. A.C. 69.  
 Wandering about the streets, or concealing A. R. 69.  
 themselves in the houses, they did not once  
 think of peace, though they had given over  
 fighting.

The chief officers came to a resolution.  
 They took down Vitellius's name and images,  
 and delivered Cæcina from his prison, begging  
 him to intercede for them. Cæcina †, puffed  
 up with pride and anger, refused their request:  
 they entreated earnestly, shed tears to move  
 him, and so many brave men were unhappily  
 reduced to the necessity of imploring the pro-  
 tection of a traitor. At last they submitted,  
 and threw open their gates.

Primus immediately ceased all hostilities, and  
 the conquered legions evacuated the place. The con-  
 quered legions evacuated the place.  
 The eagles ‡ and standards marched first: then  
 followed a long train of disarmed soldiers, over-  
 whelmed with grief, and fixing their eyes on  
 the ground. The conquerors were drawn up  
 on each side, and at first insulted and menaced  
 them. But when they saw them so humbled  
 and

\* Gregarius miles, futuri socors, & ignobilitate tutior,  
 prestat. Vagi per vias, in domibus abdit, pacem ne  
 tum quidem orabant, quum bellum possissent. Tac.

† Aspernantem tumentemque lacrymis fatigant, ex-  
 tremum malorum, tot fortissimi viri, proditoris opem  
 invocantes. Tac.

‡ Signa aquilasque extulere: mæstum incermium ag-  
 men, dejectis in terram oculis, sequebatur. Circum-  
 steterunt victores, & primo ingerebant proba intentabant  
 iectus. Mox ut præberi ora contumelias, & posita omni fe-  
 rocia cuncta victi patiebantur, subita recordatio, illos esse  
 qui nuper Bedriaci victorie temperassent. Sed ubi Cæ-  
 cina, prætexta Lictoribusque insignis, dimota turba, con-  
 sul incesit, exarsere victores: superbiam, sævitiamque  
 adeo invisa scelera sunt, etiam perfidiam, obiectabant.  
 Tac.

A. R. 820. and abashed, and ready to bear any thing, they  
 A. C. 69. then remembered they were the very same warriors, who, but a few months before, had behaved with great moderation when victors in the field of Bedriac. On the other hand, every one was incensed against Cæcina, nor could bear to see him march with all the pomp of consular dignity, clothed in the robe prætexta, and preceded by his licitors. They upbraided him with his pride, his cruelty, and, so odious are traitors, with his perfidy too. Primus screened him from their insults, and sent him to Vespasian, who, out of policy received him well, but did not employ him. The sequel will shew he had sufficient reason to distrust him.

*Jos. de B.  
 Jud. v. 13.*

*Sack of  
 Cremona.*

So far Primus gained infinite honour. His diligence, activity, valour, and good conduct, began and ended the war: for the victory he gained over the German legions, and the taking of Cremona, decided the dispute between Vitellius and Vespasian. What remained to be done was no ways difficult, and was the natural, and as it were necessary, consequence of this first great exploit. But the sack of Cremona greatly sullied the victor's reputation.

*Tac. Hist.  
 iii. 32.*

At the very instant when the town surrendered, the soldiers, who wanted to have the plundering of it, began to hew down all the inhabitants before them, and could not, without great difficulty, be prevented by their officers. Primus, having assembled the two armies, commended the valour of the conquerors, and expressed kindness and clemency towards the conquered; but said nothing of Cremona. His silence on that head spoke sufficiently to  
 troops



troops whose eagerness after plunder was en-<sup>A. R. 820.</sup>  
creased by several old grudges, and a deep-<sup>A. C. 69.</sup>  
rooted hatred. The Cremonians were thought  
to have been well-wishers to Vitellius's party  
ever since the time of Otho's war. The choice  
Cæcina had made of their town to give a com-  
bat of gladiators after his victory, confirmed  
that opinion. Whilst the thirteenth legion was  
at work there, preparing matters for that shew,  
the Cremonians, as most towns people are na-  
turally inclined to do, had rallied bitterly the  
soldiers of that legion, then one of the con-  
quered, but now victorious. Cremona became  
a second time the seat of war: the inhabitants  
had supplied Vitellius's troops with refresh-  
ments during the fight: the very women had  
interested themselves in the action, so far as to  
be in the field of battle, where some of them  
were killed. So many offences incensed the  
soldiers, whilst the riches of the colony, to  
which the fair, I have spoken of, was at that  
time a great addition, made them still more  
eager to plunder it.

Primus might perhaps have found it very  
difficult to save Cremona, had he been so mind-  
ed. But he did not even attempt it: and a  
kind of pun, that escaped him, was construed  
an intended signal to set fire to the town: for,  
going into the bath to wash and clean himself,  
being covered with blood, he complained the  
water was too cold, "but (added he, in the  
" same breath) I shall soon find it warm  
" enough." That expression was taken great  
notice of, and drew on him the whole odium  
of burning Cremona; the more so, as his rank  
and reputation fixed the eyes of all upon him,

A. R. 520. and quite eclipsed his colleagues. It is however  
A. C. 69. certain, that the town was on fire at that very  
time.

Forty thousand men, completely armed, entered it in a hostile manner, together with a still greater number of servants and followers of the army, more petulant, licentious and cruel than the soldiers themselves. Neither age nor dignities were a safeguard able to protect any from death, or insults worse than death. Even the old men and women were dragged about and made their sport. The young were quarrelled for by their ravishers, who tore them from each other, and both sides, after using them ill, would often fight and kill each other. Some, as they were carrying off sums of money, or precious offerings out of the temples, were met by their greedy comrades, who killed them, and seized their prey. Others, scorning to take up with what was in sight, fixed themselves like harpies on the rich inhabitants, whom they suspected to have concealed their treasures, and by blows and torments, endeavoured to extort their secret from them. They carried lighted torches in their hands, and after plundering houses and temples, set fire to them, by way of diversion. The \* army being composed of various nations, some Romans, other allies, and others again foreigners, all whose manners, laws and customs were different, what was unlawful for one, was lawful to another; so that nothing escaped their fury and licentiousness. During four  
days

\* Utque exercitu vario linguis, moribus, cui cives, accei. externi interessent, diversæ, cupidines, & aliud nique fas, nec quidquam illicitum. Tac.

days, Cremona was a prey to those wretches. A.R. 820.  
 Every thing was burnt, sacred and profane: A.C. 69.  
 one only temple, dedicated to the goddess  
 Mephitis \*, which stood out of the town,  
 escaped the flames; protected, says Tacitus,  
 by its situation, or by the divinity that pre-  
 sided in it; which of the two we need not be  
 at a loss to determine. The conquered were  
 thought to have lost in the sack of the town,  
 and the two preceding battles, fifty thousand  
 men. Josephus says, Primus lost four thou-  
 sand five hundred officers and soldiers.

Thus was the city of Cremona destroyed in  
 the two hundred and eighty-seventh year after  
 its foundation. It was built by the Romans,  
 in the first year of Hannibal's war, as we have  
 observed in the history of the republic. Its  
 convenient situation, and the fruitfulness of  
 the soil, soon induced numbers of people to  
 leave their habitations and settle there, by  
 which means it became a very flourishing place.  
 Its fate was uncommon. Foreign enemies had  
 spared it, but it suffered under the civil wars,  
 was vexed by the triumvirs, for its attachment  
 to the cause of liberty; and ruined by Primus,  
 fighting for Vespasian.

It recovered however from that misfortune.  
 Primus, ashamed and confounded, and de-  
 siring to wipe off the reproaches every one laid  
 to his charge, published an order, forbidding  
 any Cremonian to be kept in slavery; though  
 the inhabitants of Italy had been before-hand  
 with him in that, by refusing to purchase any  
 of them for slaves. Those who had taken them  
 being

\* This goddess was to purify the air, and preserve  
 men from infection.

A. R. 820. being consequently neither able to keep or sell.  
 A. C. 69. were barbarous enough to kill them. Such shocking inhumanity forced the friends and relations of those unhappy prisoners to purchase them privately: by which means the Cremonians soon got together again. Love of their native place brought them back to their desolate city, still dear to them: and, being encouraged by Vespasian, not only rebuilt their houses, but the richest of them were at the expence of building up again their temples and public places.

Primus's  
 first care  
 after his  
 victory.

Primus could not remain long by the walls of a town quite destroyed, and infected with the stench of blood and dead bodies; and therefore removed three thousand paces off. His first care was, to call the soldiers of the conquered legion, dispersed by flight and terror, back to their standards. As the war was not yet ended, and some disturbance might be feared from those legions, he did not think it prudent to leave them in Italy, but dispersed them in Illyria, a province well-affected to Vespasian.

He then dispatched couriers to carry the news of his victory to Spain and Britain. Two officers were sent to Gaul and Germany, Julius Calænus, and Eduan, and Albinus Montanus, a native of Treves, who, having fought for Vitellius at Cremona, could speak knowingly and feelingly of the bad state of that emperor's affairs. At the same time he set a strong guard over all the passes of the Alps, that no succours might come from Germany to assist the conquered party.

Primus

Primus undoubtedly deserved success by his A. R. 820. courage, activity, and other great qualifica- A. C. 69. tions : but, at the same time, he was indebted Vitellius's for a part of it to Vitellius's stupidity ; for he, stupid in- after having sent first Cæcina and then Valens, dolence. studied \* nothing himself but how to bury the alarms of war in pleasure and luxury. He had no thoughts of providing ammunitions or arsenals, nor of encouraging or exercising the troops that remained with him : he did not even appear, but hiding himself in his groves and gardens, like a beast fattened in a corner, which, provided it has but food, remains motionless under its cover, so lived he, void of care : the past, the present, and what was to come, gave him no concern if he had but victuals and drink. Whilst he was indulging himself in this beastly sluggishness in the park of Aricia, he learnt the defection of Bassus with the Ravenna fleet. This first blow, by which Vitellius began to be rouzed from his lethargy, was soon followed by a second, the news of Cæcina's treason, which could not but have alarmed him greatly, if the same messenger had not likewise brought him intelligence that that traitor was arrested and secured. There was in this last event, a mixture of good and bad, of uneasiness and joy : and Vitellius's views † were so narrow, his soul so sluggish, that

\* *Curis luxum obtendebat. Non parare arma, non alioquin exercitioque militem firmare, non in ore vulgi agere : sed umbraculis hortorum abditus, ut ignava animalia, quibus si cibum suggeras, jacent torpentque, præterita, instantia, futura pari oblivione dimiserat. Tac.*

† *Plus apud socordem animum lætitia quam cura va-*  
*luit Tac.*

A. B. 820. that joy was the prevailing sensation which he  
 A. C. 69. felt. He returned to Rome triumphant; and  
 in a numerous assembly, convened by his order,  
 heaped praises on the fidelity of the soldiers,  
 broke one of the two prætorian perfects, P. Sabinus,  
 a creature of Cæcina's, ordered him to be put in  
 irons, and appointed Alphænus Varus to succeed  
 him.

Flattery of  
 the senators.

From thence he repaired to the senate, which  
 he harangued in a most pompous stile. The  
 senators answered him with far-fetched flatteries;  
 and Vitellius, on the brink of ruin, was still  
 pleased with them. The emperor's brother was  
 for punishing Cæcina most severely; and his  
 example was a rule to others, who, expressing  
 their indignation in the strongest terms they  
 could imagine, set forth all the enormity of  
 the crime of a consul who betrayed the republic;  
 of a general who turned traitor to his emperor;  
 and of a friend ungrateful towards his prince,  
 after receiving the greatest favours from him.  
 Thus \* they seemed concerned for Vitellius,  
 whilst the real motive of their grief was widely  
 different, and they lamented in their hearts  
 the unhappy fate of the republic, subjected to  
 so shameful a joke, and become the sport of  
 the prince's and his minister's vices. Not  
 one uttered the least disobliging word  
 against the generals of the adverse party:  
 they said the armies were imprudent and  
 in the wrong, but never dared to mention  
 Vespasian's name.

Cæcina's

\* Velut pro Vitellio conquerentes; dolorem suum præferrebant. Nulla in oratione ejusquam erga Flavianos duces obtrectatio. Errorem imprudentiamque exercituum culpantes, Vespasiani nomen suspensi & vitabundi circumibant. Tac.

Cæcina's consulship was within a day of expiring when this meeting was held; and yet there was a senator who begged as a great favour to be consul that one day. His request was granted, not without affording an ample field for laughter at his expence, and the expence of him who granted such a favour. Roscius Regulus took possession of the consulship the thirty-first of October, and abdicated it the same day. A consul for a single day had been already seen under the dictator Cæsar: but what in this case was without example, was, to appoint a successor to a living man, whose post was not vacated either by a decree of the senate or order of the people. Vitellius, and those who managed him, had not sense enough to take notice of such a want of formality.

The death of Junius Blæsus, which happened at this time, made a great noise, and is a convincing proof that Vitellius, as much as he deserved to be hated and despised, merited still more by his cruelty and perfidiousness, than by his gluttony and imbecility, the unhappy fate that awaited him. We have seen how Junius Blæsus was one of the first that declared for Vitellius, and with what magnificence he received him at Lyons: but that the emperor's groveling soul even then requitted his services with hatred and jealousy. The occasion I am about to mention revived and increased that hatred.

Vitellius, being very ill, perceived in his neighbourhood a tower greatly illuminated during the night. He asked what it was, and was answered, that Cæcina Tuscus gave a great entertainment

A. R. 820.  
A. C. 69.  
A consul  
for a day.

Vitellius  
causes Ju-  
nius Blæ-  
sus to be  
poisoned.  
Tac. Hist.  
111. 38.

A. R. 820. entertainment to several persons of distinction,  
 A. C. 69. the most eminent of whom was Blæsus. The courtiers, as usual, took care to give it a malignant turn, exalting the splendour of the feast, and the gaiety of the guests; adding, that he who gave the entertainment, as well as those who were at it, but especially Blæsus, chose a very improper time for merriment, whilst their prince was ill. That crew of wretches, who infect every court, and carefully watch their masters good and bad humours, seeing Vitellius \* exasperated, judged that a proper opportunity to ruin Blæsus: and L. Vitellius, whose own vices would not suffer him to bear virtue and reputation in others, undertook the odious part of informer and accuser.

He entered the room, holding the emperor's son in his arms, and, falling on his knees, remained some time motionless and silent. Vitellius asking him the cause of his grief and terror, "It is not (answered he) for myself that I fear: my brother's danger, and that of his family, is what alarms me. In vain do we dread Vespasian: the valour of the German legions, the fidelity of our provinces, the immense space of seas and land that part us, are sufficient to secure us against him. But we have, in the very heart of the city, an enemy, who reckons the Junii and Antonii † among his ancestors, and to  
 " the

\* Ubi adspersum Vitellium, & posse Blæsum perverti, satis patuit iis qui Principum offensas acrius specularunt, datæ L. Vitellio delationis partes. Ille infensus Blæso, emulatione, prava, quod cum omni dedecore maculosum egregia fama antebat, cubiculum Imperatoris reserat. Tac.

† I am at a loss to tell how Blæsus could pretend to be related to the Antonian family.



" the splendour he pretends to derive from an A. R. 820.  
 " imperial origin, adds such popularity and A. C. 69.  
 " magnificence, as are capable of corrupting  
 " the soldiers. The eyes \* of all are fixed  
 " on him; whilst, making no distinction be-  
 " tween your friends and enemies, you en-  
 " courage the ambition of a rival who feasts  
 " and riots as if he rejoiced in his prince's  
 " illness. Reward him for that ill-timed joy  
 " with a just return of tears and sorrow:  
 " make this night, that now shines with his  
 " illuminations, a night of woe and anguish to  
 " him. Let him know that Vitellius lives,  
 " and that if the gods should take him from  
 " us, he has a son, the support of his family."

Vitellius was terrified, and considered only  
 how it were best to execute his vengeance:  
 fearing the public hatred, if he openly ordered  
 Blæsus's death, he preferred the cowardly  
 means of poison. He even resolved to enjoy  
 the pleasure of his crime, by going to visit the  
 man who lay expiring with a fatal dose, given  
 by his order, and was heard to congratulate  
 himself, on having feasted his eyes with his  
 enemy's death.

This crime appeared the more atrocious, as  
 Blæsus, besides his high birth and irreproachable  
 conduct, had always been inviolably attached  
 to Vitellius. When Cæcina first formed his  
 plan of treason, and several other leading men  
 began,

\* Versas illuc omnium mentes, dum Vitellius amicorum  
 inimicorumque negligens, fovet æmulum, Principis la-  
 bores e convivio prospectantem. Reddendam pro intem-  
 pestiva lætitia mortuum ac funebrem noctem, qua sciat &  
 sentiat vivere Vitellium, & imperare, & filium habere.  
*Tac.*

A. R. 820. began, like him, to be disgusted, Blæsus was  
 A. C. 69. sounded, but firmly rejected all their proposals.  
 He was a man of \* unspotted character, fond  
 of peace, happy and content with his own  
 fortune, and so far from wishing to be empe-  
 ror, that many were inclined to think he de-  
 served the throne for that very reason.

Valen's  
 slowness,  
 and disso-  
 lute con-  
 duct. He  
 misses an  
 opportuni-  
 ty to join  
 the army.

Valens set out from Rome, as I have said,  
 in order to join the army; but this march was  
 slow, and suitable to the train he carried with  
 him, of women and eunuchs, more like a  
 Persian satrap, than a Roman general. Bassus's  
 defection, and the revolt of the Ravenna fleet,  
 ought to have hastened him on; and if he had  
 been in the least active, or known how to come  
 to a resolution at once, he might have pre-  
 vented Cæcina's last treasonable step, or at least  
 have joined the army before the battle of Cre-  
 mona. By his irresolution †, he lost in deli-  
 berating, the time he thought to have employ-  
 ed in acting. He listened to the various coun-  
 sels of those that were about him, some of  
 whom advised his taking a few chosen horse,  
 and getting to Ostiglia or Cremona by private  
 roads; whilst others thought he had best send  
 for the prætorian cohorts, with which he  
 would be able to force the passes blocked up  
 by the enemy.

