

CHAPTER IV

DRUMS OF CARRHAE

PHRAATES III THEOS¹ succeeded his father Sinatruces on the Parthian throne at a time when the fortunes of Mithradates of Pontus were at a low ebb. Tigranes of Armenia, the Pontian ally, though stripped of much of his territory, remained one of the great figures in the Orient. That the Parthian king should be drawn into the maelstrom of international politics was inevitable.

Shortly before the Battle of Tigranocerta in 69 B.C., Mithradates and Tigranes sent pleas for aid against Rome to Phraates, offering the "seventy valleys," Adiabene, and northern Mesopotamia as an inducement.² Mithradates proposed that the Parthian should attack Mesopotamia while he and his ally advanced on Armenia, thus cutting Lucullus off from supplies.³ After his victory Lucullus, learning of

¹ Phlegon fr. 12. 7 (J, II B, p. 1164); Appian *Mith.* 104; Dio Cass. xxxvi. 45; cf. the coins assigned Phraates by Wroth, *Parthia*, pp. 45-55.

² Memnon fr. lviii. 2 (*FHG*, III, 556 f.), "Phradates"; Dio Cass. xxxvi. 1; Appian *Mith.* 87; Plut. *Lucullus* 30.

³ Sallust *Hist.* iv. fr. 69. In the letter of Mithradates as reported by Sallust the last historical reference (line 15) concerns the defeat of a large Pontian force in a defile. This is obviously the defeat described in Plut. *Lucullus* 25, which occurred before the Battle of Tigranocerta. Mauren-

these negotiations, sent some of his allies to threaten the Parthian king, should he join forces with Mithradates and Tigranes, and to promise rewards for his friendship. Phraates replied in a conciliatory manner to the overtures of both parties, and both felt that he had promised them support. The Parthian response reached Lucullus in Gorduene, and the legate Sextilius⁴ was sent to continue negotiations. Phraates suspected, perhaps rightly, that the officer was sent to report Parthian movements; the net result was that he did not give aid to either side, but attempted the dangerous procedure of straddling the diplomatic fence. Lucullus, who felt that Mithradates and Tigranes were both so exhausted from the prolonged struggle that they were not dangerous, determined to attack Parthia.⁵ Sornatius⁶ was ordered to bring the army from Pontus to Gorduene, but the troops refused to move and even threatened to leave Pontus undefended. When this news reached the legions with Lucullus they also mutinied, and the Parthian

brecher's edition of Sallust's history, where the letter is placed after the battle, must therefore be corrected. With this rearrangement we understand why in line 16 Sallust could say that the kingdom of Tigranes was still unimpaired. Cf. also line 21: "Quod haud difficile est, si tu Mesopotamia, nos Armenia circumgredimur exercitum sine frumento, sine auxilio, fortuna aut nostris vitiis adhuc incolumem." If we may trust Orosius vi. 13. 2, the Euphrates was recognized as the boundary.

⁴ PW, art. "Sextilius," No. 2.

⁵ Plut. *Lucullus* 30; Appian *Mith.* 87; Dio Cass. xxxvi. 3.

⁶ PW, art. "Sornatius."

expedition had to be abandoned for one against Tigranes.⁷

In 66 B.C., under the Lex Manilia, Pompey was appointed to replace Lucullus and at once secured an agreement with Phraates to insure Parthian neutrality in the same manner as under the previous treaty. But Tigranes the Younger, after an unsuccessful revolt against his father, sought refuge with Phraates and urged him to invade that part of Armenia held by the elder Tigranes.⁸ Phraates acquiesced, though with some hesitation because of his agreement with Pompey. News of the Parthian treaty with the Romans alarmed Mithradates, and he began to negotiate for a truce.

The Parthian forces advanced to Artaxata (Artashat). When the siege promised to be of considerable duration, Phraates left a detachment of his troops with the younger Tigranes and returned to his own country. Tigranes the Elder then took the field and

⁷ Cicero *Manil.* 23-24; Plut. *Lucullus* 30; Sallust *Hist.* iv. fr. 72. See also PW, arts. "Licinius (Lucullus)," No. 102, and "Mithradates," No. 12. From about this time comes a tablet of the year 68 B.C. mentioning an Arshakan, king, and Pi-ir(?) -us(or -ri) -ta-na-a, his wife, queen. The king must be Phraates III; cf. Strassmaier in *ZA*, VIII (1893), 112; Kugler, *Sternkunde*, II, 447 and n. 3; Minns, "Avroman Parchments," *JHS* XXXV (1915), 36.

⁸ Cf. Dio Cass. xxxvi. 45, where the invasion of Armenia seems to have been required by the treaty with Pompey, and *ibid.* 51, where it is the result of the efforts of Tigranes the Younger. But since the treaty was the same as that made by Lucullus, and Phraates had misgivings about violating his agreement with Pompey, the version of xxxvi. 51 is correct. See also Appian *Mith.* 104. On the younger Tigranes see PW, art. "Tigranes," No. 2.

defeated his son. The young man thought of seeking refuge with Mithradates of Pontus, but felt that Mithradates was now little stronger than he; so, perhaps at the suggestion of Phraates, he threw himself on the mercy of Pompey. The Roman commander was already marching on Artaxata, and Tigranes acted as guide. Tigranes the Elder despaired of further resistance and submitted to Pompey. In the partition which followed, Sophene and Gorduene were to be given to Tigranes the Younger.⁹ His father retained Armenia proper, but was forced to relinquish his conquests in Syria. Almost immediately after this decision there were fresh disputes, and Pompey seized the younger Tigranes. Cappadocia was then restored to its king Ariobarzanes I, and along with it went the districts of Sophene and Gorduene;¹⁰ but the latter at least was never effectively occupied.¹¹

In 65 B.C. Pompey made an extended campaign against the Iberians and Albanians, leaving L. Afranius to maintain control of Armenia. Pompey was within three days' march of the Caspian Sea and was even inquiring the distance to India when he was forced to abandon his advance.¹² In the meantime A. Gabinius, then a legate under Pompey, made a

⁹ Strabo xvi. i. 24; Appian *Mith.* 105. Plut. *Pompey* 33 and Dio Cass. xxxvi. 53 mention only Sophene. On this district see PW s.v. Cf. also Eutrop. *Brev.* vi. 13 and Zonaras x. 4.

¹⁰ Appian *Mith.* 105.

¹¹ See p. 74.

¹² Plut. *Pompey* 36; Pliny *Hist. nat.* vi. 52.

raid across the Euphrates as far as the Tigris,¹³ and Phraates, who had learned of the seizure of Tigranes the Younger, again invaded Gorduene, which he rapidly won from Tigranes the Elder.¹⁴ While Pompey was returning through Lesser Armenia he received ambassadors of the Medes and the Elymaeans,¹⁵ who came perhaps because of the Roman attack on Darius of Media Atropatene, who had befriended Antiochus I of Commagene or Tigranes.¹⁶ Phraates too sent an embassy, perhaps inspired by Gabinius' raid, requesting that Tigranes the Younger, his son-in-law, be delivered over to him, and at the same time demanding formal recognition of the Euphrates as the boundary between Rome and Parthia.

Pompey asked the return of the newly captured district of Gorduene and refused to surrender Tigranes. As for the boundary the only satisfaction Phraates could obtain was the lofty sentiment that the Romans set justice as their boundary toward the Parthians.¹⁷ Since the ambassadors were not instructed with regard to Gorduene, Pompey wrote briefly to Phraates, addressing him merely as "king," not "king of kings," a title which he wished to reserve for Tigranes, and without waiting for a reply sent Afranius to occupy the disputed territory. Whether this was

¹³ Dio Cass. xxxvii. 5. 2.

¹⁴ Dio Cass. xxxvii. 5. 3; Appian *Mith.* 106; Plut. *Pompey* 36.

¹⁵ Plut. *Pompey* 36. ¹⁶ Appian *Mith.* 106 and 117; Diod. Sic. xl. 4.

¹⁷ Plut. *Pompey* 33 and *Reg. imp. apophtheg.* 204. 8 (Loeb, III, p. 210).

accomplished without fighting we cannot be sure;¹⁸ but Gorduene was given again to Tigranes of Armenia. Contrary to a treaty with the Parthians, Afranius returned through Mesopotamia to Syria, encountering many hardships and nearly losing his army.

The quarrel between Tigranes and Phraates was not yet ended. In 64 B.C., while Pompey was in Syria, ambassadors from both parties arrived to consult him. As an excuse for not supporting his Armenian appointee, Pompey replied that he could take no action without orders from the Senate; but he did send three commissioners to settle the boundary dispute.¹⁹ Apparently Phraates retained Adiabene, and Tigranes Gorduene and Nisibis. No doubt the ambassadors found the matter somewhat simplified by the fact that both kings now realized they must conserve their strength for attacks on their common enemy, Rome, rather than waste it in petty quarrels.²⁰ About 58/57 B.C.²¹ Phraates III was murdered by his sons

¹⁸ Dio Cass. xxxvii. 5 says the district was taken without a battle, whereas Plut. *Pompey* 36 states that Afranius drove Phraates from the district and pursued him as far as Arbela. Strabo xvi. 1. 24 mentions Pompey's giving of Gorduene to Tigranes.

¹⁹ Appian *Mith.* 106; Dio Cass. xxxvii. 5; Plut. *Pompey* 39.

²⁰ Plut. *Pompey* 39; Dio Cass. xxxvii. 7.

²¹ J. Saint-Martin, *Fragments d'une histoire des Arsacides* (Paris, 1850), II, 107; Friedrich von Spiegel, *Erânische Alterthumskunde* (Leipzig, 1871-78), III, 98; J. H. Schneiderwirth, *Die Parther oder das neupersische Reich unter den Arsaciden nach griechisch-römischen Quellen* (Heiligenstadt, 1874), p. 50; Wroth, *Parthia*, p. xxxii; K. Regling, "Crassus' Partherkrieg," *Klio*, VII (1907), 359 f. and n. 1. Cf. L. du Four de Longuerue, *Annales Arsacidarum* (Argentorati, 1732), p. 22 (not available).

Bambyce (Membidj),⁴² and enrolled a few additional soldiers. About the same time, or perhaps in the spring, Orodes sent ambassadors to Crassus to demand the reason for this unprovoked invasion. If the war was being waged without the consent of the Roman people, as the Parthians had been informed, then they would show mercy and take pity on the old age of Crassus; but if the attack were official, then it was to be a war without truce or treaty. If the message is correctly reported, this is one of the numerous examples proving the superiority of the Parthian intelligence service over the Roman, which seems to have been notoriously bad in the East.⁴³ Such a reply was not calculated to pacify the Roman; on the contrary it provoked him to fury, as perhaps Orodes intended. Crassus replied that he would answer their demands in Seleucia. The eldest of the Parthians then stretched out the palm of his hand and responded: "Hair will grow here before you see Seleucia."⁴⁴ The gesture and retort are still in use among present-day Arabs.

Because he had garrisoned the captured towns Crassus had no choice but to follow the same road on his next campaign, for, as he said, he had left many good men there. This decision cost him the support of a large body of foot and horse tendered by Artavasdes the Armenian,⁴⁵ who advised Crassus to advance by way of Armenia and thus keep in the hills, where the Parthian cavalry would be least useful. His advice and support were refused, and he rode away.

Crassus crossed the Euphrates at Zeugma⁴⁶ with a force which numbered about forty-two thousand, including four thousand cavalry and a like number of light-armed men.⁴⁷ Opposed to these troops were ten thousand cavalrymen (ten dragons⁴⁸), munitioned by a thousand camels which carried additional supplies of arrows. These forces were in command of Suren,⁴⁹ the Parthian commander in chief, assisted by the satrap Silaces; for Orodes, taking with him the bulk of the infantry, had gone to Armenia to hold in check Artavasdes the king and to await the Roman attack, which he had every reason to expect would fall in that direction. But even Orodes was unable to

⁴⁵ Said by Plut. *Crassus* 19 to have numbered thirty thousand foot and sixteen thousand mailed horse.

⁴⁶ On the location of this Zeugma and the earlier one to the north see F. Cumont, *Études syriennes* (Paris, 1917), pp. 119-42; J. Dobiáš, "Séleucie sur l'Euphrate," *Syria*, VI (1925), 253-68.

⁴⁷ Plut. *Crassus* 20 gives the force at seven legions with four thousand horse and as many light-armed men. Florus i. 46. 2 speaks of eleven legions; Appian *Bell. civ.* ii. 18 makes the total force a hundred thousand! The legions are estimated at thirty-five thousand by Rawlinson, *Sixth Mon.*, pp. 155 f.; thirty-four thousand by Sykes, *Hist. of Persia*, I, 347 f.; and twenty-eight thousand by Tarn in *CAH*, IX, 608.

⁴⁸ The Parthian military unit was a "dragon," consisting of one thousand men, according to Lucian *Quomodo hist.* 29.

⁴⁹ This is a family name; see Herzfeld, "Sakastan," *AMI*, IV (1932), 70 ff.

⁴² Plut. *Crassus* 17.

⁴³ Cf. Trajan's difficulties (pp. 234 f.).

⁴⁴ Dio Cass. xl. 16; Plut. *Crassus* 17-18.

foresee the foolhardiness of Crassus; hence the brunt of the campaign was borne by the cavalry left to defend Mesopotamia, where they were eminently suited to the level country.

Cassius, the quaestor, suggested a halt to rest the men in one of the garrisoned villages and the dispatch of scouts to gather information on the enemy forces. He argued that, if the advance had to be made at once, the best route lay along the Euphrates to Seleucia, which was the objective. But when Abgarus of Osroene rode into camp with news that the Parthians were retreating and taking their goods with them, and that they had left only two subordinates to cover their flight, Crassus permitted his enthusiasm to win the upper hand, and immediate advance across Mesopotamia was decided upon. Abgarus was later accused of acting as agent of the Parthians, but it is difficult to substantiate the charge.⁵⁰

Suren was undoubtedly a man of great ability and courage, although not yet thirty years of age. He traveled with a large number of personal attendants, a bodyguard of a thousand mail-clad horsemen, and a sufficient number of concubines to require two hundred wagons. Apparently his force was composed entirely of cavalry,⁵¹ the logical arm for the open country and for the distances to be traversed.

⁵⁰ Dio Cass. xl. 20. Rawlinson, *Sixth Mon.*, pp. 162 f., expressed doubts as to the accuracy of the original source; Tarn in *CAH*, IX, 608, believes Abgarus innocent.

⁵¹ Plut. *Crassus* 23 ff.; cf. Vell. Pat. ii. 46.

Crassus hastened across Mesopotamia through territory which the Roman authorities who seek an excuse for the subsequent defeat claim was trackless desert waste. Actually the country was rolling, and there were some villages and water holes throughout the region. Since the legions, among the most rapid marchers in the world, set out in the spring, they probably arrived before the lush grass of the last rains had burned away. On May 6 the troops reached the river Balicha (Balikh) at a point below the city of Carrhae (Harran).

At Carrhae the Roman commander was informed by his scouts that Suren was near by. The officers urged a rest and a reconnoitering expedition; but Crassus, carried away by the ardor of his son, advanced almost immediately, allowing his men barely sufficient time to eat and drink while standing in ranks. As Cassius had advised, Crassus moved forward with a wide front and little depth to his line, the wings supported by cavalry. To his son Publius he gave the command of one wing, to Cassius that of the other, while he himself took the center. The hurried advance tired still more the already weary Romans. On the approach of the Parthians, the bulk of the troops were formed into a square. The strength of the enemy remained an unknown quantity, for their numbers were masked by an advance guard and the heavy armor of the cataphracts was concealed under skins. At a given signal the Parthians

discarded the coverings and with the roar of a multitude of kettledrums charged the Roman line. This move resulted in a general withdrawal of the scouts and light-armed to positions within the square; and before the astonished Crassus was aware of the maneuver, he was surrounded.

To understand the disaster which followed, some discussion of the character of the forces involved is demanded. The chief strength of the Parthian army was in its cavalry, which was divided into two branches, the light- and the heavy-armed. The light-armed wore no armor at all, though each man probably bore a small oval shield and carried a powerful bow and a quiver of arrows. This compound bow outranged the Roman weapons and had sufficient force to penetrate the armor of the legionaries. Camels stationed behind the fighting lines carried an extra supply of arrows from which the light-armed replenished their quivers.

The heavy cavalry, the cataphracts, wore scale armor which covered horse and rider⁵² from head to foot. Their weapon was a long, heavy lance, with which they charged the enemy, relying on weight to carry them through the opposing forces. Scale armor

⁵² Examples were found at Dura-Europus, *Illust. London News*, September 2, 1933, p. 362. The horses apparently were not as heavy as Tarn in *CAH*, IX, 601, has supposed, since the Dura armor fitted light Arab horses. However, the Dura armor is later in date than the time of Crassus. See also the figures clad in scale armor on Trajan's column (p. 217).

was first developed in Iran and spread rapidly eastward into China and more slowly westward through Parthia to the later Roman army.⁵³ In direct contrast to the Parthians were the Romans, armored foot soldiers, equipped for close fighting, each man protected by a shield and by a javelin (*pilum*) which he hurled before closing in with his short sword. In cavalry the army was weak, for the Romans as yet depended on their allies to supply this branch of the service; the lesson taught at Carrhae eventually caused the expansion of the Roman mounted forces.

The Roman infantry were surrounded by the Parthian bowmen, who poured into them a deadly hail of arrows from every side. A charge by the Roman light-armed proved ineffectual. When the legions attempted the hand-to-hand fighting by which they hitherto had always conquered, the Parthians retired before them and continued to wield their bows with telling effect until they drove the legionaries back to the main body. Crassus realized the necessity of decisive action at once; the order was given for his son to charge the Parthians. With thirteen hundred horsemen, five hundred archers, and eight cohorts (about four thousand men), the young Publius drove the enemy before him with ease until, caught far from all support, the Parthians turned upon him. Many of

⁵³ B. Laufer, *Chinese Clay Figures. I. Prolegomena on the History of Defensive Armor* (Field Museum Anthropological Series, XIII 2; Chicago, 1914), pp. 217 ff.

those engaged in the attack on Crassus left and joined the assault on Publius. The bowmen rode Indian fashion around the bewildered Romans, shooting as they passed. Only the light-armed Gauls were effective against the Parthians, for they slipped from their mounts and stabbed the unprotected bellies of the Parthian horses or seized the lances and dragged the heavily armored riders to earth. But they were too few. Publius was wounded and attempted to fall back on the legions. His soldiers retired to a little hill, perhaps a tell, locked their shields, and fought on until they were killed or forced to surrender; not more than five hundred were taken alive. Publius⁵⁴ and the majority of his officers ordered their shield-bearers to kill them or committed suicide. The Parthians cut off the head of Publius, fixed it on a lance, and returned to the main attack.

