

Aurélius, in person, conducted a war against the German tribes, without once returning to Rome. During the German war occurred that remarkable deliverance of the emperor and his army from danger, which has been related both by pagan and Christian writers. It is said that the Romans, drawn into a narrow defile, where they could neither fight nor retreat, were on the point of perishing by thirst, when a violent thunder-storm burst upon both armies, and the lightning fired the tents of the barbarians and broke up their camp while the rain relieved the pressing wants of the Romans. Many ancient fathers of the Church ascribed the seasonable shower to the prayers of the Christian soldiers then serving in the imperial army; and we are told by Eusébius that the emperor immediately gave to their division the title of the "Thundering Legion," and henceforth relaxed his severity towards the Christians, whose persecution he had before tolerated.

12. The reigns of Nerva, Trajan, Adrian, and the two Antonines, comprised a happy period in the annals of the Roman empire. These monarchs observed the laws, and the ancient forms of civil administration, and probably allowed the Roman people all the freedom they were capable of enjoying. But under an arbitrary government there is no guarantee for the continuance of a wise and equitable administration; for the next monarch may be a profligate sensualist, an imbecile dotard, or a jealous tyrant; and he may abuse, to the destruction of his subjects, that absolute power which others had exerted for their welfare. The uncertain tenure by which the people held their lives and liberties under despotic rule, is fully illustrated in the dark pictures of tyranny which the annals of the Roman emperors exhibit. The golden age of Trajan and the Antonines had been preceded by an age of iron; and it was followed by a period of gloom, of whose public wretchedness, the shortness, and violent termination, of most of the imperial reigns, is sufficient proof.

13. Com' modus, the unworthy son of Aurélius, succeeded to the throne on the death of his father, (A. D. 180,) amidst the acclamations of the senate and the armies. During three years, while he retained his father's counsellors around him, he ruled with equity and moderation; but the weakness of his mind and the timidity of his disposition, together with his natural indolence, rendered him the slave of base attendants; and sensual indulgence and crime, which others had taught him, finally degenerated into a habit, and became the ruling passions of his soul.

14. A fatal incident decided his fluctuating character, and suddenly developed his dormant cruelty and thirst for blood. In an attempt to assassinate him, the assailant, aiming a blow at him with a dagger, exclaimed, "the senate sends you this." The menace prevented the deed; but the words sunk deep into the mind of Com' modus, and kindled the utmost fury of his nature. It was found that the conspirators were men of senatorial rank, who had been instigated by the emperor's own sister. Suspicion and distrust, fear and hatred, were henceforth indulged by the emperor towards the whole body of senators: spies and informers were encouraged; neither virtue nor station afforded any security; and when Com' modus had once tasted human blood, he became incapable of pity or remorse. He sacrificed a long list of consular senators to his wanton suspicion, and took especial delight in hunting out and exterminating all who had been connected with the family of the Antonines.

15. The debaucheries of Com' modus exceeded, in extravagance and iniquity, those of any previous Roman emperor. He was averse to every rational and liberal pursuit, and all his sports were mingled with cruelty. He cultivated his physical, to the neglect of his mental powers; and in shooting with the bow and throwing the javelin, Rome had not his superior. Delighting in exhibiting to the people his superior skill in archery, he at one time caused a hundred lions to be let loose in the amphitheatre; and as they ran raging around the arena, they successively fell by a hundred arrows from the royal hand. He fought in the circus as a common gladiator, and, always victorious, often wantonly slew his antagonists, who were less completely armed than himself. This monster of folly and wickedness was finally slain, (A. D. 193,) partly by poisoning and partly by strangling, at the instigation of his favorite concubine Marcia, who accidentally learned that her own death, and that of several officers of the palace, had been resolved upon by the tyrant.

16. On the death of Com' modus the throne was offered to Per tinax, a senator of consular rank and strict integrity, who accepted the office with extreme reluctance, fully aware of the dangers which he incurred, and the great weight of responsibility thrown upon him. The virtues of Per tinax secured to him the love of the senate and the people; but his zeal to correct abuses provoked the anger of the turbulent Prætorian soldiery, who preferred the favor of a tyrant to the stern equality of the laws; and

after a reign of three months, Per'tinax was slain in the imperial palace by the same guards who had placed him on the throne.

17. Amidst the wild disorder that attended the violent death of the emperor the Prætorian guards proclaimed that they would dispose of the sovereignty of the Roman world to the highest bidder, and while the body of Per'tinax remained unburied in the streets

VIII. DID' IUS of Rome, the prize of the empire was purchased by a JULIA' NUS vain and wealthy old senator, Did' ius Juliánus, who, repairing to the Prætorian camp, outbid all competitors, and actually paid to each of the soldiers, ten thousand in number, more than two hundred pounds sterling, or nearly nine millions of dollars in all.

18. The obsequious senate, overawed by the soldiery, ratified the unworthy negotiation; but the Prætorians themselves were ashamed of the prince whom their avarice had persuaded them to accept; the citizens looked upon his elevation with horror, as a lasting insult to the Roman name; and the armies in the provinces were unanimous in refusing allegiance to the new ruler, while the emperor, trembling with the dangers of his position, found himself, although on the throne of the world, scorned and despised, without a friend, and even without an adherent.

19. Three competitors soon appeared to contest the throne with Juliánus,—Clódius Albinus, who commanded in Britain,—Pescen' nius Níger in Syria,—and Septim' ius Sevérus in Dal' ius Sevérus. mátia' and Pannónia. The latter, by his nearness to Rome, and the rapidity of his marches gained the advance of his rivals, and was hailed emperor by the people: the faithless Prætorians submitted without a blow, and were disbanded; and the senate pronounced a sentence of deposition and death against the terror-stricken Juliánus, whose anxious and precarious reign of sixty-five days was terminated by the hands of the common executioner.