Extremes are often best in nice and critical  
 cases. He † took a medium: and whilst he  
 ought

\* Sanctus, inturbidus, nullius repentini honoris, adeo  
 non principatus appetens, ut parum effugeret ne dignus  
 crederetur. Tac.

† Ipse inutili cunctatione, agendi tempora consultando  
 consumpsit. Tac.

‡ Utrumque consilium aspernatus, quod inter ancipi-  
 tia deterrimum est, dum media sequitur, nec ausus est  
 satis, nec providit. Tac.

ought either to have ventured all, or have acted with the most consummate prudence and caution, only wrote to Vitellius for a reinforcement, which was sent him, consisting of three cohorts, and a regiment of horse, too numerous a body to pass unheeded by those who guarded the passes, and too weak to surmount obstacles. His leisure hours, till he received those succours, were employed in the most criminal debaucheries. The wives and daughters of those who received and entertained him were not spared, but \* money, and even violence, which ever best suited his turn, were made use of. He seemed, like a man drove to despair, determined at any rate to enjoy what little sunshine of fortune he had left.

The small body of troops he expected were of no service to him when they came, for he soon perceived their attachment and fidelity to Vitellius was far from sincere. Their general's presence † was the only thing that prevented their going over to the enemy: and Valens was very sensible how weak a tie that must be on soldiers more afraid of danger than of infamy. He sent them to Remi; whilst himself, returning to his scheme of concealing his march from the enemy, took with him only a few of those whose fidelity he thought he could most rely on, went towards Umbria, and from thence to Tuscany, where he learned the

\* *Aderant vis & pecunia & ruentis fortunæ novissima libido.* Tac.

† *Pudor & præsentis ducis reverentia morabatur, haud diuturna vincula apud pavidos \* periculorum, & dedecoris securos.* Tac.

\* The text of Tacitus says *audor*. I follow a conjecture authorized by two learned men, and founded on sense and reason.

A. R. 820. the defeat of the German Legions and the loss  
A. C. 69. of Cremona.

Valens's  
bold de-  
sign. He  
is taken  
prisoner.

He then formed a resolution, which shewed he had courage, and might have been attended with great and terrible consequences, if fortune had but favoured him. He went to Pisa, and there embarked on board the first ships he could find, with a design to land in some part of the Narbonnese, from thence to go through all Gaul, collect together the troops that were there, join them to those of Germany, and by that means form an army with which he would be enabled to begin a new war. The winds, either contrary or falling short, forced him to put into Monaco. He was well received there by Marius Maturus, intendant of the Maritime Alps, and a friend to Vitellius: but learned from him, that Valerius Paulinus, intendant of the Narbonnese, formerly a tribune in the prætorian cohorts, a brave warrior and faithful friend to Vespasian, had prevailed on the nations round him to take the oaths to that emperor. That being master of the town of Frejus, where he was born, the coasts were strictly guarded by his orders. That he had ships and troops at his command; and, besides what soldiers he had got together, was furnished by the country with men who served him zealously. Valens, greatly embarrassed, and knowing better whom to fear, than whom to trust, put out to sea again. A storm drove him on the Stæchadæ \* Islands, dependant on Marseilles, to which Paulinus sent some gallies who took him prisoner.

\* The islands  
Iliæ.  
709.

By his retreat from Italy, Rimini was given up to Cornelius Fuscus, the new commander

of the Ravenna fleet, who, after that made himself master of Picenum, and the low lands of Umbria; by which means all Italy was divided between Vespasian and Vitellius, by the Apennine mountains. The taking of Valens was a signal to all the western provinces to submit to the conqueror. In Spain, the first legion, which still revered the memory of Otho, and detested Vitellius, set the sixth and tenth the example, and all declared for Vespasian. The Gauls did the same. In Britain the second legion, which had been commanded by Vespasian under Claudius's reign, was well acquainted with his bravery and skill in war, and acknowledged him emperor with great joy. The others did not submit quite so readily, because many of their officers had been promoted by Vitellius; but at last they followed the general torrent.

All this success was the fruit of Primus's victory, though he was so unfortunate as to lose the whole merit of his exploits, by the inconsistency of his conduct. Looking on the war as finished since the battle of Cremona, he laid himself no longer under any constraint, and prosperity awaked in him all the vices, danger had forced him to lay aside for a time, his covetousness, pride, and immoderate ambition: he strove to make the legions love him, as if they had been his own: self-love, and a strong desire to rule, were visible in all his speeches and actions. The better to pay his court to the legions, he permitted them to chuse their own centurions in the room of those who had been killed in the war, and they did not fail to pitch upon the most turbulent men in the army.

A.R. 820.

A. C. 69.

Vespasian

is acknow-

ledged by

a great

part of Ita-

ly, and all

the wes-

tern pro-

vinces.

Inconsis-

tency of

Primus's

conduct,

after the

battle of

Cremona-

Tac. Hist.

lib. 49.

A. R. 820. army. All discipline was spoilt; the soldiers  
 A. C. 69. were no longer governed by their officers, but  
 the officers forced to give way to the licen-  
 tiousness of the soldiers. Primus's thoughts  
 were wholly taken up with the means of exe-  
 cuting his ambitious schemes, and enriching  
 himself by plunder and rapine; he did not  
 even attempt to conceal the excesses he was  
 guilty of, nor seemed in the least disturbed at  
 the apprehension of Mucian's speedy arrival,  
 whom it was much more dangerous to offend,  
 than to disobey Vespasian himself.

He advan-  
 ces towards  
 Rome.

He did not however neglect the cares of  
 war; and winter drawing on, he left the plains  
 near the Po, which began to grow wet and  
 boggy, and marched towards Rome, but not  
 with his whole army. He took with him only  
 detachments of the victorious legions, leaving  
 the standards, eagles, and most of the soldiers  
 at Verona. He likewise carried with him the  
 auxiliary cohorts and cavalry, and was joined  
 on the road by the eleventh legion, which had  
 embraced Vespasian's party from the very first,  
 though feebly, having till then remained in Dal-  
 matia waiting the event, and repining at hav-  
 ing had no share in the success. The com-  
 mander in chief of that legion, and of six  
 thousand Dalmatians lately raised, who were  
 with it, was Poppæus Silvanus, an ancient  
 consul, and governor of Dalmatia, as I have  
 before said: but the real power of command  
 was exercised by Annus Bassus, colonel of the  
 legion: for Silvanus\* was an old man, who  
 had

\* Is Silvanum, socordem bello, & dies rerum, verbis  
 terentem, specie obsequii regebat, ad omniaque qua  
 agenda forent quieta cum industria aderat. Tac.

had neither vigour nor capacity for war, an A. R. 820  
 eternal prater, who lost in talking the time he A. C. 69.  
 should have employed in acting; and Annius  
 keeping in appearance within all the bounds  
 of a subaltern officer, governed him neverthe-  
 less, and directed every operation with a quiet  
 and modest activity. Besides those troops,  
 Primus strengthened his army, by incorpo-  
 rating into his legions the flower of the Ra-  
 venna fleet, whom he replaced out of Silva-  
 nus's Dalmatians.

Arriving with all these forces at Fano in  
 Picenum, he halted there, to hold a council.  
 He learned that the pratorian cohorts were set  
 out from Rome, and it was not doubted but  
 that the passes of the Apennine mountains  
 were guarded. Besides, the situation of the  
 victorious army was such as could not of itself  
 but give uneasiness. The country it was in  
 had been ruined and laid waste by the war:  
 the soldiers, apt to be most insolent when the  
 distress is greatest, demanded a \* gratification  
 it was impossible to give them. No stock had  
 been provided either of money or provisions:  
 and their inconsiderate greediness hurt them-  
 selves, by destroying and dissipating in plunder,  
 what, if raised by moderate contributions,  
 would have been a resource in times of ge-  
 neral need.

So great was the contempt for the most sa-  
 cred laws in this army, that one of the soldiers  
 declared he had killed his own brother in the  
 late battle, and demanded a reward for it. The  
 officers were puzzled. To reward so abomi-  
 nable

A soldier  
 demands a  
 reward for  
 killing his  
 brother.

\* Tacitus calls this gratification *Clavarium*. It related  
 to the soldiers shoes and the nails they were trimmed with.

A. R. 820. nable a murder, would have been a manifest  
 A. C. 69. violation of the law of nature; but by the  
 law of war he was not punishable for it. The  
 soldier who presented that petition was put off  
 to another time, under pretence that it was not  
 possible just then to pay him according to his  
 merit. Tacitus mentions, on this occasion,  
 an affair of the same nature, of a brother  
 killed by a brother in the battle fought at the  
 gates of Rome, between Pompeius Strabo and  
 Cinna. But then he observes a very material  
 difference, which is, that the murderer, out  
 of remorse and grief, afterwards killed him-  
 self: "So much \* (adds he) did our ancestors  
 excel us, both in love of virtue and abhor-  
 rence of guilt."

*Tac. Hist.*  
 lib. 52.

The result of the council held by Primus  
 was, that a detachment of horse should be sent  
 to scour the country, reconnoitre all Umbria,  
 and discover where the Apennine mountains  
 were most accessible: that all the troops left  
 at Verona should be sent for, and proper or-  
 ders given for convoys to come by the Po or  
 sea.

Quarrels  
 between  
 Primus  
 and Mu-  
 cian.

These measures were very prudent and well-  
 judged; but the execution of them was ob-  
 structed by several of the chief officers, who  
 grew jealous of Primus's too great power, and  
 thought they could build their hopes of fortune  
 more securely on Mucian, whose interest it was  
 to protract matters. That general was piqued  
 at Primus's sudden victory, and was vexed to  
 see that if he was not on the spot, at least to  
 usher Vespasian's arms into the capital, the  
 war

\* Tanto acrior apud majores, sicut virtutibus gloria,  
 ita flagitiis penitentia fuit. *Tac.*



war would be ended without his having any share in it. For that reason, he wrote plainly to his friends, desiring them to spin things out till his arrival: to others he wrote less openly, sometimes exhorting them to finish quickly a work so well begun, and at other times desiring them not to be over hasty, but to proceed with prudence and caution: by that means reserving in his own power, either to blame others for the bad success, or assume to himself the merit of the good, according as the event should prove. Mucian's friends in the army answered him in a manner agreeable to his views, and gave a bad turn to Primus and Varus's haste; and these letters being sent to Vespasian, prejudiced him against Primus, and made him not set so great a value on his services, as the latter expected he should.

His pride was hurt. He imputed it to Mucian, whom he railed against most bitterly; and even wrote to Vespasian in a more haughty stile, than became a subject speaking to his sovereign, boasting his own exploits, and giving Vespasian to understand he owed the empire to him. Then glancing at Mucian, "I serve my prince, said he, not by writing letters, and sending couriers, but with my sword. I do not mean to lessen the glory of those who maintained peace and quiet in Asia; but only observe that Italy was the object of my care, and the theatre of my services. I made the powerful provinces of Spain and Gaul acknowledge you for emperor. In vain have I run so many hazards, and borne so much fatigue, if the reward is to be given to those who have not even seen

Vol. V. U " the

A. R. 820. "the enemy." He \* at whom these reproaches, A. C. 69. intermixed with insults, were aimed, was not ignorant of them. From thence arose an implacable hatred between Primus and Mucian: the one shewed it openly like a soldier, whilst the other disguised it like a courtier, and never could forgive. Primus did not serve Vespasian with the less zeal. He completed his work, indeed without much difficulty, because the enemy he had to deal with sought his own ruin.

Vitellius endeavours to stifle the news of the battle of Cremona. Extraordinary resolution of a centurion.

When Vitellius † learned the defeat of his legions at Cremona, his greatest care was how to stifle and suppress the news of his disaster: a vain and wretched dissimulation, which, without lessening the evil, retarded the remedy: for, had he owned the truth, and advised with his friends he still had resources left; whereas by giving out that all went well, he gave the evil time to increase. None about him ventured to say a word of the war, and spies and soldiers spread up and down the city, prevented others from talking of it, though in fact it only made them say the more in private. Had people been allowed to speak, they would have spoke the truth only; but being ordered to hold

\* Neque fefellerent ea Mucianum. Inde graves similitudines, quas Antonius simplicius, Mucianus callide, eoque implacabilius nutriebat. Tac.

† At Vitellius, fractis apud Cremonam rebus, nuncios cladis occultans stulta dissimulatione, remedia potius malorum quam mala differebat. Quippe confitenti consultantique supererant spes viresque: quam e contrario leta omnia fingeret, falsis ingravescebat. Mirum apud ipsum de bello silentium: prohibiti per urbem sermones, eoque plures: ac si liceret, vera narraturi, quia vetabantur atrociora vulgaverant. Tac.

hold their tongues, they were induced to think, A. R. 820.  
and say much more than really was. A. C. 69.

The generals on the other side endeavoured to enhance the opinion of their advantages, by the confidence they expressed on all occasions. Whenever they took any of Vitellius's scouts, they led them round the camp, shewed them what forces they had, and then sent them back to their master, who, after questioning them in private, put them all to death.

Vitellius was so blind, that he would not believe what he wished might not be true. A centurion, called Julius Agrestis, undertook to break this kind of enchantment: and after exhorting Vitellius several times to take a vigorous resolution, begged leave to go himself to reconnoitre the enemy, and see with his own eyes what had passed at Cremona. He did not attempt to deceive Primus by getting intelligence privately, but went at once to him, told him the orders his emperor had charged him with, and with what intention he came. Primus ordered some of his men to shew him the field of battle, the ruins of Cremona, and the legions which had submitted to the conqueror's mercy. Agrestis returned to Vitellius, who still refused to credit his report, and accused him of being bribed by the enemy.

“ Well, \* said that brave officer, since you  
“ will have a stronger and more convincing  
“ proof, and that neither my life nor death  
“ can be of any farther service to you, I will  
“ give you such a one, as shall get the better  
“ of

2

\* Quandoquidem magno documento opus est, nec alius jam tibi aut vitæ aut mortis meæ usus, dabo cui credas. *Tac.*

A. R. 820. "of your incredulity;" and so saying, killed  
 A. C. 69. himself. Accordingly to another account of  
 this affair, agreeing with this in every other  
 circumstance, it was Vitellius that ordered him  
 to be killed.

He sends  
 troops to  
 secure the  
 passes of  
 the Apennine  
 mountains.

At length, Vitellius, as if waking from a deep sleep, sent the two prætorian prefects, Julius Priscus and Alphænus Varus, with fourteen prætorian cohorts, and all the auxiliary horse, to secure the passes of the Apennine mountains. This body, already numerous, was soon after increased by a legion of marines. Such an army, formidable by its number, and the goodness of its troops, would have been able, under a proper general, to have acted even offensively. These troops took their post at Mævania \* in Umbria, whilst Vitellius remained at Rome, busying himself with very different cares. Without † lessening his usual prodigality and luxury, he took measures for the future, because he was sensible the present was not his. He named the magistrates for ten years to come, and declared himself perpetual consul. Still greedy after money, and imagining it would please the people, he granted foreigners the privileges the Latins had enjoyed in the time of the old republic; renewed treaties with allies on more advantageous terms; and was lavish of immunities and exemptions from tributes: in short, without minding what might be the consequence, he dissipated all the rights and patrimony of the empire. The ‡ vulgar admired his magnificence

\* *Bevogna.*

Remaining  
 in Rome,  
 he is taken  
 up with  
 other  
 thoughts  
 than war.

† *Nihil a solito luxu remittens, & disidentia properus.*  
*Tac.*

‡ *Vulgus ad magnitudinem beneficiorum aderat: acul-*  
*tissimus*

cence and generosity, and some were mad enough to purchase from him: wiser men looked upon such concession, which could not subsist without the ruin of the state, as idle, and of no value.

The army at Mævania desired strongly to be favoured with the emperor's presence. He went, attended with a crowd of senators, some of whom he took with him to form his train, but the greater number because he distrusted and feared them. The same irresolution that followed him elsewhere, went with him to the camp, and fitted him to be the dupe of perfidious counsels. A prodigious flight of crows that hovered over him whilst he harangued the soldiers, and the resistance of a victim that fled from the altar, and was not killed till at some distance from the place were it was to be offered up, were looked upon as very bad omens. But \* the worst omen of all, was Vitellius himself, who had no idea of war, was always dubious and at a loss, betraying his ignorance by repeated idle questions, about the order to be observed by an army on a march, the measures to be taken to reconnoitre an enemy, and the methods to be used to hasten or prolong a war, trembling at ever news that came, and discovering his fear by his pale looks and tottering steps, and then getting drunk to drown thought.

He

*Uisimus quisque pecunia mercabatur. Apud sapientes cassa habebantur, quæ neque dari, neque accipi salva Republica poterant. Tac.*

\* Sed præcipuum ipse Vitellius ostentum erat, ignarus militiæ, improvidus consilli, quis ordo agminis, quæ cura explorandi, quantus urgendo trahendove bello modus, alios rogitans, & ad omnes nuncios vultu quoque & incessu trepidus, dein temulentus. *Tac.*

A.R. 920. He soon grew tired of the camp, and being  
 A. C. 69. informed of the defection of the Misænum  
 fleet, returned to Rome in great consternation :  
 for his soul received a new impression of ter-  
 ror \* at each misfortune that befel him, whilst  
 the general danger of his situation seemed not  
 to affect him at all. If he had had the least  
 judgment or understanding, it was plain he  
 ought to have passed the Apennine mountains  
 with his fresh troops, and attacked the enemy,  
 worn out with the fatigues of a hard campaign,  
 and greatly distressed for want of provisions.  
 Instead of that, he lost time, divided † his  
 army into small detachments, and by that  
 means delivered up to be butchered, brave men,  
 obstinately resolved to stand by him to the last.  
 The best and most experienced of the centu-  
 rions disapproved of that step, and would have  
 said so had they been asked their opinions.  
 Those whom Vitellius most confided in kept  
 them at a distance : but the prince was most  
 to blame in rejecting every good advice that  
 was offered, and listening to none but those  
 who, whilst they strove to please, were in fact  
 undoing him.