In the meantime Crassus, relieved somewhat by the departure of those who had joined the assault on Publius, took courage and drew up his troops on sloping ground. Warned by a messenger of the danger to which his son was exposed, Crassus prepared to move to his aid; but scarcely had he set his forces in motion when the returning Parthians appeared with the head of Publius. Attacked by bowmen on the flanks and crowded by the heavy cavalry in front, the situation of the Romans was extremely serious until nightfall, when the Parthians withdrew.

⁵⁴ Cicero *Pro Scauro* iii. 1.

Crassus had sunk so far into the depths of despair that his officers were unable to rouse him, and on their own authority they ordered a general retreat to Carrhae. The cries of the wounded who were left behind informed the Parthians that the Romans were retreating; but they did not attack, as their bowmen and horses would have been at a great disadvantage in the darkness. About midnight a band of three hundred horsemen arrived at Carrhae and sent a message to tell Coponius, the commandant, of the disaster. He ordered his men to arms at once, and when positive news of the defeat was received he marched out to meet Crassus.

The following day the Parthians tarried to dispatch some four thousand Roman wounded and the numerous stragglers who were fleeing in all directions; four cohorts under Varguntius were also destroyed. Since the slaughter did not begin until dawn, it doubtless occupied most of the day. Their task finished, the Parthians took up the pursuit and surrounded the town of Carrhae where Crassus and the remnant of his army had taken refuge. There was no prospect of relief, since the whole Near East had been denuded of troops for the expedition; hence Crassus determined to abandon the shelter of the friendly but dangerous walls and to seek protection in the hills of Armenia. For obvious reasons the time of departure was kept secret; but the Parthians managed to place a citizen of Carrhae, one Andromachus,

who was in their service, in the position of guide to the Roman forces. Crassus set out at night toward the hill town of Sinnaca,⁵⁵ but Andromachus wasted time until day broke. For this service he was rewarded with the tyranny of Carrhae, which he held until his cruelty led the citizens to kill him and his family.⁵⁶ Octavius, more successful in his choice of guides, reached the hill country safely with about five thousand men. Meanwhile Cassius, disgusted with the meanderings of Andromachus, had returned to Carrhae, whence he fled with five hundred horsemen to Syria. Unnerved by this bitter experience, he ever after kept a man ready to kill him should he so direct.⁵⁷

At dawn Crassus was still a mile and a half from Octavius and the safety of the rough country when the appearance of the Parthians forced him to take refuge on a knoll. Surrounded by an enemy numerically far superior, his situation was extremely dangerous; Octavius perceived his peril and courageously left a safe position on high ground to relieve Crassus.

Suren realized that he must act immediately, for if the Romans reached the near-by hills it would be impossible to use the Parthian cavalry. His next move, though possibly motivated by a desire to secure the person of Crassus, who was believed to be the in-

⁵⁵ Strabo xvi. 1. 23; Tarn in *CAH*, IX, 610, n. 1.

⁵⁶ Nic. Dam. cxiv (J, II A, p. 378, fr. 79); Plut. *Crassus* 29.

⁵⁷ Plut. *Brutus* 43.

stigatator of the war, may also have been caused by a genuine desire to make peace, perhaps for purposes of self-aggrandizement. He released some Roman prisoners who had been allowed to overhear a conversation in the course of which assurances of kind treatment for Crassus and a desire for peace were expressed. The Parthians were ordered to cease fighting, and Suren with his staff advanced to the base of the rise on which the Romans had made their stand and offered safe passage and a treaty of peace. Crassus, fearing treachery, was disinclined to accept; but his men threatened him, and he was forced to comply.⁵⁸ The meeting took place in the open space between the two armies, and each commander was accompanied by an equal number of men, presumably unarmed. The Parthians were on horseback, the Romans on foot. After a short conversation Crassus was offered a horse and the party started in the direction of the Euphrates, the boundary where most of the preceding treaties had been signed. But the Romans, weary with fighting and expecting treachery, perhaps failed to understand the purpose of this act, seeing in it an abduction of their commander. Octavius seized the bridle of Crassus' horse, and a general scuffle ensued, during which Octavius drew a sword and slew one of the Parthian grooms. This precipitated a mêlée in which Crassus, Octavius, and

⁵⁸ Plut. *Crassus* 30; but cf. Dio Cass. xl. 26, who says that Crassus trusted Suren without hesitation.

other Romans were slain. Whether or not the Parthians intended treachery we cannot be sure, but one of the supposedly unarmed Romans struck the first blow, and the whole affair may have been a tragic misunderstanding.⁵⁹ Later the headless bodies of the Romans were dragged around the walls of Sinnaca.⁶⁰

The Roman troops either surrendered or scattered during the night, only to be hunted down when daylight broke. Of the forty-two thousand who had set out with Crassus, scarcely one-fourth escaped, for twenty thousand were slain and ten thousand were made prisoners. The captives were settled at Margiana⁶¹ (Merv), where they intermarried with native women.⁶² Some were pressed into the Parthian armies and later betrayed their captors.⁶³ Suren proceeded to Seleucia, where he held a mock triumph to impress the citizens. Not long afterward, realizing the danger from so able a man, Orodes put Suren to death.

While the campaign against Crassus was in progress, Orodes had come to terms with Artavasdes, who was no longer under Roman influence. The Parthian had arranged a marriage between his son Pacorus and

⁵⁹ G. E. J. Guilhem de Sainte-Croix, "Mémoire sur le gouvernement des Parthes," *Acad. des inscr. et belles-lettres, Mém. de litt.*, L (1808), 62, was the first to point out this very possible interpretation of the story.

⁶⁰ Lucan *De bell. civ.* viii. 436 f.; Strabo xvi. 1. 23.

⁶¹ Pliny *Hist. nat.* vi. 47.

⁶² Horace *Od.* iii. 5. 5.

⁶³ Vell. Pat. ii. 82; Florus ii. 20. 4.

the sister of the Armenian monarch. While the festivities were in progress and the entire company was watching a performance of the *Bacchae* of Euripides, messengers arrived with the head and hand of Crassus, gruesome trophies of Carrhae. In announcing the victory the head was thrown upon the stage, an action scarcely in keeping with Greek tradition, though both of the kings and their attendants were familiar with the Greek language and literature, and Artavasdes had written orations and histories and composed tragedies in that language.⁶⁴

The result of Crassus' fiasco was to place Parthia on an equal if not superior plane with Rome in the minds of men from the Mediterranean to the Indus.⁶⁵ The lands east of the Euphrates became definitely Parthian, and the Euphrates remained the boundary between Rome and Parthia until A.D. 63, when the defeat of Paetus took place. The Parthians failed to follow up their victory, although Cassius, now in command of the Roman troops in Syria, was short of men and unlikely to receive reinforcements while civil war was threatening in Rome.

Among the groups most strongly affected by this increase in Parthian prestige were the Jews. For

⁶⁴ Plut. *Crassus* 33. Just how much reliance can be placed on this much overworked story is doubtful. In any case, the evidence concerns only the immediate court circle, and the extent to which Hellenism penetrated the life of the common people yet remains to be determined.

⁶⁵ Strabo xi. 9. 2; Dio Cass. xl. 14; Pliny *Hist. nat.* v. 88 (25); Justin xli. 1. 1; Herodian iv. 10; Plut. *Antony* 34.

years they had looked to this newly risen power in the East as a possible source of support, and the strong Jewish colonies in Babylonia must have kept their more westerly brethren informed of the Parthian successes. As the Greeks of Mesopotamia directed their appeals for aid to the rulers of Seleucid Syria, so the Palestinian Jews turned their eyes toward Parthia for deliverance from oppression.

Perhaps in the time of Antiochus Sidetes (139/38–129 B.C.) an agreement for co-ordinated action had been reached between the Jews and the Parthians.⁶⁶ Certainly either during the ill-fated Parthian expedition or immediately afterward John Hyrcanus had made attacks on Syrian cities.⁶⁷ A passage of about that date in the Talmud seems to mention an attack by the Jews on Antioch.⁶⁸ In the time of Alexander Jannaeus (103–78 B.C.) a Parthian embassy of good will is mentioned as having been feasted at Jerusalem. During the celebration they inquired for the old man Simeon, then in exile, who had entertained them previously.⁶⁹ It is noteworthy that during the reign of Alexander no mention is made of Jewish embassies to Rome such as had commonly been sent by his

⁶⁶ A late writer, Josippon, chap. 28, says that John Hyrcanus received an embassy which proposed such an agreement.

⁶⁷ Josephus *Ant.* xiii. 254 and *Bell.* i. 62.

⁶⁸ *Soṭah* 33a. "Antioch" is by many emended to "Antiochus"; see J. Klausner, *Israelitic History* [in Hebrew], II (Jerusalem, 1924), 74.

⁶⁹ *Yerushalmi*, *Berakoth* 7. 2 (Krotoschin ed., reproduced by L. Lamm [Berlin, 1920], I, 111b) and *Nazir* 5. 5 (*ibid.*, II, 54b).

predecessors.⁷⁰ The disaster which the Roman arms had suffered at Carrhae made certain the supremacy, at least for the time being, of pro-Parthian over pro-Roman sentiment among the Jews.

In 52 B.C. raids were made on Syria; but the Parthians were driven out by Cassius, who then hastily marched southward into Judea, where he assaulted and captured the city of Taricheae. Large numbers of Jews who had revolted, perhaps inspired by the Parthian success, were sold into slavery.⁷¹ The Jews discovered in plots against members of the pro-Roman party naturally turned toward Parthia as a certain refuge.⁷²

The next, more determined, attempt by Parthia opened the way for expansion to its farthest western limits. This advance forms the subject of the following chapter.

⁷⁰ Eleazar Isar Szadzunski, *The Talmudical Writings as a Source for Parthian and Sassanid History* (unpublished M.A. diss., University of Chicago, 1932), pp. 30–34, and abstract of a paper in *JAOS*, LII (1932) 305.

⁷¹ Dio Cass. xl. 28; Josephus *Bell.* i. 180.

⁷² Cf. the example in Josephus *Bell.* i. 485 f.

and Hybreas of Mylasa both wished to oppose him, but others, who were without arms and inclined toward peace, yielded. Hybreas especially provoked Labienus, for when the latter struck coins with the legend IMPERATOR PARTHICUS⁶⁶ Hybreas said: "Then I shall call myself 'Carian general.'" When Mylasa was taken the home of Hybreas was especially singled out for plunder, but the orator himself had sought safety in Rhodes.⁶⁷ Alabanda also surrendered only after sharp fighting; Stratonicea of Caria, though it was besieged a long time, was never taken.⁶⁸ A later rescript of Augustus praised Stratonicea for its resistance to the Parthian attack.⁶⁹ L. Munatius Plancus, governor of Asia, fled to the islands for refuge. The forces of Labienus may even have penetrated as far as Lydia and Ionia.⁷⁰ Naturally he did not neglect the opportunity thus created to collect funds from the captured territory.⁷¹

Pacorus, proceeding along the coast, and Barzapharnes, one of his commanders, marching farther inland, met with equal success in the south. All Syria

⁶⁶ G. F. Hill, *Historical Roman Coins* (London, 1909), pp. 128-31 and Pl. XIII 80. These coins bore on the obverse the head of Labienus and on the reverse a saddled and bridled horse. The assumption of such a title should mean a victory over the Parthians, but the Parthians were the allies of Labienus! It was evidently as difficult for contemporaries to understand this action as for us.

⁶⁷ Strabo xiv. 2. 24.

⁶⁸ Dio Cass. xlviii. 25-26.

⁶⁹ Tac. *Ann.* iii. 62. ⁷⁰ Plut. *Antony* 30. ⁷¹ Strabo xii. 8. 9.

fell before them except Tyre, against which Pacorus was powerless without a fleet.⁷² In some places, such as Sidon and Ptolemais (Acre), he was favorably received.

At this time in Judea the political power of the Hasmoneans was gone. Hyrcanus (I), the high priest, was but nominal ruler; and Antigonus, his nephew, had already failed in the attempt to wrest Jewish leadership from his uncle. The real power lay in the hands of Phasael and Herod, sons of Antipater the Idumean. To the advancing Parthians Antigonus⁷³ offered one thousand talents and five hundred Jewish women, and because he was the head of a pro-Parthian group Pacorus decided to aid him. A special squadron of horsemen under the command of the cupbearer Pacorus, a man who bore the same name as the prince, was detailed to advance into Judea for this purpose. While these troops were raiding Carmel, a large number of Jews volunteered their services to Antigonus. Jews and Parthians together advanced to a grove of oak trees⁷⁴ not far away, where they defeated the opposing forces, and then hastened on to Jerusalem.

⁷² Dio Cass. xlviii. 26; Josephus *Ant.* xiv. 330 ff., xx. 245, and *Bell.* i. 248 ff.

⁷³ Dio Cass. xlviii. 26 confuses Antigonus with Aristobulus, as xlviii. 41 and xlix. 22 of his own work, as well as the accounts of Josephus, prove.

⁷⁴ Cf. Strabo xvi. 2. 28; PW, art. "Drymos," No. 4. This may be a place name.

Within the city the writer of Enoch was moved by the coming of the Parthian hosts to express the pious hope that the city of righteousness would be a hindrance to their horses.⁷⁵ In possible internal dissensions among the invaders he saw deliverance for the elect—a most reasonable hope in view of the past history of Parthia, but one not fulfilled in this case.

The combined Jewish and Parthian forces managed to enter the palace; but the struggle, eventually little more than an armed contest between two political factions, went on for some time within the walls. Finally the cupbearer Pacorus was admitted to the city with five hundred Parthian horsemen, ostensibly to act as mediator. Hyrcanus and the tetrarch Phasael were persuaded to go as ambassadors to the Parthian commander Barzapharnes. To allay suspicion Pacorus left with Herod two hundred horsemen and ten "Freemen," and the remainder of the cavalry acted as escort to the embassy. They were well received by Barzapharnes, and it was not until the Parthian commander had departed to rejoin Prince Pacorus and the ambassadors had reached Ecdippa (ez-Zib) on the coast that they learned they were virtual prisoners.

In the meantime Pacorus the cupbearer was attempting to lure Herod outside the walls of Jerusalem in order to seize him. But Herod was suspicious, for

⁷⁵ I Enoch 56: 5-8; cf. also chap. 57. See Olmstead, "Intertestamental Studies," *JAOs*, LVI (1936), 255 f., for the dating.

he had heard of his brother's arrest; under cover of darkness he fled with most of his family, pursued by the Parthians. Herod and his supporters managed to hold both the Parthians and the hostile Jewish group at bay and eventually reached the stronghold of Masada (es-Sebbah) to the west of the Dead Sea. The Parthians pillaged Jerusalem and the surrounding country and laid waste the city of Mareshah or Marissa (Tell Sandahannah). Antigonus himself bit off the ears of Hyrcanus, so that his mutilated condition might prevent his ever again holding office.⁷⁶ Phasael killed himself; Antigonus was made king in Jerusalem; and Hyrcanus was carried away to Parthia.⁷⁷ By Parthian intervention a Jewish king again sat on the throne in the Holy City; the dream of re-establishing the kingdom had become a reality. The wide extent of Parthian influence, no doubt originally through trade relations and now through military strength, is demonstrated by the rapidity with which Malchus, king of the Nabataean Arabs, obeyed Parthian orders to expel Herod from his territory.⁷⁸ This act later cost him a large sum of money.⁷⁹ Practically all of the Asiatic possessions of Rome were now either

⁷⁶ Cf. Lev. 21: 16-23.

⁷⁷ Josephus *Bell.* i. 273 and 284 and *Ant.* xiv. 379 and 384 f.; Euseb. *Hist.* i. 6. 7; *CSCO Syr.*, 3. ser., t. IV, Versio (1903-5), p. 83, lines 17-19. Cf. Edwyn Robert Bevan, *Jerusalem under the High Priests* (London, 1924), pp. 145 f.; James Darmesteter, "Les Parthes à Jérusalem," *JA*, 9. sér., IV (1894), 43-54.

⁷⁸ Josephus *Bell.* i. 276.

⁷⁹ Dio Cass. xlviii. 41.

in the hands of Parthia or were seriously threatened by her. Antony, though aware of the situation, took no decisive action during his voyage up the Syrian coast on his way to Greece,⁸⁰ for war was on in Italy and his presence there was imperative.

In 39 B.C. Antony was sufficiently in control of the situation at home to begin a new campaign against the Parthians.⁸¹ He had sent Publius Ventidius Bassus in advance into Asia in 40 B.C.,⁸² and this officer surprised Labienus with only a small body of local troops, for his Parthian allies were not present at that time. Labienus, unable to offer battle, was forced into Syria, where he was evidently cornered. Both the Romans and the troops of Labienus awaited reinforcements; for the former these were heavy-armed men, for the latter the Parthians. Both received the expected aid on the same day, but Ventidius wisely re-

⁸⁰ Dio Cass. xlviii. 27; Plut. *Antony* 30.

⁸¹ Appian *Bell. civ.* v. 65, 75, 132 f.; Gellius *Noct. Att.* xv. 4; Victor *De vir. ill.* 85; Dio Cass. xlviii. 39-41 and xlix. 19-22; Eutrop. *Brev.* vii. 5; Florus ii. 19 f.; Frontinus *Strat.* i. 1. 6 and ii. 5. 36 f.; Tac. *Germ.* 37; Josephus *Ant.* xiv. 392-95 and 420 and *Bell.* i. 284-92; Justin xlii. 4. 7-11; Juvenal *Sat.* vii. 199; Livy *Epit.* cxxvii; Orosius vi. 18. 23; Pliny *Hist. nat.* vii. 135 (44); Plut. *Antony* 33 f.; Ruf. *Fest.* 18; Strabo xii. 2. 11, xiv. 2. 24, xvi. 2. 8; Val. Max. vi. 9. 9; Vell. Pat. ii. 78; Zonaras x. 18 and 22 f. Plutarch drew his information on Antony's movements from the accounts of Quintus Dellius, one of his officers; see Plut. *Antony* 59. Cf. also *ibid.* 25; Strabo xi. 13. 3; Horace *Od.* ii. 3; and the discussion in J, II D, pp. 623-25. It is doubtful whether Dellius covered the campaign of Ventidius; see O. Hirschfeld, "Dellius ou Sallustius," *Mélanges Boissier* (Paris, 1903), pp. 293-95.