20. While Sevérus, employing the most subtle craft and dissimulation, was flattering Albinus in Britain with the hope of being associated with him in the empire, he rapidly passed into Asia, and after several engagements with the forces of Níger completely defeated them on the plains of Issus, where Alexander and Daríus had long before contended for the sovereignty of the world. Such was the

1. *Dalmatia*, anciently a part of Illy' rium, and now the most southern province of the Austrian empire, comprises a long and narrow territory on the eastern shore of the Adriatic. After the division of the Roman provinces under Con' stantine and Theodósius, Dalmátia became one of the most important parts of the empire.

duplicity of Sevérus, that even in the letter in which he announced the victory to Albinus, he addressed the latter with the most friendly salutations, and expressed the strongest regard for his welfare; while at the same time he intrusted the messengers charged with the letter to desire a private audience, and to plunge their dagger to the heart of his rival. It was only when the infamous plot was detected that Albinus awoke to the reality of his situation, and began to make vigorous preparations for open war. This second contest for empire was decided against Albinus in a most desperate battle near Lyons,¹ in Gaul, (A. D. 197,) where one hundred and fifty thousand Romans are said to have fought on each side. Albinus was overtaken in flight, and slain; and many senators and eminent provincials suffered death for the attachment which they had shown to his cause.

21. After Sevérus had obtained undisputed possession of the empire, he governed with mildness: considering the Roman world as his property, he bestowed his care on the cultivation and improvement of so valuable an acquisition, and after a reign of eighteen years he could boast, with a just pride, that he received the empire oppressed with foreign and domestic wars, and left it established in profound, universal, and honorable peace. In his last illness, Sevérus deeply felt and acknowledged the littleness of human greatness. Born in an African town, fortune and merit had elevated him from an humble station to the first place among mankind; and now, satiated with power, and oppressed with age and infirmities, all his prospects in life were closed. "He had been all things," he said, "and all was of little value." Calling for the urn in which his ashes were to be inclosed, he thus moralized on his decaying greatness. "Little urn, thou shalt soon hold all that will remain of him whom the world could not contain." He died at York,² in Britain, (A. D. 211,) having been called into that country to repress an insurrection of the Caledonians.

1. *Lyons*, called by the Romans *Lugdunum*, is situated at the confluence of the rivers Rhone and Saone. The Roman town was at the foot of a hill on the western bank of the Rhone. Cæsar conquered the place from the Gauls: Augustus made it the capital of a province; and, being enlarged by succeeding emperors, it became one of the principal cities of the Roman world. It is now the principal manufacturing town of France, containing a population of about two hundred thousand inhabitants. (Map No. XIII.)

2. *York*, called by the Romans *Ebor' acum*, is situated on the river Ouse, one hundred and seventy miles N. N. west from London. It was the capital of the Roman province, and next to London, the most important city in the island. It was successively the residence of Adrian, Sevérus, Géta and Caracal' la, Constan' tius Chlorus, Con' stantine the Great, &c. The modern city can still show many vestiges of Roman power and magnificence. Constan' tius Chlorus, the father of Con' stantine the Great, died here. (Map No. XVI.)

22. Sevérus had left the empire to his two sons Caracal'la and Géta, but the former, whose misconduct had imbibbered the last days of his father, soon after his accession slew his brother in his mother's arms. His character resembled that of Com'modus in cruelty, but his extortions were carried to a far greater extent. After the Roman world had endured his tyranny nearly six years, he was assassinated while in Syria, at the instigation of Macrinus, the captain of the guards, (A. D. 217,) who succeeded to the throne; but after a reign of fourteen months, Macrinus lost his life in the struggle to retain his power.

23. Bassiánus, a youth of fourteen, and a cousin of Caracal'la, had been consecrated, according to the rites of the Syrian worship, to the ministry of high-priest of the sun; and it was a rebellion of the Eastern troops in his favor that had overthrown the power of Macrinus. Although these events occurred in distant Syria, yet the Roman senate and the whole Roman world received with servile submission the emperors whom the army successively offered them. As priest of the sun Bassiánus adopted the title of Elagabálus,^a and on his arrival at Rome established there the Syrian worship, and compelled the grandest personages of the State and the army to officiate in the temple dedicated to the Syrian god.

24. The follies, gross licentiousness, boundless prodigality, and cruelty of this pagan priest and emperor, soon disgusted even the licentious soldiery, the only support of his throne. He established a senate of women, the subject of whose deliberations were dress and etiquette; he even copied the dress and manners of the female sex, and styling himself empress, publicly invested one of his officers with the title of husband. His grandmother Mœ'sa, foreseeing that the Roman world would not long endure the yoke of so contemptible a monster, artfully persuaded him, in a favorable moment of fondness, to adopt for his successor his cousin Alexander Sevérus; yet soon after, Elagabálus, indignant that the affections of the army were bestowed upon another, meditated the destruction of Sevérus, but was himself massacred by the indignant Prætorians, who dragged his mutilated corpse through the city, and threw it into the Tiber, while the senate publicly branded his name with infamy. (A. D. 222.)

^a. A name derived from two Syrian words, *ela* a god, and *gabal* to form:—signifying the forming, or plastic god,—a proper and even happy epithet for the sun.—Gibbon, 1. 83.

25. At the age of seventeen Alexander Sevérus was raised to the throne by the Prætorian guards. He proved to be a wise, energetic, and virtuous prince: he relieved the provinces of the oppressive taxes imposed by his predecessors, and restored the dignity, freedom, and authority of the senate; but his attempted reformation of the military order served only to inflame the ills it was meant to cure. His administration of the government was an unavailing struggle against the corruptions of the age; and after many mutinies of his troops his life was at length sacrificed, after a reign of fourteen years, to the fierce contents of the army, whose power had now increased to a height so dangerous as to obliterate the faint image of laws and liberty, and introduce the sway of military despotism. Max'imin, the instigator of the revolt, was proclaimed emperor.

