

CHAPTER XIX

GERMANICUS'S third year of war against the Germans was more successful even than the first two. He had worked out a new plan of campaign, by which he would take the Germans by surprise and save his men a lot of dangerous and weary marching. This was to build on the ^{A. D. 16} Rhine a fleet of nearly a thousand transports, embark with most of his forces and sail down the river and, by way of the canal that our father had once cut, through the Dutch lakes and by sea to the mouth of the Ems. Here he would anchor his transports on the near bank, except for a few which would serve for making a pontoon bridge. He would then attack the tribes across the Weser, a river, fordable in places, which runs parallel to the Ems about fifty miles beyond. The plan worked well in every detail.

When the advance-guard reached the Weser they found Hermann and some allied chieftains waiting on the further bank. Hermann shouted across to ask whether Germanicus was in command. When they answered yes, he asked whether they would take him a message? The message was: "Hermann's courteous greetings to Germanicus, and might he be permitted speech with his brother?" This was a brother of Hermann's called, in German, something like Goldkopf, or at any rate a name so barbarous that it was impossible to transliterate it into Latin—as "Hermann" had been made into "Arminius", or as "Siegmyrgth" into "Segimerus"; so it was translated as Flavius, meaning the golden-headed. Flavius had been in the Roman Army for years, and being at Lyons at the time of the disaster of Varus had there made a declaration of his continued loyalty to

Rome, repudiating all the family ties which bound him to his treacherous brother Hermann. In the next year's campaign of Tiberius and Germanicus he had fought bravely and lost an eye.

Germanicus asked Flavius whether he wished to address his brother. Flavius said he didn't much want to but that it might be an offer to surrender. So the two brothers started shouting at each other across the river. Hermann began talking German, but Flavius said that unless he talked Latin the conversation was at an end. Hermann did not want to talk Latin, which the other chiefs did not understand, for fear of being thought a traitor, and Flavius did not want to be thought a traitor by the Romans, who did not understand German. On the other hand Hermann wanted to make an impression on the Romans, and Flavius on the Germans. Hermann tried to keep to German, and Flavius to Latin, but as they grew more and more heated they fell into such a dreadful mixture of both languages that, as Germanicus wrote to me, it was as good as a comedy to hear them. I quote from Germanicus's account of the dialogue.

HERMANN: Hullo, brother. What's happened to your face? That scar's an awful deformity. Lost an eye?

FLAVIUS: Yes, brother. Did you happen to pick one up? I lost it that day you galloped away out of the wood with mud smeared on your shield so that Germanicus wouldn't recognize you.

HERMANN: You're wrong, brother. That wasn't me. You must have been drinking again. You were always like that before a battle: a bit nervous unless you had drunk at least a gallon of beer, and had to be strapped to the saddle by the time the war-horns sounded.

FLAVIUS: That's a lie, of course, but it reminds me what a barbarous gut-rotting drink your German beer is. I never drink it now even when there's a great consignment come into the camp from one of your captured villages. The men only drink it when they have to: they say that it's better than swamp water spoilt by German corpses.

HERMANN: Yes, I like Roman wine myself. I have a few hundred jars left of what I captured from Varus. This summer I'll be getting in another good supply, if Germanicus doesn't look out. By the way, what reward did you get for losing your eye?

FLAVIUS (*with great dignity*): The personal thanks of the Commander-in-Chief, and three decorations, including the Crown and the Chain.

HERMANN: Ho Ho! The Chain! Do you wear it round your ankles, you Roman slave?

FLAVIUS: I'd rather any day be a slave to the Romans than a traitor to them. By the way, your dear Thrusnelda's very well and so's your boy. When are you coming to Rome to visit them?

HERMANN: At the end of this campaign, brother. Ho, ho!

FLAVIUS: You mean when you walk behind Germanicus's car in the triumph and the crowd pelts you with rotten eggs? How I'll laugh!

HERMANN: You had better do all your laughing in advance, because if you still have any throat left to laugh through in three days from now my name's not Hermann. But enough of this. I have a message to you from your mother.

FLAVIUS (*suddenly serious and fetching a deep sigh*): Ah, my dear, dear mother! What message does my mother send me? Have I her sacred blessing still, brother?

