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From the translator

To Eddie,

From Bobby,

18th January 1944

THE AGRICOLA AND GERMANIA
OF TACITUS

ABERDEEN UNIVERSITY PRESS.

TACITUS
THE AGRICOLA AND GERMANIA

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH BY

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TO THE MEMORY OF

FRANK EUSTACE ANDERSON,

FORMERLY ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF GREEK

AT HARVARD, MASSACHUSETTS.

2064992

P R E F A C E.

THE text from which the following translation has been made is that of the edition of the *Agricola* and *Germania* which was brought out by Mr. A. J. Church and Mr. W. J. Brodribb in 1869. In the one or two cases where I have used a different reading, the reader's attention has been called to it in a footnote. I have to express my great obligations to the very useful notes appended to their work, as well as to the translation of the two treatises which they published previously. After I had finished my translation, Dr. E. B. Tylor kindly lent me an unpublished version of the *Germania* of which he had a copy in his possession, and I obtained permission to borrow from it the phrase "these are no boy's lovelocks" in the passage where Tacitus is describing the head-dress of the Swabian warriors; the footnotes to it were also useful on various points. In the identification of the numerous peoples and tribes whom Tacitus mentions, I have almost invariably followed Dr. Latham. If his great work on the *Germania* may be considered to be in some respects a little out of date, on the other hand in it was first suggested, if I am not mistaken, that

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hypothesis of the European origin of the Aryans which now commends itself so strongly to many scientific men. I may add that the short footnotes which I have ventured to append to some of the names are to be taken as stating in the briefest possible manner such conclusions as I have been able to arrive at. To have attempted more would have swelled the contents of this little book far beyond the modest limits assigned to it. It makes no pretensions to come into the same class as the last German treatise on the Germania, which extends, so it is said, to over a thousand pages.

A translation of the *Agricola* appeared anonymously in 1885 from the press of Messrs. Kegan Paul & Co. I had not seen it when I made my version, but I read it afterwards with much pleasure on account of its very spirited style, and I have taken the liberty of borrowing from it one phrase, "in the springtime of her rare promise," where Tacitus is speaking of his betrothal to *Agricola's* daughter.

Finally, I have to express my sincere and hearty thanks to Mr. H. F. Fox of Brasenose, for advice and assistance generously bestowed; to the Headmaster of Bath College, who most kindly gave up several days to the task of going over the whole of the *Germania* with me; and to Mr. A. Godley of Magdalen College, who was good enough to revise the sheets of the *Agricola*.

OXFORD, *September*, 1894.

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I. It was the practice of our forefathers to bequeath to posterity the history of the deeds and the characters of their great men, nor has the practice ceased even at the present day. It still obtains, although this age is careless of its heroes, in those instances where some sublime and distinguished virtue has risen victorious over the besetting sin of every community, large or small, a blind antipathy to goodness. But of old the hero found a ready outlet and a fair field for his energies ; while genius hastened to embalm the memory of his valour, not with partiality and not with any selfish motive, but looking solely to the recompense of a good conscience. Not a few men, moreover, thought that to be the chroniclers of their own lives was a sign of self-respect rather than of conceit ; nor was any imputation ever made upon this ground against the good faith or the good taste of Rutilius and Scaurus : periods that were prolific of great men were most capable of appreciating them. At the present day I feel it necessary to begin by apologising beforehand for writing the biography of one who has passed away, which I need scarcely have done were these pages to be devoted to some lively satire upon the age in which he lived, an age so malignant and hostile to virtue.

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II. Death was the reward meted out by Domitian, so it is recorded, to Arulenus Rusticus for writing the eulogy of Paetus Thrasea, and to Herennius Senecio for writing that of Priscus Helvidius; nor did he glut his rage upon their persons alone: their writings also felt his fury, and the works in which they had enshrined the memory of those great men were ordered to be publicly committed to the flames in the place of assembly in the forum by the hands of the executioners. Perhaps in the smoke of those fires the tyrant and his tools flattered themselves that the voice of Rome, the independence of the senate, and the conscience of mankind were vanishing away; and they proceeded to expel from Rome the teachers of philosophy, and banish the members of every honourable profession, so that nothing might be left to put them to shame. Colossal, indeed, was the exhibition of abjectness offered by us: our forefathers had shown the world to what heights freedom could soar; we, when we dared neither speak nor listen for terror of the informers, showed to what slavishness humanity could sink. Our mouths were closed, and even our memories themselves would have become a blank had we been as able to forget as we were to keep silence.

III. Now, at last, our courage is reviving. We first saw the dawn of a happier epoch when Nerva reconciled two things divorced until this time,—the rule of the emperor and the liberty of the individual; and now every day of Trajan's reign is adding to the sum of our happiness. Public security has not merely been brought

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within the range of our hopes and prayers but has attained to the solid assurance of a prayer fulfilled. Nevertheless, from the nature of human weakness remedies act more slowly than diseases. Our bodily frame takes years to grow, but in the twinkling of an eye it returns to its dust: so in like manner it is easier to quench the generous ardours of the mind than to rekindle them again. Nay, inaction itself benumbs us with its charm, and the passiveness we loathe at the first becomes a passion in the end.

Those fifteen years have made a great gap in our little span of life. The ordinary chances of man's lot have removed not a few of our number, but all our boldest spirits were cut off by the ruthless hand of the tyrant. We, the survivors of that generation, are but a handful, and we, I may say, have survived not only our fellows but our very selves. Those years were an absolute blank, during which in unbroken silence we who were in the prime of life grew old and those of us who were already old reached the very verge of the grave. Nevertheless, though it be with rude and stammering tongue, I shall not regret my task when I have succeeded in telling the story of our days of bondage and bearing my testimony to the blessings of the present epoch. In the meantime, this work, which is intended as a tribute to my father-in-law Agricola, must base upon the filial piety that it displays whatever claims it may possess to the indulgence, if not the praise, of the reader.

IV. Gnaeus Julius Agricola was sprung from the old

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and illustrious colony of Forumjulii.¹ Either of his grandfathers had held office as the imperial commissioner of a province, which confers a title to nobility among men of equestrian rank. His father, Julius Graecinus,² rose to be a senator, and was distinguished for his devotion to eloquence and philosophy, thereby earning destruction for himself at the hands of Caligula ; for he was ordered to impeach Marcus Silanus³ : he declined to obey, and he was put to death.

The mother of Agricola was Julia Procilla, a woman of singular virtue. At her side he was brought up with fond affection, and spent his boyhood and his youth in the acquisition of all honourable accomplishments. He was protected from the snares of vice not only by his own

¹ Fréjus on the Riviera, about 75 miles east from Marseilles.

² Seneca is our authority for the following story of Graecinus. He had incurred heavy expenses in exhibiting the public games ; and a base creature, Fabius Persicus, sent him a liberal subscription towards defraying them. Graecinus politely returned it, and on being remonstrated with by his friends, said : “ Shall I allow a man to do me a favour whom I would not allow to propose my health ? ” Another man, equally base, Rebilius, sent him a still larger subscription, and was likewise refused. Rebilius would not be denied, and sent it in again. It was again declined, with the apology : “ I must really beg you to excuse me : I have declined Persicus’ subscription too ”.

³ Caligula’s own father-in-law, who was rash enough to give the mad emperor good advice. Junia Claudilla, the daughter of Silanus, who had been wife to Caligula, was dead when this happened. Caligula, after punishing Graecinus with death for declining to impeach the old man, sent a message to Silanus, “ to take his compliments to the spirit of the dead ”. Silanus, in order to escape the confiscation of his property, committed suicide.

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good and healthy disposition, but by the fact that from a very early age he had Massilia¹ for the scene and guide of his studies; and Massilia was a place that afforded a happy combination of the refinement of Greek culture with the simplicity of provincial life. I can well remember that he used to say, that as a very young man he became absorbed in the study of philosophy with an exclusiveness unsuited to the career of a Roman and a senator, but that his mother's prudent counsels calmed his fevered and over-excited mind. In truth, his intellect with its lofty aims and ideals had thirsted for the fair guerdon of a noble and exalted fame, with an ardour that recked nothing of consequences. Reason and experience tempered this excess ere long, and he laid to heart the hardest lesson that philosophy has to teach,—moderation.

V. He served his military apprenticeship in Britain under Suetonius Paulinus, a steady and careful general, who admitted him to share his tent, as a member of his staff, in order to judge of his capabilities, and was well satisfied with them. Agricola did not utilise his rank of tribune and his lack of experience, either to indulge in vice, like the young men who find in military service an opportunity for debauchery, or to idle away his time in pleasures and in being absent on leave. On the contrary, he made it his business to know the province and to become known to the army, to learn from the experienced, and to attach himself to the best officers, never to

¹ Marseilles, a colony founded by Ionian Greeks six centuries before this time.

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thrust himself forward for display, never to hang back from timidity, and at the same time to combine caution with dash.

As a matter of fact, at no time had Britain been in a more excited state, or our position there more doubtful. Our veterans had been massacred, our colonies burned, our armies isolated. It was a struggle for bare life, but it was soon to be changed into a contest for the honours of victory. The change was due, not to him, but to the strategy and generalship of another, the leader to whom fell the direction of affairs and the glory of saving the province; yet campaigning gave the young soldier skill, it gave him experience, it roused his pride, and the love of military glory entered into his soul,—an ill-starred passion to awake at an era when every man who came to the front was regarded askance, and pre-eminent fame was as dangerous as infamy.

VI. Exchanging the camp for the city in order to become a candidate for civil office at Rome, he wedded Domitia Decidiana, a lady of noble lineage; and by this union he advanced himself socially, and strengthened his position for his future career. Their married life was singularly happy, owing to their mutual affection and self-sacrifice; for which let us give due honour to the woman, for the severity with which we condemn a bad wife should be balanced by a generous appreciation of a good one.

For his quæstorship the chance of the lot assigned to him Asia as his province and Salvius Titianus as proconsul. It was a double ordeal, for the province was

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rich and a tempting prey to the unscrupulous ; and the proconsul, a grossly avaricious man, was ready to wink at anything in order to purchase connivance in return ; nevertheless, Agricola passed through it unscathed.

While in Asia his wife bore him a daughter, an addition to their family that came to them as a consolation, for the son previously born to them had been lost in infancy.

On his return to Rome, at the expiry of his quæstorship, he lived a very retired life during the year that intervened before he became tribune of the people ; and during the actual year of his tribunate he lived no less retired, aware that those were the days of Nero, when inactivity was wisdom. During his prætorship he persisted in the same retirement, and, indeed, the judicial functions of the post did not fall to him : in ordering the games and the pageantry of the office he kept to a mean between a reasonable and a profuse expenditure, and gained all the more credit by refraining absolutely from extravagance. Subsequently he was selected by Galba to investigate the grants of temple property,¹ and he scrutinized them with the utmost stringency, to the end that the State might ultimately be freed from the guilt of every single confiscation except Nero's own.

VII. The year following he suffered a grievous blow which affected him both personally and pecuniarily: the

¹ Forced contributions towards the rebuilding of Rome after the great fire, which were made under Nero and were largely misappropriated.

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fleet of Otho,¹ while marauding at large, ravaged Intemelii,² a district of Liguria; and Agricola's mother was murdered at her country seat. Robbery was the object of the crime, and the estate itself, and a great part of the property coming to Agricola, was plundered. Agricola had started on his way to perform his mother's funeral rites, when he was overtaken by the news that Vespasian had appeared as a claimant for the empire, and thereupon he immediately joined his party.

Mucianus undertook the inauguration of the new government and the settlement of affairs at Rome; Vespasian's son, Domitian, being a very young man, and merely utilising his father's elevation to indulge in debauchery. Agricola was despatched to obtain recruits, and acted with such energy and fidelity that Mucianus appointed him to the command of the twentieth legion,³ which had taken the oath to the new emperor reluctantly, and whose retiring officer⁴ was said to be a centre of disaffection. Even the governors of the province⁵ had been terrorised by this legion, which was too strong for them; indeed, its own commander was unable to control it, though whether his character or that of his men was to blame for this fact is not clear. Selected to displace

¹ During the hostilities between Otho and Vitellius.

² Vintimiglia, on the Riviera, between Mentone and Bordighera.

³ Quartered in Britain.

⁴ Roscius Caelius.

⁵ *Legatus consularis* means governor of an imperial province of the first rank. *Legatus praetorius* may mean, as here, commander of a legion, or it may mean, as in the case of Agricola's office in Aquitania, governor of an imperial province of the second rank.

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him and to chastise their license, Agricola acted with singular moderation; and he preferred to make it seem that he found them amenable to discipline, than to take credit to himself for having reduced them to order.

VIII. The governor of Britain at this time was Vettius Bolanus, too mild a man for a turbulent province. In order not to cast him in the shade, Agricola restrained his own energies and curbed his own ardour, for he was schooled in subordination and had learned to reconcile honour with expediency. Shortly afterwards, Petilius Cerealis succeeded to the governorship, and then great qualities had an opportunity given them to display themselves. The new governor began by allowing him his full share of difficulties and dangers; he allowed him in the sequel his full share of the glory also. Agricola was frequently given the command of a division in order to test him; several times in consequence of his success he found himself promoted to the command of a larger body of troops. Nor did he use the successes he obtained to puff himself: he gave the credit of them to his superior, who planned them, regarding himself as merely an agent. Valiant in carrying out orders, modest in reporting their execution, he escaped jealousy, he did not escape glory.

IX. At the conclusion of his military command the late Emperor Vespasian admitted him to the rank of patrician, and afterwards placed him over the province of Aquitania,¹ a post of especial dignity from the importance of

¹ In south-western Gaul.

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its duties and from its being the stepping-stone to the consulship, for which he intended him.

It is commonly believed that military minds lack discrimination, seeing that martial authority is irresponsible and somewhat inclined to ignore nice distinctions ; force is its argument, and it does not develop the subtlety of the law court. Yet now that Agricola was placed amid civilian surroundings, his natural good sense enabled him to act with urbanity and justice. Moreover, he drew a line between the hours of business and of relaxation. When days of session claimed him and he sat as judge, he was serious, earnest, strict, with a leaning to mercy for the most part ; but his duty once done the air of authority was dropped entirely. He never had a trace of harshness, arrogance, or avarice, and he had the rare faculty of being familiar without loss of dignity, and of being strict without forfeiting affection. It would be almost an insult to so great a man to mention honesty and incorruptibility as among his virtues. He had not even the hankering after fame, which is the infirmity of even the good ; he did not seek it either by advertising his virtues or by indirect methods. He abstained from rivalry with the governors of other provinces and from controversy with the emperor's agents in his own, esteeming victory in such a case to be inglorious and defeat ignominious.

He was kept rather less than three years in this post and was recalled in the immediate expectation of the consulship. The general opinion went with him that the arrangement was for him to subsequently take Britain as his province ; nor did the report spring up

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from any suggestion on his part, but from the manifest fitness of the appointment. Rumour is not always mistaken : there have been occasions when it has brought the right man to the front.

I was at this time a young man when Agricola became consul, and he now betrothed to me his daughter in the spring-time of her rare promise. Our marriage took place at the expiration of his term. He was immediately afterwards appointed governor of Britain, and he held besides the priestly office of pontifex.

X. The situation and the inhabitants of Britain have been described already by various writers ; and if I touch on the subject I do so, not in order to challenge their ability or their industry, but because the whole of the island was now for the first time brought into subjugation. I can therefore substitute actual facts for their eloquent but imaginative disquisitions upon certain points.

