Woe the people in Rome heard of the fate of Otho, they naturally transferred their allegiance forthwith. And so Otho, whom they had previously been loving and for whose victory they had been praying, was now assailed as an enemy, whereas Vitellius, upon whom they had been invoking curses, was lauded and proclaimed emperor. So true is it that there is nothing constant in human affairs; but alike those who are most prosperous and those who are in the humblest station make an unstable choice and receive praise or blame, honour or dishonour, according as their fortunes shift.

News of Otho's death was brought to him [Vitellius] while he was in Gaul. There he was joined by his wife and son; and he placed the boy on a tribunal and gave him the titles of Germanicus and Imperator, though he was only six years old.

Vitellius witnessed gladiatorial combats at Lugdunum and again at Cremona, as if the crowds of men who had perished in the battles and were even then lying unburied where they had been east did not suffice. He befriended the skin with his own eyes, for he traversed all the ground where they lay and glistened over the spectacle as if it were still the moment of his victory; and not even then did he order them to be buried.

Vitellius, upon reaching Rome and arranging affairs
to suit him, issued an edict banishing the astrologers a.p. 69 and commanding them to leave the whole of Italy by a certain specified day. They answered him by putting up at night another notice, in which they commanded him in turn to depart this life before the end of the very day on which he actually died.

So accurate was their foreknowledge of what should come to pass.

Vitellius, addicted as he was to luxury and licentiousness, no longer cared for anything else other than human or divine. He had indeed always been inclined to idle about in taverns and gaming-houses, and devoted himself to dancers and charioteers; and he used to spend incalculable sums on such pursuits, with the result that he had many creditors. Now, when he was in a position of so great authority, his wantonness only increased, and he was squandering money most of the day and night alike. He was insatiate in gorging himself, and was constantly vomiting up what he ate, being nourished by the mere passage of the food. Yet this practice was all that enabled him to hold out; for his fellow-banqueters feared very badly. For he was always inviting many of the foremost men to his table and he was frequently entertained at their houses. It was in this connexion that one of them, Vibo, Clabitus, uttered a very witty remark. Having been compelled for some days by sickness to abstain himself from the convivial board, he said:

1. Zonaras: Though he had a great regard for oratory, and did nothing however trivial without consulting them, he banished the astrologers at this time and later the seers.

2. According to Sosoninus (Πτ. 14) they named the very same day that had been appointed by Vitellius.
"If I had not fallen ill, I surely should have perished." \(λ.0.69\)

The entire period of his reign was nothing but a series of carousals and revels. All the most costly viands were brought from as far as the Ocean (not to say farther) and drawn from both land and sea, and were prepared in so costly a fashion that even now certain cakes and other dishes are named Vitellian, after him. And yet why should one name over all the details, when it is admitted by all alike that during the period of his reign he expended 900,000,000 This there soon was a famine in all costly articles of food, yet it was absolutely imperious that they should be provided. For example, he once caused a dish to be made that cost a million sestertii, into which he put a mixture of tongues and brains and livers of certain fishes and birds. As it was impossible to make so large a vessel of pottery, it was made of silver and remained in existence for some time, being regarded somewhat in the light of a votive offering, until Hadrian finally set eyes on it and melted it down.

Now that I have once touched on this subject, I will also add that not even Nero's Golden House could satisfy Vitellius. For though he admired and lauded the name and the life and all the practices of Nero, yet he found fault with him for living in such a wretched house, so shabbily and meagrely equipped. At any rate, when he fell ill one time, he looked about for a room to live in; so little did anything even of Nero's satisfy him. And his wife Galeria ridiculed the small amount of decoration found in the royal

1. ιησύς ΧΡ. ΑΝΩ. χριστός ζων. The larger figure is confirmed by Tac., Hist., II. 55.
2. ναυτικον Εκ., χριστόν ΥC cod. Piri.
apartments. This pair, then, as they were spending all of other people's money, never stopped to count the cost of anything; but those who invited them to meals found themselves in great embarrassment, excepting a few to whom he gave something in return. Yet the same persons would not entertain him for the entire day, but one set of men furnished breakfast, another luncheon, another dinner, and still another certain kinds of dessert, consolations for a jaded appetite. For all who were able to do so were eager to entertain him, so that in the course of a few days they spent four million stateres for dinner. His birthday celebrations lasted over two days and many wild beasts and men, too, were slain.

