

Chapter XXIV: The Retreat And Death Of Julian.--Part III.

The fields of Assyria were devoted by Julian to the calamities of war; and the philosopher retaliated on a guiltless people the acts of rapine and cruelty which had been committed by their haughty master in the Roman provinces. The trembling Assyrians summoned the rivers to their assistance; and completed, with their own hands, the ruin of their country. The roads were rendered impracticable; a flood of waters was poured into the camp; and, during several days, the troops of Julian were obliged to contend with the most discouraging hardships. But every obstacle was surmounted by the perseverance of the legionaries, who were inured to toil as well as to danger, and who felt themselves animated by the spirit of their leader. The damage was gradually repaired; the waters were restored to their proper channels; whole groves of palm-trees were cut down, and placed along the broken parts of the road; and the army passed over the broad and deeper canals, on bridges of floating rafts, which were supported by the help of bladders. Two cities of Assyria presumed to resist the arms of a Roman emperor: and they both paid the severe penalty of their rashness. At the distance of fifty miles from the royal residence of Ctesiphon, Perisabor, [57a] or Anbar, held the second rank in the province; a city, large, populous, and well fortified, surrounded with a double wall, almost encompassed by a branch of the Euphrates, and defended by the valor of a numerous garrison. The exhortations of Hormisdas were repulsed with contempt; and the ears of the Persian prince were wounded by a just reproach, that, unmindful of his royal birth, he conducted an army of strangers against his king and

country. The Assyrians maintained their loyalty by a skilful, as well as vigorous, defence; till the lucky stroke of a battering-ram, having opened a large breach, by shattering one of the angles of the wall, they hastily retired into the fortifications of the interior citadel. The soldiers of Julian rushed impetuously into the town, and after the full gratification of every military appetite, Perisabor was reduced to ashes; and the engines which assaulted the citadel were planted on the ruins of the smoking houses. The contest was continued by an incessant and mutual discharge of missile weapons; and the superiority which the Romans might derive from the mechanical powers of their balistae and catapultae was counterbalanced by the advantage of the ground on the side of the besieged. But as soon as an Helepolis had been constructed, which could engage on equal terms with the loftiest ramparts, the tremendous aspect of a moving turret, that would leave no hope of resistance or mercy, terrified the defenders of the citadel into an humble submission; and the place was surrendered only two days after Julian first appeared under the walls of Perisabor. Two thousand five hundred persons, of both sexes, the feeble remnant of a flourishing people, were permitted to retire; the plentiful magazines of corn, of arms, and of splendid furniture, were partly distributed among the troops, and partly reserved for the public service; the useless stores were destroyed by fire or thrown into the stream of the Euphrates; and the fate of Amida was revenged by the total ruin of Perisabor.

[Footnote 57a: Libanius says that it was a great city of Assyria, called after the name of the reigning king. The orator of Antioch is not

mistaken. The Persians and Syrians called it Fyrouz Schapour or Fyrouz Schahbour; in Persian, the victory of Schahpour. It owed that name to Sapor the First. It was before called Anbar St. Martin, iii. 85.--M.]

The city or rather fortress, of Maogamalcha, which was defended by sixteen large towers, a deep ditch, and two strong and solid walls of brick and bitumen, appears to have been constructed at the distance of eleven miles, as the safeguard of the capital of Persia. The emperor, apprehensive of leaving such an important fortress in his rear, immediately formed the siege of Maogamalcha; and the Roman army was distributed, for that purpose, into three divisions. Victor, at the head of the cavalry, and of a detachment of heavy-armed foot, was ordered to clear the country, as far as the banks of the Tigris, and the suburbs of Ctesiphon. The conduct of the attack was assumed by Julian himself, who seemed to place his whole dependence in the military engines which he erected against the walls; while he secretly contrived a more efficacious method of introducing his troops into the heart of the city. Under the direction of Nevitta and Dagalaiphus, the trenches were opened at a considerable distance, and gradually prolonged as far as the edge of the ditch. The ditch was speedily filled with earth; and, by the incessant labor of the troops, a mine was carried under the foundations of the walls, and sustained, at sufficient intervals, by props of timber. Three chosen cohorts, advancing in a single file, silently explored the dark and dangerous passage; till their intrepid leader whispered back the intelligence, that he was ready to issue from his confinement into the streets of the hostile city. Julian checked their

