

Chapter XLIII: Last Victory And Death Of Belisarius, Death Of Justinian.--Part IV.

About two years after the last victory of Belisarius, the emperor returned from a Thracian journey of health, or business, or devotion. Justinian was afflicted by a pain in his head; and his private entry countenanced the rumor of his death. Before the third hour of the day, the bakers' shops were plundered of their bread, the houses were shut, and every citizen, with hope or terror, prepared for the impending tumult. The senators themselves, fearful and suspicious, were convened at the ninth hour; and the praefect received their commands to visit every quarter of the city, and proclaim a general illumination for the recovery of the emperor's health. The ferment subsided; but every accident betrayed the impotence of the government, and the factious temper of the people: the guards were disposed to mutiny as often as their quarters were changed, or their pay was withheld: the frequent calamities of fires and earthquakes afforded the opportunities of disorder; the disputes of the blues and greens, of the orthodox and heretics, degenerated into bloody battles; and, in the presence of the Persian ambassador, Justinian blushed for himself and for his subjects. Capricious pardon and arbitrary punishment imbittered the irksomeness and discontent of a long reign: a conspiracy was formed in the palace; and, unless we are deceived by the names of Marcellus and Sergius, the most virtuous and the most profligate of the courtiers were associated in the same designs. They had fixed the time of the execution; their rank gave them access to the royal banquet; and their black slaves [65] were stationed in the vestibule and porticos, to announce the death

of the tyrant, and to excite a sedition in the capital. But the indiscretion of an accomplice saved the poor remnant of the days of Justinian. The conspirators were detected and seized, with daggers hidden under their garments: Marcellus died by his own hand, and Sergius was dragged from the sanctuary. [66] Pressed by remorse, or tempted by the hopes of safety, he accused two officers of the household of Belisarius; and torture forced them to declare that they had acted according to the secret instructions of their patron. [67] Posterity will not hastily believe that a hero who, in the vigor of life, had disdained the fairest offers of ambition and revenge, should stoop to the murder of his prince, whom he could not long expect to survive. His followers were impatient to fly; but flight must have been supported by rebellion, and he had lived enough for nature and for glory. Belisarius appeared before the council with less fear than indignation: after forty years' service, the emperor had prejudged his guilt; and injustice was sanctified by the presence and authority of the patriarch. The life of Belisarius was graciously spared; but his fortunes were sequestered, and, from December to July, he was guarded as a prisoner in his own palace. At length his innocence was acknowledged; his freedom and honor were restored; and death, which might be hastened by resentment and grief, removed him from the world in about eight months after his deliverance. The name of Belisarius can never die but instead of the funeral, the monuments, the statues, so justly due to his memory, I only read, that his treasures, the spoil of the Goths and Vandals, were immediately confiscated by the emperor. Some decent portion was reserved, however for the use of his widow: and as Antonina had much

to repent, she devoted the last remains of her life and fortune to the foundation of a convent. Such is the simple and genuine narrative of the fall of Belisarius and the ingratitude of Justinian. [68] That he was deprived of his eyes, and reduced by envy to beg his bread, [6811] "Give a penny to Belisarius the general!" is a fiction of later times, [69] which has obtained credit, or rather favor, as a strange example of the vicissitudes of fortune. [70]

[Footnote 65: They could scarcely be real Indians; and the Aethiopians, sometimes known by that name, were never used by the ancients as guards or followers: they were the trifling, though costly objects of female and royal luxury, (Terent. Eunuch. act. i. scene ii Sueton. in August. c. 83, with a good note of Casaubon, in Caligula, c. 57.)]

[Footnote 66: The Sergius (Vandal. 1. ii. c. 21, 22, Anecd. c. 5) and Marcellus (Goth. 1. iii. c. 32) are mentioned by Procopius. See Theophanes, p. 197, 201. \* Note: Some words, "the acts of," or "the crimes of," appear to have fallen from the text. The omission is in all the editions I have consulted.--M.]

[Footnote 67: Alemannus, (p. quotes an old Byzantine Ms., which has been printed in the Imperium Orientale of Banduri.)]

[Footnote 68: Of the disgrace and restoration of Belisarius, the genuine original record is preserved in the Fragment of John Malala (tom. ii. p. 234--243) and the exact Chronicle of Theophanes, (p. 194--204.) Cedrenus

(Compend. p. 387, 388) and Zonaras (tom. ii. l. xiv. p. 69) seem to hesitate between the obsolete truth and the growing falsehood.]

