

176 to 199

Commodus Emperor 180-192

LIBER BRITANNICUS.

Ab incarnatione Domini clvi. Marcus Antonus with his brother, i. e. Lucius Aurelius Commodus, devastated the island of Britain.

180 Theophilus of Antioch

CHAP. XXXII.--HOW THE HUMAN RACE WAS DISPERSED.

Hence, therefore, may the loves of learning and of antiquity understand the history, and see that those things are recent which are told by us apart from the holy prophets. For though at first there were few men in the land of Arabia and Chaldaea, yet, after their languages were divided, they gradually began to multiply and spread over all the earth; and some of them tended towards the east to dwell there, and others to the parts of the great continent, and others northwards, so as to extend as far as **Britain**, in the Arctic regions. And others went to the land of Canaan, which is called Judaea, and Phoenicia, and the region of Ethiopia, and Egypt, and Libya, and the country called torrid, and the parts stretching towards the west; and the rest went to places by the sea, and Pamphylia, and Asia, and Greece, and Macedonia, and, besides, to Italy, and the whole country called Gaul, and Spain, and Germany; so that now the whole world is thus filled with inhabitants.

184 Cassius Dio Cocceianus

[Commodus displayed in Rome itself many marks of wealth and very many more, even, of love for the beautiful. Indeed, he performed one or two acts of public benefit. Manilius, a kinsman of Cassius, who had been secretary of his Latin letters and had possessed the greatest influence with him, was caught after a flight, but the emperor would not listen to a word of his, though he promised to lay a great deal of information, and burned all the conspirator's documents without reading them. He had also some wars with the barbarians beyond Dacia, in which Albinus and Niger, who later fought the emperor Severus, won fame, but the greatest conflict was the one in **Britain**. When the tribes in the island, passing beyond the wall that separated them from the Roman legions, proceeded to commit many outrages and cut down a general, together with the soldiers that he had, Commodus was seized with fear and sent Marcellus Ulpianus against them. This man, who was temperate and frugal and always followed strict military rules in regard to food and all other details when he was at war, became in course of time haughty and arrogant. He was conspicuously incorruptible in the matter of bribes, but was not of a pleasant or kindly nature. He showed himself more wakeful than any other general, and, as he desired his associates also to be alert, he wrote orders on twelve tablets (such as are made out of linden wood) [almost] every evening, and bade a man carry them to various persons at various hours, that they, believing the general to be always awake, might not themselves take their fill of sleep. Nature had made him able in the first place to go without sleep and he had developed this faculty a great deal more by abstinence from food. [Of scarcely anything did he eat his fill and] in order to avoid satisfying his hunger even with bread he sent to Rome for the loaves: [this was not because he could not eat what was prepared in that region, but] it was done with the purpose that the age of the article might prevent him eating ever so little more than what was absolutely necessary. [His gums, which were sore, were easily made to bleed by the

dryness of the bread. And he made it his practice to affect sleeplessness even more than was the case, that he might have a reputation for being always awake.] This was the kind of man Marcellus was, who inflicted great damage upon the barbarians in Britain. Later he narrowly escaped being destroyed by Commodus on account of his peculiar excellence, but was, nevertheless, released.

Perennis, commander of the Pretorians after Paternus, met destruction on account of a rebellion of the soldiers. For, since Commodus had devoted himself to chariot-racing and licentiousness and paid scarcely any attention to matters pertaining to the empire, Perennis was compelled to manage not only military affairs, but everything else, and to preside over the government. The soldiers, accordingly, when anything did not go to suit them, laid the blame upon Perennis and cherished anger against him.

The soldiers in **Britain** chose Priscus, a lieutenant, emperor. But he deprecated their action, saying "I am as little suited for emperor as you are for soldiers."

The lieutenants in **Britain** had been rebuked for their turbulence (indeed, they had not become quiet until Pertinax put a stop to their discord), and now they chose of their number fifteen hundred javelin-slingers, whom they sent into Italy. They had approached Rome without meeting any hindrance, when Commodus met them and enquired: "Why is this, fellow-soldiers? What does your presence signify?" Their answer was: "We are here because Perennis is plotting against you, and intends to make his son emperor." Commodus believed them, especially since Cleander dwelt at length upon the point. (The latter was often prevented by Perennis from doing all that he desired, and consequently entertained a bitter hatred for him). Therefore he delivered the prefect to the soldiers of whom he was commander, and did not venture to despise fifteen hundred men, though he had many times that number of Pretorians. So Perennis was abused and struck down, and his wife and sister and two sons were also killed.

[Public opinion regarding Pertinax was so different from that in the case of Commodus that those who heard what had happened, suspecting that this story had been spread by Commodus to test them, in several instances (governors of provinces being particularly involved) imprisoned the men who brought the news. It was not that they did not wish it to be true, but they were more afraid of seeming to have helped destroy Commodus than of not attaching themselves to Pertinax. For under the latter one who even committed an error of this kind might still breathe freely, but under the former not even a faultless person could feel safe.]

While he was still in **Britain**, after that great revolt which he quelled, and was being accorded praise on all sides, a horse named Pertinax won a race at Rome. It belonged to the Greens and was picked as a winner by Commodus. So, when its partisans raised a great shout, proclaiming "It is Pertinax," the others, their opponents, in disgust at Commodus likewise prayed (speaking with reference to the man, not the horse): "Would that it might be so!" Later, when this same horse by reason of age had given up racing and was in the country, it was sent for by Commodus, who brought it into the hippodrome, gilded its hoofs, and adorned its back with a gilded skin. And people suddenly seeing it cried out again: "It is Pertinax!" The very expression was itself ominous, since it occurred at the last horse-race that year, and immediately after it the sovereignty passed to Pertinax. A similar import was attached to the club, for Commodus when about to fight on the final day had given it to Pertinax.