SECTION III.

ROMAN HISTORY FROM THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MILITARY DESPOTISM, AFTER THE MURDER OF ALEXANDER SEVE'RUS, A. D. 235, TO THE SUBVERSION OF THE WESTERN EMPIRE OF THE ROMANS, A. D. 476 = 241 YEARS.

ANALYSIS. 1. Earliest account of the Thracian Max'imin.—2. His origin. His history down to the death of Alexander Sevérus. [The Goths. Aláni.]—3. Max'imin proclaimed emperor by the army. Commencement of his reign.—4. Gor'dian. Pupie'nus and Balb'nus. Death of Max'imin. The Second Gor'dian.—5. German and Persian wars.—6. Sapor, the Persian king. Death of Gor'dian, and accession of Philip the Arabian.—7. Insurrections and rebellions. De'cius proclaimed emperor, and death of Philip. [Veróna.]—8. War with the Goths, and death of Decius. Reign of Gallus Æmilia'nus. Accession of Vale'rian.—9. Worthy character of Valérian. Ravages of the barbarians. Spain, Gaul, and Britain. The Persians. [The Franks. The Aleman'ni. Lombardy.]—10. Valérian taken prisoner. His treatment. Gallie'nus.—11. Odenátus, prince of Palmyra. He routs the Persians. [Palmyra.]—12. Numerous competitors for the throne.—13. Death of Gallienus, and accession of Claudius. [Milan.]—14. Character, reign, and death of Claudius. [Sir'mium.]—15. Quintilius.—16. The reign of Aure'lian. His wars. Zenobia. Character of Aure'lian. His death. [Tibur. Byzantium.]—17. An interregnum. Election of Tacitus. His reign and death. [Bos'porus.]—18. Flo'rian. The reign, and death, of Probus. [Sarmatia 'an'dale.]—19. Reign of Ca'rus. His character, and death. Nume'rian and Car'nus.—20. Superstition, and retreat, of the Roman army in Persia. Character of Carinus, and death of Numerian.—21. Carinus marches against Diocletian. His death. Diocle'tian acknowledged emperor. His treatment of the vanquished.

22. The reign of Diocletian, an important epoch. [Copts and Abyssinians.]—23. Division of the imperial authority.—24. The rule of Maxim'ian. [Nicomédia.] Of his colleague Constant'ius. Countries ruled by Diocletian, and his colleague Galérian.—25. Important events of the reign of Diocle'tian. The insurrection in Britain.—26. Revolt in Egypt and northern Africa. [Busiris and Cop'tos. The Moors.]—27. The war with Persia. [Antioch.

Kurdistan.]—23. Persecution of the Christians. Diocletian's edict against them.—29. Results and effects of this persecution.—30. Diocletian and Maximian lay down the sceptre, and retire to private life. GALE'RIUS AND CONSTANTIUS acknowledged sovereigns. Discord and confusion.—31. Death of Constantius. CONSTANTINE proclaimed emperor. Six competitors for the throne. Death of Galérius.—32. Conversion of Constantine, and triumph of Christianity.—33. Most important events in the reign of Constantine. The choice of a new capital.—34. Removal of the seat of government to Byzantium, and the changes that followed. Constantine divides the empire among his three sons and two nephews. His death.—35. Sixteen years of civil wars. CONSTANTINUS II. becomes sole emperor. His reign of twenty-four years. His death. [The Saxons.]—36. JULIAN THE APOSTATE. His character. Hostility to the Christians.—37. His efforts against Christianity. The result.—38. His attempt to rebuild Jerusalem.—39. Causes of the suspension of the work.—40. Julian's invasion of Persia. His death.—31. The brief reign of JOVIAN.—42. VALENTINIAN elected emperor. Associates his brother VALENTIUS with him. Final division of the empire. The two capitals. Rome.

43. BARBARIAN INROADS. Picts and Scots.—44. Death of Valentinian, and westward progress of the Huns. The Visigoths are allowed to settle in Thrace.—45. The Ostrogoths cross the Danube in arms. The two divisions raise the standard of war. Death of Valens. [Adrianople.]—46. GRA'TIAN emperor of the West. THEODOSIUS emperor of the East. The Goths. Many of them settle in Thrace, Phrygia, &c.—47. Death of Gratian. VALENTINIAN II. His death. Theodosius sole emperor. Death of Theodosius. Division of the empire between HONORIUS AND ARCADIUS.—48. Civil wars. ALARIC THE GOTH ravages Greece, and then passes into Italy. [Julian Alps.]—49. Honorius is relieved by Stilicho. [As'ia Pollentia.] Rome saved by Stilicho.—50. Raven'na becomes the capital of Italy. Deluge of barbarians. [Raven'na. Van'dals. Suévi. Burgundians.]—51. Italy delivered by Stilicho. [Florence.]—52. Stilicho put to death. Massacre of the Goths, and revolt of the Gothic soldiers.—53. Rome besieged by Alaric. His terms of ransom.—54. The terms finally agreed upon. Rejected by Honorius. [Tuscany.] Alaric returns and reduces Rome.—55. Pillage of Rome. Alaric abandons Rome. His death and burial.—56. The Goths withdraw from Italy. The Visigoths in Spain and Gaul. Saxons establish themselves in England.—57. The Vandals in Spain and Africa. VALENTINIAN III. CONQUESTS OF AFRICA. [Andalusia. The Huns. Chalons. Venetian Republic.]—58. Extinction of the empire of the Huns. Situation of the Roman world at this period. Rome pillaged by the VANDALS, A. D. 455.—59. AVI'US, MAJORIAN.—60. SEVERUS. Vandal invasions. Expedition against Carthage.—61. Revolutionary changes. Demands of the barbarians, and SUBVERSION OF THE WESTERN EMPIRE. [Her'ull.]