ardor, that he might insure their success; and immediately diverted the attention of the garrison, by the tumult and clamor of a general assault. The Persians, who, from their walls, contemptuously beheld the progress of an impotent attack, celebrated with songs of triumph the glory of Sapor; and ventured to assure the emperor, that he might ascend the starry mansion of Ormusd, before he could hope to take the impregnable city of Maogamalcha. The city was already taken. History has recorded the name of a private soldier the first who ascended from the mine into a deserted tower. The passage was widened by his companions, who pressed forwards with impatient valor. Fifteen hundred enemies were already in the midst of the city. The astonished garrison abandoned the walls, and their only hope of safety; the gates were instantly burst open; and the revenge of the soldier, unless it were suspended by lust or avarice, was satiated by an undistinguishing massacre. The governor, who had yielded on a promise of mercy, was burnt alive, a few days afterwards, on a charge of having uttered some disrespectful words against the honor of Prince Hormisdas. The fortifications were razed to the ground; and not a vestige was left, that the city of Maogamalcha had ever existed. The neighborhood of the capital of Persia was adorned with three stately palaces, laboriously enriched with every production that could gratify the luxury and pride of an Eastern monarch. The pleasant situation of the gardens along the banks of the Tigris, was improved, according to the Persian taste, by the symmetry of flowers, fountains, and shady walks: and spacious parks were enclosed for the reception of the bears, lions, and wild boars, which were maintained at a considerable expense for the pleasure of the royal chase. The park walls

were broken down, the savage game was abandoned to the darts of the soldiers, and the palaces of Sapor were reduced to ashes, by the command of the Roman emperor. Julian, on this occasion, showed himself ignorant, or careless, of the laws of civility, which the prudence and refinement of polished ages have established between hostile princes. Yet these wanton ravages need not excite in our breasts any vehement emotions of pity or resentment. A simple, naked statue, finished by the hand of a Grecian artist, is of more genuine value than all these rude and costly monuments of Barbaric labor; and, if we are more deeply affected by the ruin of a palace than by the conflagration of a cottage, our humanity must have formed a very erroneous estimate of the miseries of human life. [57]

[Footnote 57a: And as guilty of a double treachery, having first engaged to surrender the city, and afterwards valiantly defended it. Gibbon, perhaps, should have noticed this charge, though he may have rejected it as improbable Compare Zosimus. iii. 23.--M.]

[Footnote 57: The operations of the Assyrian war are circumstantially related by Ammianus, (xxiv. 2, 3, 4, 5,) Libanius, (Orat. Parent. c. 112-123, p. 335-347,) Zosimus, (l. iii. p. 168-180,) and Gregory Nazianzen, (Orat iv. p. 113, 144.) The military criticisms of the saint are devoutly copied by Tillemont, his faithful slave.]

Julian was an object of hatred and terror to the Persian and the painters of that nation represented the invader of their country under

