

Chapter XXV: Reigns Of Jovian And Valentinian, Division Of The Empire.--Part II.

Before Valentinian divided the provinces, he reformed the administration of the empire. All ranks of subjects, who had been injured or oppressed under the reign of Julian, were invited to support their public accusations. The silence of mankind attested the spotless integrity of the praefect Sallust; [29] and his own pressing solicitations, that he might be permitted to retire from the business of the state, were rejected by Valentinian with the most honorable expressions of friendship and esteem. But among the favorites of the late emperor, there were many who had abused his credulity or superstition; and who could no longer hope to be protected either by favor or justice. [30] The greater part of the ministers of the palace, and the governors of the provinces, were removed from their respective stations; yet the eminent merit of some officers was distinguished from the obnoxious crowd; and, notwithstanding the opposite clamors of zeal and resentment, the whole proceedings of this delicate inquiry appear to have been conducted with a reasonable share of wisdom and moderation. [31] The festivity of a new reign received a short and suspicious interruption from the sudden illness of the two princes; but as soon as their health was restored, they left Constantinople in the beginning of the spring. In the castle, or palace, of Mediana, only three miles from Naissus, they executed the solemn and final division of the Roman empire. [32] Valentinian bestowed on his brother the rich praefecture of the East, from the Lower Danube to the confines of Persia; whilst he reserved for

his immediate government the warlike [3a] praefectures of Illyricum, Italy, and Gaul, from the extremity of Greece to the Caledonian rampart, and from the rampart of Caledonia to the foot of Mount Atlas. The provincial administration remained on its former basis; but a double supply of generals and magistrates was required for two councils, and two courts: the division was made with a just regard to their peculiar merit and situation, and seven master-generals were soon created, either of the cavalry or infantry. When this important business had been amicably transacted, Valentinian and Valens embraced for the last time. The emperor of the West established his temporary residence at Milan; and the emperor of the East returned to Constantinople, to assume the dominion of fifty provinces, of whose language he was totally ignorant.

[33]

[Footnote 29: Notwithstanding the evidence of Zonaras, Suidas, and the Paschal Chronicle, M. de Tillemont (Hist. des Empereurs, tom. v. p. 671) wishes to disbelieve those stories, si avantageuses a un payen.]

[Footnote 30: Eunapius celebrates and exaggerates the sufferings of Maximus. (p. 82, 83;) yet he allows that the sophist or magician, the guilty favorite of Julian, and the personal enemy of Valentinian, was dismissed on the payment of a small fine.]

[Footnote 31: The loose assertions of a general disgrace (Zosimus, l. iv. p. 201), are detected and refuted by Tillemont, (tom. v. p. 21.)]

[Footnote 32: Ammianus, xxvi. 5.]

[Footnote 32a: *Ipaē supra impacati Rhen semibarbaras ripas raptim vexilla constituens * * Princeps creatus ad difficilem militiam revertisti. Symm. Orat. 81.--M.*]

[Footnote 33: Ammianus says, in general terms, *subagrestis ingenii, nec bellicis nec liberalibus studiis eruditus. Ammian. xxxi. 14.* The orator Themistius, with the genuine impertinence of a Greek, wishes for the first time to speak the Latin language, the dialect of his sovereign. *Orat. vi. p. 71.*]

The tranquility of the East was soon disturbed by rebellion; and the throne of Valens was threatened by the daring attempts of a rival whose affinity to the emperor Julian [34] was his sole merit, and had been his only crime. Procopius had been hastily promoted from the obscure station of a tribune, and a notary, to the joint command of the army of Mesopotamia; the public opinion already named him as the successor of a prince who was destitute of natural heirs; and a vain rumor was propagated by his friends, or his enemies, that Julian, before the altar of the Moon at Carrhae, had privately invested Procopius with the Imperial purple. [35] He endeavored, by his dutiful and submissive behavior, to disarm the jealousy of Jovian; resigned, without a contest, his military command; and retired, with his wife and family, to cultivate the ample patrimony which he possessed in the province of Cappadocia. These useful and innocent occupations were interrupted by