⁸² Appian *Bell. civ.* v. 65.

mained encamped on high ground where the Parthian horsemen could not operate effectively. Overconfident because of their previous success, the Parthians advanced without seeking to effect a junction with Labienus, and charged up the slope of the hill on which the Romans awaited them. The legions met them in a downrush that swept all before it. The Parthian survivors fled to Cilicia without attempting to join Labienus, who tried to escape at nightfall. His plans were betrayed by deserters; many of his troops were killed in ambush, and the remainder went over to the Romans. Again Labienus escaped, but soon afterward he was taken prisoner and put to death; thus ended the career of the man who chose to style himself "Imperator Parthicus."⁸³

Ventidius recovered Cilicia and then sent Pompaedius⁸⁴ Silo with a troop of cavalry to secure the Amanus Gates, through which passed the road to Syria.⁸⁵ This officer was unable to force the pass and

⁸³ Dio Cass. xlviii. 26 and 39-40; Strabo xiv. 2. 24. Rhosus (Arsus) seems to have begun a new era on its coinage with these victories of Ventidius in 39 B.C.; see George Macdonald, "A New Syrian Era," *Journal international d'archéologie et numismatique*, VI (1903), 47 f.

⁸⁴ Or Pompaedius; see notes in Boissevain's ed. of Dio Cass. at xlviii. 41.

⁸⁵ Dio Cass. xlviii. 41; Earnest Cary, *ad loc.*, n. 1, states that the *Cilician* Gates are meant. That is obviously an error, since the Cilician Gates are located in the Taurus Mountains, whereas Dio clearly refers to a pass in the Amanus on the border between Cilicia and Syria. Rawlinson, *Sixth Mon.*, p. 190 and n. 2, suggests the *Syrian* Gates, on the basis of Strabo xvi. 2. 8; the reference in n. 2 is incorrect, for Strabo xv. 2. 8 refers to the *Caspian* Gates, hundreds of miles to the east. The *Amanus* Gates, just north of Epiphanea in Cilicia, are the most probable.

fore the close of the siege. Unfortunately Antony was even less successful than his able lieutenant before the walls of Samosata, and he was at last constrained to accept three hundred talents in lieu of the original offer of a thousand.¹⁰³

Ventidius returned to Rome. Gaius Sosius was to take charge of Syria, and Publius Canidius Crassus was expected to subdue Armenia and then proceed northward to the Caucasus. In November, 38 B.C., Ventidius celebrated his triumph in Rome.¹⁰⁴ Antony also was granted one, but did not live to enjoy it. Jerusalem fell in 37 B.C.; Antigonus was put to death, and Herod became king of the Jews.

The loss of his son Pacorus proved a great shock to the aged King Orodes and may have unbalanced his mind to some extent. With thirty sons to choose from, Orodes found it difficult to make up his mind. His selection of Phraates, the eldest of his eligible children,¹⁰⁵ was most unfortunate, as the events which followed proved.

¹⁰³ Plut. *Antony* 34; Josephus *Ant.* xiv. 439-47 and *Bell.* i. 321 f.; Dio Cass. xlix. 20 f. Can this be the treaty mentioned in Florus ii. 20. 1?

¹⁰⁴ The speech in which he proclaimed his victories was borrowed from C. Sallustius, according to Fronto *Epist.* ii. 1. 5 (Loeb, II, p. 137). On Ventidius see Suetonius in Gellius *Noct. Att.* xv. 4. On the triumph see *Fasti triumphales populi Romani*, ed. E. Pais (Rome, 1920), F. Tr. 715/39; *CIL*, I 1, p. 461, A.U.C. 716; Vell. Pat. ii. 65.

¹⁰⁵ Justin xlii. 4. 11-16; Dio Cass. xlix. 23.

CHAPTER VI

ANTONY AND ARMENIA

PHRAATES IV came into power shortly before 37 B.C.¹ Not long thereafter he attempted to hasten the death of his aged father by a dose of aconite.² When this failed he resorted to the more certain method of strangulation. To make his position more secure, he shortly murdered his brothers³ and was thus apparently without opposition. But soon he found himself compelled to remove numbers of prominent Parthians, while the remainder fled to refuge among various peoples and in distant cities.

¹ No coins are known to have been struck in 38/37 B.C. either by Orodes II or by Phraates IV; see McDowell, *Coins from Seleucia*, p. 184. Phraates' first known issue, A. Ritter von Petrowicz, *Arsaciden-Münzen* (Wien, 1904), p. 77, No. 1, is dated June, 37 B.C. Horace *Ep.* 7. 9 should be placed about this time.

² Plut. *Crassus* 33. In dropsy the excess blood which the heart cannot handle backs up into the extremities, causing them to swell. When given in small doses, aconite strengthens and steadies the heart action and might thus effect a temporary cure, though larger quantities would be fatal. The drug is made from common monkshood and would be in an impure state as prepared in antiquity—a fact which may account for the cure rather than the death of Orodes. The whole incident may be a later Greek or Roman addition.

³ There is almost no agreement of sources with regard to the time of these murders: no clue in Justin xlii. 5. 1; Plut. *Antony* 37, Phraates put Orodes to death; Dio Cass. xlix. 23, Orodes dies of grief and old age before the murder of the sons. Cf. Rawlinson, *Sixth Mon.*, p. 196 and note 1.

Some even sought the protection of the Romans. Among the latter was a noble, Monaeses, a man of great prominence and wealth who had gained a reputation as a commander during the war just completed.⁴ He promised Antony to lead the Roman army and believed that he could easily win over almost all of Parthia. Induced by this favorable presentation of the situation, Antony prepared for war against the Parthians. Late in 37 or early in 36 B.C. Publius Canidius Crassus forced Armenia to become a Roman ally and then turned northward to defeat the Iberians and Albanians, thus removing the threat of an attack from the rear on the proposed expedition.⁵

Hyrcanus, the Jewish high priest carried off to Parthia in 39 B.C., though unable to serve again in his former capacity because of his mutilated condition, wished to return home. Not long after his accession to the throne in 37 B.C. Herod sent an ambassador to request the release of Hyrcanus. Despite the protests of the local Jews, leave to depart was granted by the Parthian king. Financed by his friends, Hyrcanus journeyed to Jerusalem, where he lived in honor until 30 B.C., when he was put to death on the suspicion that he was plotting against Herod.⁶ Later Pheroras,

⁴ Horace *Od.* iii. 6. 9; Plut. *Antony* 37. Adolf Günther, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Kriege zwischen Römern und Parthern* (Berlin, 1922), p. 58, n. 1, suggests that his reputation was won in the attack on Statianus.

⁵ Dio Cass. xlix. 24; T. R. Holmes, *The Architect of the Roman Empire* (Oxford, 1928), pp. 122 f. and notes; Günther, *op. cit.*, p. 51 and n. 1.

⁶ Josephus *Bell.* i. 433 and *Ant.* xv. 11-22 and 164-82.

brother of Herod, was accused of planning to flee to the Parthians.⁷

On the eastern frontier the precarious state of affairs in Parthia attracted the attention of the Hun Chih-chih, whose capital lay on the Talus River in western Turkestan; but his plans to invade Bactria and Parthia never materialized.⁸

Until the war with Parthia should terminate, Antony lent Monaeses three cities, Larissa (Sizara), Arethusa (Restan), and Hierapolis (Membidj),⁹ and promised him the Parthian throne. Phraates opened negotiations with Monaeses and eventually persuaded him to return to Parthia, a move which Antony did not prevent, since to destroy Monaeses would merely result in alienating the pro-Roman Parthians. Envoys were sent with him to request the return of the standards captured from Crassus in 53 B.C. and of such of his men as still survived.¹⁰

While these negotiations were under way, Antony continued his preparations for war, the most important part of which was to secure allies to supply cavalry. Of these Artavasdes, king of Armenia, was the

⁷ Josephus *Bell.* i. 486.

⁸ J. de Groot, *Chinesische Urkunden zur Geschichte Asiens*, I, 230 f. ("Tsit-ki" = Chih-chih).

⁹ PW, arts. "Larisa," No. 12; "Arethusa," No. 10; and "Hierapolis" (in Suppl. IV).

¹⁰ Dio Cass. xlix. 24; Plut. *Antony* 37.

most powerful.¹¹ When late in April or early in May¹² Antony advanced to the Euphrates, contrary to expectations he found the whole region carefully guarded; but, since he was following the plan of invasion laid out by Caesar¹³ rather than that of Crassus, this made little difference. Since in any case he needed the cavalry to be furnished by his northern allies, he turned up the Euphrates, passed through Zeugma (near modern Biredjik, Turkish Birecik, which is the ancient Apamea; see p. 83, n. 46), and at some point, perhaps Carana (Erzurum), met the auxiliaries and held a review of the troops.¹⁴

The total forces under Antony's command numbered about a hundred thousand men, divided as follows: sixty thousand legionaries (sixteen legions), ten thousand Iberian and Celtic cavalry, and thirty thousand allies, both horsemen and light-armed, including seven thousand foot and six thousand horse

¹¹ Dio Cass. xlix. 25; Plut. *Antony* 37; cf. Strabo xi. 13. 4 and xvi. 1. 28.

¹² J. Kromayer, "Kleine Forschungen zur Geschichte des zweiten Triumvirats," *Hermes*, XXXI (1896), 92 ff.; Holmes, *op. cit.*, pp. 225 f. Günther, *Beiträge*, p. 55, makes it the middle of April; cf. also J. Kromayer and G. Veith, *Schlachten-Atlas zur antiken Kriegsgeschichte* (Leipzig, 1922-29), Röm. Abt., Blatt 24:7. Florus ii. 20. 2 states that Antony made no declaration of war.

¹³ Suet. *Julius* 44.

¹⁴ On the route followed see Kromayer, *op. cit.*, pp. 70-86; Holmes, *op. cit.*, pp. 124 f. and 223-25 (with bibliographical notes). Cf. Theodor Mommsen, *The Provinces of the Roman Empire* (tr. by W. P. Dickson; New York, 1906), II, 30-34, and Delbrück, *Geschichte der Kriegskunst*, I, 478-81.

furnished by Artavasdes.¹⁵ These horsemen, fully equipped and armored, the Armenian king was proud to display before Antony.¹⁶ His advice was to attack Media Atropatene, since the ruler of that country, also named Artavasdes, and all of his troops were with the Parthians on the Euphrates. The guide who led the Romans northward from Zeugma to the borders of Atropatene, and later even Artavasdes himself, were accused of being Parthian agents;¹⁷ but the charge may have been based on a desire to shift the blame for the defeat that ensued. In order to speed up his advance Antony left behind his slow-moving baggage, his siege engines (carried in three hundred wagons), and all beasts of burden. About two legions, under Oppius Statianus, were assigned the task of bringing forward this material as rapidly as possible.¹⁸ Because there was no heavy timber in the country to be traversed, siege engines could not be constructed there; if they were to be available, they had to be brought with the army. Antony himself took the cavalry and the pick of the infantry and hurried to the capital of Media Atropatene, Praaspa (Takht-i-

¹⁵ Plut. *Antony* 37. Justin xlii. 5. 3 and Florus ii. 20 state that he had with him sixteen legions; Victor *De vir. ill.* 85. 4 reports the number as fifteen; Livy *Epit.* cxxx gives 18; and Vell. Pat. ii. 82 says thirteen. Kromayer, *op. cit.*, *Hermes*, XXXIII (1898), 27, estimates the average strength of these legions at 3750. See also Günther, *Beiträge*, p. 50 and n. 2; Tarn, "Antony's Legions," *Classical Quarterly*, XXVI (1932), 75-81.

¹⁶ Strabo xi. 14. 9. ¹⁷ Strabo xi. 13. 4 and xvi. 1. 28.

¹⁸ Dio Cass. xlix. 25; Plut. *Antony* 38 says ten thousand men.

Sulaimān),¹⁹ which he was forced to besiege.²⁰ Lack of siege equipment was a great handicap, for Antony had to build huge mounds in lieu of the usual towers. Phraates, when he saw that the task of reducing the well garrisoned and strongly defended city was likely to occupy Antony for some time, turned his attention to the baggage train. Statianus, caught off his guard, was surrounded by cavalry, and in the battle which ensued the Roman commander and all his men were lost.²¹ The valuable siege engines and the baggage were destroyed by the Parthians. Among the numerous captives taken was Polemon, king of Pontus, who was afterward released for a ransom. Artavasdes the Armenian deserted either just before the battle, which may account for the completeness of the Roman defeat,²² or shortly afterward when he despaired of the Roman cause.²³ He took with him, besides his own troops, some of the allied forces, a total of sixteen thousand men. Antony, hastening with reinforcements in response to messengers from Statianus, found only corpses.

The Roman commander was now in a peculiarly

¹⁹ Praaspa is the classical Vera, Strabo xi. 13. 3. See Sykes, *Hist. of Persia*, I, 360 and n. 1; H. C. Rawlinson, "Memoir on the Site of Atropatenian Ecbatana," *Journ. Royal Geog. Soc.*, X (1841), 113-15.

²⁰ Dio Cass. xlix. 25.

²¹ Plut. *Antony* 38 mentions the loss of ten thousand men; Livy *Epit.* cxxx and Vell. Pat. ii. 82, two legions.

²² Dio Cass. xlix. 25.

²³ Plut. *Antony* 39.

difficult position. To obtain food he had to send out foraging parties, which, if they were small, were wiped out or, if large enough to defend themselves, so reduced the strength of the besiegers that the people of Praaspa could make successful sorties and destroy the siege works. The legionaries, though protected by slingers, suffered much from the Parthian archers and their run-and-fight cavalry tactics. As Delliuss, probably an eyewitness, remarked in his account of a skirmish engaged in by a large foraging party in which the Parthian dead totaled eighty, the Romans thought it a terrible thing that, when they were victorious, they killed so few of the enemy and, when they were vanquished, they were robbed of as many men as they had lost with the baggage wagons.²⁴ Shortly after this particular party returned, the people of the city made a sally and put to flight the Romans on the mound. To punish the cowardice of these men Antony was reduced to decimation; that is, he put to death every tenth man. To the remainder he gave barley instead of the usual wheat.²⁵ Since neither side wished to prolong the campaign into the approaching winter, Antony made a last, unsuccessful attempt to

²⁴ Plut. *Antony* 39.

²⁵ *Ibid.*; Frontinus *Strat.* iv. 1. 37. Though Dio Cass. xlix. 27 says that all the army was given barley, the substitution of barley for wheat is ordinarily part of the punishment; cf. Octavian in the Dalmatian War, Suet. *Augustus* 24; Dio Cass. xlix. 38. 4; H. M. D. Parker, *The Roman Legions* (Oxford, 1928), pp. 232-34 (a work almost valueless for the eastern campaigns).

secure the lost standards and captives before raising the siege. After all negotiations proved abortive, Antony departed, leaving behind his improvised siege implements.

Phraates expected the Romans to return by the route they had come, but Antony was advised by a friendly Mardian²⁶ to follow the hills and thus avoid the archers to some extent rather than cross the open, treeless plains. The hill route was also said to be shorter, to be better provisioned, and to have the additional advantage of passing through many villages. With the Mardian as guide, Antony took the route suggested, and for two days all went well. On the third, when he had relaxed his guard and was marching in open order, he came to a point where the road was flooded by a recently breached dike. Warned by his guide that this was the work of the Parthians, Antony ordered his men into battle array, a task scarcely accomplished when the Romans were enveloped by enemy cavalry. Charges by light-armed troops simply caused the Parthians to withdraw momentarily, but attacks by the Celtic horsemen were effective.

Antony then adopted a formation consisting of a hollow square the flanks of which were covered by slingers and javelin-throwers, while horsemen broke up the Parthian attacks with charges. Thus the col-

²⁶ Plut. *Antony* 41. The later writers Vell. Pat. ii. 82 and Florus ii. 20. 4 represent him as a survivor of Crassus' expedition, settled in Margiana.

umn was able to proceed, though but slowly.²⁷ On the fifth day Flavius Gallus asked for some of the light-armed troops from the rear. When the usual attack came, he pressed forward against the enemy instead of drawing them back toward the legionaries as was the custom. In a few moments he was surrounded and forced to ask for aid, but the small detachments sent were quickly cut to pieces. Disaster appeared imminent until Antony arrived from the van and with him Legion III, which pushed its way through the fugitives and effected a rescue. Some three thousand were killed and five thousand wounded, among them Gallus, who died shortly afterward.²⁸ On the next day the Parthians, said to number about forty thousand, hoped to complete the destruction of the Roman forces, but the legions rallied and met the attack by forming a testudo.²⁹ The Parthians, deceived by the sea of shields, supposed that the Romans were giving up the struggle and so dismounted and charged on foot. When they were within a short distance, the legionaries rose and met them with their short swords, killing those in the front ranks and putting the remainder to flight. The weary retreat then continued.

Famine fought with the Parthians, for the small amount of grain available was difficult to grind after the mills had been abandoned with the transport

²⁷ On the retreat see also Frontinus *Strat.* ii. 13. 7.

²⁸ Plut. *Antony* 42 f.; cf. Tac. *Hist.* iii. 24.

²⁹ Plut. *Antony* 45; Dio Cass. xlix. 29 f.; Frontinus *Strat.* ii. 3. 15.

animals. Wild plants which the soldiers ate produced sickness and even death.