the emblem of a furious lion, who vomited from his mouth a consuming fire. [58] To his friends and soldiers the philosophic hero appeared in a more amiable light; and his virtues were never more conspicuously displayed, than in the last and most active period of his life. He practised, without effort, and almost without merit, the habitual qualities of temperance and sobriety. According to the dictates of that artificial wisdom, which assumes an absolute dominion over the mind and body, he sternly refused himself the indulgence of the most natural appetites. [59] In the warm climate of Assyria, which solicited a luxurious people to the gratification of every sensual desire, [60] a youthful conqueror preserved his chastity pure and inviolate; nor was Julian ever tempted, even by a motive of curiosity, to visit his female captives of exquisite beauty, [61] who, instead of resisting his power, would have disputed with each other the honor of his embraces. With the same firmness that he resisted the allurements of love, he sustained the hardships of war. When the Romans marched through the flat and flooded country, their sovereign, on foot, at the head of his legions, shared their fatigues and animated their diligence. In every useful labor, the hand of Julian was prompt and strenuous; and the Imperial purple was wet and dirty as the coarse garment of the meanest soldier. The two sieges allowed him some remarkable opportunities of signaling his personal valor, which, in the improved state of the military art, can seldom be exerted by a prudent general. The emperor stood before the citadel before the citadel of Perisabor, insensible of his extreme danger, and encouraged his troops to burst open the gates of iron, till he was almost overwhelmed under a cloud of missile weapons and huge stones,

that were directed against his person. As he examined the exterior fortifications of Maogamalcha, two Persians, devoting themselves for their country, suddenly rushed upon him with drawn cimeters: the emperor dexterously received their blows on his uplifted shield; and, with a steady and well-aimed thrust, laid one of his adversaries dead at his feet. The esteem of a prince who possesses the virtues which he approves, is the noblest recompense of a deserving subject; and the authority which Julian derived from his personal merit, enabled him to revive and enforce the rigor of ancient discipline. He punished with death or ignominy the misbehavior of three troops of horse, who, in a skirmish with the Surenas, had lost their honor and one of their standards: and he distinguished with obsidional [62] crowns the valor of the foremost soldiers, who had ascended into the city of Maogamalcha.

After the siege of Perisabor, the firmness of the emperor was exercised by the insolent avarice of the army, who loudly complained, that their services were rewarded by a trifling donative of one hundred pieces of silver. His just indignation was expressed in the grave and manly language of a Roman. "Riches are the object of your desires; those riches are in the hands of the Persians; and the spoils of this fruitful country are proposed as the prize of your valor and discipline. Believe me," added Julian, "the Roman republic, which formerly possessed such immense treasures, is now reduced to want and wretchedness once our princes have been persuaded, by weak and interested ministers, to purchase with gold the tranquillity of the Barbarians. The revenue is exhausted; the cities are ruined; the provinces are dispeopled.

For myself, the only inheritance that I have received from my royal ancestors is a soul incapable of fear; and as long as I am convinced that every real advantage is seated in the mind, I shall not blush to acknowledge an honorable poverty, which, in the days of ancient virtue, was considered as the glory of Fabricius. That glory, and that virtue, may be your own, if you will listen to the voice of Heaven and of your leader. But if you will rashly persist, if you are determined to renew the shameful and mischievous examples of old seditions, proceed. As it becomes an emperor who has filled the first rank among men, I am prepared to die, standing; and to despise a precarious life, which, every hour, may depend on an accidental fever. If I have been found unworthy of the command, there are now among you, (I speak it with pride and pleasure,) there are many chiefs whose merit and experience are equal to the conduct of the most important war. Such has been the temper of my reign, that I can retire, without regret, and without apprehension, to the obscurity of a private station" [63] The modest resolution of Julian was answered by the unanimous applause and cheerful obedience of the Romans, who declared their confidence of victory, while they fought under the banners of their heroic prince. Their courage was kindled by his frequent and familiar asseverations, (for such wishes were the oaths of Julian,) "So may I reduce the Persians under the yoke!" "Thus may I restore the strength and splendor of the republic!" The love of fame was the ardent passion of his soul: but it was not before he trampled on the ruins of Maogamalcha, that he allowed himself to say, "We have now provided some materials for the sophist of Antioch." [64]



[Footnote 58: Libanius de ulciscenda Juliani nece, c. 13, p. 162.]

[Footnote 59: The famous examples of Cyrus, Alexander, and Scipio, were acts of justice. Julian's chastity was voluntary, and, in his opinion, meritorious.]