the appearance of an officer with a band of soldiers, who, in the name of his new sovereigns, Valentinian and Valens, was despatched to conduct the unfortunate Procopius either to a perpetual prison or an ignominious death. His presence of mind procured him a longer respite, and a more splendid fate. Without presuming to dispute the royal mandate, he requested the indulgence of a few moments to embrace his weeping family; and while the vigilance of his guards was relaxed by a plentiful entertainment, he dexterously escaped to the sea-coast of the Euxine, from whence he passed over to the country of Bosphorus. In that sequestered region he remained many months, exposed to the hardships of exile, of solitude, and of want; his melancholy temper brooding over his misfortunes, and his mind agitated by the just apprehension, that, if any accident should discover his name, the faithless Barbarians would violate, without much scruple, the laws of hospitality. In a moment of impatience and despair, Procopius embarked in a merchant vessel, which made sail for Constantinople; and boldly aspired to the rank of a sovereign, because he was not allowed to enjoy the security of a subject. At first he lurked in the villages of Bithynia, continually changing his habitation and his disguise. [36] By degrees he ventured into the capital, trusted his life and fortune to the fidelity of two friends, a senator and a eunuch, and conceived some hopes of success, from the intelligence which he obtained of the actual state of public affairs. The body of the people was infected with a spirit of discontent: they regretted the justice and the abilities of Sallust, who had been imprudently dismissed from the praefecture of the East. They despised the character of Valens, which was rude without vigor,

and feeble without mildness. They dreaded the influence of his father-in-law, the patrician Petronius, a cruel and rapacious minister, who rigorously exacted all the arrears of tribute that might remain unpaid since the reign of the emperor Aurelian. The circumstances were propitious to the designs of a usurper. The hostile measures of the Persians required the presence of Valens in Syria: from the Danube to the Euphrates the troops were in motion; and the capital was occasionally filled with the soldiers who passed or repassed the Thracian Bosphorus. Two cohorts of Gaul were persuaded to listen to the secret proposals of the conspirators; which were recommended by the promise of a liberal donative; and, as they still revered the memory of Julian, they easily consented to support the hereditary claim of his proscribed kinsman. At the dawn of day they were drawn up near the baths of Anastasia; and Procopius, clothed in a purple garment, more suitable to a player than to a monarch, appeared, as if he rose from the dead, in the midst of Constantinople. The soldiers, who were prepared for his reception, saluted their trembling prince with shouts of joy and vows of fidelity. Their numbers were soon increased by a band of sturdy peasants, collected from the adjacent country; and Procopius, shielded by the arms of his adherents, was successively conducted to the tribunal, the senate, and the palace. During the first moments of his tumultuous reign, he was astonished and terrified by the gloomy silence of the people; who were either ignorant of the cause, or apprehensive of the event. But his military strength was superior to any actual resistance: the malecontents flocked to the standard of rebellion; the poor were excited by the hopes, and the rich were intimidated by the

fear, of a general pillage; and the obstinate credulity of the multitude was once more deceived by the promised advantages of a revolution. The magistrates were seized; the prisons and arsenals broke open; the gates, and the entrance of the harbor, were diligently occupied; and, in a few hours, Procopius became the absolute, though precarious, master of the Imperial city. [36a] The usurper improved this unexpected success with some degree of courage and dexterity. He artfully propagated the rumors and opinions the most favorable to his interest; while he deluded the populace by giving audience to the frequent, but imaginary, ambassadors of distant nations. The large bodies of troops stationed in the cities of Thrace and the fortresses of the Lower Danube, were gradually involved in the guilt of rebellion: and the Gothic princes consented to supply the sovereign of Constantinople with the formidable strength of several thousand auxiliaries. His generals passed the Bosphorus, and subdued, without an effort, the unarmed, but wealthy provinces of Bithynia and Asia. After an honorable defence, the city and island of Cyzicus yielded to his power; the renowned legions of the Jovians and Herculeans embraced the cause of the usurper, whom they were ordered to crush; and, as the veterans were continually augmented with new levies, he soon appeared at the head of an army, whose valor, as well as numbers, were not unequal to the greatness of the contest. The son of Hormisdas, [37] a youth of spirit and ability, condescended to draw his sword against the lawful emperor of the East; and the Persian prince was immediately invested with the ancient and extraordinary powers of a Roman Proconsul. The alliance of Faustina, the widow of the emperor Constantius, who intrusted herself and her daughter to the hands of

the usurper, added dignity and reputation to his cause. The princess Constantia, who was then about five years of age, accompanied, in a litter, the march of the army. She was shown to the multitude in the arms of her adopted father; and, as often as she passed through the ranks, the tenderness of the soldiers was inflamed into martial fury: [38] they recollected the glories of the house of Constantine, and they declared, with loyal acclamation, that they would shed the last drop of their blood in the defence of the royal infant. [39]