When the vigor of the Parthian attacks had declined for a time, Antony considered leaving the hills for level ground, especially as the rough hill country ahead was reported to be waterless. A cousin of the Monaeses who had been with Antony came to camp and warned him through an interpreter that the same fate which had befallen Crassus awaited him should he ever leave the hills. The Mardian was of the same opinion, and he added that but one day without water awaited them on the safe route. Accordingly they continued on as originally planned. Camp was broken at night, the troops carrying water in such vessels as they had or even in their helmets. But the Parthians, contrary to their usual custom, took up the pursuit even in the darkness and followed close behind the legions. About sunrise they overtook the rear guard, then worn out by a thirty-mile march. The parched soldiers suffered from drinking water laden with salts, for it was impossible to restrain them from anything liquid. Antony began to pitch camp, but abandoned the idea and resumed the march on the advice of a Parthian deserter who assured him that a river of good water was not far off, and that beyond it the Parthians were not likely to pursue them. As a reward for this information, the deserter was given as many gold vessels as he could conceal in his garments. The disorganization of the Roman army was by this

time almost complete, for Roman stole from Roman, Antony's own baggage-carriers were attacked, and the commander himself made arrangements for a freedman in his bodyguard to kill him should he so command. To reorganize his troops Antony called a halt, and he had partially brought order out of chaos when the Parthians resumed the attack. A *testudo* was formed, and the front ranks moved gradually along until they came to the river, across which the wounded were sent first, while the retreat was covered by the cavalry. Beyond this the Parthians did not pursue, even as the deserter had predicted. Six days later the Romans reached the Araxes (Aras) River, the border between Media and Armenia, twenty-seven days after leaving Praaspa.³⁰

The expedition cost the lives of approximately thirty-five thousand men. In eighteen defensive engagements the Romans had managed to preserve their forces from annihilation. A few more such Pyrrhic victories, and no one would have returned to tell the tale.³¹ Phraates celebrated his victory by re-

³⁰ Plut. *Antony* 47 ff.; Frontinus *Strat.* ii. 3. 15 and ii. 13. 7. On the retreat see H. C. Rawlinson, "Memoir on the Site of the Atropatenian Ecbatana," *Journ. Royal Geog. Soc.*, X (1841), 113-17.

³¹ Plut. *Antony* 50 puts the loss at twenty thousand infantry and four thousand cavalry, but apparently (see Rawlinson, *Sixth Mon.*, p. 205 and n. 2) does not include the ten thousand men lost under Statianus. Vell. Pat. ii. 82 states that losses amounted to not less than one-fourth of all the soldiers, one-third of the camp followers, and all of the baggage. Florus ii. 20. 10 says one-third of the legions remained; cf. Plut. *Demetrius et Antonius* 1!

striking with his own types the tetradrachms of Antony and Cleopatra captured as a part of the spoils.³²

Antony, though keenly aware that the desertion of Artavasdes the Armenian had cost him dearly, was forced to treat him with respect and friendliness in order to secure much needed supplies. From Armenia Antony proceeded in haste to a place called Leukē Kōmē ("White Village") between Beirut and Sidon on the Syrian coast, though he was constantly hampered by inclement weather in the rainy season and lost eight thousand men on the march. There he stayed until joined by Cleopatra, who brought with her clothing and money for the troops. When these proved insufficient, Antony made up the difference from his own pocket and the pockets of his allies.³³ After a short rest together on the Syrian coast, Antony and Cleopatra proceeded to Alexandria, where they spent the winter. In the meantime a quarrel had arisen between Phraates and his Median ally over the booty taken from the Romans. The Median, fearful for the safety of his throne, sent Polemon³⁴ to Antony with an offer of alliance. This Antony accepted, and

³² Allotte de la Fuÿe, "Monnaies arsacides surfrappées," *Rev. num.*, 1904, pp. 174-87; the example discussed is now in the collection of E. T. Newell, New York City. See also Allotte de la Fuÿe in *Mém. Miss. archéol. de Perse*, XXV (1934), 34.

³³ Dio Cass. xlix. 31. Cf. Plut. *Antony* 51, according to whom one account relates that Cleopatra brought only the clothing and Antony furnished the money from his private funds.

³⁴ Dio Cass. xlix. 33.

he later gave the kingdom of Lesser Armenia as a reward to the ambassador.

During this winter in Alexandria Sextus Pompeius, perhaps inspired by the successes of the late Labienus, sent messengers to the Parthians to offer them his services. The envoys were captured by Antony's men and sent back to Egypt.³⁵

Meantime Antony planned to advance through Media Atropatene in the spring, join the king at the Araxes River, and invade Parthia. He had actually left Egypt when he learned that his other wife, Octavia, was on the way from Rome; he thereupon returned to Alexandria.³⁶ After the failure of an attempt to entice Artavasdes into Egypt, Antony sent Quintus Dellius to seek one of the daughters of the Armenian monarch as a wife for his son by Cleopatra. Evidently this also failed, since in the early spring of 34 B.C. Antony marched northward through Palestine. Herod escorted him for some distance, and Cleopatra accompanied him as far as the Euphrates.³⁷ Antony advanced to the borders of Armenia, whence he conducted further negotiations for the marriage alliance. At length, when the king did not appear in person, Antony hastened toward Artaxata, the Armenian capital. Artavasdes was finally induced to enter camp, where he was at once seized and put in

³⁵ Appian *Bell. civ.* v. 133 and 136; Dio Cass. xlix. 18; Livy *Epit.* cxxxi.

³⁶ Plut. *Antony* 52; Dio Cass. xlix. 33.

³⁷ Josephus *Ant.* xv. 80 and 96 and *Bell.* i. 362.

chains. The fact that Octavian had attempted to enlist the aid of Artavasdes^{37a} may have provoked Antony's action. The Armenians, who knew nothing of this intrigue, found in the seizure of their king a permanent grievance against Rome.^{37b}

Antony thereupon subdued the country with comparative ease and drove the king's eldest son, Artaxes, about whom the Armenians had rallied, out of the country to refuge with Phraates. After the region had been garrisoned, Antony went back to Egypt. The Armenian king and his wife and children and much booty were given as presents to Cleopatra. The king eventually graced a triumph and later was put to death.³⁸ Antony's son Alexander was made king of Armenia, Media, and Parthia—that is, from the Euphrates to India!^{38a}

In 33 B.C. Antony again penetrated as far as the Araxes River, where he made a treaty with the Median king, an alliance against Octavian and the Parthians. Troops were exchanged, the Median king received a part of Armenia, and Antony secured Iotape, daughter of the ruler, for his son. The standards taken at the defeat of Statianus were also returned.

Not long afterward the Parthians together with

^{37a} Dio Cass. xlix. 41. 5, possibly also Vergil *Georg.* iv. 560.

^{37b} Tac. *Ann.* ii. 3.

³⁸ Plut. *Antony* 50 and *Demetrius et Antonius* 5; Josephus *Bell.* i. 363 and *Ant.* xv. 104 f.; Strabo xi. 14. 15.

^{38a} Plut. *Antony* 54. 4; Dio Cass. xlix. 41.

Artaxes of Armenia, whom they had aided to recover his kingdom, were defeated by the Median Artavasdes with the help of his Roman allies.³⁹ Later, when Antony recalled his troops, Artavasdes was in turn overcome and forced to seek refuge with the Romans. Armenia and Media were thus lost to Rome, the first to Artaxes, the second to Phraates. Such Romans as were left behind were killed.⁴⁰

As a result of Phraates' victory over Antony, the brewing internal strife in Parthia broke forth, and even before 31 B.C. a certain Tiridates (II) was in open revolt against the king.⁴¹ Both parties sought aid from Octavian, who was too deeply engaged in his war with Antony to take up the matter. Cleopatra and Antony were defeated in the Battle of Actium in 31 B.C., and both chose to take their own lives rather than appear in the triumph of Octavian. Tiridates was victorious, and the deposed Phraates sought aid from the "Scythians." Among the Greek inscriptions from Susa is a much mutilated metric one which Cumont has dated to Phraates IV.⁴² As he suggests, this rebel Tiridates might be the general men-

³⁹ Horace *Od.* iii. 8. 19 suggests internal strife among the Parthians; cf. also Plut. *Antony* 53. 6.

⁴⁰ Dio Cass. li. 16. 2. Note the Zeus Nikephoros types struck by Phraates in 32/31; see McDowell, *Coins from Seleucia*, pp. 184 f.

⁴¹ Justin xlii. 5. 4; Dio Cass. li. 18; cf. also Horace *Epist.* i. 12. 27–28 and *Od.* i. 26. 5, and Vergil *Georg.* i. 509. See also PW, art. "Tiridates," No. 4.

⁴² "Nouvelles inscriptions grecques de Suse," *CR*, 1930, pp. 211–20.

tioned in these verses, perhaps a commander who won fame in the victory over Antony.

From Egypt Octavian passed through Syria to the province of Asia, where he spent the winter of 30/29 B.C. About the same time Phraates and his "Scythian" allies drove Tiridates from Parthia, and he fled to Syria, where Octavian permitted him to live in peace.⁴³ Because of the laxity of the royal guards Tiridates had been able to steal Phraates' young son, whom he took with him to Syria. Phraates, then sole ruler of Parthia, on learning of this, sent envoys to Octavian in Asia Minor requesting the return of his son and the surrender of Tiridates. When Octavian left for Rome the son of the Parthian king and the pretender Tiridates went with him. They were brought before the Senate, which turned the matter over to Octavian for settlement. The son of Phraates was then returned to his father⁴⁴ upon the condition

⁴³ Dio Cass. li. 18. There are no known dated tetradrachms of Phraates for 30/29 B.C.; see McDowell, *Coins from Seleucia*, p. 185. Horace *Od.* ii. 2. 17 mentions Phraates' restoration. On the problem of Tiridates and Phraates see H. Ten Cate Fennema, *Quaestiones Parthicae* (Neomagi, 1882), pp. 44 f.

⁴⁴ Dio Cass. li. 18. 3 is just after Actium. Dio liii. 33. 1 clearly suggests he is recalling earlier events; hence the next section probably refers to the same time as the passage previously cited. Dio states that the matter was referred to the Senate, which turned it over to Octavian for settlement. This would require some time, which the interval between Octavian's stay in Asia Minor and the reappearance of Tiridates in Parthia in May, 26 B.C., provides. We cannot accept all of Justin xlii. 5. 6 f., where he says that Tiridates with the son of Phraates and later the envoys, dispatched after the news reached Phraates, were received by Octavian in Spain. The ten months allowed by the numismatic evidence

that the standards be restored, but it was a number of years before the Romans actually received them.

Coins of Attambelus II of Characene overstruck by Phraates about this time show that the former had suffered some defeat at the hands of his overlord.^{44a}

In the spring of 26 B.C.⁴⁵ Tiridates evidently advanced down the Euphrates with unexpected speed, for Phraates was forced to kill his harem on a little island a short distance south of Belesi Biblada (Kalat Bulak).⁴⁶ Perhaps at this time Tiridates struck the coins with the unique legend $\Phi\Lambda\Box\Omega\text{MAI}\Box$.⁴⁷ Tiridates must have reigned but a very short time, for his only

would be barely sufficient for Tiridates alone, to say nothing of the envoys, to reach Spain and return. Since Tiridates' coins stop in March, 25, the above interpretation of Dio liii. 33. 1 solves the problem usually created by dating the passage to 23 B.C. All of Justin xlii. 5. 6 may be erroneous, or he may have misplaced the incident of the kidnaping of the son. This type of error is even more common in Justin than one of fact. If the foregoing argument is accepted, we must date the return of Phraates' son between 29 and 26 B.C.

^{44a} G. F. Hill, "Greek Coins Acquired by the British Museum in 1926," *Num. Chron.*, 5th ser., VII (1927), 207.

⁴⁵ The following table, drawn from McDowell, *Coins from Seleucia*, p. 185, lists the known tetradrachms from Mesopotamia bearing dates from 26-25 B.C. assigned to Phraates IV and Tiridates II:

Phraates IV	April, 26 B.C.
Tiridates II	May, 26 B.C.
Phraates IV	Aug., Sept., and Nov., 26 B.C.
Tiridates II	March, 25 B.C.
Phraates IV	May, 25 B.C.

⁴⁶ Isid. Char. *Mans. Parth.* 1.

⁴⁷ Wroth, *Parthia*, p. 135. The reference in Horace *Sat.* ii. 5. 62 should be dated about this time.

coins of this period are dated in May, 26 B.C. Soon thereafter, if we may accept Justin,⁴⁸ he again fled with many of his adherents to Octavian, who was then in Spain. An inscription found in Spolato seems to refer to a son of Tiridates who eventually became a Roman citizen under the name Caius Julius Tiridates and who fell while in command of some Parthian auxiliaries serving in the Roman army.⁴⁹

But Tiridates was not thus easily disposed of; in March, 25 B.C., he was again striking coins in the mint city of Seleucia. By May of the same year, however, Phraates had resumed control sufficiently to coin money at the same place, and Tiridates had vanished from our knowledge, this time permanently.

Meanwhile Roman losses at the hands of the Parthians had not been forgotten. War in the East was

⁴⁸ Cf. p. 136, n. 44. See the discussion of this period in David Magie, "The Mission of Agrippa to the Orient in 23 B.C.," *Class. Philol.*, III (1908), 145 ff. Trogus sheds no light on the question. Tiridates had a maximum of ten months to make the trip, but perhaps like Herod he did not fear to travel in winter. Tiridates is mentioned by Horace *Od.* i. 26. 5 and in *Mon. Ancy.* vi (32). I cannot agree with the suggestion of Tarn, "Tiridates II and the Young Phraates," *Mélanges Glotz*, II, 834, that "Phraates, son of Phraates," mentioned by Augustus was set up as a joint king by Tiridates in his second attempt on the throne. Tarn feels that Dio Cass. li. 18. 3 is impossible and Justin xlii. 5. 6 untrue, but it seems equally impossible that the Romans ever supported dual candidates for the throne. The junior Phraates in question is perhaps Phraataces, son of Phraates IV.

⁴⁹ *CIL*, III, No. 8746; V. E. Gardthausen, "Die Parther in griechisch-römischen Inschriften," *Orientalische Studien Theodor Nöldeke zum siebenzigsten Geburtstag gewidmet* (Gieszen, 1906), pp. 847 f.

definitely among Octavian's plans.⁵⁰ The campaign was to be directed at Parthia, and at least a part of the troops would follow the route used by Antony. Even dreams of Bactria and India are mentioned; and ambassadors or agents, one of whom is called "Lycotas," apparently penetrated more than once to those regions.⁵¹ Lycotas' lady love must learn where the Araxes flows and how many miles a Parthian charger can go without water, and she must consult a painted map (the world map of Agrippa?) to discover where the Dahae live.⁵²

If a parchment written in Greek and found with two others at Avroman in Kurdistan is dated in the

⁵⁰ Propertius iii. 1. 16; 4. 1-19; 5. 48; 9. 25 and 53 f.; 12. 1-15. The *ante quem* date for these plans would seem to be the recognition of Octavian as a god, Propertius iii. 4. 1-19, and the *post quem* date the recovery of the standards in 20 B.C. Since his patron was C. Maecenas, friend and military adviser to Octavian, Propertius would be in a position to secure information. There are indications of such plans as early as 30 B.C. in Tibullus iii. 7 and Horace *Od.* i. 2. 21 f. and 51 (on the dating of this ode see J. Elmore, "Horace and Octavian [*Car.* i. 2]," *Class. Philol.*, XXVI [1931], 258-63); 11. 2; 12. 53 ff.; 19. 11 f.; 21. 15. On Iccius' preparing chains for the Mede see *ibid.* i. 29. 4 f.; on new levies, i. 35. 30-32. See also *ibid.* ii. 9. 18 ff.; 13. 17 f.; 16. 6; iii. 2. 3; 3. 44; 5. 4; 29. 27; Vergil *Aeneid* vii. 605 f.

⁵¹ Propertius iv. 3.

⁵² Magie, "Mission of Agrippa," *Class. Philol.*, III (1908), 145 ff., suggests that while Agrippa was at Mytilene in 23 B.C. his officers may have been negotiating for the return of the standards. Horace *Od.* i. 12. 53, and perhaps also i. 19. 12, should be placed about this time. The date of *Od.* i. 21. 15 is uncertain; see A. Steinmann, *De Parthis ab Horatio memoratis* (Berlin, 1898), p. 22.

Seleucid era, Phraates had at least four queens: Olenieire, Cleopatra, Baseirta, and Bistheibanaps.⁵³

On May 12,⁵⁴ 20 B.C., when Augustus was in Syria, the prisoners and standards were surrendered to Tiberius, who was commissioned to receive them.⁵⁵ One can hardly appreciate how large this event loomed in the eyes of contemporaries, even in view of the numerous literary references, until one turns to numismatics. The restoration of the standards was recorded on coins struck in the Asiatic, Spanish, imperial, and senatorial mints.⁵⁶ Indeed, most of the legends which relate to contemporary events are concerned with Parthian affairs. Augustus thought the return of the standards important enough to boast of it in his record a copy of which is preserved as the *Monumentum Ancyranum*.⁵⁷ The event was celebrated in

⁵³ Avroman II; see E. H. Minns, "Parchments of the Parthian Period from Avroman in Kurdistan," *JHS*, XXXV (1915), 22-65. The document bears the date 291, i.e., 21/20 B.C. if the era is Seleucid, A.D. 44/45 if it is Arsacid. For further bibliography on the parchment see p. 47, n. 70; see also p. 170, n. 87.

⁵⁴ Ovid *Fasti* v. 545 ff.; *CIL*, I (2d ed.), pp. 229 and 318.

⁵⁵ Suet. *Augustus* 21. 3 and *Tiberius* 9. 1; Justin xlii. 5. 11 f.; Livy *Epit.* cxli; Vell. Pat. ii. 91. 1; Florus ii. 34. 63; Eutrop. *Brev.* vii. 9; Orosius vi. 21. 29; Horace *Od.* iv. 15. 6-8 and *Epist.* i. 12. 27 f. and 18. 56 f.; Ovid *Tristia* ii. 227 f. and *Fasti* v. 579 f. and vi. 465-68; Strabo vi. 4. 2 and xvi. 1. 28; Vergil *Aeneid* vii. 605 f.; Propertius iv. 6. 79-82; *Orac. Sibyl.* v. 47 ff. See also the later statue of Augustus in *CAH*, Plates, IV, 148 a and 150.

⁵⁶ Harold Mattingly and E. A. Sydenham, *The Roman Imperial Coinage*, I (London, 1923), 46; 63, Nos. 46 ff.; 70, Nos. 98 ff.; 84, No. 256; 86, Nos. 302 ff.