HERMANN: Brother, you have wounded our wise and noble and prolific mother to the soul. She says that she will turn her blessing into a curse if you continue to be a traitor to your family and tribe and race, and do not instantly come over to us again and act as joint-General with me.

FLAVIUS (*in German, bursting into tears of rage*): Oh, she never said that, Hermann. She couldn't have said that. It's a lie you made up yourself just to make me unhappy. Confess it's a lie, Hermann!

HERMANN: She gave you two days to make up your mind.

FLAVIUS (*to his groom*): Hi, you ugly-faced pig, give me

my horse and arms! I'm going over the stream to fight my brother. Hermann, you foul thing, I'm coming to fight you!

HERMANN: Come on then, you one-eyed bean-eating slave, you!

Flavius jumped on his horse and was about to swim it across the river when a Roman colonel caught at his leg and pulled him off the saddle: he knew German and he knew the absurd veneration that Germans have for their wives and mothers. Suppose Flavius really meant to desert? So he told him not to bother about Hermann or believe his lies. But Flavius couldn't resist having the last word. He dried his eyes and shouted across: "I saw your father-in-law last week. He'd got a nice place near Lyons. He told me that Thrusnelda came to him because she couldn't bear the disgrace of being married to a man who broke his solemn oath as an ally of Rome and betrayed a friend at whose table he had eaten. She said that the only way you can ever win back her esteem is by not using the arms which she gave you on your wedding-day against your sworn friends. She has not been unfaithful to you yet, but that won't last long if you don't instantly come to your senses."

Then it was Hermann's turn to weep and storm and accuse Flavius of telling lies. Germanicus privately detailed a captain to watch Flavius very carefully during the next battle and at the least sign of treachery to run him through.

Germanicus wrote seldom but when he did they were long letters and he put into them, he said, all the interesting and amusing things that did not seem quite suitable for his official dispatches to Tiberius: I lived for those letters. I was never anxious about Germanicus's safety when he was fighting the Germans: he had the same sort of confidence with them as an experienced bee-keeper has with bees, who can go boldly to a hive and remove the honey, and the bees somehow never sting him as they would you or me if we tried to do the same thing. Two days after fording the Weser he fought a decisive battle with Hermann. I have always been interested in speeches made before a battle: there is nothing that throws

such light on the character of a general. Germanicus neither harangued his men in an oratorical way nor joked obscenely with them like Julius Cæsar. He was always very serious, very precise and very practical. His speech on this occasion was about what he really thought of the Germans. He said that they were not soldiers. They had a certain bravado and fought well in a mob, as wild cattle fight, and they had a certain animal cunning too which made it unwise to neglect ordinary precautions in fighting them. But they soon tired after their first furious charge and they had no discipline in any true military sense, only a spirit of mutual rivalry. Their chiefs could never count on them to do what was wanted: either they did too much or not enough. "The Germans," he said, "are the most insolent and boastful nation in the world when things go well with them, but once they are defeated they are the most cowardly and abject. Never trust a German out of your sight, but never be afraid of him when you have him face to face. And that's all that need be said except this: most of the fighting to-morrow will be in among those woods, where from all accounts the enemy will be so tightly packed that they will have no room for manœuvre. Go straight at them, never mind their assegais, and get to close quarters at once. Stab at their faces: that is what they hate most."

Hermann had chosen his battle-ground carefully: a narrowing plain lying between the Weser and a range of wooded hills. He would fight at the narrow end of this plain with a big oak and birch forest at his back, the river on his right and the hills on his left. The Germans were in three detachments. The first of these, young assegai-men of local tribes, were to advance into the plain against the leading Roman regiments, who would probably be French auxiliaries, and drive them back. Then when the Roman supports came up they were to break off the fight and pretend to fly in panic. The Romans would press on towards the wood and at this point the second detachment, consisting of Hermann's own tribe, would charge down from an

ambush on the hill and take them in the flank. This would cause great confusion and the first detachment would then return, closely supported by the third—the experienced elder men of the local tribes—and drive the Romans into the river. The German cavalry by this time would have come round from behind the hill and taken the Romans in the rear.

