

region west of that line. Lepidus was to be left undisturbed in the possession of Africa. The triumvirs then, after some correspondence with Sextus Pompey, held an interview with him at Misenum, on the coast of Campania, and concluded a treaty, by which they surrendered to him the islands of Sicily, Sardinia, Corsica, and the province of Achaia. They also paid him a sum amounting to about three millions of dollars, in compensation for his father's confiscated estates. Thus the Roman empire was divided into four parts.

It is pleasant to record that in this treaty the humane regulation was introduced, that there should be a general amnesty for all political offenses, and that the proscribed, who had fled from Italy, should be allowed to return in safety, and recover a fourth part of their confiscated estates. But the leviathan of human depravity is not easily tamed. War was soon renewed; and the shouts of the infuriated combatants pierced the skies, while conflagration and blood desolated the land. The Parthians, from the eastern shores of the Caspian, had marched upon Syria; and, after many fierce battles, all Syria and Palestine, with the exception of Tyre alone, fell into the hands of the invaders. The foe then ravaged Cilicia, and like demon legions penetrated Asia Minor. Antony raised an army in Greece for the recovery of his provinces, and again the horrid billows of war rolled over the land, leaving in their train pestilence, famine, and misery. But the Parthians were driven out, and the woe-scathed people had Antony for their plunderer instead of Pacorus, the son of the Parthian king.

Difficulties soon arose between Octavius and Pompey, each accusing the other of not being faithful to the terms of the treaty. Some affirm that Octavius was the aggressor, and that he had assented to peace, only that he might recruit his energies to renew the war, and acquire for himself universal empire. Others assert that Pompey, hungering and thirsting to regain the ascendancy, throughout the Roman empire,

of the old aristocratic party, of which his father was the illustrious representative, was responsible for the outbreak of hostilities. The question can not well be decided. Even to the present day, opinions will be expressed according to the reader's proclivities toward the patrician or plebeian side of this question. Neither Octavius nor Pompey were scrupulous as to the means employed for the attainment of their ends, and there can be no question, that they both were equally eager to gain, for the parties which they represented, undisputed dominion.

The war between aristocracy and democracy is ever waged fiercely. Octavius wrote immediately to Antony to cooperate with him. But Antony was then fully occupied with the Parthian war, and it is supposed that, jealous of the power of Octavius, he was perfectly willing that he should be weakened in the strife with Pompey. But for the entreaties of his wife, Octavia, the sister of Octavius, it is said that he would even have united his fortunes with those of Pompey. Octavius, baffled in his first attempts to effect a landing in Sicily, appealed again to Antony. The two illustrious sovereigns met at Tarentum, by their sole authority renewed the triumvirate for five years more, and Antony, who was just setting out on a military expedition to Parthia, intrusted his fleet of three hundred ships to Octavius, and also his wife and child, to reside in Rome during his absence.

At the same time Octavius, in harmony with the utter demoralization of the times, married his third wife, Livia Drusilla, whom he wrested from her husband, Tiberius Nero. Drusilla, at the time of her marriage, was on the eve of again becoming a mother. To this scandalous union Octavius was driven by mere sensual passion. Octavius first married Clodia, the daughter-in-law of Antony. He soon repudiated her, and married Scribonia, the sister of the wife of Sextus Pompey. Both of these unions were formed for political purposes merely. Octavius charged Scribonia with being as profligate

as he was himself. This charge, however, was not made until, incited by a passion for Drusilla, he had resolved to divorce Scribonia. This divorce was effected on the very day in which Scribonia became the mother of a daughter. At this time Octavius was but twenty-five years of age.

A vast amount of money was needed for the prosecution of the war against Pompey, and Italy again groaned beneath the burden of taxation. Every man of wealth was required to furnish a certain number of slaves to provide the ships with rowers. In the spring of the year 36 B. C., Octavius had assembled an overwhelming force on the coast of Campania. The fleets were sheltered in the lakes Lucrinus and Avernus. Lepidus had sent to his aid a powerful army from Africa. The army effected a landing on the island of Sicily, and Pompey, utterly defeated both by land and sea, abandoned the contest as hopeless, and escaped to Peloponnesus.