[Footnote 60: Sallust (ap. Vet. Scholiast. Juvenal. Satir. i. 104) observes, that nihil corruptius moribus. The matrons and virgins of Babylon freely mingled with the men in licentious banquets; and as they felt the intoxication of wine and love, they gradually, and almost completely, threw aside the encumbrance of dress; ad ultimum imaginum corporum velamenta projiciunt. Q. Curtius, v. 1.]

[Footnote 61: Ex virginibus autem quae speciosae sunt captae, et in Perside, ubi faeminarum pulchritudo excellit, nec contrectare aliquam votuit nec videre. Ammian. xxiv. 4. The native race of Persians is small and ugly; but it has been improved by the perpetual mixture of Circassian blood, (Herodot. 1. iii. c. 97. Buffon, Hist. Naturelle, tom. iii. p. 420.)]

[Footnote 62: Obsidionalibus coronis donati. Ammian. xxiv. 4. Either Julian or his historian were unskillful antiquaries. He should have given mural crowns. The obsidional were the reward of a general who had delivered a besieged city, (Aulus Gellius, Noct. Attic. v. 6.)]

[Footnote 63: I give this speech as original and genuine. Ammianus might hear, could transcribe, and was incapable of inventing, it. I have used some slight freedoms, and conclude with the most forcible sentence.]

[Footnote 64: Ammian. xxiv. 3. Libanius, Orat. Parent. c. 122, p. 346.]

The successful valor of Julian had triumphed over all the obstacles that opposed his march to the gates of Ctesiphon. But the reduction, or even the siege, of the capital of Persia, was still at a distance: nor can the military conduct of the emperor be clearly apprehended, without a knowledge of the country which was the theatre of his bold and skilful operations. [65] Twenty miles to the south of Bagdad, and on the eastern bank of the Tigris, the curiosity of travellers has observed some ruins of the palaces of Ctesiphon, which, in the time of Julian, was a great and populous city. The name and glory of the adjacent Seleucia were forever extinguished; and the only remaining quarter of that Greek colony had resumed, with the Assyrian language and manners, the primitive appellation of Coche. Coche was situate on the western side of the Tigris; but it was naturally considered as a suburb of Ctesiphon, with which we may suppose it to have been connected by a permanent bridge of boats.

The united parts contribute to form the common epithet of Al Modain, the cities, which the Orientals have bestowed on the winter residence of the Sassinadees; and the whole circumference of the Persian capital was strongly fortified by the waters of the river, by lofty walls, and by

impracticable morasses. Near the ruins of Seleucia, the camp of Julian was fixed, and secured, by a ditch and rampart, against the sallies of the numerous and enterprising garrison of Coche. In this fruitful and pleasant country, the Romans were plentifully supplied with water and forage: and several forts, which might have embarrassed the motions of the army, submitted, after some resistance, to the efforts of their valor. The fleet passed from the Euphrates into an artificial derivation of that river, which pours a copious and navigable stream into the Tigris, at a small distance below the great city. If they had followed this royal canal, which bore the name of Nahar-Malcha, [66] the intermediate situation of Coche would have separated the fleet and army of Julian; and the rash attempt of steering against the current of the Tigris, and forcing their way through the midst of a hostile capital, must have been attended with the total destruction of the Roman navy. The prudence of the emperor foresaw the danger, and provided the remedy. As he had minutely studied the operations of Trajan in the same country, he soon recollected that his warlike predecessor had dug a new and navigable canal, which, leaving Coche on the right hand, conveyed the waters of the Nahar-Malcha into the river Tigris, at some distance above the cities. From the information of the peasants, Julian ascertained the vestiges of this ancient work, which were almost obliterated by design or accident. By the indefatigable labor of the soldiers, a broad and deep channel was speedily prepared for the reception of the Euphrates. A strong dike was constructed to interrupt the ordinary current of the Nahar-Malcha: a flood of waters rushed impetuously into their new bed; and the Roman fleet, steering their triumphant course into the Tigris,

derided the vain and ineffectual barriers which the Persians of Ctesiphon had erected to oppose their passage.