Britain is the largest of the islands known to Roman geography ; in extent and position it reaches from a point opposite Germany on the east to one opposite Spain on the west, while its southern side is within actual sight of Gaul. To the north of it no land exists whatever, and upon that face beat the waves of a vast and shoreless sea. In general shape it has been compared by Livy and Fabius Rusticus, the most graphic of our ancient and modern authorities respectively, to a rather long dish, or to a double-headed axe. Leaving out Caledonia this comparison holds good, and thus it has been extended to the whole area of the country.

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But there is an immense stretch of land which runs out and tapers off like a wedge, the shore-line of which is absolutely the furthest of all. Round this shore, washed by the remotest sea, a Roman fleet now for the first time sailed, and proved Britain to be an island, at the same time that it discovered the previously unknown group of islets named the Orkneys, and subjugated them. Thule (Shetland) was also sighted, though only in the offing, as the fleet had orders to go no further, and winter was approaching.

The water of this sea is peculiarly heavy and dead for rowing; even the force of the wind, so they say, does not affect it as much as other seas, owing, I imagine, to the scarcity of large land-surfaces and mountains, which are the breeders and generators of storms, and to the greater difficulty of setting in motion a mass of deep water unbroken by land.

It does not lie within the province of this work to inquire into the physical characteristics of the ocean and its tides, and there are many treatises on the subject. I would only add one remark, that nowhere else does the sea make its power more felt; the tide causes long stretches of the rivers alternately to ebb and flow, nor does it simply rise and sink upon the shore, but it runs far inland, and winds about and makes its way into the very heart of the hills and mountain chains, as if the sea were lord of all.

XI. Whether the earliest inhabitants of Britain were an indigenous or an invading race is, as might be expected to be the case with barbarians, an open question.

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Some evidence, however, may be drawn from the differences of physique that prevail. The red hair and the large limbs of the Caledonian peoples testify to a German origin. The swarthy complexion of the Silures¹ and the frequency of curling hair among them, with the fact that Spain lies opposite their district, lead us to believe that the ancient Iberians² crossed the sea and settled in those parts. The tribes that dwell nearest to the Gauls are likewise similar to them : it may be because they were originally descended from them, and still show it ; or because, though the countries extend in opposite directions, the climate has produced similarity of physique.

On the whole, however, it seems most likely to have been the case, that the Gauls established themselves upon an island lying so close to them. You find their religious rites³ in Britain, as also their ingrained superstition ; there is not much difference between the languages. Both races are equally bold in defying any form of danger beforehand, and equally timorous in running away from it when it arrives. The Britons, however, display more spirit, for they have never yet been long enough at peace to grow tame. History tells us that the Gauls were great warriors once : since that day a life of ease has bred in them an unwarlike temper, and with their liberty they have lost their valour. A similar change has come over those of the Britons who were conquered some time ago ; the rest of them still are what the Gauls once were.

¹ In South Wales. ² Probably the ancestors of the Basques.

³ Druidism.

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XII. Their main strength is in foot-soldiers: some tribes use the war chariot as well, in which case the more honourable position is that of the charioteer, and the fighting is done by his followers.¹ Formerly they were governed by kings; now they are torn by intrigues and factions between rival chiefs; nor is there anything that has been of greater service to us against these warlike races than their inability to combine for a common end, Rarely do even two or three of their tribes unite to ward off a common danger; they fight in detail, and the whole of them are thus defeated.

The climate is disagreeable from the constant rains and fogs; great cold, however, is unknown. The duration of daylight is greater than in our part of the world. The nights are not dark, and in the extreme north of Britain they are so short that scarcely any interval is discernible between twilight and dawn. It is even asserted that the sun's light is visible all night if no clouds intervene, and that he does not set and rise, but travels across. The explanation is, that the level edge of the earth casts only a low shadow, and consequently does not project the darkness high aloft, and so the shades of night do not reach the sky and the stars above.²

The soil is suitable for cultivation, and is fertile; though the olive, the vine, and other fruits of warmer

¹ In contrast with the Homeric chariot, where the hero stood and fought, and the driving was done by a subordinate.

² Tacitus appears to have conceived of the earth as a disk, higher in the middle than at the edge, beneath which the sun passed during the night.

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climes, will not thrive in it. The crops are early in starting and late in ripening, and in both cases from the same cause, viz., the extreme wetness of the soil and climate. Britain offers a prize to the conqueror in her gold and silver and other metals; the ocean also yields its pearls, but they are dark and lead-coloured. Some consider this to be due to lack of skill in the pearl-gatherers; for in the Red Sea the shells are torn away from the rock alive and breathing, while in Britain they are merely collected as they are washed up by the waves. I should be more ready to believe that the pearls were less valuable than that men were less avaricious.

XIII. The people themselves readily submit to military impressment, and to the taxes and other burdens imposed upon them by our government, provided always that nothing injures their pride. On this point they are highly sensitive, having been tamed so far as to yield obedience, but not, as yet, to be servile.

The first Roman invasion of Britain was made by an army under Julius, of blessed memory; he won a pitched battle, struck terror into the natives, and made himself master of the coast, but he may be considered as the first pioneer of the country rather than its conqueror. Subsequently came our civil wars, when the arms of the rival claimants of the empire were turned against the State, and even after peace was restored Britain was for long years left in oblivion. Augustus, of blessed memory, called this masterly inactivity; Tiberius called it a maxim inherited from Augustus. An expedition to Britain was undoubtedly projected by Caligula; but if swift to devise

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he was utterly infirm of purpose, and his prodigious preparations against Germany had all come to nothing. The work was begun anew by the Emperor Claudius. Roman legions and auxiliary troops were landed on the island, and a share in the operations was given to Vespasian, thus opening to him the career which afterwards proved so successful. The tribes were subdued, the kings of Britain were made captives, and Vespasian was declared the man of destiny.

XIV. The first man of consular rank to be appointed governor of Britain was Aulus Plautius, and the second was Ostorius Scapula. They were both distinguished soldiers ; and the eastern part of the country was gradually reduced to the condition of a province, while a colony¹ of veterans was planted in it for additional security. Some districts were handed over to King Cogidumnus (who remained our ever faithful friend down to a time within living memory), in order that, according to the old and well-approved policy of Rome, we might make even the kings of a people our instruments to enslave them.

The next governor, Didius Gallus, merely held what his predecessors had won, and contented himself with planting one or two forts beyond the frontier, in order to obtain credit for having annexed something during his term of office. Veranius succeeded Didius, and died within the year.

His place was taken by Suetonius Paulinus, and for two years all went well ; new tribes were subdued, and

¹ At Colchester.

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strong garrisons established among them. This emboldened Paulinus to venture on an expedition against the Isle of Anglesea, as the source from which the rebels drew their strength; but in so doing he put the districts which he left behind him in jeopardy.

XV. No sooner had the governor departed on his expedition than the Britons of the province began to breathe freely; they fell to discussing the woes of slavery and comparing their wrongs, and the more they looked at them the worse they seemed. "If," cried they, "we bend our necks to the yoke, the Romans do but lay on heavier burdens, as if we bore them lightly. We used only to have one king at a time: now we have two; our lives are the prey of the military governor, while our goods are the prey of the civil commissioner. Whether they agree or disagree we are equally undone. The one has his staff and his centurions at his beck, the other has his attendant slaves to do his will; and both gangs add insult to outrage. Nothing escapes their avarice or their lust. When a battle has been lost and won, the spoiler has at least proved himself the better man. As it is, a pack of effeminate cowards (for that is what the most of them are) plunder our homes, carry off our children, and then force us to serve in their ranks, as though we could face death well enough in any cause except our country's. Count the Britons in the ranks, and see what a small fraction the Roman soldiers from beyond the seas are. This was the way in which the Germans threw off the yoke; and they have only a river, not the sea, for their line

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of defence. We fight for our country, our wives, and our parents: these Romans fight only to gratify their avarice and their luxury. They shall be driven out, as their deified Julius was driven out, if we do but prove ourselves such men as our fathers were. Let not our courage fail us though we should lose a battle or two: desperate men are all the surer to charge home and fight it out to the bitter end. Even the gods are now showing compassion for the Britons: witness how they are keeping the Roman general far away, with his army banished in another island. Our greatest difficulty, which was to meet in council, is already overcome, but at the same time do not let us forget that there is a greater peril in being caught planning a revolt than any that lies in actual rebellion."

XVI. By appeals like this the tribes fired each other's passions, and the whole province flew to arms under the leadership of Boadicea,¹ a woman of royal race, for sex is with them no bar to command in the field. Our soldiers, scattered in isolated posts, were ruthlessly hunted down; the fortified places were taken by storm, and they burst into the colony² itself, which they looked

¹ One cannot refrain from recalling Tennyson's lines:—

"While about the shore of Mona those Neronian legionaries
Burnt and broke the grove and altar of the Druid and Druidess,
Far in the East Boädicéa, standing loftily charioted,
Mad and maddening all that heard her in her fierce volubility,
Girt by half the tribes of Britain, near the colony Cámulodúne,
Yell'd and shriek'd between her daughters, o'er a wild confederacy".

² Colchester.

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on as the very seat of their slavery. Maddened by their success they stopped at no single sort of outrageous cruelty of which barbarians are capable ; and if Paulinus had not received tidings of the outbreak and flown to the rescue, Britain would have been lost to us. By one successful battle he brought the rebellious province back to its former obedience, although many of the insurgents continued to retain their arms, being tormented by the consciousness of their guilt, and by the more immediate terror of the governor : a splendid administrator in other respects, he was harsh to a beaten foe, and he indulged in excessive severity as if he were revenging his own personal wrongs in each particular case. For this reason he was replaced by Petronius Turpilianus, a more merciful man, and more disposed to accept the penitence of our enemies, seeing that he had not been a witness of their misdeeds. Under him the late disorders were adjusted, and without venturing on any new military operations he handed over the province to Trebellius Maximus.

Trebellius, a man of little energy and no military experience, kept his hold over the province by an easy-going sort of administration. The barbarians, too, had learnt by this time to pardon faults which were pleasant to them, and a valid excuse for the governor's inactivity was afforded by the occurrence of civil war at the seat of empire. But mutiny gave him much trouble, now that the soldiery, after having grown used to active service, were rioting in ease. Trebellius suffered the shameful humiliation of having to run away and hide,

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in order to escape the wrath of his troops ; after which he governed on sufferance, under a tacit compact that the men should do as they pleased, and their general keep a whole skin ; and the mutiny came to an end without bloodshed.

He was succeeded by Vettius Bolanus. Our civil wars were still going on, and he, too, refrained from raising an excitement in Britain by the enforcement of discipline. There was the same inactivity against the foe as ever, and the same insubordination in the camp : the only difference was that Bolanus was an upright man ; no misdeeds brought down hatred on his head, and he made himself loved, if he was not obeyed.

XVII. But when the civil wars ended in Vespasian restoring order to the world, Britain also was reorganised, and splendid armies under competent generals soon crushed the hopes of the enemy. They were panic-stricken at the outset by the blows delivered by Petilius Cerealis against the Brigantes,¹ reputed to be the most numerous tribe of the whole province ; he fought a series of battles, inflicting tremendous slaughter in some of them, and there was little of their territory but owned him as conqueror or felt his vengeance. Coming after Cerealis any other commander than Julius Frontinus would have been absolutely dwarfed by the immense reputation for energy which he left behind him ; but Frontinus, a very able man, was equal to the task, so far as scope was given him, and his victorious arms subdued the powerful and warlike race of the Silures² after a severe but suc-

¹ Of Yorkshire.

² In South Wales.

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cessful struggle, not only with the valour of the foe, but also with the difficulties of the country.

XVIII. Such was the condition of the country, and such had been the varying fortunes of its wars, when Agricola crossed over to Britain in the latter part of summer. The soldiers having given up the idea of a campaign were taking their ease, and the enemy were taking advantage of the opportunity. Not long before he landed, the Ordovices¹ had almost annihilated a detachment of cavalry quartered in their districts, and the spark had fired the province. All those who wished for war were burning to follow the lead of the Ordovices, and were only waiting to find out what was the temper of the new governor. There were delays and difficulties to his beginning a campaign : the summer was far spent, the troops were scattered through the province, the soldiers had made up their minds that it was to be a quiet year ; the majority of advisers were in favour of a policy of caution, with a sharp watch kept on suspected points. Agricola decided to take the bull by the horns. He recalled the scattered detachments of the legions and collected a considerable body of allies, and, as the Ordovices did not venture to come down into the plain, he placed himself at the head of his troops in order to rouse their spirit by sharing their danger, and advanced against the enemy up the steep. He scarcely left a man of the Ordovices alive ; and then, being well aware that he must use his prestige, and that the future terror of his

¹ Of North Wales.

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name would depend on his first successes, he turned his attention to the island of Anglesea.

Paulinus had been compelled to abandon Anglesea, as I have already mentioned, by the rebellion of the whole province of Britain. Agricola was bent upon reducing it to subjection. But there were no ships, as was natural considering that his plans had not been settled beforehand; nevertheless, the resource and determination of the general discovered a means of crossing.¹ Leaving the whole of his baggage train under guard, he made a most careful selection among the auxiliaries of men used to fording arms of the sea and swimmers from their birth, men able to handle themselves and their arms and their horses in the water; and with them he made a sudden descent upon the island. The result was that the enemy, who were looking out for a fleet of ships and a naval invasion, were utterly bewildered, and believed that such amphibious warriors could go anywhere and defeat anybody. They sued for peace, and surrendered their island; and Agricola's fame went forth as a brilliant and successful governor, the sort of man who signalised his entry into office by hard work and hard fighting, instead of devoting, like other men, that period to idle show and a round of ceremonies.

Personally, Agricola did not trade on this success: he did not entitle the enforcement of submission among the conquered a campaign crowned with victory, nor did he even report his performances in laurel-wreathed despatches. But this very show of indifference to fame

¹ Over the Menai Straits.

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made his fame all the greater with the far-seeing: a man who said nothing about such exploits must indeed be aiming high.

XIX. The discontented condition of the province, however, was no secret to Agricola, and he knew likewise from the experience of his predecessors that force was no remedy if it were to be followed by injustice; accordingly, he determined to prevent rebellions by removing the reasons for them. His reforms began at home: his first step was to keep his own dependants in order, a task which many a man finds not less arduous than ruling a province. No public business whatever was allowed to pass through the hands of freedmen or of slaves: he did not make his own personal preferences or his friends' recommendations or requests a ground for the selection of centurions or soldiers to be near him, but considered every man of high character as perfectly worthy of his trust: nothing escaped his vigilance, but he did not always act upon his knowledge; to minor faults he was clement; to great ones he was properly severe, yet even here he frequently remitted the penalty and was satisfied with penitence, and his desire was to appoint to offices and positions of trust men who would not steal, rather than to condemn men after they had stolen.

He proceeded to make the exaction of corn and of taxes less onerous by equalising contributions and by abolishing absolutely those devices for extortion which were felt to be more vexatious than the taxes themselves. For the natives used to be compelled to sit waiting

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ignominiously before our closed granaries and actually to buy corn of us at a fancy price. Delivery used to be required off the regular roads and at the other end of the country in such a way that districts with troops wintering at their doors had to deliver their corn at places far away where there were no roads, so that what might easily have been supplied to all was made to enrich a few.

XX. His first year saw a speedy end put to these abuses, and brought peace into high honour with the natives whom the alternate carelessness and cruelty of his predecessors caused to dread it no less than war. With the advent of summer, however, he took the field again at the head of his army: on the march he was everywhere in person, praising steadiness and checking stragglers. He himself chose the camps, he himself sounded the estuaries and scoured the woods; and in the meantime he never allowed the enemy a moment's rest, but laid waste their territories with unexpected forays. Then when he had brought them to their knees his ready clemency unfolded to them the attractions of peace. By these methods many tribes, independent until then, were brought to give hostages and abandon their hostile attitude, and a line of forts was drawn round them, nor was any new annexation in Britain ever so wisely and carefully carried out before.