[Footnote 6811: Le Beau, following Allemannus, conceives that Belisarius was confounded with John of Cappadocia, who was thus reduced to beggary, (vol. ix. p. 58, 449.) Lord Mahon has, with considerable learning, and on the authority of a yet unquoted writer of the eleventh century, endeavored to reestablish the old tradition. I cannot acknowledge that I have been convinced, and am inclined to subscribe to the theory of Le Beau.--M.]

[Footnote 69: The source of this idle fable may be derived from a miscellaneous work of the xiith century, the Chiliads of John Tzetzes, a monk, (Basil. 1546, ad calcem Lycophront. Colon. Allobrog. 1614, in Corp. Poet. Graec.) He relates the blindness and beggary of Belisarius in ten vulgar or political verses, (Chiliad iii. No. 88, 339--348, in Corp. Poet. Graec. tom. ii. p. 311.) This moral or romantic tale was imported into Italy with the language and manuscripts of Greece; repeated before the end of the xvth century by Crinitus, Pontanus, and Volaterranus, attacked by Alciat, for the honor of the law; and defended by Baronius, (A.D. 561, No. 2, &c.,) for the honor of the church. Yet Tzetzes himself had read in other chronicles, that Belisarius did not lose his sight, and that he recovered his fame and fortunes. \* Note: I know not where Gibbon found Tzetzes to be a monk; I suppose he considered his bad verses a proof of his monachism. Compare to Gerbelius in Kiesling's edition of Tzetzes.--M.]

[Footnote 70: The statue in the villa Borghese at Rome, in a sitting posture, with an open hand, which is vulgarly given to Belisarius, may be ascribed with more dignity to Augustus in the act of propitiating Nemesis, (Winckelman, *Hist. de l'Art*, tom. iii. p. 266.) *Ex nocturno visu etiam stipem, quotannis, die certo, emendicabat a populo, cavana manum asses porrigentibus praebens*, (Sueton. in *August.* c. 91, with an excellent note of Casaubon.) \* Note: Lord Mahon abandons the statue, as altogether irreconcilable with the state of the arts at this period, (p. 472.)--M.]

If the emperor could rejoice in the death of Belisarius, he enjoyed the base satisfaction only eight months, the last period of a reign of thirty-eight years, and a life of eighty-three years. It would be difficult to trace the character of a prince who is not the most conspicuous object of his own times: but the confessions of an enemy may be received as the safest evidence of his virtues. The resemblance of Justinian to the bust of Domitian, is maliciously urged; [71] with the acknowledgment, however, of a well-proportioned figure, a ruddy complexion, and a pleasing countenance. The emperor was easy of access, patient of hearing, courteous and affable in discourse, and a master of the angry passions which rage with such destructive violence in the breast of a despot. Procopius praises his temper, to reproach him with calm and deliberate cruelty: but in the conspiracies which attacked his authority and person, a more candid judge will approve the justice, or admire the clemency, of Justinian. He excelled in the private virtues

of chastity and temperance: but the impartial love of beauty would have been less mischievous than his conjugal tenderness for Theodora; and his abstemious diet was regulated, not by the prudence of a philosopher, but the superstition of a monk. His repasts were short and frugal: on solemn fasts, he contented himself with water and vegetables; and such was his strength, as well as fervor, that he frequently passed two days, and as many nights, without tasting any food. The measure of his sleep was not less rigorous: after the repose of a single hour, the body was awakened by the soul, and, to the astonishment of his chamberlain, Justinian walked or studied till the morning light. Such restless application prolonged his time for the acquisition of knowledge [72] and the despatch of business; and he might seriously deserve the reproach of confounding, by minute and preposterous diligence, the general order of his administration. The emperor professed himself a musician and architect, a poet and philosopher, a lawyer and theologian; and if he failed in the enterprise of reconciling the Christian sects, the review of the Roman jurisprudence is a noble monument of his spirit and industry. In the government of the empire, he was less wise, or less successful: the age was unfortunate; the people was oppressed and discontented; Theodora abused her power; a succession of bad ministers disgraced his judgment; and Justinian was neither beloved in his life, nor regretted at his death. The love of fame was deeply implanted in his breast, but he condescended to the poor ambition of titles, honors, and contemporary praise; and while he labored to fix the admiration, he forfeited the esteem and affection, of the Romans.