⁵⁷ *Mon. Ancy.* v (29).

Rome by the erection of a triumphal arch,⁵⁸ and the standards were ultimately placed in the temple of Mars Ultor.⁵⁹

As we have previously seen,⁶⁰ after Artaxes had cleared Armenia of the Roman garrisons left by Antony, he remained ruler of the country. About 20 B.C. the Armenians became so dissatisfied with him that they requested that Tigranes, brother of Artaxes, be sent to rule over them. Augustus sent not only Tigranes but in addition an army under the command of Tiberius to drive out Artaxes and place Tigranes on the throne. Archelaus of Cappadocia was given Lesser Armenia as well as certain lands in Cilicia. Ariobarzanes, son of the former king of Media Atropatene, was appointed to rule over his father's lands.⁶¹ Before Tiberius arrived, Artaxes had been slain by the Armenians; hence there remained little for the Roman forces to do. Tigranes reigned for some years, and at a later date may have fallen under Parthian in-

⁵⁸ Mattingly and Sydenham, *op. cit.*, I, 46; 61, No. 17; and 63, No. 37; Dio Cass. liv. 8.

⁵⁹ *Mon. Ancy.* v (29); Dio Cass. liv. 8. This temple in the forum of Augustus was not finished until 2 B.C., and the representations on the coins (for which see Mattingly and Sydenham, *op. cit.*, I, 46; 61, No. 16; 85, Nos. 281 ff.) do not correspond to the known plan of the building. G. F. Hill, *Historical Roman Coins* (London, 1909), p. 143, and other writers have suggested that the building on the coins is a temporary shrine erected on the Capitol.

⁶⁰ See p. 135.

⁶¹ Strabo xii. 1. 4 and 3. 29; Dio Cass. liv. 9. 2; Suet. *Tiberius* 9. 1.

fluence,⁶² although at the time the general feeling was that Armenia had been restored to the ostensible, if not actual, control of Rome.⁶³

The years which followed the Parthian victories in Syria and Armenia and the subsequent disorder within their empire saw the scene of their contest with Rome shifted to the Euphrates, which by the beginning of the Christian era had for nearly a hundred years been the boundary between the two great powers.

⁶² Tigranes' coins bear Parthian titles; see Newell, *Coins of Eastern Dynasts* ("Numismatic Notes and Monographs," No. 30), pp. 13-15.

⁶³ *Mon. Ancy.* v (27); Strabo xvii. 1. 54; Dio Cass. liv. 9; Josephus *Ant.* xv. 105; Tac. *Ann.* ii. 3; Vell. Pat. ii. 94. 4 and 122. 1; Suet. *Augustus* 21. 3 and *Tiberius* 9. 1. Cf. also Crinagoras in *Anthologia Planudea* xvi. 61 (Loeb, V). On the coinage see Mattingly and Sydenham, *op. cit.*, I, 47 and 69, Nos. 97 ff., issued in 18 B.C., especially No. 101, which bears the legend CAESAR DIVI F ARME CAPTA and the figure of an Armenian kneeling to the right.

CHAPTER VII

THE CONTEST FOR THE EUPHRATES

THE standards and captives taken from the armies of Crassus and Antony had been returned to Rome; faced with discord within her own domains, Parthia yielded them without a struggle. Shortly after their surrender in 20 B.C., Augustus sent as a present to Phraates, the Parthian king, an Italian slave girl named Musa.¹ Whether she was placed in a strategic position as a source of information or with the hope that she might influence the king, we have no means of knowing. By Musa Phraates had a son, also named Phraates² (V), better known by the diminutive Phraataces. After the birth of this male heir to the throne, the status of Musa was raised from that of concubine to queen.

When about 10 B.C. Phraataces attained sufficient age to become a candidate for the succession to the throne, Musa persuaded her husband to send his older children to Rome and thus to leave the field clear for her own son. Phraates invited M. Titius,³

¹ The son of Musa was old enough to rule Parthia in 2 B.C.; cf. p. 147.

² He is probably the Aphrahat the son of Aphrahat who ruled over Seleucia and Ctesiphon of Beth Aramaya according to Mar Mari in *Acta martyrum et sanctorum*, ed. Paul Bedjan (Paris, 1890-97), I, 68, § 7.

³ PW, art. "Syria," col. 1629. Titius was governor from 10 to 9 B.C.

then governor of Syria, to a conference and turned over to him his sons⁴ Seraspadanes, Phraates, Rhodaspes, and Vonones, as well as two of their wives and four of their sons. Throughout their residence at Rome these princes were treated with all respect due their rank,⁵ and one of them, Phraates, built a temple at Nemi, dedicated perhaps to the goddess Isis.⁶

"Who fears the Parthian . . . while Augustus lives?" boldly sang Horace⁷ about this time, but others of his poems both earlier and later betray a lively interest in the East not unmixed with that emotion.⁸ In Parthia itself the surrender of the standards aroused further animosity against Phraates and provided additional fuel for the discontent already present. Josephus mentions a Parthian king named Mithradates who was in power sometime between 12 and 9 B.C. and who must represent some opposition of which all other record is lost.⁹

⁴ *Mon. Ancy.* vi (32). Seraspadanes and Rhodaspes are mentioned in an inscription found in Rome, *CIL*, VI, No. 1799 = Dessau 842. See also Strabo vi. 4. 2 and xvi. 1. 28; Tac. *Ann.* ii. 1 f.; Vell. Pat. ii. 94.4; Justin xlii. 5. 12; Josephus *Ant.* xviii. 42; Suet. *Augustus* 21.3 and 43.4; Eutrop. *Brev.* vii. 9; Orosius vi. 21. 29.

⁵ They are generally spoken of as hostages (see the references in the preceding note); but this word, like "tribute," was regularly abused by ancient writers.

⁶ *CIL*, XIV, No. 2216; Gardthausen, "Die Parther," p. 844.

⁷ *Od.* iv. 5. 25.

⁸ Horace *Carmen saec.* 53 ff.; *Epist.* ii. 1. 112 and 256; *Od.* iv. 14. 42 and 15. 23.

⁹ Josephus *Ant.* xvi. 253; Wroth, *Parthia*, p. xxxviii; Gutschmid, *Geschichte Irans*, p. 116.

Strong central government in Parthia was a thing of the past, and for some years to come the empire remained in a state of turmoil. Under such conditions party, racial, and religious strife found ample opportunity to develop. The Parthians had long enjoyed friendly relations with the Jews both within and without their political domain. The return of Hyrcanus from Parthia to Jerusalem in 37 B.C. is but the last demonstration of this *entente cordiale*. The breakdown of royal power brought a change in the situation. Sometime not long before 6 B.C. a Babylonian Jew, Zamaris, fled with one hundred of his relatives and five hundred of his armed cavalry to Antioch, where he sought refuge with C. Sentius Saturninus, then governor of Syria.¹⁰ Such a man was no city merchant but a rich and powerful landowner, one of the feudal nobility who lived on vast estates outside of the city areas. Indeed, many other Babylonian Jews, like Zamaris, were agriculturists, not merchants, even as they were in the time when Babylon flourished.¹¹ Only some desperate situation could force a man who could raise five hundred armed retainers to flee from his homeland; perhaps Zamaris had espoused the cause of the Mithradates mentioned by Josephus. Saturninus gave him land at Ulatha near Daphne; but Herod offered a tract in Batanaea

¹⁰ Josephus *Ant.* xvii. 23-27; PW, art. "Sentius (Saturninus)," No. 9, cols. 1518 f.

¹¹ Szadzunski, *Talmudical Writings*, *passim*.

with special privileges, including freedom from taxation.

About the end of the century events occurred in Armenia which led again to Roman intervention. As we have seen (p. 141), the expedition led by Tiberius in 20 B.C. arrived too late to be of great service, for the death of Artaxes permitted the installation of his brother Tigranes II without difficulty. When not long before 6 B.C. Tigranes died, the nationalist party placed on the throne Tigranes (III) and Erato, his sister-wife, the children of the dead king.¹² To insure the investiture of a candidate satisfactory to Rome, Tiberius was commissioned to leave for Armenia.¹³ But Tiberius lingered at Rhodes. Eventually Augustus ordered that a certain Artavasdes II, perhaps a brother of Tigranes II,¹⁴ be installed as ruler of Armenia.¹⁵ Tigranes and Erato must have been deposed, and Artavasdes reigned a short time.

¹² Cf. Dio Cass. lv. 10a. On the coins of Tigranes and Erato see Barclay V. Head, *Historia numorum* (Oxford, 1887), p. 636 (the Armenian material was omitted from the 2d ed., 1911). For further numismatic bibliography see PW, art. "Erato," No. 9. This period in general is dealt with in PW, art. "Iulius (Augustus)," No. 132, cols. 350 ff.; *CAH*, X, 254-64 and 273-79; F. B. Marsh, *The Reign of Tiberius* (Oxford, 1931), pp. 81 ff. and 211 ff. See also PW, art. "Tigranes," No. 4.

¹³ Dio Cass. lv. 9; Zonaras x. 35; (Ovid) *Consol. ad Liviam* 389 ff. may refer to the commission of Tiberius.

¹⁴ Cf. Tac. *Ann.* ii. 3.

¹⁵ Artavasdes struck coins with portraits of Augustus and himself; see Percy Gardner, "On an Unpublished Coin of Artavasdes II., King of Armenia," *Num. Chron.*, N.S., XII (1872), 9-15. Besides the fact that the portrait of Augustus is reasonably youthful, the Artavasdes from Media would probably not have followed such a model.

In 2 B.C. Musa took the final step to secure for her son Phraataces the throne of Parthia; Phraates, now an old man, was poisoned.¹⁶ Artavasdes, established by Roman aid on the Armenian throne, was looked upon with disfavor by many of his subjects and certainly by the Parthians. A coalition of these two groups drove him from the throne about 1 B.C., and Tigranes and his sister-wife again secured control.¹⁷ If Rome was to maintain her sphere of influence in Armenia and her prestige in the Near East, immediate action was imperative. At the moment Augustus had few whom he could trust to cope with this new development. His grandson Gaius was put in command of the forces sent to restore Roman authority. Someone, perhaps Isidore of Charax, was commissioned to secure information about the East—a definite indication that the government was awakening to the inadequacy of the Roman military intelligence service.¹⁸

When the news of the advance of Gaius reached Parthia, Phraataces sent an embassy to Augustus

¹⁶ The earliest coins of Phraataces are dated early in 310 S.E.; see Wroth, *Parthia*, pp. xl and 136.

¹⁷ Tac. *Ann.* ii. 4; Dio Cass. lv. 10. 18; Vell. Pat. ii. 100. 1; cf. *Mon. Ancyr.* v (27).

¹⁸ Pliny *Hist. nat.* vi. 141; E. Herzfeld, "Sakastan," *AMI*, IV (1932), 4-8. Cf. Rostovtzeff in *CAH*, XI, 126, who dates Isidore in the time of Pliny (d. A.D. 79). His argument is based on the mention of an Artabazus, king of Characene, in Lucian *Long.* 16. But no coins of this king are known, and information given by Isidore does not otherwise extend beyond Augustus' time. See PW, art. "Mesene," cols. 1091 f.

to explain matters and to request the return of his brothers. The Roman reply was addressed baldly to "Phraataces" and directed that he lay aside the title of king and withdraw from Armenia.¹⁹ The Parthian answered with equal rudeness. Alarmed by the turn affairs had taken, Tigranes of Armenia attempted to make peace with Augustus and was sent to Gaius with a promise of favorable action. Not long after this Tigranes died fighting some barbarians, perhaps on the northern frontier, and Erato abdicated.

When Gaius reached the Euphrates, Phraataces, now thoroughly aroused by active intervention on the part of Rome, held an interview with him on an island, while the armies were drawn up on opposite banks. Later the two dined, first on the Roman side and then on the Parthian, pledging their good faith thus in typical eastern fashion. One of the officers, Velleius Paterculus, a youthful tribune with Gaius, aptly describes Phraataces as an excellent youth.²⁰ The terms arranged appear to have favored the Romans, for it was agreed that the Parthians should drop all claim to Armenia and that the four Parthian princes should stay in Rome.²¹

In A.D. 2 Phraataces and Musa his mother were

¹⁹ Dio Cass. iv. 10. 20.

²⁰ Vell. Pat. ii. 101. 1.

²¹ Cf. the passage from Antipater of Thessalonica urging Gaius on to the Euphrates, *Anthol. Palat.* ix. 297, and the mentions of Armenia and the Araxes in Crinagoras *ibid.* 430. See also Suet. *Nero* 5. 1 and *Tiberius* 12. 2; Plut. *Reg. imp. apophtheg.* 207. 10.

married.²² This act, which horrified the Greeks and Romans,²³ suggests a possible connection with the changes which Zoroastrianism was then undergoing. Customs long confined solely to the Magi were being adopted at this time by the people as a whole; thus burial in rock tombs was abandoned for exposure and the collection of the bones in small rock cuttings.²⁴ Next-of-kin marriages had been common among the Magi.

After his interview with Phraataces Gaius advanced northward into Armenia, where he placed Ariobarzanes, son of Artabazus, king of the Medes, on the throne. Revolt against this new Roman appointee was soon in full swing, and Gaius began military operations to suppress it. In due course he attacked the stronghold of Artagira,²⁵ which was defended by Addon,²⁶ perhaps the satrap set over the

²² The date is fixed by the appearance of the head of Musa for the first time on the coins along with that of Phraataces; see Gardner, *Parthian Coinage*, pp. 45 f. The only other appearance of the heads of king and queen together on the Parthian coinage is in the reign of Gotarzes II; see Wroth, *Parthia*, p. 172.

²³ Cf. Josephus *Ant.* xviii. 42 f.; Lucan *De bell. civ.* viii. 401-10; M. Felix *Octavius* xxxi. 3; *Orac. Sibyl.* vii. 38-50.

²⁴ Justin xli. 3. 5. Silius Italicus xiii. 473 f. mentions that it was proper to bring dogs to the royal corpses in Hyrcania. Lucian *De luctu* 21 notes that the Persians bury their dead. See also Herzfeld, *Archaeological History of Iran* (London, 1935), pp. 38 f.

²⁵ PW s.v., No. 1. The spelling and date are fixed by *CIL*, IX, No. 5290.

²⁶ PW, art. "Donnes." The spelling is uncertain; perhaps Dones or Addus is better.

territory by the Parthian king. On September 9, A.D. 3, in the course of a parley in which Addon was to reveal the whereabouts of a treasure hoard of the Parthian ruler, he wounded the young Roman commander, and, although the city was taken by the Romans, Gaius died from the effects of his wound the next year.²⁷ Augustus could boast that all Armenia had been subdued,²⁸ and poets commemorated the return of Gaius.²⁹ There are some indications that this Armenian campaign was but the preliminary to an attack on the Parthians. Gaius is said to have died in the midst of preparations for a Parthian war,³⁰ and Augustus is reported to have contemplated expanding the boundary of the Empire beyond the Euphrates.³¹

Ariobarzanes, installed as king of Armenia by Gaius, soon died, and his place was taken by his son, Artavasdes III.³² Phraataces did not remain long

²⁷ Strabo xi. 14. 6; Dio Cass. iv. 10a. 6-9; Vell. Pat. ii. 102; Florus ii. 32; Ruf. Fest. 19; Tac. *Ann.* i. 3; *CIL*, IX, No. 5290.

²⁸ *Mon. Ancyr.* v (27).

²⁹ Antipater of Thessalonica in *Anthol. Palat.* ix. 59.

³⁰ Seneca *De cons. ad Polyb.* xv. 4; Ovid *Ars amat.* i. 177 ff., 199 ff., 223 ff.; *Remedia amoris* 155 ff. and 224. The verse last cited possibly expresses disappointment over the failure of the expedition.

³¹ Seneca *De brev. vit.* iv. 5.

³² *Mon. Ancyr.* v (27). There is a Greek inscription from Susa of about this date which mentions Zamaspes, stratiarch of Susa, who was commended by Phraates for watering the gardens of the guards. Note the continued use of Macedonian titles at this late date. The inscription should be dated either 9/8 B.C., under Phraates IV, or A.D. 2/3, under

in power after his marriage to his mother, an act which his subjects did not approve.³³ In A.D. 4³⁴ he was either killed or driven into Syria, where he died shortly afterward.³⁵ The nobles called in a prince of the Arsacid family named Orodes (III), whose violent temper and great cruelty made him intolerable. Another insurrection followed, and Orodes was murdered at a festival or while hunting³⁶ about A.D. 6.³⁷

Ambassadors were then dispatched to Rome, whence they were sent to Tiberius, who was probably in Germany.³⁸ They requested the return of one of the sons of Phraates IV; and Vonones, the eldest, was sent.³⁹ The Parthians were not long satisfied, for they were irked by the western manners and friends their new sovereign had acquired at Rome.

Phraataces; see F. Cumont, "Inscriptions grecques de Suse," *CR*, 1931, pp. 238-50.

³³ Josephus *Ant.* xviii. 42 f.

³⁴ Gardner, *Parthian Coinage*, p. 46; the last coins of Musa and Phraataces are dated Hyperberetaeus, 315 S.E.

³⁵ Cf. Josephus *Ant.* xviii. 42 f. and *Mon. Ancyr.* vi (32).

³⁶ Josephus *Ant.* xviii. 44 f.

³⁷ The only known coin of Orodes, if indeed it is properly assigned, is dated 317 S.E., i.e., A.D. 6/7; see Gardner, *Parthian Coinage*, p. 46 and Pl. V 1. No coins were struck in the two years which followed.

³⁸ Suet. *Tiberius* 16.

³⁹ *Mon. Ancyr.* vi (33); Tac. *Ann.* ii. 1-2; Josephus *Ant.* xviii. 46. This is probably the Vonones mentioned in a poem quoted by Ausonius *Epist.* xxiii. 6. The poem, sent him by Pontius Paulinus, was based on Suetonius *Lives of the Kings*, a work now lost.