The Misæ-  
 num fleet  
 declares for  
 Vespasian.  
*Tac. Hist.*  
 x. 57.

Every thing about him melted away. The  
 Misænum fleet, as I have said, had just betray-  
 ed him, and drew with it the greatest part of  
 Campania. The author of that defection was a  
 centurion,

\* *Recentissimum quodque vulnus pavens, summi discriminis incuriosus. Tac.*

† *Dum dispergit vires acerrimum militem, & usque in extrema obstinatum, trucidandum capiendumq; tradidit : peritissimis Centurionum dissentientibus, & si consulerentur, vera dicturis. Arcuere eos intimi amicorum Vitellii, ita formatis Principis auribus, ut aspera que utilia, nec quidquam nisi jucundum & læsurum acciperet. Tac.*

centurion, ignominiously broke by Calba: A.R. 820.  
 so capable \* is the audaciousness of a single A. C. 69.  
 man to produce the greatest and most unexpected revolutions in civil wars. That traitor, whose name was Claudius Faventinus, forged letters in Vespasian's name, promising great rewards to all such as should espouse his cause; and by that means gained over the soldiers, who met with no obstruction from their commander Claudius Apollinaris, for † he himself wavered, but wanted vigour and resolution to back his treasonable inclinations. Apinius Tiro, an ancient prætor, who happened by mere accident to be at Minturni, fortified that place, and took upon him the command of it. They acted in concert, and after having made the fleet declare, applied to the several towns of Campania, who made no difficulty to follow their example; unless it be, that the zeal the inhabitants of Puzzola expressed for Vespasian, made Capua espouse the contrary party, in consequence of the rivalship between those two towns, which shewed itself ‡ even when so important a point was at stake.

Vitellius hearing what had past, sent Claudius Julianus, who had lately had the command of the Misænum fleet, and was greatly beloved by the soldiers, to try to bring them back to their duty. Julianus had with him one of the city cohorts, and a troop of gladiators; a new reinforcement for their adversaries, who found no difficulty in bringing  
 over

\* *Tantum civilibus discordiis etiam singulorum audacia valet. Tac.*

† *Neque fidei constans, neque strenuus in perfidia.*

‡ *Municipalem æmulationem bellis civilibus miscbant. Tac.*

A.R.820. over to them both the commander and his  
 A.C.69. men. They all took up their quarters in Terracina, a town strong by its situation, well judging, that so near Rome they would soon be attacked. In effect, Vitellius dividing the army he had in Umbria, left the greatest part of it at Narnia \* with the two prætorian prefects; and detached six cohorts and five hundred horse, who marched towards Terracina, under the command of L. Vitellius the emperor's brother.

Terracina taken possession of by the soldiers of the fleet, and their associates.  
 \* Narni.

Momentary zeal of the city of Rome in favour of Vitellius.

Vitellius began to be sensible of the danger he was in, when he found himself, as it were, enclosed between Primus's victorious army in Umbria on one side, and the new rebels of Campania on the other. His hopes were however elated for a few moments by a vain and frivolous resource. The people of Rome were for taking arms, and the prince's freemen advised him to take advantage of that favourable disposition. He consulted them only; for all his friends, and especially those whom he had most promoted, had forsaken him. Vitellius following their advice, cited the tribes to repair to him; and promised, that after the victory he would dismiss such as should enlist, and grant them the rewards and privileges of veterans. The multitude of those that offered themselves was so great, that he ordered the consuls to finish the levying of those troops, the silly emperor trusted to that weak prop, calling a despicable mob \*, brave in talk only, his army and his legions.

The

\* *Vulgus ignavum, & nihil ultra verba ausurum, falsa specie, exercitum & legiones appellat. Tac.*



The whole city stirred in favour of Vitellius,<sup>A. R. 820.</sup> moved by one of those sudden starts which ea-<sup>A. C. 69.</sup>sily communicate from one to the other, and as readily subside, being seldom directed by reason. The Roman knights, with a numerous body of the freemen, offered their money and personal service. The senators agreed to tax themselves at certain sums, and to furnish a number of slaves for soldiers. Fear \* began, and pity coming in to its aid, inspired them with favourable sentiments. Vitellius's person was less the object of it, than their concern to see the supreme rank so degraded, and reduced to such humiliation. Vitellius's speeches, his actions, tears, and great promises, the usual effects of fear, likewise moved them. Then it was that he first took the name of Cæsar, which he had always refused before: but he was in a situation, in which men are apt to lay as great a stress on vulgar ideas, as on the wisest councils; and he superstitiously hoped that name, always thought fortunate, would be a safeguard and protection to him.

This gust of good fortune, which seemed to flatter Vitellius, lasted but a moment. An ardour † void of motive goes out as soon as kindled.

\* *Ea simulatio officii* \*, a metu profecta, verterat in favorem. Et plerique laud perinde Vitellium, quam casum, locumque principatus miserabantur. Nec deerat ipse, vultu, voce, lacrymis, misericordiam elicere, largus promissis, & quæ natura trepidantium est, immodicus. Quia & Cæsarem se dici voluit, aspernatus antea: sed tunc, superstitione nominis, & quia in metu consilia prudentium & vulgi rumor juxta audiuntur. *Tac.*

† *Omnia inconsulti impetus cepta, initiis valida, spatium languescunt.* *Tac.*

\* I have made a small correction in the text, after Helmsius and Rivinius, which to me appears necessary. Most of the editions have *officia metu profecta*.

A. R. 820. kindled. All began to withdraw: the senators and knights excused themselves from performing their promises, first, by avoiding the Emperor's presence, but afterwards openly; so that Vitellius, not having power to force them, ceased to ask what they would not grant.

The cohorts opposed against Primus are forced to submit. *Tac. Hist. III. 59.*

At the same time the strongest body of troops that still remained faithful, was forced to abandon him, and leave Primus a free passage to Rome. Italy thought the war was going to be renewed, when Vitellius's prætorian cohorts took possession of Mævania, and made it their place of arms. But that cowardly emperor's hasty retreat, made every one sensible there was no danger of farther battles, and determined several nations in favour of his rival. The Sammites, Pelignians, and Marsi, declared for Vespasian, and vying in emulation with Campania, brought \* with them all the zeal and ardour of men newly engaged.

Primus's legions passed the Apennine mountains without meeting any other obstacle than the snow, bad weather, and difficulty of the roads. This was in the month of December; and the incredible fatigues they suffered only in crossing the mountains, prove how doubtful success would have been had the enemy opposed them at the same time.

There they met with Petilius Cærealis, who had made his escape from the guards Vitellius had set over him, disguised like a peasant; and he was well acquainted with the country. Cærealis was very nearly related to Vespasian, and a good

\* Ut in novo obsequio, ad cuncta belli munia acres erant. *Tac.*

a good warrior, having served with distinction A. R. 820.  
in Britain. He was therefore ranked among A. C. 69.  
the commanding officers.

Many were of opinion, that Flavius Sabinus and Domitian, the one brother, and the other son to Vespasian, who were then in Rome, might likewise have made their escape. Primus offered them the means, sending them instructions what road to take, and where to go to be in safety. Sabinus being old and infirm, was afraid of the fatigue of flight. Domitian was very willing to go, but was too closely watched; and though his guards seemed disposed to assist him, he would not trust them, fearing their offers were only meant as snares. Nor had Vitellius any bad design against either Sabinus or Domitian, but spared his adversary's family, in order to save his own.

Primus having passed the Apennine mountains, marched to Carsulum \*, where he resolved to halt to rest his troops, and wait the coming up of the legion sent for from Verona, of which he had only detachments with him. The place where he was, was very proper for an encampment, being a high ground which overlooked a great extent of land, and could be well supplied with provisions from several rich neighbouring towns. Besides that, Vitellius's troops being but ten miles off at Narnia, Primus was in hopes of having a conference with them, and of being able to bring them over without fighting.

Primus's soldiers preferring victory to peace, were not over fond of that state of inaction:  
nor

\* This town, long since destroyed, was situated between Todi and Spoleta

A. R. 820. nor were they much pleased with waiting for  
 A. C. 69. the legions, who they thought were coming to share the booty, rather than their danger. Primus having assembled them, represented, "That Vitellius still had forces able to resist, " if they remained faithful to him, and even to " become formidable if drove to despair. That " in all beginnings of civil wars much must " be trusted to fortune, but that victory was " to be completed by wise councils and mature deliberation. That the Misænum fleet, " and the fine country of Campania, had " abandoned Vitellius, and all he had remaining out of the empire of the world, was the " district between Terracina and Narnia. You " have gained sufficient glory, added he, by " the battle of Cremona, and the taking of " that town has brought too much hatred upon you. Your design ought to be, not to " take Rome, but to save it. You will have a " right to expect the greatest rewards and infinite honour, if you deliver the senate and " Roman people from a shameful bondage, " without shedding the blood of your fellow " citizens." These remonstrances took effect and pacified the soldiers, and the legions they expected arrived soon after.

The news of the increase of Primus's forces, struck a terror on the adverse cohorts, whose fidelity began to waver. None exhorted them to continue the war, but many of their officers advised them to change sides, hoping to make a merit of it with the conqueror, and expecting to be the more esteemed, if each carried over the troop under his command. They kept up a correspondence with Primus, and gave him

him intelligence, that he might easily make himself master of a body of four hundred horse then in Interamna \*. Arrius Varus was immediately dispatched with a detachment of chosen troops to attack them. But few resisted, and they were killed: most of the others laying down their arms, submitted; whilst some fled to their camp, where they increased the alarm, by exaggerating the enemy's strength and valour, to lessen their own shame. Thus were all things disposed for a general defection. Cowardice was not punished: desertion did not fail to be rewarded: the only emulation among the officers was, who should be most perfidious: tribunes and centurions were continually passing over to the enemy: the common soldiers still held out obstinately, till the two prætorian prefects, Priscus and Alphænus, leaving the camp also and going to Vitellius, set an example every man thought he might follow without shame, and like them abandon a desponding party.

The soldiers, however, still flattered themselves with a chimerical hope. Uninformed of the fate of Valens, or not believing it, they imagined that general had penetrated into Germany, where he would collect all the troops left on the Rhine, add others to them, and soon arrive with a formidable army. The chiefs of the adverse party put an end to those hopes, by causing Valens to be killed at Urbino, to which place he had been brought prisoner; and shewed his head, that none might doubt what was become of him. Valen's reputation was so great, that both parties looked upon the war as at an end by his death.

He

Valens is killed at Urbino, by order of the conquerors.

A. R. 820. He \* was born at Agnania, of an equestrian  
 A. C. 69. family. He was a man of pleasure, and had  
 that turn of mind which forms what is gene-  
 rally called an agreeable companion. He ap-  
 peared on the stage at the juvenile games in  
 Nero's time, being at first forced to it, but  
 afterwards took a pleasure he did not attempt  
 to conceal in that ignoble exercise, in which he  
 succeeded better than became a man of his  
 rank. When commander of a legion in Ger-  
 many he wanted to place Virginus on the  
 throne, and afterwards became his accuser.  
 He killed Fonteius Capito, either after he had  
 corrupted his fidelity, or because he could not  
 corrupt it. A traitor to Galba, and faithful  
 to Vitellius, he owed most of his reputation to  
 the perfidy of others.

Vitellius's unfortunate troops, forsaken and  
 deprived of all hopes, resolved to submit to  
 the conqueror. It was a very humiliating ce-  
 remony for those brave men, to march out of  
 Narnia with their colours and ensigns, and  
 yield themselves up to the discretion of the  
 enemy, who waited for them in the plain,  
 drawn up in battle array. Primus's troops  
 surrounded them, whilst he spoke to them with  
 mildness, and ordered part back to Narnia,  
 and part to Interamna, leaving with them suf-  
 ficient

\* Natus erat Valens Agnaniæ, equestri familia, procax  
 moribus, neque absurdus ingenio famam urbanitatis, per  
 lasciviam petere. Ludicro Juvenalium sub Nerone, ve-  
 lut ex necessitate, mox sponte mimos actitavit, scitè ma-  
 gis quam probe. Legatus legionis, & fovit Virginium,  
 & infamavit. Fonteium Capitonem in proditorem cor-  
 ruptum, seu quia corrumpere nequiverat, interfecit.  
 Galbæ proditor, Vitellio fidus, & aliorum perfidia illus-  
 tratus. Tac.

ficient forces to prevent their attempting a rebellion, but with orders likewise not to molest them if they behaved well. A. R. 820.  
A. C. 69.

Vitellius, unable to defend himself any longer, was reduced to the necessity of chusing, either to die in arms, if he had been capable of so brave a resolution, or to negotiate with the victor, and make the best terms he could. Vitellius  
disposed to  
abdicate.  
Tac. Hist.  
III. 63. This last is the step he would have taken if he had been his own master. His stupid \* insensibility would have suffered him to forget his having been emperor, if others could likewise not have remembered it. That would have been a great advantage to Rome, which would not then have felt the calamities of war, and where Vespasian would have been acknowledged as readily, as if the empire had belonged to him by right of inheritance. The contrary happened, much against the will of all the commanders of the victorious party. Primus had declared to his soldiers, that his desire was to end the war by agreement, rather than by force of arms, and in consequence of the system made overtures to Vitellius. Mucian too, was for treating with him. But the negotiation was carried farthest by Flavius Sabinus; and would have succeeded, had it not been for the insuperable obstinacy of Vitellius's soldiers.

Flavius Sabinus was, as I have already often said, elder brother to Vespasian, and præfect of Rome, by virtue of which post he had the command of the city cohorts. If he had followed the advice of the chief senators, he would have He settles  
the conditions with  
Flavius  
Sabinus.

\* *Tanta torpedo invaserat animi sua, ut si Principem cum falsæ ceteri non meminissent, ipse oblivisceretur. Tac*

A. R. 820. have endeavoured to share the honour of the  
 A. C. 69. victory, by making himself master of the capital. They represented to him, how easy an enterprize it was, "That, besides the troops  
 " under his command, he might depend on the  
 " watch, the slaves of those who spoke to him,  
 " and above all, on the prosperous fortune of  
 " a party, to which all obstacles gave way.  
 " That Vitellius had only a few cohorts left,  
 " and those discouraged by a series of bad success. That the people, who then seemed  
 " well affected towards him, might change  
 " those sentiments in a moment; and that if  
 " he acted with vigour, and put himself at  
 " their head, the adulations then lavished on  
 " Vitellius, would soon be given to Vespasian.  
 " That Vitellius was in himself contemptible  
 " to the highest degree, incapable of bearing  
 " prosperity, and much less able to struggle  
 " against the misfortunes that overwhelmed  
 " him on all sides. That he ought not to  
 " leave all to Primus and Varus. That whoever  
 " ever brought the city over to Vespasian's  
 " side, would have the merit of finishing the  
 " war. That it would well become him to  
 " take the empire as in trust for his brother;  
 " and Vespasian would have very just reason  
 " to honour him above all, and prefer him to  
 " every other person."

Sabinus heard them with great composure, and seeming indifference, which made some think him jealous of his brother's fortune. In effect, before Vespasian's elevation to the empire, Sabinus surpassed him in power and riches: and as no man is pleased with falling lower, some misintelligence was feared between the



two brothers, concealed under the appearance of union and friendship. It would be more charitable, and perhaps more agreeable to truth, to think that Sabinus, naturally mild and gentle, was averse to bloodshed and slaughter; and that finding an opening to induce Vitellius to make a voluntary cession of the throne, he thought pacific means the most eligible. He had several private conferences with him, and the affair was at last concluded in the temple of Apollo. Vitellius was to abdicate the empire, in consideration of a pension of a hundred \* millions of sesterces: his expences for house-keeping to be defrayed, and he at liberty to spend the rest of his days on the delightful coast of Campania. Cluvius Rufus, and Silius Italicus, both of consular dignity, were witnesses and sureties to the agreement: and crowds † of distant spectators observed their looks. Meanness was pictured in Vitellius's: Sabinus was far from insulting over him, seeming rather to pity and take compassion on him.

Every thing was settled, and would have remained quiet, if those who were about Vitellius had been as tractable as himself: but they opposed the agreement, telling him how shameful, dangerous, and uncertain it would be, since it must depend on the victor's caprice. "Vespasian, said they, will never have pride enough to bear the sight of Vitellius reduced to a private station. Your conquered friends  
" will

\* Eight hundred thousand pounds.

† *Vultus procul viscentibus notabantur: Vitellii pro-  
jectus & degener, Sabinus non insultans, & miseranti  
propior. Tac.*

A. R. 920. " will not be able to brook such indignity,  
 A. C. 69. " and the pity they will feel for you, will ex-  
 " pose you to new dangers. You have indeed  
 " attained an age, at which the vicissitudes of  
 " fortune may have given you a dislike to  
 " grandeur, and make you wish for retire-  
 " ment. But what is to become of your son  
 " Germanicus? What is his fate to be? What  
 " rank is he to hold in the Republic? And  
 " you yourself, can you depend on that peace-  
 " ful retreat that is promised you? If Vespasian is once possess of the empire, neither  
 " he, nor his friends, nor armies, will think  
 " themselves safe so long as a rival family sub-  
 " sists. Fabius Valens, though a prisoner, and  
 " loaded with chains, gave them such um-  
 " brage, that they thought it necessary to kill  
 " him: nor will Primus, Varus, and Mucian,  
 " the honour and support of that party, have  
 " any other power with regard to Vitellius,  
 " than that of prosecuting him unto death.  
 " Cæsar did not spare Pompey's life, nor Au-  
 " gustus Antony's. Can more elevated senti-  
 " ments be expected from Vespasian, who was  
 " a client of your father Vitellius, whilst  
 " Vitellius was colleague with Claudius? No,  
 " rather \* remember your father, censor and  
 " thrice consul: remember the honours your  
 " family has enjoyed, and let despair inspire  
 " you

\* Quin, et censuram patris, ut tres Consulatus, ut tot egregie domus honores deceret, desperatione saltem ad audaciam accingeretur. Perstare militem: superesse studia populi. Denique nihil atrocius eventurum, quam in quod sponte ruant. Moriendum victis, moriendum deditis: id solum referre, novissimum spiritum per ludibrium & contumelias effundant, an per virtutem. Tac.