Though he lived this kind of life, he was not entirely without good deeds. For example, he retained the coinage minted under Nero, Galba and Otho, evincing no displeasure at their likenesses; and any gifts that they had bestowed upon any persons he held to be valid and deprived no one of any such possession. He did not collect any sums still owing of former levies, and he confiscated no one's property. He put to death but very few of those who had sided with Otho, and did not withhold the property of these even from their relatives. Upon the kinsmen of those previously executed he bestowed all their funds that were still to be found in the public treasury. He did not even find fault with the wills of such as had fought against him and had fallen in the battles. Furthermore he forbade

This little phrase is taken from Plutarch's "Cicero," 115 n.
The text is uncertain, cite perhaps to the omission of some details by the epitomist. The reading of the Cod. Pei., is "and they say he spent four millions upon dinner," omitting the words "in the course of a few days."
the senators and the knights to fight as gladiators or to perform in any spectacle in the orchestra. For these measures he was commended.

The character of Vitellius being such as I have described, the soldiers did not show any restraint either, but numerous instances of their wantonness and licentiousness were occurring everywhere alike.

Vitellius ascended the Capitol and embraced his mother. She was a good, honest soul, and when she first heard that her son had been given the name Germanicus, she said: "The child I love was Vitellius, not Germanicus."

Vitellius, however, furnished many with material for amusement. They could not restrain their laughter when they beheld wearing a solemn face in the official religious processions a man whom they knew to have played the trumpet, or saw mounted on a royal steed and clad in a purple mantle he who used, as they knew full well, to wear the blue costume and carry the race-horses, or when they beheld ascending the Capitol with so great a crowd of soldiers him whom previously no one could catch a glimpse of even in the Forum because of the throng of his creditors, or saw receiving the adoration of all a man whom, a while before, nobody would readily have consented even to greet with a kiss. Indeed, those who had lent him anything had had hold of him when he was setting out for Germany and would scarcely release him after he had given security. Now, however, so far from laughing at him, they were mourning and hiding themselves; but he sought them out, telling them he spared...
DIOS ROMAN HISTORY

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He was a constant attendant at the theatres, and by this won the attachment of the populace. He ate with the most influential men on free and easy terms, and this gained their favour to an even greater degree. His old companions never failed to remember and honour them greatly, not disdaining to appear to recognize any of them. In this he was unlike some others; for many who have unexpectedly attained to great power feel hatred for those who are acquainted with their former humble state.

Vitellius, when Priscus opposed him in the senate and also denounced the soldiers, called the tribunes to his side as if he needed their assistance. Yet he neither did Priscus any harm himself nor did he allow the tribunes to molest him, but merely said:

"Ibe not disturbed, Fathers, nor indignant, that we two out of your number have had a little dispute with each other." This act seemed to have been due to a kindly disposition. The fact, however, that he wished to imitate Nero and offered sacrifices to that emperor's Manes, and that he spent so great sums on dinners, though it caused joy to some, made sensible people grieve, since they were fully aware that not all the money in the whole world would be sufficient for him.

While he was behaving in this way, evil omens

1 ήλιον φύλειν εύ το δεσμόλογον ἀποκείβαιναι ἔλεγε καὶ τὰ συμβολαία ἀπέτητε.—Xiph. 195, 4–11
2 Ἑπεφέρεται δὲ καὶ τοῖς θεάτροις οἰκεῖος, διότι καὶ τὸν ὄμηλον ἀπ' αὐτῶν ἀναρρήθηκεν, συνε-"
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occurred. A comet was seen, and the moon, contrary to precedent, appeared to suffer two eclipses, being obscured on the fourth and on the seventh day. Also people saw two suns at once, one in the west white and pale, and one in the east brilliant and powerful. On the Capitol many huge footprints were seen, presumably of some spirits that had descended from it. The soldiers who had slept there on the night in question said that the temple of Jupiter had opened of itself with great clamor and that some of the guards had been so terrified that they fainted.

At the same time that this happened Vespasian, who was engaged in warfare with the Jews, learned of the rebellion of Vitellius and of Otho and was deliberating what he should do.

Vespasian was never inclined to be rash, and he hesitated very much about involving himself in such troublesome affairs.

For not only was the popular feeling strong in his favor—since his reputation won in Britain, his

1 Cl. Zuover At this juncture the uprising against him to Julianus was reported to him. And he was in great fear because of it, since various omens, etc.
2 Cl. Zuover The rebellion came about in this way. Vespasian, who was occupying in Judaea (for, as has already been related [lxxii. 22], I had been sent thither on account of the revolt of the Jews), had sent his son to carry his greetings to Gallus when the latter had become emperor; but when Titus returned, having learned on the way of the rebellion of Vitellius and of Otho, Vespasian also set out to gain the sovereignty.

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