The design of the African and Italian wars was boldly conceived and executed; and his penetration discovered the talents of Belisarius in the camp, of Narses in the palace. But the name of the emperor is eclipsed by the names of his victorious generals; and Belisarius still lives, to upbraid the envy and ingratitude of his sovereign. The partial favor of mankind applauds the genius of a conqueror, who leads and directs his subjects in the exercise of arms. The characters of Philip the Second and of Justinian are distinguished by the cold ambition which delights in war, and declines the dangers of the field. Yet a colossal statue of bronze represented the emperor on horseback, preparing to march against the Persians in the habit and armor of Achilles. In the great square before the church of St. Sophia, this monument was raised on a brass column and a stone pedestal of seven steps; and the pillar of Theodosius, which weighed seven thousand four hundred pounds of silver, was removed from the same place by the avarice and vanity of Justinian. Future princes were more just or indulgent to his memory; the elder Andronicus, in the beginning of the fourteenth century, repaired and beautified his equestrian statue: since the fall of the empire it has been melted into cannon by the victorious Turks. [73]

[Footnote 71: The rubor of Domitian is stigmatized, quaintly enough, by the pen of Tacitus, (in *Vit. Agric.* c. 45;) and has been likewise noticed by the younger Pliny, (*Panegy.* c. 48,) and Suetonius, (in *Domitian*, c. 18, and *Casaubon ad locum.*) Procopius (*Anecd.* c. 8) foolishly believes that only one bust of Domitian had reached the vith century.]

[Footnote 72: The studies and science of Justinian are attested by the confession (Anecdot. c. 8, 13) still more than by the praises (Gothic. 1. iii. c. 31, de Edific. 1. i. Proem. c. 7) of Procopius. Consult the copious index of Alemannus, and read the life of Justinian by Ludewig, (p. 135--142.)]

[Footnote 73: See in the C. P. Christiana of Ducange (l. i. c. 24, No. 1) a chain of original testimonies, from Procopius in the vith, to Gyllius in the xvith century.]

I shall conclude this chapter with the comets, the earthquakes, and the plague, which astonished or afflicted the age of Justinian. I. In the fifth year of his reign, and in the month of September, a comet [74] was seen during twenty days in the western quarter of the heavens, and which shot its rays into the north. Eight years afterwards, while the sun was in Capricorn, another comet appeared to follow in the Sagittary; the size was gradually increasing; the head was in the east, the tail in the west, and it remained visible above forty days. The nations, who gazed with astonishment, expected wars and calamities from their baleful influence; and these expectations were abundantly fulfilled. The astronomers dissembled their ignorance of the nature of these blazing stars, which they affected to represent as the floating meteors of the air; and few among them embraced the simple notion of Seneca and the Chaldeans, that they are only planets of a longer period and more eccentric motion. [75] Time and science have justified the conjectures



and predictions of the Roman sage: the telescope has opened new worlds to the eyes of astronomers; [76] and, in the narrow space of history and fable, one and the same comet is already found to have revisited the earth in seven equal revolutions of five hundred and seventy-five years. The first, [77] which ascends beyond the Christian aera one thousand seven hundred and sixty-seven years, is coeval with Ogyges, the father of Grecian antiquity. And this appearance explains the tradition which Varro has preserved, that under his reign the planet Venus changed her color, size, figure, and course; a prodigy without example either in past or succeeding ages. [78] The second visit, in the year eleven hundred and ninety-three, is darkly implied in the fable of Electra, the seventh of the Pleiads, who have been reduced to six since the time of the Trojan war. That nymph, the wife of Dardanus, was unable to support the ruin of her country: she abandoned the dances of her sister orbs, fled from the zodiac to the north pole, and obtained, from her dishevelled locks, the name of the comet. The third period expires in the year six hundred and eighteen, a date that exactly agrees with the tremendous comet of the Sibyl, and perhaps of Pliny, which arose in the West two generations before the reign of Cyrus. The fourth apparition, forty-four years before the birth of Christ, is of all others the most splendid and important. After the death of Caesar, a long-haired star was conspicuous to Rome and to the nations, during the games which were exhibited by young Octavian in honor of Venus and his uncle. The vulgar opinion, that it conveyed to heaven the divine soul of the dictator, was cherished and consecrated by the piety of a statesman; while his secret superstition referred the comet to the glory of his own times. [79] The