185 Historia Augusta The Life of Commodus

At this time Claudius also, whose son had previously come into Commodus' presence with a dagger, was slain, ostensibly by bandits, and many other senators were put to death, and also certain women of wealth. And not a few provincials, for the sake of their riches, were charged with crimes by Perennis and then plundered or

even slain; some, against whom there was not even the imputation of a fictitious crime, were accused of having been unwilling to name Commodus as their heir.

About this time the victories in Sarmatia won by other generals were attributed by Perennis to his own son. Yet in spite of his great power, suddenly, because in the war in **Britain** he had dismissed certain senators and had put men of the equestrian order in command of the soldiers, this same Perennis was declared an enemy to the state, when the matter was reported by the legates in command of the army, and was thereupon delivered up to the soldiers to be torn to pieces. In his place of power Commodus put Cleander, one of his chamberlains.

(Part removed)

Meanwhile, because he had appointed to the consulship a former lover of his mother's, the senate mockingly gave Commodus the name Pius; and after he had executed Perennis, he was given the name Felix, as though, amid the multitudinous executions of many citizens, he were a second Sulla. And this same Commodus, who was called Pius, and who was called Felix, is said to have feigned a plot against his own life, in order that he might have an excuse for putting many to death. Yet as a matter of fact, there were no rebellions save that of Alexander, who soon killed himself and his near of kin, and that of Commodus' sister Lucilla. He was called **Britannicus** by those who desired to flatter him, whereas the **Britons** even wished to set up an emperor against him. He was called also the Roman Hercules, on the ground that he had killed wild beasts in the amphitheatre the Lanuvium; and, indeed, it was his custom to kill wild beasts on his own estate. He had, besides, an insane desire that the city of Rome should be renamed Colonia Commodiana. This mad idea, it is said, was inspired in him while listening to the blandishments of Marcia.

(Part removed)

The Moors and the Dacians were conquered during his reign, and peace was established in the Pannonias, but all by his legates, since such was the manner of his life. The provincials in **Britain**, Dacia, and Germany attempted to cast off his yoke, but all these attempts were put down by his generals. Commodus himself was so lazy and careless in signing documents that he answered many petitions with the same formula, while in very many letters he merely wrote the word "Farewell". All official business was carried on by others, who, it is said, even used condemnations to swell their purses. And because he was so careless, moreover, a great famine arose in Rome, not because there was any real shortage of crops, but merely because those who then ruled the state were plundering the food supply.

c185 Historia Augusta The Life of Pertinax

After Perennis had been put to death, Commodus made amends to Pertinax, and in a letter asked him to set out for **Britain**. After his arrival there he kept the soldiers from any revolt, for they wished to set up some other man as emperor, preferably Pertinax himself. And now Pertinax acquired an evil character for enviousness, for he was said to have laid before Commodus the charge that Antistius Burrus and Arrius Antoninus were aspiring to the throne. And certainly he did suppress a mutiny against himself in **Britain**, but in so doing he came into great danger; for in a mutiny of a legion he was almost killed, and indeed was left among the slain. This mutiny Pertinax punished very severely. Later on, however, he petitioned to be excused from his governorship, saying that the legions were hostile to him because he had been strict in his discipline. After he had been relieved of his post, he was put in charge of the grants to the poor. Next he was made proconsul of Africa. During this proconsulship, it is said, he suppressed many rebellions by the aid of prophetic verses which issued from the temple of Caelestis. Next he was made prefect of the city, and in this office, as successor to Fuscianus, a very stern man, Pertinax was exceedingly

gentle and considerate, and he proved very pleasing to Commodus himself, for he was .when Pertinax was made consul for the second time. And while in this position, Pertinax did not avoid complicity in the murder of Commodus, when a share in this plot was offered him by the other conspirators.

After Commodus was slain, Laetus, the prefect of the guard, and Eclectus, the chamberlain, came to Pertinax and reassured him, and then led him to the camp.

186. Annals of the Four Masters

The twenty first year of Art, son of Conn of the Hundred Battles, in the sovereignty of Ireland.

The battle of Ceanntfeabhra by the sons of Oilioll Olum and the three Cairbres, i.e. Cairbre Musc, Cairbre Riada, and Cairbre Bascainn, against Dadera, the Druid; Neimhidh, son of Sroibhcinn; and the south of Ireland; where fell Neimhidh, son of Sroibhcinn, King of the Ernai of Munster; and Dadera, the Druid of the Dairinni. Dadera was slain by Eoghain, son of Oilioll; Neimhidh, son of Sroibhcinn, by Cairbre Rioghfhoda, son of Conaire, in revenge of his own father, i.e. Conaire. Cairbre Musc wounded Lughaidh, i.e. Mac Con, in the thigh, so that he was ever afterwards lame. The cause of this cognomen was: Lughaidh was agreeable to a greyhound that was suckling her whelps in the house of his foster father, and he was used to suckle the teat of the aforesaid greyhound, so that Mac Con son of the greyhound adhered to him as a soubriquet.

St Victor 1 Pope 189-199

189 ANGLO-SAXON CHRONICLE. This year Severus came to the empire; and went with his army into Britain, and subdued in battle a great part of the island. Then wrought he a mound of turf, with a broad wall thereupon, from sea to sea, for the defence of the Britons. He reigned seventeen years; and then ended his days at York. His son Bassianus succeeded him in the empire. His other son, who perished, was called Geta. This year Eleutherius undertook the bishopric of Rome, and held it honourably for fifteen winters. To him Lucius, king of the Britons, sent letters, and prayed that he might be made a Christian. He obtained his request; and they continued afterwards in the right belief until the reign of Diocletian.

(Ed see also this work at year 167)

BEDE

CHAP. V. How the Emperor Severus divided from the rest by a rampart that part of Britain which had been recovered.