His dislike of the hunt and of traditional feasts, his free and open manners, his failure to show interest in horses—all these things caused the nationalists to call in another Arsacid, Artabanus III. He was king of Atropatene, but had connections on one side of his family with the Dahae.⁴⁰ On his first attempt to secure the throne, in A.D. 9/10, Artabanus was badly defeated and forced to retreat to the mountain fastnesses of his own kingdom. Vonones hastened to re-strike the old tetradrachms of Musa and Phraataces with a design symbolic of his success, a winged Victory bearing a palm branch, and then to strike drachms in a similar style with the legend BACIAEYC ONOWNHC NEIKHCAC APTABANON.⁴¹ But his triumph was short-lived, for Artabanus collected a second army and returned to the attack. This time Vonones was defeated and forced to flee to Seleucia on the Tigris. Artabanus followed, and many of his opponents were slain. The victor entered Ctesiphon and was proclaimed king about A.D. 12.⁴² Vonones escaped from Seleucia to Armenia, which was then without a king, for Artavasdes III had been murdered

⁴⁰ Tac. *Ann.* ii. 3 and vi. 36 and 42; Josephus *Ant.* xviii. 48. See also PW, art. "Hyrkania," cols. 507 f., and Werner Schur, *Die Orientpolitik des Kaisers Nero (Klio, Beiheft XV [1923])*, pp. 70 ff. Vonones' existing coins are dated A.D. 9/10, 11/12, and 12/13; see McDowell, *Coins from Seleucia*, p. 187.

⁴¹ Wroth, *Parthia*, pp. xliii and 143 f.

⁴² Josephus *Ant.* xviii. 48–50; McDowell, *Coins from Seleucia*, p. 187. This Artabanus is probably the same one mentioned by Mar Mari in *Acta martyrum et sanctorum*, I, 79, § 8.

and Tigranes (IV), a grandson of King Herod the Great, sent by Augustus to succeed him, had been deposed after a brief reign.⁴³ Vonones secured the Armenian throne, but owing to pressure from the Parthian king Artabanus he was forced to abdicate in A.D. 15 or 16.⁴⁴ He threw himself on the mercy of the governor of Syria, Creticus Silanus,⁴⁵ who allowed him to live in Antioch and to retain the pomp and name of king.

Shortly before the abdication of Vonones from the throne of Armenia, in A.D. 14 the aged Augustus died and his adopted son Tiberius succeeded him. When Artabanus of Parthia sent his son Orodes to fill the vacant place, Tiberius felt it incumbent upon himself to take action. In A.D. 18 he sent his adopted son Germanicus with full authority to act as a free agent⁴⁶ and with what was felt to be an impressive retinue. Germanicus proceeded to Artaxata, the Armenian capital, where he found that the people were ready to accept Zeno, son of Polemon, king of Pontus, who had grown up among them and adopted their customs and manners. As Zeno was also friendly to the Romans, Germanicus crowned him in the midst of a

⁴³ *Mon. Ancyr.* v (27); Tac. *Ann.* ii. 3 f. and vi. 40; Josephus *Ant.* xviii 140 and *Bell.* ii. 222. See also PW, art. "Tigranes," No. 5.

⁴⁴ Tac. *Ann.* ii. 4. Cf. Josephus *Ant.* xviii. 50–52; W. E. Gwatkin, *Cappadocia as a Roman Procuratorial Province* ("University of Missouri Studies," V 4 [Columbia, Mo., 1930]), p. 13; McDowell, *Coins from Seleucia*, p. 223.

⁴⁵ PW, art. "Caecilius," No. 90.

⁴⁶ Tac. *Ann.* ii. 43.

multitude of people who hailed him as king of Armenia under the name Artaxias.⁴⁷

Germanicus then returned to Syria, where an embassy from the Parthian king reached him. The proposal was made that the friendly alliance in effect between their predecessors should be renewed, and Artabanus sent word that he would be willing to come as far as the Euphrates, the traditional meeting-place for Roman and Parthian and the boundary between the two great empires. He requested, however, that Vonones be removed from the neighborhood of the frontier, whence he was fomenting discontent among the Parthians. Germanicus replied with politeness but made no mention of the proposed conference, which apparently never took place. He did transfer Vonones to the coastal city of Pompeiopolis (ancient Soli, near modern Mezitli) in Cilicia.⁴⁸ At the same time Germanicus sent Alexander, perhaps a Palmyrene merchant, on a mission to Mesene and to a certain Orabazes. The nature of his message we can only conjecture; but it could hardly involve any direct threat against the Parthians, with relations as amicable as they then were. The embassy suggests

⁴⁷ Tac. *Ann.* ii. 56; cf. also Suet. *Gaius* 1. 2 and Strabo xii. 3. 29. Coins were struck in Caesarea of Cappadocia with the legend GERMANICUS ARTAXIAS and with the coronation scene; see Mattingly and Sydenham, *Rom. Imp. Coin.*, I, 104, No. 8. Mattingly suggests that these were perhaps struck by Caligula.

⁴⁸ Tac. *Ann.* ii. 58; the contemporary Strabo xvi. 1. 28 confirms the fact that the Euphrates was still the boundary.

that the Parthian vassal state of Mesene was by this time more or less independent, which is not surprising in view of the weak central government.⁴⁹

Vonones bribed his guards the next year, A.D. 19, and in the course of a hunt attempted to escape. Halted at the banks of the Pyramus River (Jeihan, Turkish Ceyhan Nehri) by the destruction of a bridge which had been torn up to prevent his escape, he was arrested by Vibius Fronto, prefect of the cavalry. Shortly afterward Vonones was assassinated by Remmius, under whose charge he had been placed in Pompeiopolis. Probably Remmius had been implicated in the escape and feared the revelations which might be made after its failure.⁵⁰

In the same year that Vonones was murdered, Germanicus died, and for the next decade the East remained at peace. Thus between the years 19 and 32 only one governor was sent out to Syria, and even he probably served but a short term. Tiberius was later reproached for thus inviting trouble on the Armenian frontier by leaving that office vacant.⁵¹

Artabanus at once set about consolidating his position. Josephus⁵² tells us at length a story of two Jewish brothers, Anilaeus and Asinaeus, who lived in

⁴⁹ J. Cantineau, "Textes palmyréniens provenant de la fouille du temple de Bêl," *Syria*, XII (1931), 139-41; H. Seyrig, "Antiquités syriennes," *Syria*, XIII (1932), 266-69.

⁵⁰ Tac. *Ann.* ii. 68; Suet. *Tiberius* 49. 2. On Remmius see PW s.v., No. 3.

⁵¹ Suet. *Tiberius* 41.

⁵² *Ant.* xviii. 310-79.

Neharda.⁵³ They set up a robber kingdom in northern Babylonia, defeated the Parthian satrap, and thus brought themselves to the attention of the Great King. Artabanus handled the situation in a manner much used by present-day mandataries: he sent for the brothers and placed them in formal control of the region which they had ruled as robber barons. This arrangement served admirably for fifteen years, until the death of the brothers just before the revolt of Seleucia.⁵⁴ As a consequence of this military inactivity we have little information for the period;⁵⁵ one exception is a letter which Artabanus wrote in December, A.D. 21, to the magistrates and the city of Susa, the only royal document of the Arsacid period which has come down to us. The purport of the letter, which was later graven on the stone base of a statue, was to validate a contested city election.⁵⁶

⁵³ Arrian *Parthica* xi, Νάαρδα; see also PW, art. "Νάαρδα." This city lay on the Euphrates not far from Sippar and near the mouth of the Nahr Malka.

⁵⁴ This chronology is not exact, but it seems to fit the evidence. If the six-year period mentioned by Josephus *Ant.* xviii. 373 represents, as it seems to do, the duration of the revolt of Seleucia, which began in A.D. 35 (see p. 164), then subtraction of the fifteen peaceful years (Josephus *Ant.* xviii. 339) gives A.D. 20 for the beginning of the brothers' activities.

⁵⁵ Artabanus ceased coining money long before the end of his reign. McDowell, *Coins from Seleucia*, p. 188, reports his last known coin as dated A.D. 27/28 but adds with a query coins from 29/30 and 30/31.

⁵⁶ F. Cumont, "Une lettre du roi Artaban III," *CR*, 1932, pp. 238-60; M. Rostovtzeff, "L'Hellénisme en Mésopotamie," *Scientia*, LIII (1933), 120 f.; C. Bradford Welles, *Royal Correspondence in the Hellenistic Period* (New Haven, 1934), pp. 299-306. As to Welles, *op. cit.*, p. 302, note that

On the death of Artaxias III (Zeno) of Armenia, Artabanus seized the opportunity thus occasioned to place his eldest son, known to us only as Arsaces, upon the throne.⁵⁷ To the aged Tiberius he wrote, claiming the treasure left by Vonones in Syria and Cilicia and threatening to add to his domain all the lands of the Achaemenidae and Seleucidae.⁵⁸

Perhaps it was Artabanus III who brought the Mandaeans from "Madai" to the country of the Two Rivers.⁵⁹ The long reign of Artabanus suggests that he was both able and powerful and that he must have restored central authority over the nobles. His diplomatic success in Armenia perhaps caused him to attempt to bring them further under his control, until at last they took action. Two of the most prominent among them, Sinnaces and Abdus, the latter a eunuch, went secretly to Rome, where they reported that if a Parthian prince should appear on the frontier the country would rise to his support. Tiberius chose Phraates, last and youngest son of Phraates IV, now a man of years and a resident of Rome for nearly half a century. But Phraates died suddenly

while Dura-Europus would follow the Syrian Seleucid era beginning October, 312 B.C., Susa would use the Babylonian one beginning April, 311 B.C. The Parthian era dates from April, 247 (not 248) B.C.

⁵⁷ Tac. *Ann.* vi. 31. Cf. also Philostratus *Vita Apoll.* ii. 2.

⁵⁸ Tac. *loc. cit.*; Dio Cass. lviii. 26; Suet. *Tiberius* 66.

⁵⁹ E. S. Drower, *The Mandaeans of Iraq and Iran* (Oxford, 1937), pp. 6 ff., suggests that Madai may have been a city in Media, the homeland of Artabanus, or may have been located farther east.

after his arrival in Syria, perhaps from age and the fatigue of travel, or possibly overtaken by the fate which hovers over those who pretend to thrones occupied by such as Artabanus. Artabanus discovered the mission of the two ambassadors to Tiberius, removed Abdus by poison, and kept Sinnaces occupied by various missions and pretenses.

Not discouraged by his first attempt, in 35 Tiberius dispatched another Arsacid prince, this time Tiridates (III), a grandson of Phraates IV, and appointed L. Vitellius as governor of Syria. To make the task of Vitellius easier he planned to set up a rival king in Armenia, and to this end he reconciled Pharasmanes, king of Iberia, and his brother Mithradates. Financial encouragement was offered to Pharasmanes to place his brother on the Armenian throne. Since to this was added the incentive of removing so dangerous an opponent to a safe distance, Pharasmanes undertook the task.⁶⁰ Arsaces, the son of Artabanus, was murdered by his attendants, who had been bribed, and Pharasmanes took Artaxata without resistance. When this news reached the Parthian court, Artabanus at once sent his son Orodes to recover the lost dependency.

Unfortunately Orodes was unable to secure sufficient mercenary troops, since the passes through which they must come were controlled by the Ibe-

⁶⁰ Tac. *Ann.* vi. 33; Dio Cass. lvi. 26; Josephus *Ant.* xviii. 97; Pliny *Hist. nat.* xv. 83.

rians. The Parthian forces consisted almost wholly of cavalry, while the Iberians had a force of infantry. Orodes was unwilling to risk a battle against superior odds and prudently evaded the issue until forced by his men to give battle. When the Parthian prince was defeated in personal combat by Pharasmanes, the troops of the defeated leader, supposing him to be dead, fled from the field.⁶¹

Artabanus in 36 gathered the remaining forces of his empire and advanced against the Iberians. The Alani, possibly incited by agents of Vitellius, had moved through the passes of the Caucasus and, unopposed by the Iberians, had swarmed into Parthian territory.⁶² Before Artabanus could force a decisive engagement, Vitellius took the field at the head of his legions and spread the rumor that he was about to invade Mesopotamia. Because he felt it impossible to maintain the struggle in Armenia and at the same time engage in a war with Rome, Artabanus withdrew from Armenia to defend his homeland. When he had thus attained his objective, Vitellius modified his policy and by means of bribes encouraged disaffection within the Parthian kingdom. He was so successful that Artabanus was compelled to retire to his eastern frontier with only a band of foreign mer-

⁶¹ Tac. *Ann.* vi. 35; Josephus *Ant.* xviii. 97 ff. From Tiberius to Severus Alexander the *Orac. Sibyl.* xii. 47-288 furnishes a fairly extensive sketch of Roman history.

⁶² Josephus *loc. cit.*; Rostovtzeff, *Iranians and Greeks in South Russia* (Oxford, 1922), p. 116. Cf. Seneca *Thyestes* 630 f.

cenaries. There he hoped to find support among those long-time friends of Parthia, the tribes to the east of the lower Caspian Sea, for he felt sure that the Parthians would soon tire of a ruler set up by Rome.⁶³

Meanwhile Vitellius urged Tiridates to seize his kingdom while opportunity offered, and to this end conducted him with legions and allies to the banks of the Euphrates. After sacrifices were made and the omens found favorable, a bridge of boats was thrown across the river and the army passed over it to Parthian territory. There they were met by Ornospadēs, a Parthian who had served under Tiberius and had thus won Roman citizenship.⁶⁴ Shortly afterward Sinnaces arrived with more troops, and Abdagases brought the royal treasure and ornaments.

The Greek cities of Mesopotamia, such as Nicephorium and Anthemusia, and the Parthian cities, such as Halus and Artemita,⁶⁵ all welcomed Tiridates, who was apparently acceptable to the Greeks, the nobility, and the pro-Romans. Seleucia received him

⁶³ Tac. *Ann.* vi. 36; Josephus *Ant.* xviii. 100.

⁶⁴ Tac. *Ann.* vi. 37; cf. Rawlinson, *Sixth Mon.*, p. 234. Ornospadēs was not yet satrap of Mesopotamia, an honor which he received after he rejoined his king.

⁶⁵ This distinction between Greek and Parthian cities is made by a number of ancient authors. Besides cities given above from Tac. *Ann.* vi. 41, Isid. *Char. Mans. Parth.* 1-3 mentions Ichnae, Nicephorium, Artemita, and Chala as Greek cities. Note that Artemita is called both Greek and Parthian; on its location see T. Jacobsen in *Four Ancient Towns in the Diyala Region*, a forthcoming Oriental Institute Publication.

with acclaim, and his supporters⁶⁶ were rewarded with control of the city government, displacing the more aristocratic group which had upheld Artabanus. Coronation ceremonies were delayed pending the arrival of Phraates and Hiero, two powerful nobles. This Phraates was perhaps satrap of Susiana, then an important Parthian province.⁶⁷ These two nobles were probably engaged in negotiations with Artabanus, with whom they shortly allied themselves, for they failed to appear at the coronation, and Tiridates was crowned by a member of the Suren family according to the custom. Restrained by lack of funds from an attack on Artabanus, now installed in the far eastern part of the empire, Tiridates laid siege to a fort in which the former ruler had left his treasure and his concubines. The possession of the royal harem was vital to recognition by the country at large, and we have seen how Phraates IV slew his women rather than allow them to fall into the possession of the pretender Tiridates.

Parthia was never long sympathetic with kings who held their crowns by virtue of Roman support,

⁶⁶ McDowell, *Coins from Seleucia*, p. 225, suggests that his supporters in Seleucia were the native elements, consistently pro-Roman. This idea cannot be reconciled with information from Tacitus, which clearly indicates that the three groups behind Tiridates were the Greeks, the nobility, and the pro-Romans, unless we assume the last to be the native elements.

⁶⁷ Suggested by Cumont, "Une lettre du roi Artaban III," *CR*, 1932, pp. 249 f.

and the disaffected party probably had strong support from the two nobles who had failed to attend the coronation. Artabanus was discovered in Hyrcania clothed in dirty rags and living by his bow. Naturally he was suspicious of a trap when first approached, but eventually he became convinced of the reality of Parthian dislike for Tiridates if not of the people's love for himself. Artabanus hesitated only long enough to gather some Dahae and Sacae contingents before he hastened forward, still in his rags, which he continued to wear to arouse sympathy.⁶⁸ He was in the vicinity of Seleucia before his opponent made a move. Some of the adherents of Tiridates advised bringing the struggle to an immediate issue before the troops of Artabanus could be reorganized and rested. Another faction, headed by the king's chief adviser, Abdagases, suggested a retreat across the Tigris into Mesopotamia proper, for this would delay action until the arrival of Roman troops and of Armenian and Elymaean forces. Tiridates, who was not of a war-like disposition, agreed to the withdrawal. The strategic retreat soon took on the aspect of a flight, for his troops deserted rapidly. Among the first to leave were the nomadic tribes; and they were soon followed by others, some of whom went over to Artabanus. Tiridates fled to Syria, where he arrived with scarcely more than a handful of men.

Artabanus evidently had little trouble in reoc-

⁶⁸ Josephus *Ant.* xviii. 100; Tac. *Ann.* vi. 44.

cupying the country. Tiberius desired to have the struggle formally ended and instructed Vitellius to that effect late in A.D. 36. Artabanus expressed his willingness and met the Roman commander on a bridge of boats across the Euphrates. Each was escorted by a guard. We do not know the terms agreed upon, but not long afterward Artabanus' son Darius was sent to Rome to live.⁶⁹ Negotiations completed, Herod Antipas, the Jewish tetrarch and a Roman ally, invited both leaders to a rich feast in a tent erected on the bridge. Among other objects, Josephus says that the Parthians presented the Romans with a Jewish giant some seven cubits in height! After the banquet Vitellius went to Antioch and Artabanus to "Babylon."⁷⁰

Struggle after struggle between contenders for the throne for over half a century had reduced Parthia to a state of anarchy, and the good effects of the strong rule of Artabanus had been largely negated by his contest with Tiridates. This situation is clearly reflected in the coinage, for from the beginning of the Christian era until about A.D. 40 there are frequent intervals for which no royal coins are known. The kings were either not in possession of the mint cities

⁶⁹ Josephus *Ant.* xviii. 101-3. Cf. Dio Cass. lix. 17. 5 and 27. 2 f.; Suet. *Vitellius* 2. 4 and *Gaius* 19; all of these either place this incident in the reign of Gaius or leave the question unsettled. See Eugen Täubler, *Die Parthernachrichten bei Josephus* (Berlin, 1904), pp. 33-39.