fifth visit has been already ascribed to the fifth year of Justinian, which coincides with the five hundred and thirty-first of the Christian aera. And it may deserve notice, that in this, as in the preceding instance, the comet was followed, though at a longer interval, by a remarkable paleness of the sun. The sixth return, in the year eleven hundred and six, is recorded by the chronicles of Europe and China: and in the first fervor of the crusades, the Christians and the Mahometans might surmise, with equal reason, that it portended the destruction of the Infidels. The seventh phenomenon, of one thousand six hundred and eighty, was presented to the eyes of an enlightened age. [80] The philosophy of Bayle dispelled a prejudice which Milton's muse had so recently adorned, that the comet, "from its horrid hair shakes pestilence and war." [81] Its road in the heavens was observed with exquisite skill by Flamstead and Cassini: and the mathematical science of Bernoulli, Newton [8111], and Halley, investigated the laws of its revolutions. At the eighth period, in the year two thousand three hundred and fifty-five, their calculations may perhaps be verified by the astronomers of some future capital in the Siberian or American wilderness.

[Footnote 74: The first comet is mentioned by John Malala (tom. ii. p. 190, 219) and Theophanes, (p. 154;) the second by Procopius, (Persic. 1. ii. 4.) Yet I strongly suspect their identity. The paleness of the sun sum Vandal. (l. ii. c. 14) is applied by Theophanes (p. 158) to a different year. Note: See Lydus de Ostentis, particularly c 15, in which the author begins to show the signification of comets according to

the part of the heavens in which they appear, and what fortunes they prognosticate to the Roman empire and their Persian enemies. The chapter, however, is imperfect. (Edit. Neibuhr, p. 290.)--M.]

[Footnote 75: Seneca's viith book of Natural Questions displays, in the theory of comets, a philosophic mind. Yet should we not too candidly confound a vague prediction, a *venient tempus*, &c., with the merit of real discoveries.]

[Footnote 76: Astronomers may study Newton and Halley. I draw my humble science from the article Comete, in the French Encyclopedie, by M. d'Alembert.]

[Footnote 77: Whiston, the honest, pious, visionary Whiston, had fancied for the aera of Noah's flood (2242 years before Christ) a prior apparition of the same comet which drowned the earth with its tail.]

[Footnote 78: A Dissertation of Freret (Memoires de l'Academie des Inscriptions, tom. x. p. 357-377) affords a happy union of philosophy and erudition. The phenomenon in the time of Ogyges was preserved by Varro, (Apud Augustin. de Civitate Dei, xxi. 8,) who quotes Castor, Dion of Naples, and Adastrus of Cyzicus--nobiles mathematici. The two subsequent periods are preserved by the Greek mythologists and the spurious books of Sibylline verses.]

[Footnote 79: Pliny (Hist. Nat. ii. 23) has transcribed the original

memorial of Augustus. Mairan, in his most ingenious letters to the P. Parennin, missionary in China, removes the games and the comet of September, from the year 44 to the year 43, before the Christian aera; but I am not totally subdued by the criticism of the astronomer, (Opuscules, p. 275 )]

[Footnote 80: This last comet was visible in the month of December, 1680. Bayle, who began his *Pensees sur la Comete* in January, 1681, (Oeuvres, tom. iii.) was forced to argue that a supernatural comet would have confirmed the ancients in their idolatry. Bernoulli (see his *Eloge*, in Fontenelle, tom. v. p. 99) was forced to allow that the tail though not the head, was a sign of the wrath of God.]

[Footnote 81: *Paradise Lost* was published in the year 1667; and the famous lines (l. ii. 708, &c.) which startled the licenser, may allude to the recent comet of 1664, observed by Cassini at Rome in the presence of Queen Christina, (Fontenelle, in his *Eloge*, tom. v. p. 338.) Had Charles II. betrayed any symptoms of curiosity or fear?]

[Footnote 8111: Compare Pingre, *Histoire des Cometes*.--M.]

