

Chapter V: Sale Of The Empire To Didius Julianus.--Part I.

Public Sale Of The Empire To Didius Julianus By The
Praetorian Guards--Clodius Albinus In Britain, Pescennius
Niger In Syria, And Septimius Severus In Pannonia, Declare
Against The Murderers Of Pertinax--Civil Wars And Victory Of
Severus Over His Three Rivals--Relaxation Of Discipline--New
Maxims Of Government.

The power of the sword is more sensibly felt in an extensive monarchy, than in a small community. It has been calculated by the ablest politicians, that no state, without being soon exhausted, can maintain above the hundredth part of its members in arms and idleness. But although this relative proportion may be uniform, the influence of the army over the rest of the society will vary according to the degree of its positive strength. The advantages of military science and discipline cannot be exerted, unless a proper number of soldiers are united into one body, and actuated by one soul. With a handful of men, such a union would be ineffectual; with an unwieldy host, it would be impracticable; and the powers of the machine would be alike destroyed by the extreme minuteness or the excessive weight of its springs. To illustrate this observation, we need only reflect, that there is no superiority of natural strength, artificial weapons, or acquired skill, which could enable one man to keep in constant subjection one hundred of his fellow-creatures: the tyrant of a single town, or a small district, would soon discover that a hundred armed followers were a weak defence

against ten thousand peasants or citizens; but a hundred thousand well-disciplined soldiers will command, with despotic sway, ten millions of subjects; and a body of ten or fifteen thousand guards will strike terror into the most numerous populace that ever crowded the streets of an immense capital. The Praetorian bands, whose licentious fury was the first symptom and cause of the decline of the Roman empire, scarcely amounted to the last-mentioned number [1] They derived their institution from Augustus. That crafty tyrant, sensible that laws might color, but that arms alone could maintain, his usurped dominion, had gradually formed this powerful body of guards, in constant readiness to protect his person, to awe the senate, and either to prevent or to crush the first motions of rebellion. He distinguished these favored troops by a double pay and superior privileges; but, as their formidable aspect would at once have alarmed and irritated the Roman people, three cohorts only were stationed in the capital, whilst the remainder was dispersed in the adjacent towns of Italy. [2] But after fifty years of peace and servitude, Tiberius ventured on a decisive measure, which forever rivetted the fetters of his country. Under the fair pretences of relieving Italy from the heavy burden of military quarters, and of introducing a stricter discipline among the guards, he assembled them at Rome, in a permanent camp, [3] which was fortified with skilful care, [4] and placed on a commanding situation. [5]

[Footnote 1: They were originally nine or ten thousand men, (for Tacitus and son are not agreed upon the subject,) divided into as many cohorts. Vitellius increased them to sixteen thousand, and as far as we can learn

from inscriptions, they never afterwards sunk much below that number.
See Lipsius de magnitudine Romana, i. 4.]

[Footnote 2: Sueton. in August. c. 49.]

[Footnote 3: Tacit. Annal. iv. 2. Sueton. in Tiber. c. 37. Dion Cassius,
l. lvii. p. 867.]

[Footnote 4: In the civil war between Vitellius and Vespasian, the
Praetorian camp was attacked and defended with all the machines used in
the siege of the best fortified cities. Tacit. Hist. iii. 84.]

[Footnote 5: Close to the walls of the city, on the broad summit of the
Quirinal and Viminal hills. See Nardini Roma Antica, p. 174. Donatus de
Roma Antiqua, p. 46. * Note: Not on both these hills: neither Donatus
nor Nardini justify this position. (Whitaker's Review. p. 13.) At the
northern extremity of this hill (the Viminal) are some considerable
remains of a walled enclosure which bears all the appearance of a Roman
camp, and therefore is generally thought to correspond with the Castra
Praetoria. Cramer's Italy 390.--M.]