1. 'Thirty-two years before the murder of Alexander Sévérus, the emperor Septim'ius Sévérus, returning from his Asiatic expedition, halted in Thrace to celebrate with military games the birthday of his younger son Géta. Among the crowd that flocked to behold their sovereign was a young barbarian of gigantic stature, who earnestly solicited, in his rude dialect, that he might be allowed to contend for the prize of wrestling. As the pride of discipline would have been disgraced in the overthrow of a Roman soldier by a Thracian peasant, he was matched with the stoutest followers of the camp, sixteen of whom he successively laid on the ground. His victory was rewarded by some trifling gifts, and a permission to enlist in the troops. The next day the happy barbarian was distinguished above a crowd of recruits, dancing and exulting after the fashion of his country. As soon as he perceived that he had attracted the emperor's notice, he ran up to his horse,

and followed him on foot, without the least appearance of fatigue, in a long and rapid career. "Thracian," said Sévérus, with astonishment, "art thou disposed to wrestle after thy race?" "Most willingly, sir," replied the unwearied youth, and almost in a breadth overthrew seven of the strongest soldiers in the army. A gold collar was the prize of his matchless vigor and activity, and he was immediately appointed to serve in the horse-guards, who always attended on the person of the sovereign.^a

2. Max'imin, for that was the name of the Thracian, was descended from a mixed race of barbarians,—his father being a Goth,¹ and his mother of the nation of the Aláni.² Under the reign of the first Sévérus and his son Caracal'la he held the rank of centurion; but he declined to serve under Macrinus and Elagabalus. On the accession of Alexander he returned to court, and was promoted to various military offices honorable to himself and useful to the nation, but, elated by the applause of the soldiers, who bestowed on him the names of Ajax and Hercules, and prompted by ambition, he conspired against his benefactor, and excited that mutiny in which the latter lost his life.

3. Declaring himself the friend and advocate of the military order,

1. The *Goths*, a powerful northern nation, who acted an important part in the overthrow of the Roman empire, were probably a Scythian tribe, and came originally from Asia, whence they passed north into Scandinavia. When first known to the Romans, a large division of their nation lived on the northern shores of the Euxine. About the middle of the third century of our era they crossed the Dnieper, and devastated Dacia and Thrace. The emperor Décius lost his life in opposing them; after which his successor Gal'us induced them by money, to withdraw to their old seats on the Dnieper. (See p. 215.) Soon after this period the Goths appear in two grand divisions;—the Ostrogoths, or Eastern Goths, passing the Euxine into Asia Minor, and ravaging Bythin'ia;—and the Visigoths, or Western Goths, gradually pressing upon the Roman provinces along the Danube. About the year 375, the Huns, coming from the East, fell upon the Ostrogoths, and drove them upon the Visigoths, who were then living north of the Danube. A vast multitude of the latter were permitted by the emperor Valens to settle in Mœ'sia, and on the waste lands of Thrace; but being soon after joined by their Eastern brethren, they raised the standard of war, carried their ravages to the very gates of Constantinople, and killed Valens in battle. (See p. 228.) It was Al'aric, king of the Visigoths, who plundered Rome in the beginning of the fifth century. (See p. 231.) The Visigoths afterwards passed into Spain, where they founded a dynasty which reigned nearly three centuries, and was finally conquered by the Moors, A. D. 711. In the meantime the Ostrogoths had been following in the path of their brethren, and in the year 493 their great king Theod'oric defeated Odoacer, and seated himself on the throne of Italy. (See p. 239.) The Gothic kingdom lasted only till the year 554, when it was overthrown by Nar'ses, the general of Justinian (See p. 241.) From this period the Goths no longer occupy a prominent place in history, except in Spain.

2. The *Aláni*, likewise a Scythian race, when first known occupied the country between the Volga and the Don. Being conquered, eventually, by the Huns, most of the Aláni united with their conquerors, and proceeded with them to invade the limits of the Gothic empire of Italy.

a. Gibbon, i. 96.

Max'imin was unanimously proclaimed emperor by the applauding legions, who, now composed mostly of peasants and barbarians of the frontiers, knowing no country but their camp, and no science but that of war, and discarding the authority of the senate, looked upon themselves as the sole depositaries of power, as they were, in reality, the real masters of the Roman world. Max'imin commenced his reign by a sanguinary butchery of the friends of the late monarch; but his avarice and cruelty soon provoked a civil war, and raised up against him several competitors for the throne.

4. At first the aged and virtuous Gor'dian, pro-consul of Africa, was declared sovereign by the legions in that part of the Roman world, but he persisted in refusing the dangerous honor until menaces compelled him to accept the imperial title. At Rome the news of his election was received with universal joy, and confirmed by the senate; but two months after his accession he perished in a struggle with the Roman governor of Maurítania, who still adhered to Max'imin. Two senators of consular dignity, Pupienus, (sometimes called Max'imus) and Balbinus, were then declared emperors by the senate; and soon after, Max'imin, while on his march from Pannónia to Rome, was slain in his tent by his own guards. (A. D. 238.) Only a few days later both Pupienus and Balbinus were slain in a mutiny of the troops. The youthful Gor'dian, grandson of the former Gor'dian, was then declared emperor.

5. During these rapid changes in the sovereignty of the Roman world, the empire was involved in numerous foreign wars, which gradually wasted its strength and resources, and hastened its downfall. On the north, the German nations, and other barbarian tribes, almost constantly harassed the frontier provinces; while in the east the Persians, after overthrowing the Parthian empire, and establishing the second or later Persian empire under the dynasty of the Sassan'idæ, (A. D. 226,) commenced a long series of destructive wars against the Romans, with the constant object of driving the latter from Asia.