II. The near approach of a comet may injure or destroy the globe which we inhabit; but the changes on its surface have been hitherto produced by the action of volcanoes and earthquakes. [82] The nature of the soil may indicate the countries most exposed to these formidable concussions, since they are caused by subterraneous fires, and such fires are kindled

by the union and fermentation of iron and sulphur. But their times and effects appear to lie beyond the reach of human curiosity; and the philosopher will discreetly abstain from the prediction of earthquakes, till he has counted the drops of water that silently filtrate on the inflammable mineral, and measured the caverns which increase by resistance the explosion of the imprisoned air. Without assigning the cause, history will distinguish the periods in which these calamitous events have been rare or frequent, and will observe, that this fever of the earth raged with uncommon violence during the reign of Justinian. [83] Each year is marked by the repetition of earthquakes, of such duration, that Constantinople has been shaken above forty days; of such extent, that the shock has been communicated to the whole surface of the globe, or at least of the Roman empire. An impulsive or vibratory motion was felt: enormous chasms were opened, huge and heavy bodies were discharged into the air, the sea alternately advanced and retreated beyond its ordinary bounds, and a mountain was torn from Libanus, [84] and cast into the waves, where it protected, as a mole, the new harbor of Botrys [85] in Phoenicia. The stroke that agitates an ant-hill may crush the insect-myriads in the dust; yet truth must extort confession that man has industriously labored for his own destruction. The institution of great cities, which include a nation within the limits of a wall, almost realizes the wish of Caligula, that the Roman people had but one neck. Two hundred and fifty thousand persons are said to have perished in the earthquake of Antioch, whose domestic multitudes were swelled by the conflux of strangers to the festival of the Ascension. The loss of Berytus [86] was of smaller account, but of much greater

value. That city, on the coast of Phoenicia, was illustrated by the study of the civil law, which opened the surest road to wealth and dignity: the schools of Berytus were filled with the rising spirits of the age, and many a youth was lost in the earthquake, who might have lived to be the scourge or the guardian of his country. In these disasters, the architect becomes the enemy of mankind. The hut of a savage, or the tent of an Arab, may be thrown down without injury to the inhabitant; and the Peruvians had reason to deride the folly of their Spanish conquerors, who with so much cost and labor erected their own sepulchres. The rich marbles of a patrician are dashed on his own head: a whole people is buried under the ruins of public and private edifices, and the conflagration is kindled and propagated by the innumerable fires which are necessary for the subsistence and manufactures of a great city. Instead of the mutual sympathy which might comfort and assist the distressed, they dreadfully experience the vices and passions which are released from the fear of punishment: the tottering houses are pillaged by intrepid avarice; revenge embraces the moment, and selects the victim; and the earth often swallows the assassin, or the ravisher, in the consummation of their crimes. Superstition involves the present danger with invisible terrors; and if the image of death may sometimes be subservient to the virtue or repentance of individuals, an affrighted people is more forcibly moved to expect the end of the world, or to deprecate with servile homage the wrath of an avenging Deity.

[Footnote 82: For the cause of earthquakes, see Buffon, (tom. i. p. 502--536 Supplement a l'Hist. Naturelle, tom. v. p. 382-390, edition in 4to.,

Valmont de Bomare, Dictionnaire d'Histoire Naturelle, Tremblemen de Terre, Pyrites,) Watson, (Chemical Essays, tom. i. p. 181--209.)]

[Footnote 83: The earthquakes that shook the Roman world in the reign of Justinian are described or mentioned by Procopius, (Goth. l. iv. c. 25 Anecd. c. 18,) Agathias, (l. ii. p. 52, 53, 54, l. v. p. 145-152,) John Malala, (Chron. tom. ii. p. 140-146, 176, 177, 183, 193, 220, 229, 231, 233, 234,) and Theophanes, (p. 151, 183, 189, 191-196.) \* Note \*: Compare Daubeny on Earthquakes, and Lyell's Geology, vol. ii. p. 161 et seq.--M]

[Footnote 84: An abrupt height, a perpendicular cape, between Aradus and Botrys (Polyb. l. v. p. 411. Pompon. Mela, l. i. c. 12, p. 87, cum Isaac. Voss. Observat. Maundrell, Journey, p. 32, 33. Pocock's Description, vol. ii. p. 99.)]

[Footnote 85: Botrys was founded (ann. ante Christ. 935--903) by Ithobal, king of Tyre, (Marsham, Canon. Chron. p. 387, 388.) Its poor representative, the village of Patrone, is now destitute of a harbor.]

[Footnote 86: The university, splendor, and ruin of Berytus are celebrated by Heineccius (p. 351--356) as an essential part of the history of the Roman law. It was overthrown in the xxvth year of Justinian, A. D 551, July 9, (Theophanes, p. 192;) but Agathias (l. ii. p. 51, 52) suspends the earthquake till he has achieved the Italian war.]