In the year of our Lord 189, Severus, an African, born at Leptis, in the province of Tripolis, became emperor. He was the seventeenth from Augustus; and reigned seventeen years. Being naturally of a harsh disposition, and engaged in many wars, he governed the state vigorously, but with much trouble. Having been victorious in all the grievous civil wars which happened in his time, he was drawn into Britain by the revolt of almost all the confederated tribes; and, after many great and severe battles, he thought fit to divide that part of the island, which he had recovered, from the other unconquered nations, not with a wall, as some imagine, but with a rampart. For a wall is made of stones, but a rampart, with which camps are fortified to repel the assaults of enemies, is made of sods, cut out of the earth, and raised high above the ground, like a wall, having in front of it the trench whence the sods were taken, with strong stakes of wood fixed above it. Thus Severus drew a great trench and strong rampart, fortified with several towers, from sea to sea. And there, at York, he fell sick afterwards and died, leaving two sons, Bassianus and Geta; of whom Geta died,

adjudged an enemy of the State; but Bassianus, having taken the surname of Antonius, obtained the empire.

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Still, the effect of Commodus upon the Romans was worse than that of all pestilences and all villanies. One feature was that whatever honors they were wont to vote to his father out of pure regard they were compelled by fear and by strict injunction to assign also to the son. He gave orders that Rome itself be called *Commodiana*, the legions "*Commodian*," and the day on which this measure was voted "*Commodiana*." Upon himself he bestowed, in addition to very many other titles, that of *Hercules*. Rome he termed "*the Immortal*," "*the Fortunate*," "*the Universal Colony of the Earth*" (for he wished it to seem a settlement of his own). In his honor a gold statue was erected of a thousand pounds' weight, together with a bull and a cow. Finally, all the months were likewise called after him, so that they were enumerated as follows: *Amazonian*, *Invincible*, *Fortunate*, *Pious*, *Lucius*, *Aelius*, *Aurelius*, *Commodus*, *August*, *Herculean*, *Roman*, *Transcendent*. For he had assumed these different names at different times. "*Amazonian*" and "*Transcendent*," however, he applied exclusively to himself, to indicate that in absolutely every respect he unapproachably surpassed all mankind. So extravagantly did the wretch rave. And to the senate he would send a despatch couched in these terms: "*Caesar Imperator*, *Lucius Aelius Aurelius Commodus*, *Augustus*, *Pius*, *Beatus*, *Sarmaticus*, *Germanicus*, *Maximus*, ***Britannicus***, *Peacemaker of the World*, *Invincible*, *Roman Hercules*, *High Priest*, *Holder of Tribunician Authority for the eighteenth term*, *Imperator for the eighth time*, *Consul for the seventh time*, *Father of the Fatherland*, *to consuls*, *praetors*, *tribunes and the Commodian Fortunate Senate*, *Greeting*." Great numbers of statues were erected displaying him in the garb of *Hercules*. And it was voted that his age should be called the "*Golden Age*" and that entries to correspond with this should in every case be made in the records.

Pertinax Emperor 192-193

192AD Historia Augusta The Life of Clodius Albinus

We do not believe it wholly irrelevant to recount the causes which won Clodius Albinus the love of the senate. After Commodus had bestowed upon him the name of *Caesar*, and while by the Emperor's orders he was in command of the troops in ***Britain***, false tidings were brought that Commodus had been slain. Then he came forth before the soldiers and delivered the following speech: "If the senate of the Roman people but had its ancient power, and if this vast empire were not under the sway of a single man, it would never have come to pass that the destiny of the state should fall into the hands of a *Vitellius*, a *Nero*, or a *Domitian*. Under the rule of consuls there were those mighty families of ours, the *Ceionii*, the *Albini*, and the *Postumii*, of whom your fathers heard from their grandsires and from whom they learned many things. It was surely the senate, moreover, that added *Africa* to the dominions of *Rome*, the senate that conquered *Gaul* and the *Spains*, the senate that gave laws to the tribes of the *East*, and the senate that dared to attack the *Parthians* — and would have conquered them, too, had not the fortune of *Rome* just then assigned our army so covetous a leader. ***Britain***, to be sure, was conquered by *Caesar*, but he was still a senator and not yet dictator. Now as for *Commodus* himself, how much better an emperor would he had been had he stood in awe of the senate! Even as late as the time of *Nero*, the power of the senate prevailed, and the senators did not fear to deliver speeches against a base and filthy prince and condemn him, even though he still retained both power of life and death and the empire too. Wherefore, my

comrades, the name of Caesar, which Commodus now confers on me, I do not wish to accept. May the gods grant that no one else may wish it! Let the senate have rule, let the senate distribute the provinces and appoint us consuls. But why do I say the senate? It is you, I mean, and your fathers; you yourselves shall be the senators."

This harangue was reported at Rome while Commodus was still alive and roused him greatly against Albinus. He forthwith despatched one of his aides, Junius Severus, to replace him. The senate, however, was so much pleased that it honoured Albinus, though absent, with marvellous acclamations, both while Commodus still lived and, later, after his murder. Some even counselled Pertinax to ally himself with Albinus, and as for Julianus, Albinus' influence had the greatest weight in his plan for murdering Pertinax. In proof, moreover, that my statements are true, I will quote a letter written by Commodus to the prefects of the guard, in which he makes clear his intention of killing Albinus; "Aurelius Commodus to his prefects, greeting. You have heard, I believe, in the first place, the false statement that I had been slain by a conspiracy of my household; in the second, that Clodius Albinus has delivered an harangue to the senate at great length — and not for nothing, it seems to me. For whoever asserts that the state ought not to be under the sway of one man, and that the senate should rule the empire, he is merely seeking to get the empire himself through the senate. Keep a diligent watch then; for now you know the man whom you and the troops and the people must avoid."

When Pertinax found this letter he desired to make it public in order to stir up hatred against Albinus; and for this reason Albinus advised Julianus to bring about Pertinax's death.