Such formidable servants are always necessary, but often
fatal to the throne of despotism. By thus introducing the Praetorian
guards as it were into the palace and the senate, the emperors taught
them to perceive their own strength, and the weakness of the civil
government; to view the vices of their masters with familiar contempt,

and to lay aside that reverential awe, which distance only, and mystery, can preserve towards an imaginary power. In the luxurious idleness of an opulent city, their pride was nourished by the sense of their irresistible weight; nor was it possible to conceal from them, that the person of the sovereign, the authority of the senate, the public treasure, and the seat of empire, were all in their hands. To divert the Praetorian bands from these dangerous reflections, the firmest and best established princes were obliged to mix blandishments with commands, rewards with punishments, to flatter their pride, indulge their pleasures, connive at their irregularities, and to purchase their precarious faith by a liberal donative; which, since the elevation of Claudius, was enacted as a legal claim, on the accession of every new emperor. [6]

[Footnote 6: Claudius, raised by the soldiers to the empire, was the first who gave a donative. He gave quina dena, 120l. (Sueton. in Claud. c. 10:) when Marcus, with his colleague Lucius Versus, took quiet possession of the throne, he gave vicena, 160l. to each of the guards. Hist. August. p. 25, (Dion, l. lxxiii. p. 1231.) We may form some idea of the amount of these sums, by Hadrian's complaint that the promotion of a Caesar had cost him ter millies, two millions and a half sterling.]

The advocate of the guards endeavored to justify by arguments the power which they asserted by arms; and to maintain that, according to the purest principles of the constitution, their consent was essentially necessary in the appointment of an emperor. The election of consuls, of

generals, and of magistrates, however it had been recently usurped by the senate, was the ancient and undoubted right of the Roman people. [7] But where was the Roman people to be found? Not surely amongst the mixed multitude of slaves and strangers that filled the streets of Rome; a servile populace, as devoid of spirit as destitute of property. The defenders of the state, selected from the flower of the Italian youth, [8] and trained in the exercise of arms and virtue, were the genuine representatives of the people, and the best entitled to elect the military chief of the republic. These assertions, however defective in reason, became unanswerable when the fierce Praetorians increased their weight, by throwing, like the barbarian conqueror of Rome, their swords into the scale. [9]

[Footnote 7: Cicero de Legibus, iii. 3. The first book of Livy, and the second of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, show the authority of the people, even in the election of the kings.]

[Footnote 8: They were originally recruited in Latium, Etruria, and the old colonies, (Tacit. Annal. iv. 5.) The emperor Otho compliments their vanity with the flattering titles of Italiae, Alumni, Romanae juventus. Tacit. Hist. i. 84.]

[Footnote 9: In the siege of Rome by the Gauls. See Livy, v. 48. Plutarch. in Camill. p. 143.]

The Praetorians had violated the sanctity of the throne by the atrocious

murder of Pertinax; they dishonored the majesty of it by their subsequent conduct. The camp was without a leader, for even the praefect Laetus, who had excited the tempest, prudently declined the public indignation. Amidst the wild disorder, Sulpicianus, the emperor's father-in-law, and governor of the city, who had been sent to the camp on the first alarm of mutiny, was endeavoring to calm the fury of the multitude, when he was silenced by the clamorous return of the murderers, bearing on a lance the head of Pertinax. Though history has accustomed us to observe every principle and every passion yielding to the imperious dictates of ambition, it is scarcely credible that, in these moments of horror, Sulpicianus should have aspired to ascend a throne polluted with the recent blood of so near a relation and so excellent a prince. He had already begun to use the only effectual argument, and to treat for the Imperial dignity; but the more prudent of the Praetorians, apprehensive that, in this private contract, they should not obtain a just price for so valuable a commodity, ran out upon the ramparts; and, with a loud voice, proclaimed that the Roman world was to be disposed of to the best bidder by public auction. [10]

[Footnote 10: Dion, L. lxxiii. p. 1234. Herodian, l. ii. p. 63. Hist. August p. 60. Though the three historians agree that it was in fact an auction, Herodian alone affirms that it was proclaimed as such by the soldiers.]

This infamous offer, the most insolent excess of military license, diffused a universal grief, shame, and indignation throughout the city.

It reached at length the ears of Didius Julianus, a wealthy senator, who, regardless of the public calamities, was indulging himself in the luxury of the table. [11] His wife and his daughter, his freedmen and his parasites, easily convinced him that he deserved the throne, and earnestly conjured him to embrace so fortunate an opportunity. The vain old man hastened to the Praetorian camp, where Sulpicianus was still in treaty with the guards, and began to bid against him from the foot of the rampart. The unworthy negotiation was transacted by faithful emissaries, who passed alternately from one candidate to the other, and acquainted each of them with the offers of his rival. Sulpicianus had already promised a donative of five thousand drachms (above one hundred and sixty pounds) to each soldier; when Julian, eager for the prize, rose at once to the sum of six thousand two hundred and fifty drachms, or upwards of two hundred pounds sterling. The gates of the camp were instantly thrown open to the purchaser; he was declared emperor, and received an oath of allegiance from the soldiers, who retained humanity enough to stipulate that he should pardon and forget the competition of Sulpicianus. [111]

[Footnote 11: Spartianus softens the most odious parts of the character and elevation of Julian.]

