The popularity of Cæsar was now unbounded. He established the most magnificent spectacles for the entertainment of the people of Rome. Meat, corn, and money were distributed to the poor. A feast was provided for them, twenty-two thousand tables being spread. It gives one a deplorable idea of the condition of Rome at this time, to be informed that there were three hundred and twenty thousand persons needing to be fed at the public expense. It is hardly possible to credit the accounts, seemingly authentic, which have descended to us respecting the splendor of these gifts and displays. It is said that to each of his common soldiers, he gave a sum amounting to over eight hundred dollars; to the centurions sixteen hundred dollars; to the military tribunes three thousand two hundred. Each man of the cavalry received nearly one thousand dollars. The patricians complained that he was pampering the populace with spectacles and gold, while he was robbing the opulent and the noble.

Dramatic entertainments were established in different quarters of the city, and were performed in various languages, for the entertainment of strangers from all parts of the then known world. It is worthy of remark that even then, and surely it is difficult to say why, the profession of a play-actor was deemed infamous, and any patrician who appeared upon the stage forfeited his rank. The games of the circus, gladiatorial combats, and mock sea-fights were then popular above all other shows. At one time, there appeared in the gladiatorial arena twenty elephants, thirty horsemen, and five hundred soldiers on each side, to contend in mortal combat.

For the display of a naval battle, an immense lake was dug near the Tiber, sufficiently large to contain two fleets of galleys, with two thousand rowers, and one thousand fighting men on each side. For the amusement of the people they met, not in sham fight, but in all the sanguinary horrors of real war. Vast numbers were killed, and the waters of the



lake were crimsoned with their blood. Such was Rome. The world has surely made advances since the advent of Christianity.

In this horrid naval battle, the unhappy captives of Cæsar were compelled to fight each other, the Egyptians being arrayed against the Tyrians. The gladiatorial fights were scarcely less cruel and bloody. To protect the spectators from the sun, silken awnings were spread over the whole forum and the whole length of the Via Sacra. These entertainments were so accordant with the barbaric habits and tastes of the times, and so attractive as to draw such multitudes to Rome, that all the principal streets, and the fields outside of the city, were lined with booths for their accommodation. For some cause, not explained, human sacrifices were deemed essential to the completion of these festivities, and two men were the victims of these revolting rites.

Cæsar's power seemed now consolidated beyond all fear of reverse. The senate, amidst other honors which they lavished upon him in the greatest profusion, had appointed him dictator for ten years. His statue was raised on a globe in the capital, opposite the statue of Jupiter, and on it were inscribed the words, "He is a demigod." His popularity was such, and his confidence in the affection of the people so unbounded, that he did not even retain about his person a body guard. In exploring the records of these days, one is strongly impressed with the semblance between Cæsar and Napoleon; though Napoleon, living in a more enlightened age, displayed a character of much greater moral worth. We have before mentioned that the estates of Pompey were confiscated. Marc Antony, whom Cæsar had left in command of Rome, and intrusted with the government of Italy during his absence, purchased these estates at auction of the government, and relying upon Cæsar's partiality, was not disposed to pay for them. But Cæsar insisted indignantly on the payment being

made. Antony was a dissolute, extravagant man, always involved in pecuniary embarrassments.

The triumph of Cæsar was a signal triumph of the intellectual and moneyed classes over the aristocracy of birth. Merit was now the passport to office, far more than had ever before been known in Rome. It was, however, a decided addition o Cæsar's power that he was himself of such illustrious lineage as to authorize him to take his stand at the head of the proudest of Roman patricians. The laws which Cæsar enacted are generally admitted to have been wise and liberal, and intended to promote the prosperity of the empire. Being strictly temperate in his own habits of eating and drinking, he attempted to enforce sumptuary laws, which experience has proved to be inexpedient. He extended greatly the rights of Roman citizenship, and was intending to confer those rights upon all the inhabitants within the Alps. Several persons of distinguished merit were ennobled; others were placed in the senate; and all physicians, as well as other professors of the liberal arts and sciences, resident at Rome, were admitted to the rights of citizenship.