Didius Julianus Emperor 193

193 Historia Augusta The Life of Didius Julianus

The populace, however, kept inveighing with the utmost violence against the soldiers, who had slain Pertinax, so they said, for money. And so, in order to win favour with the people, Julianus restored many measures which Commodus had enacted and Pertinax had repealed. Concerning Pertinax himself he took no steps either good or evil, a fact which to very many seemed a serious matter. It is generally agreed, however, that it was his fear of the soldiers that caused him to keep silent about the honours due Pertinax. As a matter of fact, however, Julianus had no fear of either the **British** or the Illyrian army; but being chiefly afraid of the Syrian army, he despatched a centurion of the first rank with orders to murder Niger. Consequently Pescennius Niger in Syria and Septimius Severus in Illyricum, together with the armies which they commanded, revolted from Julianus.

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This was what went on in Rome. Now I shall speak about what happened outside and the various revolutions. There were three men at this time who were commanding each three legions of citizens and many foreigners besides, and they all asserted their claims,—Severus, Niger, and Albinus. The last-named governed **Britain**, Severus Pannonia, and Niger Syria. These were the three persons darkly indicated by the three stars that suddenly came to view surrounding the sun, when Julianus in our presence was offering the Sacrifices of Entrance in front of the senate-house. These heavenly bodies were so very brilliant that the soldiers kept continually looking at them and pointing them out to one another, declaring moreover that some dreadful fate would befall the usurper. As for us, however much we hoped and prayed that it might so prove, yet the fear of the moment would not permit us to gaze at them, save by occasional glances. Such are the facts that I know about the matter.

Septimus Severus Emperor 193-211
(Presennius Niger Emperor 193-94)
(Clodius Albinus Emperor 193-197)

193 LIBER BRITANNICUS. Severus *was* the third king *that* came to Britain; *and* it was by him was made the Saxon ditch against the barbarians, i. e. the Cruithnians, 2130 paces long, and the name of that ditch among the Britons was GUAUL. And he commanded another ditch to be made against the Gaels and the Cruithnians, i. e. Cladh na muice, and he was afterwards killed by the Britons, with his chieftains.

Ab incarnatione Domini clxxxix. Severus Afer Tripolitanus came into the island of Britain. Leips was the name of the city in Africa where he was born; he was the seventeenth king after Jul: t was for him was made the Saxon ditch; he died at Caer Abrog. He had two sons, Basianus and Geta. It was he (*the former*) that succeeded to the kingdom by the name of Anton.

NENNIUS

Severus was the third emperor who passed the sea to Britain, where, to protect the provinces recovered from barbaric incursions, he ordered a wall and a rampart to be made between the Britons, the Scots, and the Picts, extending across the island from sea to sea, in length one hundred and thirty-three miles: and it is called in the British language Gwal. Moreover, he ordered it to be made between the Britons, and the Picts and Scots; for the Scots from the west, and the Picts from the north, unanimously made war against the Britons; but were at peace among themselves. Not long after Severus dies in Britain.

(One MS. here adds, "The above-mentioned Severus constructed it of rude workmanship in length 132 miles; i.e. from Penguaul, which village is called in Scottish Cenail, in English Peneltun, to the mouth of the river Cluth and Cairpentaloch, where this wall terminates; but it was of no avail. The emperor Carausius afterwards rebuilt it, and fortified it with seven castles between the two mouths: he built also a round house of polished stones on the banks of the river Carun (Carron): he likewise erected a triumphal arch, on which he inscribed his own name in memory of his victory.")

HERODIAN OF ANTIOCH

SEVERUS made preparations for the war with great care. A thorough and cautious man, he had his doubts about the army in **Britain**, which was large and very powerful, manned by excellent soldiers. **Britain** was then under the command of Albinus, a man of the senatorial order who had been reared in luxury on money inherited from his ancestors. Severus, wishing to gain the friendship of this man, deceived him by a trick; he feared that Albinus, having strong stimuli to encourage him to seize the throne, and made bold by his ancestry and wealth, a powerful army, and his popularity among the Romans, might seize the empire and occupy Rome while Severus was busy with affairs in the East. And so he deceived the man by pretending to do him honor. Albinus, conceited and somewhat naive in his judgment, really believed the many things which Severus swore on oath in his letters. Severus appointed him Caesar, to anticipate his hope and desire for a share of the imperial power. He wrote Albinus the friendliest of letters, deceitful, of course, in which he begged the man to devote his attention to the welfare of the empire. He wrote him that the situation required a man of the nobility in the prime of life; he himself was old and afflicted with gout, and his sons were still very young. Believing Severus, Albinus

gratefully accepted the honor, delighted to be getting what he wanted without fighting and without risk. After making these same proposals to the senate, to increase their faith in him, Severus ordered coins to be struck bearing his likeness, and he increased the favor he had won by erecting statues of himself and assuming the rest of the imperial honors. When he had, by his cunning, arranged matters securely with respect to Albinus and consequently had nothing to fear from **Britain**, the emperor, accompanied by the entire army of Illyricum, set out against Niger, convinced that he had arranged to his own advantage everything affecting his reign.

(Herodian now describes the war in the east)

AFTER settling Eastern affairs in what he thought was the most advantageous way, Severus wished to take the field immediately against the Atreian king and invade Parthia also, charging both of these kings with friendship for Niger. He put off these projects until later, however, wishing to seize the Roman empire first and make it secure for himself and his sons. Even though Niger had been eliminated, Severus considered Albinus still a menace. He now heard that this man, delighted with the title of Caesar, was acting more and more like an emperor; he was informed also that a great many men, particularly the most distinguished senators, were writing public and private letters to the Caesar, trying to persuade him to come to Rome while Severus was absent and occupied elsewhere. The fact is that the aristocracy much preferred Albinus as emperor because he belonged to a noble family and was reputed to have a mild nature. When he learned of these developments, Severus declined to initiate open hostility against Albinus and start a war with him since he lacked a reasonable excuse for such action. He thought it best to try to eliminate his Caesar by tricking him without warning. He therefore sent his most trusted imperial messengers to **Britain** with secret orders to hand Albinus the dispatches openly if they were admitted to his presence. They were then to ask him to meet them privately to receive secret instructions; when Albinus agreed to this and his bodyguards were not present, the messengers were to attack him without warning and cut him down. . Severus provided them with deadly poisons so that, if the opportunity presented itself, they might persuade one of his cooks or cupbearers to administer a dose in secret. . Albinus' advisers, however, were suspicious of the emperor's messengers, 186 and warned him to be on his guard against this cunning schemer. Severus' actions against Niger's governors had seriously damaged his reputation; after forcing them through their children to betray Niger, as has been related above, and after making good use of their assistance, he put them to death with their children after he had got from them everything he wanted. His actions on this occasion clearly revealed Severus' despicable character. The efforts of Severus now led Albinus to increase the size of his bodyguard. None of the emperor's men was admitted into the Caesar's presence until he had first been stripped and searched for concealed weapons. Now when the messengers from Severus arrived, they handed over the dispatches to Albinus openly and asked him to retire with them to receive secret orders. But Albinus, suspicious, had the men seized, and, putting them to torture privately, discovered the entire plot; after killing the messengers, he prepared to resist his revealed enemy.

