



ROMAN DEATH MASK

CHAPTER XXXII

THE LAST YEARS OF AUGUSTUS

OCTAVIAN divorced his first two wives, the daughter of Publ. Servilius, to whom he had been married at eighteen, and Clodia, daughter of Antony's wife Fulvia by her first husband P. Clodius the triumvir, after a short period of wedded life; and a year after she had borne him a daughter, Julia by name he put away his third wife Scribonia, being captivated by the charms of Livia, the wife of Ti. Claudius Nero, who came into his house as his fourth wife with the consent of her former husband. Her two sons, Tiberius (born 42 B.C.) and Drusus, whom she brought into the world three months after her union with Augustus, were brought up in the house of their father Cl. Nero, but were received by Augustus into his own house on the death of the former, who had appointed him their guardian.

The person who had the likeliest prospect of the succession seemed to be M. Marcellus, the son of the emperor's sister Octavia by her first marriage. He was treated with the utmost distinction by Augustus, who loaded him with honours in quick succession and married him at an early age to his daughter Julia, to the great mortification of the haughty and ambitious Livia, who, having borne no children to her imperial spouse, desired to secure the first place after the monarch and the reversion of the throne for her sons Tiberius and Drusus.

A second rival to the youthful Marcellus arose in the person of his own brother-in-law Agrippa, the famous general to whom Augustus chiefly owed his victories over Sext. Pompeius and Antony, and whom he himself had encouraged to cherish the most daring hopes by high distinctions and proofs of favour. When the enmity between Agrippa and Marcellus grew too plainly manifest, the emperor despatched the former to Asia under pretext of an honourable mission. But Agrippa, looking upon this as a kind of banishment, ruled the province through his legate, while he himself remained at Lesbos, his gaze riveted upon Rome. Fate intervened to save Augustus from painful experience of the affronted pride of an ambitious man. Marcellus died in the year 23, universally lamented by the Roman people, whose darling he was. It was skrewdly suspected that he had fallen a victim to the rancour and intrigues of Livia, who, by birth a member of the Claudian family, had inherited all the pride and jealous ambition of their old patrician blood. Augustus, dismayed by the disturbances at Rome in the year 22, and

[11 B.C.—8 A.D.]

the evidences of a conspiracy against his life which then came to light, made haste to be reconciled with Agrippa, and, by marrying him to Julia, assured him of the first place after his own and the prospect of the succession. Octavia, the emperor's sister, moved by envy and jealousy of Livia, gladly agreed to Agrippa's divorce from her daughter Marcella, that so she might thwart the ambitious schemes of the emperor's consort. A few years later Agrippa journeyed to the East, accompanied by Julia, to set in order the complications and struggles for the throne which had arisen in various districts from the Bosphorus to Syria. His presence was a blessing to the Asiatic provinces and dependent states; he reconciled the wrangling members of the empire by admonitions and commands, and perpetuated the name of his wife by founding on the site of the ancient and ruinous seaport of Berytus the colony of Julia Felix, which was provided with a garrison of two legions and became the centre of Roman dominion in Syria. As Agrippa was returning to Italy after a stay of some years in the East, he succumbed to sickness in the fifty-first year of his age. He died in Campania in 12 B.C.

Augustus rendered the highest honours to the man to whom he owed so much, and who had devoted himself as fully to the welfare of the state as to the cause of his imperial friend. He had the body interred with the most solemn obsequies in the imperial vault, himself delivering the funeral oration, and not only made over the baths and gardens of Agrippa to the city of Rome according to the wishes of the deceased, but distributed considerable donations of money among the people in his name.

Livia now conceived fresh hopes for her sons. By her intrigues she succeeded in procuring the divorce of Tiberius, her first-born, who was at that time thirty years of age, from his wife, and his marriage with the emperor's widowed daughter, who had borne three sons to Agrippa — Caius, Lucius, and Agrippa, and two daughters, Julia and Agrippina. Augustus with difficulty suppressed his dislike of his ambitious, overbearing, and sullen stepson.

Within a very few years the circle of friends which Augustus had gathered about him had been sadly thinned by death. Agrippa, Octavia, Drusus, and Mæcenas had sunk into the tomb within the space of four years (from 12 to 8 B.C.). Thus with declining age the emperor fixed his affections all the more exclusively upon his two grandsons, Caius and Lucius, the children of his daughter Julia and his friend Agrippa. He admitted them by adoption into the Julian family, conferred the title of Cæsar upon them, and had them brought up under his own eye; he even devoted part of his own leisure to their instruction and education. They were his usual companions at table, and were treated with such distinction that all men regarded them as the future heirs of the empire. The populace and the senate vied with each other in offering homage and adulation to the imperial grandsons of Augustus, and they were loaded with fresh honours and dignities every year.

But this brilliant position was fated to be the ruin of the young princes. It not only filled their own hearts with presumption and self-conceit; Livia and Tiberius turned eyes of envy and hatred upon the favoured pair. When Augustus, who was not blind to their sentiments, attempted to remove his stepson from the capital by giving him the honourable task of conducting a campaign in Armenia, the latter declined the proffered honour out of mortified pride, and begged leave to spend some years in learned leisure in the island of Rhodes. The leave was granted, and extended even beyond his desires. For seven years he stayed in the Greek island; busy with philosophical and mathematical studies, and observing the constellations in the night hours under the guidance of Thrasyllus, to draw auguries for the

future from their position. His absence was at first associated with demonstrations of honour, through the splendour of the tribunician office which Augustus had conferred on him before his departure ; but in course of time it assumed more and more the character of an exile, and Julia took advantage of it to increase her father's aversion for the husband she abhorred.