It would have been a good plan if Hermann had been in command of disciplined troops. But it went ludicrously wrong. Germanicus's order of battle was as follows: first, two regiments of French heavy infantry on the river flank, and two of the auxiliary Germans on the mountain flank, then the foot archers, then four regular regiments, then Germanicus with two Guards battalions and the regular cavalry, then four more regular regiments, then the French mounted archers, then the French light infantry. As the German auxiliaries advanced along the spurs of the mountain, Hermann, who was watching events from the top of a pine tree, called out excitedly to his nephew who was standing by for orders below: "There goes my traitor brother! He must never leave this battle alive." The stupid nephew sprang forward shouting, "Hermann's orders are to charge at once!" He rushed down into the plain with about half the tribe. Hermann with difficulty managed to restrain the rest. Germanicus sent the regular cavalry out at once to charge the fools in the flank before they could reach Flavius's men, and the French mounted archers to cut off their retreat.

The German skirmishing detachment had meanwhile advanced from the wood, but the Roman cavalry charge sent the men under Hermann's nephew rushing back on top of them and they caught the panic and ran back too. The German third detachment, the main body, then came out of the wood, expecting the skirmishers to halt and turn back with them as arranged. But the skirmishers' only thought was to get away from the cavalry: they ran back through the main body. At this moment there came a most cheering omen for the Romans—eight eagles, who had been frightened from the hill by the sortie and were wheeling about the

plain, uttering loud shrieks, now flew all together towards the wood. Germanicus called out: "Follow the Eagles! Follow the Roman Eagles!" The whole army took up the cry: "Follow the Eagles!" Meanwhile Hermann had charged with the rest of his men and taken the foot-archers by surprise, killing a number of them; but the rear regiment of French heavy infantry wheeled round to the archers' assistance. Hermann's force, which consisted of some fifteen thousand men, might still have saved the battle by crushing the French infantry and thus driving a formidable wedge between the Roman advance guard and the main body. But the sun flashed in their faces from the weapons and breast-plates and shields and helmets of the long ranks of advancing regular infantry, and the Germans lost courage. Most of them rushed back to the hill. Hermann rallied a thousand or two, but not enough, and by this time two squadrons of regular cavalry had come charging back among the fugitives, and cut off his retreat to the hill. How he got away is a mystery, but it is generally believed that he spurred his horse towards the wood and overtook the German auxiliaries who were advancing to attack it. Then he shouted: "Make way, cattle! I'm Hermann!" Nobody dared to kill him because he was Flavius's brother and Flavius would feel bound in family honour to avenge his death.

It was no longer a battle but a slaughter. The German main-body was outflanked and forced towards the river, which many managed to swim, but not all. Germanicus pushed his second line of regular infantry into the wood and routed the skirmishers who were waiting there in the vague hope of the battle suddenly turning in their favour. (The archers had good sport shooting down Germans who had climbed trees and were hiding in the foliage at the top.) All resistance was now over. From nine o'clock in the morning until seven o'clock in the evening, when it began to get dark, the killing went on. For ten miles beyond the battle-field the woods and plains were scattered with German corpses. Among the captives was the mother of Hermann and

Flavius. She begged for life, saying that she had always tried to persuade Hermann to abandon his futile resistance to the Roman conquerors. So Flavius's loyalty was now assured.

A month later another battle was fought, in thick forest-land on the banks of the Elbe. Hermann had chosen an ambush and made dispositions which might have been most effective if Germanicus had not heard all about them a few hours beforehand from deserters. As it was, instead of the Romans being driven into the river, the Germans were forced back through the wood, in which they were packed too closely for their usual strike-and-run tactics—back into a quaking bog which surrounded it, where thousands slowly sank out of sight, yelling with rage and despair. Hermann, who had been disabled by an arrow wound in the previous battle, was not much to the fore this time. But he carried on the fight in the wood as stubbornly as he could and, meeting by chance with his brother Flavius, thrust him through with an assegai. He escaped across the bog, jumping from tussock to tussock with extraordinary nimbleness and good luck.

Germanicus raised a huge trophy-heap of German weapons and put on it the following inscription: "The Forces of Tiberius Cæsar having subdued the tribes between Rhine and Elbe consecrate these memorials of their victory to Jove, to Mars and to Augustus." No mention of himself. His total casualties in these two battles were not above twenty-five hundred men killed and seriously wounded. The Germans must have lost at least twenty-five thousand.