[Footnote 65: M. d'Anville, (Mem. de l'Academie des Inscriptions, tom. xxxviii p. 246-259) has ascertained the true position and distance of Babylon, Seleucia, Ctesiphon, Bagdad, &c. The Roman traveller, Pietro della Valle, (tom. i. lett. xvii. p. 650-780,) seems to be the most intelligent spectator of that famous province. He is a gentleman and a scholar, but intolerably vain and prolix.]

[Footnote 66: The Royal Canal (Nahar-Malcha) might be successively restored, altered, divided, &c., (Cellarius, Geograph. Antiq. tom. ii. p. 453;) and these changes may serve to explain the seeming contradictions of antiquity. In the time of Julian, it must have fallen into the Euphrates below Ctesiphon.]

As it became necessary to transport the Roman army over the Tigris, another labor presented itself, of less toil, but of more danger, than the preceding expedition. The stream was broad and rapid; the ascent steep and difficult; and the intrenchments which had been formed on the ridge of the opposite bank, were lined with a numerous army of heavy cuirassiers, dexterous archers, and huge elephants; who (according to the extravagant hyperbole of Libanius) could trample with the same ease a field of corn, or a legion of Romans. [67] In the presence of such an enemy, the construction of a bridge was impracticable; and the intrepid prince, who instantly seized the only possible expedient, concealed

his design, till the moment of execution, from the knowledge of the Barbarians, of his own troops, and even of his generals themselves. Under the specious pretence of examining the state of the magazines, fourscore vessels [67a] were gradually unladen; and a select detachment, apparently destined for some secret expedition, was ordered to stand to their arms on the first signal. Julian disguised the silent anxiety of his own mind with smiles of confidence and joy; and amused the hostile nations with the spectacle of military games, which he insultingly celebrated under the walls of Coche. The day was consecrated to pleasure; but, as soon as the hour of supper was passed, the emperor summoned the generals to his tent, and acquainted them that he had fixed that night for the passage of the Tigris. They stood in silent and respectful astonishment; but, when the venerable Sallust assumed the privilege of his age and experience, the rest of the chiefs supported with freedom the weight of his prudent remonstrances. [68] Julian contented himself with observing, that conquest and safety depended on the attempt; that instead of diminishing, the number of their enemies would be increased, by successive reinforcements; and that a longer delay would neither contract the breadth of the stream, nor level the height of the bank. The signal was instantly given, and obeyed; the most impatient of the legionaries leaped into five vessels that lay nearest to the bank; and as they plied their oars with intrepid diligence, they were lost, after a few moments, in the darkness of the night. A flame arose on the opposite side; and Julian, who too clearly understood that his foremost vessels, in attempting to land, had been fired by the enemy, dexterously converted their extreme danger into a presage

of victory. "Our fellow-soldiers," he eagerly exclaimed, "are already masters of the bank; see--they make the appointed signal; let us hasten to emulate and assist their courage." The united and rapid motion of a great fleet broke the violence of the current, and they reached the eastern shore of the Tigris with sufficient speed to extinguish the flames, and rescue their adventurous companions. The difficulties of a steep and lofty ascent were increased by the weight of armor, and the darkness of the night. A shower of stones, darts, and fire, was incessantly discharged on the heads of the assailants; who, after an arduous struggle, climbed the bank and stood victorious upon the rampart. As soon as they possessed a more equal field, Julian, who, with his light infantry, had led the attack, [69] darted through the ranks a skilful and experienced eye: his bravest soldiers, according to the precepts of Homer, [70] were distributed in the front and rear: and all the trumpets of the Imperial army sounded to battle. The Romans, after sending up a military shout, advanced in measured steps to the animating notes of martial music; launched their formidable javelins; and rushed forwards with drawn swords, to deprive the Barbarians, by a closer onset, of the advantage of their missile weapons. The whole engagement lasted above twelve hours; till the gradual retreat of the Persians was changed into a disorderly flight, of which the shameful example was given by the principal leader, and the Surenas himself. They were pursued to the gates of Ctesiphon; and the conquerors might have entered the dismayed city, [71] if their general, Victor, who was dangerously wounded with an arrow, had not conjured them to desist from a rash attempt, which must be fatal, if it were not successful. On their side,