Frivolous, vain, and wanton, the emperor's daughter had caused him many a heartache by the levity of her conduct and her fondness for amusement ; but she had always been able to propitiate his wrath and regain her ascendancy by her amiability, her talent for witty and delightful conversation, her culture, and her art of delicate flattery. He shut his eyes when she violated the outward propriety and decorum which he endeavoured to diffuse over the private life of the imperial family, or when she showed herself in public surrounded by a swarm of aristocratic young men of lax morals. If he were annoyed at some too wanton attire of hers, she would presently appear in the decorous garb of a Roman matron and enliven her father by some jesting observation. The circle of blooming grandchildren with which she had surrounded his throne, and by which she seemed to have ensured his line in the possession of the monarchy, inclined him to judge her leniently and to make allowances for her.

But Livia's intriguing temper found ways and means to destroy this bond and to extinguish in the father's heart the long-cherished belief in his daughter's innocence. She contrived to arouse in him the dark suspicion that Julia was not only disgracing the honour of the imperial house by a licentious way of life, but that she and her lovers had actually conceived hostile designs against his person and the security of the empire. For by this alone can we explain the harsh measures adopted by Augustus, who had his daughter suddenly banished without trial to the little island of Pandataria off the Campanian coast, and informed the senate that through shameless wantonness she had so far erred as to make the Forum and tribune the scene of nocturnal orgies and the witness of her gallantries. Her accomplices, real or supposed, who were for the most part opponents of Tiberius, shared the same fate of exile, or suffered the penalty of death, like the gifted and cultured son of the triumvir, Julius Antonius, eminent both as a statesman and a soldier. The sympathy and compassion of the people accompanied the emperor's daughter (then thirty-eight years of age) into her place of punishment. Her guilt and transgression were her portion in the life of a degenerate age and city steeped in pleasures and vices, her penance was the outcome of the envy and malignity of an intriguing stepmother.

Her life in exile, which was voluntarily shared by her mother Scribonia, was rich in deeds of benevolence and charity. She died at Rhegium soon after her father, full of sorrows and weary of life. The gifted and eloquent Sempronius Gracchus, who had enjoyed her favour and love in happier days and had consequently been banished to the African island of Cercina, died about the same time by the hands of assassins sent by Tiberius to despatch him; showing himself by his fortitude in death not unworthy of the Sempronian name which in his life he had brought to shame.

With the banishment of Julia commenced that series of misfortunes which ended by leaving the house of Augustus desolate and inflicted deep wounds upon his paternal heart. In that same year her eldest son, the eighteen-year-old Caius Cæsar, undertook a campaign in Asia at the head of a considerable army, in order to reduce to submission the Armenians — who had revolted from the dominion of Rome by the help of the Parthians — and to chastise the refractory Arab tribes. Armed with authority of the

[1 B.C.-9 A.D.]

proconsular imperium over all the provinces of the east, so that absolute power in matters military and civil rested in his hands and all local governors were subject to his commands, the youthful commander-in-chief crossed to Egypt by way of Samos, accompanied by M. Lollius and other experienced and learned men whom Augustus had placed about him as counsellors. Tiberius, who visited his stepson during his stay on the island, was able to draw from the coolness of his reception the conclusion that his own star was on the decline and that Caius Cæsar was universally recognised and honoured as the heir to the empire. From Egypt the expedition passed through Palestine to Syria. All men bowed before the imperial youth who seemed destined to inherit the empire of the world, and vied with one another in proffering homage, courting favour, and bringing gifts. Access to the youthful imperator was purchased of Lollius at a high price.

The enemies of Rome were struck with awe at this display of might and majesty. The Nabatæans of Petra voluntarily returned to their previous position of dependence, and in a personal interview with the Roman commander-in-chief on an island in the Euphrates, Phraates, king of Parthia, concluded a peace on terms dictated by this mighty ruler and evacuated Armenia, which was then quickly conquered by the legions after a faint resistance, and was again numbered among Roman dependencies.

Caius Cæsar then made ready to return home. Feeble of body and greatly distressed by a wound received at the siege of the town of Artagera on the Euphrates, he had no desire for more of the hardships and perils of war; he longed for enjoyment and tranquillity rather than for honour and military reputation. Both were denied him. Death overtook him at Lycia on his homeward way. Before he died he received the mournful tidings that his younger brother Lucius Cæsar had suddenly fallen a victim to sickness eighteen months earlier, at Massilia, on an expedition into Spain.

With the death of the two Cæsars the hopes of Tiberius blossomed anew. Hence it is not improbable that they died of poison, administered at the criminal instigations of Livia. Even contemporaries nourished this suspicion. The passionate nature of the empress, who shrank from no crime however heinous, was well known, as was also the revengeful and spiteful temper of her eldest son, who had returned to Rome shortly before the death of Caius, and now did all he could to step into the vacant place. The mother's intrigues and the son's flattering arts of dissimulation did actually succeed to some extent in overcoming the emperor's aversion to his stepson. He received him into favour and graciously acceded to Livia's proud hopes and desires by adopting him and admitting him into the Julian family. Julia, the granddaughter of Augustus, who resembled her mother in beauty, in wit, as well as in levity and voluptuousness, and the younger Agrippa (styled Postumus, because Julia had brought him into the world after the death of her husband) a turbulent youth of haughty and intractable disposition, rude manners, and violent passions, were no formidable rivals to the artful Livia and her malevolent son.