“ you with courage. The soldiers are invio-  
 “ lably attached to you, and the people love  
 “ you with an ardent zeal. At all events, no-  
 “ thing worse can happen than what we are  
 “ rushing into of our own accords. If con-  
 “ quered, we die : and if we trust to the ene-  
 “ my’s mercy, our fate is the same : death is  
 “ inevitable every way : the only thing in our  
 “ power to chuse is, whether we will die with  
 “ glory, or with shame.”

Vitellius’s ears were shut to all generous councils. He sunk under the load of his misfortunes, and his uneasiness for his family quite overwhelmed him : he feared too obstinate a resistance might irritate the conqueror against his wife and children. He had a mother too, whose age and virtues were infinitely respectable, but her opportune death preceded a few days the ruin of her family. She died, reaping \* no other fruit from her son’s high fortune, but causes of grief, and a good reputation. According to Suetonius, many were of opinion *Suet. Vit.* that lady did not die a natural death. Some <sup>14.</sup> said, that her son refused her food during her illness, on account of a pretended prediction of a woman in the country of the Catti, promising him a long and happy reign if he survived his mother. Others say, that Sextilia herself, tired of life, and dreading the misfortunes that were falling on her family, obtained, without much difficulty, Vitellius’s leave to hasten her death by poison. The contrariety of these reports lessens their weight, and Tacitus’s silence strengthens our doubts. Vitellius is already

\* Nihil principatum filii assecuta, nisi luctum & bonam famam. *Tac.*

A. R. 820. criminal enough without the additional guilt  
A. C. 69. of parricide, either actually committed, or consented to.

Vitellius  
abdicates.  
The people  
and soldiers  
oppose it,  
and force  
him to re-  
turn to the  
palace.  
*Tac. Hist.*  
III. 67.

On the eighteenth of December this unhappy prince, being informed of the defection of the troops at Narnia, who had been forced to swear allegiance to his enemy, went \* out of the palace, cloathed in mourning, and followed by all his household, extremely afflicted and dejected. His son, a child, was carried in a small litter. Their march seemed like that of a funeral procession. The people still heaped flatteries upon him, whilst the soldiers followed in sullen menacing silence.

A man must have been void of all feeling and compassion to have beheld without concern, the melancholy fate of a Roman emperor, lately master of the whole universe, now walking through an immense crowd of his own subjects, towards the most public part of his capitol, to make a solemn abdication of his rank and power. Such a thing had never before been seen nor heard of. The dictator Cæsar, and after him Caligula, perished by a conspiracy.

\* Pullo amictu Palatio degreditur mœsta circum familia. Simul ferebatur lecticula parvulus filius, velut in funebrem pompam. Voces populi blandæ & intempestivæ: miles minaci silentio. Nec quisquam adeo rerum humanarum immemor, quem non commoveret illa facies: Romanum Principem, & generis humani paulo ante dominum, velicta fortunæ suæ sede, per populum, per urbem, exire de Imperio. Nihil tale viderant, nihil audierant. Repentina vis Dictatorem Cæsarem oppresserat, occulta Cælium insidiæ: nox & ignotum rus, fugam Neronis absconderant: Piso & Galba tanquam in acie ceciderant. In sua consensione Vitellius, inter suos milites, prospectantibus etiam feminis, pœna & presenti mœstitiæ congruentia locutus, &c. *Tac.*

racy. Nero's flight was hid by the darkness of the night, and few were witnesses to his death. Galba and Piso were killed, as it were in battle. But Vitellius, in the midst of his people, surrounded by his soldiers, and in the sight of even the women, whose curiosity had brought them to see so extraordinary an event, with a sorrowful heart, renounce the empire.

He read his act of renunciation, whereby he declared in few words and with many tears, that, for the peace and welfare of the republic, he resigned the supreme power; begging those who heard him, still to remember him, and take pity on his brother, wife, and infant children. At the same time, taking up his son in his arms, he presented and recommended him to each of the great men in particular, and to the whole people in general. His tears stifling his speech, he took off his sword from his side, to signify that he gave up all power of life and death, and presented it to the consul Cæcilius Simplex who stood next him. The consul refused to take it; and the whole assembly unanimously cried out against it: on which Vitellius retired, going towards the temple of concord, to divest himself of the badges of supreme command, and from thence proceed to his brother's house. The cries of the people grew louder than ever: they would not suffer him to take up his abode in a private house, but insisted on his returning to the palace, blocking up every other way, and leaving none open but that which lead to the sacred street. Vitellius disconcerted, and prevented from executing his resolution, was forced to yield to the

A.R. 820. the desires of the multitude, who conducted  
 A.C. 69. him back to the palace.

Battle, in  
 which Sa-  
 binus was  
 worsted.  
 He retires  
 to the ca-  
 pitol.

Before the ceremony of the abdication was performed, a report was already spread, that Vitellius had renounced the empire: in consequence of which, Sabinus wrote to the tribunes of the German cohorts, desiring them to keep their troops within proper bounds. In all revolutions, every one strives to be first to worship a rising fortune. And accordingly the chief of the senators, with a great number of Roman knights, the officers and soldiers of the city cohorts, and those of the watch, hurried in crowds to pay their court to Sabinus. They were greatly surprised to learn there, that the business was not yet done; that the people began to take fire for Vitellius, and that the angry troops began to menace and grow outrageous. They had gone too far to recede: and those who formed a court about Sabinus, concluded they could not be safe if they separated, but must become an easy prey to Vitellius's soldiers, turned their personal fears into party zeal, and exhorted the city præfect to take arms.

But \*, as is generally the case on those occasions, all were forward to advise, but few ready to share the danger. Sabinus went out, but badly attended, and was soon met by a body of soldiers of the contrary party. A battle ensued, and Sabinus being worsted, was forced to take shelter in the capitol, after losing some of his men. Besides the soldiers under his command, some senators and knights shut themselves

\* Sed, quod in ejusmodi rebus accidit, consilium ab omnibus datum est, periculum pauci sumpserunt. Tac.

selves up with him, whose names Tacitus says A.R. 820. he could not well tell, because numbers, after A. C. 69. Vespasian had gained a complete victory, falsely assumed the honour of having ventured their lives for him on that occasion. Some ladies too, were courageous enough to enter into that fortress just ready to be besieged. All of them accompanied their relations or husbands, one excepted, Verulana Gracilia, whose only motive was her love for war.

Vitellius's troops, courageous enough to The capitol besieged and taken by Vitellius's soldiers. brave danger, though strangers to discipline, and unable to bear fatigue, kept so loose a guard about the capitol, that Sabinus found means to bring his children thither, with his nephew Domitian. He likewise dispatched a courier with letters to the chiefs of the victorious army, acquainting them with the situation he was in, and desiring their speedy assistance. In other respects, he past the night so quietly, that he might have gone out, and taken shelter elsewhere without danger.

At break of day, before any hostilities began, he sent Cornelius Martialis, an officer of distinction to Vitellius to complain of the infraction of their agreement, of the slaughter committed the evening before, and the siege he was obliged to sustain in the capitol. And to shew how unjust their treatment of him was, he added in the letter which Martialis carried :

“ I took no part in the war, but kept myself  
 “ within the sphere of senator, whilst the  
 “ quarrel was deciding betwixt you and Vespasian, by the battles of your legions, the  
 “ taking of towns, and the desolation of all  
 “ Italy. Spain, Britain and Gaul revolted.  
 “ whilst

A.R. 820. " whilst Vespasian's brother remained faithful  
 A. C. 69. " to you, until you yourself solicited him first  
 " to enter into treaty. Peace \* and concord  
 " are useful to the conquered, whilst they are  
 " only glorious to the conquerors. If you re-  
 " peat the steps you were pleased to take, it  
 " is not me that you ought to attack with vio-  
 " lence, after having deceived me by a breach  
 " of faith; it is not Vespasian's son, scarce  
 " past his infancy, that you ought to blame.  
 " What will you gain by the death of an old  
 " man, and a youth of fifteen? Go, meet the  
 " legions, dispute your rights with them; the  
 " event of the battle will determine all."

To these reproaches, Vitellius returned only excuses in answer, laying the blame on the soldiers, whose too great audour he could not prevent: but advised Martialis to go out privately at a back-door, for fear the message he had brought should cost him his life, the soldiers being quite averse to all thoughts of peace. Thus † Vitellius, having no power either to command or forbid any thing, was no longer emperor, but all the motive and occasion of the war.

Martialis had scarce got back to the capitol, when the German cohorts began the attack. They had no officer to command them, but each soldier took orders from himself and his own fury. They had not given themselves time to bring up any of their engines for war, nor to provide the proper kind of arrows then used  
 in

\* *Pacem & concordiam victis utilia, victoribus tantum videri esse Tac.*

† *Ipsæ eque jubet cunctis veteri potens, non jam Imperator, sed tantum belli causa erat. Tac.*



in sieges, but with no other arms than their swords advanced on to the gates of the citadel, amidst a shower of tiles and stones, poured down from the tops of the portico's from each side of the street. They set fire to the gates, and would have forced their passage through the gates, had not Sabinus formed a kind of rampart of the statues, of which he had numbers at hand. Those monuments of the glory of the old Roman heroes, heaped one upon another, stopped the assailants.

They did not however give over for that, but formed their attack in two other places, in one of which they succeeded, on the side of Romulus's asylum\*. Private persons had been suffered to build there, because the peace that Rome, then mistress of the universe, enjoyed, left no room to apprehend war, and houses were built up to the very walls of the capitol. Vitellius's soldiers fought from the tops of those houses, with such advantage, as could not possibly be resisted. Fire was made use of under those unhappy circumstances, whether by the assailants, who wanted to force their way into the capitol; or, as was more generally thought, by the besieged, who hoped by that means, to put a stop to the enemy's progress, is uncertain. The fact is, that the fire spreading from one part to another, at last gained the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, which was entirely consumed.

Tacitus † deplors this event, as the most melancholy and shameful that ever happened to

\* *Id facinus post conditam urbem luctuosissimum fieri dissimulatumque populo Romano accidit: nullo externo hoste,*

A. R. 820.  
A. C. 69.

\* See Hist. of the Roman Republic, B. 1.

The temple of Jupiter burnt.

A. R. 570. to the Roman people. At a time, says he, A. C. 69. when no enemies were concerned, when the gods would have been propitious to us, if our crimes had not been a bar to their protection, the abode of Jupiter Capitolinus, deemed by our pious ancestors the test of the duration of our empire, that august edifice, whose sanctity neither Porsenna, to whom Rome surrendered, nor the Gauls who took it, had dared to violate, perished by the fury of our own princes. It was burnt before in Sylla's war \*, but that was by the treachery of some particular persons: now it was besieged in form, and set on fire openly. What was the object of our arms? What † could be expected to compensate so fatal a loss?

If the besieged were the authors of the conflagration, they did not reap the fruits of their crime; for the German cohorts wanted neither courage nor cunning when in danger; but on the contrary, ‡ the soldiers of the opposite

hoste, propitiis, si per mores nostros liceret, deis, sedem Jovis O. M. auspicato a majoribus pignus Imperii conditam, quam non Porsena dedita urbe, non Galli captâ, temerare potuissent, furore Principum excindi. Arserat & ante Capitolium civili bello, sed fraude privata. Nunc palam obscessum, palam incensum. Quibus armorum causis: quo tantæ cladis pretio pro patria bellavimus?

\* See Hist. of the Rom. Repub. Vol. X. p. 106.

† The Text of Tacitus is obscure in this place, and has probably been corrupted. I have made the most I could of it.

‡ Ex diverso trepidus miles, dux segniss, & veluti captivæ animi, non lingua, non auribus competere: neque alienis consiliis regi, neque sua expedire: huc illuc clamoribus hostium circummagi; quæ jusserat vetare, quæ veterat jubere. Mox, quod in perditis rebus solet, omnes præcipere, nemo exsequi. Postrem, objectum armis, inspectis & fallendi artes circumspectabant. Tac.



A. R. 520. of the temple; after which, a sensible honest  
 A. C. 69. freeman, putting one of the priest's garments  
 over him, he remained unknown among them  
 till the tumult was pretty well over, and then  
 retired to a friend's house, where he waited the  
 event. He afterwards erected two monuments  
 in memory of what had passed: the one in  
 his father's life-time, plain and modest, being  
 a small chapel in honour of JUPITER the PRE-  
 SERVER, in the place where the apartment of  
 the clerk or keeper of the temple stood, which  
 was pulled down, with an altar, and an in-  
 scription on the marble, setting forth what had  
 befallen him. The other was a magnificent  
 temple, built when he was emperor, and de-  
 dicated to THE GUARDIAN JUPITER, in which  
 he placed a statue of that god holding him in  
 his arms.

Death of  
 Sabinus.  
 His execu-  
 ter.

Sabinus and Atticus, loaded with chains,  
 were carried to Vitellius, who received him at  
 the top of the palace stairs, without emotion  
 or anger, to the great displeasure of those who  
 came to desire his leave to put them to death,  
 and to be rewarded for the service they pre-  
 tended to have done him. The most audaci-  
 ous exclaimed loudly with great rage and fury,  
 and were backed by a numerous mob. Some  
 menaced and others flattered, and all insisted  
 on Sabinus's death. Vitellius endeavoured to  
 move them by prayers and entreaties, but was  
 at last forced to yield to their perverse obsti-  
 nacy. They seized Sabinus directly, tore him  
 to pieces, cut off his head, and dragged his  
 body to the common place of execution.

Such

Such \* was the end of a man, by no means A.R. 820.  
 to be held in contempt. He served the re. A. C. 69.  
 public five and thirty years, and behaved with  
 honour both in peace and war. He never gave  
 any one room to accuse him of being covetous  
 or unjust: he was too talkative, and that  
 was the only failing his enemies could ever  
 tax him with, in the great employments he  
 held: for he was seven years governor of Macedonia,  
 and twelve years prefect of Rome. In  
 the catastrophe in which he perished, some  
 thought him timid and cowardly, whilst others  
 imputed it to his unwillingness to shed the  
 blood of the citizens. Whatever motive it be  
 ascribed to, it is certain he did not behave like  
 a man capable of heading any great enterprize:  
 and if what Tacitus assures us be true, that  
 Sabinus was the honour of his family before  
 Vespasian was raised to the empire; at least it  
 is plainly proved by facts, that Vespasian had  
 a better head, and more resolution than Sabinus.  
 His death was a satisfaction to Mucian: and  
 politicians thought it likewise of advantage  
 to the public tranquillity, because a perfect  
 harmony could hardly have subsisted between  
 two men who might have made equal claims,  
 the one as brother to the emperor, and the  
 other as having given him the empire.

The

\* Hic exitus fuit viri haud sane spernendi. Quinque & triginta stipendia in Republica fecerat, domi militiæque clarus. Innocentiam justitiamque ejus non argueres: sermone nimis erat. Id unum septem annis, quibus Macedonia, duodecim, quibus Praefecturam urbis obtinuit calumniatus est rumor. In fine vite alii segnem, multi moderatum & civium sanguinis parum credidere. Quod inter omnes constitit ante principatum Vespasiani in decu domus penes Sabinum erat. Tac.

A. R. 820. The people demanded the consul's death  
 A. C. 69. too ; but Vitellius persisted in refusing it. He was highly pleased at Quintius's declaring to whoever would hear it, that it was he who set fire to the capitol. Whether what he said was true or false, Quintius took upon himself the odium of that deplorable event, and acquitted Vitellius's party of it.

The town of Terracina surprised and sacked by L. Vitellius.

At the same time L. Vitellius, with his six cohorts, menaced and pressed Terracina, where, as I have said, the marines of the Misenum fleet, and a great number of gladiators, the former \* commanded by Apollinaris, and the latter by Julianus, had shut themselves up. Those two chiefs but ill deserved the name of commanders : their licentious rashness and extreme negligence fitted them rather for gladiators. They kept no guard, nor thought of fortifying the weak parts of the town : but taken up with their pleasures both day and night, they gave entertainments and concerts, making the soldiers subservient to their luxury, and talking of war only when they were at table. Apinius Tiro who had joined them, left Terracina, in order to visit the neighbouring towns, and raise contributions from them, by which he did the party much more hurt than good.

A slave found means to pass over from the town to L. Vitellius's camp, and offered to introduce

\* *Preerat . . Julianus gladiatoribus, Apollinaris remi-  
 ribus, lascivia socordiaque gladiatorum magis, quam  
 ducum similes. Non Vigiliis agere, non intuta incertum  
 firmare : noctu dieque fluxi, & amœna littorum person-  
 antes, in ministerium luxus dispersis militibus, de bello  
 ut in inter convivia loquebantur Tac.*

introduce his troops privately into the citadel. A. R. 820. His offer was accepted, and easily put in execution: the garrison, as supinely negligent as its commanders, was surprized in the dead of the night. Vitellius's men rushed sword in hand upon their enemies, and made a dreadful slaughter of them, some being quite unarmed, others suddenly awaked from their sleep, amazed and terrified by the horrors of the dark, the sound of trumpets, and the menacing shouts of the victors. Only a few gladiators made a brave defence, and sold their lives very dear; the rest ran towards their ships, where the tumult and confusion was not less than in the town. Several of the inhabitants flying with the soldiers were likewise killed with them. Six ships escaped at the very beginning of the tumult, and the commander of the fleet, Apollinaris, was as careful to save himself, as he had been negligent and remiss before. The rest of the ships were taken on the shore, and some of them sunk by the precipitate hurry of the crowds that boarded them, without considering how much they were overloaded by it. Julianus was taken and delivered up to L. Vitellius, who ordered him to be scourged severely, and then killed in his presence. It was reported at that time that Triaria, L. Vitellius's wife, striving to equal her husband's insolence and cruelty, appeared in the streets of Terracina with a sword by her side, insulting over the misfortunes of the wretched inhabitants, and encouraging the massacre and plunder of them.