6. At the time of the accession of the second Gor'dian to the sovereignty of the Roman empire, Sapor, the second prince of the Sassanid dynasty, was driving the Romans from several of their Asiatic provinces. The efforts of Gor'dian, who went in person to protect the provinces of Syria, were partially successful but while

the youthful conqueror was pursuing his advantages, he was supported in the affections of his army by Philip the Arabian, the prefect or commander of the Prætorian guards, who caused his monarch and benefactor to be slain, (A. D. 244.)

7. It is not surprising that the generals of Philip were disposed to imitate the example of their master, and that insurrections and rebellions were frequent during his reign. At length a rebellion having broken out in Pannónia, Décius was sent to suppress it, when he himself was proclaimed emperor by the fickle troops, and compelled, by the threat of instant death, to submit to their dictation. Philip immediately marched against Décius, but was defeated and slain near Veróna.¹ (A. D. 249.)

8. Several monarchs now succeeded each other in rapid succession. Décius soon fell in battle with the Goths, (A. D. 251,) large numbers of whom during his reign first crossed the Danube, and desolated the Roman provinces in that quarter. Gal'lus, a general of Décius, being raised to the throne, concluded a dishonorable peace with the barbarians, and renewed a violent persecution of the Christians, which had been commenced by Décius. As new swarms of the barbarians crossed the Danube, the pusillanimous emperor seemed about to abandon the defence of the monarchy, when Æmiliánus, governor of Pannónia and Mœ'sia, unexpectedly attacked the enemy and drove them back into their own territories. His troops, elated by the victory, proclaimed their general emperor on the field of battle; and Gal'lus was soon after slain by his own soldiers. In three months a similar fate befel Æmiliánus, when Valérian, governor of Gaul, then about sixty years of age, a man of learning, wisdom, and virtue, was advanced to the sovereignty, not by the clamors of the army only, but by the unanimous voice of the Roman world.

9. Valérian possessed abilities that might have rendered his administration happy and illustrious, had he lived in times more peaceful, and more favorable for the display and appreciation of virtue; but his reign had not only a most deplorable end, but was marked, throughout, with nothing but confusion and calamities. At this time the Goths, who had already formed a powerful nation on the lower Dan-

¹ Veróna, a large and flourishing Roman city of Cisalpine Gaul, still retains its ancient name. It is situated on both sides of the river Adige, sixty-four miles west from Venice. The great glory of Veróna is its amphitheatre, one of the noblest existing monuments of the ancient Romans, and, excepting the Colosséum at Rome, the largest extant edifice of its class. It is supposed to have been capable of accommodating twenty thousand spectators. *Mag* No. XVII.)

ube and the northern coasts of the Black Sea, ravaged the Roman dominions on their borders, and penetrating into the interior of Greece, or Acháia, destroyed Ar' gos, Corinth, and Athens, by fire and by the sword: the Franks,¹ who had formed a kingdom on the lower Rhine, began to be formidable: the Aleman' ni² broke through their boundaries, and advanced into the plains of Lom' bardy³: Spain, Gaul, and Britain, were virtually torn away from the empire, and governed by independent chiefs; while in the East, the Persians, under their monarch Sápór, fell like a mountain torrent upon Syria and Cappadócia, and almost effaced the Roman power from Asia.

10. Valérian in person led the Roman army against the Persians, but, penetrating beyond the Euphrátes, he was surrounded and taken prisoner by Sápór, who is accused of treating his royal captive with wanton and unrelenting cruelty,—using him as a stepping-stone when he mounted on horseback, and at last causing him, after nine years of captivity, to be flayed alive, and his skin to be stuffed in the form
 X. GALLIÉ-
 NUS. of the living emperor—dyed in scarlet in mockery of his imperial dignity, and preserved as a trophy in a temple of Persia. Galliénus, the unworthy son of Valérian, receiving the news of his father's captivity with secret joy and open indifference, immediately succeeded to the throne. (A. D. 259.)

11. At the time when nearly every Roman town in Asia had submitted to Sápór, Odenátus, prince of Palmyra,⁴ who was attached

1. The *Franks*, or "Freemen," were a confederation of the rudest of the Germanic tribes, and were first known to the Romans as inhabiting the numerous islets formed by the mouth of the Rhine; but they afterwards crossed into Gaul, and, in the latter part of a. d. fifth century, under their leader Clovis, laid the foundation of the French monarchy. (See also p. 255.)

2. The *Aleman' ni*, or "all men," that is, men of all tribes, were also a German confederacy, situated on the northern borders of Switzerland. They were finally overthrown by Clovis, after which they were dispersed over Gaul, Switzerland, and northern Italy.

3. *Lom' bardy* embraced most of the great plain of northern Italy watered by the Po and its tributaries.

4. *Palmyra*, "The ancient "Tadmor in the wilderness" built by king Solomon, (2 Chron. viii. 4,) was situated in an oasis of the Syrian desert, about one hundred and forty miles north-east from Damascus. The first notice we have of it in Roman history is at the commencement of the wars with the Parthians, when it was permitted to maintain a state of independence and neutrality between the contending parties. Being on the caravan route from the coast of Syria to the regions of Mesopotámia, Persia, and India, it was long the principalemporium of commerce between the Eastern and Western worlds—a city of merchants and factors, whose wealth is still attested by the number and magnificence of its ruins. After the victories of Trajan had established the unquestionable preponderance of the Roman arms, it became allied to the empire as a free State, and was greatly favored by Adrian and the Antonines, during whose reigns it attained its greatest splendor. Odenátus maintained its glory, and for his defeat of the Persians the Roman senate conferred on him the title of Augustus, and associated him with Galliénus in the empire; but his queen and successor, the famous Zenóbia, broke the alliance with the imbecile Galliénus, annexed Egypt to her do-

to the Roman interest, desirous at least to secure the forbearance of the conqueror, sent Sápór a magnificent present of camels and merchandise, accompanied with a respectful, but not servile, epistle; but the haughty monarch ordered the gifts to be thrown into the Euphrátes, and returned for an answer that if Odenátus hoped to mitigate his punishments he must prostrate himself before the throne of Sápór with his hands tied behind his back. The Palmyrean prince reading his fate in the angry message of Sápór, resolved to meet the Persian in arms. Hastily collecting a little army from the villages of Syria, and the tents of the desert, he fell upon and routed the Persian host, seized the camp, the women, and the treasures of Sápór, and in a short time restored to the Romans most of the provinces of which they had been despoiled.