When Agrippa's outbreaks of fury were carried so far that neither the emperor nor the empress were spared by them, the latter contrived that the thoughtless and ungovernable youth, though adopted by Augustus at the same time as Tiberius, should be kept under military supervision in the little island of Planasia; where Tiberius had put him out of the way in the first year of his reign by assassins despatched for the purpose, alleging instruction left by the deceased emperor as his excuse. The younger Julia was banished on the pretext of an illicit amour with Decius Silanus, to a desolate island in

the neighbourhood of Apulia, and compelled to pass the rest of her days — twenty long years — in exile.

Fortune, which had stood by Augustus faithfully throughout his public career and had led him by many thorny paths to the summit of earthly glory, deserted him in his private life and in his domestic circle. Hatred and envy, fanned by female passions, ranged his court in two hostile factions, which employed against each other all the weapons of intrigue and all the arts of treachery and dissimulation, and scared peace and harmony away from the apartments of the imperial palace.

Livia's ambitious and passionate temper was so notorious that she was actually suspected of having cut her husband's days short by poison, lest he should restore his grandson Agrippa, to whom he had been reconciled in his island exile a little while before with tears and passionate embraces, to his rights and honours. She was alone with the emperor when death overtook him on a journey, at Nola in Lower Italy, in the seventy-sixth year of his age; and by carefully guarding the house and spreading false reports she concealed the fact of his decease until her son, who for several years had been associated with his adoptive father as coadjutor in the empire, could be summoned from Illyricum. Then the world was startled by the double announcement that Augustus was dead and that Tiberius had assumed the reins of power.

The gorgeous obsequies of his predecessor were the new emperor's first business. Escorted by the whole body of knights and senators, and accompanied by women, bodyguards, and an innumerable multitude, the corpse was borne to the Field of Mars and there committed to the flames. When the ashes had been collected and interred in the imperial vault the deceased was exalted to a place among the gods by a decree of the senate, and a temple and ritual were assigned to him. Livia, known as Julia Livia since her adoption into the Julian family, was to preside as high priestess over the new college of priests devoted to the deified monarch. She died in the year 29 A.D., at the advanced age of 86.^b

It is extremely difficult to estimate the character of this celebrated woman. Expression has been given above to various intimations which if justified reveal her in the worst possible light. But it must not be forgotten that evil-minded gossips were very busy in the early days of the empire, and that intrigues and sinister motives of a doubtful character darken the pages of Tacitus, our chief authority. Indeed it is no exaggeration to say that Tacitus excels in the invention or the partisan use of bad motives, and his great dramatic and satirical powers give peculiar force to this unfair weapon. Tacitus can be relied on for facts which were publicly known or recorded at the time, but he is far from impartial. It may be, then, that an impartial estimate might soften somewhat the harsh judgment which, thanks to Tacitus, most writers have not hesitated to pass upon Livia. With this qualified estimate let us turn from Livia to consider the character of her famous husband.^a

THE PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF AUGUSTUS

We are indebted to C. Suetonius Tranquillus, who lived at Rome about the close of the first century A.D., for most that we know of the personal characteristics of Augustus, and of his immediate successors. Thanks to him, we are enabled to gain a personal acquaintance, as it were, with the Cæsars;

which is very unusual with the great characters of antiquity in general. The biographies of Plutarch and of Cornelius Nepos are about the only other extensive repositories of information concerning the character of celebrities as men rather than as mere historical personalities. We turn now to Suetonius' estimate of Augustus :

Augustus was slow in forming friendships, but when once they were contracted, he maintained them with great constancy ; not only rewarding very handsomely the virtues and good services of his friends, but bearing likewise with their faults and vices, provided that they were of a venial kind. For amongst all his friends, we scarcely find any who fell into disgrace with him, except Salvidienus Rufus, whom he raised to the consulship, and Cornelius Gallus whom he made governor of Egypt, both of them men of the lowest extraction. One of these, being engaged in a design to excite a rebellion, he delivered up to the senate, that he might be condemned ; and the other, on account of his ungrateful and malicious temper, he dismissed from his family and the provinces under his government. But when Gallus, by the threats of his accusers, and the votes of the senate against him, was driven to the desperate extremity of laying violent hands upon himself, he commended indeed the attachment of the senate, that had expressed so much indignation on his account ; but he shed tears, and lamented his unhappy condition, " that I alone," said he, " cannot be permitted to be angry with my friends to such a degree as I think proper." The rest of his friends continued during their whole lives to make a distinguished figure in their several orders, both in power and estate, notwithstanding some occasional incidents of a disagreeable nature. For to say nothing of others, he would sometimes complain of impatience in Agrippa, and of loquacity in Mæcenas : the former from a suspicion of a coolness in Augustus towards him, and because Marcus received greater marks of favour, having withdrawn himself from all concern in the government, and retired to Mytilene ; and the latter having confidentially imparted to his wife Terentia the discovery of Murena's conspiracy. He likewise expected from his friends, both living and dying, a mutual proof of their benevolence. For though he was far from coveting their estates (as he never would accept of any legacy left him by a stranger), yet he examined their last sentiments of him, expressed in their wills, with an anxious attention ; not being able to conceal his chagrin, if they made but a slight, or no very honourable mention of him, nor his joy on the other hand, if they expressed a grateful sense of his favours and a hearty affection for him. And what was left him by such as had children, he used to restore to the latter, either immediately, or if they were under age, upon the day of their assuming the manly habit, or of their marriage, with interest.