The conqueror immediately dispatched a courier to his brother, with the news of his exploit:

A. R. 820. exploit; telling him at the same time, that he  
 A. C. 69. waited his orders either to return to Rome,  
 or remain in Campania, till that country should  
 be quite reduced. Vitellius had not time to  
 answer him, being prevented by the enemy's  
 becoming master of the city, and his person,  
 as I am going to relate: and it was a great  
 happiness, not only for Vespasian's party, but  
 for the republic too, that L. Vitellius did not  
 of his own accord resolve to hasten to Rome:  
 for the troops under his command, besides  
 their valour and obstinate fidelity, were at that  
 time greatly elated by their recent victory.  
 Himself \*, infamous as all his conduct was,  
 did not want activity, and vice produced in  
 him the same effects that love of good does in  
 virtuous men: so that Primus would have met  
 with some resistance on his arrival at Rome,  
 and the city might have perished in the con-  
 test. But it had enough to suffer without that:  
 the few troops that Vitellius had, were a suf-  
 ficient scourge to that capital of the world.

The victo-  
 rious army  
 did not  
 make haste  
 enough to  
 Rome.  
 Causes of  
 the delay.

The slowness and delays of Primus's victo-  
 rious army likewise contributed to the mis-  
 fortunes of Rome. If his troops had made  
 haste, they might have prevented the burning  
 of the capitol, and the death of Sabinus;  
 events which cut off all hopes of reconcilia-  
 tion between Vitellius and Vespasian. Instead  
 of marching on with dispatch, they stopt at  
 Otricoli, to celebrate the Saturnalian feasts,  
 whilst Rome was in the utmost confusion and  
 distress.

The

\* Quippe L. Vitellio, quamvis infami, inerat industria:  
 nec virtutibus, ut boni, sed, quomodo pessimus qui-que,  
 vitiis valebat. *Tac.*



The motive or excuse for so ill-timed a delay, was the pretended necessity of waiting for Mucian; though some were suspicious enough to accuse Primus of losing time purposely, because he was then in treaty with Vitellius, who offered him the consulship, and his daughter in marriage. Others rejected those reports as false and calumnious, and invented by Mucian's flatterers. And indeed it is hardly probable, that in the condition Vitellius then was, Primus, who had pulled him down, should think of raising him up again, by a treachery from which he could expect nothing but inevitable ruin. The most favourable, and perhaps the truest construction that can be put upon a delay, the consequences of which were so fatal, is, that all the generals of the victorious party, were desirous to save the city from the evils of war, and chose rather to threaten than to hurt it. Seeing Vitellius abandoned by his best troops, and absolutely destitute of all resource, they thought, not without reason, that the negociation already began for him to abdicate, would succeed. But Sabinus spoilt all, first by his precipitate rashness in taking up arms, and afterwards by his want of courage to defend the capitol, a place able to resist very powerful armies, but which did not hold out four and twenty hours against only three cohorts.

These reasons have undoubtedly some weight; but they do not fully justify either Mucian or Primus. The former sufficiently declared by the ambiguous expressions in his letters, that he desired to be waited for. The latter, out of an ill-timed complaisance, or rather to make

A. R. 820. his rival responsible for the event, did wait.  
 A. C. 69. In short, all the commanders of that party, persuading themselves the war was over, marked the end of it with bloody calamities. Even Cærealis, who had great vivacity and fire, made no use of it on this occasion. For, being sent to Rome with a thousand horse through the Sabine territories, and by the Sellarian way, he marched very slowly, and quite at his ease.

On the news of the capitol's being besieged the army marches forward. Vitellius's deputation rejected.

At last, the news of the capitol's being besieged roused them all from their lethargy, and forced them, but too late, to exert themselves. Primus arriving by the Flaminian way, at a place called Red-Stones, nine miles from Rome, learnt the burning of the capitol, and Sabinus's death. Cærealis, who was nearer, got thither before him; but had no cause to be much pleased with his diligence. Running on without precaution, thinking he had none but conquered troops to deal with, he was greatly surprized to find Vitellius's men drawn up in good order, horse and foot being intermixed to back and assist each other. A battle ensued not far from the city, between the houses and gardens. Vitellius's soldiers had the advantage of being best acquainted with the ground: besides which Cærealis's horse did not fight with equal zeal, several of them being of the number of those who had lately passed over to the victorious army near Narnia, and had not yet forgot their first engagement. Cærealis was beat: an officer of distinction called Tullius Flavianus made prisoner: the rest fled in disorder, and were pursued by the conquerors as far as Fidenæ.

This success animated the people in favour of Vitellius: the multitude, armed indeed,  
 not

not regularly, but with whatever each could A.R. 820.  
lay his hand on, demanded with loud cries to A.C. 69.  
be led on to battle. Vitellius received those  
proofs of their affection with joy, and expressed  
his gratitude for them: but being sensible such  
soldiers could make no resistance against victo-  
rious legions, he assembled the senate, and  
caused deputies to be appointed to go and in-  
vite the army to peace and concord, screening  
himself under the name of the Republic, and  
alleging the good of the empire.

The deputies divided, and met with differ-  
ent treatment. Those that applied to Cære-  
alis were in extreme danger from the fury of  
the soldiers, who would not hear of peace.  
Arulæus Rusticus, at that time prætor, and  
highly estimable for his merit and virtue, was  
wounded. Those that were with him dispersed  
and fled. The Lictor, who preceded him, at-  
tempting to keep off the mob, was killed on  
the spot: and if Cærealis had not appointed  
an escort to guard the deputies of the senate,  
the sacred character with which they were  
clothed would not have protected them, but  
the enraged citizens would have massacred  
them at the city gates, and been guilty of a  
crime that would have filled even strangers with  
horror. Those who went to Primus were re-  
ceived with greater respect, not that his troops  
were more reserved, but because he had a  
greater command over them.

With the deputies of the senate went, of his  
own accord, Musonius Rufus, a Roman knight,  
famous for his philosophical studies, and for-  
merly banished by Nero on that account: but  
who, like a true stoic, exaggerated virtue, and

A. R. 820. spoilt his good qualities by his indiscreet zeal.  
A. C. 69. This philosopher, as if he had been in his school among his disciples, preached up to the army the advantages of peace, and the misfortunes of war. Some laughed at, others were tired of him, and others again began to use him roughly. Terrified by their threats, and gently advised by some men of sense, he at last gave over displaying his wisdom, which suited neither the place, nor time, nor persons he was speaking to.

The Vestals too came out to meet Primus, bringing him a letter from Vitellius, wherein he desired only one day's delay, in order to resume the negotiation, and settle all things. Primus paid the Vestals all the honour due to their character, but answered Vitellius, that Sabinus's death, and the burning of the capitol, required vengeance, and cut off all possibility of treating.

Primus wished however to be able to spare Rome, and calling an assembly of the soldiers, endeavoured to prevail on them to encamp at Ponte-mole, and defer entering the city till the next day. He was apprehensive, that the resistance they would meet with, might induce them to spare neither the people, senate, nor temple of the gods. But it was not in his power to keep them back. Every delay seemed suspicious, and detrimental to their expected victory: the more so, as the colours they saw flying on the hills around Rome, though followed only by a despicable mob, indicated in their opinions a numerous army of enemies.

Accordingly

Accordingly they marched directly on, and dividing into three bodies, some continued on in the Flaminian way where they were ; another party took to the right along the Tiber, and a third division advanced towards the gate Colline. Vitellius's men were without the city walls. The militia raised among the people did not hold out a moment against the enemy's horse. The old soldiers stood their ground, and fought bravely. The place where they engaged not being open, but intersected by houses and buildings, the general action was divided into numbers of skirmishes, in which Vespasian's troops, being better governed, and commanded by better officers, had the advantage every where : only those who took to the left suffered greatly from the narrowness and difficulties of the streets : Vitellius's soldiers, getting up on the walls of the gardens, drove them back with showers of stones and arrows, till towards the evening, the gate Colline having been forced by Vespasian's horse, they were surrounded. A battle in form was likewise fought in the Campus Martius, and Vitellius's men, whose despair was their own resource, were conquered there too. Forced to retreat within the walls of Rome, they rallied there in small bodies, determined to hold out to the last extremity.

The people enjoyed the sight ; and, as if it had been a battle fought purposely to divert them, clapped their hands, and encouraged sometimes one, and sometimes the other party. When either of them was worsted, the spectators called out to the conquerors, to kill those that had taken shelter in the shops and houses.

The

A. R. 820.  
A. C. 69.  
The city  
taken.

A.R. 820. the victorious soldiers thought of nothing but  
A. C. 69. blood and slaughter, whilst the people took  
care to strip the slain.

Strange  
mixture of  
licentious  
diversions  
and cruel-  
ty.

The day on which this violence and slaugh-  
ter was committed, being one of the saturna-  
lian holidays, a season of pleasure and diversion  
in the nature of our Carnival, the appearance  
of \* things in Rome, was strange beyond all  
imagination. In one place was bloodshed and  
battle, in another baths open, and taverns full  
of drunkards: the greatest excesses of de-  
bauchery were committed amidst streams of  
blood, and heaps of dead bodies: every con-  
comitant of voluptuous idleness and licentious-  
ness was intermixed with all the horrors that  
attend the sacking of a town: so that the city  
seemed to be in a fit of fury and madness, and  
at the same time intoxicated with pleasure.

Rome had already seen armies of her own  
citizens fight against each other within her  
walls. Sylla had made her bleed twice, and  
Cinna once; nor were their victories attended  
with less cruelty. But what characterises the  
event I am now speaking of, is a difference that  
shocks humanity: pleasures and diversions suf-  
fered no interruption by it, as if what happen-  
ed

\* *Sæva ac deformis urbe tota facies. Alibi prælia & vulnera, alibi balneæ popinæque: simul cruor & strues corporum, juxta scorta, & scortis similes: quantum in luxurioso otio libidinum, quidquid in acerbissima captivitate scelerum: prorsus ut eandem civitatem & furere credens, & lascivire.*

*Confluxerant ante armati exercitus in urbe, bis L. Sulla, semel Cinna, victoribus, nec tunc minus crudelitatis: nunc inhumana securitas, & ne minimo quidem temporis voluptates intermissæ, vult fistis dubus id quoque gaudium ac cederet. Exsultabant, fruebantur, nulla partium cura, malis publicis, luti. T. c.*

ed had been a joyous addition to the festival. A. R. 820.  
Dancing, frolicking and laughing was all the A. C. 69.  
Romans minded: the public misfortunes gave  
them no concern, nor did they seem to care  
which side got the better.

The city was taken: but the prætorian camp, The prætorian camp forced. to which the bravest of the conquered had retreated, resolved to defend it as their last hope still resisted. The conquerors were bent on driving them from that asylum; and especially the old prætorians, broke by Vitellius and restored by Vespasian, were obstinate in it. All that the art of war had then invented for attacking the strongest places, was made use of against the walls of the camp. Each man encouraging his comrade, cried out, "The finishing stroke was then to be put to their work, and they should at least reap the reward of all the dangers and labours they had undergone. That they had restored the city to the senate and people, and the temples to the gods. But that the camp was the centre of the soldier's glory, his country, and ought to be dear to him as his household gods. That if they did not that instant force their way in, they would be obliged to spend the whole night under arms." The besieged on their side, thoughless numerous, and already so often conquered, would not hear of surrendering, but still obstinately persisted to dispute the victory. Covered with blood, they embraced their standards and altars, the last consolation of dying men: many struggling against death to their last grasp, expired on the tops of the towers and ramparts; and at last, when the gates were forced, the few remaining combatants

A. R. 820. combatants rushed upon the victors, and, ene-  
 A. C. 69. my like \*, died of the wounds they received  
 in their breasts, fond of preserving their ho-  
 nour to the last moment.

Vitellius's  
 tragical  
 death.  
*Tac. Hist.*  
 III. 85.  
*Suet. Vit.*  
 16, & 17.  
*Dio.*

Vitellius little deserved to have such brave  
 soldiers. The cowardice he had so often shewn,  
 and of which he gave fresh proofs at his death,  
 forms a very great contrast with the valour of  
 those who lost their lives in his cause. So  
 soon as he found the city was taken, he slipt  
 out of his palace by a back door, and was  
 carried in a chair to his wife's house on mount  
 Aventinus, taking with him only two of his  
 domestics, a cook, and a baker. His design  
 was, if he could remain there the rest of the  
 day undiscovered, to go to Terracina, and  
 throw himself into the arms of the cohorts  
 commanded by his brother. He did not con-  
 tinue long in the place he had chosen for his  
 retreat, but changing his mind, either † out  
 of mere fickleness, as Tacitus says, and be-  
 cause people who are terrified, are apt to think  
 every situation better than that they are in; or  
 rather, as Suetonius thinks, misled by a false  
 report that was spread of peace, he returned  
 to the palace. He found it quite deserted:  
 all, even the lowest of the slaves, had fled, or  
 avoided meeting him. Even his cook and  
 baker forsook him. The solitude ‡ of the  
 place,

\* Et cecidere omnes contrariis vulneribus, versi in  
 hostem. Ea cura etiam morientibus decori exitus fuit.  
*Tac.*

† Mobilitate ingenii, & quæ natura pavoris est, quum  
 omnia metuenti presentia maxime despiciunt. *Tac.*

‡ Terret solitudo, & tacentes locitentat clausa, in-  
 horrescit vacuis: fessusque misero errore, & pudenda  
 latebra semet occultans, ab Julio Placido tribuno cohorti  
 protrahitur. *Tac.*



place, and the silence that reigned throughout A. R. 820-  
the vast empty spaces, filled him with dread. A. C. 66-  
He opened the apartments, and shuddered with  
terror when he found them empty. At last,  
tired of running he knew not where, he tied  
about his waist a girdle filled with gold, and  
hid himself in the porter's lodge, near which  
a great dog was tied up. Suetonius adds, that  
he stopped up the door of the lodge (probably  
on the outside to prevent its being seen) with  
the bedding of the slave whose place he took.

This shameful asylum, as Tacitus justly calls  
it, could not save him. Those who were hunt-  
ing after him, finding no body in the palace,  
made a strict search, and forcibly dragging him  
from his lurking hole, asked him (for they did  
not know him) Where they could find Vitel-  
lius. He told them some lie or other at first,  
but it was not possible to deceive them long:  
he was soon known, and then stooped to the  
most humble prayers and supplications, beg-  
ging they would but spare his life, and he  
would be content to live in a prison; adding,  
that he had secrets to disclose which nearly con-  
cerned Vespasian. His prayers were not heard,  
and a tribune, called Julius Placidus \*, or-  
dered his hands to be tied behind him, a rope  
to be put about his neck, and his clothes to be  
torn off; in which condition he was dragged  
to the Forum like a criminal going to execu-  
tion: a sad, and dreadful sight, which how-  
ever only drew insults upon him and not tears,  
his

\* *Vinctæ post tergum manus: laniata veste, sedum  
spectaculum ducebatur, multis increpantibus, nullo illa-  
crymante: deformitas exitus misericordiam abutulerat.*  
*Tac.*

A.R. 820. his own infamy stifling all compassion. The  
 A. C. 69. mob pelted him with dirt and dung, pursuing him with a thousand invectives, calling him an incendiary, because the capital had been burnt, a glutton and a drunkard. Even his bodily defects were reproached him, his enormous size and red face, illuminated with wine, his great bully, and tottering walk, (for he had a weakness in his legs, occasioned by a blow he received from one of the chariots in the circus, when attending on Caligula there,) did not escape their censure. A soldier belonging to the German armies meeting him in that condition, drew his sword, and, either out of indignation, and to rescue him from such insults, or that he owed the tribune, and not Vitellius, a grudge, cut off the tribune's ear, for which he was killed on the spot.

Vitellius was still dragged along the sacred street, his hair being thrown back to shew his face, and the point of a sword held under his chin to prevent his stooping to hide his confusion. In that condition he was forced to see his own statues thrown down and stamped on, and to look at the place where Galba was murdered. After which he was dragged to the Gemoniæ, or common place of execution, where Sabinus's body lay. Vitellius shewed all this time the utmost lowness of soul, except on one occasion, when a tribune insulting him, he answered, "I have however been thy emperor." The soldiers who seized him took a barbarous pleasure in pricking him with the points of their swords, and hacking him piece-meal, to make him feel all the pangs  
 of

of a slow death: and \* the mob, always out-<sup>A.R.820.</sup>rageous and running into extremes, heaped as <sup>A. C. 69.</sup>many curses on him after his death, as they had praises whilst he lived. His body was dragged through the Tiber with a hook, and his head stuck on a pike, and carried through the city. His widow Galerica took care however to see him buried at last.

Such was the deplorable end of that emperor in the fifty-fifth year of his age. Vitellius was indebted to others for every thing he possessed. It † was not by his personal merit, but in virtue of his father's name and reputation, that he obtained the consulship, several priesthoods, and a distinguished rank in the city and senate. Those who raised him to the empire did not know him. It is very remarkable that, cowardly as he was, he was better beloved by the troops than many of the greatest and best generals had ever been. It must however be owned, that he was open and liberal, virtues which easily ruin a prince, when not conducted with prudence and discretion. He thought to make and secure himself friends  
by

\* Et vulgus eadem pro vitate insectabatur interfectum, qua fovet viventem. Tac.