WHEN he was informed of what had occurred, Severus took effective and energetic action; by nature quick to anger, he no longer concealed his hostility toward Albinus. Calling together the entire army, he spoke to them as follows:

"Let no one charge us with capricious inconsistency in our actions against Albinus, and let no one think that I am disloyal to this alleged friend or lacking in feeling toward him. We gave this man everything, even a share of the established empire, a thing which a man would hardly do for his own brother. Indeed, I bestowed upon him that which you entrusted to me alone. Surely Albinus has shown little gratitude for the many benefits I have lavished upon him. Now he is collecting an army to take up

arms against us, scornful of your valor and indifferent to his pledge of good faith to me, wishing in his insatiable greed to seize at the risk of disaster that which he has already received in part without war and without bloodshed, showing no respect for the gods by whom he has often sworn, and counting as worthless the labors you performed on our joint behalf with such courage and devotion to duty. In what you accomplished, he also had a share, and he would have had an even greater share of the honor you gained for us both if he had only kept his word. For, just as it is unfair to initiate wrong actions, so also it is cowardly to make no defense against unjust treatment. Now when we took the field against Niger, we had reasons for our hostility, not entirely logical, perhaps, but inevitable. We did not hate him because he had seized the empire after it was already ours, but rather each one of us, motivated by an equal desire for glory, sought the empire for himself alone, when it was still in dispute and lay prostrate before all. But Albinus has violated his pledges and broken his oaths, and although he received from me that which a man normally gives only to his son, he has chosen to be hostile rather than friendly and belligerent instead of peaceful. And just as we were generous to him previously and showered fame and honor upon him, so let us now punish him with our arms for his treachery and cowardice. His army, small and island-bred, will not stand against your might. For you, who by your valor and readiness to act on your own behalf have been victorious in many battles and have gained control of the entire East, how can you fail to emerge victorious with the greatest of ease when you have so large a number of allies and when virtually the entire army is here. Whereas they, by contrast, are few in number and lack a brave and competent general to lead them. Who does not know Albinus' effeminate nature? Who does not know that his way of life has prepared him more for the chorus than for the battlefield? Let us therefore go forth against him with confidence, relying on our customary zeal and valor, with the gods as our allies, gods against whom he has acted impiously in breaking his oaths, and let us be mindful of the victories we have won, victories which that man ridicules."

When Severus had finished speaking, the entire army called Albinus enemy and shouted their approval of Severus, promising him their wholehearted support; as a result, he was inspired even more and encouraged to anticipate greater things. After making generous gifts to the soldiers, Severus publicly announced his expedition against Albinus. He also sent troops to continue the siege of Byzantium, which was still under blockade because the soldiers of Niger had fled there. At a later date Byzantium was captured as a result of famine, and the entire city was razed. Stripped of its theaters and baths and, indeed, of all adornments, the city, now only a village, was given to the Perinthians to be subject to them; in the same way Antioch was given to the Laodiceans. Severus made available a huge sum of money for rebuilding the cities destroyed by Niger's soldiers. The emperor himself set out on the march, scorning heat and cold alike, and gave the army no respite for holidays or rest. Often when he was journeying through very high and very cold mountains, the emperor strode along bareheaded through rain and snow, setting an example of courage and constancy for his soldiers, who endured hardships not only from fear and from training but also in imitation of their emperor. Severus sent a general ahead with a unit of soldiers to seize the passes of the Alps and guard the approaches to Italy. |89

WHEN it was reported that Severus was not merely threatening to come but would soon appear in person, Albinus was in a state of complete confusion amid the negligence and revelry. Crossing over to the mainland of Gaul opposite **Britain**, he established his headquarters there. He then sent messages to the governors of the provinces ordering them to provide food and money for his army. Some obeyed and sent supplies, to their own destruction, since they suffered for it later; those who did not obey him saved themselves, more by luck than good judgment. The outcome of

the affair and the fortunes of war determined the wisdom of each decision. When the army of Severus came to Gaul, a few minor skirmishes occurred here and there, but the final battle was fought near the large and prosperous city of Lugdunum [Lyon]. Albinus shut himself up in that city, remaining behind when he sent the army out to do battle. A major engagement developed, and for a long time each side's chances of victory were equal, for in courage and ruthlessness the soldiers from **Britain** were in no way inferior to the soldiers from Illyria. When these two magnificent armies were locked in combat, it was no easy matter to put either one to flight. As some contemporary historians recorded—saying it not to curry favor but in the interests of accuracy—the division of the army stationed opposite the sector where Severus and his command were fighting proved far superior; the emperor slipped from his horse and fled, managing to escape by throwing off the imperial cloak. But while the soldiers from **Britain** were pursuing the Illyrians, chanting paeans of praise as if they were already victorious, they say that Laetus, one of Severus' generals, appeared with the troops under his command fresh and not yet committed in the battle. The historians accuse Laetus of watching the progress of the battle and deliberately waiting, holding his troops out of the fighting and appearing only after he was informed that Severus had been beaten. The aftermath of the affair substantiates the charge that Laetus coveted the empire himself. Later, when Severus had set everything straight and was living an orderly life, he gave generous rewards to the rest of his commanders, but Laetus alone he put to death, as seems reasonable under the circumstances, considering the general's past performances. All this happened at a much later date, however. On this occasion, when Laetus appeared with fresh troops, as has been related above, Severus' soldiers, taking heart, wrapped the emperor in the imperial cloak again and mounted him on his horse. But Albinus' soldiers, thinking that the victory was theirs, now found themselves in disorder when this powerful and as yet uncommitted army suddenly attacked; after a brief resistance they broke and ran. When the rout became general, Severus' soldiers pursued and slaughtered the fugitives until they drove them into Lugdunum. Each contemporary historian has recorded to suit his own purpose the actual number of those killed and captured on each side. The emperor's troops captured Lugdunum and burned it. When they caught Albinus they cut off his head and sent it to Severus [A.D. 197]. The emperor thus won two magnificent victories, one in the East and one in the West. No battles and no victories can be compared to those of Severus, and no army to the size of his army; there are no comparable uprisings among nations, or total number of campaigns, or length and speed of marches.