As a patron and master, his behaviour in general was mild and conciliating ; but when occasion required it, he could be severe. He employed many of his freedmen in considerable posts about him, as Licius, Enceladus, and others. And when his slave Cosmus had reflected bitterly upon him, he represented the injury no further than by putting him in fetters. When his steward Diomedes, as they were walking together, left him exposed to a wild boar, which came suddenly upon them, he chose rather to charge him with cowardice than any ill design, and turned an incident of no small hazard to his person into a jest, because it had proceeded from no treachery. Proculus, who was one of his greatest favourites amongst all his freedmen, he put to death, for maintaining a criminal commerce with other men's wives. He broke the legs of his secretary Thallus, for taking a bribe of five hundred denarii to discover the contents of a letter of his. And his son Caius' tutor,

and other attendants, upon the occasion of his sickness and death behaving with great insolence, and committing acts of rapaciousness, he tied great weights about their necks and threw them into a river.

In his youth he lay under the infamy of various aspersions. Sextus Pompeius reproached him as an effeminate fellow ; and M. Antony, that he had earned his adoption from his uncle by prostitution. L. Antony likewise upbraids him with the same ; and that he had, for a gratification of three hundred thousand sesterces, submitted to A. Hirtius in the same way, in Spain ; adding, that he used to singe his legs with the flame of nutshells, to make the hair become softer.

That he was guilty of various acts of adultery is not denied even by his friends ; but they allege in excuse for it that he engaged in those intrigues not from lewdness but policy, to discover more easily the designs of his enemies by their wives.

With respect to the charge of prostitution, he very easily refuted it by the chastity of his life, at the very time when the imputation was made, as well as ever after. His conduct likewise gave the lie to that of a luxurious extravagance in his furniture, when, upon the taking of Alexandria, he reserved for himself nothing of all the furniture of the palace but a cup of porcelain ; and soon after melted down all the golden vessels, even such as were intended for common use. But he never could discountenance the imputation of lewdness with women ; being, as they say, in the latter part of his life, much addicted to the deflowering of virgins, who were procured for him from all parts, even by his own wife. To the remarks concerning his gaming he paid not the smallest regard ; but played frankly and openly for his diversion, even when he was advanced in years ; and not only in the month of December, but at other times, and upon all days, whether festivals or not. This evidently appears from a letter under his own hand, in which he says, "I supped, my dear Tiberius, with the same company. We had besides Vinicius, and Silvius the father. We gamed like old fellows at supper, both yesterday and to-day. And as any one threw upon the *tali*¹ aces or sixes, he put down for every *talus* a denarius ; all which was gained by him who threw a Venus."

In another letter he says : "We had, my dear Tiberius, a pleasant time of it during the festival of Minerva : for we played every day, and kept the gaming board warm. Your brother uttered many exclamations at a desperate run of ill fortune ; but recovering by degrees, and unexpectedly, he in the end lost not much. I lost twenty thousand sesterces for my part ; but then I was profusely generous in my play, as I commonly am ; for had I insisted upon the stakes which I declined, or kept what I gave away, I should have won above fifty thousand. But this I like better ; for my generosity will raise me to celestial glory." In a letter to his daughter, he writes thus : "I have sent you 250 denarii, which I gave to every one of my guests ; in case they were inclined at supper to divert themselves with the *tali*, or at the game of even or odd."

In other parts of his life, it is certain that he conducted himself with great discretion, and was free from all suspicion of any vice. He lived at first near the Roman Forum, above the Ringmaker's Stairs, in a house

¹ The Romans at their feasts, during the intervals of drinking, often played at dice, of which there were two kinds, the *tesseræ* and *tali*. The former had six sides, like the modern dice ; the latter, four oblong sides, for the two ends were not regarded. In playing, they used three *tesseræ* and four *tali*, which were all put into a box wider below than above, and being shaken, were thrown out upon the gaming board or table.

which had once been occupied by Calvus the orator. He afterwards moved to the Palatine, where he resided in a small house belonging to Hortensius, no way remarkable either in respect of accommodation or ornament; the piazzas being but small, the pillars of Alban stone, and the rooms without anything of marble or fine paving. He continued to use the same bed chamber, both winter and summer, during forty years; for though he was sensible that the city did not agree well with his health, he nevertheless resided constantly in it through the winter.

If at any time he wished to be perfectly retired, and secure from interruption, he shut himself up in an apartment in the top of his house, which he called Syracuse, or *Τεχνόφρον*, or he went to some seat belonging to his freedmen near the city. But when he was indisposed, he commonly took up his residence in Mæcenas' house. Of all the places of retirement from the city, he chiefly frequented those upon the seacoast, and the islands of Campania, or the towns near the city, as Lanuvium, Præneste, and Tibur, where he often used to sit for the administration of justice, in the porticos of Hercules' temple. He had a particular aversion to large and sumptuous palaces; and some that had been raised at a vast expense by his granddaughter Julia he levelled with the ground. Those of his own, which were far from being spacious, he adorned not so much with statues and pictures as with walks and groves, and things which were curious either for their antiquity or rarity; such as at Capræ, the huge limbs of sea monsters and wild beasts, which some affect to call the bones of giants and the arms of old heroes.

His frugality in the furniture of his house appears even at this day, from some beds and tables still extant; most of which are scarcely fit for any genteel private family. It is reported that he never lay upon a bed, but such as was low and meanly furnished. He seldom wore any garment but what was made by the hands of his wife, sister, daughter, and granddaughters. His togas were neither scanty nor full; nor the *clavus* of his tunic either remarkably broad or narrow. His shoes were a little higher than common; to make him appear taller than he was. He had always clothes and shoes, proper to go abroad in, ready by him in his bed chamber, for any sudden occasion.