⁷⁰ Josephus *Ant.* xviii. 103 f. This is probably an early case of confusion between Babylon and Seleucia.

or were too poverty-stricken to be able to coin money. If life and commerce continued, it was because of the strength of local authorities or the power and prestige of ancient cities. The story of Anilaeus and Asinaeus (pp. 155 f.) well illustrates the situation in Parthia about this time. Artabanus was forced to recognize the virtual independence of large areas in the north, and Parthian troops and officials were everywhere helpless. Within Seleucia there was continual strife between opposing elements. The native or Babylonian group and the Jews at first combined against the Greeks with success; but the Greeks managed to alienate the natives from their former allies, and together they massacred thousands of Jews.

One specific example is known to us of the way in which the great commercial centers met this breakdown of authority. About two years before the death of Tiberius, which took place in March, A.D. 37, the great mint city of Seleucia, center of the royal power, revolted.⁷² For five years no royal coinage had been struck in the city. Then the strong commercial elements, wearied of the bickerings of petty contenders for the throne, declared their independence. Life within and without the city probably continued much as usual, except in time of actual siege. During the

⁷² Numismatic evidence given in McDowell, *Coins from Seleucia*, pp. 225 and 188 ff., and Wroth, *Parthia*, p. xlvi, when combined with Tacitus' statement (*Ann.* xi. 9. 6) that the revolt lasted seven years, enables us to date its beginning. On the coins struck by the city during the revolt see McDowell, *op. cit.*, pp. 141 f., No. 141.

seven years of the revolt Seleucia maintained an independent position.

Not long after the meeting between Vitellius and Artabanus discontent was again manifest among the nobles. The situation appeared so hopeless to the king that he thought it prudent to leave the country and place himself under the protection of his neighbor and vassal, Izates II of Adiabene. The story of the Parthian vassal kings of Adiabene is an interesting one. The first king known to us, Izates (I), had two children, Helena and Monobazus (I). Following the custom then prevalent, these two were married. Monobazus succeeded to the throne about A.D. 30. Izates II, their son, was sent to Adinerglus,⁷³ king of Charax, for safety from the threat of death which hangs over all youthful oriental princes who are surrounded by half-brothers with zealous mothers. While there he was converted to Judaism by a commercial Jew. When Izates was old enough, his father recalled him and gave him land in Gorduene. Through the efforts of another Jew, Helena adopted the new faith. On the death of Monobazus I, about A.D. 36, Izates II came to the throne of Adiabene.⁷³

Upon the abdication of Artabanus a certain Cinna-

⁷² Josephus *Ant.* xx. 22, Abennerigus. The Ad(or b)inerglus named on coins of A.D. 10(?) may be identical with the Adinn(e)rglus of A.D. 22; see G. F. Hill, *Catalogue of the Greek Coins of Arabia, Mesopotamia and Persia* (London, 1922), pp. cxcix-cc1.

⁷³ Josephus *Ant.* xx. 17-37 and 54. "Gorduene" depends on an emendation; the text reads Καρδῶν, which is impossible (cf. PW s.v.).

mus, who had been brought up by Artabanus, was selected to rule. Artabanus arrived at the court of Izates with a thousand relatives and retainers, and his faithful vassal was easily persuaded to act as mediator. In response to a letter from Izates suggesting that Artabanus resume his throne, the Parthians replied that, since Cinnaeus had already been installed, they feared another change would bring civil war. Cinnaeus, either because of genuine friendship for Artabanus or because he felt his own position very insecure, offered to abdicate in favor of the former ruler and even placed the crown on the head of the exile himself. Izates was rewarded by the gift of the city of Nisibis and its surrounding lands, which were detached from the Armenian kingdom.⁷⁴

Artabanus lived but a short time after his restoration, for the evidence suggests that he died about A.D. 38.⁷⁵ He was followed by Gotarzes II,⁷⁶ who was

⁷⁴ Josephus *Ant.* xx. 54-69.

⁷⁵ Vardanes, the second successor of Artabanus, was in the third year and second month of his restoration when Apollonius of Tyana visited him (see n. 81). Seleucia, which surrendered in the spring of 42 (see p. 169), was then still in revolt.

⁷⁶ Tac. *Ann.* xi. 8. Cf. Josephus *Ant.* xx. 69, whose condensed account apparently makes Vardanes the first to mount the throne. For somewhat uncertain numismatic evidence which upholds Tacitus see Wroth, *Parthia*, pp. xlv f.; J. de Bartholomaei, "Recherches sur la numismatique des rois Arsacides," *Mém. Soc. d'arch. et de num. de St. Pétersbourg*, II (1848), 59; Herzfeld, *Am Tor*, pp. 45 and 47 f.

Many of the exploits of Gotarzes appear in various forms in the *Shahnamah*; see J. C. Coyajee, "The House of Gotarzes: a Chapter of Parthian History in the *Shahnameh*," *Asiatic Society of Bengal, Journ. and Proc.*, N.S., XXVIII (for 1932), 207-24.

probably not an Arsacid but may have been of Hyrcanian origin, the son of a man named Gew.⁷⁷ Gotarzes had two brothers, Artabanus and Vardanes, whom he evidently feared, for he murdered the first together with his wife and son, and the second fled far away. Gotarzes had been on the throne about a year when in A.D. 39 the nobles called in Vardanes, who is reported by Tacitus to have covered three thousand stadia in two days.⁷⁸ Such a feat, if not impossible, is very extraordinary. As a result of this hasty trip Vardanes surprised and put to flight Gotarzes. The deposed ruler escaped to the country of the Dahae, where he occupied himself with plots against his brother.

If the rule of Vardanes was to be firmly established, control of the mint city of Seleucia was essential. He began a siege of the city, which was strongly fortified by walls and by its natural defenses, the river and the canals, and was well provisioned. Perhaps Vardanes made use of Ctesiphon as his base of operations, for at a later date he was believed to have been its founder.⁷⁹

⁷⁷ Herzfeld, *Am Tor*, pp. 40 ff. and Pls. XXI-XXIII; Herzfeld, "Kushano-Sasanian Coins," *Mem. Archaeol. Survey of India*, No. 38 (1930), p. 5; *CIG*, III, No. 4674. Philostratus *Vita Apoll.* i. 21 calls Gotarzes' brother, Vardanes, a Mede.

⁷⁸ *Ann.* xi. 8. 4. Tiberius traveled 184 miles in a night and a day over well constructed Roman roads with an elaborate system of relays. Possibly the royal post roads of Persia had survived in better shape than we have suspected, but approximately 350 miles in two days is still remarkable.

⁷⁹ *Amm. Marcel.* xxiii. 23.

In the meantime Gotarzes had enlisted the aid of the Dahae and the Hyrcanians and soon advanced to recover his kingdom. Vardanes abandoned the siege of Seleucia in 39 and moved his forces to the great Bactrian plain, far to the east; but preparations for the battle were suddenly interrupted when Gotarzes discovered that the nobles were planning to take the throne away from both his brother and himself. Drawn together by this common danger, the brothers agreed that Vardanes was to occupy the throne of Parthia and Gotarzes was to withdraw to Hyrcania. "Victory" coins were struck by the aristocratic party in Seleucia in the years 40/41—43/44 in celebration of their triumph over the popular party and the restoration of Vardanes to the throne.⁸⁰

In the spring of 42 the sage Apollonius of Tyana passed through Babylonia on his way to India.⁸¹ Vardanes had but two years and two months before recovered his throne;⁸² Seleucia still apparently remained in revolt,⁸³ and Vardanes was established in Babylon. The account of Philostratus suggests that Vardanes' territory was limited in extent, for Apollonius passed into Parthia after leaving Nineveh,

⁸⁰ McDowell, *Coins from Seleucia*, pp. 225 f.

⁸¹ Philostratus *Vita Apoll.* i. 19–40; cf. A. von Gutschmid, *Kleine Schriften*, III (Leipzig, 1892), 58 f.

⁸² Philostratus *Vita Apoll.* i. 28; cf. also i. 21.

⁸³ *Ibid.* i. 21. Ctesiphon alone is mentioned. The reference to Babylon cannot in this case be assigned to Seleucia, although such details cannot be pressed too far in this source.

which evidently belonged to Adiabene and hence to the kingdom of Gotarzes. By June, A.D. 42, Vardanes had again advanced to the neighborhood of Seleucia and under guidance of the aristocratic party, then apparently favorable to his candidacy for the throne, the city had voluntarily surrendered.⁸⁴ The revolt, which had lasted for seven years, was thus ended.

Philostratus reports that the governor of Syria sent an embassy to Vardanes regarding two villages (in Roman territory near a Zeugma) which the Parthians had recently seized. Because of their lack of importance they were apparently surrendered without a struggle. He states further that Megabates, a brother of the king, saw Apollonius in Antioch.^{84a}

The Iberian Mithradates, Roman appointee to the throne of Armenia, having proved unsatisfactory to the patron nation, was brought back, imprisoned, and then banished by Caligula.⁸⁵ Shortly after the latter's death in 41, his successor Claudius released Mithradates and sent him eastward to regain his kingdom, the throne of which had apparently been vacant for some time and then had been seized by the Parthians. Supported by Roman troops and by Iberians supplied by his brother Pharasmanes, Mithradates defeated the Armenians under Demonax with

⁸⁴ He at once began the issue of royal coinage; see McDowell, *Coins from Seleucia*, p. 189.

^{84a} Philostratus *Vita Apoll.* i 31 and 37.

⁸⁵ Dio Cass. lx. 8; Seneca *De tranquillitate animi* 11. 12; Tac. *Ann.* xi. 8. 1.

ease. Lesser Armenia under Cotys continued resistance for some time, but it too was at last subdued. The new king, perhaps because he felt insecure, ruled with great cruelty, which soon caused appeals for aid to the Parthian Vardanes. The Parthian king attempted to secure the help of one of his principal vassals, Izates II of Adiabene, but was unable to convince him that a campaign against Mithradates had much chance of success. The fact that his five sons were in Rome undoubtedly influenced Izates. Angered by the latter's refusal, Vardanes began a campaign against his vassal. Possibly for the purpose of distracting Vardanes, Vibius Marsus, governor of Syria from 42 to 45, made a feint at the Euphrates frontier.⁸⁶

The position of Vardanes was perhaps becoming too strong for the nobles; at any rate they encouraged Gotarzes to secure the throne. About 43⁸⁷ Gotarzes collected an army and advanced to the river Erindes (probably the ancient Charindas)⁸⁸ in Hyrcania. The passage of this stream was hotly contested, and Vardanes at last managed to prevent his brother from

⁸⁶ Tac. *Ann.* xi. 10; Josephus *Ant.* xx. 72.

⁸⁷ Gotarzes' first coins, Wroth, *Parthia*, p. 161, were struck early in 355 S.E., i.e., A.D. 44/45; cf. McDowell, *Coins from Seleucia*, pp. 226 f. and table, p. 189. If Avroman II (see p. 140, end of n. 53) is dated in the Arsacid era, it should be placed in A.D. 44. It seems better, however, as indicated in chap. ii, to consider that the Seleucid era was used and that the date is 21/20 B.C.; cf. p. 47, n. 70. The occurrence of the name Cleopatra among the queens is a further argument for the earlier dating, for after Actium Cleopatra was not a popular name; see PW, arts. "Kleopatra."

⁸⁸ PW, art. "Hyrcania," cols. 468 and 506 f.

crossing. This victory Vardanes followed up with other successes until he was master of all the territory to the river Sindes, which separated the Dahae from the people of Aria.⁸⁹ There the troops refused to advance farther, and a monument was erected.

About the end of 45 the conflict between the brothers broke out again, and from 46/47 to 47/48 they were engaged in a struggle which terminated with the death of Vardanes. He was assassinated by the nobles, probably at the instigation of Gotarzes, while engaged in the national sport of the chase.⁹⁰ With the death of Vardanes, a thoroughly native king, the only hope of Gotarzes' opponents lay in appeal to Rome.

From this period onward the dates given in this volume are calculated on the basis of a readjustment in the calendar which took place between the years A.D. 16/17 and 46/47, almost certainly in the latter year. The 19-year cycle of intercalation introduced in 747 B.C. had been employed without change since 367 B.C. The calendar year was again brought into conformity with the solar year by the insertion of a full month so that henceforth the Macedonian month Xandicus instead of Artemisius corresponds to the Babylonian Nisan, the beginning of the year.^{90a}

⁸⁹ Tac. *Ann.* xi. 10. 3.

⁹⁰ McDowell, *Coins from Seleucia*, p. 190. Vardanes' coins stop in the fourth month of 45/46, but this proves only that Vardanes no longer held Seleucia. Furthermore, coins of 46/47 and 47/48 bear the personal name of Gotarzes and thus prove that he had a rival, who was most probably Vardanes.

^{90a} McDowell, *Coins from Seleucia*, pp. 151-53; cf. J. Johnson, *Dura Studies* (Roma, 1931), pp. 1-15.

There was a division of opinion as to who should succeed to the Parthian throne; many favored Gotarzes, while others preferred Meherdates, son of Vonones I and grandson of Phraates IV, who had been sent to Rome. Because of the general dislike of Romanized Parthians and perhaps because of the proximity of Gotarzes, he was accepted as king again. But further reports of cruelties and excesses soon appeared,⁹¹ and in 47 an appeal was made to Rome for Meherdates.⁹² Claudius responded favorably and ordered C. Cassius Longinus, governor of Syria, to conduct the new pretender to the Euphrates.⁹³ In 49 the expedition set out; at Zeugma a halt was made to await the Parthian supporters of Meherdates. Cassius urged an immediate advance before the ardor of the adherents of Meherdates could cool, and the head of the great house of Karen sent messengers with the same advice. Through the influence of Abgarus V of Edessa Meherdates was persuaded to make his advance through Armenia, where he was delayed for some time in the capital of this Arab ruler. After much hardship in the snow and mountains of Armenia, Meherdates reached the level ground, where

⁹¹ Tac. *Ann.* xi. 10. Tacitus' information would of necessity be based largely on the reports brought to Rome by delegates of the dissatisfied parties.

⁹² Gutschmid, *Geschichte Irans*, p. 127 and n. 2; Wroth, *Parthia*, p. xlvii.

⁹³ Cf. the reference to some Parthian victory of Claudius, Seneca *Apocolocyntosis* 12.

he was joined by forces under the command of the head of the Karen family. Crossing the Tigris they proceeded through Adiabene to Nineveh and Arbela. Faced with such an army, Izates of Adiabene could do nothing less than exhibit friendliness, however transitory. When they turned southward they found Gotarzes in a strong defensive position behind the river Corma (‘Adhaim?’).⁹⁴ Since, however, his troops were insufficient to force the issue, Gotarzes sought to delay a decisive battle while he attempted to win over the troops of his opponents. Izates and Abgarus were thus lost by Meherdates, who, fearing a general exodus, determined to strike before all his army melted away. The battle remained undecided until the Karen, who had defeated the forces opposed to him and carried his pursuit too far, was met on his return by the reserves of Gotarzes and was slain. His army defeated and its morale broken, Meherdates threw himself on the mercy of a certain Parraces, one of his father's vassals. This man betrayed him and gave him in chains to Gotarzes, who cropped his ears, that he might never again reign, but spared his life.⁹⁵

Probably in commemoration of this victory Gotarzes about A.D. 50 cut a great relief on the rock at

⁹⁴ Tac. *Ann.* xii. 13 f.; PW, art. “Corma.” Sanbulus (see PW s.v.), the mountain where Gotarzes offered sacrifices to Hercules, is probably the Sunbula Kuh. Both the ‘Adhaim and the Diyala are so small in summer that the troops would scarcely notice them; hence their omission in Tacitus' account is understandable.

⁹⁵ Tac. *Ann.* xii. 13 f.

Behistun. It shows him charging the foe with leveled spear, while overhead hovers a winged Victory crowning the king with a wreath. The accompanying inscription reads ΓΩΤΑΡΞΗC ΓΕΟΠΟΘΡΟC, "Gotarzes, son of Gew."⁹⁶

In 51 Gotarzes either died of some disease⁹⁷ or fell the victim of a plot.⁹⁸ He was succeeded by a certain Vonones (II), who was king of Media.⁹⁹ Vonones must have reigned but a few months; the empire then passed to his son or brother Vologases I.¹⁰⁰

About A.D. 52¹⁰¹ Pharasmanes of Iberia sent his

⁹⁶ Herzfeld, *Am Tor*, pp. 40 ff. and Pls. XXI-XXIII. Probably, as C. Hopkins in M. I. Rostovtzeff and P. V. C. Bauer, *The Excavations at Dura-Europos, Second Season, 1928-29* (New Haven, 1931), p. 93, suggests, the dedicatory inscription to Zeus Soter dated A.D. 50/51, found at Dura, should be referred to this civil war.

⁹⁷ Tac. *Ann.* xii. 14. 7.

⁹⁸ Cf. McDowell, *Coins from Seleucia*, p. 191, who finds a coin of Gotarzes dated three months after the first of those struck by Vologases. This find strongly supports Josephus *Ant.* xx. 74, who says that Gotarzes was the victim of a plot.

⁹⁹ Tac. *Ann.* xii. 14. 7. Josephus does not mention Vonones; but Tacitus cannot be discredited on the basis of the abbreviated account of the Jewish historian, who may well have deliberately omitted the name of Vonones because of his unimportance. No coins can be assigned to him.

¹⁰⁰ Son, Tac. *loc. cit.*; brother, Josephus *loc. cit.* The date A.D. 54 for the close of the reign of Vonones, proposed by Gutschmid, *Geschichte Irans*, p. 128 and n. 2, is too late.