XXI. Tranquillity reigned during the following winter, and Agricola took advantage of it to give wholesome advice. The people lived isolated and ignorant, and were therefore prone to war: his object was that the

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amenities of life should give them a taste for peace and quietness. By private influence and by grants of public money he urged on the erection of good houses, of courts of justice, and of temples, praising those who were apt pupils and reprimanding the backward. Emulation was his stimulus in lieu of coercion. He moreover offered the sons of the chiefs a liberal education, and lauded the native genius of the Britons at the expense of the industry of the Gauls, in order that they who so lately loathed the sound of Latin might be fired with ambition to make eloquent speeches in it.¹ Roman costume thus came into fashion, and the toga began to be commonly seen, and bit by bit the way was opened to those agreeable means of demoralisation, the lounge, the bath, and the banquet; and this change the unsuspecting Britons called by the name of refinement, when it was but one step deeper into slavery.

XXII. Agricola's third year of expeditions introduced him to new tribes, and his forays extended as far as the estuary known as the Tanus.² His vigorous action inspired such terror that the enemy dared not molest him even when his army was embarrassed by severe storms, and indeed he found time to plant a chain

¹ Gallia caesidicos docuit facunda Britannos :
De conducendo loquitur jam rhetore Thule.—*Juv.*

The Gaul has been teaching the Briton
The art of embellishing pleas,
And Shetlanders now are discussing
A rhetoric lecturer's fees.

² Variouslly identified as the Tweed, or North Tyne, or (reading Taum) Tay.

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of forts. Good critics remarked that there never was a general with a better eye for country. No fort planted by him was ever taken by storm, or surrendered and abandoned. Constant forays were made from them, for they were secured against a long blockade by being victualled for a whole year.‡ Thus, during the winter they had no anxiety, and every garrison held its own unsupported, while the baffled enemy grew desperate, for their rule used to be to wipe out their losses in summer by their successes in winter, and now they were fighting a losing game both winter and summer alike.

Nor were the achievements of any of his lieutenants ever appropriated unfairly by Agricola: were the man a centurion of legionaries or were he an officer of auxiliaries, Agricola credited him honestly with his success. He had, however, the reputation of giving very severe reprimands in some cases: proportionate to his cordiality to a good soldier was his sternness to a bad one; but after his anger abated he harboured no malice; when he held his tongue it was not an ominous sign, and he thought it a more honourable part to chide a man openly than to bear a grudge.

XXIII. The fourth summer was taken up in securing his hold upon the territory he had overrun, and he discovered a good boundary line in Britain itself, if the valour of our armies and the honour of Rome could allow such a thing. For the Firths of Forth and Clyde, tidal waters running far back inland from either sea, are divided by a narrow isthmus only, across which forts were now planted. All the country to the south of

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the line was securely held, and the hostile tribes were pushed beyond it into what was practically another island.

XXIV. In the fifth year of his expeditions Agricola crossed over the Clyde, his ship leading the way;¹ here he fell in with tribes previously unknown, and subdued them in a series of successful encounters, and he strongly garrisoned that part of Britain which faces Ireland.² This was not done as a precaution but with an eye to future conquest, on the theory that Ireland, lying between Britain and Spain and easily accessible from the sea of Gaul, constitutes a valuable link between those provinces which form the backbone of the empire.

Ireland is small as compared to Britain, but it is larger than any of the Mediterranean islands. It resembles Britain in soil and climate, and in the character and customs of its inhabitants; through trade and traders we are tolerably well acquainted with the approaches to it and with its harbours. One of the petty kings of Ireland had been driven out by a rebellion, and took refuge with Agricola, who treated him as a friend and kept him till he could make use of him. I have often heard Agricola remark that with one legion and a suitable force of auxiliaries Ireland could be conquered and held in subjection; and, moreover, that

¹ *Nave prima* has also been variously rendered "in the first ship that ever ploughed those waters," "in the first ship that he found," "as soon as navigation opened".

² Galloway.

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as against the Britons it would be a good move if the Roman arms thus closed round them, and the spectacle of a country still free was removed clean out of their sight.

XXV. However, in the summer in which he entered on his sixth year of office he took for his field of operations the districts lying beyond the Firth of Forth; but anticipating that the whole country would be up in arms, and the march of a hostile expedition through it perilously beset, he sent his fleet to explore the harbours along the coast.¹ Never before had the fleet been adopted by Agricola as part of his regular force, and the spectacle of war carried on at once by sea and land was most imposing. Often did the horsemen and the footmen, and the marines from the ships, meet in one camp at jovial entertainments, where either party magnified their own exploits and their own special dangers: the one had to tell of deep woods and mountain passes, the other of struggles with wind and wave; and they gloried, as warriors are wont, in pitting one against the other their triumphs over the foe and his fastnesses, and over the mighty ocean. Moreover, the mere sight of the fleet, according to the reports of captives, dismayed the Britons, who felt that the secret of their sea was discovered, and the last loophole of escape closed behind them.

The Caledonian tribes were all up in arms, and took the field in great strength, which uncertain rumour naturally exaggerated. They threw down the gauntlet

¹ Of Fife.

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by attempting the storm of one of our forts, and alarm had been excited by this audacious challenge; so that weak spirits, under the guise of prudence, began to suggest that it might be better to retire behind the Forth, and evacuate the country before we were chased out of it. At this crisis, information reached Agricola that the enemy were preparing to assail him in several quarters. He felt that their superiority in numbers and in knowledge of the localities might enable them to surround him. So, to prevent this, he marched ahead with his army divided into three separate detachments.

XXVI. The enemy finding this out suddenly altered their plans, united their forces, and made a night attack on the camp of the ninth legion, which they understood to be the weakest.¹ They cut down the sentinels, and burst in upon the sleepy and panic-stricken troops. The fight was actually going on inside the camp when Agricola, who had learned by his scouts which way the enemy had gone and had followed on their tracks, sent forward the fastest marchers of his horse and foot to fall upon the rear of the assailants, and by his orders the whole of his division hastening behind presently began to cheer. Day was now dawning, and the light shone on his advancing standards: the Britons, with an enemy both in front and rear, were struck with terror; the courage of the legionaries revived; they felt their safety assured, and began to strive for honour. It was

¹ It had been almost destroyed once before in Boadicea's rebellion. It was destined to be absolutely annihilated a few years later by a revolt at Eburacum (*York*).

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now their turn to attack ; they charged, and, after a desperate struggle in the narrow gateways, the enemy were put to flight, each of the Roman armies doing its very best—the relieving force in order to prove its assistance a reality, the defenders of the camp to show that they had never required it. Had not the swamps and forests afforded a shelter to the fugitives, this affair would have ended the war at a blow.

XXVII. It was a splendid victory, and our men knew it and were fired by the knowledge. They declared that nothing could stop them now, that they could march right through Caledonia, and fight their way the whole length of Britain till they found the other end of it. The cautious and prudent of yesterday became, after the action, loud for an immediate advance. The most unreasonable thing about war is that every one claims a share in a success, while disaster is laid upon one man alone.

For their part, the Britons held themselves not to have been beaten on their merits, but by an unlucky chance of which Agricola had taken advantage ; and, far from lowering their tone, they went on arming their youth, sending away their women and children to places of safety, and confirming the confederacy of their tribes by meetings and sacrifices. And thus both sides severally went their ways with unappeased anger.¹

¹ It is a little curious that the numbers that fell in this severe engagement are not given as they are after the defeat of Galgacus. It would appear, moreover, that Agricola must have paused in consequence of it, or even perhaps gone back into his own quarters, for the advance northwards against the Caledonian tribes did not take place till the following year.

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XXVIII. In this same summer a cohort of Usipii, who had been levied in Germany¹ and shipped off to service in Britain, embarked on a very notable adventure. Murdering their centurion and the trained soldiers enrolled in their ranks to impart discipline by their example, they seized three light galleys and put to sea, taking the three pilots along by force. Two of these men fell under suspicion and were likewise murdered, the third directed them how to row, and they slipped past our fleet, like an apparition, before the report of the matter got abroad. After this they made descents upon the shore for water and in search of the necessaries of life, and came into frequent collision with the Britons, who resisted the spoliation of their property. They were successful on various occasions, but sometimes they were repulsed, and at last they were reduced to such an extremity of famine that they devoured the weakest of their number, and when these were eaten drew lots for new victims amongst the survivors. After thus working down the coast of Britain, they cast away their vessels² through their ignorance of navigation; they were taken for sea-robbers and made prisoners, some by the Suabians where they first struck the land, and others further on by the Frisians.³ A few out of their number, being sold as slaves and passed from hand to hand in the course of trade, finally reached the Roman bank of the Rhine, and

¹ They lived on the right bank of the Rhine: see *Germania*, xxxii.

² On the shores of Germany.

³ As they pushed on towards the Rhine.

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there attained notoriety from the story they had to tell of such an amazing adventure.

XXIX. In the early part of the following summer a heavy bereavement befell Agricola. His son, who had been born to him during the previous year, died. He bore his loss neither with affected stoicism, as many brave men do, nor with weeping and passionate laments like a woman. War, it may be added, was one of the distractions by which he sought to relieve his grief.

He sent forward the fleet, with orders to harry a great many different places, and thus create wide-spread terror and uncertainty. He added to his forces the bravest of the Britons who had attested their fidelity by remaining long at peace with us; and, with his army in light marching order, he reached the Grampian Mountains, where the enemy had already taken up a position.

For the Caledonians were by no means dismayed at the result of their previous trial of strength with us: they saw that the alternatives before them were to wipe out that defeat or else be enslaved; and, having learned to look to united action for a defence against a common peril, by embassies and treaties they had called out the strength of all their tribes. More than thirty thousand armed men were already on the ground, and thither still came pouring in every soul of their youth, and veterans whose years left them hardy and vigorous yet, warriors of fame, bearing every man of them his honours won on the field. Among the numerous chieftains was Galgacus, renowned above them all for valour and for

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race, and he is said to have spoken thus to the multitude clamouring for battle :—

XXX. “Every time that I look at the reasons we have for fighting, and the fact that we have no choice but to fight, my heart beats high at the thought that this morn, which sees your united hosts assembled, is the dawn of liberty for all Britain. For not one man among all your thousands has ever bowed his neck to the yoke, and there is no land behind us to fall back to, and the very sea is blocked to us by the all-present Roman fleet. Thus the sword and the battle to which honour calls the brave offer now the safest path to the coward. During the struggles waged in the past by the Britons against the Romans, struggles sometimes lost and sometimes won, we were always in the background as a last hope and resource ; because we who are the noblest Britons of all Britain, whose home is the very citadel of the land, who are out of sight of the shores where slavery reigns, we, free ourselves, have never so much as defiled our eyes with the sight of Roman tyranny. We live, the last of the free, on the last point of the land, and the remoteness and mystery of our reputation has been our defence unto this day ; for the terrors of the unknown loom large. But now the uttermost end of Britain is discovered. No other tribe stands behind us ; nought is yonder but the rocks and waves, and the Romans more cruel yet, and vainly by servility and compliance will you seek to escape from them. The plunderers of the world they have laid waste the land till there is no more left, and now they scour the sea. If a people are

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rich they are worth robbing, if poor they are worth enslaving; and not the East and not the West can content their greedy maw. They are the only men in all the world whose lust of conquest makes them find in wealth and in poverty equally tempting baits. To robbery, murder, and outrage they give the lying name of government, and where they make a desert they call it peace.

XXXI. "It is a law of nature that every man loves his own sons, his own kith and kin, more than all beside. He sees them carried off by the conscription to distant lands into a service which is slavery. He sees the honour of the women of his house, supposing them to escape actual violence, corrupted all the same by men styling themselves his friends and guests. His goods and his fortune are swallowed up by the taxes; the corn-dues strip him of his harvest and of his land. His body is worn out and his limbs crippled in building roads for them through swamp and forest, and they repay him with gross insult and with the lash. Slaves born into slavery are sold once and for all, and their masters provide food for them of their own accord. Britain is sold anew into slavery every day; she pays the price herself, and finds her own food to boot. You know how in a household the slave last purchased is made the butt even of his fellow-slaves. The nations of the world are the old slaves of Rome, and they now seek our destruction as the latest miserable victims. We have no tilled fields, no mines, no ports, that they should keep us here to work in them. Remember that

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masters will never tolerate valour and high spirit in their subjects. Remember that they will never trust them to live in a spot so far away out of their reach.

“Cast away, then, all hope of finding mercy, and summon up your courage like men who fight for dear life as well as for love of honour. Led by a woman, the Brigantes could storm a Roman camp and burn a Roman colony: had not success relaxed their efforts they would have broken the yoke. We have never felt the yoke; we have never bowed the knee; we never shall so use our liberty as to repent of it; let us then show, in this hour, in our first charge, what sort of warriors still we keep in Caledonia's wilds.

XXXII. “Do you really imagine that the courage of the Romans in war is equal to their licentiousness in peace? It is our quarrels and our discords that give them their fame, for they turn the faults of their enemies to the glory of their own army—that mongrel army of a mixed multitude of peoples which is only kept together by prosperity, and must assuredly dissolve under defeat. Or can you believe that the Gaul, the German, and the Briton,—yes, shame that I must say it! of Britons not a few,—are following the standards of Rome from loyalty and love? I would have you reflect that, though they now lend their blood to the foreign usurper, they were his enemies for more years than they have been his friends. Fear and dread are the bonds that bind them, bonds all too weak in the place of love. Break their bonds, and, as their fears vanish, hatred will spring to life. On our side is everything that can spur

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men on to victory. The Romans have no wives to fire their hearts, no kinsfolk to brand them as cowards if they fly. Most of them are men without a country, or if they have one it is some other than Rome. Few in number, bewildered and lost, they turn their eyes to sky, and sea, and forest, and all alike are strange to them. Verily they are as men fettered and taken in the snare, and thus the gods have delivered them into our hands.

“Tremble not at their vain show, nor at the sheen of silver and of gold, which can neither hurt nor protect. In the very lines of the foe we shall find friends. The Briton will see that our cause is his; the Gaul will bethink him of his former liberty; the rest of their German conscripts will follow the recent example of the Usipii and desert them too. Victorious here, you have nothing else to fear. Their fortresses are ungarrisoned, their colonists are old dotards; between rebellious subjects and unjust rulers, their towns are tottering and riven with discord. Here before you stand their general and their army; behind them, lo! come the tribute, the penal labour in the mines, and all the anguish of slavery, which you must endure for ever and ever, or else strike home upon this field to-day. Remember your fathers, remember your children, and let your last thoughts be of them ere you rush upon the foe.”

XXXIII. This speech was received with frantic joy, signified, as is the barbarian fashion, by songs and yells and wild war whoops. Their bands set themselves in motion, and their arms flashed as all their boldest war-

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riors pressed into the van. Indeed, they were actually forming their line of battle when Agricola, thinking that though his soldiers were full of confidence and scarcely to be held back within the rampart, it were well to rouse their ardour still more, addressed them thus:—

“It is now eight years, comrades, that I have shared in your conquests in Britain; conquests due to your loyalty and your devotion, inspired by the valour and the majesty of imperial Rome. Side by side in many a march and many a fight, whether the call was for courage against the foe, or for patient effort to overcome the obstacles offered by nature herself, we have been well content with each other, you and I. Therefore it is that we have pushed our way far beyond any point that other generals and other armies have ever reached, and are masters of this extremity of the land, thanks not to our prestige or our reputation, but to our camps and our good swords. You have been the explorers of Britain, you have been its conquerors as well.