Momentous indeed were the battles of Caesar against Pompey, when Roman fought Roman; equally momentous were the battles fought by Augustus against Antony and the sons of Pompey, and the struggles of Sulla and Marius at an earlier date, in the Roman civil and foreign wars. But here is one man who overthrew three emperors after they were already ruling, and got the upper hand over the praetorians by a trick: he succeeded in killing Julianus, the man in the imperial palace; Niger, who had previously governed the people of the East and was saluted as emperor by the Roman people; and Albinus, who had already been awarded the honor and authority of Caesar. He prevailed over them all by his courage. It is not possible to name another like Severus.

Such was the fate suffered by Albinus, who was stripped of the honor which destroyed him after a brief time.

THEN the angry emperor took vengeance upon Albinus' friends at Rome. He sent the man's head to the city and ordered that it be displayed. When he reported his victory in dispatches, he added a note stating that he had sent Albinus' head to be put on public view so that the people might know the extent of his anger against them.

After settling affairs in **Britain**, he divided this region into two provinces, each under its own governor. When he had also arranged matters in Gaul in what he considered the most advantageous way, he put all the friends of Albinus to death and confiscated their property, indifferent to whether they had supported the man by choice or by necessity. He then took his entire army to Rome in order to inspire the utmost terror there. When he had completed the journey at his usual rapid pace, he entered Rome, raging at Albinus' surviving friends. The citizens, carrying laurel branches, welcomed him with all honor and praise; the senate also came out to greet him, most of them standing before him in abject dread, convinced that he would not spare their lives. Since his malevolence, a natural character trait, was deadly even when he had little provocation, now that he seemed to have every reason to treat them harshly, the members of the senate were terror-stricken.

195. Annals of the Four Masters

After Art, the son of Conn of the Hundred Battles, had been thirty years in the sovereignty of Ireland, he fell in the battle of Magh Mucruimhe, by Maccon and his foreigners. In the same battle, along with Art, fell also the sons of his sister, Sathbh, daughter of Conn, namely, the seven sons of Oilioll Olum, who had come with him against Maccon, their brother. Eoghan Mor, Dubhmerchon, Mughcorb, Lughaidh, Eochaidh, Diochorb, and Tadhg, were their names; and Beinne Brit, King of **Britain**, was he who laid violent hands upon them. Beinne was slain by Lughaidh Lagha, in revenge of his relatives. Lioghairne of the Long Cheeks, son of Aenghus Balbh, son of Eochaidh Finn Fuathairt, was he who laid violent hands upon Art in this battle of Magh Mucruimhe, after he had joined the forces of Maccon.

196. Annals of the Four Masters The first year of Lughaidh, i.e. Maccon, son of Maicniadh, in the sovereignty of Ireland.

197 Cassius Dio Cocceianus

[In **Britain** at this period, because the Caledonians did not abide by their promises but made preparations to aid the Maeatians, and because Severus at the time was attending to the war abroad, Lupus was compelled to purchase peace for the Maeatians at a high figure, and recovered some few captives.]

St Zepyrinus Pope 199-217

199 ANGLO-SAXON CHRONICLE. . In this year was found the holy rood. (13)

Late 2nd Century Oppian of Cilicia

Tracking the dim trail is of two sorts, by men and by dogs. Men, cunning of counsel, divine and mark the trail by the eyes ; dogs trace all tracks by the nostrils. Now for men winter is a favourable season and they track the quarry with untroubled eyes, since every mark is written in the snow to see and the likeness of the foot remains imprinted in the mud. For dogs spring is hostile but autumn kindly; for in spring the grassy earth is many-scented and over-full of herbs and flowers, and all around the fair-crowned meadows without tillage are purple, while the tilled fields destroy all the scent which is the ambassadress to the keen-nosed tracking dogs. But in autumn," rich in fruit and sweet >nth grapes,

CYNEGETICA, I. 466-486 grass and herbs and flowers wax old and the scent of the ■wild beasts remains naked for the hounds. There is one vahant breed of tracking dogs, small indeed but as worthy as large dogs to be the theme of song ; bred

by the wild tribes of the painted "» **Britons** and called by the name of Agassaeus.** Their size is like that of the weak and greedy domestic table dog: round, very lean, shaggy of hair, dull of eye, it has its feet armed with grievous claws and its mouth sharp with close-set venomous tusks. With its nose especially the Agassian dog is most excellent and in tracking it is best of all ; for it is very clever at finding the track of things that walk the earth but skilful too to mark the airy scent.