† Consulatum, Sacerdotia, nomen locumque inter primos, nulla sua industria, sed cuncta patris claritudine adeptus. Principatum ei detulere qui ipsum non novissent. Studia exercitus raro cuiquam bonis artibus quæ sita perinde adfuerunt, quam huic per ignaviam. Inerat tamen simplicitas ac liberalitas, quæ, ni adsit modus, in exitium vertuntur. Amicitias dum magnitudine numerum, non constantia morum, continere putat, meritis magis quam habuit. Republicæ haud dubie intererat Vitellium vinci: sed imputare perfidiam non potest qui Vitellium Vespasiano prodidit, quum a Galba discivissent. Luc.

A.R. 820. by the greatness of his gifts, without backing  
A. C. 69. them by a continued series of virtuous deeds.

But the event shewed how much he was mistaken. It was certainly, says Tacitus, for the interest of the republic, that Vitellius should be conquered. But the men who abandoned and betrayed him to favour Vespasian, could claim no merit from that treachery, for they had served Galba so before.

Death of  
his brother  
and son.  
*Tac. Hist.*  
iv. 2.

Vitellius's whole family fell with him. His brother was marching towards Rome, at the head of the cohorts with which he had surprised Terracina. The citizens, easily terrified, and always ready to flatter the present reigning monarch, earnestly desired troops might be sent against L. Vitellius, and the remainder of the enemies destroyed. Their desires were granted. The victorious cavalry were sent to Africa, and followed by the legions, who however did not proceed beyond Bovillæ. L. Vitellius did not attempt to resist, but surrendered up himself and his cohorts to the conqueror's mercy: and his men \*, as much out of indignation as fear, laid down their unfortunate arms.

Those who surrendered were led, as in triumph, through the city, between two ranks of armed men. Not one of them had the air of a supplicant, but their looks spoke sorrow and  
bravery,

\* Et miles infelicia arma, haud minus ira quam metu, abiecit. Longus deditorum ordo, septus armatis, per urbem incessit. Nemo supplicii vultu, sed tristes & truces, & adversum plausus ac lasciviam insultantis vulgi immobiles. Paucos crumpere ausos circumjecti pressere: ceteri in custodiam conditi: nihil quisquam locutus indignum, & quanquam inter adversa, salva virtutis fama.  
*Tac.*

bravery. Nor could the insults of the populace force a complaint from them: on the contrary, some stepped out of their ranks to chastize the insolence of the mob, but were killed on the spot: the rest were locked up in prisons. They bore all without uttering a word unbecoming their courage, and preserved their glory unsullied in the depth of misery.

L. Vitellius suffered death. He was as bad as his brother, but more vigilant in his prosperity, of which he had a less share than of his adversity.

The emperor Vitellius's son, though very young, and having such an impediment in his speech, that he could barely articulate a word, likewise forfeited his life, for the dangerous honour of having a father clothed with the purple of the Cæsars. Mucian did not think proper to let that last branch of an enemy's family subsist: and his cruelty in that must have been the more odious, when compared with Vitellius's clemency towards Otho's and Vespasian's relations, not one of which were hurt by him; for Sabinus's death ought not to be laid to his charge.

Vitellius's daughter was however spared. Mucian let her live; and Vespasian, who did not act on the principal of a suspicious policy, found a suitable match for her, and gave her a handsome fortune.

Of all those who had an influence over Vitellius, none was hurt, but the freeman Asiaticus, who suffered the death ordained for slaves, and by that atoned for the ill use he had made of his power. The two prætorian prefects, Julius Præcus and Alphenus Varus, were

A.R. 820.  
A. C. 69.

*Tac. Hist.*  
iv. 80.  
*Suet Vit. 6.*  
& 19.  
*Div.*

Vespasian  
marries off  
his daughter.  
*Suet. Vesp.*  
c. 14.

The freeman  
Asiaticus  
suffers the  
death ordained  
for slaves.  
*Tac. Hist.*  
iv. 11.

A. R. 820. were only broke ; and it was without any manner of necessity that the former killed himself. His colleague enjoyed his life and liberty in peace.

Before I proceed to Vespasian's reign, I ought to give an account of some foreign wars, which more properly belong to Vitellius's. Such were those in Mœsia and Pontus : but especially the nether Germany was disturbed by a most violent war, which communicated to a part of Gaul ; and, proceeding from the intestine divisions and troubles of the Romans, after causing them very great losses, not without some mixture of shame and ignominy, could not at last be ended but by the restoration of the empire to tranquillity and good order, under the government of Vespasian. I shall begin with the slight insurrections in Mœsia and Pontus, which will require but few words.

SECT.

## SECT. III.

*Incursions of the Dacians into Mæsia stopt by Mucian. Insurrection in Pontus, quelled by Vespasian. Civilis, a Batavian, makes his nation revolt. The Romans driven out of the Batavian island. Civilis attempts to gain over the Gauls. Another Victory gained by Civilis over the Romans. Eight Batavian cohorts, old troops, who had long served in the Roman armies, join Civilis. He makes all his troops swear allegiance to Vespasian. He besieges the camp of Vetera. Flaccus marches to succour the besieged. Seditions perpetually breaking out. Flaccus retreats, and Vocula remains at the head of the enterprize. New seditions. Incursions of the Germans in alliance with Civilis. Civilis attempts in vain to force the camp of Vetera. The news of the battle of Cremona known in Germany. Civilis's intrigues to raise the Gauls. Civilis detaches part of his army to attack Vocula. Combat in which the Romans are conquerors. Vocula gains a second victory before Vetera; and makes the enemy raise the siege. Vocula loses the fruit of his victories. The camp of Vetera besieged again. Another Sedition. Flaccus is killed by his soldiers. What ensued after Flaccus's death, till the revolt of the Gauls.*

**T**HE Dacians, ever uneasy, thought of taking up arms again the moment they were delivered from fear by the absence of the Mæisian army, gone to attack Vitellius. They remained quiet however some time longer, A. R. 820.  
A. C. 69  
Incursions  
of the Da-  
cians into  
Mæsia,  
stopt by  
Mucian.  
waiting  
2. c. III. c.  
III. 46

A. R. 820. waiting the event of things. So soon as they  
 A. C. 69. knew that a civil war had broke out in Italy, and that the armies of the two contending parties had begun to engage, they proceeded to action, forced the winter quarters of the auxiliary troops, horse and foot, left by the Romans in that country, and, making themselves masters of both shores of the Danube, were preparing to attack the camp of the legions, who would not have been able to resist them. Mucian happened fortunately to be in those parts at that time. He had learnt the victory Antonius Primus had gained at Cremona, and being consequently in no violent hurry to get to Italy, undertook to check the incursions of the Dacians, sending his sixth legion against them, by which they were soon drove back beyond the river. In order to secure the tranquillity of that province more effectually, he gave the command of it to Fonteius Agrippa, late proconsul of Asia, together with part of the troops who, after fighting for Vitellius in Italy, were ordered back to Illyria, and whom it was policy to divide into different bodies, and employ in a war against a foreign enemy.

Insurrection in Pontus, quelled by Vespasian.

A mean slave, called Anicetus, was the cause of the war that broke out in Pontus. He was a freeman to Polemon, the last king of that country, who consented under Nero to have his kingdom reduced into a Roman province. Anicetus, all powerful under Polemon, found his condition greatly altered by the Roman government. He therefore took advantage of their intestine troubles, and, pretending great zeal for Vespasian, gained over the people bordering



bordering on the Euxine sea, and by promising great plunder and booty, secured the assistance of those whose desperate fortunes left them no other resource, and by that means soon saw himself at the head of an army, by no means contemptible. He attacked Trebisonde, an ancient Greek colony, and took it, cutting to pieces the garrison, which consisted of a cohort, originally composed of foreigners, who afterwards assuming the name of Roman citizens, and with that name, says Tacitus, took Roman arms and standards, retaining however all the licentiousness and indolence natural to the Greeks.

The Roman fleet in the Euxine sea had been weakened by Mucian; who had sent the best ships and soldiers belonging to it to Byzantium. Anicetus attacked with fire and sword what remained of that fleet; fell upon the coasts of Pontus, and the barbarians, becoming masters of the sea, over-run it with impunity in ships of a particular construction. Neither iron nor brass were used in building them. Their bottoms were wide, and sides narrow, and when the sea grew rough and stormy, they heightened those sides, by adding planks which met at top and formed a kind of roof. With these light vessels, which could not contain above five-and-twenty, or at most thirty men, they braved the dangers of the waves, sailing backwards as well as forwards, both head and stern being built alike.

Vespasian was informed of these disturbances before he left Judæa, and immediately sent a considerable detachment of good troops under the command of Viridius Geminus, a brave

A. R. §20. and experienced officer, who easily defeated an  
 A. C. 69. enemy ignorant of all discipline, and spread  
 about the country without order, in quest of  
 plunder. The barbarians found an asylum in  
 their ships. But Viridius had others built, and  
 overtook Amicetus at the mouth of a river,  
 which Tacitus calls Cohibus, where the rebel  
 thought himself secure under the protection of  
 the king of the Sedochezians, whom he had  
 gained over by making him great presents. In  
 fact, that king seemed at first disposed to de-  
 fend him with his arms; but when, on one  
 side, he was offered a certain subsidy if he gave  
 up Amicetus, and on the other threatened with  
 war if he refused, his fidelity, of which much  
 could not be expected from a barbarian, for-  
 sook him, and he was pretty easily prevailed  
 on to sell both the leader and his followers,  
 for a sum of money agreed on by both sides.  
 By that means the war in Pontus was ended  
 almost as soon as begun.

Civilis, a  
 Batavian,  
 makes his  
 nation re-  
 volt.  
*Tac. Hist.*  
 iv. 12.

Not so the Batavian war, of which I am go-  
 ing to speak. That nation, formerly a part of  
 the Catti in Germany, and driven from their  
 country by intestine broils, retained all the  
 fierceness of their origin, in the new habitation  
 they pitched upon, which was an island formed  
 by the right arm of the Rhine, the Vahal, and  
 the sea. The face of that country has been  
 much altered since those times: but Betaw,  
 or Betavia, as I have elsewhere observed, still  
 preserves their name. They were rather allied,  
 than subject to the Romans. Nor did they  
 suffer so disproportioned a friendship to crush  
 them. They paid no tribute, but only fur-  
 nished the empire with soldiers, whose valour

was often of great service in the German wars. A. R. 820.  
They had likewise gained great honour in Bri- A. C. 69.  
tain, and I have several times had occasion  
to speak of eight Batavian cohorts, who, be-  
ing attached as auxiliaries to the fourteenth le-  
gion, became its rivals and enemies. Their  
cavalry was excellent, and used to swim over  
the Rhine without a man's quitting his horse  
or arms, or even breaking his rank.

The most illustrious of that nation, at the  
time I am speaking of, was Claudius Civilis,  
distinguished above all for his high birth, be-  
ing of royal descent; his personal bravery, and  
endowments of mind, fertile, cunning, and  
active; we are not much acquainted with his  
name, though he deserves to be as well known,  
as most of the greatest generals recorded in  
history.

He had reason not to be satisfied with the  
Romans. His brother Julius Paulus, falsely  
accused of treason, had been put to death by  
order of Fonteius Capito, who commanded in  
lower Germany before Vitellius. I have ob-  
served elsewhere, that Civilis was himself in  
danger of suffering the same fate. His resent-  
ment for his brother's death, and his own peril,  
induced him to seize the opportunity of the  
civil war to take revenge. But he was too  
cunning to act openly, or warn the Romans to  
look upon him as an enemy, and treat him as  
such by a manifest rebellion. Sertorius and  
Hannibal were the models he proposed to imi-  
tate, intending to be like them for arts and  
stratagems, as he was in his face, for he too  
had but one eye. He therefore resolved to  
work underhand, and hide his play. Accord-

A. R. 820. ingly he pretended to espouse Vespasian's  
A. C. 69. cause, for which he had a specious pretence,  
very fit to give an air of sincerity to all his  
steps. Antonius Primus had wrote to him to  
prevent the departure of the succours Vitellius  
had sent for, and to amuse the legions on the  
Rhine, under pretence of some disturbance or  
other in Germany. Hordeonius Flaccus who  
commanded on the spot, likewise desired him  
to behave in that manner, as much out of in-  
clination to Vespasian's party, as affection to  
the Republic, in danger of perishing, if a new  
inundation of numerous troops should pour in  
upon Italy, and revive the war.

Civilis finding he should be able to conceal  
his intended revolt, under the appearance of  
obedience to the private orders of the Roman  
generals, immediately set to work; and found  
the Batavians already disposed to rise by a very  
singular circumstance. Vitellius had ordered  
soldiers to be levied among them, and that  
burden, heavy in itself, was rendered quite  
unsupportable by the tyrannical proceedings of  
those who inlisted them. Their greedy cove-  
tousness was such, that they took old and sick  
men, and made them pay a ransom before they  
were dismissed. A motive still more infa-  
mous engaged them to take young lads before  
they were of proper age to bear arms. The  
whole nation was incensed, and Civilis's emis-  
saries took care to foment the sedition, and  
easily persuaded the Batavians to refuse to in-  
list. Civilis himself, under pretence of giving  
a great entertainment, assembled in one of their  
sacred woods, the chief nobility, and those  
among the lower class, whose courage and bra-

very were most signal, and when they began to wax warm with wine and good cheer, opened his mind to them. A. R. 820.  
A. C. 69.

After extolling the ancient glory of their nation, and observing how much they were degraded and dishonoured by the insults and outrages they suffered, being treated more like slaves than allies, he added, that no opportunity had ever offered so fair as the present, to gain their liberty. "The Romans, said he, are weakened by their own divisions. None but old men are left in their camps upon the Rhine, where we are sure of a rich and easy booty. Dare but to lift up your eyes, and be not terrified by empty shadows of legions without reality. We are strong in horse and foot, and can depend on the assistance of our neighbours and brothers, the Germans. The Romans\* themselves will not be much displeased at our war. If the success prove doubtful, we will make a merit of it with Vespasian: victory carries with it its own apology."

This speech was greatly applauded by all that heard it, and Civilis made them take the most solemn oaths known to barbarians. He likewise applied to the Caninefates, whose origin was the same with the Batavians, and who, inhabiting the same island, were not inferior to them in any respect, but in number. He applied also to the eight Batavian cohorts, already often mentioned, who were returning  
to

\* Ne Romanis quidem ingratum id bellum, cujus ambiguum fortunam Vespasiano imputaturos: victoriae rationem non reddi. Tac.

A. R. 820. to Germany by Vitellius's order, and were at A. C. 69. that time at Mentz.

The Romans driven out of the Batavian island. The Caninefates took the field first ; and, till Civilis and the Batavians should think proper to declare themselves, chose for their leader a man of great birth, and in high esteem among the barbarians for his brutal courage. His name was Brinno, and he was son to a man who, after having attacked the Romans several times in a hostile manner, had laughed with impunity at the phantom of war, Caligula had attempted to frighten the Germans with. The Caninefates were pleased with a name that had ever been at enmity with Rome. Brinno, exalted on the soldiers shoulders, was solemnly proclaimed their general in that war.

He was immediately joined by the Frisous from the other side of the Rhine, and opened the campaign by taking a camp in the island of the Batavians, in which were two cohorts, who did not in the least dream of being so attacked. They were cut to pieces or put to flight, and a great number of sutlers and Roman traders, fearing no harm from people they thought their friends, and suddenly surprised by this unexpected war, fell into the conqueror's hands. Several castles and forts must have suffered the same fate with the camp, if the præfects of the cohorts, unable to defend, had not thought it most prudent to burn them. They retired with all the troops they had, to the farther part of the island, where they formed a small army, but very unequal to the rebels ; for most of them were raw soldiers, to whom their arms were rather a load and burden than a means of defence, and very  
badly

badly replaced the old troops Vitellius had ordered into Italy. Besides these land forces, the Romans had a fleet of four-and-twenty sail, which they took care to collect and station near them.

Civilis first tried what art and cunning would do. Pretending to be still a friend to the Romans, he blamed the præfect for leaving their fortresses; and advises them to return to their winter quarters, and depend on his taking care to disperse that handful of rebels with his cohort. His design was to facilitate a victory over troops separated and remote from each other. The Roman officers perceived his drift, and the intelligence they received from all hands, left them no room to doubt, but that Civilis was the real author and head of the rebellion, and that Brinno only lent him his name. The Germans, passionately fond of war, could not keep a secret that gave them so much pleasure.

Civilis, finding artifice would not do, had recourse to open force. He put himself at the head of the rebels, and attacked the Romans in their post, being followed by the Caninefates, Frisons, and Batavians. The Romans prepared to give them a warm reception, and drew up their sea and land forces in order of battle: but the engagement was hardly begun, when a cohort of Tongrians deserted, and went over to Civilis; by which the party they forsook was greatly disconcerted, being attacked at the same time by allies as well as enemies. The fleet was not less perfidious. Part of the rowers were Batavians, who, pretending want of skill, embarrassed the operations of such sailors and soldiers as were faithful; but grow-  
ing

A.R. 820. ing bolder by degrees, they resisted, and al-  
 A. C. 69. tered the course of the ships, turning their  
 sterns towards the enemy instead of their heads.  
 At last they attacked the centurions and tri-  
 bunes, and killed such as would not join them ;  
 by which means the four-and-twenty ships, of  
 which the fleet consisted, were either given up  
 to the rebels, or taken by them. The land  
 forces were not able to recover the disorder in-  
 to which they had been thrown at first ; and  
 Civilis gained a complete victory.

This first exploit was of great advantage to  
 the rebels, to whom it procured arms and  
 ships, of which they had much need ; and  
 made a great noise in Gaul and Germany,  
 where Civilis and his associates were celebrated  
 and extolled, as the avengers of the common  
 liberty. The Germans, their nearest and  
 bravest neighbours, offered all the assistance  
 they could give. The Gauls were not so easily  
 moved, though Civilis tried every method to  
 gain their alliance. The cohorts he had just  
 conquered were Gauls, as well as their com-  
 manders. He sent back the officers he had  
 taken prisoners without ransom : and gave the  
 soldiers their choice, either to remain with him  
 or go, promising the greatest encouragement  
 and distinction to such as should share his for-  
 tune ; and giving even those that left him some  
 share of the Roman spoils.

