

himself in the magnificence of his voice, acquired his glorious wisdom by a visit to Egypt.

23. The inhabitants of Egypt are generally swarthy and dark complexioned, and of a rather melancholy cast of countenance, thin and dry looking, quick in every motion, fond of controversy, and bitter exactors of their rights. Among them a man is ashamed who has not resisted the payment of tribute, and who does not carry about him wheals which he has received before he could be compelled to pay it. Nor have any tortures been found sufficiently powerful to make the hardened robbers of this country disclose their names unless they do so voluntarily.

24. It is well known, as the ancient annals prove, that all Egypt was formerly under kings who were friendly to us. But after Antony and Cleopatra were defeated in the naval battle at Actium, it became a province under the dominion of Octavianus Augustus. We became masters of the dry Libya by the last will of king Apion. Cyrene and the other cities of Libya Pentapolis we owe to the liberality of Ptolemy. After this long digression, I will now return to my original subject.

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## BOOK XXIII.

### ARGUMENT.

**I.** Julian in vain attempts to restore the temple at Jerusalem, which had been destroyed long before.—**II.** He orders Arsaces, king of Armenia, to prepare for the war with Persia, and with an army and auxiliary troops of the Scythians crosses the Euphrates.—**III.** As he marches through Mesopotamia, the princes of the Saracenic tribes of their own accord offer him a golden crown and auxiliary troops—A Roman fleet of eleven hundred ships arrives, and bridges over the Euphrates.—**IV.** A description of several engines, balistæ, scorpions, or wild-asses, battering-rams, helepoles, and fire-machines.—**V.** Julian, with all his army, crosses the river Aboras by a bridge of boats at Circesium—He harangues his soldiers.—**VI.** A description of the eighteen principal provinces of Persia, their cities, and the customs of their inhabitants.

## I.

A. D. 363.

§ 1. To pass over minute details, these were the principal events of the year. But Julian, who in his third consulship had taken as his colleague Sallustius, the prefect of Gaul, now entered on his fourth year, and by a novel arrangement took as his colleague a private individual; an act of which no one recollected an instance since that of Diocletian and Aristobulus.

2. And although, foreseeing in his anxious mind the various accidents that might happen, he urged on with great diligence all the endless preparations necessary for his expedition, yet distributing his diligence everywhere; and being eager to extend the recollection of his reign by the greatness of his exploits, he proposed to rebuild at a vast expense the once magnificent temple of Jerusalem, which after many deadly contests was with difficulty taken by Vespasian and Titus, who succeeded his father in the conduct of the siege. And he assigned the task to Alypius of Antioch, who had formerly been pro-prefect of Britain.

3. But though Alypius applied himself vigorously to the work, and though the governor of the province co-operated with him, fearful balls of fire burst forth with continual eruptions close to the foundations, burning several of the workmen and making the spot altogether inaccessible. And thus the very elements, as if by some fate, repelling the attempt, it was laid aside.

4. About the same time the emperor conferred various honours on the ambassadors who were sent to him from the Eternal City, being men of high rank and established excellence of character. He appointed Apronianus to be prefect of Rome, Octavianus to be proconsul of Africa, Venustus to be viceroy of Spain, and promoted Rufinus Aradius to be count of the East in the room of his uncle Julian, lately deceased.

5. When all this had been carried out as he arranged, he was alarmed by an omen which, as the result showed, indicated an event immediately at hand. Felix, the principal treasurer, having died suddenly of a hemorrhage, and Count Julian having followed him, the populace, look-

ing on their public titles, hailed Julian as Felix and Augustus.

6. Another bad omen had preceded this, for, on the very first day of the year, as the emperor was mounting the steps of the temple of the Genius, one of the priests, the eldest of all, fell without any one striking him, and suddenly expired; an event which the bystanders, either out of ignorance or a desire to flatter, affirmed was an omen affecting Sallustius, as the elder consul; but it was soon seen that the death it portended was not to the elder man, but to the higher authority.