“Many a time on the route, when morass and mountain and river tried your patience, have I heard these words from the lips of the brave: ‘When shall we see an enemy? When will the day of battle come?’ Here come your enemies now, driven from their hiding places; here is the fulfilment of your prayers and an occasion for your valour; beat them now, and you have the ball at your feet; fail to do so, and the outlook is grave. In our triumphant advance we have travelled a long, long road, we have threaded forests, and we have forded estuaries, all of which are so many addi-

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tions to our glory ; if we flee now, all these things do but multiply our perils. We have no knowledge of the country, such as our enemies have ; we have no means of getting supplies like them ; what we have are our swords and our strong arms, and having them we have all things.

“ For my part I long ago made up my mind that it was never safe for an army or a general to let an enemy see their backs. Death on the field of honour is better than a life of shame ; but in our position life and honour go hand in hand, while to fall at the point where the natural world itself comes to an end would be to find a glorious tomb.

XXXIV. “ If those tribes yonder were new to you and their battle array something strange, I would encourage you by the example of what other armies have done : as it is, I say count over your own victories and ask your own eyes. Those are the rogues who last year fell upon one legion under cover of darkness, and who were turned to flight by the sound of your cheering. Those are the most runaway rascals of all the Britons, and that is the only reason why they have survived till now. You know that when men are penetrating the forest glades the bravest of the wild beasts charge upon them and meet their fate ; the timorous and the cowardly fly at the mere sound of their feet. Thus the stoutest-hearted of the Britons have long since bitten the dust ; the remainder are but a pack of panic-stricken poltroons. The reason that at last you find them here in front of you is not that they have turned to bay, but that they

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are caught in a trap. Their desperate case and their paralysing fears have nailed them to the spot where they stand, and on that spot you shall show the world the spectacle of a brilliant and memorable victory. Here make an end to these campaigns. Let fifty years of conquest have their crowning day. Prove to Rome that her army never falters with its work, nor leaves behind it the seeds of fresh rebellions."

XXXV. Even while Agricola was still speaking, the men's excitement was intense; this final appeal was instantly followed by a burst of enthusiasm, and they rapidly put themselves in motion to close with the enemy. Fired as they were with impetuosity, he so arranged their order that the eight thousand infantry of the allies formed a solid centre, the three thousand cavalry being distributed on the wings. The legions took their stand in front of the rampart of the camp, to win a glorious victory without the loss of a drop of Roman blood if our allies were successful; to save the day if they were repulsed.

The Britons had posted their forces upon the mountain sides, for effect and in order to strike terror, their front line resting on the plain, the rest as it were towering behind them rank over rank up the steep.¹ The level

¹ Like the loose crags whose threatening mass
Lay tottering o'er the hollow pass,
As if an infant's touch could urge
Their headlong passage down the verge,
With step and weapon forward flung
Upon the mountain-side they hung.—*Lady of the Lake.*

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space between the two armies was filled with their charioteers who galloped up and down and yelled.

Agricola now seeing himself outnumbered by such swarms of enemies, and fearing a simultaneous attack on his front and on his flanks, widened out his lines, although this was to make his formation dangerously extended, and he was strongly urged to bring up the legions. But, naturally sanguine and resolute in difficulty, he sent his charger to the rear, and took his position on foot in the van of the allies.

XXXVI. The combat opened with the discharge of missiles; and the Britons, with their mighty claymores and small targes, coolly and skilfully evaded or parried the darts of our men, and poured in upon them in reply a tremendous shower of javelins, until Agricola ordered all the Batavians and two cohorts of Tungrians to go in to close quarters and use their swords. Long drill at the sword-exercise had made our allies masters of this arm; while the enemy, with their small shields and unwieldy blades, were awkward at it; for the claymores of the Britons were not thrusting weapons, and were ill adapted for entanglement in a close¹ mellay. When therefore the Batavians fell on hand to hand, striking with their shield-spikes, and thrusting at their enemies' faces, they overthrew the front line planted on the plain, and pushed their advance up the hill-sides, and the other cohorts, eager to rival them, charged home and likewise cut down those opposed to them; so rapid was the success obtained, that they left on the ground

¹ Reading *in arcto pugnam*.

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many disabled, and even many unwounded men of the enemy.

Their cavalry in the meantime were chased off by ours, and their charioteers mingled in the infantry fight ; but, though their intervention at first checked our advance, they were much hampered by the dense masses of their own side, and by the steepness of the ground. The combat at this point had none of the characteristics of a cavalry engagement ; here were men with difficulty making good their footing on the hill-sides, while the horses pushed in among them ; and constantly runaway chariots, dragged driverless by terrified horses, came tearing through their front or their flanks, wherever fear urged the animals.

XXXVII. The Britons posted on the hill-tops who hitherto had not been engaged, looking on with contemptuous carelessness at the efforts of our little army, now began gradually to descend and surround the rear of our victorious troops. Anticipating this move, Agricola sent four squadrons of cavalry, which he kept in reserve for emergencies, to stop them, and turned their bold advance into a headlong flight. Thus the fate they intended for us befell them instead ; and the cavalry squadrons by the general's orders, passing from the enemy's front, flung themselves upon his rear. Then on all the open ground was seen a slaughter fierce and fell. The horsemen were everywhere chasing the fugitives, plunging their weapons into them, taking some prisoners, and presently slaughtering these when they captured others. Now the qualities of men showed

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themselves : some of the enemy's bands, with arms still in their hands, fleeing before a few of ours ; others choosing of their own accord to rush barehanded on the sword and seek a voluntary death. The field was covered with arms and bodies of the slain and severed limbs and pools of blood, yet even then there were some amid the rout whose valour and courage did not desert them. When they reached the woods they rallied and made an attempt to entrap the foremost pursuers, who were dashing in recklessly and were ignorant of the ground. But Agricola was everywhere in person : placing strong cohorts of light-armed men to watch the outlets he dismounted some of his cavalry and sent them on foot to beat the thickets, and made the men who remained on horseback scour the thinner parts of the wood ; had he not adopted these tactics the enemy would have made us pay dearly for our over confidence. However, when they saw the pursuit beginning again, with our lines re-formed and steady, they broke and ran, not, as before, preserving some sort of formation and keeping in touch with one another ; now they scattered, and fled every man from his fellow, and sought the pathless recesses of their wilds. We had execution of them till night came on, and our men were tired of killing. Their slain were ten thousand. Of ours there fell three hundred and sixty, amongst whom was Aulus Atticus, the commander of a cohort, whom youthful ardour and a too spirited horse carried right into the ranks of the enemy.

XXXVIII. That was a night of rejoicing for the

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victors over their triumph and their booty. The Britons wandered hither and thither in the darkness, men and women raising lamentable cries as they dragged away their dead or called to those who were still alive ; they deserted their homes and fired them with their own hands in their rage ; they chose hiding-places only to abandon them again directly ; they met in parties and formed a common plan, and then immediately turned their backs on one another. Some broke down completely when they saw their dear ones once more ; but most of them were roused to fury thereby, and it is an undoubted fact that there were those who in their frenzy slew their own wives and children as an act of mercy.

The morning's light brought unmistakable proofs of the completeness of our victory. A dreary silence was all around—the hills were deserted, the ruins of houses smoked in the distance ; no living being met the advance of our scouts. We sent these out in every direction, and learnt that the tracks of the fugitives ran all ways, and that the enemy were not concentrating anywhere. To follow them up involved a desultory warfare, which was out of the question now that the summer was over ; so Agricola withdrew his army into the territory of the Boresti.¹ There he received hostages, and commissioned the commander of the fleet to circumnavigate Britain. A force for this purpose was assigned to him, and terror had cleared the way. Agricola himself led the cavalry and infantry to their winter quarters, marching slowly through the country

¹ Fife most probably.

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in order that the very deliberateness of his progress might impress the minds of the newly-conquered tribes. His arrival coincided with that of the fleet, which, favoured by fine weather, succeeded in accomplishing a famous voyage, and, after skirting the whole of the east coast of Britain, returned to its starting-point, the port of Trutulium.¹

XXXIX. Agricola reported these events to Rome in despatches of studied moderation; but the gratified air with which Domitian received them only disguised, as usual, the suspicion gnawing at his heart. His conscience told him that the public had mocked at the sham triumph he had just celebrated over Germany, for which the markets had been ransacked to buy slaves, whose hair and appearance might admit of their playing the part of captives. Here, he must have felt, was a

¹ Tacitus is a consummate literary artist; but Mommsen, with reason, calls him an unmilitary historian. Scarcely one of the places in these last chapters can be identified with any sort of certainty. The site of the battle with Galgacus is placed by Mr. Skene at Cleaven Dykes, where the Isla and the Tay unite. But the other proposed sites for it are innumerable. The "Antiquary," with his Kaim of Kinprunes and his stone inscribed A. D. L. L., is only one among a multitude. Mons Grampius may or may not be the Grampians; there are old Roman camps in Perth and Forfar as well as in Fife, and the location of the Boresti in Fife is but a conjecture. The Portus Trutulensis may, with probability, be placed on the shores of the Firth of Forth, but it is impossible to say where. It is doubtful if the fleet did more than double Cape Wrath, ascertain that the west coast of Scotland trended south from there, and return back down the east coast to the Forth again. That it circumnavigated the whole of Britain during the fag end of autumn is incredible.

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great and genuine victory, in which the enemy's loss was counted by many thousands, and the fame of which was in every mouth. The emperor had a haunting fear of being outshone by a subject. He had silenced the learned professions, and had forbidden honour to be won in civil life ; but what availed this, if another might forestall him in military glory. Other points might in some sort be glossed over with ease, but to be a good general was unmistakably an imperial quality. The idea tormented him, and it was a sure sign of the deadliness of his purpose that he was satisfied with brooding over his intention, thinking it politic to mask his hatred for the present till the freshness of his victim's fame and his favour with the army should fade away ; for Agricola still was the governor of Britain.

XL. Accordingly, by the emperor's orders, the senate formally voted him a triumph's accessory decorations, with the compliment of a statue in his honour and all the substitutes for a triumph, and intimated also that the province of Syria was intended for Agricola, it being then vacant by the death of the consular Atilius Rufus, and specially reserved for men of more than ordinary calibre. Not a few believed that a commission appointing him to Syria was positively sent by the hands of a freedman of the emperor's inner council, to be delivered to him in case he were still in Britain. The story went that the freedman actually encountered Agricola half-way across the Straits of Dover, whereupon he never even asked for an interview, but made his way back to Domitian. The story may be true, or it may be a

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fiction, invented as being in accordance with the emperor's character.

True or not, Agricola had handed over his province to his successor in a state of peace and security. To prevent his entry into Rome from being an occasion for a great assemblage and the gathering of a throng of sightseers, he evaded the attentions of his friends and came into the city by night. By night he attended at the palace, a positive order to do so having been conveyed to him ; he was received with a formal salutation, the emperor did not engage him in conversation, and he was suffered to fall back into the crowd of courtiers in waiting. To disarm through less offensive forms of virtue the prejudice that his military reputation aroused among men of pleasure, he pushed quietness and retirement to an extreme ; unpretending in style, affable in conversation, he never was seen abroad with more than one or two friends, so that the mass of people, who are accustomed to measure men's greatness by the scale of their pretensions, when they met Agricola used to ask how he ever got his reputation ; and those who could give the right answer were few.

XLI. Frequently through all this period was he in absence accused to Domitian, and in absence acquitted of the charges. Agricola had committed no crime, nor had he wronged any man, that he should be thus attacked. His peril lay in the emperor's hatred of greatness, in his own fame, and in the pertinacity of a man's most mischievous foes, the people who sing his praises.

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Moreover, the times which followed his return were such as unavoidably brought up the name of Agricola. In Mœsia, in Dacia, in Germany, in Pannonia, army after army was destroyed because our generals were either fools or cowards, and case after case occurred where officers of experience with their cohorts were overwhelmed and driven to surrender. It was no longer our frontier and the line of the Danube or the Rhine that were threatened; the power of our legions to hold their own districts and their own winter quarters was endangered. Accordingly, as the tale of losses kept increasing, when each year as it came was marked by fresh mourning and disaster, "send Agricola" became the cry of the multitude; and everybody was contrasting his energy, his resolution, his warlike spirit, with the stupidity and timidity of the others.

Domitian too, beyond all doubt, had this language dinned into his ears, the friendly sincerity of the best among his freedmen, conspiring with the envious malevolence of the worst to exasperate the natural malignity of their master. Thus Agricola's own merits combined with the faults of others to thrust his name into a fatal prominence.

XLII. And now the year was at hand when the lot was to assign him to Asia or to Africa as pro-consul, and the recent execution of Civica¹ was a warning for Agricola as well as a precedent for Domitian. Certain men familiar with the emperor's secrets approached Agricola, as if on their own account, to put

¹ Late pro-consul of Asia.

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the question, "Did he propose to take a province?" They began indirectly by hinting at the virtues of peace and quietness; then they proceeded to press upon him their services in seconding an appeal to be allowed to decline office; finally they threw off the mask, and by urgency and actual menace they positively forced him into the presence of Domitian. The emperor was a past-master in hypocrisy: with an air of great condescension he listened to the appeal to be excused from serving; he stooped so far as to grant the desired favour, and to accept an expression of gratitude for it, nor did the odiousness of his benefaction raise a blush upon his cheek. It had been usual to give a salary to a governor of consular rank, and this in certain cases had been yielded by Domitian himself; but he withheld it from Agricola, perhaps offended because no application was made for it; possibly suspecting that he might be thought to have purchased what he had compelled.

It is an instinct of human nature to hate the man you have wronged. Rancour was the keynote of Domitian's character, and the more he disguised his feeling, the less apt was he to alter it; yet, nevertheless, even he began to soften towards Agricola on account of the self-command and discretion he exhibited. Not with mutinous bearing nor with idle vapouring about "Liberty" did Agricola make any bid for fame by challenging his fate. There are people whose rule it is to belaud every defiance of constituted authority: they may learn that even under bad emperors great lives may be led, and that compliant and sober conduct, if combined with in-

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dustry and energy, is far grander than the headlong career of a self-made martyr whose sacrifice is perfectly useless to the State.

XLIII. The death of Agricola was a grievous shock to me, and a painful event to all his friends ; even by the outside world, and those to whom he was not personally known, it was felt as a real loss. Numbers, moreover, of the populace and the busy masses flocked round his house ; and in public places, and wherever knots of talkers were assembled, his name was on all lips ; nor did a single soul on hearing of his death rejoice at the news or forget it quickly. This sympathy was increased by the wide-spread rumour that he had been removed by poison.

I may venture to state that I have no positive knowledge on this matter. But during the course of his illness there was a very unusual interest shown in his condition by an imperial court which pays its visits by means of messengers, who in this case included both the principal freedmen and the most confidential physicians of the emperor. This may have been due to pure anxiety ; it might also have been in order to watch the effects of a potion. Certain it is that on the final day relays of couriers carried reports of the crisis of his last agony ; and no man believed that such singular speed was given to tidings that were unwelcome to Domitian. The external signs of mourning, nevertheless, were conspicuously exhibited in his face and demeanour, now that he did not care to show his hatred, and being, as he was, the sort of man to disguise his satisfaction more easily than his fears.

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It was no secret that when Agricola's will was read and it was found that as co-heir to the best of wives and the most dutiful of daughters he had nominated Domitian, the emperor appeared to be greatly pleased thereby, as if it were a complimentary choice. His mind was so blinded and besotted by everlasting flattery that he was actually ignorant that no good father would dream of putting an emperor into his will unless that emperor were a miscreant.