These measures were very influential in breaking down the rigor of aristocratic caste, of uniting the distant provinces in closer ties, and in giving more unity to the nation. Nearly all the soil of Italy was cultivated by slaves. To encourage free labor, and to relieve the capital of a vast population of ignorant and beggared people, he conferred farms, in the provinces, upon more than eighty thousand of the citizens of Rome, thus adding also, to the population and the power of regions which had been desolated by war. Carthage and Corinth, which had both been destroyed in the same year, one hundred years before the reign of Cæsar, were by his encouragement rebuilt, and again attained a very considerable degree of wealth and importance. It seemed to be a special object of his administration to encourage free labor. Citizens between the ages of twenty and forty were not allowed to be absent from their



estates for more than three years at a time; and all graziers and shepherds, on a large scale, were required to employ freemen to the amount of at least one third of their laborers.

The grasp of Cæsar's mind is, perhaps, in nothing more conspicuous than in his reform of the calendar. Until his day, the division of time was so imperfect, the year consisting of but three hundred and sixty days, that the months were moving continually along the year, the summer months passing into the winter, and the winter into the summer. The vernal equinox was already two months later than it should be. To rectify this irregularity, Cæsar invited the celebrated Greek astronomer Sosigenes to Rome, who, with the assistance of Marcus Fabius, by accurate calculations, so arranged the system of months, that the real and nominal time might agree with each other. The year was divided into three hundred and sixty-five days for three years, adding one day on the fourth year. This division was called the Julian calendar, and though not perfectly accurate, was so nearly so that it continued unchanged for sixteen centuries. In the year 1582, Pope Gregory XIII. made the slight alteration called the change from Old Style to New Style, which was adopted by Great Britain in the year 1752. By this change, called the Gregorian calendar, ten days were dropped after the fourth of October, and what would have been the fifth was called the fifteenth. It will now require three thousand years before the error will again amount to a single day.

The honors now lavished upon Cæsar were more than frail human nature could well bear. The senate declared him to be the "father of his country," and voted that the title "Imperator" should be affixed to his name. The month in which he was born, which had been called Quintilis, was now named, in honor of him, Julius, or July. A guard of senators, and of citizens of the equestrian rank was appointed for his protection, and the whole senate, in a body, waited upon him as a committee to communicate the decrees which had been passed

in his honor. Never was a mind more active in originating and executing schemes of grandeur. He planned public buildings for Rome, which were to surpass in splendor any which the world had before seen. He commenced the collection of imperial libraries; undertook the vast enterprise of draining the Pontine marshes; formed plans for supplying Rome with pure water by an aqueduct, and even began to cut a new passage for the Tiber from Rome to the sea, constructing a capacious artificial harbor at its mouth. He commenced opening a canal through the isthmus of Corinth, and making a royal road over the cliffs and ravines of the Apennines from the Tiber to the Adriatic. Rome was the idol of his adoration, and all his energies were concentrated upon the undertaking of making Rome the capital of the world.

Such energy and power could not but create both admiration and jealousy. As subsequently in France, against Napoleon, there were two parties hostile to Cæsar,—the aristocracy over whom he had triumphed, and the lowest class of the democracy, the Jacobins, the Red Republicans, who could not brook a master. The intermediate class, however, composing the mass of the community, were enthusiastically in his favor, and were eager to confer power upon him beyond what he asked. His enemies began to accuse him of the desire to to make himself king in name, as he certainly already was in fact. The Romans had a great abhorrence of the kingly name. Execrating the pride and oppression of their former kings, they had indignantly expelled them from the throne, and now, for a period of more than five hundred years, their empire had assumed the forms of a republic.