7. Besides these several other lesser signs from time to time indicated what was about to happen; for, at the very beginning of the arrangements for the Parthian campaign, news came that there had been an earthquake at Constantinople, which those skilful in divination declared to be an unfavourable omen to a ruler about to invade a foreign country; and therefore advised Julian to abandon his unreasonable enterprise, affirming that these and similar signs can only be disregarded with propriety when one's country is invaded by foreign armies, as then there is one everlasting and invariable law, to defend its safety by every possible means, allowing no relaxation nor delay. News also came by letter that at Rome the Sibylline volumes had been consulted on the subject of the war by Julian's order, and that they had in plain terms warned him not to quit his own territories that year.

## II.

§ 1. BUT in the mean time embassies arrived from several nations promising aid, and they were liberally received and dismissed; the emperor with plausible confidence replying that it by no means became the power of Rome to rely on foreign aid to avenge itself, as it was rather fitting that Rome should give support to its friends and allies if necessity drove them to ask it.

2. He only warned Arsaces, king of Armenia, to collect a strong force, and wait for his orders, as he should soon know which way to march, and what to do. Then, as soon as prudence afforded him an opportunity, hastening to anticipate every rumour of his approach by the occupa-

tion of the enemy's country, before spring had well set in, he sent the signal for the advance to all his troops, commanding them to cross the Euphrates.

3. As soon as the order reached them, they hastened to quit their winter quarters; and having crossed the river, according to their orders, they dispersed into their various stations, and awaited the arrival of the emperor. But he, being about to quit Antioch, appointed a citizen of Heliopolis, named Alexander, a man of turbulent and ferocious character, to govern Syria, saying that he indeed had not deserved such a post, but that the Antiochians, being covetous and insolent, required a judge of that kind.

4. When he was about to set forth, escorted by a promiscuous multitude who wished him a fortunate march and a glorious return, praying that he would be merciful and kinder than he had been, he (for the anger which their addresses and reproaches had excited in his breast was not yet appeased) spoke with severity to them, and declared that he would never see them again.

5. For he said that he had determined, after his campaign was over, to return by a shorter road to Tarsus in Cilicia, to winter there: and that he had written to Memorius, the governor of the city, to prepare everything that he might require in that city. This happened not long afterwards; for his body was brought back thither and buried in the suburbs with a very plain funeral, as he himself had commanded.

6. As the weather was now getting warm he set out on the fifth of March, and by the usual stages arrived at Hieropolis; and as he entered the gates of that large city a portico on the left suddenly fell down, and as fifty soldiers were passing under it at that moment it wounded many, crushing them beneath the vast weight of the beams and tiles.

7. Having collected all his troops from thence, he marched with such speed towards Mesopotamia, that before any intelligence of his march could arrive (an object about which he was especially solicitous) he came upon the Assyrians quite unexpectedly. Then having led his whole army and the Scythian auxiliaries across the Euphrates by a bridge of boats, he arrived at Batnæ, a town of Osdroene, and there again a sad omen met him.

8. For when a great crowd of grooms was standing near an enormously high haystack, in order to receive their forage (for in this way those supplies used to be stored in that country), the mass was shaken by the numbers who sought to strip it, and falling down, overwhelmed fifty men.

### III.

§ 1. LEAVING this place with a heavy heart, he marched with great speed, and arrived at Carrhæ, an ancient town notorious for the disasters of Crassus and the Roman army. From this town two royal roads branch off, both leading into Persia; that on the left hand through Adiabena and along the Tigris, that on the right through the Assyrians and along the Euphrates.

2. There he stayed some days, preparing necessary supplies; and according to the custom of the district he offered sacrifices to the moon, which is religiously worshipped in that region; and it is said that while before the altar, no witness to the action being admitted, he secretly gave his own purple robe to Procopius, and bade him boldly assume the sovereignty if he should hear that he had died among the Parthians.