[Footnote 34: The uncertain degree of alliance, or consanguinity, is expressed by the words, cognatus, consobrinus, (see Valesius ad Ammian. xxiii. 3.) The mother of Procopius might be a sister of Basilina and Count Julian, the mother and uncle of the Apostate. Ducange, Fam. Byzantin. p. 49.]

[Footnote 35: Ammian. xxiii. 3, xxvi. 6. He mentions the report with much hesitation: *susurravit obscurior fama; nemo enim dicti auctor exstitit verus*. It serves, however, to remark, that Procopius was a Pagan. Yet his religion does not appear to have promoted, or obstructed, his pretensions.]

[Footnote 36: One of his retreats was a country-house of Eunomius, the heretic. The master was absent, innocent, ignorant; yet he narrowly escaped a sentence of death, and was banished into the remote parts of Mauritania, (Philostorg. l. ix. c. 5, 8, and Godefroy's Dissert. p. 369-378.)]

[Footnote 36a: It may be suspected, from a fragment of Eunapius, that the heathen and philosophic party espoused the cause of Procopius. Heraclius, the Cynic, a man who had been honored by a philosophic controversy with Julian, striking the ground with his staff, incited him to courage with the line of Homer Eunapius. Mai, p. 207 or in Niebuhr's edition, p. 73.--M.]

[Footnote 37: *Hormisdæ maturo juveni Hormisdæ regalis illius filio, potestatem Proconsulis detulit; et civilia, more veterum, et bella, recturo. Ammian. xxvi. 8.* The Persian prince escaped with honor and safety, and was afterwards (A. D. 380) restored to the same extraordinary office of proconsul of Bithynia, (Tillemont, *Hist. des Empereurs*, tom. v. p. 204) I am ignorant whether the race of Sassan was propagated. I find (A. D. 514) a pope Hormisdas; but he was a native of Frusino, in Italy, (Pagi *Brev. Pontific.* tom. i. p. 247)]

[Footnote 38: The infant rebel was afterwards the wife of the emperor Gratian but she died young, and childless. See Ducange, *Fam. Byzantin.* p. 48, 59.]

[Footnote 39: *Sequimini culminis summi prosapiam*, was the language of Procopius, who affected to despise the obscure birth, and fortuitous election of the upstart Pannonian. *Ammian. xxvi. 7.*]

In the mean while Valentinian was alarmed and perplexed by the doubtful

intelligence of the revolt of the East. [39a] The difficulties of a German was forced him to confine his immediate care to the safety of his own dominions; and, as every channel of communication was stopped or corrupted, he listened, with doubtful anxiety, to the rumors which were industriously spread, that the defeat and death of Valens had left Procopius sole master of the Eastern provinces. Valens was not dead: but on the news of the rebellion, which he received at Caesarea, he basely despaired of his life and fortune; proposed to negotiate with the usurper, and discovered his secret inclination to abdicate the Imperial purple. The timid monarch was saved from disgrace and ruin by the firmness of his ministers, and their abilities soon decided in his favor the event of the civil war. In a season of tranquillity, Sallust had resigned without a murmur; but as soon as the public safety was attacked, he ambitiously solicited the preeminence of toil and danger; and the restoration of that virtuous minister to the praefecture of the East, was the first step which indicated the repentance of Valens, and satisfied the minds of the people. The reign of Procopius was apparently supported by powerful armies and obedient provinces. But many of the principal officers, military as well as civil, had been urged, either by motives of duty or interest, to withdraw themselves from the guilty scene; or to watch the moment of betraying, and deserting, the cause of the usurper. Lupicinus advanced by hasty marches, to bring the legions of Syria to the aid of Valens. Arintheus, who, in strength, beauty, and valor, excelled all the heroes of the age, attacked with a small troop a superior body of the rebels. When he beheld the faces of the soldiers who had served under his banner, he commanded them, with a loud voice,