Octavius, flushed with victory, assumed an air of authority and of superiority which roused Lepidus. A conflict immediately ensued, which was short, bloodless, and decisive. The soldiers preferred to have for their commander one who was sovereign at Rome, rather than a governor of the remote province of Africa. In a body they passed over to the camp of Octavius. The ruin of Lepidus was so entire, and so utter his helplessness, that in the garb of a suppliant he repaired to the tent of Octavius, threw himself at his feet, and besought his mercy. There was no occasion for severity upon so powerless a foe. Octavius spared his life, and allowed him to retire wherever he pleased, with his private property. Some of the nobles had rushed to the camp of Lepidus, hoping to take advantage of the quarrel for their own reinstatement. All of these, with but few exceptions, were mercilessly put to death.

Having secured the enthusiastic devotion of his troops by immense gifts of money and lands, Octavius now returned to Italy. The army was in his hands, a pliant weapon with

which he could bid defiance to the world. By such influences does one man get a control, which compels millions of men to bow to his sway. A people, jealous of liberty, should guard, above all things else, against the organization of a great military power, unless, as is unhappily the case in many of the states of Europe, this great military power is absolutely essential to guard against the encroachments of menacing foes.

The conqueror was received in Italy as undisputed sovereign. Antony, far away upon the plains of Asia, was forgotten in Rome. The senate voted, that Octavius Cæsar should be received with that triumph called an ovation; that an annual thanksgiving should be appointed in commemoration of his victory; and that his statue, decorated with triumphal robes, should be erected in the forum. He addressed the senate in speeches containing a full exposition of his political views. The sentiments he advanced were, generally, eminently just, and calculated to promote the public weal. He promised to do all in his power to grant peace to the empire; all the unpaid taxes, for the support of the war, were remitted; he proposed vigorous measures to prevent the extortion which had been practiced by the public officers, and established an efficient city police.

But these judicious measures were sullied by one of unpardonable atrocity, if, through the somewhat obscure recital of those times, we are correctly informed respecting its nature. In the treaty with Pompey, amnesty was promised for all political offenses. A large number of slaves, who had served under Pompey, were now scattered throughout the empire. These men were ordered to be arrested, and returned to their former masters, if they could be found. If their masters could not be found, they were mercilessly to be put to death. It would seem that there must be some mistake in this recital, the act seems so unreasonable. But historic fidelity renders it necessary, that it should not be passed over in silence.

Sextus Pompey arrived safely in the Peloponnesus, and sailed thence with a few followers to Asia to seek Marc Antony, hoping to form an alliance with him against Octavius Cæsar. He first stopped at the island of Lesbos, where his father found his wife and child on his retreat from the fatal field of Pharsalia. He was received by the inhabitants so kindly, that his hopes were quite revived. A number of his partisans, who had been widely dispersed, here joined him; and a great number of others plundered and wretched, who had nothing to lose, and nothing to fear, as no change could be for the worst, offered him their services. For food, clothing and a chance for plunder, they were willing to go any where, and serve any body.

Antony sent a force of disciplined troops under M. Titius to oppose him, and the rabble of adventurers gathered beneath the banners of Pompey were speedily slain or dispersed; and Pompey himself was taken prisoner and cruelly slain. The death of this illustrious son, of a still more illustrious sire, was celebrated by Octavius in Rome with indecent rejoicings.

Octavius and Antony were now dividing the world between them. They were both men of too much ambition to brook a superior; and Antony, as sovereign of the east, was by no means disposed to yield the palm to Octavius, monarch of the west, though Rome, which had claimed to be the mistress of the world, was his capital. Every month the indications of an approaching quarrel became more clear. Complaints and recriminations passed from one to the other, until war was openly and madly declared.

Antony was, at this time, in Leucopolis, a city of Asia Minor, in effeminate, guilty, and unblushing dalliance with Cleopatra, the beautiful, voluptuous, and wanton queen of Egypt. With wonderful seductive charms of person and of mind, she had obtained the entire ascendancy over Antony, so that he was perfectly her slave. Octavius sent his sister Octavia to her faithless husband, expecting that his treatment of

her would be such as to magnify his unpopularity in Italy, and rouse the people to that vigorous prosecution of the war which personal animosity would inspire. Antony, in obedience to the requirements of Cleopatra, his paramour, who languished, sighed, and wept, and played off all the pretty artifices of coquetry, not only sent Octavia back to Rome, refusing to see her, but followed this outrage with a bill of repudiation and divorcement, cuttingly copied verbatim from the divorce which Octavius had infamously inflicted upon Clodia, the daughter-in-law of Antony. Such was Roman virtue.