3. Here while asleep his mind was agitated with dreams, and foresaw some sad event about to happen; on which account he and the interpreters of dreams considering the omens which presented themselves, pronounced that the next day, which was the nineteenth of March, ought to be solemnly observed. But, as was ascertained subsequently, that very same night, while Apronianus was prefect of Rome, the temple of the Palatine Apollo was burnt in the Eternal City; and if aid from all quarters had not come to the rescue the violence of the conflagration would have destroyed even the prophetic volumes of the Sibyl.

4. After these things had happened in this manner, and while Julian was settling his line of march, and making arrangements for supplies of all kinds, his scouts come panting in, and bring him word that some squadrons of the enemy's cavalry have suddenly passed the frontier in

the neighbourhood of the camp, and have driven off a large booty.

5. Indignant at such atrocity and at such an insult, he immediately (as indeed he had previously contemplated) put thirty thousand chosen men under the orders of Procopius, who has been already mentioned, uniting with him in this command Count Sebastian, formerly Duke of Egypt; and he ordered them to act on this side of the Tigris, observing everything vigilantly, so that no danger might arise on any side where it was not expected, for such things had frequently happened. He charged them further, if it could be done, to join King Arsaces; and march with him suddenly through Corduena and Moxoëne, ravaging Chiliocomus, a very fertile district of Media, and other places; and then to rejoin him while still in Assyria, in order to assist him as he might require.

6. Having taken these measures, Julian himself, pretending to march by the line of the Tigris, on which road he had purposely commanded magazines of provisions to be prepared, turned towards the right, and after a quiet night, asked in the morning for the horse which he was accustomed to ride: his name was Babylonius. And when he was brought, being suddenly griped and starting at the pain, he fell down, and rolling about scattered the gold and jewels with which his trappings were decked. Julian, in joy at this omen, cried out, amid the applause of those around, that "Babylon had fallen, and was stripped of all her ornaments."

7. Having delayed a little that he might confirm the omen by the sacrifice of some victims, he advanced to Davana, where he had a garrison-fortress, and where the river Belias rises which falls into the Euphrates. Here he refreshed his men with food and sleep, and the next day reached Callinicus, a strong fortress, and also a great commercial mart, where, on the 27th of March (the day on which at Rome the annual festival in honour of Cybele is celebrated, and the car in which her image is borne is, as it is said, washed in the waters of the Almo), he kept the same feast according to the manner of the ancients, and then, retiring to rest, passed a triumphant and joyful night.

8. The next day he proceeded along the bank of the

river, which other streams began to augment, marching with an armed escort; and at night he rested in a tent, where some princes of the Saracenic tribes came as suppliants, bringing him a golden crown, and adoring him as the master of the world and of their own nations: he received them graciously, as people well adapted for surprises in war.

9. And while addressing them a fleet arrived equal to that of the mighty sovereign Xerxes, under the command of the tribune Constantianus, and Count Lucillianus; they threw a bridge over the broadest part of the Euphrates: the fleet consisted of one thousand transports, of various sorts and sizes, bringing large supplies of provisions, and arms, and engines for sieges, and fifty ships of war, and as many more suitable for the construction of bridges.

#### IV.

§ 1. I AM reminded by the circumstances to explain instruments of this kind briefly, as far as my moderate talent may enable me to do, and first I will set forth the figure of the balista.

2. Between two axletrees a strong large iron bar is fastened, like a great rule, round, smooth, and polished; from its centre a square pin projects for some distance, hollowed out into a narrow channel down its middle. This is bound by many ligatures of twisted cords: to it two wooden nuts are accurately fitted, by one of which stands a skilful man who works it, and who fits neatly into the hollow of the pin or pole a wooden arrow with a large point; and as soon as this is done, some strong young men rapidly turn a wheel.

3. When the tip of the arrow's point has reached the extremity of the cords, the arrow is struck by a blow from the balista, and flies out of sight; sometimes even giving forth sparks by its great velocity, and it often happens that before the arrow is seen, it has given a fatal wound.

4. The scorpion, which they now call the wild-ass, is in the following form. Two axletrees of oak or box are cut out and slightly curved, so as to project in small humps, and they are fastened together like a sawing machine, being perforated with large holes on each side; and between

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