III. Aethiopia and Egypt have been stigmatized, in every age, as the original source and seminary of the plague. [87] In a damp, hot, stagnating air, this African fever is generated from the putrefaction of animal substances, and especially from the swarms of locusts, not less destructive to mankind in their death than in their lives. The fatal disease which depopulated the earth in the time of Justinian and his successors, [88] first appeared in the neighborhood of Pelusium, between the Serbonian bog and the eastern channel of the Nile. From thence, tracing as it were a double path, it spread to the East, over Syria, Persia, and the Indies, and penetrated to the West, along the coast of Africa, and over the continent of Europe. In the spring of the second year, Constantinople, during three or four months, was visited by the pestilence; and Procopius, who observed its progress and symptoms with the eyes of a physician, [89] has emulated the skill and diligence of Thucydides in the description of the plague of Athens. [90] The infection was sometimes announced by the visions of a distempered fancy, and the victim despaired as soon as he had heard the menace and felt the stroke of an invisible spectre. But the greater number, in their beds, in the streets, in their usual occupation, were surprised by a slight fever; so slight, indeed, that neither the pulse nor the color of the patient gave any signs of the approaching danger. The same, the next, or the succeeding day, it was declared by the swelling of the glands, particularly those of the groin, of the armpits, and under the ear; and when these buboes or tumors were opened, they were found to contain a coal, or black substance, of the size of a lentil. If they came to a



just swelling and suppuration, the patient was saved by this kind and natural discharge of the morbid humor. But if they continued hard and dry, a mortification quickly ensued, and the fifth day was commonly the term of his life. The fever was often accompanied with lethargy or delirium; the bodies of the sick were covered with black pustules or carbuncles, the symptoms of immediate death; and in the constitutions too feeble to produce an irruption, the vomiting of blood was followed by a mortification of the bowels. To pregnant women the plague was generally mortal: yet one infant was drawn alive from his dead mother, and three mothers survived the loss of their infected foetus. Youth was the most perilous season; and the female sex was less susceptible than the male: but every rank and profession was attacked with indiscriminate rage, and many of those who escaped were deprived of the use of their speech, without being secure from a return of the disorder. [91] The physicians of Constantinople were zealous and skilful; but their art was baffled by the various symptoms and pertinacious vehemence of the disease: the same remedies were productive of contrary effects, and the event capriciously disappointed their prognostics of death or recovery. The order of funerals, and the right of sepulchres, were confounded: those who were left without friends or servants, lay unburied in the streets, or in their desolate houses; and a magistrate was authorized to collect the promiscuous heaps of dead bodies, to transport them by land or water, and to inter them in deep pits beyond the precincts of the city. Their own danger, and the prospect of public distress, awakened some remorse in the minds of the most vicious of mankind: the confidence of health again revived their passions and habits; but philosophy must

disdain the observation of Procopius, that the lives of such men were guarded by the peculiar favor of fortune or Providence. He forgot, or perhaps he secretly recollected, that the plague had touched the person of Justinian himself; but the abstemious diet of the emperor may suggest, as in the case of Socrates, a more rational and honorable cause for his recovery. [92] During his sickness, the public consternation was expressed in the habits of the citizens; and their idleness and despondence occasioned a general scarcity in the capital of the East. [Footnote 87: I have read with pleasure Mead's short, but elegant, treatise concerning Pestilential Disorders, the viii<sup>th</sup> edition, London, 1722.]

[Footnote 88: The great plague which raged in 542 and the following years (Pagi, *Critica*, tom. ii. p. 518) must be traced in Procopius, (*Persic.* l. ii. c. 22, 23,) Agathias, (l. v. p. 153, 154,) Evagrius, (l. iv. c. 29,) Paul Diaconus, (l. ii. c. iv. p. 776, 777,) Gregory of Tours, (tom. ii. l. iv. c. 5, p. 205,) who styles it *Lues Inguinaria*, and the *Chronicles of Victor Tunnunensis*, (p. 9, in *Thesaur. Temporum*,) of Marcellinus, (p. 54,) and of Theophanes, (p. 153.)]

[Footnote 89: Dr. Friend (*Hist. Medicin. in Opp.* p. 416--420, Lond. 1733) is satisfied that Procopius must have studied physic, from his knowledge and use of the technical words. Yet many words that are now scientific were common and popular in the Greek idiom.]