Germanicus considered that he had done enough this year and sent some of his men back to the Rhine by land and embarked the rest on transports. But then came misfortune: a sudden storm from the south-west caught the fleet soon after it weighed anchor and scattered it in all directions. Many vessels went to the bottom and only Germanicus's own ship managed to reach the mouth of the Weser, where he reproached himself as a second Varus with the loss of a whole

Roman army. He was with difficulty prevented by his friends from leaping into the sea to join the dead. However, a few days later the wind veered round to the north and one by one the scattered ships came back, almost all oarless and some with cloaks spread instead of sails, the less disabled taking turns to tow the ones that could barely keep afloat.

Germanicus hurriedly set to work repairing the damaged hulls and sent off as many of the fit vessels as he could to search the desolate neighbouring islands for survivors. Many were found there, but in a half-starved state, kept alive only by shell-fish and the carcasses of horses thrown up on the beach. Many more came in from points further up the coast; they had been respectfully treated by the inhabitants, who had lately been forced to swear alliance with Rome. About twenty ship-loads returned from as far away as Britain, which had been paying a nominal tribute since its conquest seventy years before by Julius Cæsar, sent back by the petty kings of Kent and Sussex. In the end not more than a quarter of the lost men were unaccounted for, and nearly two hundred of these were found, years later, in Central Britain. They were rescued from the lead-mines, where they had been put to forced labour.

The inland Germans, when they first heard of this disaster, thought that their gods had avenged them. They overthrew the battle-field trophy and even began talking of a march to the Rhine. But Germanicus suddenly struck again, sending an expedition of sixty infantry battalions and a hundred cavalry squadrons against the tribes of the upper Weser, while he himself marched with eighty more infantry battalions and another hundred cavalry squadrons against the tribes between the lower Rhine and the Ems. Both expeditions were completely successful and, what was better than the killing of many thousand Germans, the Eagle of the Eighteenth Regiment was found in an underground temple in a wood and triumphantly borne away. Only the Eagle of the Seventeenth now remained unredeemed, and

Germanicus promised his men that next year, if he was still in command, they would rescue that too. Meanwhile he marched them back to winter-quarters.

Then Tiberius wrote pressing him to come home for the triumph which had been decreed him, for he had surely done enough. Germanicus wrote back that he would not be content until he had altogether broken the power of the Germans, for which not many more battles were now needed, and recovered the third Eagle. Tiberius wrote again that Rome could not afford such high casualties even at the reward of such splendid victories: he was not criticizing Germanicus's skill as a general, for his battles had been most economical in men, but between battle casualties and the sea-disaster he had lost the equivalent of two whole regiments, which was more than Rome could afford. He reminded Germanicus that he had himself been sent nine times into Germany by Augustus and so was not talking without experience. His opinion was that it was not worth the life of a single Roman to kill even as many as ten Germans. Germany was like a Hydra: the more heads you lopped off the more it grew. The best way of managing Germans was to play on their inter-tribal jealousies and foment war between neighbouring chieftains: encouraging them to kill each other without outside help. Germanicus wrote back begging for one year more in which to complete his work of subjugation. But Tiberius told him that he was wanted at Rome as Consul again, and touched him on his most tender spot by saying that he should remember his brother Castor. Germany was the only country now where any important war was being fought and if he insisted on finishing it himself, Castor would have no opportunity of winning a triumph or the title of field-marshal. Germanicus persisted no longer but said that Tiberius's wishes were his law and that he would return as soon as relieved.

He came back in the early spring and celebrated his triumph. The whole population of Rome streamed out to welcome him twenty miles from the City. A

great arch to commemorate the recovery of the Eagles was dedicated near the temple of Saturn. The triumphal procession passed under it. There were cars heaped with the spoil of German temples, and with enemy shields and weapons; others carried tableaux representing battles or German river-gods and mountain-gods dominated by Roman soldiers. Thrusnelda and her child were on one car, with halters about their necks, followed by an enormous train of manacled German prisoners. Germanicus rode, crowned, in his chariot with Agrippina seated beside him and his five children—Nero, Drusus, Caligula, Agrippinilla and Drusilla—seated behind. He won more applause than any other triumphant general had won since Augustus's triumph after Actium.