XLIV. Agricola was born on the thirteenth of June in the third consulship of Caligula;¹ he died in the fifty-fourth year of his age on the twenty-third of August in the consulship of Collega and Priscus.² As to his personal appearance, should the curiosity of posterity extend to such a matter, his frame was well proportioned and of the middle height; his expression, far from being stern, was exceedingly winning; one trusted him instinctively and acknowledged his greatness with pleasure. His life was cut short in its prime, yet his glory could have been no brighter had he lived to four score. Virtue is the true source of happiness, and that was his without stint; while as for success, he had won the consulship and the insignia of a triumph, and what more had fortune to give him? He had no mind to be immensely rich, and he was the possessor of a handsome estate. Escaping the sorrow of seeing either wife or daughter die before him, he may indeed be deemed happy in that he was taken away from the evil to come, with his honours unimpaired, his fame still

¹ A.D. 40.

² A.D. 93.

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flourishing, and with no gap yet made in the circle of his friends and relatives. He had indeed hoped to live to see the dawn of this golden age, he had hoped to see a Trajan on the throne; in my ear he prophesied that this would be. So in his prematurely-wrought death it was no small consolation to him that he was spared the horror of beholding those latter days when Domitian no longer tasted blood, and paused, and tasted again, but at one deep draught sucked the life-blood of the State.

XLV. Agricola never beheld the senate-house beset and the senators overawed by force of arms; he never beheld men of consular position butchered wholesale, and ladies of the highest rank driven headlong into exile. When Agricola died, Carus Metius had only scored his maiden success as an informer, the odious voice of Messalinus was not heard outside of the citadel of Alba, and Massa Baebius was himself among the accused. It was subsequently that our senatorial hands were made the instruments whereby Helvidius was cast into prison, that our eyes endured the sight of Mauricus and Rusticus, and that upon us fell the stain of the innocent blood of Senecio.

Nero was a tyrant, but he turned away his eyes; Nero ordered atrocities, but he did not gloat over his victims. Under Domitian the chiefest of our tortures was to see and to be seen by him, as he registered our sighs and set his mark against every senator that turned pale before the stare of his malignant visage, whose purple hue rendered him unnaturally proof against shame.

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Happy was it for you, Agricola, that not only was your life so glorious, but that death came to you at the right hour. Those who were by to hear your last words declare that you met your fate bravely and cheerfully, as though doing all that a man could to ensure a verdict of not guilty for the emperor. Your daughter and I, alas, not only had to endure the terrible loss of a parent, but to suffer the additional pang of absence ; we were not present to sit by your sick bed, to sustain your dying form, and to receive your last long farewell look and embrace, nor could you have failed to give us some commands and loving words that would have been for ever graven on our hearts. That crowning sorrow of absence was ours ; the duty that called me away from Rome four years previously was the cause. True it is, O best of fathers, that your loving wife was by your side, and that all and more than all that was due to your honourable position was done. Yet some tears that should have been shed at your deathbed were not shed, and your dying eyes looked round at the last for something and looked in vain.

XLVI. If there be any habitation for the spirits of just men, if, as the philosophers aver, great souls perish not along with the bodily life, mayest thou rest in peace, and recall us, who were dear to thee, away from weak regrets and womanish tears back to the thought of thy virtues, which are no subject for sorrow or for sighing ! Not with the fleeting breath of praise would we do thee honour, but with life-long admiration, and the effort, if strength be given us, to emulate thee. Thus

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shall each man that is of thy kin do thee truest service and prove his piety. To thy widow and to thy daughter I would say this: Keep sacred the memory of the husband and the father by pondering all that he said or did, each of you in your heart; and let the lineaments and the expression of his character rather than of his person be enshrined there. Not that I would say aught against the portraits that are fashioned of marble or of bronze; but these material things are as much subject to the law of decay and death as the features they represent: the soul's image is imperishable, and that you may embody and express not in gross matter, by the craftsman's hand, but in the spiritual nature of your inmost self. All of Agricola that we loved, all that we admired, abides and will abide in the hearts of men, in the endless course of time, in the pages of fame. Many a hero of old has gone down into oblivion like the common herd: the story of Agricola has been transmitted to those who come after, and he shall live.

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I. Germany taken as a whole is divided from Gaul, Rhaetia and Pannonia¹ by the Rhine and the Danube. Mountains divide it from Sarmatia and Dacia,² and mutual fear is also a barrier between the peoples. On the far side it is encircled by the ocean, which sweeps around broad promontories and islands³ of unknown extent, where dwell kings and tribes, whose existence has only been recently revealed to us by war. Rising amid the untrodden fastnesses of the Rhaetic Alps, the Rhine flows with a slight westerly curve down to its outlet in the North Sea. The Danube, issuing from the gentle slopes of the Black Forest, visits many peoples in its course until it forces its way into the Black Sea through six mouths, whilst a seventh channel loses itself in the marshes.

II. In my opinion the Germans are the original inhabitants of the country, and are almost entirely unalloyed by admixture with immigrant tribes from without. I ground this opinion upon the fact that ancient migrations took place not by land but by sea, and

¹ *i.e.*, From France and the south-western part of Austro-Hungary.

² Russia and Roumania.

³ Scandinavia was supposed to be an archipelago of islands.

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that seldom indeed are those vast and, I may say, hostile seas that encompass them visited by a ship from our part of the world. And, moreover, apart from the perils of that terrible unknown ocean, no man would think of abandoning Asia or Africa or Italy and seeking a home in Germany, with its uninviting lands and ungenial climate, its dreary aspect and its social gloom, if it were not his native place.

The sagas, which are the sole record of their past history, say that the God Tuisto¹ sprang from the earth, and that he and his son Mannus were the authors and founders of the race. To Mannus they ascribe three sons, whose names are borne respectively by the Ingaevones² next to the ocean, the Herminones in the middle of the country, and the Iscaevones in the rest of it. Others, with true mythological license, give the deity several more sons, from whom are derived more tribal names, such as Marsians, Gambrivians, Suabians, and Vandals; and these names are both genuine and ancient. The name Germany, however, is new and of recent application, owing to the fact that the first of these peoples to cross the Rhine and dispossess the Gauls, a tribe now known as the Tungrians, then got the name of "Germans". Thus what was originally a name given to a tribe and not that of a race gradually came to be accepted, so that all men of the race were

¹ Or Tuisco, the deity that gives its name to Tuesday.

² "Grimm's identification of the Ingaevones with the Saxons, of the Iscaevones with the Franks, and of the Herminones with the Thuringians is convenient" (Stubbs, *Const. Hist.*, i. 38).

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called Germans, by the victorious tribe first as a name of fear, and by themselves afterwards when the name had once been coined.

III. Tradition goes so far as to say that Hercules¹ visited their country, and they raise a hymn in his praise, as the pattern of all valiant men, as they approach the field of battle. They have also a kind of song which they chaunt to fire their courage (they call it "barding"²), and from this chaunt they draw an augury of the issue of the coming fray. For they inspire terror in the foe, or become flurried themselves according to the sound that goes up from the host. It is not so much any articulate expression of words as a war-like chorus. The great aim is to produce a hoarse tempestuous roar, every man holding his shield before his mouth to increase the volume and the depth of tone by reverberation.

Ulysses also, as some think, sailed into the northern ocean, in the course of his long mythical wanderings, and trod on German soil, and they maintain that Asburg on the Rhine, which is an inhabited place at the present day,

¹ Tacitus may have taken Thor for a northern Hercules, from the nature of his exploits, or he may have identified the Roman demi-god with Irmin, son of Wuotan.

² Possibly an interpolation, "bard" being a Celtic and not a Teutonic word, or it may be that Tacitus got this information through a Celtic channel. Orelli reads "baritum". The "baritus" was a precisely similar war-cry raised, so Ammianus tells us, at a later date, by the Roman legionaries on going into battle. But in his time the legionaries were largely composed of Germans, and they may very well have introduced a practice of their own into the ranks of the Roman regulars.

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was both founded and named by him ; nay, more, they assert that an altar, consecrated to Ulysses, with the name of his father, Laertes, also on it, was once found on this very spot, and that certain monuments and tombs inscribed with Greek characters are still to be seen on the confines of Germany and Rhaetia. I have no intention of bringing forward evidence either in order to confirm these statements or to refute them ; every man must give or withhold his assent as he is inclined.

IV. For myself I am disposed to side with those who hold that the German peoples have never intermarried with alien stocks, but have always stood forth as a race rooted in the soil, pure and unlike every other. This is why, extraordinarily numerous as the Germans are, they all possess precisely the same physical characteristics,—fierce blue eyes, red hair, and large frames which are good only for a spurt ; they certainly have not a corresponding power of endurance for hard work, while, although inured by the nature of their climate and soil to hunger and cold, they have never learnt to support heat and thirst.

V. Their land, notwithstanding considerable local diversities, as a rule consists of tangled forests and dismal swamps, the rainfall being greater on the side towards Gaul, while the side facing Noricum and Pannonia is more exposed to winds. It is fairly fertile, though fruit trees do not flourish, and it is a good grazing country, but the cattle are usually stunted ; our fine powerful oxen with their spreading horns are positively unknown ; their pride is in large herds, which constitute

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their sole and most highly prized form of wealth. Silver and gold the gods have denied them, but whether in mercy or in anger I hesitate to say; neither would I be understood to affirm that Germany possesses no veins of silver or gold, for nobody has ever looked for them. They make a difference in the value they set upon the precious metals for use and for commerce. One may see amongst them vessels of silver, that have been officially presented to their envoys and chiefs, put to the same common uses as pots of clay, although those tribes that are on our border highly appreciate gold and silver for the purposes of trade, and recognise and preferentially accept some varieties of our coins. The interior tribes still exchange by barter after the more primitive and ancient fashion. They like money that is old and familiar, in the form of pieces having deeply-indented rims,¹ and bearing the impression of a two-horse chariot. Silver, too, rather than gold attracts them, not that they are any fonder of it as a metal, but because the reckoning of silver coins is easier for men who deal in a variety of cheap articles.

VI. Even iron is by no means abundant with them, as we may gather from the character of their weapons. Only a few have swords and heavy spears. They carry lances, "frameae"² as they call them, with the iron point narrow and short, but so sharp and so easy

¹ Notches were filed in the rim of the coin after it was struck to show that it was not a mere disk of copper coated with silver.—*Sir John Evans.*

² The old German word is "pfriemen".

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to handle that they employ them either for stabbing¹ or for throwing as occasion demands. A lance and a shield are arms enough for a horseman ; the footmen have also darts to hurl : each man carries several, and, being naked or only lightly clad with a little cloak, they can hurl them to an immense distance. They make no display of ornament, only they are very careful in the colours they use for the devices on their shields. Few possess such a thing as a breastplate, and only a man or two here and there a helmet or headpiece.

Their horses are not remarkable for beauty or speed, neither are they trained to complex evolutions like ours ; the riders charge straight forward, or wheel in a single turn to the right, the formation of the troop being such that there is no rear rank. Generally speaking, the footmen are the most numerous, and the fighting line therefore is composed of both arms combined, all the fastest runners among the young men being chosen for the van, and by their great speed of foot being admirably suited for a cavalry engagement.² Their number, moreover, is exactly fixed ; there are one hundred of them from every village ; these chosen youths are always known as "The Hundred" among their own folk ; and thus what was originally a mere number, has grown to be an actual title of honour.

Their line of battle is drawn up in wedge-shaped

¹ Like the "stabbing assegai" of the Zulus.

² "At Waterloo the Scots Greys charged with a 92nd Highlander hanging on to each stirrup."—*Lord Roberts' speech at the St. Andrew's-day dinner, 30th November, 1893.*

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columns ; to fall back, however, provided only a man comes on again, is held to be good tactics, not cowardice. Even in a defeat they carry off the bodies of their comrades. Throwing away the shield is the crowning disgrace, and a man who has so dishonoured himself may neither take part in the rites of religion nor enter the general assembly ; many such survivors from the battlefield have been known to end their shame by hanging themselves.

VII. They choose their kings for their noble birth, their generals for their prowess : the king's power is neither unlimited nor arbitrary, and the generals owe their authority less to their military rank than to their example and the admiration they excite by it, if they are dashing, if they are conspicuous, if they charge ahead of the line. But they may not execute, they may not bind, they may not even strike a delinquent ; those are the privileges solely of the priests, and they do such things not as a form of military punishment nor at the generals' bidding, but as if such were the express commands of the deity whom they believe to be present on the field ; and they carry with them into battle certain images and statues brought out of the sacred groves.

But the sharpest spur to their valour is that each separate squadron or column is not a mere casual aggregation of chance-comers, but is composed of men of one family and one kin ; and their households go with them to the field, and the shrieks of their women and the wailings of their children ring in their ears. Each man feels bound to play the hero before such witnesses

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and to earn their most coveted praise. To his mother and to his wife he brings his wounds ; and they do not shrink from counting them, nor from searching them, while they carry food to the fighters and give them encouragement

VIII. Their traditions tell that more than once, when a German line was wavering on the point of giving way, the women rallied it, urgently entreating the men to fight on, baring their breasts and crying out that their captivity was at hand. Captivity for their women is a thing the men abhor far more than for themselves ; so that, as a matter of fact, we always obtain the firmest hold over those states which are compelled to include amongst the hostages they send us some maidens of noble birth. Nay, the Germans even ascribe to women a certain inspiration and power of prophecy ; they do not either despise the advice they give or neglect their forecasts. Most of their tribes long gave divine honours to Veleda, whom we saw as a prisoner here in the days of the Emperor Vespasian, of blessed memory ; but there was also an Aurinia¹ in earlier times, and many others likewise, whom they venerated sincerely enough, though not with any idea of making goddesses of them.

IX. Mercury² is their principal divinity, and upon

¹ Others read "Albruna" ; but perhaps it should be "aliruna," an old word for prophetess.

² The identification of the Teutonic deities in their Latin garb is not easy. Grimm says: "The net result is that in Latin records dealing with Germany and her gods we are warranted in interpreting Mercurius as Wuotan, Jupiter as Donar, and Mars as Ziu" (*Teutonic Mythology*, p. 130 ; Stallybrass' translation).

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certain days their religion requires that in their sacrifices to him they should include human victims. Hercules and Mars are appeased with offerings of the lower animals, and some of the Suabians also offer sacrifice to Isis.¹ From what sources this foreign cult took its rise I have failed to discover, further than that the actual emblem of the goddess being made in the form of a Liburnian galley points to the worship having been imported from without.

For the rest, the thought of confining their gods within walls, or of making any human face the model after which to represent the divine image, seems to them out of keeping with the dignity of celestial beings. They consecrate woods and groves to them, and under the names of the various deities they invoke that invisible presence which is apprehended only by the reverent mind.

X. To omens and the drawing of lots they pay the very greatest attention. Their method of divining by the lot is simple. They lop a branch from a fruit tree and cut off the twigs: they mark these differently in order to distinguish them apart, and they then cast them loosely, at haphazard, on a white robe. Then the priest of the community, if it is going to be a public divination, or if a private one, the head of the household, offers a prayer to the gods, and turning up his eyes to heaven he draws three twigs, one at a time, and he interprets those which he has drawn according to the

¹ It is very hard to say who "Isis" can be. Holda and Bertha are possible suggestions.

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marks previously set upon them. If the interpretation proves to be unfavourable, no further divination on the same question takes place that day. If it is favourable, the auspices have still to be consulted. We, too, are familiar with the practice of drawing auguries from the flight and the cries of birds. Peculiar to the German race is the importance attached to certain forecasts and warnings afforded by horses as well. Horses are kept at the public charges in the sacred woods and groves; they are white in colour and are never desecrated by any toil in the service of man; they are harnessed to a sacred car, and the priest and the king or the chief of the state walk beside them and note with the utmost care their neighings and snortings. In no other omen have they firmer faith, and this holds good not only among the common people but also among the chiefs and priests: for these latter, while considering themselves to be the ministers of the gods, think that the sacred steeds are their mouthpieces.