[Footnote 90: See Thucydides, l. ii. c. 47--54, p. 127--133, edit.

Duker, and the poetical description of the same plague by Lucretius. (l. vi. 1136--1284.) I was indebted to Dr. Hunter for an elaborate commentary on this part of Thucydides, a quarto of 600 pages, (Venet. 1603, apud Juntas,) which was pronounced in St. Mark's Library by Fabius Paullinus Utinensis, a physician and philosopher.]

[Footnote 91: Thucydides (c. 51) affirms, that the infection could only be once taken; but Evagrius, who had family experience of the plague, observes, that some persons, who had escaped the first, sunk under the second attack; and this repetition is confirmed by Fabius Paullinus, (p. 588.) I observe, that on this head physicians are divided; and the nature and operation of the disease may not always be similar.]

[Footnote 92: It was thus that Socrates had been saved by his temperance, in the plague of Athens, (Aul. Gellius, Noct. Attic. ii. 1.) Dr. Mead accounts for the peculiar salubrity of religious houses, by the two advantages of seclusion and abstinence, (p. 18, 19.)]

Contagion is the inseparable symptom of the plague; which, by mutual respiration, is transfused from the infected persons to the lungs and stomach of those who approach them. While philosophers believe and tremble, it is singular, that the existence of a real danger should have been denied by a people most prone to vain and imaginary terrors. [93] Yet the fellow-citizens of Procopius were satisfied, by some short and partial experience, that the infection could not be gained by the closest conversation: [94] and this persuasion might support the

assiduity of friends or physicians in the care of the sick, whom inhuman prudence would have condemned to solitude and despair. But the fatal security, like the predestination of the Turks, must have aided the progress of the contagion; and those salutary precautions to which Europe is indebted for her safety, were unknown to the government of Justinian. No restraints were imposed on the free and frequent intercourse of the Roman provinces: from Persia to France, the nations were mingled and infected by wars and emigrations; and the pestilential odor which lurks for years in a bale of cotton was imported, by the abuse of trade, into the most distant regions. The mode of its propagation is explained by the remark of Procopius himself, that it always spread from the sea-coast to the inland country: the most sequestered islands and mountains were successively visited; the places which had escaped the fury of its first passage were alone exposed to the contagion of the ensuing year. The winds might diffuse that subtile venom; but unless the atmosphere be previously disposed for its reception, the plague would soon expire in the cold or temperate climates of the earth. Such was the universal corruption of the air, that the pestilence which burst forth in the fifteenth year of Justinian was not checked or alleviated by any difference of the seasons. In time, its first malignity was abated and dispersed; the disease alternately languished and revived; but it was not till the end of a calamitous period of fifty-two years, that mankind recovered their health, or the air resumed its pure and salubrious quality.

No facts have been preserved to sustain an account, or even a

conjecture, of the numbers that perished in this extraordinary mortality. I only find, that during three months, five, and at length ten, thousand persons died each day at Constantinople; that many cities of the East were left vacant, and that in several districts of Italy the harvest and the vintage withered on the ground. The triple scourge of war, pestilence, and famine, afflicted the subjects of Justinian; and his reign is disgraced by the visible decrease of the human species, which has never been repaired in some of the fairest countries of the globe. [95]

[Footnote 93: Mead proves that the plague is contagious from Thucydides, Lactetius, Aristotle, Galen, and common experience, (p. 10--20;) and he refutes (Preface, p. 2--13) the contrary opinion of the French physicians who visited Marseilles in the year 1720. Yet these were the recent and enlightened spectators of a plague which, in a few months, swept away 50,000 inhabitants (sur le Peste de Marseille, Paris, 1786) of a city that, in the present hour of prosperity and trade contains no more than 90,000 souls, (Necker, sur les Finances, tom. i. p. 231.)]

[Footnote 94: The strong assertions of Procopius are overthrown by the subsequent experience of Evagrius.]

[Footnote 95: After some figures of rhetoric, the sands of the sea, &c., Procopius (Anecd. c. 18) attempts a more definite account; that it had been exterminated under the reign of the Imperial demon. The expression is obscure in grammar and arithmetic and a literal interpretation would

produce several millions of millions Alemannus (p. 80) and Cousin (tom. iii. p. 178) translate this passage, "two hundred millions:" but I am ignorant of their motives. The remaining myriad of myriads, would furnish one hundred millions, a number not wholly inadmissible.]