[Footnote 111: One of the principal causes of the preference of Julianus by the soldiers, was the dexterty dexterity with which he reminded them that Sulpicianus would not fail to revenge on them the death of his son-in-law. (See Dion, p. 1234, 1234. c. 11. Herod. ii. 6.)--W.]

It was now incumbent on the Praetorians to fulfil the conditions of the sale. They placed their new sovereign, whom they served and despised, in the centre of their ranks, surrounded him on every side with their shields, and conducted him in close order of battle through the deserted streets of the city. The senate was commanded to assemble; and those who had been the distinguished friends of Pertinax, or the personal enemies of Julian, found it necessary to affect a more than common share of satisfaction at this happy revolution. [12] After Julian had filled the senate house with armed soldiers, he expatiated on the freedom of his election, his own eminent virtues, and his full assurance of the affections of the senate. The obsequious assembly congratulated their own and the public felicity; engaged their allegiance, and conferred on him all the several branches of the Imperial power. [13] From the senate Julian was conducted, by the same military procession, to take possession of the palace. The first objects that struck his eyes, were the abandoned trunk of Pertinax, and the frugal entertainment prepared for his supper. The one he viewed with indifference, the other with contempt. A magnificent feast was prepared by his order, and he amused himself, till a very late hour, with dice, and the performances of Pylades, a celebrated dancer. Yet it was observed, that after the crowd of flatterers dispersed, and left him to darkness, solitude, and terrible reflection, he passed a sleepless night; revolving most probably in his mind his own rash folly, the fate of his virtuous predecessor, and the doubtful and dangerous tenure of an empire which had not been acquired by merit, but purchased by money. [14]

[Footnote 12: Dion Cassius, at that time praetor, had been a personal enemy to Julian, i. lxxiii. p. 1235.]

[Footnote 13: Hist. August. p. 61. We learn from thence one curious circumstance, that the new emperor, whatever had been his birth, was immediately aggregated to the number of patrician families. Note: A new fragment of Dion shows some shrewdness in the character of Julian. When the senate voted him a golden statue, he preferred one of brass, as more lasting. He "had always observed," he said, "that the statues of former emperors were soon destroyed. Those of brass alone remained." The indignant historian adds that he was wrong. The virtue of sovereigns alone preserves their images: the brazen statue of Julian was broken to pieces at his death. Mai. Fragm. Vatican. p. 226.--M.]

[Footnote 14: Dion, l. lxxiii. p. 1235. Hist. August. p. 61. I have endeavored to blend into one consistent story the seeming contradictions of the two writers. * Note: The contradiction as M. Guizot observed, is irreconcilable. He quotes both passages: in one Julianus is represented as a miser, in the other as a voluptuary. In the one he refuses to eat till the body of Pertinax has been buried; in the other he gluts himself with every luxury almost in the sight of his headless remains.--M.]

He had reason to tremble. On the throne of the world he found himself without a friend, and even without an adherent. The guards themselves were ashamed of the prince whom their avarice had persuaded them to

accept; nor was there a citizen who did not consider his elevation with horror, as the last insult on the Roman name. The nobility, whose conspicuous station, and ample possessions, exacted the strictest caution, dissembled their sentiments, and met the affected civility of the emperor with smiles of complacency and professions of duty. But the people, secure in their numbers and obscurity, gave a free vent to their passions. The streets and public places of Rome resounded with clamors and imprecations. The enraged multitude affronted the person of Julian, rejected his liberality, and, conscious of the impotence of their own resentment, they called aloud on the legions of the frontiers to assert the violated majesty of the Roman empire. The public discontent was soon diffused from the centre to the frontiers of the empire. The armies of Britain, of Syria, and of Illyricum, lamented the death of Pertinax, in whose company, or under whose command, they had so often fought and conquered. They received with surprise, with indignation, and perhaps with envy, the extraordinary intelligence, that the Praetorians had disposed of the empire by public auction; and they sternly refused to ratify the ignominious bargain. Their immediate and unanimous revolt was fatal to Julian, but it was fatal at the same time to the public peace, as the generals of the respective armies, Clodius Albinus, Pescennius Niger, and Septimius Severus, were still more anxious to succeed than to revenge the murdered Pertinax. Their forces were exactly balanced. Each of them was at the head of three legions, [15] with a numerous train of auxiliaries; and however different in their characters, they were all soldiers of experience and capacity.