They have also another method of consulting the omens, which is used to ascertain beforehand the issue of wars of grave importance. A man of the nation with which they are at war is captured by some means or other, and is put to fight with a champion of their own nation, armed each with his national weapons; the victory of the one or the other is thought to foretell the event of the war.

XI. Upon minor matters the chiefs deliberate; upon greater matters the general assembly, with the reservation that, in the latter case, where the popular vote

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settles the question, these matters, too, must be thoroughly debated at a meeting of the chiefs. The general assembly is held regularly on fixed days (except in the instance of a sudden emergency arising) either at new or at full moon, for they hold these times to be the most auspicious date for entering upon their discussions. They reckon time by nights instead of by days as we do, and all their engagements and arrangements are made on this system; the day is counted in with the previous night.

Their perfect independence of one another involves this drawback, that they never reach their trysting-place together nor obey the conditions of their summons, but two or three days are always wasted by the unpunctuality of the late comers. When the general opinion is that the time has come to begin, they all take their seats, arms in hand. Silence is commanded by the priests, on whom now devolves the task of maintaining order. Then the king or a chief, according to the speaker's age or rank or fame or eloquence, is heard by the assembly; but he is listened to rather as a man whose influential character carries weight than as one who has the power to command. If the proposal finds no favour, its rejection is signified by groaning; if it is accepted, the warriors clash their spears. Approval expressed by the clashing of arms is the form of assent held in the highest honour.

XII. Before the general assembly, likewise, criminals may be charged and may be tried for their lives. The penalties vary with the crime. Traitors and renegades

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are hung on a tree ; cowards and recreants and infamous wretches are pressed under a hurdle into the slime of a morass and suffocated. This difference in the methods of execution is not meaningless, the idea being that crimes should be made a public example of, but that abominations should be buried out of sight. Minor offences are punished proportionately, the offender on conviction being fined in a number of horses or cattle ; part of the fine goes to the king or to the State, part to the man whose wrongs are being righted, or to his family.

It is also in these assemblies that chiefs are chosen to administer justice throughout the districts and villages. Each chief so chosen has the assistance of a hundred of the commonalty, who are associated with him ¹ in order to advise him and enforce his decisions.

XIII. All business, public and private, is transacted arms in hand ; custom, however, forbids any one to carry arms before the community has approved his claim to do so. When the time comes the young man is formally presented with a shield and a lance in the presence of the assembly either by some one of the chiefs, or by his own father, or his relatives. This with them is equivalent to the taking of the toga with us : it is the young man's first admission to public life ; before this he is a part

¹ Dr. Latham considers this to be the origin of the Hundred as a territorial division. These attendants *comites*, chosen from the common people, for local purposes, in time of peace, whose number is exactly fixed at a hundred, seem to be different from the other *comites*, mentioned in the next chapter, of noble birth in many cases and of varying number, who formed a chief's body-guard and fought around him in war.

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of the household, henceforward he is a member of the State. Illustrious birth or great services rendered by the family may confer the rank of chief even upon mere youths; such youths associate themselves with the others whose strength is more matured and whose quality has been already put to the proof; nor is it considered to be any sort of derogation for them to be seen in a chief's body-guard.¹ In fact, among the henchmen or retainers composing the body-guards there are varying degrees of rank conferred by the chief whom they follow, and there is an eager rivalry between the retainers for the post of honour next their chief, as well as between the different chiefs for the honour of having the most numerous and the most valiant body-guard. Here lie dignity and strength. To be perpetually surrounded by a large train of picked young warriors is a distinction in peace and a protection in war. Nor is it merely in his own nation alone that each chieftain enjoys his reputation and his fame if he stands forth pre-eminent by the number and the valour of his retinue, but they are spread abroad among the neighbouring states as well; em-

¹ Dr. Latham says "comitatus—comites. The German of this translation was probably some older form of the Anglo-Saxon *gesið*, plural, *ge-si-ðas* = retainers."

Mr. Thomas Hodgkin, in his work *Theodoric the Goth*, prefers to translate *comes* by *henchman*.

The title *count* is actually derived from *comes* (or rather from the acc. *comitem*), and *comes* became in later times the term for a member of a knightly order. Some historians have seen in the personal devotion of the *comites* to their *princeps* a foreshadowing of the relation of vassal and lord, but Dr. Stubbs, following Waitz, entirely discards this theory (*Const. Hist.*, i. 251).

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bassies come specially to court the alliance of such men, and compliment them with gifts, and their mere reputation is enough in many cases virtually to decide a war.

XIV. Upon the field of battle the chief is bound in honour not to let himself be surpassed in valour, and his retainers are equally bound to rival the valour of their chief. Furthermore, for one of the retainers to come back alive from the field where his chief has fallen is from that day forward an infamy and a reproach during all the rest of his life. To defend him, to guard him, nay, to give to him the glory of their own feats of valour, is the perfection of their loyalty. The chiefs fight for victory; the body-guard for their chief.

If a State lies long rusting in peace and inactivity, off go most of the noble youths belonging to it, of their own accord, to join other nations where a war of some sort is going on; because peace is repulsive to the race, and the path to glory lies through danger, and also because a numerous band of retainers can only be maintained by war and rapine. For they claim from the liberality of their chief the coveted war-horse and the blood-stained spear of victory that they desire. As a substitute for pay they have repasts and banquets, coarse it may be, but abundant. Forays and plunderings supply the means of keeping a free table. These men can be far less easily prevailed upon to plough the soil and wait for the ingathering than to challenge the enemy and take wounds as their reward. In truth, they regard it as a dull and stupid thing to painfully accu-

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mulate by the sweat of the brow what might be won by a little blood.

XV. In the intervals of wars they spend much of their time in hunting and still more in doing nothing, without any sort of object except sleeping and eating, all the boldest and most warlike men having no employment whatsoever, while the care of the house and its belongings and the cultivation of the fields are abandoned to the women and old men and to the weaklings of the family. The warriors lie torpid. Amazing inconsistency! The same men love sloth and hate peace.

It is customary for the chiefs to receive a share of the herds and of the crops, given voluntarily and individually by the members of the community. They accept this as an honour, and their needs are also supplied thereby. They take especial pleasure in gifts from neighbouring tribes, which come not only from individuals, but from the general body as well, and take the form of choice steeds, massive arms, pendants, and necklets. They have, moreover, learnt from us by this time to accept money.

XVI. The fact is well known that the peoples of Germany do not dwell in cities, and will not even suffer their settlements to adjoin each other. They plant themselves separately and independently at some favourite spring or plain or grove. They do not lay out their villages like ours, where the houses join and are massed together, but every man makes his abode with a clear space round it, possibly as a precaution against fires, or perhaps from pure ignorance of the art

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of building. They never use quarry stone, or tiles, but employ rough timber for everything, with an entire disregard of beauty and elegance. They do, however, plaster parts of their houses with some care, using an earth so pure and bright that the effect resembles coloured designs done with paint. They likewise make a practice of digging cellars, which they cover with a heap of manure, as winter refuges and as storehouses for their crops, for two reasons: firstly, the frost does not penetrate into such places, and secondly, if any enemy happens to invade the country, he plunders everything above ground, but these hidden and buried stores escape, because he either does not know of their existence or has no time to hunt for them.

XVII. Their invariable dress is a cloak fastened with a brooch, or, failing that, a thorn. With nothing on except this they pass whole days indoors around the hearth where the fire is burning. It is a sign of great wealth to wear underclothing, which in Germany is not loose and flowing like that of the Sclavonians and Parthians, but fits close and follows the shape of the limbs. They also wear furs; but those nearest our frontier are beginning to leave them off, while those in the farther part of the country, not getting any clothing through the channels of trade, set great store by them. Some sorts of animals are held in greater esteem than others, and the furs obtained from them are dotted over with snippets from the pelts of strange beasts which are found in the outside ocean and the unknown sea.

The women dress like the men, only they frequently

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wear a vesture woven from flax, with a purple pattern on it; there are no sleeves to the upper part of this garment, the whole arm being left bare, and the upper part of the breast is likewise uncovered.

XVIII. For all that, the marriage bond is strict, and no feature in their mode of life is more creditable to them than this. Unlike the great majority of barbarians, they are content with one wife: very few of them have more than one, and these few exceptions are not due to wantonness; they are cases of men of high rank, to whom several matrimonial alliances have been offered from motives of policy. The wife does not bring a dowry to her husband; on the contrary, he offers one to her. This part of the affair is arranged by her parents and kinsmen, and they pass judgment on the wedding gifts, which are no toys collected to suit feminine frivolities or adorn a bride; instead of that, they consist of oxen, and a bridled horse, and shield and spear and sword. These are the presents that await her as a wife, and her own wedding present to her husband in return is a gift of arms. This is the strongest bond of union—this the mystery of marriage; these are their gods of wedded life. Lest the woman should think that masculine courage and the perils of war lie beyond her sphere, these tokens remind her upon the threshold of marriage that she comes as the man's partner in toils and dangers; and that in peace and in war she must expect to suffer and to dare the same. This is the signification of the oxen in the yoke, of the harnessed horse, of the offering of arms. Thus is she bound to live and thus to die. She

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receives what she is to hand on to her sons, inviolate and unprofaned ; what her sons' wives are to receive after her, and they, in their turn, to hand on to her children's children.

XIX. So they guard the chastity of their lives, with no shows to entice them nor orgies to excite their evil passions. To men and women alike such a thing as secret correspondence is unknown. Amongst all this immense population adultery is extremely rare : its penalty is instant, and is left to the husband ; he cuts off the hair of the unfaithful wife, strips her, turns her out of his house in the presence of the kinsmen, and scourges her through the whole village. For there is no pardon for the fallen woman ; not by her beauty, not by her youth, not by her wealth, will she succeed in finding a husband. For no one there makes a jest of vice, or says that seducing and being seduced is the style of the period.

Better still, to be sure, is the practice of those states in which none but maidens marry, and a woman becomes a wife with a wife's hopes and wishes once and once only. Thus it becomes as much a matter of course for her to have only one husband as to have only one body or one life, to the end that she may not look beyond him nor let her desires stray further, and that she may not so much cherish her husband as her status as a wife. To limit the number of the family or to put to death any of the later-born infants is held to be an abomination, and with the Germans good customs have more authority than good laws elsewhere.

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XX. In every household the naked, dirty children develop the mighty limbs and frames that we see with so much admiration. Every mother suckles her own babes, and does not give them over into the charge of handmaids and nurses. No one could distinguish the young master from the slave by any luxury in his bringing up. Out among the cattle, at home on the earthen floor, they live just alike until approaching manhood separates them, and the free-born youth proves his breeding by his valour.

The youths do not early indulge the passion of love, and hence come to manhood unexhausted. Nor are the maidens hurried into marriage : in their case the same maturity and the same full growth is required ; they enter upon marriage equally strong and vigorous, and the children inherit the robust frames of their parents.

A sister's children are considered to be related to her brothers as nearly as to their own father. Some tribes even esteem the former tie to be the closer and more sacred of the two, and they tend to require it in exacting hostages, as appealing more strongly to the feelings and giving a wider hold upon the family. Nevertheless, a man's own children are his heirs and successors, and there is no power of bequest. If he has no children the next in succession to the inheritance are his brothers, and his uncles both on the father's and the mother's side. The more relations and connections a man has, the more attention he commands in his old age ; there are no fortune-hunters there to pay court to him if he is childless.

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XXI. Along with the inheritance the heirs incur the obligation of taking up the family feuds as well as the family friendships. But the feuds are not irreconcilable or perpetual ; even homicide may be atoned for by the payment of a fixed number of cattle and sheep, and this compensation is divided amongst all the kin of the slain man ; the plan is greatly to the public advantage, for feuds where men have so much freedom are exceedingly dangerous.

No people in the world are more prodigal of hospitality, whether to friends or to strangers. They account it a sin to refuse the shelter of their roof to any human being. Every host provides the best entertainment that he can afford for his guest. When supplies fail, he becomes the guide, and finds elsewhere a welcome for his guest. They enter, uninvited, the next house ; no difference is made between them ; both are received with equal courtesy ; no one draws any distinction between friend and stranger as far as the rights of hospitality are concerned. On departing it is customary to present the guest with anything he may ask for, and there is the same absence of embarrassment in asking a boon in return. They like gifts, but the giver does not consider them as scored to his credit, or the receiver feel that he is being laid under an obligation. The relation of host and guest is one of courtesy.

XXII. They usually sleep until some time after sunrise, and immediately upon rising they bathe, in warm water as a rule, the weather there being wintry during the greater part of the year. After bathing they break-

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fast, each having his own separate seat and table. Then, taking their arms, they proceed to business, or, quite as often, to a drinking bout. There is no shame attached to drinking steadily all day and night long; naturally among drunken men quarrels frequently spring up, and these seldom stop at angry words, but in the majority of cases end in wounds and bloodshed. Nevertheless, it is generally at drinking bouts that they discuss the making up of feuds, the contracting of marriages, the admissions to the order of chiefs, and indeed the all-important question of peace or war; as though under no other circumstances were men more likely to be single-hearted or more easy to warm to great resolves. Not being a crafty or a cunning race they furthermore disclose their secret thoughts in the freedom of the feast, and so the minds of all lie open and discovered. On the morrow the matter is debated again, and the double process justifies itself. They discuss when disguise is impossible,¹ they decide when too sober to blunder.

XXIII. Their drink is a liquor made from barley or wheat, fermented so as somewhat to resemble wine. The frontier tribes do indeed buy wine. Their food is simple: wild fruits, fresh game, or curdled milk; they appease their hunger without luxurious accessories to tickle their senses. In quenching their thirst they

¹ Tacitus here adopts a highly rationalising explanation of an ancient practice common to both the Persians and the Germans. The line between intoxication and inspiration was not visible to them: drink was regarded as divine, and they discussed great questions under its influence in order to get the advantage of the assistance afforded by the god.

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are by no means so temperate ; let them but be given all the intoxicating liquor they choose to drink, and vice will make an easier conquest of them than the sword.

XXIV. They have but one form of public spectacle, and that is repeated without variation at every gathering. Naked young warriors, for whom the thing is a game, leap and bound about amidst bare swords and bristling spears. Practice makes them skilful at this exercise, and skill makes them graceful ; but it is not done professionally or for pay. Their most daring flings find their sole recompense in the delight of the spectators.

An amazing thing to us is that they practise gambling as the serious occupation of their sober hours ; and they hazard to win or lose so recklessly that, when all he has is gone, a player will stake his personal liberty on a last and decisive throw. If he loses he goes into voluntary slavery ; and, although he may be the younger and the stronger man, he suffers himself to be bound and to be sold. They exhibit herein a most perverse obstinacy, and call it paying a debt of honour. Successful gamblers get rid of the slaves held under this title by selling them to the merchants in order to escape their share of the shame.

XXV. Their other slaves they do not employ as we do by telling them off to special duties. Each has his tenement, and possesses an independent home of his own. His master exacts from him, as if he were a metayer,¹ a certain amount of wheat or of live stock or of cloth, and to this extent the slave has to obey

¹ *i.e.*, A peasant farmer who pays his rent in kind.

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his orders ; but the master's own wife and children do the actual work of the house. To flog a slave or to put him in chains and set him to penal labour is a rare thing ; to kill one outright is common enough, but it is done not as a strict enforcement of discipline, but in a burst of passion, as if he were a personal enemy, with the difference that there is no fine to pay for it. A man's freedmen are not much above his slaves in position. They rarely have any weight in the household, and never in the community, save and except among those peoples that are ruled by kings ; for there they rise not only above the freeborn but above the nobles. In all the other German states the inferior status of the class of freedmen is a proof that these states enjoy freedom.