the Romans acknowledged the loss of only seventy-five men; while they affirmed, that the Barbarians had left on the field of battle two thousand five hundred, or even six thousand, of their bravest soldiers. The spoil was such as might be expected from the riches and luxury of an Oriental camp; large quantities of silver and gold, splendid arms and trappings, and beds and tables of massy silver. [71a] The victorious emperor distributed, as the rewards of valor, some honorable gifts, civic, and mural, and naval crowns; which he, and perhaps he alone, esteemed more precious than the wealth of Asia. A solemn sacrifice was offered to the god of war, but the appearances of the victims threatened the most inauspicious events; and Julian soon discovered, by less ambiguous signs, that he had now reached the term of his prosperity.

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[Footnote 67: Rien n'est beau que le vrai; a maxim which should be inscribed on the desk of every rhetorician.]

[Footnote 67a: This is a mistake; each vessel (according to Zosimus two, according to Ammianus five) had eighty men. Amm. xxiv. 6, with Wagner's note. Gibbon must have read octogenas for octogenis. The five vessels selected for this service were remarkably large and strong provision transports. The strength of the fleet remained with Julian to carry over the army--M.]

[Footnote 68: Libanius alludes to the most powerful of the generals. I have ventured to name Sallust. Ammianus says, of all the leaders, quod

acri metu territ acrimetu territi duces concordi precatu precaut fieri prohibere tentarent. \* Note: It is evident that Gibbon has mistaken the sense of Libanius; his words can only apply to a commander of a detachment, not to so eminent a person as the Praefect of the East. St. Martin, iii. 313.--M.]

[Footnote 69: Hinc Imperator.... (says Ammianus) ipse cum levis armaturae auxiliis per prima postremaque discurrens, &c. Yet Zosimus, his friend, does not allow him to pass the river till two days after the battle.]

[Footnote 70: Secundum Homericam dispositionem. A similar disposition is ascribed to the wise Nestor, in the fourth book of the Iliad; and Homer was never absent from the mind of Julian.]

[Footnote 71: Persas terrore subito miscuerunt, versisque agminibus totius gentis, apertas Ctesiphontis portas victor miles intrasset, ni major praedarum occasio fuisset, quam cura victoriae, (Sextus Rufus de Provinciis c. 28.) Their avarice might dispose them to hear the advice of Victor.]

[Footnote 71a: The suburbs of Ctesiphon, according to a new fragment of Eunapius, were so full of provisions, that the soldiers were in danger of suffering from excess. Mai, p. 260. Eunapius in Niebuhr. Nov. Byz. Coll. 68. Julian exhibited warlike dances and games in his camp to recreate the soldiers Ibid.--M.]



[Footnote 72: The labor of the canal, the passage of the Tigris, and the victory, are described by Ammianus, (xxiv. 5, 6,) Libanius, (Orat. Parent. c. 124-128, p. 347-353,) Greg. Nazianzen, (Orat. iv. p. 115,) Zosimus, (l. iii. p. 181-183,) and Sextus Rufus, (de Provinciis, c. 28.)]