[Footnote 15: Dion, l. lxxiii. p. 1235.]

Clodius Albinus, governor of Britain, surpassed both his competitors in the nobility of his extraction, which he derived from some of the most illustrious names of the old republic. [16] But the branch from which he claimed his descent was sunk into mean circumstances, and transplanted into a remote province. It is difficult to form a just idea of his true character. Under the philosophic cloak of austerity, he stands accused of concealing most of the vices which degrade human nature. [17] But his accusers are those venal writers who adored the fortune of Severus, and trampled on the ashes of an unsuccessful rival. Virtue, or the appearances of virtue, recommended Albinus to the confidence and good opinion of Marcus; and his preserving with the son the same interest which he had acquired with the father, is a proof at least that he was possessed of a very flexible disposition. The favor of a tyrant does not always suppose a want of merit in the object of it; he may, without intending it, reward a man of worth and ability, or he may find such a man useful to his own service. It does not appear that Albinus served the son of Marcus, either as the minister of his cruelties, or even as the associate of his pleasures. He was employed in a distant honorable command, when he received a confidential letter from the emperor, acquainting him of the treasonable designs of some discontented generals, and authorizing him to declare himself the guardian and successor of the throne, by assuming the title and ensigns of Caesar. [18] The governor of Britain wisely declined the dangerous honor, which would have marked him for the jealousy, or involved him in the

approaching ruin, of Commodus. He courted power by nobler, or, at least, by more specious arts. On a premature report of the death of the emperor, he assembled his troops; and, in an eloquent discourse, deplored the inevitable mischiefs of despotism, described the happiness and glory which their ancestors had enjoyed under the consular government, and declared his firm resolution to reinstate the senate and people in their legal authority. This popular harangue was answered by the loud acclamations of the British legions, and received at Rome with a secret murmur of applause. Safe in the possession of his little world, and in the command of an army less distinguished indeed for discipline than for numbers and valor, [19] Albinus braved the menaces of Commodus, maintained towards Pertinax a stately ambiguous reserve, and instantly declared against the usurpation of Julian. The convulsions of the capital added new weight to his sentiments, or rather to his professions of patriotism. A regard to decency induced him to decline the lofty titles of Augustus and Emperor; and he imitated perhaps the example of Galba, who, on a similar occasion, had styled himself the Lieutenant of the senate and people. [20]

[Footnote 16: The Posthumian and the Ce'onian; the former of whom was raised to the consulship in the fifth year after its institution.]

[Footnote 17: Spartianus, in his undigested collections, mixes up all the virtues and all the vices that enter into the human composition, and bestows them on the same object. Such, indeed are many of the characters in the Augustan History.]

[Footnote 18: Hist. August. p. 80, 84.]

[Footnote 19: Pertinax, who governed Britain a few years before, had been left for dead, in a mutiny of the soldiers. Hist. August. p 54. Yet they loved and regretted him; admirantibus eam virtutem cui irascebantur.]

[Footnote 20: Sueton. in Galb. c. 10.]

Personal merit alone had raised Pescennius Niger, from an obscure birth and station, to the government of Syria; a lucrative and important command, which in times of civil confusion gave him a near prospect of the throne. Yet his parts seem to have been better suited to the second than to the first rank; he was an unequal rival, though he might have approved himself an excellent lieutenant, to Severus, who afterwards displayed the greatness of his mind by adopting several useful institutions from a vanquished enemy. [21] In his government Niger acquired the esteem of the soldiers and the love of the provincials. His rigid discipline fortified the valor and confirmed the obedience of the former, whilst the voluptuous Syrians were less delighted with the mild firmness of his administration, than with the affability of his manners, and the apparent pleasure with which he attended their frequent and pompous festivals. [22] As soon as the intelligence of the atrocious murder of Pertinax had reached Antioch, the wishes of Asia invited Niger to assume the Imperial purple and revenge his death. The legions of the

eastern frontier embraced his cause; the opulent but unarmed provinces, from the frontiers of Aethiopia [23] to the Hadriatic, cheerfully submitted to his power; and the kings beyond the Tigris and the Euphrates congratulated his election, and offered him their homage and services. The mind of Niger was not capable of receiving this sudden tide of fortune: he flattered himself that his accession would be undisturbed by competition and unstained by civil blood; and whilst he enjoyed the vain pomp of triumph, he neglected to secure the means of victory. Instead of entering into an effectual negotiation with the powerful armies of the West, whose resolution might decide, or at least must balance, the mighty contest; instead of advancing without delay towards Rome and Italy, where his presence was impatiently expected, [24] Niger trifled away in the luxury of Antioch those irretrievable moments which were diligently improved by the decisive activity of Severus. [25]