XXVI. The exacting of interest simple or compound is quite unknown, and is therefore more guarded from abuse than if it had been forbidden.

The lands,¹ allotted in proportion to the number of cultivators, are entered upon by the communities in

¹ The meaning of the passage has been much disputed, as well as the different readings. A good light seems to be thrown upon it by the parallel passage in Cæsar, *De Bell. Gall.*, VI. xxii., which runs as follows : " They (the Germans) are not fond of agriculture, and the principal portion of their diet consists of milk, cheese, and flesh ; nor have any among them a fixed quantity of territory or private property in land, but the magistrates and the chiefs assign for the term of one year to the tribes and clanships forming communities (*gentibus cognationibusque hominum qui una coierint*) as much land as they think good, and in such place as they think good, and compel them to remove to another place the next year ".

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rotation, and these lands they thereupon distribute amongst themselves according to their estimate of individual claims. The great amount of open land at their disposal makes this task of distribution easy. The part ploughed they change annually, and there is ground over and to spare. For they take no advantage of the extent and the fertility of their soil by corresponding industry in planting orchards, and fencing off meadows, and irrigating gardens; corn is the only return they insist upon from the earth. Hence, too, they do not, like us, divide the year into four seasons: they recognise and have names for only three, winter, spring, and summer; they are ignorant alike of the name and of the blessings of autumn.

XXVII. They have no ostentation in their funerals. The only special observance is the custom of burning the bodies of famous men with particular kinds of wood. They do not heap robes and rich spices on the funeral pile; but a man's arms are burnt along with him, and sometimes his horse is burnt also. A barrow of earth is raised as a sepulchre; they will not hear of huge monuments laboriously piled up in their honour, considering them as but a load upon the dead. Weeping and wailing soon cease, but their sorrow and sadness they are slow to put by: women may mourn, men should remember.

Such is the information I have been able to collect concerning the origin and the customs of the Germans in general. I now propose to deal with the social and religious institutions of the separate tribes, explaining

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their differences, and noting what peoples transplanted themselves from Germany into Gaul.

XXVIII. A great authority, Julius Cæsar, of blessed memory, informs us that at an earlier period the Gauls had been far more powerful than in his time, and it is therefore quite credible that there were also migrations of Gauls into Germany. A river would offer but a trifling obstacle to prevent each tribe, as soon as it found itself strong enough, from moving into and seizing upon such territories as still lay open to the first comer and had not been already appropriated by aggressive kingdoms. Thus the Swiss established themselves between the Hartz Forest and the rivers Rhine and Main, and the Boii in the district beyond, both tribes being of Gallic origin. The name Boihemum (Bohemia) still survives as a landmark, recalling the past history of the district, although another folk now inhabit it.

Again, the Aravisci of Pannonia and the Osi, a nation of Germans,¹ are still identical in language, in institutions, and in customs. But in their case there is a doubt as to which of the two has been the parent stock and which has migrated, seeing that in early days, both being equally poor and equally free, one side of the Danube was as likely to attract them as the other.

The people of Trèves and of the Sambre, in Gaul, are even ambitious to establish their German ancestry, by way of showing that their noble lineage should save

¹ Yet in chapter xliii. Tacitus classes them as non-Germanic, thereby proving that he sometimes uses the word *Germani* in a geographical and not an ethnological sense.

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them from being confounded with the spiritless Gauls whom they resemble.

The actual bank of the Rhine is held by undoubted Germans, the people of Worms, Strasburg, and Spiers. Even the citizens of Cologne, who have won the honour of being made a Roman colony and prefer the name of Agrippinenses, after the colony's founder, the Empress Agrippina, are noways ashamed of their origin. They came over to our side of the Rhine many years ago, and were posted by us directly on its bank ; they had given proof of their loyalty, and they were to be our guards, not we theirs.

XXIX. The Batavians are the bravest race of all the Rhine country. They occupy an island in the river, and a small strip along its banks. Once they were a branch of the Chatti,¹ but in consequence of a domestic quarrel they removed to their present position to become a part of the Roman empire. They enjoy that honour still, and likewise a special privilege that marks their old alliance with us. No tribute brands them as inferiors ; no tax-farmer spoils their substance ; excused from all tax or contribution, they form a reserve of brave men, to be employed only on the field of battle, like a magazine of arms kept in store for use in war. The Mattiaci² also stand on the same dependent footing with regard to us. Extending away across the Rhine and beyond the old boundaries of the empire the greatness of the Roman people made itself felt and revered. Thus, in their homes in their country on their

¹ Hessians.

² A tribe of what is now Nassau.

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own side of the Rhine, they are with us heart and soul as truly as the emigrant Batavians, whom they otherwise resemble, save indeed that they are of an even more enterprising courage, the natural effect of their sterner clime and country.

I cannot class among Germanic peoples the present occupants of the Tithe-lands,¹ though they have established themselves on the German side of the Rhine and of the Danube. That territory used to be a debatable land, and all the greatest rovers and the needy adventurers among the Gauls seized upon it; subsequently, our boundary was advanced and our forts were pushed forward;² they are now an outlying corner of the empire and a part of a Roman province.

XXX. Beyond the Tithe-lands at the Great Hercynian³ forest, the country of the Chatti⁴ begins; theirs is not a flat marshy country like the rest of the states that stretch across the German plain; for the forest hills extend far before they gradually die away; the Chatti are the children of the Hercynian forest, and

¹ Part of Baden and Wurtemberg.

² Evidently under Domitian, says Mommsen, which is the reason why Tacitus, who hated him, abstained from mentioning the name of the emperor who made the annexation.

³ The Hercynian forest spread over the whole mountainous region of South Germany, from what is now the Black Forest to the Carpathians.

⁴ The name Chatti, or Catti, may have signified "Whelps," or possibly "Cats". Grimm also suggests that it may be connected with "hat," and refer to a head-dress that the Chatti wore (*Geschichte der Deutschen Sprache*, pp. 567, 577).

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with it they extend and with it they end. They are distinguished beyond their fellows by their singularly hardy frames, well-knit limbs, resolute eyes, and by a remarkable energy of spirit. For Germans, they have an unusual amount of method and skill: they choose leaders and obey them when chosen; they keep their ranks, discern the requirement of the moment, and can postpone an attack; they throw out pickets by day, and entrench their camps at night; they trust less to fortune, which is fickle, than to their own courage, which is proof; and, rarest of all,—a thing characteristic only of a discipline like the Roman,—they rely more on their general than on their army.

Their whole strength is in foot-soldiers, who, besides carrying their arms, are loaded with tools and supplies; other Germans come out for a single battle, the Chatti for a campaign; they seldom make mere raids or allow themselves to be drawn into a casual encounter: it is cavalry, to be sure, from which one expects a quick success or a quick retreat; speed goes with timidity, slowness is more allied to steadiness.

XXXI. There is one custom which is universal amongst the Chatti, but is only occasionally found elsewhere in Germany, and then simply as an exhibition of individual daring. Every youth on reaching manhood allows his hair and beard to grow, and vows that in this guise he will boldly court danger until he shall have slain an enemy. Then, in triumph, bestriding the bloody corpse, he bares his face, and proclaims that now at last he has justified his existence and proved

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himself worthy of his parents and of his country. The laggard and the dastard remain to the end unkempt.

Their boldest champions moreover pledge themselves to wear an iron ring like a shackle, an intolerable indignity for a German, till they win their release by the slaughter of a foe. With most of the Chatti this fashion finds favour; ay, and they grow grey with this badge, conspicuous alike to friend and foe. In every battle these shackle-wearers have the honour of leading the way. Their line is always in front, a truly startling sight; for their ferocious features scarcely relax even in times of peace. These men have no home, no land, no occupation; wherever they present themselves they find entertainment, squanderers of other men's goods and heedless of their own, until enfeebling age unfits them for this career of desperate valour.

XXXII. Next to the Chatti dwell the Usipii¹ and Tencteri along the Rhine, which by this time flows in a well-defined channel, and is now sufficiently large to be a boundary. The Tencteri enjoy the usual high reputation of Germans as warriors, and in particular are distinguished for the excellence of their cavalry, whose reputation is equal to that of the infantry of the Chatti. In this they do but follow the example set them by their forefathers. Horsemanship among them is the amusement of childhood and the passion of youth, while even the old persist in keeping it up. Horses

¹ For the adventures of a cohort of Usipii, who deserted in Scotland and were reduced to cannibalism in trying to find their way home, see cap. xxviii. of the *Agricola*.

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pass by inheritance as well as slaves and household goods and other property to which there are legal rights of succession; but primogeniture gives no preferential claim to them as it does to the rest; the son who gets the horses gets them as being a bold warrior and the better man.

XXXIII. Next to the Tencteri in former days used to dwell the Bructeri; but now I am told that the Chamavi and Agrivarii¹ have moved in there, the Bructeri having been defeated and utterly exterminated² by a coalition of the neighbouring nations; their destroyers may have been impelled to the act either by some resentment at their overbearingness, or by mere lust of plunder, or by some special favour extended towards us on the part of the gods, who deigned even to grant us the entertainment of witnessing the show. Our eyes were feasted with the glorious spectacle of over sixty thousand men being slaughtered without one single Roman sword having to leave its scabbard. So may it continue is my earnest prayer, yea, may it endure for ever among the nations, that if they do not love us they may at least hate each other; for now, when Rome is staggering to her doom, fortune can bestow on us no greater blessing than discord amongst our enemies.

XXXIV. The Agrivarii and Chamavi are bounded in the rear by the Dulgibini and Chasuarii and other tribes of whom we do not hear so much; in their front they have the Frisians, who are distinguished, according to the

¹ Saxon tribes from the Ems and Weser.

² Not utterly: they survived, and even grew to power again.

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relative strength of their divisions, into the Greater Frisians and the Lesser. Both divisions live beside the Rhine bank down to the ocean, and also around the margin of those vast lagoons along the coast on which Roman ships have sailed. Nay, our vessels have ventured far even on the Ocean of the North, and rumour brings a tale of Pillars of Hercules¹ that stand there unto this day; whether it be true that Hercules ever visited the spot, or that we by common consent attach his great name to imposing objects everywhere. There was no lack of daring in Drusus Germanicus, but Ocean barred his way;² the secrets of Ocean and of Hercules were not to be pried into. After him no one made the attempt; and it has been deemed more pious and reverent to believe than to know, when the doings of the gods are in question.

XXXV. Thus far we have learned to know Germany westward. It now makes a great sweep round on

¹ The Straits of Gibraltar were known as the "Pillars of Hercules" from time immemorial. Perhaps the narrow channels between Denmark and Scandinavia are here compared to the entrance to the Mediterranean. Or it may be that, taking Hercules to be "Thor," this refers to the "Pillars of Thor" at Upsala; or again, taking him to be "Irmin," it may even refer to the "Irminsul," though that stood far inland.

² This in all probability refers to the second campaign of Germanicus in A.D. 16, culminating in the victory of Idistaviso, when he set up a trophy and formally announced the conquest of all the country between the Rhine and the Elbe. But on his return the fleet of a thousand sail, in which he had reached the mouth of the Ems, was scattered by a tempest, and he himself was cast away alone on the desolate shore of the Chauci.—See Mommsen, *Provinces*, i. 54, and Bury, *Hist. Rom. Emp.* (early period), 173, 174.

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the north; and here at once we come on the tribe of the Chauci. They adjoin the Frisians, and possess a frontage to the sea; but from thence their territory stretches all along the flank of the nations I have enumerated until it finally curves into that of the Chatti. Large as it is, the Chauci not only hold this immense district, but fill it. The noblest of the Germans, they desire to preserve their high place by righteous dealing. Neither greedy nor violent, they live quietly by themselves, provoking no wars and making no raids and forays in quest of plunder. Of their strength and valour there can be no better proof than the fact that they do not resort to wrong in order to maintain their superiority. But every man of them has his arms ready, and, if occasion demands, they can put an army in the field and march with very many men and very many horses. Thus they succeed in combining peace with honour.

XXXVI. The Cherusci, the next neighbours to the Chauci and the Chatti, lived for a long period in the undisturbed enjoyment of an excessive and enervating repose. They lived in a fool's paradise; for to take your ease with the strong and unscrupulous at your door is a delusion. When men appeal to force, moderation and fairness are words that belong to the stronger side. Formerly the phrase in use was "The Cherusci, good honest souls"; now they are known as "Those dull fools of Cherusci,"¹ while to their conquerors, the

¹ It has been suggested that these phrases may have come from some of the camp songs which Tacitus is known to have collected.

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Chatti, success has brought an excellent reputation for wisdom.

The fall of the Cherusci involved that of the Fosi, whose boundaries marched with theirs: from having been their dependents in the days of prosperity, the Fosi have been promoted to a position of perfect equality in their ruin.

XXXVII. In this same outlying part of Germany, nearest to the sea, dwell the Cimbri. They are now but a mere remnant, yet their fame is world-wide. Traces of their past greatness are still to be seen, stretching in the shape of vast encampments along both banks of the Rhine, by measuring which we may verify even at the present day the enormous number of men employed and the historical truth of that swarming migration.¹

It was in the consulship of Caecilius Metellus and Papirius Carbo, six hundred and forty years after the founding of Rome, that we first heard the clash of the Cimbrian arms. From that date, reckoning down to the second² consulship of the Emperor Trajan, gives an interval of some two hundred and ten years. Our conquest of Germany is taking us a long time.

And during the process we have had many hard blows in return. Not the Samnites, nor the Carthaginians,

¹ The peninsula of Denmark is sometimes called the Cimbric Chersonese; but there is a dispute as to its having been the original seat of the Cimbri, who invaded the Roman empire in B.C. 113, when their warriors are said to have been a quarter of a million.

² A.D. 98, the year in which Tacitus published the *Germania*.

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nor the Spaniards, nor the Gauls, nor even the Parthians themselves, have oftener given us a lesson. The freemen of Germany are more spirited antagonists than all the subjects of King Arsaces. What has the East really scored against us save the slaughter of Crassus, and was not that defeat more than wiped out by the crushing victory of Ventidius over Pacorus? Contrast with this the success of the Germans: Carbo, and Cassius, and Scaurus Aurelius, and Servilius Caepio, and finally Marcus Manlius, all cut to pieces or captured, make altogether five consular armies destroyed in the days of the Republic, while even Augustus endured at their hands the loss of Varus and his three legions.¹ Moreover, the victories obtained over them by Caius Marius in Italy, by Julius Cæsar in Gaul, and by Drusus and Tiberius and Germanicus on their own ground, were all dearly bought.

Later came the farcical collapse of the monstrous threats of Caligula.² Then there followed a time of peace

¹ In the autumn of A.D. 9, a Roman army of some 20,000 men under Varus was beset and utterly destroyed by the Germans under Arminius, the Cheruscan, somewhere in the Teutoburger Wald. The three legions destroyed were the 17th, the 18th, and the 19th. Augustus felt the loss bitterly, and was often heard to cry out: "O Varus, Varus, give me back my legions". Arminius is known to the Germans as Herman, and his victory as the *Herman-schlacht*. Grimm quotes a verse of an old ballad, "Un Hermen sla dermen, sla pipen, sla trummen; de fürsten sind kummen mit all eren mannen; hebt Varus uphangen,"—but he is doubtful whether this verse can be genuine.

² He arranged a sham fight with some captives hidden for that purpose just across the border; reported his splendid victory in laurelled letters to the senate, and demanded a triumph,

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until the dissensions that culminated in our civil wars gave the Germans the chance of carrying by storm the winter quarters of our legions, and actually attempting to make themselves masters of Gaul; the attempt failed, but the triumphs celebrated over them in recent times have been in honour of imaginary victories.