But I was not there. Of all places in the world I was in Carthage! Only a month before Germanicus's return I had been sent a note by Livia instructing me to prepare for a journey to Africa. A representative of the Imperial family was needed to dedicate a new temple to Augustus at Carthage, and I was the only one who could be spared for the task. I would be given ample advice on how to conduct myself and how to perform the ceremony, and it was to be hoped I would not once more make a fool of myself, even before African provincials. I guessed at once why I was being sent. There was no reason for anyone to go yet, because the temple would not be completed for at least another three months. I was being got out of the way. While Germanicus was in the City I would not be allowed to return, and all my letters home would be opened. So I never had an opportunity of telling Germanicus what I had been saving up for him so long. On the other hand, Germanicus had his talk with Tiberius. He told him that he knew that Postumus's banishment had been due to a cruel plot on Livia's part—he had positive proof of it. Livia certainly ought to be removed from public affairs. Her actions could not be justified by any subsequent misbehaviour of Postumus's. It was only natural for him to try to escape

from undeserved confinement. Tiberius professed to be shocked by Germanicus's revelations; but said that he could not create a public scandal by suddenly dishonouring his mother: he would charge her privately with the crime and gradually take away her powers.

What he really did was to go to Livia and tell her exactly what Germanicus had said to him, adding that Germanicus was a credulous fool, but seemed to be in earnest and was so popular at Rome and in the Army that perhaps it would be advisable for Livia to convince him that she was not guilty of what he charged her, unless she thought this beneath her dignity. He added that he would send Germanicus away somewhere as soon as possible, probably to the East, and would raise the question again in the Senate of her being called Mother of the Country, a title which she had well deserved. He had taken exactly the right line with her. She was pleased that he still feared her sufficiently to tell her so much, and called him a dutiful son. She swore that she had not arranged false charges against Postumus: this story was probably invented by Agrippina, whom Germanicus followed blindly and who was trying to persuade him to usurp the monarchy. Agrippina's plan, she said, was no doubt to make trouble between Tiberius and his loving mother. Tiberius, embracing her, said that though little disagreements might occasionally occur nothing could break the ties that bound them. Livia then sighed, she was getting to be an old woman now—she was well on in her seventies—and was beginning to find her work too much for her: perhaps he would anyhow relieve her of the more tedious part and only consult her on important questions of appointments and decrees? She would not even be offended if he discontinued his practice of putting her name above his on all official documents: she did not want it said that he was under her tutelage. But, she said, the sooner he persuaded the Senate to give her that title the more pleased she would be. So there was a show of reconciliation: but neither trusted the other.

Tiberius now named Germanicus as his colleague in the Consulship and told him that he had persuaded Livia to retire from public business, though as a matter of form he would still pretend to consult her. This seemed to satisfy Germanicus. But Tiberius did not feel at all comfortable. Agrippina would hardly speak to him, and knowing that Germanicus and she had only one soul between them, he could not believe in their continued loyalty. Besides, things were going on at Rome which a man of Germanicus's character would naturally detest. First of all, the informers. Since Livia would not give him access to the criminal dossiers or let him share the control of her very efficient spy-system—she had a paid agent in almost every important household or institution—he had to adopt another method. He made a decree that if anyone was found guilty of plotting against the State or blaspheming the God Augustus his confiscated estates would be divided among his loyal accusers. Plots against the State were less easy to prove than blasphemies against Augustus. The first case of blasphemy against Augustus was that of a wag, a young shopkeeper, who happened to be standing near Tiberius in the Market Place as a funeral passed. He sprang forward and whispered something in the ear of the corpse. Tiberius was curious to know what it was. The man explained that he was asking the dead man to tell Augustus when he met him down below that his legacies to the people of Rome had not yet been paid. Tiberius had the man arrested and executed for speaking of Augustus as if he were a mere ghost, not an immortal God, and said that he was sending him down below to convince him of his mistake. A month or two later, by the way, he did pay the legacies in full. In a case like this Tiberius had some justification, but later the most harmless abuses of Augustus's name were enough to put a man on trial for his life.

A class of professional informers sprang up who could be counted on to make out a case against any man who was indicated to them as having incurred Tiberius's displeasure.