[Footnote 21: Hist. August. p. 76.]

[Footnote 22: Herod. 1. ii. p. 68. The Chronicle of John Malala, of Antioch, shows the zealous attachment of his countrymen to these festivals, which at once gratified their superstition, and their love of pleasure.]

[Footnote 23: A king of Thebes, in Egypt, is mentioned, in the Augustan History, as an ally, and, indeed, as a personal friend of Niger. If Spartianus is not, as I strongly suspect, mistaken, he has brought to light a dynasty of tributary princes totally unknown to history.]

[Footnote 24: Dion, l. lxxiii. p. 1238. Herod. l. ii. p. 67. A verse in every one's mouth at that time, seems to express the general opinion of the three rivals; Optimus est Niger, [Fuscus, which preserves the quantity.--M.] bonus Afer, pessimus Albus. Hist. August. p. 75.]

[Footnote 25: Herodian, l. ii. p. 71.]

The country of Pannonia and Dalmatia, which occupied the space between the Danube and the Hadriatic, was one of the last and most difficult conquests of the Romans. In the defence of national freedom, two hundred thousand of these barbarians had once appeared in the field, alarmed the declining age of Augustus, and exercised the vigilant prudence of Tiberius at the head of the collected force of the empire. [26] The Pannonians yielded at length to the arms and institutions of Rome. Their recent subjection, however, the neighborhood, and even the mixture, of the unconquered tribes, and perhaps the climate, adapted, as it has been observed, to the production of great bodies and slow minds, [27] all contributed to preserve some remains of their original ferocity, and under the tame and uniform countenance of Roman provincials, the hardy features of the natives were still to be discerned. Their warlike youth afforded an inexhaustible supply of recruits to the legions stationed on the banks of the Danube, and which, from a perpetual warfare against the Germans and Sarmazans, were deservedly esteemed the best troops in the service.

[Footnote 26: See an account of that memorable war in Velleius

Paterculus, is 110, &c., who served in the army of Tiberius.]

[Footnote 27: Such is the reflection of Herodian, l. ii. p. 74. Will the modern Austrians allow the influence?]

The Pannonian army was at this time commanded by Septimius Severus, a native of Africa, who, in the gradual ascent of private honors, had concealed his daring ambition, which was never diverted from its steady course by the allurements of pleasure, the apprehension of danger, or the feelings of humanity. [28] On the first news of the murder of Pertinax, he assembled his troops, painted in the most lively colors the crime, the insolence, and the weakness of the Praetorian guards, and animated the legions to arms and to revenge. He concluded (and the peroration was thought extremely eloquent) with promising every soldier about four hundred pounds; an honorable donative, double in value to the infamous bribe with which Julian had purchased the empire. [29] The acclamations of the army immediately saluted Severus with the names of Augustus, Pertinax, and Emperor; and he thus attained the lofty station to which he was invited, by conscious merit and a long train of dreams and omens, the fruitful offsprings either of his superstition or policy. [30]

[Footnote 28: In the letter to Albinus, already mentioned, Commodus accuses Severus, as one of the ambitious generals who censured his conduct, and wished to occupy his place. Hist. August. p. 80.]

[Footnote 29: Pannonia was too poor to supply such a sum. It was probably promised in the camp, and paid at Rome, after the victory. In fixing the sum, I have adopted the conjecture of Casaubon. See Hist. August. p. 66. Comment. p. 115.]

[Footnote 30: Herodian, l. ii. p. 78. Severus was declared emperor on the banks of the Danube, either at Carnuntum, according to Spartianus, (Hist. August. p. 65,) or else at Sabaria, according to Victor. Mr. Hume, in supposing that the birth and dignity of Severus were too much inferior to the Imperial crown, and that he marched into Italy as general only, has not considered this transaction with his usual accuracy, (Essay on the original contract.) * Note: Carnuntum, opposite to the mouth of the Morava: its position is doubtful, either Petronel or Haimburg. A little intermediate village seems to indicate by its name (Altenburg) the site of an old town. D'Anville Geogr. Anc. Sabaria, now Sarvar.--G. Compare note 37.--M.]