At his table, which was always plentiful and elegant, he constantly entertained company; but he was very scrupulous in choosing his. Valerius Messalla informs us that he never admitted any freedman to his table, except Menas, after he had betrayed to him Pompey's fleet, but not until he had promoted him to the state of the freeborn. He writes himself that he invited to his table a person in whose country house he lodged, that had formerly been a spy to him. He often would come late to table, and withdraw soon, so that the company began supper before his coming in and continued at table after his departure. His entertainments consisted of three dishes, or at most only six. But if the expense was moderate, the complaisance with which he treated his company was extraordinary. For such as were silent, or talked low, he excited to bear a part in the common conversation; and ordered in music and stage-players and dancers from the circus, and very often itinerant declaimers, to enliven the company.

Festivals and solemn days of joy he usually celebrated in a very expensive manner, but sometimes only in a jocular manner. In the Saturnalia, or at any other time when the fancy took him, he would distribute to his company clothes, gold, and silver; sometimes coins of all sorts, even of the ancient kings of Rome and of other nations; sometimes nothing but

hair-cloth, sponges, peels, and pincers, and other things of that kind, with obscure and ambiguous inscriptions upon them. He used likewise to sell tickets of things of very unequal value, and pictures with the back sides turned towards the company at table; and so, by the unknown quality of the lot, disappoint or gratify the expectation of the purchasers. This sort of traffic went round the whole company, everyone being obliged to buy something, and to run the chance of loss or gain with the rest.

He was a man of a little stomach (for I must not omit even this article), and commonly used a plain diet. He was particularly fond of coarse bread, small fishes, cheese made of cow's milk, and green figs of that kind that

comes twice a year. He would eat before supper, at any time, and in any place, when he had an appetite.

He was naturally extremely sparing in the use of wine. Cornelius Nepos says that he used to drink only three times at supper in the camp at Mutina; and when he indulged himself the most, he never exceeded a pint, or if he did, he threw it up again. Of all wines, he gave the preference to the Rhætic, but scarcely ever drank any in the daytime. Instead of drinking, he used to take a piece of bread dipped in cold water, or a slice of cucumber, or some leaves of lettuce, or a green sharp juicy apple.

After a little food at noon, he used to take a nap with his clothes and shoes on, his feet covered, and his hand held before his eyes. After supper he

commonly withdrew to a couch in his study, where he continued late, until he had put down in his diary all or most of the remaining transactions of the day, which he had not before registered. He would then go to bed, but never slept above seven hours at most, and that not without interruption; for he would wake three or four times in that space. If he could not again fall asleep, as sometimes happened, he would call for some person to read or tell stories to him, until sleep supervened, which was usually protracted till after daybreak. He never would lie awake in the dark without somebody to sit by him. Very early rising was apt to disagree with him. On which account, if religious or social duty obliged him to get up early, that he might guard as much as possible against the inconvenience resulting from it, he used to lodge in some apartment belonging to any of his domes-



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tics that was nearest the place at which he was to give his attendance. If at any time a fit of drowsiness seized him in passing along the streets, he would order the chair to be set down, until he had taken a little sleep.

In person he was handsome and graceful, through all the stages of his life. But he was careless of dress; and so little attentive to the adjustment of his hair, that he usually had it done in great haste, by several barbers at a time. He would sometimes clip, and sometimes shave his beard; and during the operation would be either reading or writing. His countenance, either when he spoke or held his tongue, was so calm and serene, that a Gaul of the first rank declared amongst his friends that he was so much mollified by it, as to be restrained from throwing him down a precipice, in his passage over the Alps, upon being admitted to approach him, under the pretext of speaking with him. His eyes were clear and bright; and he was willing it should be thought that there was something of a divine vigour in them. He was likewise not a little pleased to see people, upon his looking steadfastly at them, lower their countenances, as if the sun shone in their eyes. But in his old age, he saw very imperfectly with his left eye. His teeth were thin set, small and rough, his hair a little curled, and inclining to a yellow colour. His eyebrows met; his ears were small, and he had an aquiline nose. His complexion was betwixt brown and fair; his stature but low; though Julius Marathus his freedman says he was five feet and nine inches in height. This however was so much concealed by the just proportion of his limbs, that it was only perceivable upon comparison with some taller person standing by him.

From early youth he devoted himself with great diligence and application to the study of eloquence, and the other liberal arts. In the war of Mütina, notwithstanding the weighty affairs in which he was engaged, he is said to have read, written, and declaimed every day. He never addressed the senate, people, or soldiery but in a premeditated speech, though he was not destitute of the talent of speaking extempore. And lest his memory should fail him, as well as to prevent the loss of time in getting his speeches by heart, he resolved to read them all. In his intercourse with individuals, and even with his wife Livia, upon a subject of importance, he had all he would say down in writing, lest, if he spoke extempore, he should say more or less than was proper. He delivered himself in a sweet and peculiar tone, in which he was diligently instructed by a master. But when he had a cold, he sometimes made use of a crier for the delivery of his speeches to the people.^c