Antony now resolved publicly to make his queenly paramour his wife. To Cleopatra it was a matter of no earthly moment, save as she might enjoy the pomp and pageantry of the nuptials. There were no ties which she respected; and governed solely by her passions, and possessed of regal wealth and power, she played the wanton at her pleasure. The city of Alexandria, her capital, was selected as the spot for the espousals. In the public theater two thrones of gold were erected. Antony sat upon one in the dress so appropriate to his character of the god Bacchus. Cleopatra sat upon the other by his side, representing the Egyptian goddess Iris. Cleopatra had then several children. One was the son of Julius Cæsar. Two were recognized by Antony as his own. On this occasion Antony conferred upon his bride, as a present, vast provinces over which he held sway.

While the agents of Antony were collecting an army in Greece for the decisive strife with Octavius, he repaired with Cleopatra to Samos, an island of the Archipelago, to superintend his measures. His conduct here was such as must needs consign his name to utter contempt. His camp was crowded with armed men from all the countries of the East, blended in ridiculous confusion with comedians, dancing girls, and buffoons. From Samos, Antony and his wedded paramour proceeded to Athens, in Greece. But while they were thus

wasting their hours in folly which exposed them to universal derision, Octavius was mustering all his energies for the strife.

Still Antony, through the combined energies of Egypt and the whole western empire, had assembled an enormous force, consisting of one hundred thousand foot, twelve thousand horse, and five hundred ships of war. Octavius had mustered an army of eighty thousand foot, twelve thousand horse, and two hundred and fifty ships. His ships, however, were better built and more efficiently manned than those of his antagonist. With such forces these two imperial men prepared to contend for the mastery of the world. But Octavius was in the prime of youth, and inflamed with a yet unsated ambition. Antony had already passed the meridian of his days, for many years he had tasted both the bitter and the sweets of power, and now he was surrendering himself to voluptuous indulgence, and to all the enervating influences of a sensual and shameful love. A lascivious woman was the ignoble idol of his adoration; and for one who worships at that shrine, final destruction is sure.



CHAPTER XV.

CÆSAR AUGUSTUS AND MARC ANTONY.

FROM 32 B. C. TO 10 B. C.

BATTLE OF ACTIUM.—FLIGHT OF CLEOPATRA.—ENTIRE VICTORY OF OCTAVIUS.—THE PURSUIT TO ALEXANDRIA.—SUICIDE OF ANTONY.—GUILF OF CLEOPATRA.—HER ENDEAVORS TO WIN OCTAVIUS.—DESPAIR AND SUICIDE OF CLEOPATRA.—TRIUMPHANT RETURN OF OCTAVIUS TO ROME.—HIS WISE MEASURES.—THE TITLE OF AUGUSTUS CONFERRED.—STATE OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE, ITALY, GAUL, BRITAIN, SPAIN, AFRICA, SYRIA, ASIA MINOR, GREECE.—THE DESOLATIONS OF CIVIL WAR.

ON the coast of the Grecian province of Epirus, there is a noble sheet of water, twenty-five miles in extreme length, and from three to ten miles in breadth, now called the gulf of Arta, but then known as the Ambracian gulf. Within this bay Antony had assembled his fleet, and, in a formidable position, had drawn them up in line of battle. Cleopatra, in alliance, had contributed sixty Egyptian galleys to the armament. Octavius entered the bay, with his fleet, prepared for the decisive encounter. The two armies were upon the opposite shores, where they could not reach each other or take any part in the battle, but in situations in which the whole scene was open before them, and where they could animate the combatants by gestures and shouts.

The hostile ships approached each other, to grapple side to side and to engage in a hand to hand struggle, with all the fury human passion could inspire. Octavius and Antony, in person, were in command of their several fleets. Cleopatra also, in person, assumed the command of her own sixty Egyptian galleys. The voluptuous queen sat canopied in her imperial barge, ridiculously surrounded by her maids of honor.