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CONSTANTIUS. JULIAN. THEODOSIUS

Constantius (337).—Constantine committed the mistake of dividing the empire between his three sons and several of his nephews, without deciding upon a definitive dismemberment. This procedure caused fresh wars and fresh crimes. First of all the soldiers massacred his nephews with the exception of Gallus and Julian. The eldest of his sons, Constantine II, perished in battle against one of his brothers (340) who himself was killed (350) by the Frank Magnentius. Constantius, who had to check the Persians in the East and to combat a usurper in the West, appointed his cousin Gallus as Cæsar and intrusted to him the war against Sapor. Magnentius killed himself on being defeated in Pannonia (351), whereupon Gaul, Spain and Britain submitted. Thus all the provinces were once more united under one master, but they were no better governed. The palace was distracted by the intrigues of women, eunuchs and courtiers, and the empire by the quarrels of Arianism and by the continued inroads of barbarians. From false reports Constantius believed that Gallus, the Cæsar of the East, was preparing to revolt. The young prince, recalled from Asia by flattering promises, was taken to Pola in Istria and beheaded. His brother Julian was spared. Exiled to Athens, he was able to fully gratify his taste for study and to become initiated into the Platonic doctrines. But imperial authority must be present on all the menaced frontiers. So after fourteen months it became necessary to recall Julian and intrust to him, as Cæsar, the defence of Gaul, now invaded by the Franks and the Alemanni. He vanquished the barbarians in the battle of Strasburg (357), expelled them from all the country comprised between Basle and Cologne, crossed the Rhine and brought back a great number of captive Gauls and legions as prisoners. His skilful administration rendered him as popular with the citizens as his victories had done with the soldiers. Constantius grew uneasy and wished to take

away his troops, but they mutinied and proclaimed him Augustus. This was a declaration of war. A bold and rapid march had already brought Julian to the heart of Illyricum, when Constantius died (361).

Julian (361).—Julian, a conqueror without a combat, abjured Christianity and received the surname of the Apostate. He publicly professed the ancient faith and reopened the temples. He strangely misunderstood the society which he was called to rule by attempting to restore life to the dead. Had he lived longer, he would doubtless have cruelly expiated this unintelligent return to the past. Nevertheless he did not summon the aid of violence to effect the triumph of reaction. He promulgated an edict of toleration, which permitted the sacrifices forbidden by Constantius, and recalled the exiled members of all religious parties; but he must be reproached for one astute order which forbade Christians to teach belles-lettres. The reign of Constantius had been incessantly troubled by the contentions of the Arians and the Orthodox. Alexandria and Constantinople were the principal theatres of this struggle. These quarrels assisted Julian in his attempted restoration of paganism. Also the sect of the Donatists was devastating Africa at the same time. The Circumcelliones, separating from the Donatists, wished to establish social equality. They liberated debtors, broke the chains of the slaves and divided the property of the masters. Hence arose a savage war.

Austere himself, he lay claim to the simplicity of a rigid stoic. He was sometimes harsh toward others. Thus to judge faithless officers, after his accession he established a tribunal which was charged with revising unjust decisions. Once when severity would have been justified he displayed a patience which does him honor. Anxious to avenge upon the Persians the long injuries of the empire, he had reached Syria with his army. At Antioch the inhabitants, zealous Christians, loudly ridiculed him for his untrimmed beard and shabby clothing and even proceeded to insult. The emperor could punish, but the philosopher contented himself with replying by the *Misopogon*, a satire on their effeminate habits. At the head of 60,000 men he penetrated to Ctesiphon, where he crossed the Tigris and burned his fleet that his soldiers might have no other hope than victory. But misled by traitors and in need of provisions, he was obliged to fall back upon Gordyene to which a vic-

tory opened the road. In a second combat he fell severely wounded, and died conversing with his friends concerning the immortality promised to the just. Only thirty-two years of age, he had sat upon the throne less than twenty-three months (363).

Jovian (363). Valentinian and Valens (364).—The army proclaimed Jovian. By a disgraceful treaty he abandoned to Sapor the supremacy in Armenia and the five provinces beyond the Tigris with many strongholds which served as bulwarks to the empire. He died seven months afterward (364). The generals agreed to proclaim Valentinian, who gave the East to his brother Valens, and established himself at Paris whence he could observe the Germans. He sowed discord among the barbarians, set the Burgundians against the Alemanni and after conquering several of those turbulent tribes rebuilt the fortresses which guarded the passages of the Rhine. In his internal government, he was stern even to cruelty. Death was the punishment for all offences. But he showed himself tolerant in religious affairs. Unfortunately for the empire this valiant chief died in an expedition against the Quadi (375). His son Gratian who succeeded abandoned to his younger brother, Valentinian II, the prefectures of Italy and Illyricum.

In the East Valens less wise had entered into religious quarrels instead of reorganizing the army. A great peril threatened. A horde of Huns, belonging to the Mongol race of Eastern Asia, had crossed the Ural, subjugated the Alani and driven back upon the Danube the Goths, who stretched out supplicating hands to the emperor (375). Valens, whose pride was flattered, forgot his prudence and welcomed this host of 200,000 fighting men. Afterward they rose against him, and Valens near Adrianople experienced a defeat more disastrous than that of Cannæ (378). Barely a third of the Roman army escaped. The wounded emperor perished in a hut to which the barbarians set fire. The whole country was horribly ravaged. Some bands of Saracens, summoned from Asia, saved Constantinople. Those children of the southern deserts found themselves for the first time in hand-to-hand combat with the men of the north whom they were destined to encounter three and a half centuries later at the other extremity of the Mediterranean.