Thus criminal dossiers based on a record of real delinquency were superfluous. Sejanus was Tiberius's go-between with these scoundrels. In the year before Germanicus's return Tiberius had put the informers to work on a young man called Libo who was a great-grandson of Pompey and a cousin of Agrippina's through their grandmother Scribonia. A.D. 16 Sejanus had warned Tiberius that Libo was dangerous and had been making disrespectful remarks about him: but Tiberius was careful at this stage not to make disrespect to himself an indictable offence, so he had to invent other charges. Now, Tiberius, to cover his own association with Thrasyllus, had expelled from Rome all astrologers, magicians, fortune-tellers and interpreters of dreams, and forbidden anyone to consult such of them as secretly stayed on. A few stayed, with Tiberius's connivance, on condition that they gave séances only with an Imperial agent concealed in the room. Libo was persuaded by a senator who had turned professional informer to visit one of these decoys and have his fortune told. His questions were noted down by the hidden agent. In themselves they were not treasonable, only foolish: he wanted to know how rich he would become and whether he would ever be the leading man at Rome, and so on. But a forged document was produced at his trial which was said to have been discovered by slaves in his bedroom—a list, in what appeared to be his handwriting, of names of all the members of the Imperial family and of the leading senators, with curious Chaldean and Egyptian characters written against each name in the margin. The penalty for consulting a magician was banishment, but the penalty for practising magic oneself was death. Libo denied authorship of the document, and the evidence of slaves, even under torture, would not be sufficient to condemn him: slave-evidence was accepted only when the accusation was that of incest. There was no freedman evidence, because Libo's freedmen could not be persuaded to testify against him nor might a freedman be put to torture to force a confession from him. On Sejanus's advice, however,

Tiberius made a new legal ruling that when a man was charged with a capital crime his slaves could be bought at a fair valuation by the Public Steward and thus enabled to give evidence under torture. Libo, who had not been able to get a lawyer brave enough to defend him, saw that he was caught and asked for an adjournment of the trial until the next day. When this was granted he went home and killed himself. The charge against him was nevertheless gone through with in the Senate with the same formality as if he had been alive and he was found guilty on all charges. Tiberius said that it was unfortunate that the foolish young man had killed himself, because he would have interceded for his life. Libo's estate was divided among his accusers, among whom were four senators. Such a disgraceful farce could never have been played when Augustus was Emperor, but under Tiberius it was played, with variations, over and over again. Only one man made a public protest, and that was a certain Calpurnius Piso, who rose in the Senate to say that he was so disgusted with the atmosphere of political intrigue in the City, the corruption of justice and the disgraceful spectacle of his fellow-senators acting as paid informers, that he was leaving Rome for good and retiring to some village in a remote part of Italy. Having said this he walked out. The speech made a powerful impression on the House. Tiberius sent someone to call Calpurnius back, and when he was once more in his seat told him that if there were miscarriages of justice any senator was at liberty to call attention to them at question-time. He said, too, that a certain amount of political intrigue was inevitable in the capital city of the greatest Empire the world had ever known. Did Calpurnius suggest that the senators would not have come forward with their accusations if they had had no hopes of reward? He said that he admired Calpurnius's earnestness and independence and envied his talents; but would it not be better to employ these noble qualities for the improvement of social and political morality at Rome than to bury them in some wretched hamlet of the Apen-

nines, among shepherds and bandits? So Calpurnius had to stay. But soon after he showed his earnestness and independence by summoning old Urgulania to appear in court for non-payment of a large sum of money which she owed him for some pictures and statuary: Calpurnius's sister had died and there had been a sale. When Urgulania read the summons, which was for her immediate attendance at the Debtors' Court, she told her chair-men to take her straight to Livia's Palace. Calpurnius followed her and was met in the hall by Livia, who told him to be off. Calpurnius courteously but firmly excused himself, saying that Urgulania must obey the summons without fail unless too ill to attend, which clearly she was not. Even Vestal Virgins were not exempt from attendance at court when subpoenaed. Livia said that his behaviour was personally insulting to her and that her son, the Emperor, would know how to avenge her. Tiberius was sent for and tried to smooth things over, telling Calpurnius that Urgulania surely meant to come as soon as she had composed herself after the sudden shock of the summons, and telling Livia that it was no doubt a mistake, that Calpurnius certainly meant no disrespect, and that he himself would attend the trial and see that Urgulania had a capable counsel and a fair trial. He left the Palace, walking beside Calpurnius towards the courts and talking with him of this and that. Calpurnius's friends tried to persuade him to drop the charge, but he replied that he was old-fashioned: he liked being paid money that was owed him. The trial never came off. Livia sent a mounted messenger after them with the whole amount of the debt in gold in his saddle-bags: he overtook Calpurnius and Tiberius before they arrived at the door of the Court.