¹⁰¹ The whole chronological question from 51 to 63 is very complex; see the editions of Tacitus by L. Nipperday and H. Furneaux; E. Egli, "Feldzüge in Armenien von 41-63 n. Chr.," in Max Büdinger, *Untersuchungen zur römischen Kaiser Geschichte* (Leipzig, 1868), pp. 267-362; H. Schiller, *Geschichte des römischen Kaiserreichs unter der Regierung des Nero* (Berlin, 1872), pp. 91-205; Mommsen, *Prov. Rom. Emp.*, II, 50 ff.;

son Rhadamistus to invade Armenia, which was at that time in the hands of the pro-Roman Mithradates, brother of the Iberian ruler. Mithradates was soon besieged in Gorneae (Garni), not far from Artaxata, the capital. The Roman garrison in the beleaguered town was under the command of the prefect Caelius Pollio and the centurion Casperius. Rhadamistus attempted to bribe Pollio to surrender Gorneae; the prefect was sorely tempted to accept, but Casperius refused to be a party to such an affair. He secured a temporary truce and set out to persuade Pharasmanes to abandon the war or, if he should be unsuccessful there, to carry the news to Ummidius Quadratus, legate of Syria. Casperius reached Pharasmanes, but his negotiations with him were unsuccessful, for the Iberian king wrote secretly urging Rhadamistus to press the siege in every possible manner. The bribe offered to Pollio was increased, and, with the restraining influence of the centurion absent, a deal was soon struck. The Roman soldiers forced Mithradates to surrender by threatening to

B. W. Henderson, "The Chronology of the Wars in Armenia, A.D. 51-63," *Class. Rev.*, XV (1901), 159-65, 204-13, and 266-74; D. T. Schoonover, *A Study of Cn. Domitius Corbulo as Found in the "Annals" of Tacitus* (Chicago, 1906); Werner Schur, *Die Orientpolitik des Kaisers Nero* (*Klio*, Beiheft XV [1923]), pp. 7-38, and "Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der Kriege Corbulos," *Klio*, XIX (1925), 75-96, and "Zur Neronischen Orientpolitik," *Klio*, XX (1926), 215-22; Arnaldo Momigliano, "Corbulone e la politica romana verso i Parti," *Atti del II° congresso nazionale di studi romani*, I (Roma, 1931), 368-75; Mason Hammond, "Corbulo and Nero's Eastern Policy," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*, XLV (Cambridge, 1934), 81-104.

refuse to fight. Mithradates, his wife, and all his children were murdered at the command of Rhadamistus, who thus came into possession of Armenia.¹⁰²

Quadratus heard of these events, perhaps through the centurion Casperius, and ordered a council of war. Pharasmanes was commanded to recall Rhadamistus and withdraw from Armenia, but no other action was taken. Julius Paelignus,¹⁰³ procurator of Cappadocia, gathered together some provincial auxiliaries, ostensibly to recover Armenia but actually to despoil his friends. Deserted by his troops, he was forced to flee to Rhadamistus, whom he urged to assume the crown and in whose coronation he participated. When Quadratus heard of these proceedings, he dispatched Helvidius Priscus with a legion to set matters right. Priscus had already crossed the Taurus and restored order in some measure when he was recalled. This sudden change on the part of the Romans was caused by the fact that the newly crowned Vologases I of Parthia was contemplating an advance into Armenia and the presence of Roman legions on soil which was considered Parthian was certain to cause trouble.

Vologases, who was the son of a Greek concubine, had two brothers, Pacorus and Tiridates.¹⁰⁴ Vologases

¹⁰² Tac. *Ann.* xii. 44-47.

¹⁰³ Tac. *Ann.* xii. 49. 1. Perhaps the same man as the Laelianus of Dio Cass. lxi. 6. 6; see PW, art. "Julius (Paelignus)," No. 374.

¹⁰⁴ Dio Cass. lxii (lxiii. 5); Josephus *Ant.* xx. 74; Tac. *Ann.* xii. 44. This Greek woman may well have been a long-time resident of Parthia.

was probably the eldest, since his brothers yielded to him their claims to the throne. To Pacorus, the elder of his two brothers, Vologases had given Media Atropatene;¹⁰⁵ it was now imperative that a suitable position be found for the younger, Tiridates. Since Armenia, which was felt to be properly Parthian territory, was unsettled, Vologases saw therein an opportunity to strengthen his own position and at the same time provide a satrapy for Tiridates.

Vologases about A.D. 52¹⁰⁶ began an advance into Armenia, where he encountered little resistance. In his rapid advance he took the important city of Tigranocerta and then the capital, Artaxata. Because of the severity of the winter, which had then closed in, and the attendant lack of provisions, Vologases was forced to abandon his conquest. Rhadamistus, who had fled on his approach, at once returned and began to rule with great cruelty, at least according to the reports which reached Rome.

In the meantime the nobles of Adiabene had become dissatisfied with the rule of Izates II and proposed Parthian intervention to Vologases. The Parthian ruler demanded that Izates give up the special privileges granted to him by Artabanus III and resume

¹⁰⁵ Josephus *Ant.* xx. 74.

¹⁰⁶ If McDowell, *Coins from Seleucia*, p. 191, is right in assigning to Gotarzes II a coin as late as December, 51, then Vologases' invasion of Armenia is not likely to have taken place before 52. Cf. also *CAH*, X, 757 and n. 2, following Henderson, "Chron. of the Wars in Armenia," *Class. Rev.*, XV (1901), 164 f.

This trip of Tiridates affords us glimpses of Zoroastrianism which unite with other scraps of evidence to show that in the second half of the first century after Christ a wave of oriental reaction was taking place. On the coins of the contemporary Parthian king Vologases I the altar appears for the first time in the history of Arsacid numismatics,³⁷ and the figure of a man making an offering before a similar object is frequent.³⁸ Under this same ruler all of the scattered remains of the manuscript or oral traditions of the Avesta were ordered collected.³⁹ For the first time Pahlavi appears on the coins in addition to the traditional Greek, which has by now become hopelessly corrupt.⁴⁰

The period of peace which followed the temporary settlement of the Armenian question is responsible for a dearth of information on Parthia. There is even considerable doubt as to the length of the reign of Vologases I; it probably extended to 79/80.⁴¹ Military preparations on a large scale were made by Rome in the years 66 and 67: a new legion, the I Italica, was created;⁴² and one of the crack legions, the XIV Gemina (Martia Victrix), was started on the journey to the eastern front.⁴³ At the time of his

³⁷ Wroth, *Parthia*, Pl. XXIX 11 f. ³⁸ *Ibid.*, Pl. XXIX 8-10.

³⁹ *Zend-Avesta*, I. *Vendîdâd*, tr. by Darmesteter, pp. xxxviii-xli.

⁴⁰ Wroth, *Parthia*, pp. 182 f.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. xlix f.; McDowell, *Coins from Seleucia*, p. 192.

⁴² Suet. *Nero* 19; Dio Cass. lv. 24. 2.

⁴³ Tac. *Hist.* ii. 11, 27, 66; W. Schur, *Die Orientpolitik des Kaisers Nero* (*Klio*, Beiheft XV [1923]), pp. 107 ff.

death in 68 Nero was engaged in plans for a great expedition which had as its objective the Iron Gates of the Caucasus.⁴⁴ Possibly its ultimate aim was the Alani, as has been suggested,⁴⁵ or it might have been a feint to keep the Parthians occupied and thus prevent their sending aid to the Jews; but in any case hostilities with the Parthians could hardly have been avoided. The troublous times which followed Nero's death put a stop to all such preparations.

In 69 Vespasian declared himself emperor. Vologases, informed of the event, sent ambassadors to Alexandria the next year to offer him the use of forty thousand Parthian horse.⁴⁶ The letter which they bore was addressed: "The King of Kings, Arsaces, to Flavius Vespasianus, greetings."⁴⁷ Possibly this salutation had something to do with the polite refusal which followed, but more likely Vespasian felt he had the situation in hand. Sohaemus of Emesa and Antiochus of Commagene joined forces with Vespasian, and embassies were sent to the Parthians and Armenians so that peaceful relations might be established with them.⁴⁸ In 71 Vologases sent his congratulations to Titus at Zeugma on the Roman victories over the Jews and presented him with a gold crown.

⁴⁴ Tac. *Hist.* i. 6; Suet. *Nero* 19; Dio Cass. lxii (lxiii. 8. 1); Pliny *Hist. nat.* vi. 40; *CAH*, X, 773-78. See also E. M. Sanford, "Nero and the East," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*, XLVIII (1937), 75-103.

⁴⁵ Mommsen, *Prov. Rom. Emp.*, II, 65 f. and n. 3.

⁴⁶ Suet. *Vespasian* 6; Tac. *Hist.* iv. 51. On a revolt in Seleucia in 69/70 see McDowell, *Coins from Seleucia*, pp. 228 f.

⁴⁷ Dio Cass. lxv (lxvi. 11. 3). ⁴⁸ Tac. *Hist.* ii. 81 f.; v. 1.

The gift was accepted, and the messengers who brought it were feasted before their return.⁴⁹

An incident occurred in 72 which threatened to break the established peace.⁵⁰ L. Caesennius Paetus, formerly with Corbulo and now governor of Syria, informed Vespasian of a projected alliance of Antiochus of Commagene and his son Epiphanes with Vologases against Rome. The union would have been dangerous, for Samosata, the capital of Commagene, lay on the Euphrates at one of the best crossings. The Parthians would thus have an excellent base for operations in Syria and Cilicia. Paetus was given authority to proceed against Antiochus, which he did with all possible speed. Moving forward with the X Fretensis and some auxiliaries furnished by Aristobulus of Chalcis and Sohaemus of Emesa, Paetus took Antiochus of Commagene by surprise. That king gathered his wife and children and retired before the Roman advance, which swept into Samosata without a struggle. Though Antiochus himself was not disposed to contest the matter by force of arms, his two sons, Epiphanes and Callinicus, with such troops as they could muster, barred the passage. An all-day battle resulted in a draw at nightfall, when the king

⁴⁹ Josephus *Bell.* vii. 105 f.

⁵⁰ C. E. S. Gsell, *Essai sur le règne de l'empereur Domitien* (Paris, 1893), pp. 232-34. H. C. Newton, *The Epigraphical Evidence for the Reigns of Vespasian and Titus* ("Cornell Studies in Classical Philology," XVI [New York, 1901]), pp. 19 f. and No. 254, does not date the consulship of Paetus; but cf. PW, art. "Syria," col. 1629.

left and continued his flight. This so disheartened the troops that they deserted to the Romans and the princes fled for refuge to Vologases with a guard of only ten men.⁵¹ Among the Parthians they were well treated, but they were later surrendered to Velius Rufus, who had been sent by Vespasian to secure them. Antiochus was placed under arrest by the Romans, but was allowed to live in Sparta, where he was furnished with sufficient money to maintain an estate such as befitted a king.⁵² Lesser Armenia and Commagene were then made into provinces and garrisoned accordingly.⁵³ The absorption of these frontier kingdoms was in accord with the policy begun under Tiberius and now continued under Vespasian, who had become thoroughly acquainted with the eastern situation during his campaign in Judea.

The number of standing legions in the Near East was raised, as well as the number of high commands. Syria and Commagene, which was added to it, had the III Gallica, the IV Scythica, and the VI Ferrata; Judea retained the X Fretensis; and the V Macedonica, which had been utilized in the Jewish War, was sent back to Moesia via Alexandria early in 71.

⁵¹ *CIL*, III, No. 14387 i = Dessau 9198; also Dessau 9200.

⁵² Josephus *Bell.* vii. 219-43.

⁵³ Franz Cumont, "L'Annexion du Pont Polémoniaque et de la Petite Arménie," *Anatolian Studies Presented to Sir William Mitchell Ramsay* (Manchester, 1923), p. 114 and notes; Théodore Reinach, "Le mari de Salomé et les monnaies de Nicopolis d'Arménie," *Revue des études anciennes*, XVI (1914), 133-58.

Cappadocia, Lesser Armenia, and Galatia were placed under one governor with military headquarters at Melitene. Apparently there were no legions in Cappadocia at the beginning of Vespasian's reign, and he was the first to station legions there.⁵⁴ The legions for this district were the XII Fulminata and at least one other, probably the XVI Flavia.

The invasion of Parthian territory by the Alani, a nomadic tribe of the north, occurred about A.D. 72.⁵⁵ They advanced from their territory near Lake Maeotis (the Sea of Azov),⁵⁶ secured an alliance with the king of the now independent Hyrcania,⁵⁷ and passed

⁵⁴ Suet. *Vespasian* 8. 4; Tac. *Hist.* ii. 81; S. E. Stout, "L. Antistius Rusticus," *Class. Philol.*, XXI (1926), 49. PW, art. "Legio" (pub. 1924-25), contains nearly all of the evidence available on the subject.

⁵⁵ Josephus *Bell.* vii. 244-51 and *Ant.* xviii. 97; Suet. *Domitian* 2. 2; Dio Cass. lxxv (lxxvi. 15. 3); perhaps Lucan *De bell. civ.* viii. 223. Suggested dates for the invasion run from 72 to 74; see B. Niese, "Zur Chronologie des Josephus," *Hermes*, XXVIII (1893), 209-11, A.D. 73; Emil Schürer, *Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes im Zeitalter Jesu Christi*, I (Leipzig, 1901), 639, n. 139, A.D. 72; E. Täubler, "Zur Geschichte der Alanen," *Klio*, IX (1909), 18, A.D. 72 or 73; Rostovtzeff, *Iranians and Greeks in S. Russia*, p. 118, A.D. 73-74; R. P. Longden, "Notes on the Parthian Campaigns of Trajan," *JRS*, XXI (1931), 23, and Josef Markwart, "Iberer und Hyrkanier," *Caucasica*, VIII (1931), 80, A.D. 72.

⁵⁶ There have been numerous attempts to emend the text of Josephus, especially on the basis of early translations of the Chinese sources; see Täubler, *op. cit.*, pp. 18 ff. More recent work on these same sources makes it probable that Josephus was correct, as Gutschmid, *Geschichte Irans*, p. 133, recognized; see Hirth, "Story of Chang K'ien," *JAS*, XXXVII (1917), 96. J. Saint-Martin, "Discours sur l'origine et l'histoire des Arsacides," *J.A.*, I (1822), 65-77, believed the original Parthian invasion was similar in character to that of such peoples as the Alani.

⁵⁷ Josephus *Bell.* vii. 245.

to the south through the Iron Gates of the Caucasus⁵⁸ and thence into Media Atropatene. Pacorus, brother of Vologases I, installed in that country at the accession of Vologases to the Parthian throne, was driven into some remote spot. His harem fell into the hands of the Alani, but he succeeded in ransoming his wife and concubines. The hordes continued their march westward and defeated Tiridates, king of Armenia, within the confines of his own country, where they nearly captured him with a lasso. Satiated with booty, they returned eastward.

In 75 Vologases appealed to Rome for aid against the Alani, but Vespasian did not send either Titus or Domitian as the Parthian monarch had requested.⁵⁹ There was a Roman force in at least one of the passes of the Caucasus,⁶⁰ and Vespasian aided Mithradates of Iberia to fortify his capital, Metskheta. While these precautions were ostensibly for the purpose of curbing the Alani, they might also have been directed

⁵⁸ There were Roman troops stationed here at one time, but possibly this was later, in 75; see Statius *Silvae* iv. 4. 61 ff.

⁵⁹ Suet. *Domitian* 2. 2; Dio Cass. lxxv (lxxvi. 15. 3).

⁶⁰ *CIL*, III, No. 6052, plus a minor correction by A. Aminraschwili quoted in *Philol. Wochenschr.*, XLVIII (1928), col. 838. See also *J.A.*, 6. sér., XIII (1869), 93-103; C. de la Berge, *Essai sur le règne de Trajan* ("Bibliothèque de l'École des hautes études," XXXII [Paris, 1877]), p. 163; Newton, *Vesp. and Tit.*, pp. 19 f. The fact that almost every Roman campaign in Mesopotamia began with an expedition into Armenia disproves the belief of D. Magie, "Roman Policy in Armenia and Transcaucasia and Its Significance," *Amer. Hist. Assoc., Annual Report for 1919*, I (Washington, D.C., 1923), 300-303, that Roman interest in these regions was not military but commercial.

against the Parthians. In 76 M. Ulpian Trajan, father of the future emperor, received triumphal insignia for some diplomatic victory over the Parthians.⁶¹ The work of Valerius Flaccus, a part of which must have been composed about this time, clearly mirrors Roman interest in the Alani and in the Caucasus region.⁶²

⁶¹ W. H. Waddington, *Fastes des provinces asiatiques* (Paris, 1872), No. 100; Pliny *Panegyricus* 14. That no serious fighting took place is shown by Tac. *Hist.* i. 2; Victor *Epit.* 9. 12 and *De Caes.* 9. 10.

⁶² Valerius Flaccus iii. 493 f.; v. 558-60 and 600 f.; vi. 65 f., 106 f., 114-35, 203 f., 507 f., 690-92.

To about this same time may belong the Pahlavi document Avroman III. It is dated 321 (A.E.?), i.e., A.D. 74, or, if it is dated in the Seleucid era, A.D. 10. See A. Cowley, "The Pahlavi Document from Avroman," *JRAS*, 1919, pp. 147-54; A. H. Sayce, "Two Notes on Hellenic Asia. I. The Aramaic Parchment from Avroman," *JHS*, XXXIX (1919), 202-4; J. M. Unvala, "On the Three Parchments from Avroman in Kurdistan," *Bull. School of Or. Studies*, I 4 (1920), 125-44; H. S. Nyberg, "The Pahlavi Documents from Avroman," *Le monde oriental*, XVII (1923), 182-230.

CHAPTER IX

PARTHIA IN COMMERCE AND LITERATURE

IN THE period covered by the past four chapters important changes were taking place in the world of commerce, changes which were eventually to influence profoundly the course of Parthian history. With increasing wealth and luxury in Syria and Rome came a demand for the products of the Far East. One or more of the great silk routes from China passed through Parthia, and others crossed territory which Parthian arms controlled.¹ The revenue from taxes swelled Parthian treasuries until Tacitus compared them with those of Rome.² Incentive for the development of new routes to avoid Parthia probably arose not from a desire to avoid payment of these duties but from the breakdown of Parthian control along the route. Customs exacted by an organized government, though high, amount to less than the numerous tributes required by petty chieftains every

¹ M. P. Charlesworth, *Trade-Routes and Commerce of the Roman Empire* (2d ed.; Cambridge, 1926), pp. 98 ff. There are several errors in that chapter; e.g., Seleucia was directly opposite Ctesiphon, not "a few miles distant" (as stated on his p. 101). Again, Charlesworth, *loc. cit.*, says: "Seleucia on the Tigris . . . usually was able to hold itself independent(!) of Parthia."

² Tac. *Ann.* ii. 60.5.