XXXVIII. Let us turn now to the Suabians, who are not simply a single tribe like the Chatti or the Tenceteri, but occupy more than half of Germany, and have moreover their own distinct national names, though they all come under the general appellation of Suabians.¹

It is a common mark of them all to tie back the hair and bind it up in a knot. This practice distinguishes the freemen from the slaves among the Suabians, as well as the Suabians themselves from other Germans. It is indeed sometimes to be seen among other tribes who are either akin to the Suabians, or, as is not uncommon, imitate their style; but it is rare, and only during the period of youth. The Suabians keep it up until hoar old age; the hair is drawn back so as to stand erect off the forehead, and is generally bound in a single knot over the crown of the head. The chiefs have it dressed even more elaborately. They take pains about their appearance to this extent, but they

¹ Dr. Latham says: "Zeuss admits that between the Suevi of Suabia and the Alemanni no tangible difference can be found. . . . One half of what at present constitutes the High-German division is of Alemanno-Suevic origin," pp. liii., liv. The Suevi of Tacitus lay further to the east than the Suevi of Cæsar, and included populations which we should class as Slavonic,

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do so innocently enough, for these are no boy's love-locks ; it is for their enemies' eyes that they dress their hair, in order to make themselves look more tall and terrible as they rush to battle.

XXXIX. The Semnones talk of themselves as most ancient and the most noble of the Suabians. Their religion confirms the belief in their antiquity. They possess a wood¹

Which Fear has haunted since the days of old,
And rites ancestral make a holy place.

Hither at a stated time deputations from all the peoples of the common Suabian stock assemble, and here upon behalf of the State they offer a human sacrifice, and with this hideous formality they open their barbarous rites. There is another superstitious observance also connected with the wood. Every man who enters it must do so bound with a fetter, as a mark of humility and an avowal of the power of the divinity. If he happens to fall down, he may not lift himself up and rise to his feet, but must roll himself out along the ground. This wood is the centre of their whole superstition, being looked upon as the cradle of the race, and the god of it as the universal ruler to whom all other things are subject and obedient. The prosperity of the Semnones adds weight to this claim. The districts inhabited by them number one hundred, and their great size causes them to think that they are the principal people among the Suabians.

¹ ? The Sonnenwald.

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XI. The Lombards,¹ on the other hand, are famous because they are few. Hemmed in by numerous and powerful tribes, they survive, not by truckling to the strong, but by fighting and taking all risks.

Further on lie a number of tribes, Reudigni and Aviones, Angles and Warings, Eudoses, Suardones, and Nuithones, all with their ramparts of forest or of river. There is nothing that calls for notice among these tribes individually, except the worship of Nerthus or Mother Earth, which is common to them all, the goddess, according to their belief, mingling in the affairs of men, and visiting her various peoples in her chariot. On an island² out in the ocean there is an inviolate grove, where, covered by a robe, is a sacred car dedicated to her. One priest, and only one, may touch it. It is he who becomes aware when the goddess is present in her holy seat; he harnesses a yoke of heifers to the car, and follows in attendance with reverent mien. Then are the days of festival, and all places which she honours with her presence keep holiday. Men lay aside their arms and go not forth to war; all iron is locked away; then only are peace and quietness known, then only are they welcomed, until the priest restores her to her temple, when she has had enough of her converse with mortals. Then the car and the robes and (if we choose to believe them) the goddess herself are washed in a mystic pool. Slaves are the ministers of this office, and are forthwith drowned in the

¹ Probably not "Long-beards," but "Long-halberdiers".

² ? Heligoland.

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pool. Dark terror springs from this, and a sacred mystery enshrouds those rites which no man is permitted to look upon and live.

XLI. This branch of the Suabian stock stretches far out into the less-known parts of Germany. Nearer home (to follow the line of the Danube as I previously did that of the Rhine), I take first the community of the Hermunduri, who are our very good friends, and whom, therefore, alone amongst the Germans, we allow to trade with us not merely on the Danubian frontier but far within our borders and even in the splendid capital of the province of Rhaetia.¹ They pass the river at any point unchallenged. To the other nations we only give permission to view our camps and our material of war; to the Hermunduri we throw open our houses and farms, because they covet nothing.

In the country of the Hermunduri lie the sources of the Elbe, a river famous and well known in other days,² now merely a name.

Next to them come the Naristi, and then the Mark-men and the Quadi. The Mark-men stand the highest in reputation and power; they drove out their predecessors the Bohemians, and won the very land they now hold by the sword. The Naristi, too, and the Quadi are not degenerating. These peoples may be said to form the van of the German line as far as it extends along the Danube. Within living memory both the

¹ Augsburg.

² When Germanicus carried a conquering army to the Elbe and set up a trophy there.

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Mark-men and the Quadi had kings of native race, the noble line of Maroboduus and Tuder.¹ Now they submit to alien rulers whose despotic power rests upon the arm of Rome ; we sometimes aid them with arms, but more frequently with a subsidy of money, which they do not find less effective.

XLII. Close in the rear of the Mark-men and the Quadi lie four tribes. Two of these, the Marsigni and Buri, both in language and mode of life, closely resemble the Suabians. The other two tribes, the Gothini and the Osi, are demonstrably non-Germanic, seeing that the former speak a Gallic, and the latter a Pannonian tongue, and both submit to tribute. This is imposed upon them partly by the Sclavonians, and partly by the Quadi, on the ground that they are foreigners. This cowardly conduct on the part of the Gothini is the more to their shame as they have iron mines. All these peoples have but little low-lying land ; their dwelling-places are the forests, and the high hills, and the mountain chain ; for an unbroken mountain chain² divides and cleaves asunder the Suabian territory, and on the farther side of it dwell a great number of tribes. The various sub-divisions of the Lygians³ embrace the greater part of this district. I will content myself with naming the chief of them, as the Harii, the Helveconae, the Manimi, the Elisii, and the Nahanarvali. The

¹ Possibly Theodmar.—See Vigfusson, *Sigfred-Arminius*, p. 17, where moreover he maintains that Arminius, the Cheruscan, may have been the original of the legendary German hero Sigfred.

² The Carpathians.

³ Lecks or Poles.

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Nahanarvali are the proud possessors of a grove of immemorial sanctity. The presiding priest wears feminine attire, but the gods they speak of in connection with it are, to give them their Roman names, Castor and Pollux ; their attributes are similar, the name by which they are known is the Alci. Images of them there are none, nor is there any trace of their worship having had a foreign origin ; nevertheless, the people adore them as youthful heroes, and as brothers.

For the rest, the Harii are not only superior in strength to the other tribes just mentioned, but they have a natural craving for bloodshed which they contrive to gratify by artful wiles and selection of the fitting hour. They paint their shields black, they paint their bodies likewise ; they select a pitch-dark night for their attack, and by the very terror and gloom of their funereal host they scatter panic before them, not a man of their enemies being able to retain his presence of mind at the startling, I might almost say supernatural, apparition. It is ever the eye that first quails in battle.

Beyond the Lygians are the Goths, who are ruled by their kings rather more strictly than the rest of the German nations, a condition that we find prevails as we go north, but, so far, not to such an extent as to extinguish liberty. Beyond them, on the side of the ocean, live the Rugii and the Lemovii ; and all these tribes are distinguished by having round shields and short swords, and by being submissive to their kings.

XLIII. From this point are the states of the Swedes,

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who inhabit islands out in the ocean itself,¹ and, besides men and arms, possess strong fleets. The build of their vessels differs from ours in this: the stern is made like the bow, so that they can be beached either end foremost; nor are their vessels worked with sails like ours; nor yet have they their oars fixed to their sides in regular banks, but they are fitted with loose sweeps, such as may be seen on some river craft, which can be shifted about as required from one side to the other.

Among the Swedes, moreover, wealth and power are held in honour; and therefore one man bears sway; so now no longer do we find any form of independence, and the claim to obedience becomes absolute. Here, too, there is no general right of carrying arms as in the other parts of Germany; the weapons are locked up in the charge of a keeper, and the keeper is a slave; because the ocean acts as a rampart against any sudden incursion of the enemy, and, furthermore, an idle body of men with arms in their hand speedily tends to mutiny. It is unquestionably to the interest of the monarch not to commit the charge of the arms to either a noble or a freeman, nor even to a freedman.

XLIV. Beyond the country of the Swedes there is another sea, sluggish and well-nigh motionless, which is believed to be the boundary and limit of the world, because here the last glow of the setting sun shines on into the following dawn, so as to dim the brightness of the stars. Nay, further, we are induced to credit the

¹ It will be remembered that Scandinavia was supposed to be an archipelago.

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fact that the noise of the sun rising out of the waters is heard, and that his attendant deities are seen and his crown of rays.¹ Thus far, and no further (and in this report speaks truly), does nature go.

So now we turn back; and on the eastern shore of the Baltic Sea we find the tribes of the East-men dwelling along the coast;² in their religion and in their fashions they are Suabians, but their language is more like the British. They worship the mother of the gods³ and, as a religious symbol, they carry images of wild boars. The symbol serves instead of arms and every kind of assistance, and gives the devotee of the goddess a sense of safety even in the midst of foes. Iron is scarce among them, and the use of the war-club is common. They cultivate grain, and also fruit trees, with more patience than is usually exhibited by the indolent Germans; and, besides this, they even search the sea, for they alone among mankind gather amber, or "glesum" as they call it, in the shallows and along the shore. And yet, like true barbarians, they have never asked nor ever found out what is its nature or how it is produced. Long it lay unheeded with the other flotsam and jetsam of the waves until the day when our luxury made it famous. They make no use of it themselves; they pick it up rough; the shapeless lump finds its way to us, and they marvel at the price they get for it. Observation shows that it

¹ Probably the Aurora Borealis, which is often accompanied by a strange rustling sound that might be taken for the hissing of the sun's orb in the water.

² Of Courland.

³ Freya.

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must be the gum of a tree, because within its transparent substance there are often visible various creatures, creeping or flying things, which, having been entangled in the gum as it flows, are imprisoned in its mass as it afterwards hardens. Therefore, I venture to think that in the isles and lands of the west there must be woods and groves of very luxuriant growth, like those of the far-distant East, dropping frankincense and balsams, and that the burning rays of their near neighbour the sun melt and distil these humours until they drop into the sea below, and that then the force of storms washes them up on the shores that lie opposite.

If we test the nature of amber by applying fire to it, it blazes up like a torch and burns with a rich and strongly-scented flame, and presently melts into a viscid mass like so much pitch or resin.

The tribes of the Sitones¹ are conterminous with those of the Swedes, whom they resemble in all respects with only one point of difference : they are ruled by a woman. So far, they fall not merely below the position of freemen, but even beneath that of slaves.

Here Suabia comes to an end.

XLV. I am in some doubt as to whether I ought to class the nations of the Peucini, the Wends, and the Finns, as Germans or as Sclavonians, although the Peucini, otherwise known as the Bastarnians, in their language and their degree of civilisation, and in their settlements and houses, are undoubtedly German. Dirt and indolence are universal among them, and by the in-

¹ ? Norwegians.

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termarriages of chiefs¹ they are acquiring something of the unseemliness of the Slavonians.

The Wends² have borrowed many of the Slavonian habits, and go roaming about in search of plunder through all the wooded and rocky highlands that separate the Peucini and the Finns. Nevertheless, they are on the whole to be classed among the Germans because they have fixed habitations, and carry shields, and are proud of being footmen and of their powers of running, in all which matters they are unlike the Slavonians, who live on horseback and whose home is in a waggon.

The Finns are utter savages, and squalidly poor; they have no arms, no horses, no homes; they eat wild herbs, go clad in skins, and lie on the bare earth; their only hope of getting better fare is in their arrows, which for lack of iron they tip with points of bone. The women seek their sustenance by the chase, exactly like the men; they accompany them wherever they go, and claim their share of the prey. Their infants have no other refuge against wild beasts and storms than a booth of wattled boughs; here the old folk crouch and hither the young folk return after hunting. Yet they esteem their life a happier one than if it were spent in groaning over the clods and labouring to build houses, dreading ever to lose what has already been gained, or hoping to gain what another must lose.

¹ Reading "procerum connubiis mixtis".

² Wends has become a general term amongst the Germans for Slavonians.

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Careless of what man or god may do, they have reached the most difficult of all positions to attain, in that they have nothing more to pray for.

Farther than this everything dissolves into fable, stories of Hellusii and Oxionae,¹ beings with men's heads and faces and the bodies and limbs of beasts. Of these things I know nothing, and choose therefore to leave them alone.

¹ Lapps, possibly.

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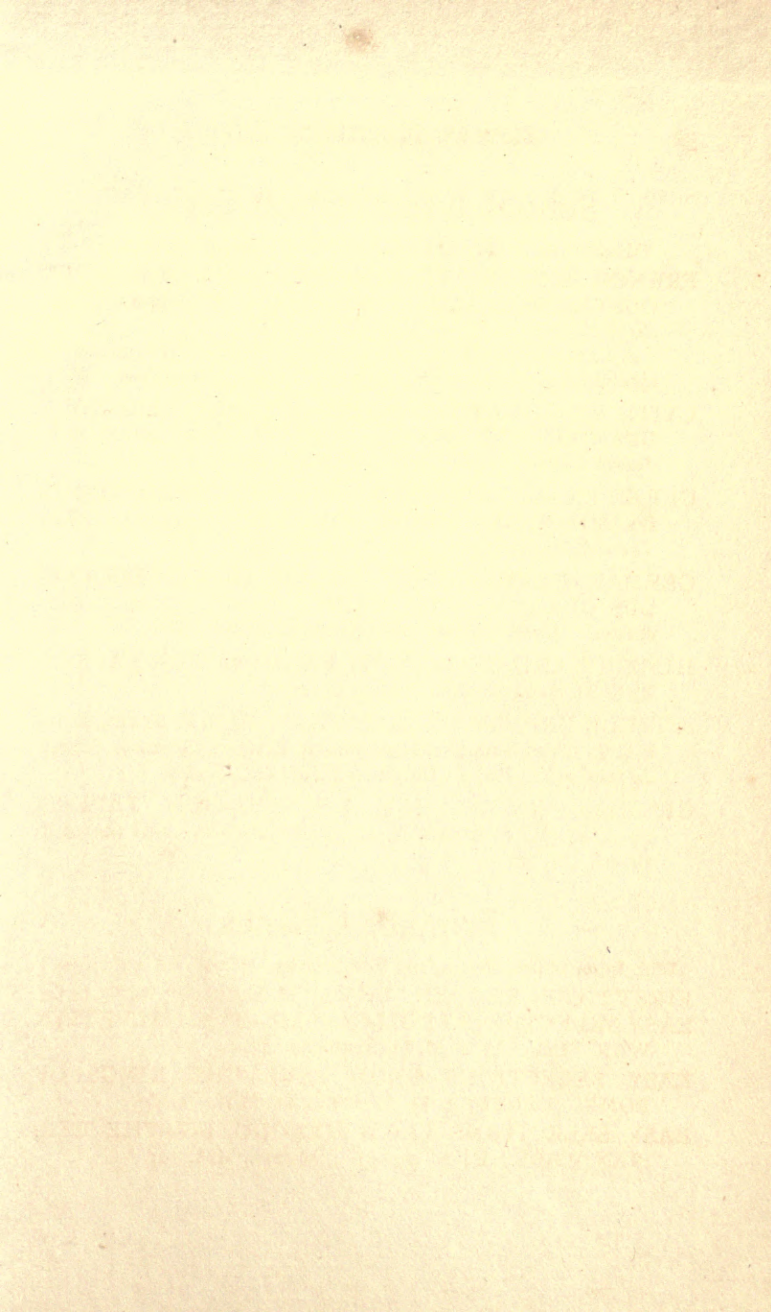
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