to seize and deliver up their pretended leader; and such was the ascendant of his genius, that this extraordinary order was instantly obeyed. [40] Arbetio, a respectable veteran of the great Constantine, who had been distinguished by the honors of the consulship, was persuaded to leave his retirement, and once more to conduct an army into the field. In the heat of action, calmly taking off his helmet, he showed his gray hairs and venerable countenance: saluted the soldiers of Procopius by the endearing names of children and companions, and exhorted them no longer to support the desperate cause of a contemptible tyrant; but to follow their old commander, who had so often led them to honor and victory. In the two engagements of Thyatira [41] and Nacolia, the unfortunate Procopius was deserted by his troops, who were seduced by the instructions and example of their perfidious officers. After wandering some time among the woods and mountains of Phrygia, he was betrayed by his desponding followers, conducted to the Imperial camp, and immediately beheaded. He suffered the ordinary fate of an unsuccessful usurper; but the acts of cruelty which were exercised by the conqueror, under the forms of legal justice, excited the pity and indignation of mankind. [42]

[Footnote 39a: Symmachus describes his embarrassment. "The Germans are the common enemies of the state, Procopius the private foe of the Emperor; his first care must be victory, his second revenge." Symm. Orat. p. 11.--M.]

[Footnote 40: Et dedignatus hominem superare certamine despicabilem,

auctoritatis et celsi fiducia corporis ipsis hostibus jussit, suum vincire rectorem: atque ita turmarum, antesignanus umbratilis comprehensus suorum manibus. The strength and beauty of Arintheus, the new Hercules, are celebrated by St. Basil, who supposed that God had created him as an inimitable model of the human species. The painters and sculptors could not express his figure: the historians appeared fabulous when they related his exploits, (Ammian. xxvi. and Vales. ad loc.)]

[Footnote 41: The same field of battle is placed by Ammianus in Lycia, and by Zosimus at Thyatira, which are at the distance of 150 miles from each other. But Thyatira alluitur Lyco, (Plin. Hist. Natur. v. 31, Cellarius, Geograph. Antiq. tom. ii. p. 79;) and the transcribers might easily convert an obscure river into a well-known province. * Note: Ammianus and Zosimus place the last battle at Nacolia in Phrygia; Ammianus altogether omits the former battle near Thyatira. Procopius was on his march (iter tendebat) towards Lycia. See Wagner's note, in c.--M.]

[Footnote 42: The adventures, usurpation, and fall of Procopius, are related, in a regular series, by Ammianus, (xxvi. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10,) and Zosimus, (l. iv. p. 203-210.) They often illustrate, and seldom contradict, each other. Themistius (Orat. vii. p. 91, 92) adds some base panegyric; and Euna pius (p. 83, 84) some malicious satire. ---Symmachus joins with Themistius in praising the clemency of Valens dic victoriae moderatus est, quasi contra se nemo pugnavit. Symm. Orat. p. 12.--M.]

Such indeed are the common and natural fruits of despotism and rebellion. But the inquisition into the crime of magic, [42a] which, under the reign of the two brothers, was so rigorously prosecuted both at Rome and Antioch, was interpreted as the fatal symptom, either of the displeasure of Heaven, or of the depravity of mankind. [43] Let us not hesitate to indulge a liberal pride, that, in the present age, the enlightened part of Europe has abolished [44] a cruel and odious prejudice, which reigned in every climate of the globe, and adhered to every system of religious opinions. [45] The nations, and the sects, of the Roman world, admitted with equal credulity, and similar abhorrence, the reality of that infernal art, [46] which was able to control the eternal order of the planets, and the voluntary operations of the human mind. They dreaded the mysterious power of spells and incantations, of potent herbs, and execrable rites; which could extinguish or recall life, inflame the passions of the soul, blast the works of creation, and extort from the reluctant daemons the secrets of futurity. They believed, with the wildest inconsistency, that this preternatural dominion of the air, of earth, and of hell, was exercised, from the vilest motives of malice or gain, by some wrinkled hags and itinerant sorcerers, who passed their obscure lives in penury and contempt. [47] The arts of magic were equally condemned by the public opinion, and by the laws of Rome; but as they tended to gratify the most imperious passions of the heart of man, they were continually proscribed, and continually practised. [48] An imaginary cause as capable of producing the most serious and mischievous effects. The dark predictions of the