In his literary qualifications, without at all rivalling the attainments of Cæsar, he was on a level with most Romans of distinction of his time; and it is said that both in speaking and writing his style was eminent for its perfect plainness and propriety. His speeches on any public occasion were composed beforehand, and recited from memory; nay, so careful was he not to commit himself by any inconsiderate expression, that even when discussing any important subject with his own wife, he wrote down what he had to say, and read it before her. Like his uncle, he was strongly tinged with superstition; he was very much afraid of thunder and lightning, and always carried about with him a sealskin, as a charm against its power; notwithstanding which, in any severe storm, he was accustomed to hide himself in a chamber in the centre of his house, to be as much out of the way of it as possible; add to which, he was a great observer of dreams, and of lucky and unlucky days.^d

He neither slighted his own dreams, nor those of other people relating to himself. At the battle of Philippi, though he had resolved not to stir out

of his tent, on account of being indisposed, yet, upon the occasion of a dream which a friend of his had, he altered his resolution ; and it was fortunate for him that he did so ; for the camp was taken, and his couch, upon a supposition of his being in it, was pierced in several parts, and cut to pieces. He had many frivolous silly dreams during the spring ; but in the other parts of the year, his dreams were less frequent and more significative. Upon his frequently visiting a temple in the Capitol, which he had dedicated to Thundering Jove, he dreamed that Jupiter Capitolinus complained that his worshippers were taken from him, and that upon this he replied he had only given him the Thunderer for his porter. He therefore immediately hung the ceiling of the temple round with little bells ; because such commonly hung at the gates of great houses. Upon occasion of a dream too, he always, on a certain day of the year, begged an alms of the people, reaching out his hand to receive the dole with which they presented him.

Some signs and omens he regarded as infallible. If in the morning his shoe was put on wrong, or the left instead of the right, that was with him a dismal presage. If, upon his setting out on a long journey by sea or land, there happened to fall a mizzling rain he held it to be a good sign of a speedy and happy return. He was much affected likewise with anything out of the common course of nature. A palm tree, which chanced to grow up betwixt some stones in the pavement before his house, he transplanted into a court where the household gods were placed, and took all possible care to make it thrive.

His death and his subsequent deification were said to have been intimated by ~~two~~ manifest prodigies. As he was finishing the census amidst a great crowd of people in the Field of Mars, an eagle flew about him several times, and then directed its course to a neighbouring temple, where it sat down upon the name of Agrippa, and at the first letter. Upon observing this, he ordered Tiberius to put up the vows, which it is usual to make on such occasions, for the succeeding lustrum. For he declared he would not meddle with what it was probable he should never accomplish, though the tables were ready drawn for it. About that same time, the first letter of his name, in an inscription upon a statue of him, was struck out by lightning ; which was interpreted as a presage that he would live only a hundred days longer : which number the letter C stands for, and that he would be placed amongst the gods ; as *Æsar*, which is the remaining part of the word *Cæsar*, signifies, in the Tuscan language, a god. Being therefore about despatching Tiberius to Illyricum, and designing to go with him as far as Beneventum, but being detained by several persons who applied to him upon account of causes they had depending, he cried out, which was afterwards regarded as an omen of his death, “ Not all the business that can occur shall detain me at Rome one moment longer ” ; and setting out upon his journey, he went as far as Astura ; whence, contrary to his custom, he put to sea in the night time, upon the occasion of a favourable wind.

His sickness was occasioned by diarrhœa ; notwithstanding which, he went round the coast of Campania and the adjacent islands, and spent four days in that of Capræ ; where he gave himself up entirely to his ease ; behaving, at the same time, to those about him with the utmost good nature and complaisance. As he happened to sail by the Bay of Puteoli, the passengers and mariners aboard a ship of Alexandria just then arrived, clad all in white, with crowns upon their heads, lauded him with praises and joyful acclamations, crying out, “ By you we live, by you we sail, by you enjoy our liberty and our fortunes. ” At which being greatly pleased, he distributed to each of

his friends that attended him forty gold pieces, requiring from them an assurance by oath not to employ the sum given them any other way than in the purchase of Alexandrian goods. And during several days after, he distributed togæ and pallia, upon condition that the Romans should use the Grecian, and the Grecians the Roman dress and language. He likewise constantly attended to see the boys perform their exercises, according to an ancient custom still continued at Capreæ. He gave them likewise an entertainment in his presence, and not only permitted but required from them the utmost freedom in jesting, and scrambling for fruit, victuals, and other things which he threw amongst them. In a word, he indulged himself in all the ways of amusement he could contrive. Soon after, passing over to Naples, though at that time greatly disordered by the frequent returns of his disease, he continued a spectator to the end of some solemn games which were performed every five years in honour of him, and came with Tiberius to the place intended. But on his return, his disorder increasing, he stopped at Nola, sent for Tiberius back again, and had a long discourse with him in private; after which he gave no further attention to business of any importance.

Upon the day of his death, he now and then inquired if there was any disturbance in the town about him; and calling for a mirror, he ordered his hair to be combed, and his falling cheeks to be adjusted. Then asking his friends that were admitted into the room, "Do ye think that I have acted my part in life well?" he immediately subjoined,

Ἐἰ δὲ παν ἔχει καλῶς, τῷ παιγνίῳ
Δότε κρότον, καὶ πάντες ὑμεῖς μετὰ χαρᾶς κτυπήσατε.

"If all be right, with joy your voices raise
In loud applauses to the actor's praise."

After which, having dismissed them all, whilst he was inquiring of some that were just come from Rome, concerning Drusus' daughter who was in a bad state of health, he expired amidst the kisses of Livia, and with these words: "Livia, live mindful of our marriage, and farewell!" dying a very easy death, and such as he himself had always wished for. For as often as he heard that any person had died quickly and without pain, he wished for himself and his friends the like *εὐθανασία* (an easy death), for that was the word he made use of. He discovered but one symptom before his death of his being delirious, which was this: he was all on a sudden much frightened, and complained that he was carried away by forty men. But this was rather a presage, than any delirium; for precisely that number of soldiers carried out his corpse.