12. The indolence and inconstancy of Galliénus soon raised up a host of competitors for the throne, generally reckoned thirty in all, although the number of actual pretenders did not exceed nineteen. Among these was Odenátus the Palmyrean, to whom the Roman senate had intrusted the command of the Eastern provinces, after associating him with Galliénus. Of all these competitors, several of whom were models of virtue, two only were of noble birth, and not one enjoyed a life of peace, or died a natural death. As one after another was cut off by the arms of a rival, or by domestic treachery, armies and provinces were involved in their fall. During the deplorable reigns of Valérian and Galliénus, the contentions of the imperial rivals, and the arms of barbarians, brought the empire to the very brink of ruin.

13. Galliénus, after a reign of nine years, was murdered while he was besieging one of his rivals in Mediolánus;¹ (*Milan*,
 A. D. 268;) but before his death he had appointed Mar-
 XL CLAUDIUS
 cus Aurélius Claudius, a general of great reputation, to succeed him, and the choice was confirmed by the joyful acclamations of the army and the people.

minions, and assumed the title of "Augusta, Queen of the East." The emperor Aurelian marched against the ill-fated Palmyra with an irresistible force; the walls of the city were razed to the ground; and the seat of commerce, of arts, and of Zenóbia, gradually sunk into an obscure town, a trifling fortress, and, at length, a miserable Arab village.

1. *Mediolánus*, now Milan, was a city of Cisalpine Gaul, one hundred and fifty miles west from Venice, situated in a beautiful plain between two small streams the Olona and Lambra, which unite at San Angelo and form a northern tributary of the Po. Mediolánus was annexed to the Roman dominions by Scipio Nasica, 191 B. C. A good specimen of ancient Roman architecture may still be seen at Milan, being a range of sixteen beautiful Corinthian columns, with their architrave, before the church at San Lorenzo. (Map No. VIII.)

14. A succession of better princes now restored for awhile the decaying energies of the empire. Claudius merited the confidence which had been placed in his wisdom, valor, and virtue; and his early death was a great misfortune to the Roman world. After having overthrown and nearly destroyed an army of three hundred and twenty thousand Goths and Van'dals, who had invaded the empire by the way of the Bos'porus, Claudius was cut off by a pestilence at Sir'mium,¹ as he was making preparations to march against the famous Zenobia, the "Queen of the East," and the widow and successor of Odenatus.

15. Quintilianus, the brother of Claudius, was proclaimed emperor by the acclamations of the troops; but when he learned that the great army of the Danube had invested Aurélian with imperial power, he sunk into despair, and terminated his life after a reign of seventeen days.

16. The reign of Aurélian, which lasted only four years and nine months, was filled with memorable achievements. After a bloody conflict, he put an end, by treaty, to the Gothic war of twenty years' duration; he chastised and drove back the Aleman'ni, who had traced a line of devastation from the Danube to the Po; he recovered Gaul, Spain, and Britain; and passing into Asia at the head of a large army, he destroyed the proud monarchy which Zenobia had erected there, and led that unfortunate, but heroic princess, captive to Rome. Being presented with an elegant villa at Tibur,² the Syrian queen insensibly sunk into a Roman matron and her daughters married into the noblest families of the empire. With great courage and superior military talents, Aurélian possessed many private virtues; but their influence was impaired by the sternness and severity of his character. He fell in a conspiracy of his officers near Byzantium,³ while preparing to carry on a war with Persia. (A. D. March, 275.)

1. Sir'mium was an important city in the south-eastern part of Pannonia, on the northern side of the river Save. Its ruins may be seen near the town of Mitrovitz, in Austrian Slavonia.

2. Tibur, now Tivoli, (te-vo-le) was situated at the cascades of the Anio, now the Teverone, eighteen miles north-east from Rome. Its ancient inhabitants were called the Tiburtini. The declivities in the vicinity of Tibur were anciently interspersed with splendid villas, the favorite residences of the refined and luxurious citizens of Rome, among which may be mentioned those of Sallust, Mæcenas, Tibullus, Varus, Attilius, Cassius, Brutus, &c. Here Virgil and Horace elaborated their immortal works. Although the temples and theatres of ancient Tibur have crumbled into dust, its orchards, its gardens, and its cool recesses, still bloom and flourish in unfading beauty. (Map No. X.)

3. Byzantium, now Constantinople, a celebrated city of Thrace on the western shore of the Thracian Bos'porus is supposed to have been founded by a Grecian colony from Megara, led

17. On the death of Aurélian, a generous and unlooked-for disinterestedness was exhibited by the army, which modestly referred the appointment of a successor to the senate. For six months the senate persisted in declining an honor it had so long been unaccustomed to enjoy; and during this period the Roman world remained without a sovereign, without a usurper, and without a sedition. At length the senate yielded to the continual request of the legions, and elected to the imperial dignity Marcus Claudius Tacitus, a wealthy and virtuous senator, who had already passed his seventy-fifth year. Tacitus, after enacting some wise laws, and restoring to the senate its ancient privileges, proceeded to join the army, which had remained assembled on the Bos'porus for the invasion of Persia; but the hardships of a military life, and the cares of government, proved too much for his constitution, and he died in Cappadocia, after a reign of little more than six months. (A. D. Sept., 275.)