When some hunter desires to make trial of his dogs, he carries in his hands before the high gates a hare, dead or alive, and walks forward on a devious path, now pursuing a straight course, now aslant, left and right winding his crooked way ; but when he has come very far from the city and the gates, then he digs a trench and buries the hare. Returning back to the city, he straightway brings nigh the path the cunning dog ; and immediately it is excited and snorts at the scent of the hare, and seeks the track upon the ground, but for all its eagerness is not able to find it and roams about in great distress. Even as when a girl in the tenth lunar month, smitten by the birth-pangs of her first child, undoes her hair and undoes the draper' of her breasts and, poor girl, without tunic and without snood, roams every-where about the house, and in her anguish now goes to the hall and anon rushes to her bed, and sometimes throws herself in the dust and mars her rosy cheeks ; so the dog, distressed by devouring grief, rushes this way and that and searches every stone in turn and every knoll and every path and trees and garden vines and dykes and threshing-floors. And when at last he hits the airy trail, he gives tongue and whines for joy ; even as the little calves leap about the uddered cows, so the dog rejoices exceedingly, and in haste he winds his way over the mazy fields ; nor couldst thou lead him astray, even if thou shouldst then drive him very far, but he runs straight on, holding steadfastly to the sweet scent, until he reaches the end of his labour and to his goal. But if thou wert to array him against the hare difficult of capture, stealthily he draws nigh, planting step on step, hiding low under vines or stubble, even as the robber thief of kids who, watching near at hand the sleeping shepherd, quietly steals upon the fold. But when he approaches the covert of the hare, swiftly he springs, like an arrow from the bow or like the hissing snake which some harvester or ploughman has disturbed when lying quietly in front of his venomous lair. So the dog gives tongue and springs ; and if he hit his quarry, easily he will overcome him with his sharp claws and take his great load in his mouth and go to meet his master : swiftly he carries his burden but labouring and heavy-laden he draws near. As the wain brings from the cornfield the fruits of harvest and comes to the steading laden with wheat and the rustics when they see it rush forth together to meet it in front of the yard ; one presses on the wheels, another on the frame, another on the axle to help the oxen ; and when they come into the yard they unstrap the pole and the sweating steers have respite from their toil, and the heart of the linked teamster rejoices exceedingly ; even so the dog comes bringing his burden in his mouth. And the swift hunter meets him joyfully and lifting both high from mother earth he puts in his bosom ° both the beast and the dog himself that slew the beast.

Cassius Dio Cocceianus

At this time, in the consulship of Cornelius and Valerius Messala, earthquakes of ill omen occurred and the Tiber tore away the bridge so that the City was under water for seven days. There was an eclipse of the sun, and famine set in. This same year Agrippa was enrolled among the iuvenes, but obtained none of the same privileges as his brother. The senators attended the horse-races separately and the knights also separately from the remainder of the populace, as is done nowadays. And since the noblest families did not show themselves inclined to give their daughters for the service of Vesta, a law was passed that the daughters of freedmen might likewise be

consecrated. Many contended for the honor, and so they drew lots in the senate in the presence of their fathers; nopriestess, however, was appointed from this class.

The soldiers were displeased at the small size of the prizes for the wars that had taken place at this period and no one was willing to carry arms for longer than the specified term of his service. It was therefore voted that five thousand denarii be given to members of the pretorian guard when they had ended sixteen, and three thousand to the other soldiers when they had completed twenty years' service. Twenty-three legions were being supported at that time, or, as others say, twenty-five, of citizen soldiers.

Only nineteen of them now remain. The Second (Augusta) is the one that winters in Upper **Britain**. Of the Third there are three divisions,--the Gallic, in Phoenicia; the Cyrenaic, in Arabia; the Augustan, in Numidia. The Fourth. (Scythian) is in Syria, the Fifth (Macedonian), in Dacia. The Sixth is divided into two parts, of which the one (Victrix) is in Lower **Britain**, and the other (Ferrata) is in Judaea. The soldiers of the Seventh, generally called Claudians, are in Upper Moesia. Those of the Eighth, Augustans, are in Upper Germany. Those of the Tenth are both in Upper Pannonia (Legio Gemina) and in Judaea. The Eleventh, in Lower Moesia, is the Claudian. This name two legions received from Claudius because they had not fought against him in the insurrection of Camillus. The Twelfth (Fulminata) is in Cappadocia: the Thirteenth (Gemina) in Dacia: the Fourteenth (Gemina) in Upper Pannonia: the Fifteenth (Apollinaris) in Cappadocia. The Twentieth, called both Valeria and Victrix, is also in **Upper Britain**. These, I believe, together with those that have the title of the Twenty second[15] and winter in Upper Germany Augustus took in charge and kept; and this I say in spite of the fact that they are by no means called Valerians by all and do not themselves use the title any longer. These are preserved from the Augustan legions. Of the rest some have been scattered altogether and others were mixed in with different legions by Augustus himself and by the other emperors, from which circumstance they are thought to have been called Gemina.

Now that I have once been brought into a discussion of the legions, I shall speak of the forces as they are at present according to the disposition made by subsequent emperors: in this way any one who desires to learn anything about them may do so easily, finding all his information written in one place. Nero organized the First legion, called the Italian, and now wintering in Lower Moesia; Galba, the First legion, called Adiutrix, in Lower Pannonia, and the Seventh (Gemina), which is in Spain; Vespasian, the Second, Adiutrix, in Lower Pannonia, and the Fourth (the Flavian) in Syria; Domitian, the First (Minervia), in Lower Germany; Trajan, the Second (the Egyptian), and the Thirtieth (Germanic), which he also named after himself. Marcus Antoninus organized the Second, which is in Noricum, and the Third, in Rhaetia; these are also called Italian: Severus the Parthian legions, i. e., the First and the Third in Mesopotamia and between them the Second, the one in Italy.

This is at present the number of legions which are enrolled in the service, exclusive of the cohortes urbanae and the pretorian guard. At that time, in the days of Augustus, those I mentioned were being supported, whether twenty-three or twenty-five altogether; and then there was some allied force, whatever the size, of infantry and cavalry and sailors. I can not state the exact figures. The body-guards, ten thousand in all, were divided into ten portions, and the six thousand warders of the city into four portions, and there were picked foreign horsemen to whom the name **Batavians** is applied (from the island **Batavia** in the Rhine), because the **Batavians** are noted for superiority in horsemanship. I can not, however, state their exact number any more than that of the evocati. He began to reckon in the latter from the time that he called the warriors who had previously supported his father to arms again against Antony;

and he retained control of them. They constitute even now a special corps and carry rods, like the centurions.