death of an emperor, or the success of a conspiracy, were calculated only to stimulate the hopes of ambition, and to dissolve the ties of fidelity; and the intentional guilt of magic was aggravated by the actual crimes of treason and sacrilege. [49] Such vain terrors disturbed the peace of society, and the happiness of individuals; and the harmless flame which insensibly melted a waxen image, might derive a powerful and pernicious energy from the affrighted fancy of the person whom it was maliciously designed to represent. [50] From the infusion of those herbs, which were supposed to possess a supernatural influence, it was an easy step to the use of more substantial poison; and the folly of mankind sometimes became the instrument, and the mask, of the most atrocious crimes. As soon as the zeal of informers was encouraged by the ministers of Valens and Valentinian, they could not refuse to listen to another charge, too frequently mingled in the scenes of domestic guilt; a charge of a softer and less malignant nature, for which the pious, though excessive, rigor of Constantine had recently decreed the punishment of death. [51] This deadly and incoherent mixture of treason and magic, of poison and adultery, afforded infinite gradations of guilt and innocence, of excuse and aggravation, which in these proceedings appear to have been confounded by the angry or corrupt passions of the judges. They easily discovered that the degree of their industry and discernment was estimated, by the Imperial court, according to the number of executions that were furnished from the respective tribunals. It was not without extreme reluctance that they pronounced a sentence of acquittal; but they eagerly admitted such evidence as was stained with perjury, or procured by torture, to prove the most improbable charges

against the most respectable characters. The progress of the inquiry continually opened new subjects of criminal prosecution; the audacious informer, whose falsehood was detected, retired with impunity; but the wretched victim, who discovered his real or pretended accomplices, were seldom permitted to receive the price of his infamy. From the extremity of Italy and Asia, the young, and the aged, were dragged in chains to the tribunals of Rome and Antioch. Senators, matrons, and philosophers, expired in ignominious and cruel tortures. The soldiers, who were appointed to guard the prisons, declared, with a murmur of pity and indignation, that their numbers were insufficient to oppose the flight, or resistance, of the multitude of captives. The wealthiest families were ruined by fines and confiscations; the most innocent citizens trembled for their safety; and we may form some notion of the magnitude of the evil, from the extravagant assertion of an ancient writer, that, in the obnoxious provinces, the prisoners, the exiles, and the fugitives, formed the greatest part of the inhabitants. [52]

[Footnote 42a: This infamous inquisition into sorcery and witchcraft has been of greater influence on human affairs than is commonly supposed. The persecutions against philosophers and their libraries was carried on with so much fury, that from this time (A. D. 374) the names of the Gentile philosophers became almost extinct; and the Christian philosophy and religion, particularly in the East, established their ascendancy. I am surprised that Gibbon has not made this observation. Heyne, Note on Zosimus, l. iv. 14, p. 637. Besides vast heaps of manuscripts publicly destroyed throughout the East, men of letters

burned their whole libraries, lest some fatal volume should expose them to the malice of the informers and the extreme penalty of the law. Amm. Marc. xxix. 11.--M.]

[Footnote 43: Libanius de ulciscend. Julian. nece, c. ix. p. 158, 159. The sophist deploras the public frenzy, but he does not (after their deaths) impeach the justice of the emperors.]

[Footnote 44: The French and English lawyers, of the present age, allow the theory, and deny the practice, of witchcraft, (Denisart, Recueil de Decisions de Jurisprudence, au mot Sorciers, tom. iv. p. 553. Blackstone's Commentaries, vol. iv. p. 60.) As private reason always prevents, or outstrips, public wisdom, the president Montesquieu (Esprit des Loix, l. xii. c. 5, 6) rejects the existence of magic.]

[Footnote 45: See Oeuvres de Bayle, tom. iii. p. 567-589. The sceptic of Rotterdam exhibits, according to his custom, a strange medley of loose knowledge and lively wit.]