He expired [Suetonius continues] in the same room in which his father Octavius had died, when the two Sextuses, Pompeius and Apuleius, were consuls, upon the fourteenth of the calends of September [Aug. 19 A.D., 14 according to the revised calendar], at the ninth hour of the day, wanting only five-and-thirty days of seventy-six years of age. His remains were carried by the magistrates of the municipia¹ and colonies, from Nola to Bovillæ, and in the night time because of the season of the year. During the intervals, the body lay in some court, or great temple, of each town. At Bovillæ it was met by the equestrian order who carried it to the city, and deposited it in the porch of his own house. The senate proceeded with so much zeal in the

¹ *Municipia* were foreign towns which obtained the right of Roman citizens, and were of different kinds. The *municipia* used their own laws and customs; nor were they obliged to receive the Roman laws unless they chose them.

arrangement of his funeral, and paying honour to his memory, that, amongst several other proposals, some were for having the funeral procession made through the triumphal gate, preceded by the image of Victory, which is in the senate house, and the children of the first quality, of both sexes, singing the funeral ditty. Others moved that on the day of the funeral they should lay aside their gold rings, and wear rings of iron; and others, that his bones should be collected by the priests of the superior orders. One likewise proposed to transfer the name of Augustus to September, because he was born in the latter, but died in the former. Another moved that the whole period of time, from his birth to his death, should be called the Augustan age, and be inserted in the calendar under that title. But at last it was judged proper to be moderate in the honours to be paid to his memory. Two funeral orations were pronounced in his praise, one before the temple of Julius, by Tiberius; and the other before the rostra, under the old shops, by Drusus, Tiberius' son. The body was then carried upon the shoulders of senators into the Field of Mars, and there burned. A man of prætorian rank affirmed upon oath that he saw his spirit ascend into heaven. The most distinguished persons of the equestrian order, bare-footed, and with their tunics loose, gathered up his relics, and deposited them in the mausoleum, which had been built in his sixth consulship, betwixt the Flaminian way and the bank of the Tiber, at which time likewise he gave the woods and walks about it for the use of the people.

He had made a will a year and four months before his death, upon the third of the nones of April, in the consulship of Lucius Plancus and C. Silius. It consisted of two skins of parchment, written partly in his hand, and partly by his freedmen Polybius and Hilarion. It had been committed to the custody of the vestal virgins, by whom it was now produced, with three other volumes, all sealed up as well as the will, which were every one read in the senate. He appointed for his first heirs, Tiberius for two thirds of his estate, and Livia for the other third, whom he likewise desired to assume his name. The heirs substituted in their room, in case of death, were Drusus, Tiberius' son, for a third part, and Germanicus with his three sons for the rest. Next to them were his relations and several of his friends.

He left in legacies to the Roman people 40,000,000 sesterces; to the tribes 3,500,000; to the guards 1000 each man; to the city battalions 500; and to the soldiers in the legions 300 each; which several sums he ordered to be paid immediately after his death. For he had taken care that the money should be ready in his exchequer. For the rest he ordered different times of payment. In some of his bequests he went as far as 20,000 sesterces, for the payment of which he allowed a twelvemonth; alleging for this procrastination the scantiness of his estate; and declaring that not more than 150,000,000 sesterces would come to his heirs: notwithstanding that during the twenty preceding years, he had received in legacies from his friends, the sum of 1,460,000,000; almost the whole of which, with his two paternal estates, and others that had been left him, he expended upon the public.

He left order that the two Julias, his daughter and grand-daughter, should not be buried in his sepulchre. With regard to the three volumes before mentioned, in one of them he gave orders about his funeral; another contained a narrative of his actions, which he intended should be inscribed on brass plates and placed before his mausoleum; in the third he had drawn up a concise account of the state of the empire; as to the number of soldiers

in pay, what money there was in the treasury, exchequer, and arrears of taxes : to which are added the names of the freedmen and slaves, from whom the several accounts might be taken.

A BRIEF RESUME OF THE CHARACTER AND INFLUENCE OF AUGUSTUS

It will be observed that Suetonius makes reference to brass plates, which Augustus had had inscribed with a narrative of his actions, to be placed before his mausoleum. It would appear that this biographical inscription, or a kindred one was widely copied on tablets placed in the various temples dedicated to Augustus all over the empire. Fragments of this duplicate inscription from various ruins have been preserved, but by far the most complete one is that which was discovered in the sixteenth century, on a marble slab in the wall of the temple at Ancyra (the modern Angora) in Asia Minor ; which, owing to the place of its discovery, is known as the *Monumentum Ancyranum*. This inscription, to which reference has already been made, supplies many important data as to the life of Augustus. It has a peculiar interest, because, as has been said, it is virtually autobiographical. In addition to the facts that it tabulates, it therefore gives interesting glimpses into the character of its author.^a

In a well-known passage of this inscription Augustus reviews his political career. In this review he does not begin with his adoption by Julius Cæsar, but he starts from the fact that in his nineteenth year he raised an army and saved the state on his own initiative and by his own resources. As an emperor upon whom old age was creeping, he looked back at the single landmarks of his rising career and saw the turning-point which decided his later destiny in this acquisition of an army of his own ; according to him his political significance begins with the moment in which he became the head of an army.