18. Florian, a brother of Tacitus, showed himself unworthy to reign, by assuming the government without even consulting the senate. His own soldiers soon after put him to death, while in the meantime the Syrian army proclaimed their leader, Próbus, emperor. The latter proved to be an excellent sovereign and a great general; and in the wars which he carried on with the Franks, Aleman'ni, Sarmatians,² Goths, and Van'dals,³ he gained greater advantages than any of his predecessors. In the several battles which he fought, four hundred thousand of the barbarians fell: and seventy cities opened their gates to

by Byzas a Thracian prince, about the middle of the seventh century before the Christian era. It was destroyed by the Persians in the reign of Darius: it resisted successfully the arms of Philip of Macedonia: during the reign of Philip II. it placed itself under Roman sway: it was destroyed, and afterwards rebuilt, by Septim'ius Severus; and in the year 328 A. D., Constantine made it the capital of the Roman empire. On the subjugation of the western empire by the barbarians, A. D. 476, it continued to be the capital of the eastern empire. It was taken by the crusaders in the year 1204; and in 1453 it fell into the hands of the Turks, when the last remnant of the Roman empire was finally suppressed. (Map No. III.)

1. The Bos'porus, (corrupted by modern orthography to Bos'porus), is the strait which connects the Euxine or Black Sea, with the Propontis or Sea of Marmora. The length of this remarkable channel is about seventeen miles, with a width varying from half a mile to two miles. (Map No. VII.)

2. Ancient Sarmatia extended from the Baltic Sea and the Vis'tula to the Caspian Sea and the Volga. European Sarmatia embraced Poland, Lithuania, Prussia, and a part of Russia. Asiatic Sarmatia comprised the country between the Caspian Sea and the river Don.

3. The Van'dals were a people of Germany, and are supposed to have been of Gothic origin. They formed one of the three divisions of the great Slavonian race;—viz., Vandals, Avars, and Slavonians proper. The Slavonian language is the stem from which have issued the Russian, Polish, Bohemian, &c.

him. After he had secured a general peace by his victories, he employed his armies in useful public works; but the soldiers disdained such employment, and while they were engaged in draining a marsh near Sir'caium, in the hot days of summer, they broke out into a furious mutiny, and in their sudden rage slew their emperor. (A. D. 282.)

19. The legions next raised Cárus, prefect of the Prætorian guards, to the throne. He was full of warlike ambition, and the desire of military glory, and seems to have held a middle rank between good and bad princes. He signalized the beginning of his reign by a memorable defeat of the Sarmátians in Illyr'icum, sixteen thousand of whom he slew in battle. He then marched against Persia, and had already carried his victorious arms beyond the Tigris, when he was killed in his tent, as was generally believed by lightning. (A. D. 283.) Numérian, one of the sons of Cárus, who had accompanied his father in his eastern expedition, and Carinus his elder brother, who had been left to govern Rome, were immediately acknowledged emperors by the troops.

20. On the death of Cárus, the eastern army, superstitiously regarding places or persons struck by lightning as singularly devoted to the wrath of heaven, refused to advance any farther; and the Persians beheld with wonder the unexpected retreat of a victorious army.—While Carinus remained at Rome, immersed in pleasures, and acting the part of a second Com'modus, the virtuous Numérian perished by assassination. The army of the latter then chose for his successor Dioclétian, the commander of the domestic body guards of the late emperor. (A. D. Dec., 285.)

21. Carinus, being determined to dispute the succession, marched with a large army against Dioclétian, whom he was on the point of defeating in a desperate battle on the plains of Margus, a small city of Mœ'sia, when he was slain by one of his own officers in revenge for some private wrong. The army of Carinus then acknowledged Dioclétian as emperor. He used his victory with mildness, and, contrary to the common practice, respected the lives and fortunes of his late adversaries, and even continued in their stations many of the officers of Carinus.

22. The reign of Dioclétian is an important epoch in Roman history, as it was one of long duration and general prosperity, and is

the beginning of the division of the Roman world into the Eastern and Western empire. The accession of Dioclétian also marks a new chronological era, called the "era of Dioclétian," or, "the era of martyrs," which was long recognized in the Christian church, and is still used by the Copts and Abyssinians.¹

23. The natural tendency of the eastern parts of the empire to become separated from the western, together with the difficulties of ruling singly over so many provinces of different nations and diverse interests, led Dioclétian to form the plan of dividing the imperial authority, and governing the empire from two centres, although the whole was still to remain one. He therefore first took as a colleague his friend and fellow soldier Maxim'ian; but still the weight of the public administration appearing too heavy, the two sovereigns took each a subordinate colleague, to whose name the title of Cæsar was prefixed.

24. Maxim'ian made Milan his capital, while Dioclétian held his court at Nicomédia,² in Asia Minor. Maxim'ian ruled over Italy and Africa proper; while his subordinate colleague, Constan'tius, administered the government of Gaul, Spain, Britain, and Mauritania. Dioclétian reserved, for his personal supervision, nearly all the empire east of the Adriat'ic, except Pannonia and Mœ'sia, which he conferred upon his subordinate colleague Galérius. Each of the four rulers was sovereign within his own jurisdiction; but each was prepared to assist his colleagues with counsel and with arms; while Dioclétian was regarded as the father and head of the empire.

25. The most important events of the reign of Dioclétian were the insurrection of Carausius in Britain, a revolt in Egypt and throughout northern Africa, the war against the Persians, and a long-continued persecution of the Christians. During seven years, Carausius, the commander of the northern Roman fleet, ruled over Britain, and diffused beyond the columns of Hercules the terror of his name. He was murdered by his first minister Alec'tus; but the latter, soon after, was defeated and slain in battle by Constan'tius; and after a separation of ten years, Britain was reunited with the empire.