[Footnote 46: The Pagans distinguished between good and bad magic, the Theurgic and the Goetic, (Hist. de l'Academie, &c., tom. vii. p. 25.) But they could not have defended this obscure distinction against the acute logic of Bayle. In the Jewish and Christian system, all daemons are infernal spirits; and all commerce with them is idolatry, apostasy &c., which deserves death and damnation.]

[Footnote 47: The Canidia of Horace (Carm. 1. v. Od. 5, with Dacier's and Sanadon's illustrations) is a vulgar witch. The Erictho of Lucan (Pharsal. vi. 430-830) is tedious, disgusting, but sometimes sublime. She chides the delay of the Furies, and threatens, with tremendous obscurity, to pronounce their real names; to reveal the true infernal countenance of Hecate; to invoke the secret powers that lie below hell, &c.]

[Footnote 48: Genus hominum potentibus infidum, sperantibus fallax, quod in civitate nostra et vetabitur semper et retinebitur. Tacit. Hist. i. 22. See Augustin. de Civitate Dei, l. viii. c. 19, and the Theodosian Code l. ix. tit. xvi., with Godefroy's Commentary.]

[Footnote 49: The persecution of Antioch was occasioned by a criminal consultation. The twenty-four letters of the alphabet were arranged round a magic tripod: and a dancing ring, which had been placed in the centre, pointed to the four first letters in the name of the future emperor, O. E. O Triangle. Theodorus (perhaps with many others, who owned the fatal syllables) was executed. Theodosius succeeded. Lardner (Heathen Testimonies, vol. iv. p. 353-372) has copiously and fairly examined this dark transaction of the reign of Valens.]

[Footnote 50: Limus ut hic durescit, et haec ut cera liquescit

Uno eodemque igni--Virgil. Bucolic. viii. 80.

Devovet absentes, simulacraque cerea figit.

--Ovid. in Epist. Hypsil. ad Jason 91.

Such vain incantations could affect the mind, and increase the disease of Germanicus. Tacit. Annal. ii. 69.]

[Footnote 51: See Heineccius, Antiquitat. Juris Roman. tom. ii. p. 353, &c. Cod. Theodosian. l. ix. tit. 7, with Godefroy's Commentary.]

[Footnote 52: The cruel persecution of Rome and Antioch is described, and most probably exaggerated, by Ammianus (xxvii. 1. xxix. 1, 2) and Zosimus, (l. iv. p. 216-218.) The philosopher Maximus, with some justice, was involved in the charge of magic, (Eunapius in Vit. Sophist. p. 88, 89;) and young Chrysostom, who had accidentally found one of the proscribed books, gave himself up for lost, (Tillemont, Hist. des Empereurs, tom. v. p. 340.)]

When Tacitus describes the deaths of the innocent and illustrious Romans, who were sacrificed to the cruelty of the first Caesars, the art of the historian, or the merit of the sufferers, excites in our breast the most lively sensations of terror, of admiration, and of pity. The coarse and undistinguishing pencil of Ammianus has delineated his bloody figures with tedious and disgusting accuracy. But as our attention is no longer engaged by the contrast of freedom and servitude, of recent greatness and of actual misery, we should turn with horror from the frequent executions, which disgraced, both at Rome and Antioch,

the reign of the two brothers. [53] Valens was of a timid, [54] and Valentinian of a choleric, disposition. [55] An anxious regard to his personal safety was the ruling principle of the administration of Valens. In the condition of a subject, he had kissed, with trembling awe, the hand of the oppressor; and when he ascended the throne, he reasonably expected, that the same fears, which had subdued his own mind, would secure the patient submission of his people. The favorites of Valens obtained, by the privilege of rapine and confiscation, the wealth which his economy would have refused. [56] They urged, with persuasive eloquence, that, in all cases of treason, suspicion is equivalent to proof; that the power supposes the intention, of mischief; that the intention is not less criminal than the act; and that a subject no longer deserves to live, if his life may threaten the safety, or disturb the repose, of his sovereign. The judgment of Valentinian was sometimes deceived, and his confidence abused; but he would have silenced the informers with a contemptuous smile, had they presumed to alarm his fortitude by the sound of danger. They praised his inflexible love of justice; and, in the pursuit of justice, the emperor was easily tempted to consider clemency as a weakness, and passion as a virtue. As long as he wrestled with his equals, in the bold competition of an active and ambitious life, Valentinian was seldom injured, and never insulted, with impunity: if his prudence was arraigned, his spirit was applauded; and the proudest and most powerful generals were apprehensive of provoking the resentment of a fearless soldier. After he became master of the world, he unfortunately forgot, that where no resistance can be made, no courage can be exerted; and instead of consulting the