The enemies of Cæsar appealed to the following incidents as indicative of his ambitious desires for royalty. In some of the galleries of Rome there were statues of kings of renown. Cæsar caused, or allowed, his own statue to be placed among them. In the theater, he had a seat in the form of a throne, reared for himself, more conspicuous than all the rest, and



magnificently adorned with drapery and gold. In the senate chamber a similar seat was prepared for him. On one occasion, when the senate, in a body, waited upon him in the conference of some distinguished honor, he did not even rise from his magnificent chair or throne, but received them sitting. At the celebration of one of his triumphs, an admirer, in his enthusiasm, placed a laurel crown, the emblem of royalty, upon the head of Cæsar's statue. For his audacity, the man was thrown into prison, but Cæsar immediately liberated him, saying proudly, that he wished to disavow such claims himself, and not have others disavow them for him. He was at times greeted, in the applause of the streets, with the title of *Rex*, or king. Mildly he rejected the title, simply remarking, "I am Cæsar, not king." Marc Antony, on one of their festival days, approached Cæsar, who was sitting in imperial state, and placed a crown upon his brow. Cæsar immediately, but without words of reproach, laid it aside. Again Antony placed it upon his brow, and falling at his feet implored him, in the name of the people, to accept it. Cæsar still persisted in the refusal of the gift, saying: "Take it away to the temple. There is no king in Rome but Jupiter." The vast crowd assembled applauded this act to the skies. The next morning, all the statues of Cæsar were crowned with diadems. In commemoration of Cæsar's wonderful patriotism and self-denial in rejecting the crown, the following memorandum was inserted in the calendar for the year:

"On the day of the Lupercalia, M. Antony, the consul, by command of the people, offered the dignity of king to C. Cæsar, perpetual dictator, and Cæsar refused to accept it."

Still it was affirmed, that these were but the preliminary steps by which Cæsar was preparing to ascend the throne.

The horrible system of slavery of that day consigned to that degradation the most noble, wealthy, and illustrious families who chanced to be taken captives in war. Consequently, the slave was often in lineage, political rank, and

intellectual dignity superior to his master. Cæsar himself had been a slave, and his freedom had been purchased at a vast expense, by his friends. Many of the most renowned men of the times were slaves. Cæsar, the friend of the people, was strongly anti-slavery in his sympathies, and was disposed to reward merit, wherever he found it, in Roman citizen, freed man or slave. To the excessive annoyance of the aristocracy he intrusted the charge of the public mint to some of his own slaves, in whose integrity and ability he reposed confidence. When he left Egypt, the command of three legions was intrusted to the son of one of his freedmen.

Cicero was quite disposed to be on friendly terms with Cæsar, but he could never regain that confidence which he had lost by his notorious deficiency in moral courage. The abilities of the distinguished orator could make no atonement for his timidity and temporizing spirit. He was often found waiting in Cæsar's ante-chambers; but, though always treated with respect, he was never received into the imperial councils. Cicero, in one of his letters to Atticus (Epist. lii.), has given a very interesting account of a visit he received from Cæsar, at his villa near Puteoli, in December, 46 B. C. Cæsar having no son, was disposed to adopt C. Octavius, his sister's grandchild. On the twentieth of December, with a retinue of two thousand troops, as a guard of honor, he visited the father-in-law of Octavius, who resided in the vicinity of Cæsar's villa. All the hours of the morning he spent earnestly engaged in business. He then took a walk on the sea shore, after which he went into a bath, amusing himself in the meantime in hearing read one of the most virulent Philippics agains himself. He then honored Cicero with a call, dining witl him, ir company with some of the most prominent of his attendants. "Cæsar," writes Cicero, "seemed to enjoy himself exceedingly, and was in very good spirits. The conversation did not touch at all on politics, but we talked much on literary subjects."



Cæsar's constitutional bravery rendered him insensible to danger; and he adopted no measures to guard against assassination. "My life," said he, "is more important to my country than to myself. I have attained all which ambition could desire; and I would rather die than make myself an object of terror to the people."