26. The suppression of a formidable revolt in Egypt was accom-

1. The *Copts* are Christians—descendants of the ancient Egyptians, as distinguished from the Arabians and other inhabitants of modern Egypt. The *Abyssinians* inhabitants of Abyssinia, in eastern Africa, profess Christianity, but it has little influence over their conduct.

2. *Nicomédia* was in Bithyn'ia, at the eastern extremity of the Propont'is, or Sea of Marmora. The modern *Is-Mid* occupies the site of the ancient city.

plished by Dioclétian himself, who took a terrible vengeance upon Alexandria, and utterly destroyed the proud cities of Busiris and Cop'tos.¹ In the meantime a confederacy of five Moorish² nations attacked all the Roman provinces of Africa, from the Nile westward to Mount Atlas, but the barbarians were vanquished by the arms of Maxim'ian.

27. Next commenced the war with Persia, which was carried on by Galérius, although Dioclétian, taking his station at An'tioch,³ prepared and directed the military operations. In the first campaign the Roman army received a total overthrow on the very ground rendered memorable by the defeat and death of Crassus. In a second campaign Galérius gained a complete victory by a night attack; and by the peace which followed, the eastern boundary of the Roman world was extended beyond the Tigris, so as to embrace the greater part of Cardúchia, the modern Kurdistan'.⁴

28. The triumphs of Dioclétian are sullied by a general persecution of the Christians (the tenth and last), which he is said to have commenced at the instigation of Galérius, aided by the artifices of the priesthood. (A. D. 303.) The famous edict of Dioclétian against the Christians excluded them from all offices, ordered their churches to be pulled down, and their sacred books to be burned, and led to a general and indiscriminate massacre of all such as professed the name of Jesus.

1. Four cities of Egypt bore the name of *Busiris*. The one destroyed by Dioclétian was in the Thebais, or southern Egypt,—generally called Upper Egypt. *Cop'tos* was likewise in Upper Egypt, east of the Nile. Its favorable situation for commerce caused it again to arise after its destruction by Dioclétian.

2. The *Moors*, whose name is derived from a Greek word (*Mauros*) signifying "dark," "obscure," are natives of the northern coast of Africa, or, more properly, of the Roman *Mauritania*. The Moors were originally from Asia, and are a people distinct from the native Arabs, Berbers, &c. The modern Moors are descendants of the ancient Mauritánians, intermixed with their Arab conquerors, and with the remains of the Van'dals who once ruled over the country.

3. *An'tioch*, once eminent for its beauty and greatness, was situated in northern Syria, on the left bank of the Orontes, (now the *Aszy*), twenty miles from its entrance into the Mediterranean. *An'tioch* was the capital of the Macedonian kingdom of Syria; and about the year 65 B. C. the conquests of Pompey brought it, with the whole of Syria, under the control of the Romans. It was long the centre of an extensive commerce, the residence of the governor of Syria, the frequent resort of the Roman emperors, and, next to Rome, the most celebrated city of the empire for the amusements of the circus and the theatre. Paul and Barnabas planted there the doctrines of Christianity; and "the disciples were called Christians first in *An'tioch*."—Acts, xi. 26. (*Map* No. VII.)

4. *Kurdistan*', comprised chiefly within the basin of the Tigris, is claimed partly by Turkey and partly by Persia. It is the country of the *Kurds*, in whose character the love of theft and brigandage is a marked feature; but, at the same time, when visited by travellers they exercise the most generous hospitality and often force handsome presents on their departing guests.

29. During ten years the persecution continued with scarcely mitigated horrors; and such multitudes of Christians suffered death that at last the imperial murderers boasted that they had extinguished the Christian name and religion, and restored the worship of the gods to its former purity and splendor. In spite, however, of the efforts of tyranny, the Christian Church survived, and in a few years reigned triumphant in the very metropolis of heathen idolatry.

30. After a reign of twenty years, Dioclétian, in the presence of a large concourse of citizens and soldiers who had assembled at Nicomédia to witness the spectacle, voluntarily laid down the sceptre, and retired to private life; and on the same day Maxim'ian, according to previous agreement, performed a similar ceremony at Milan. (May 1st, 305.) Galérius and Constan'tius were thereupon acknowledged sovereigns; and two subordinates, or Cæsars, were appointed to complete the system of imperial government which Dioclétian had established. But this balance-of-power system needed the firm and dexterous hand of its founder to sustain it; and the abdication of Dioclétian was followed by eighteen years of discord and confusion.

31. One year after the abdication of the sovereigns, Constan'tius died at York, in Britain, when his soldiers proclaimed his son Con'stantine emperor. In a short time the empire was divided between six sovereigns; but Con'stantine lived to see them destroyed in various ways; and, eighteen years after his accession, having overcome in battle Licin'ius, the last of his rivals, he was thus left sole master of the Roman world, whose dominions extended from the wall of Scotland to Kurdistan', and from the Red Sea to Mount Atlas in Africa. Galérius had already died of a loathsome disease, which was considered by many as a punishment from Heaven for his persecution of the Christians.

32. Con'stantine has been styled the first Christian emperor. During one of his campaigns (A. D. 312) he is said to have seen a miraculous vision of a luminous cross in the Heavens, on which was inscribed the following words in Greek, "*By this conquer.*" Certain it is that from this period Con'stantine showed the Christians marks of positive favor, and caused the cross to be employed as the imperial standard: in his last battle with Licin'ius it was the emblem of the cross that was opposed to the symbols of paganism; and as the latter went down in a night of blood, the triumph of Christianity over the Roman world was deemed complete.

XXI. GALE-
RIUS AND
CONSTAN-
TIUS.

XXII. CON-
STANTINE.