This right of exercising authority over the army, and indeed sole, undisputed authority, Cæsar had wanted to be sure of preserving at any cost for the future ; this was the fundamental notion of his whole system, if that can be called a system which was indeed only a practice. The republic, too, could not do without its commanders, but it only left them for a year, or at the most a year and a half, in office. The innovation of the emperor's time consisted in this, that the sole commander actually kept his power for a lifetime, held it simultaneously with other powerful offices, and even dared to exercise it in the capital itself.

In order to maintain his army, he had been permanently invested with control of the important boundary provinces and with the permanent garrisons of the legions ; as also with the right to supervise the other provinces, which were of course bound to supply their quota to the imperial army.

The new ruler then had to have a domestic power which he could exercise uncontrolled ; he found it in the legions and the provinces, which, from beginning to end, remained the sure foundation of the principatus. The good will of the senate and of the people, who had formerly conducted the government, was now but of second or third rate consideration to the princeps ; both senate and people were conquered and had to a large extent lost their importance in the civil wars. In spite of this, every senator who frankly recognised the new regime, and provided necessary assurances in other ways, had been raised to the highest honours and treated, at least externally, on an equal footing by the ruler.

As we have seen, Augustus preferred the modest title of Princeps, although it could not be reckoned amongst official titles and only implied the first man of the senate and of the citizens. As the ruler's rank as a citizen found expression in this title, so Augustus chose the title of Imperator to indicate his military standing. Both were selected with much ingenuity to promote the intentions of the new ruler. They were meant to cover a new thing with an old name; for this reason he pitched upon words in no way foreign to former times, which had remained totally unstamped and were soon employed exclusively in the modern sense. This it was to which the ruler attached quite particular weight, and this characterises the man no less than his administration.

He let himself be greeted by the senate in the year 29 B.C. as imperator, but not in the sense in which so many victorious generals for centuries past had been greeted for the period between the day of victory and the triumph, after which the army was disbanded. What these generals had enjoyed for a short period young Cæsar had wished to possess for a lifetime: that is, the military supremacy of the Roman Empire. That is why this title in the new monarchical sense comes, not at the end, but at the commencement of the full name in the place of the citizen forename which was set aside.

Rightly was the conferring of this name, even by the ancients, regarded as the beginning of monarchy; rightly have the Middle Ages, rightly have the thinkers of to-day, described the successors of the Roman ruler as emperors. With this title Augustus wished to mark the transition from the ancient to the modern spirit; for his achieved work lies essentially in this, that he dovetailed into the constitution the notion of a permanent commander-in-chief and a permanent army, such as had hitherto been unknown to the republic.

The practical position of the princeps must always be clearly distinguished from the theoretical. The new office of commander-in-chief for the whole Roman Empire was analogous to the office of a republican proconsul in a single province, who administered his country, commanded his troops, with a possible right to supervise the neighbouring districts. In the year 23 B.C., by way of addition, Augustus, who in the course of his long reign was always more and more occupied in obscuring the unconstitutional elements of his new position, had caused to be conferred upon him a regular proconsular imperium, so as to be sure that the exercise of his authority should also meet with recognition in the senatorial provinces.

Although Cæsar was then pre-eminently an imperator, we should do him an injustice were we to describe his achievement as a military despotism. He was personally far too little a soldier and too much a statesman for this form of government, even to suit his own taste. The army was there only to make it possible for him in all important questions to carry out his will; as a rule he kept within those constitutional limits which he himself had reconstructed.

Whereas formerly the Absolutist development of the empire was assumed without any further inquiry into its origin, we owe it to Mommsen to have fixed his gaze on the difference between the times and to have hit the note of the constitutional scheme in his systematic presentation, which is certainly more important for the conception of Augustus than for his practical illustration of it. Mommsen talks of the "juristic construction of the principatus," very rightly dwelling on the point that "Augustus' principate is not a boundless authority, but a measured magistracy within republican forms." The right of legislating remained, in theory at least, the same as

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He is all judgment, no emotion. Between the courses at dinner he listlessly plays games that he may not be annoyed by the persiflage of the jesters who are there to amuse his guests. And he plays the game of life in the same fashion. One cannot imagine him excited, enthusiastic, angry even. He might, indeed, commit a crime, but it would be a carefully measured crime, dictated by policy: not a crime of passion. Even in his liaisons, it was said of him that his chief ambition was to learn the real sentiment of those about him through their wives, rather than merely to gratify a personal appetite.

But it must not be forgotten that Augustus, had he not been such a man as this, could not have accomplished the work he did. Had he been full of enthusiasms he would have antagonised too many people; would have made too many powerful enemies; would have invited the fate that befell the man of genius whose nephew he was, and by whose good example he profited. Yet, after all, the measure of capacity is success, and it seems a grudging estimate which withholds the title of "great" from the man who changed the entire complexion of the civilised world and put his stamp indelibly upon the centuries.

But whether genius or not in the ordinary acceptance of that loosely applied and somewhat ambiguous word, there is one regard in which Augustus need fear comparison with no leader of any age: in practical statecraft, judged by its result, he has no superior. In a pre-eminent degree he was able to isolate himself from his environment; to visualise the political situation; to see his fellow-men through the clear medium of expediency, undistorted by any aberration of passion or of prejudice. To the theatrical quality of personal vanity, from which Cæsar was by no means free, Augustus was an entire stranger. Because he was master of his own ambition, he came to be master of the world. If because of his placid logicity, posterity has been disposed to speak slightingly of his genius, the same quality won him at least an unchallenged position as the most consummate master of practical politics.^a