dictates of reason and magnanimity, he indulged the furious emotions of his temper, at a time when they were disgraceful to himself, and fatal to the defenceless objects of his displeasure. In the government of his household, or of his empire, slight, or even imaginary, offences--a hasty word, a casual omission, an involuntary delay--were chastised by a sentence of immediate death. The expressions which issued the most readily from the mouth of the emperor of the West were, "Strike off his head;" "Burn him alive;" "Let him be beaten with clubs till he expires;" [57] and his most favored ministers soon understood, that, by a rash attempt to dispute, or suspend, the execution of his sanguinary commands, they might involve themselves in the guilt and punishment of disobedience. The repeated gratification of this savage justice hardened the mind of Valentinian against pity and remorse; and the sallies of passion were confirmed by the habits of cruelty. [58] He could behold with calm satisfaction the convulsive agonies of torture and death; he reserved his friendship for those faithful servants whose temper was the most congenial to his own. The merit of Maximin, who had slaughtered the noblest families of Rome, was rewarded with the royal approbation, and the praefecture of Gaul.

Two fierce and enormous bears, distinguished by the appellations of Innocence, and Mica Aurea, could alone deserve to share the favor of Maximin. The cages of those trusty guards were always placed near the bed-chamber of Valentinian, who frequently amused his eyes with the grateful spectacle of seeing them tear and devour the bleeding limbs of the malefactors who were abandoned to their rage. Their diet and

exercises were carefully inspected by the Roman emperor; and when Innocence had earned her discharge, by a long course of meritorious service, the faithful animal was again restored to the freedom of her native woods. [59]

[Footnote 53: Consult the six last books of Ammianus, and more particularly the portraits of the two royal brothers, (xxx. 8, 9, xxxi. 14.) Tillemont has collected (tom. v. p. 12-18, p. 127-133) from all antiquity their virtues and vices.]

[Footnote 54: The younger Victor asserts, that he was *valde timidus*: yet he behaved, as almost every man would do, with decent resolution at the head of an army. The same historian attempts to prove that his anger was harmless. Ammianus observes, with more candor and judgment, *incidentia crimina ad contemptam vel laesam principis amplitudinem trahens, in sanguinem saeviebat.*]

[Footnote 55: *Cum esset ad acerbitatem naturae calore propensior. . . poenas perignes augebat et gladios.* Ammian. xxx. 8. See xxvii. 7]

[Footnote 56: I have transferred the reproach of avarice from Valens to his servant. Avarice more properly belongs to ministers than to kings; in whom that passion is commonly extinguished by absolute possession.]

[Footnote 57: He sometimes expressed a sentence of death with a tone of pleasantry: "Abi, Comes, et muta ei caput, qui sibi mutari provinciam

cupit." A boy, who had slipped too hastily a Spartan bound; an armorer, who had made a polished cuirass that wanted some grains of the legitimate weight, &c., were the victims of his fury.]

[Footnote 58: The innocents of Milan were an agent and three apparitors, whom Valentinian condemned for signifying a legal summons. Ammianus (xxvii. 7) strangely supposes, that all who had been unjustly executed were worshipped as martyrs by the Christians. His impartial silence does not allow us to believe, that the great chamberlain Rhodanus was burnt alive for an act of oppression, (Chron. Paschal. p. 392.) * Note: Ammianus does not say that they were worshipped as martyrs. *Onorum memoriam apud Mediolanum colentes nunc usque Christiani loculos ubi sepulti sunt, ad innocentes appellant.* Wagner's note in loco. Yet if the next paragraph refers to that transaction, which is not quite clear. Gibbon is right.--M.]

[Footnote 59: *Ut bene meritam in sylvas jussit abire Innoxiam.* Ammian. xxix. and Valesius ad locum.]