But I was writing about informers and the demoralizing effect they had on life at Rome, and about judicial corruption. I was about to record that while Germanicus was at Rome there was not a single charge heard in the courts of blaspheming Augustus or of plotting against the State, and the informers were warned to keep absolutely quiet. Tiberius

was on his best behaviour and his speeches in the Senate were models of frankness. Sejanus retired into the background, Thrasyllus was removed from Rome to the shelter of Tiberius's villa on the island of Capri, and Tiberius appeared to have no intimate friend but the honest Nerva, whose advice he was always asking.

Castor I never could learn to like. He was a foul-mouthed, bloody-minded, violent-tempered, dissolute fellow. His character showed up most clearly at a sword-fight, where he took more delight in seeing blood spurting from a wound than in any act of skill or courage on the part of the combatants. But I must say that he behaved very finely towards Germanicus and seemed to undergo a real change of heart in his company. City factions tried to force the two into the wretched position of rivals for succession to the monarchy, but they never on any occasion encouraged this view. Castor treated Germanicus with the same brotherly consideration that Germanicus gave him. Castor was not exactly a coward, but he was a politician rather than a soldier. When he was sent across the Danube in answer to an appeal for help by the tribes of East Germany who were fighting a defensive and bloody war against Hermann's Western confederacy, he managed by clever intrigue to bring into the war the tribes of Bohemia, and of Bavaria too. He was carrying out Tiberius's policy of encouraging the Germans to exterminate each other. Maroboduus ("He who walks on the lake bottom"), the priest-king of the East Germans, fled for protection to Castor's camp. Maroboduus was given a safe retreat in Italy; and since the East Germans had sworn an oath of perpetual allegiance he remained for eighteen years a hostage for their good behaviour. These East Germans were a fiercer and more powerful race than the West Germans and Germanicus was lucky not to have had them at war with him too. But Hermann had become a national hero by his defeat of Varus, and Maroboduus was jealous of his success. Rather than that Hermann should become High King of all the German nations, which was his ambi-

tion, Maroboduus had refused to give him any help in his campaign against Germanicus, not even by making a diversion on another frontier.

I have often thought about Hermann. He was a remarkable man in his way, and though it is difficult to forget his treachery to Varus, Varus had done much to provoke the revolt and Hermann and his men were certainly fighting for liberty. They had a genuine contempt for the Romans. They could not understand in what sense the extremely severe discipline in the Roman army under Varus, Tiberius, and almost every other general but my father and my brother, differed from downright slavery. They were shocked at the disciplinary floggings and regarded the system of paying soldiers at so much a day, instead of engaging them by promises of glory and plunder, as most base. The Germans have always been very chaste in their morals and Roman officers openly practised vices which in Germany, if they ever came to light—but this was seldom—were punished by smothering both culprits in mud under a hurdle. As for German cowardice, all barbarous people are cowards. If Germans ever become civilized it will then be time to judge whether they are cowards or not. They seem, however, to be an exceptionally nervous and quarrelsome people, and I cannot make up my mind whether there is any immediate chance of their becoming really civilized. Germanicus thought that there was none. Whether his policy of extermination was justified or not (certainly it was not the usual Roman policy with frontier tribes) depends on the answer to the first question. Of course, the captured Eagles had to be won back, and Hermann had shown no mercy, after the defeat of Varus, when he overran the province; and Germanicus, who was a most gentle and humane man, disliked general massacre so much that he must have had very good reasons for ordering it.

Hermann did not die in battle. When Maroboduus was forced to fly from the country, Hermann thought that his way was now clear to a monarchy over all the nations of

Germany. But he was mistaken: he was not even able to make himself monarch of his own tribe, which was a free tribe, the chieftain having no power to command, only to lead and advise and persuade. One day, a year or two later, he tried to issue orders like a king. His family, which had hitherto been greatly devoted to him, were so scandalized that, without even first discussing the matter together, they all rushed at him with their weapons and hacked him to pieces. He was thirty-seven when he died, having been born the year before my brother Germanicus, his greatest enemy.