The new candidate for empire saw and improved the peculiar advantage of his situation. His province extended to the Julian Alps, which gave an easy access into Italy; and he remembered the saying of Augustus, That a Pannonian army might in ten days appear in sight of Rome. [31] By a celerity proportioned to the greatness of the occasion, he might reasonably hope to revenge Pertinax, punish Julian, and receive the homage of the senate and people, as their lawful emperor, before his competitors, separated from Italy by an immense tract of sea and land, were apprised of his success, or even of his election. During the whole

expedition, he scarcely allowed himself any moments for sleep or food; marching on foot, and in complete armor, at the head of his columns, he insinuated himself into the confidence and affection of his troops, pressed their diligence, revived their spirits, animated their hopes, and was well satisfied to share the hardships of the meanest soldier, whilst he kept in view the infinite superiority of his reward.

[Footnote 31: Velleius Paterculus, 1. ii. c. 3. We must reckon the march from the nearest verge of Pannonia, and extend the sight of the city as far as two hundred miles.]

The wretched Julian had expected, and thought himself prepared, to dispute the empire with the governor of Syria; but in the invincible and rapid approach of the Pannonian legions, he saw his inevitable ruin. The hasty arrival of every messenger increased his just apprehensions. He was successively informed, that Severus had passed the Alps; that the Italian cities, unwilling or unable to oppose his progress, had received him with the warmest professions of joy and duty; that the important place of Ravenna had surrendered without resistance, and that the Hadriatic fleet was in the hands of the conqueror. The enemy was now within two hundred and fifty miles of Rome; and every moment diminished the narrow span of life and empire allotted to Julian.

He attempted, however, to prevent, or at least to protract, his ruin. He implored the venal faith of the Praetorians, filled the city with unavailing preparations for war, drew lines round the suburbs, and

even strengthened the fortifications of the palace; as if those last intrenchments could be defended, without hope of relief, against a victorious invader. Fear and shame prevented the guards from deserting his standard; but they trembled at the name of the Pannonian legions, commanded by an experienced general, and accustomed to vanquish the barbarians on the frozen Danube. [32] They quitted, with a sigh, the pleasures of the baths and theatres, to put on arms, whose use they had almost forgotten, and beneath the weight of which they were oppressed. The unpractised elephants, whose uncouth appearance, it was hoped, would strike terror into the army of the north, threw their unskilful riders; and the awkward evolutions of the marines, drawn from the fleet of Misenum, were an object of ridicule to the populace; whilst the senate enjoyed, with secret pleasure, the distress and weakness of the usurper. [33]

[Footnote 32: This is not a puerile figure of rhetoric, but an allusion to a real fact recorded by Dion, l. lxxi. p. 1181. It probably happened more than once.]

[Footnote 33: Dion, l. lxxiii. p. 1233. Herodian, l. ii. p. 81. There is no surer proof of the military skill of the Romans, than their first surmounting the idle terror, and afterwards disdaining the dangerous use, of elephants in war. Note: These elephants were kept for processions, perhaps for the games. Se Herod. in loc.--M.]

Every motion of Julian betrayed his trembling perplexity. He insisted

that Severus should be declared a public enemy by the senate. He entreated that the Pannonian general might be associated to the empire. He sent public ambassadors of consular rank to negotiate with his rival; he despatched private assassins to take away his life. He designed that the Vestal virgins, and all the colleges of priests, in their sacerdotal habits, and bearing before them the sacred pledges of the Roman religion, should advance in solemn procession to meet the Pannonian legions; and, at the same time, he vainly tried to interrogate, or to appease, the fates, by magic ceremonies and unlawful sacrifices. [34]

[Footnote 34: Hist. August. p. 62, 63. * Note: Quae ad speculum dicunt fieri in quo pueri praeligatis oculis, incantate..., respicere dicuntur.

* * * Tuncque puer vidisse dicitur et adventum Severi et Juliani decessionem. This seems to have been a practice somewhat similar to that of which our recent Egyptian travellers relate such extraordinary circumstances. See also Apuleius, Orat. de Magia.--M.]