Theodosius (378).—At this very time Gratian was fight-

ing the Alemanni near Colmar, while the empire of the East was without a head. To replace his uncle he chose a skilful general, Theodosius, who reorganized the army and restored the soldiers' courage by affording them the opportunity of fighting petty engagements in which he took care that they should have the advantage. He allowed no fortress to fall into the hands of the enemy and diminished their numbers by provoking desertions. At last without having won a victory he forced the Goths to make a treaty (382). In reality Theodosius gave them what they wished. He established them in Thrace and Mœsia with the duty of defending the passage of the Danube. Forty thousand of their warriors were admitted to the imperial ranks.

In Gaul Gratian had been overthrown by the usurper Maximus (383) who, taking advantage of the Arian troubles in Italy, crossed the Alps and forced Valentinian II to take refuge with Theodosius. This prince brought him back to Italy after a victory over Maximus, who was put to death by his own soldiers in Aquileia. He gave him as his principal minister the Frank Arbogast, who had just freed Gaul from the Germans, but who filled all the civil and military offices with barbarians. After the departure of Theodosius, Valentinian wished delivery from this tutelage, but a few days later he was found strangled in his bed (392).

Arbogast threw the purple over the shoulders of a dependent of his own, the pagan orator Eugenius, and tried to rally to his cause what pagans remained. This imprudent conduct roused the Christians against him. A single battle near Aquileia ended his ephemeral domination. Eugenius was made prisoner and put to death. Arbogast killed himself (394). This time the victor retained his conquest. This victory was also the triumph of orthodoxy. Theodosius forbade under severe penalties the worship of the pagan gods. He forbade the bestowal of honors on heretics, nor could they dispose of their property by will. On the other hand he made wise regulations in the effort to heal some of the evils infesting this moribund society. He honored the last days of the empire by exhibiting upon the throne those virtues which the people had rarely beheld there.

The inhabitants of Thessalonica during a riot had killed the governor and several imperial officers. Theodosius gave orders which cost 7000 persons their lives. This massacre excited a sentiment of horror throughout the em-

pire. When he presented himself some time later at the doors of the cathedral of Milan, Saint Ambrose in the presence of all the people reproached him with his crime and forbade him to enter the church. The emperor accepted the public penance which the saintly bishop thus imposed in the name of God and outraged humanity. At his death he divided the empire between his two sons, Arcadius and Honorius (395). This final partition corresponded with the real state of affairs, for the Adriatic separated two languages and almost two religions. Constantinople, Greek-Orthodox though so often Arian, and Rome, Latin and Catholic, had each desired its own emperor. This separation still exists in the different creeds and civilizations of those two halves of the ancient world.

End of the Western Empire (476).—The barbarians who for four centuries had remained on the defensive were now beginning incessant attacks. Thanks to her situation, Constantinople was almost impregnable to assault. Rome, on the contrary, was speedily captured. The empire of the West writhed for eighty years in a painful death agony, the chief features of which we shall find in the subsequent history of Alaric, Attila and Genseric. Honorius died in 423. His nephew Valentinian III reigned miserably until 455 and perished by assassination. Majorian, worthy of a better epoch, was killed by the Sueve Ricimer who bestowed the crown on three senators in succession. Finally a chieftain of the Heruli, Odoacer, put an end to the Western Empire (476) by deposing the last emperor Romulus Augustus. Proclaimed king of Italy by his barbarians, he assigned them one-third of the territory of the country, and requested at Constantinople the title of patrician, thereby recognizing the rights of the Eastern Emperor as suzerain of the new kingdom.

Summary.—The Roman Empire fell because it had at its origin detestable political principles, and in its latter days a deplorable military organization. Taxes, constantly becoming more burdensome, and a merciless fiscal system alienated the affection of subjects whom the army no longer defended. A new religion, which tended to detach attention from the earth, did not strengthen the devotion for the public cause. Thus the empire was not thrown down headlong by a violent and unexpected blow. It collapsed because it could no longer live.

The Roman people added nothing to the heritage Greece had bequeathed. Nevertheless it also left behind great deeds and great lessons, though belonging to another order of facts and ideas. Its language has been and still is in a measure the bond of the learned world. Its laws have inspired modern legislation. Its military roads, its bridges, its aqueducts, have made men understand the necessity of public works. Its administration has taught how to control multitudes of men. Its government has served as a model to the absolute monarchies which have succeeded the feudal system. Its municipal institutions are the source of our own and could still offer useful examples. Lastly it began the transformation of ancient slavery into serfdom.

The barbaric kings, dazzled at the splendor shed by this dying empire, had at first no other idea than to continue it. Clovis will be a patrician of Rome. Theodoric will count himself the colleague of the emperor of the East. Charlemagne, Otho, Frederick Barbarossa, will call themselves the successors of Constantine. The Christianity of Jerusalem, become Catholicism at Rome, will be the most powerful government of the soul. The spiritual monarchy of the popes will copy and strive to replace the temporal monarchy of the emperors. The intellectual heirs of Ulpian and of Papinian will attach to feudal royalty the powers bestowed upon the Cæsars by the *lex regia*. When those royalties shall all have perished in their turn, Napoleon will assume a Roman title as representative of an idea both new and old, the idea of the protectorate of popular interests exercised at Rome by the tribunes of the people, whose power, *tribunicia potestas*, the emperors had absorbed.

Thus the history of Rome will long remain the training-school of the lawyer and the statesman, even as artists, thinkers and poets will always turn toward Greece.