Civilis's at-  
 tempts to  
 gain over  
 the Gauls.

These liberalities were a bait, to allure them  
 the better to relish the speeches, by which he  
 exhorted them to revolt. He represented to  
 them the extreme hardships they had suffered  
 for so many years past, in a wretched state of  
 servitude, disguised under the name of peace.

“ The



“ The Batavians, said he, though exempt A.R. 820.  
“ from tribute, have taken up arms against A. C. 96.  
“ those tyrants of the universe, and the very  
“ first opportunity that offered, conquered  
“ the Romans, and put them to flight. What  
“ then might not be done, if the Gauls too  
“ would shake off the yoke? What are the  
“ forces that Italy has remaining? It is by the  
“ blood of one province, that another pro-  
“ vince is subdued.” He alledged the exam-  
ple of Germany, which recovered its liberty  
by the defeat and death of Varus, and that too  
at a time when Augustus, and not a Vitellius,  
governed the empire. He observed, that the  
natural valour of the Gauls was heightened  
by the discipline they had learned in the Roman  
armies; and after giving them the highest  
hopes of success, spurred them on by awaking  
the love of liberty in them. “ Let Syria,  
“ Asia, and the East, said he, accustomed to  
“ obey kings, endure servitude. Gaul still has  
“ many citizens who were born\* before taxes  
“ and imposts were laid upon them. Even  
“ the

\* If we go back to Caesar's time, that date is too re-  
mote, and Tacitus's proposition would exceed all probabi-  
lity; for it was near a hundred and twenty years after  
the conquest of Gaul, that Civilis's rebellion happened.  
But Caesar's wars against the Gauls were immediately fol-  
lowed by civil wars amongst the Romans, which for  
twenty years running put the whole empire in combus-  
tion, and did not leave the conquerors of Gaul time to set-  
tle the affairs of that country. It was Augustus, who in  
his seventh consulship reduced Gaul entirely into a Ro-  
man province, and subjected it to certain fixed tributes.  
Even that is a great distance of time; for, reckoning from  
Augustus's 7th consulship, this would be the 98th year.

A. R. 820. " the brute creation is jealous of preserving  
 A. C. 69. " the liberty it receives from nature : and shall  
 " men, full of strength and valour, renounce  
 " so precious a gift ? Take \* advantage of this  
 " favourable opportunity the gods offer you.  
 " Your tyrants are distracted by their own in-  
 " testine broils, and have many things to do :  
 " you have but one. They are fatigued and  
 " harrassed by their losses : your forces are still  
 " entire. Whilst they are thus divided be-  
 " tween Vitellius and Vespasian, you may  
 " easily get rid of both." Thus did Civilis,  
 extending his views both to Gaul and Germany  
 at once, flatter the inhabitants of those vast  
 and powerful regions with the thoughts of li-  
 berty, whilst his design was to make himself  
 master of them.

Another  
 victory  
 gained by  
 Civilis over  
 the Ro-  
 mans.

Hordeonius Flaccus, commander in chief of  
 the Romans in both Germanies, connived at,  
 and favoured Civilis's first steps, for the rea-  
 sons I have mentioned. But when he saw a  
 camp forced, cohorts cut to pieces, and the  
 Romans driven out of the Batavian island, he  
 found the affair grew serious, and ordered Mum-  
 mius Luperculus, who commanded the camp  
 called Vetera, in which two legions were in  
 winter quarters, to take the field and march  
 against the enemy. Mummius obeyed. To  
 the two legions that were with him, which  
 both together did not make above five thousand  
 men, he joined the succours furnished by the  
 Ubians and people of Treves, and a regiment  
 of Batavian horse, long since gained over by  
 the

\* Deos fortioribus adesse, Proinde arriperent vacui oc-  
 cupatos, integri fessos. Dum alii Vespasianum, alii Vi-  
 tellium foveant, patere locum adversus utrumque. Tac.

the rebels, though an appearance of fidelity was A. R. 820.  
still kept up, in order to make the treachery A. C. 69.  
more fatal to the Romans, by executing it  
during the very battle. With these troops he  
marched against Civilis, who was soon found.

The brave Batavian met him, bearing before  
him the standards of the cohorts he had con-  
quered, as a trophy to animate his own men  
by the remembrance of their recent glory, and  
to strike his enemies with terror. He placed,  
as was the German custom, in the rear of the  
army, his mother and sisters, and the wives  
and children of the officers and soldiers, to en-  
courage them, by the sight of those dear ob-  
jects, to fight hard for victory, or prevent their  
flying if they gave ground.

The signal being given for the attack, the  
air was instantly rent with the confused howls  
of the one, and the warlike songs of the others  
intermixed. The Romans answered with a  
weak shout denoting fear. In fact, they saw  
their left wing quite uncovered by the desertion  
of the Batavian horse, who went over to Ci-  
vilis, and in a moment, from friends, that they  
were thought before, became enemies. The  
legions however stood firm and kept their  
ranks: but the auxiliaries, as well Ubians, as  
those that came from Treves, fled shamefully,  
and dispersed about the country. The Ger-  
mans pursued, and by that means gave the le-  
gions time to regain their camp.

Civilis did not well know what to do with  
Claudius Labeo, who commanded the Bata-  
vian horse. They had long been rivals, and  
chiefs of opposite factions in their own coun-  
try. Civilis apprehended, that by putting him  
to

A. R. 820. to death, he should make himself odious to his  
 A. C. 69. countrymen; and if he let him live, he would  
 be a continual promoter of trouble and discord.  
 He chose a medium, and sent him into Friesland  
 beyond the Rhine.

Eight Bata-  
 vian co-  
 horts, old  
 troops, who  
 had long  
 served in  
 the Ro-  
 man ar-  
 mies, join  
 Civilis.

He received soon after a considerable rein-  
 forcement by the junction of the eight Bata-  
 vian cohorts, to which, as I have already said,  
 he made application. They were marching to  
 Italy, in consequence of Vitellius's orders, when  
 Civilis's messenger met them. They imme-  
 diately resolved to espouse the common cause  
 of their country: but as they were surrounded  
 by Roman troops, did not think proper to de-  
 clare directly, but that they might have a pre-  
 tence for leaving their allies, tried to pick a  
 quarrel with them, by insisting on a general  
 gratification, double pay, and other advanta-  
 ges which Vitellius had promised. Flaccus,  
 thinking to calm them, granted part of their  
 demands; but it only made them the more  
 intractable, and they obstinately insisted on  
 what they well knew must be refused, and at  
 last, despising both his threats and promises,  
 they took the road towards lower Germany, to  
 join Civilis.

That was a manifest disobedience which they  
 would have had cause to repent, if Flaccus  
 had made use of the means then in his power;  
 for a legion commanded by Herennius Gallus  
 was encamped at Bon. If therefore Flaccus  
 had pursued the Batavian cohorts, they would  
 have been hemmed in between him and Gallus,  
 and could not have escaped. But he behaved  
 so pitifully, that he confirmed the suspicions  
 of those who accused him of acting in intelli-

gence

gence with the rebels. His first resolution was A. R. 820.  
to shut himself up within his camp, as not be- A. C. 69.  
ing able to depend on the fidelity of the auxiliaries, nor the strength of his own legions, all composed of new raised men. Then when a fit of courage seized him, he resolved to follow the Batavians, and wrote to Gallus to meet him. But returning at last to his natural timidity, he again changed his mind, and sent a counter order to Gallus.

In the mean time the cohorts drew near Bon, and as their design was to declare their revolt so soon as they joined Civilis, they sent a deputy before them, with orders to tell Herennius Gallus, "That they had no design  
" to make war against the Romans for whom  
" they had so often fought; but that, worn  
" out with a long and fruitless service, they  
" were going to seek repose in the bosom of  
" their own country. That if they met with  
" no obstacle they would pass on without  
" committing any act of hostility. But that if  
" they were opposed by arms, their swords  
" were ready, and should be made use of to  
" open them a passage."

Gallus was in doubt what to do; but his soldiers pressed him to venture a battle. Three thousand legionaries, a few cohorts of new raised Belgians, and a great number of militia, servants and followers of the army, as rash before battle, as they are cowardly in it, sallied impetuously out at the camp gates, and surrounded the Batavians inferior to them in number. The latter who were old soldiers, formed themselves into battalions, closed their ranks, and facing every side, soon broke their enemies

A. R. 820. enemies army, widely extended, but without  
 A. C. 69. depth. The Belgians fled, the legion gave way, and retired in disorder to its retrenchments. There the greatest slaughter began: the ditch was filled with heaps of slain, who perished, not only by the Batavian sword, but crushed and stifled each other by their weight, and in the fall killed themselves with their own weapons. The conquerors continued their march quietly whilst they were in the territories of the empire: they took care to avoid Cologn, and executed the affair of Bon as involuntary on their side, and owing to the injustice of the Romans who refused them a passage.

He makes  
 all his  
 troops  
 swear alle-  
 giance to  
 Vespasian.

In that manner they reached Civilis, who was not puffed up with the pride of a barbarian, nor audaciously elated when he saw his forces so considerably increased. He knew what the power of the Romans was, and being sensible it was impossible for him to pretend as yet to cope with them, he persisted in his plan of dissimulation, and made all the troops under his command swear allegiance to Vespasian. He even solicited the two legions, who had shut themselves up in the camp of \* *Vetera* to do the same; but was answered, "That the Romans did not take council from a traitor and an enemy. That they acknowledged Vitellius for their emperor, and would be faithful to him whilst they lived." "That

\* Some might think it more correct to call it *the Old Camp*: but I have preferred the Latin name, as less equivocal. *Vetera* was become the name of the place. It is now *Santen*, in the duchy of Cleves, as I have elsewhere observed.

“ That it ill became a Batavian deserter to  
 “ pretend to arbitrate the fate of Romans, and  
 “ that he ought much rather to prepare to  
 “ suffer the punishment his treachery deser-  
 “ ved.” So haughty an answer inflamed Ci-  
 vilis’s wrath. He set out immediately to at-  
 tack the camp with his Batavians, backed by  
 the succours he had received from the Brue-  
 teri and Teneteri beyond the Rhine, and dis-  
 patched couriers to every part of Germany, in-  
 viting the people to join him, and share the  
 honour and plunder with him.

The commanders of the two legions, Mum-  
 mius Lupercus and Numicius Rufus, being in-  
 formed of Civilis’s menaces and schemes, pre-  
 pared to hold out a siege. They pulled down  
 the buildings that had been erected round the  
 camp, and were a kind of suburbs to it: for  
 the Roman camp, as I have elsewhere observed,  
 being fixed and permanent, became a kind of  
 town. One important article was, provisions  
 were not taken so much care of as they ought to  
 have been. The soldiers were suffered to plunder  
 the country round them; and by that bad ma-  
 nagement, as much was consumed in a few  
 days, as, if put into magazines, and properly  
 distributed, would have lasted a long time.

Civilis arrived, with the chosen men of his  
 Batavians in the centre of his army: the Rhine  
 above and below the camp, was covered by  
 the troops he had received from Germany: his  
 horse scoured the country, and his ships were  
 coming up the river. The images of wolves  
 and other beasts, of which the German nations  
 made use by way of engines, together with the  
 colours of the cohorts who had served so long  
 in

He be-  
 sieges the  
 camp of  
 Veters.

A. R. 820. in the Roman armies, presented at once the  
A. C. 69. dreadful image of a civil and foreign war.

The extent of the camp intended for two legions, though there were then hardly five thousand men in it, rendered the defence of that place much more difficult. But the multitude of sutlers and servants, driven thither from all parts by their fears as to an asylum, was a help to the soldiers, and an ease to them in some respects. Access was very easy to the camp, which was defended only by some slight fortifications: because Augustus, by whom it was first formed, thought the valour of the Roman soldiers sufficient of itself to keep the Germans in awe; little dreaming they would ever be reduced to so melancholy a situation, as that the Batavians should dare to come in person to attack the legions.

Yet so it happened; the Batavians on one side, and the Germans on the other, animated with a national emulation, attacked the camp with great fury. The Romans defended themselves with equal bravery and skill, and baffled the blind impetuosity of their enemies. The barbarians then attempted to make use of warlike engines, in which they had no knowledge. The Roman deserters and prisoners were their engineers, and taught them how to build a kind of wooden bridge, by fastening huge beams together, and rolling them forward upon wheels; by which means the soldiers upon those bridges were enabled to engage the besieged, whilst others under their shelter sapped the walls. But their works were badly constructed, and soon demolished, by the vast stones  
the



the Romans threw from their engines. After several fruitless attempts, the besiegers despair-  
 ing of succeeding by force, resolved to change the siege into a blockade. They knew there were provisions but for a few days in the camp, and many useless mouths, and flattered themselves that want and treachery, so usual to slaves, would make them masters of the place, or, at the worst, that time and unforeseen accidents might favour them.

That blockade was an important event in this war. It lasted a considerable time, and was the centre to which all the contrary motions of the Romans and rebels tended.

The Romans had more forces upon the Rhine than were necessary to raise the siege: but the incapacity of their chief Hordeonius Flaccus, fearful, old and gouty; and still more, the mutual distrusts between the officers, who were all for Vespasian, and the soldiers who were attached in their hearts to Vitellius; in short, the eternal discords and violent seditions, which were the necessary consequences of those bad dispositions, brought on by degrees a most shameful and fatal catastrophe.

Flaccus being informed how the camp of Vetera was besieged, gave orders for raising troops in Gaul, and the more speedily to relieve the besieged, sent a detachment of the legionaries, under the conduct of Dillius Vocula, commander of the eighteenth legion, a brave and resolute officer. He followed them himself at a small distance, and was the object of the soldiers perpetual suspicions and distrusts, they accusing him of acting in concert with

Flaccus  
 marches  
 to succour  
 the be-  
 sieged.  
 Seditions  
 perpetually  
 breaking  
 out.

A. R. 820. Civilis. "No, \* said they, neither Antonius  
 A. C. 69. " Primus nor Mucian ever did so great a service  
 " to Vespasian's cause. Men are on their guard  
 " against declared hatred and open war: fraud  
 " and cunning conceal themselves, and are for  
 " that reason the more dangerous and difficult  
 " to avoid. Civilis shews himself, and takes  
 " the field against us: whilst Flaccus, with-  
 " out stirring from his bed-chamber, orders  
 " every thing for the enemy's advantage. Shall  
 " so many brave soldiers be stopt by the infir-  
 " mities of a single old man, and the opera-  
 " tions of our arms be made to depend on his  
 " fits of the gout? Let us rather resolve to  
 " kill the traitor, and free our fortune and our  
 " valour from so fatal and odious an obstacle."

The soldiers being informed a letter was come from Vespasian, their rage was so violent, that Flaccus was forced to make it public to save his own life. He read it before a general assembly of them, and sent the messengers who had brought it, loaded with chains, to Vitellius. This shew of attachment to Vitellius calmed them a little, and they continued their march quietly on to Bon, where Vocula, who probably was not strong enough to proceed farther, waited his general's coming up.

The sight of Bon revived the remembrance of Herennius Gallus's defeat by the Batavian cohorts,

\* Non Primi Antonii, neque Muciani ope Vespasianum magis adolevisse. Aperta odia armaque palam depelli? fraudem & dolum obscura, eoque inevitabilia. Civilem stare contra, struere aciem: Hordeonium è cubiculo & lectulo jubere quidquid hosti conducat. Tot armatas fortissimorum virorum manus, unius senis valetudine regi. Quin potius interfecto traditore fortunam virtutemque suam malo omine ex solverent.

cohorts, and renewed the sedition. They pretended to find in that event a manifest proof of Flaccus' treachery, by having, said they, ordered Gallus to fight, and promised to march from Mentz to his assistance, in which he broke his word, and was the cause of their defeat. They taxed him likewise with not having informed either the other armies, or the emperor, of what passed in Germany; by that means letting the evil increase, instead of stilling it at first, which he might easily have done with the united forces of the neighbouring provinces. To clear himself from this last imputation, the weak general read to his whole army copies of the letters he had sent to Gaul, Britain, and Spain, wherein he desired succours, and made an order, the consequence of which was extremely dangerous, that whatever letters came from foreign parts, should be delivered to the soldiers who bore the eagles of the legions, by which means they were read to the troops, before the general and officers were acquainted with the contents. Flaccus having appeased them for a moment by that condescension, for once exerted his authority, by ordering one of the ringleaders of the sedition to be put in irons. He was obeyed; and the army advanced from Bon to Cologne, being increased on the road by a reinforcement of Gauls, on whom Civilis, had not been able to make any impression.

The suspicions of the Roman soldiers were not removed, and the prisoner envenomed matters, by saying, he had carried and brought back messages from Flaccus to Civilis: and that it was to stifle his testimony, and prevent his

A. R. 820. speaking the truth, that he was loaded with  
 A. C. 69. chains in that manner. These speeches made  
 impression on the multitude, and Flaccus had  
 not resolution enough to remedy it. Vocula  
 did it for him. Ascending the tribunal with  
 admirable intrepidity, he ordered the prisoner  
 to be brought before him, and, in spite of all the  
 noise and clamour that was made, commanded  
 him to be executed. The bad were intimidated :  
 the good, sensible of the necessity of such an ex-  
 ample, and the criminal suffered death accord-  
 ingly. Vocula's courage gained him the esteem  
 of the troops, who unanimously desired he  
 should be their commander. Flaccus gave the  
 conduct of the enterprize up to him, and retir-  
 ing, went to join the troops that still remained  
 in quarters.