On the second day after the battle, the domestic guards, the Jovians and Herculians, and the remaining troops, which composed near two thirds of the whole army, were securely wafted over the Tigris. [73] While the Persians beheld from the walls of Ctesiphon the desolation of the adjacent country, Julian cast many an anxious look towards the North, in full expectation, that as he himself had victoriously penetrated to the capital of Sapor, the march and junction of his lieutenants, Sebastian and Procopius, would be executed with the same courage and diligence. His expectations were disappointed by the treachery of the Armenian king, who permitted, and most probably directed, the desertion of his auxiliary troops from the camp of the Romans; [74] and by the dissensions of the two generals, who were incapable of forming or executing any plan for the public service. When the emperor had relinquished the hope of this important reenforcement, he condescended to hold a council of war, and approved, after a full debate, the sentiment of those generals, who dissuaded the siege of Ctesiphon, as a fruitless and pernicious undertaking. It is not easy for us to conceive, by what arts of fortification a city thrice besieged and taken by the predecessors of Julian could be rendered impregnable against an army of

sixty thousand Romans, commanded by a brave and experienced general, and abundantly supplied with ships, provisions, battering engines, and military stores. But we may rest assured, from the love of glory, and contempt of danger, which formed the character of Julian, that he was not discouraged by any trivial or imaginary obstacles. [75] At the very time when he declined the siege of Ctesiphon, he rejected, with obstinacy and disdain, the most flattering offers of a negotiation of peace. Sapor, who had been so long accustomed to the tardy ostentation of Constantius, was surprised by the intrepid diligence of his successor. As far as the confines of India and Scythia, the satraps of the distant provinces were ordered to assemble their troops, and to march, without delay, to the assistance of their monarch. But their preparations were dilatory, their motions slow; and before Sapor could lead an army into the field, he received the melancholy intelligence of the devastation of Assyria, the ruin of his palaces, and the slaughter of his bravest troops, who defended the passage of the Tigris. The pride of royalty was humbled in the dust; he took his repasts on the ground; and the disorder of his hair expressed the grief and anxiety of his mind. Perhaps he would not have refused to purchase, with one half of his kingdom, the safety of the remainder; and he would have gladly subscribed himself, in a treaty of peace, the faithful and dependent ally of the Roman conqueror. Under the pretence of private business, a minister of rank and confidence was secretly despatched to embrace the knees of Hormisdas, and to request, in the language of a suppliant, that he might be introduced into the presence of the emperor. The Sassanian prince, whether he listened to the voice of pride or humanity,

whether he consulted the sentiments of his birth, or the duties of his situation, was equally inclined to promote a salutary measure, which would terminate the calamities of Persia, and secure the triumph of Rome. He was astonished by the inflexible firmness of a hero, who remembered, most unfortunately for himself and for his country, that Alexander had uniformly rejected the propositions of Darius. But as Julian was sensible, that the hope of a safe and honorable peace might cool the ardor of his troops, he earnestly requested that Hormisdas would privately dismiss the minister of Sapor, and conceal this dangerous temptation from the knowledge of the camp. [76]

[Footnote 73: The fleet and army were formed in three divisions, of which the first only had passed during the night.]

[Footnote 74: Moses of Chorene (Hist. Armen. l. iii. c. 15, p. 246) supplies us with a national tradition, and a spurious letter. I have borrowed only the leading circumstance, which is consistent with truth, probability, and Libanius, (Orat. Parent. c. 131, p. 355.)]

[Footnote 75: *Civitas inexpugnabilis, facinus audax et importunum.* Ammianus, xxiv. 7. His fellow-soldier, Eutropius, turns aside from the difficulty, *Assyriamque populatus, castra apud Ctesiphontem stativa aliquandiu habuit: remeansbue victor, &c.* x. 16. Zosimus is artful or ignorant, and Socrates inaccurate.]

[Footnote 76: Libanius, Orat. Parent. c. 130, p. 354, c. 139, p. 361.]

Socrates, 1. iii. c. 21. The ecclesiastical historian imputes the refusal of peace to the advice of Maximus. Such advice was unworthy of a philosopher; but the philosopher was likewise a magician, who flattered the hopes and passions of his master.]