For the distribution mentioned he needed money and therefore introduced a motion into the senate to the effect that a definite permanent fund be created, in order that without troubling any private citizen they might obtain abundant support and rewards from the proposed appropriation. The means for such a fund was accordingly sought.--As no one showed a willingness to become aedile, some from the ranks of ex-quaestors and ex-tribunes were compelled by lot to take the office. This happened frequently at other times.

Sybylline Oracle Book XII 230

Of the first unit shall another king
Bear the rule; and another after him
Shall be commander, of tens numbering seven;
And their names shall be honored; and they shall
Themselves destroy men marked by many a spot,
Britons and mighty Moors and Dacians
And the Arabians. But when the last
Of these shall perish, fearful Ares then,
He that before was wounded, shall again
Against the Parthians come, and utterly
Shall he destroy them.

After 2nd Century. Pseudo-Agathemerus

Europe. Islands of this continent worthy of note in the outer sea are the two Bretanikai, Ivernia and Alvion, lying further west, extends some way to Spain; Alvion, in which forts are situated, is the greatest and most extensive; for beginning in the north it stretches to the west as far as the middle of Tarraconensis, to the east almost to the middle of Germany. Also noteworthy would be Thule and Great Skandia.

Tertullian

Romans and sojourners, yes, and in Jerusalem Jews, and all other nations; as, for instance, by this time, the varied races of the Gaetulians, and manifold confines of the Moors, all the limits of the Spains, and the diverse nations of the Gauls, and the haunts of the **Britons**--inaccessible to the Romans, but subjugated to Christ, and of the Sarmatians, and Dacians, and Germans, and Scythians, and of many remote nations, and of provinces and islands many, to us unknown, and which we can scarce enumerate? In all which places the name of the Christ who is already come reigns, as of Him before whom the gates of all cities have been opened, and to whom none are closed, before whom iron bars have been crumbled, and brazen gates opened. Although there be withal a spiritual sense to be affixed to these expressions,--that the hearts of individuals, blockaded in various ways by the devil, are unbarred by the faith of Christ,--still they have been evidently fulfilled, inasmuch as in all these places dwells the "people" of the Name of Christ. For who *could* have reigned *over all nations* but Christ, God's Son, who was ever announced as destined to reign over all to eternity? For if Solomon "reigned," why, it was within the confines of Judea merely: "from Beersheba unto Dan" the boundaries of his kingdom are marked. If, moreover, Darius "reigned" over the Babylonians and Parthians, he had not power *over all nations*; if Pharaoh, or whoever succeeded him in his hereditary kingdom, over the Egyptians, in that country merely did he possess his kingdom's dominion; if Nebuchadnezzar with his petty kings, "from India unto Ethiopia" he had his

kingdom's boundaries; if Alexander the Macedonian he did not hold more than universal Asia, and other regions, after he had quite conquered them; if the Germans, to this day they are not suffered to cross their own limits; the **Britons** are shut within the circuit of their own ocean; the nations of the Moors, and the barbarism of the Gaetulians, are blockaded by the Romans, lest they exceed the confines of their own regions.

Chapter VI.-Of Dyeing the Hair.

I see some (women) turn (the colour of) their hair with saffron. They are ashamed even of their own nation, (ashamed) that their procreation did not assign them to Germany and to Gaul: thus, as it is, they transfer their *hair* (thither)! Ill, ay, *most* ill, do they augur for themselves with their flame-coloured head, and think that graceful which (in fact) they are polluting! Nay, moreover, the force of the cosmetics burns ruin into the hair; and the constant application of even any undrugged moisture, lays up a store of harm for the head; while the sun's warmth, too, so desirable for imparting to the hair at once growth and dryness, is hurtful. What "grace" is compatible with "injury? "What "beauty" with "impurities? "Shall a Christian woman heap saffron on her head, as upon an altar? For, whatever is wont to be burned to the honour of the unclean spirit, that---unless it is applied for honest, and necessary, and salutary uses, for which God's creature was provided---may seem to be a sacrifice. But, however, God saith, "Which of you can make a white hair black, or out of a black a white? " And so they refute the Lord! "Behold!" say they, "instead of white or black, we make it *yellow*,----more winning in grace."

Chapter VI.----Of Precious Stones and Pearls.

But, in the next place, what am I to interpret those jewels to be which vie with gold in haughtiness, except little pebbles and stones and paltry particles of the self-same earth; but yet not necessary either for laying down foundations, or rearing party-walls, or supporting pediments, or giving density to roofs? The only edifice which they know how to rear is this silly pride of women: because they require slow rubbing that they may shine, and artful underlaying that they may show to advantage, and careful piercing that they may hang; and (because they) render to gold a mutual assistance in meretricious allurement. But whatever it is that ambition fishes up from the British or the Indian sea, it is a kind of conch not more pleasing in *savour* than---I do not say the oyster and the sea-snail, but---even the giant muscle.

Chapter X.----If the Female Virgins are to Be Thus Conspicuous, Why Not the Male as Well?

Nor, similarly, (is it permitted) on the ground of any distinctions whatever. Otherwise, it were sufficiently discourteous, that while *females*, subjected as they are throughout to men, bear in their front an honourable mark of their virginity, whereby they may be looked up to and gazed at on all sides and magnified by the brethren, so many *men-virgins*, so many voluntary eunuchs, should carry their glory in secret, carrying no token to make *them*, too, illustrious. For *they*, too, will be bound to claim some distinctions for themselves---either the feathers of the Garamantes, or else the fillets of the barbarians, or else the cicadas of the Athenians, or else the curls of the Germans, or else the tattoo-marks of the Britons; or else let the opposite course be taken, and let them lurk in the churches with head *veiled*.