Flaccus  
 retreats,  
 and Voct-  
 ula remains  
 at the  
 head of  
 the en-  
 terprize.  
 New Sedi-  
 tion.

It was the general who obeyed, and the sol-  
 diers who commanded, as we see in this army,  
 Divers circumstances contributed to render them  
 intractable. They were not paid : provisions  
 fell short : the Rhine was so low as scarcely to  
 be navigable : for which reason the troops were  
 forced to be posted along it, from space to space,  
 to guard the parts that were passable, and pre-  
 vent the Germans from crossing that river : the  
 same inconvenience was productive of two ef-  
 fects detrimental to each other : the lowness of  
 the waters occasioned a scarcity, by rendering  
 the transport of provisions difficult, and was the  
 cause of having many supernumerary mouths  
 to feed. The drowth, a thing uncommon in  
 that climate, was in itself thought a prodigy by  
 the ignorant multitude. The soldiers imagined  
 that the very rivers, the ancient barriers of the  
 Roman empire, refused to serve them ; and  
 what

what \* would have been thought the effect of A. R. 820. chance, or a natural event in times of peace, A. C. 69. was then looked upon as the decree of fate, and a proof of the anger of the gods.

However, they continued their march towards *Vetera*, and when arrived at *Novesium*, now *Nuys*, were joined by the thirteenth legion, and *Herennius Gallus*, already mentioned, was made joint commander of their forces with *Vocula*. They were then very near the enemy, but not daring to attack them, formed a camp at a place called *Gelduba* by *Tacitus*, and is the present of *Gelb*. There the two commanders strove to confirm their soldiers courage, and enure them to fatigue, by all the military exercises and works necessary to fortify a camp: and in order to animate them the more by the allurements of plunder and booty, *Vocula* led a part of the army to lay waste the territories of the *Gugernians* †, who had entered into an alliance with *Civilis*: the rest of the troops remained in the camp under *Gallus's* command.

A new accident happened: a barge loaded with corn being stranded, a battle ensued between the Germans inhabiting the right side of the line, and *Gallus's* troops. The latter being worsted, and having lost several men, imputed it, according to the late prevailing custom of that army, not to their own cowardice, but to their general's perfidiousness. Their suspicions against *Flaccus* were revived: they accused him  
of

\* Quod in pace fors seu natura, tunc fatum et ira Dei vocabatur. *Tac.*

† The *Gugernians* were a colony of the *Sicambri*, transported to this side the *Rhine*, and inhabited the country from *Gelb* to the island of the *Batavians*.

A. R. 820. of being author of the treason, and Gallus of A. C. 69. putting it in execution. Laying that down for fact, the seditious were no longer at a loss, but how to account for the circumstances, and those they resolved to know from Gallus, and to force him, by blows and rough usage, to confess what induced him to act in that manner, how much money he had received, and who had been the manager of the negociation. He was weak enough to accuse Flaccus, after which they put him again in irons. Vocula returning, had power enough not only to deliver his colleague, but even to punish with death those who had used him so ill. This perpetual \* alternative of licentiousness and submission, revolts and punishments, in the same troops, is very extraordinary. Their commanders were not able to keep them quiet, and yet had power to punish them.

Incursions  
of the Ger-  
mans in al-  
liance with  
Civilis.

Whilst the Romans were thus ruining their own affairs, by their repeated discords and divisions, Civilis was gaining strength. All Germany bordering on the Rhine had declared for him, and he employed his new allies in making incursions in the territories of those who were friends to the Romans. Some were directed to plunder and lay waste the country of Ubians, others the lands about Treves, whilst others again went beyond the Maese, and attacked the Menapians, Morins, and all that northern border of Gaul. But none were used so ill as the Ubians.

\* Tanta illi exercitui diversitas inerat licentiæ patientiæque. Haud dubie gregarius miles Vitellio fidus: splendidissimus quisque in Vespasianum proni. Inde scelerum & suppliciorum vices, & mixtus obsequio furor: ut contineri non possent qui puniri poterant. Tac. Hist. IV. 27.

Ubians. They were singularly hated, because they had so far forgot their German origin, as to change their ancient name for a Roman one, *Agrippinenses*. Faithful, but unfortunate allies of the empire, they were beaten both in their own country, and that of their enemies into which they had ventured: and their repeated defeats increasing Civilis's pride and haughtiness, made him think of storming the camp he had blocked up; what likewise induced him to take that resolution, was the uneasiness *Vocula* and his troops gave him by being so near.

He had taken particular care to guard all the avenues, to prevent the besieged from receiving any news of the succours that were so near them. The attack was divided between the Batavians and Germans from beyond the Rhine. The former were to work the engines, whilst the latter, who wanted a battle with all the impetuosity of barbarians, were ordered to attack the place, fill up the ditch, and demolish the rampart. They set on with great fury, and though repulsed, still rallied and charged again. Civilis had such numbers of them, that he did not mind their lives.

*Civilis attempts in vain to force the camp of Vetera.*

They took so little care of themselves, that making great fires in the night, they proceeded to attack the Romans by the light of the flames. The latter saw them without being seen, and were able to single out their men, and shoot and kill the chief and most conspicuous of them, whilst the besiegers could not tell where to direct their blows or arrows. Civilis was sensible of their error, and had the fires put out, but without discontinuing the attack. The fight was continued in the dark, with all the confusion

A. R. 820. confusion, that may be imagined in such a case,  
A. C. 69. and without any other advantage to the Germans, than that of fatiguing their adversaries.

At break of day the Batavians relieved the Germans, and brought forward a wooden tower two stories high, which was soon broke to pieces by the poles and beams the Romans battered it with. Its fall terrified the Batavians, and at that instant the besieged made a vigorous sally. They likewise made use of a machine, the effect of which was very singular. It was a kind of harpoon fastened to a lever, one end of which was within the wall of the camp. The harpoon being thrown out, caught one or more of the enemies, and with the help of a counterpoise that was let fall at the same time, carried them up into the air, and tossed them into the camp.

Civilis, tired with the bad success of all his attack, blocked the camp up again; and pretending to act for Vespasian, privately sounded the besieged, promising them great matters if they would abandon Vitellius's party, but in reality intending to lead them much farther, if he could make them take that first step.

The news  
of the bat-  
tle of Cre-  
mona  
known in  
Germany.

What I have hitherto said, relating to Civilis's war, happened before the battle of Cremona, the news of which was sent to Germany by Antonius Primus, whose letters on that occasion were accompanied with an order made by Cæcina in quality of consul. The bearer of those dispatches was, as I have said, Alpinus Montanus, an officer of the conquered troops, who, having been present, could attest the truth of facts.

So important an event, by which the dispute between Vitellius and Vespasian was decided, ought



ought to have brought over the officers and soldiers of the German army to the victor's party, and consequently have forced Civilis either to submit, or throw off the mask, and openly declare himself an enemy to the Romans. The insuperable obstinacy of the legions prevented that good effect, maintained discord, and afforded Civilis the means of gaining other and greater advantages than those he had beforehand. They took the oaths to Vespasian, but with a very bad grace, avoiding pronouncing his name, and in their hearts attached to Vitellius.

Vocula, who, as well as all the other chief officers, was for Vespasian, sent Montanus to Civilis, with orders to represent to that Bavian, that it was now too late for him to pretend to disguise a foreign war under the false pretence of civil discord; and that if his design had been to help Vespasian, that was now done, and consequently he ought to lay down his arms. The ambassador, by birth a Gaul, Treves being his native country, was of a proud and haughty temper; readily disposed by his way of thinking to enter into a scheme of rebellion, and consequently very unfit for the commission he was charged with. Civilis's answers were vague and ambiguous, till he found him out: but soon perceiving he could trust him, he then opened himself plainly.

He began by complaining of the fatigues he had endured, and the dangers without number to which he had been exposed, during five and twenty years service in the Roman armies. "I have received, added he, afterwards a fine reward for them, my brother's death, and  
" the

A. R. 820.  
A. C. 69.

Civilis's  
intrigues  
to raise  
the Gauls.

A.R. 820. "the chains I was myself loaded with when  
 A. C. 69. "the furious armies of Germany demanded  
 "my death. I have a natural right to re-  
 "venge, and that is the motive that stirs me  
 "up. You too, inhabitants of Treves, and all  
 "ye Gauls, subject to the yoke, what atone-  
 "ment do you expect for that blood so often  
 "shed in behalf of the Romans? An ungrate-  
 "ful service, never ceasing tributes, all the ri-  
 "gours of rods and axes, and a necessity to en-  
 "dure every caprice of the tyrants Rome sends  
 "you, under the names of generals and gover-  
 "nors; those are the returns you meet with.  
 "Reflect on the example I set you. I was no  
 "more than præfect of a cohort; and with the  
 "sole assistance of the Caninefates and Bata-  
 "vians, few in number when compared with  
 "the rest of the Gauls, I humbled our masters,  
 "took their camps, and now hold them be-  
 "sieged. What risk do we run in shewing  
 "our bravery? Either we shall recover our li-  
 "berty, or, if conquered, can but return to  
 "our former state." This speech made an im-  
 pression on Montanus: he returned after suf-  
 fering himself to be quite gained over, and  
 bringing back an answer concerted with Civi-  
 lis, concealed the rest, to have the better op-  
 portunity to practise upon his countrymen, and  
 lead them on to the steps they soon took.

Civilis de-  
 taches part  
 of his ar-  
 my to at-  
 tack Veu-  
 la. Con-  
 bat in  
 which the  
 Romans  
 were con-  
 quered.

In the mean time Civilis prosecuted the war  
 with vigour, and being well acquainted with  
 the misintelligence that subsisted between the  
 Roman soldiers and their leaders, he thought  
 himself strong enough to divide his troops into  
 two bodies, one of which was to attack Vo-

cula in the camp of Gelduba, whilst the other A. R. 820.  
continued the siege. His scheme was very near A. C. 69.  
succeeding. Vocula was not on his guard.  
Surprized by an unexpected attack, he left  
his retrenchments; but his troops having hard-  
ly had time to form, were soon routed: his  
auxiliaries too, fled; and his legions drove back  
to their camp, made but a bad defence against  
the conquerors, who entered it with him.  
Luckily for the Romans, the Gascon\* cohorts  
raised by Galba in Spain, and afterwards sent  
to the Rhine, arrived at that instant. They  
fell upon the rear of the Batavians, and the  
terror they struck them with, was much greater  
than the danger arising from their number, be-  
cause they were reported to be the whole Roman  
strength brought from Nuys and Mentz. Voc-  
cula's legions, drove almost to despair, took  
courage, and found their pristine vigour in  
their confidence in a foreign help. They drove  
the enemy from their camp with great slaughter.  
The Batavian infantry suffered greatly: their  
horse fled, carrying with them the prisoners  
and standards taken at the beginning of the bat-  
tle. The Romans had most men slain, but  
the Batavians lost their best troops. Their two  
generals were to blame in Tacitus's opinion:  
Civilis for not having sent a sufficient body of  
men; for if they had been numerous enough, they  
could not have been surrounded by the Gascon  
troops, who were but a handful of men; and  
the Batavians would have remained masters of  
the

\* The Gascons or Vascons then dwelt in Spain near Pampeluna, and Calahorra. It was not till towards the end of the sixth century, that they crossed the Pyrenean mountains, and settled in Gaul.

A.R. 820. the camp, of which they had forced the entrance. Vocula was surprised at first, but when conqueror, did not make the most of his advantage. By pursuing the enemy, he would at once have raised the siege of *Vetera*. It was not till some days after that he marched against *Civilis*.

The artful Batavian had taken advantage of that interval, to try to prevail on the besieged to surrender, by endeavouring to persuade them that the succours they expected were destroyed, and that his men had gained a complete victory over them. He shewed them the standards taken from the Romans, and likewise the prisoners; but the last was what betrayed him. One of those prisoners had courage enough to tell the besieged the truth of what was concealed from them: the Germans killed him on the spot, and by so doing confirmed his testimony.

Vocula gains a second victory before *Vetera*, and makes the enemy raise the siege.

Vocula arrived at last, and by the ravages he committed, and villages and places he set on fire, signified his approach, and fully convinced *Civilis* of falsehood. He was desirous, according to the Roman custom, first to form a camp, wherein his troops might leave their baggage, in order to fight afterwards with less incumbrance. The soldiers would not allow him to follow that wise custom, but without cries, to which, with their usual violence, they added menaces, insisted on being led on to battle, without allowing time to draw them up in order. Confused and fatigued by a long march, they offered battle to *Civilis*, who, depending on the enemy's confusion, as much as on the bravery of his own troops, did not  
refuse

refuse it. The first onset was not favourable A.R. 820.  
to the Romans: the most seditious were, as A. C. 69.  
always is the case, the most cowardly: some  
however, remembering their recent glory, kept  
their posts, and encouraged each other to finish  
bravely what they had so well begun. The  
besieged perceiving from their walls what passed  
made a timely sally, in which they greatly dis-  
concerted the Batavians, and victory declared  
in favour of the Romans, by an accident  
Civilis met with. He fell from his horse, and  
a report was spread in both armies that he was  
either killed or wounded. The confidence  
with which this news inspired one side, and the  
consternation with which it struck the other,  
is incredible. It decided the success of that  
day: the siege was raised, and Vocula victo-  
rious entered the camp of *Vetera*.

He would have done better had he pursued  
the conquered, whom he might easily have  
exterminated. Instead of that, he amused  
himself with repairing the breeches in the  
camp, as if to prepare against a new siege:  
a suspicious\* conduct, which could not but  
give a sanction to the speeches of those who  
accused him of wanting to protract the war,  
he so often missed an opportunity of ending.

In fact he lost by his inaction all the fruit  
of his victory. His sole care was to provide  
the place with fresh provisions, the soldiers  
being in great want, to which end he sent car-  
riages to Nuys, to bring them by land, the  
enemies being masters of the river. The first  
convoy arrived safe, Civilis not being able to  
obstruct

Vocula  
loses the  
fruit of his  
victories.  
The camp  
of *Vetera*  
besieged  
again.

\* Corrupta toties victoria, non falso suspectus bellum  
velle. Tac.

A. R. 820. obstruct it, for he had not yet had time to re-  
 A. C. 69. pair his late losses. But the second was not so  
 fortunate. Civilis attacked it between *Vetera*  
 and Gelduba, and if the Roman detachment  
 was not entirely defeated, it was owing to the  
 night that put an end to the fight, but their  
 return however was cut off. Vocula marched  
 out of the camp to save his convoy, and try  
 to force the passes; on which the Batavian im-  
 mediately laid siege again to *Vetera*. By that  
 means, all the advantages Vocula had gained  
 vanished, and things returned to the same  
 situation in which they were before. They  
 grew even worse. The Roman commander  
 abandoned Gelduba, and retired to Nuys: on  
 which Civilis took possession of the post he  
 had left, and fought a battle with his horse  
 near Nuys, wherein he had the advantage.

Another  
 sedition.  
 Flaccus is  
 killed by  
 his sol-  
 diers.

The Romans had not only the misfortunes  
 of war, but the evils of sedition likewise to  
 endure. When Vocula left *Vetera*, he took  
 with him, besides his own army, two detach-  
 ments of the fifth and fifteenth legions, muti-  
 nous, intractable troops, ever ready to rebel  
 against their commanders. He had ordered a  
 thousand of them to go with him; but a greater  
 number set out, exclaiming openly during  
 their march, and saying, they were resolved  
 not to suffer any longer, the miseries of famine,  
 and the treachery of their commanders. On  
 the other hand, those that remained behind,  
 complained of being weakened by the loss of  
 their comrades. From thence arose a double  
 sedition, at the very moment of their depar-  
 ture, some wanting to keep Vocula with them,  
 and others refusing to return back.

I have

I have already said, what was the success of A. R. 820.  
an enterprize so inauspiciously begun. A. C. 69. The  
sequel was still more fatal. The troops knew  
that money was come from Vitellius to pay  
the soldiers for his accession to the empire, and  
secure their fidelity. The fifth and fifteenth  
legions put the others upon demanding pay-  
ment from Flaccus; and he gave them the mo-  
ney he had received, but in Vespasian's name:  
The money so received was usually spent in  
feasting and rioting: and on this occasion the  
soldiers, heated with wine, renewed their old  
complaints against Flaccus, and exhorted each  
other to make him at last suffer for his trea-  
cheries. Not one of their officers dared to op-  
pose their fury, heightened and favoured by  
the darkness of the night. Flaccus was drag-  
ged out of bed, and murdered by the sedi-  
tious. They would have served Vocula so too,  
if he had not luckily made his escape disguised  
like a slave: Vitellius's images were replaced  
in the camp, and in some towns of Gaul, when  
Vitellius himself was no more.

That fit of madness being over, the muti- What en-  
sued after  
Flaccus's  
death, till  
the revolt  
of the  
Gauls.  
neers finding they had no body to command  
them, began to be sensible of the danger they  
were in, and sent deputies to several of the  
Gaulish nations, desiring to be assisted with men  
and money. Civilis did not give them time to  
receive succours, but falling on them, confus-  
ed and disordered as they were, easily defeat-  
ed and put them to flight.

Misfortune was the mother of discord. Three  
legions separated from the others, and submit-  
ting to Vocula's command, who then ventured  
to appear, again took the oaths to Vespasian.

Vocula

A. R. 820. Vocula led them directly towards the city of  
A. C. 69. Mentz, at that time besieged by an army of  
Catti, Usipii, and Mattiaci, all German people,  
wretched troops, fitter to plunder and lay waste  
a country, than to carry on a siege. On the  
news of Vocula's approach they immediately  
dispersed.

But he was in much greater danger from  
the Gauls, who had long been solicited by  
Civilis to revolt, and accordingly did after  
Flaccus's death. As that event, by which  
the shame and misfortune of the Germanic  
legions was aggravated, happened under Ves-  
pasian's reign, I shall give an account of it in  
his life, after first relating what passed in  
Rome, and the rest of the empire, immedi-  
ately after Vitellius's death.















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