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Attitude and conduct of Tiberius toward Germanicus and his family

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Attitude and Conduct of Tiberius toward Germanicus and his Family.

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I. Introduction

Is finis fuit ulciscenda Germanici morte non modo apud illos homines qui tum agebant etiam secutis temporibus vario rumore iactata. (Tacitus Annals III, 19,2.) Thus Tacitus ended his story of the ill-fated Germanicus whose death is to-day "vario rumore iactata" and probably always will be unless the almost impossible should happen and more source material be discovered which would give more conclusive evidence in regard to it.

In the fascinating pages of Tacitus' Annals, Germanicus is a figure of romance and mystery, of romance because he, the adopted son of the emperor Tiberius, a gallant soldier, the idol of his legions, a devoted husband, a loving father, with every prospect fair before him, died in his early prime, in a foreign land; of mystery, because of the suspicion, which remains to this day a suspicion, and a suspicion only, that he was poisoned by Piso who had been sent into the East with him ~~and~~ to get rid of him if possible.

If the facts of the life and death of Germanicus which are given by Tacitus and other ancient writers are examined coolly and critically, his history loses most of its romance and much of its mystery. Instead of a hero worthy of a mediaeval romance, he appears to have been a young man of thoroughly fine character but of ordinary ability. His wife, Agrippina, seems to have been a woman of high courage and fine devotion to her husband and children, but of turbulent disposition and lacking in balance and common sense. The story of Germanicus' death has less mysterious glamour when we realize that no ancient writer gives one shred of actual evidence that he was poisoned by Piso or anybody else.

Yet because of the small amount of material concerning the relations of Tiberius with Germanicus and his family which is given by ancient authorities, Tiberius' attitude and conduct toward them will probably always be discussed and questioned. The questions that may be discussed are of two kinds, those having to do with actual acts and those relating to the mental attitudes of the people we are studying. The questions of the first type that I shall try to answer are these: Was Germanicus actually poisoned? If he was, did Tiberius have anything to do with it ? Did Tiberius cause Agrippina and her eldest son to be put to death ? The ones of the second type are: What was Tiberius' real feeling toward Germanicus ? Did he fear Agrippina and believe she was plotting against his throne ? What was his feeling toward the children of Germanicus ? It is of course impossible to answer these questions conclusively but at least an attempt to answer them may be made, first by a careful consideration of the facts told by the ancient historians, then by a study of the motives assigned to the various people by the historians and finally by inferences from the facts and from the characters of Tiberius, Agrippina, and Germanicus.

As a preliminary to the story it is well to get clearly in mind the relationships and family backgrounds of the various characters in it. Tiberius was the step-son of the emperor Augustus. He had been compelled by Augustus to divorce his dearly loved wife,Vipsania, by whom he had one son, Drusus, of approximately the age of Germanicus. Germanicus was the son of Tiberius' brother,Drusus, of whom he was devotedly fond and of Antonia, who, Ferrero says, (Short History of Rome: The Empire. Page 149) " was one of the few people who has remained faithful to him (Tiberius) through his days of glory and of sorrow". Agrippina, Germanicus' wife, was the child of Marcus Agrippa and Julia, infamous daughter of Augustus. Germanicus and Agrippina had six

children, Nero, Drusus and Caius, later the emperor Caligula, Agrippina whose memoirs Tacitus used as a source for the Annals and whose life was as evil as that of her grandmother Julia, Drusilla and Julia.

We have as authorities for the life and character of Germanicus and Tiberius' relations with him and his family, four ancient writers, Velleius Paterculus, Cassius Dio, Suetonius and Tacitus.

In Velleius Paterculus, there is very little material dealing directly with Germanicus but his work is valuable for this study because he presents the character of Tiberius from an entirely different angle from that of the other authorities. He was an officer who served under Tiberius and he pictures him as his beloved commander. He is as patently prejudiced in Tiberius' favor as Tacitus is against him. Boissier (Tacitus, Page 91) calls him " a most brazen flatterer of Tiberius." On the other hand Ferrero (A Short History of Rome: The Empire. Page 119 note) calls him " the ancient historian who best understood and described Tiberius". Frederick W. Shipley in his introduction to the edition of his works in the Loeb Classical Library makes the statement that Paterculus writes from the point of view of a member of the equestrian order and is therefore without the fond memories of the rule of the aristocracy which the senatorial class possessed.

Dio was a well trained and critical historian. His work seems to indicate that he studied all available authorities on his subject. For his portrait of Tiberius he may have consulted both Tacitus and Suetonius, though there is no direct indication of it. It is in harmony with those they give rather than with that of Paterculus. As a senator he wrote from the view point of the senatorial class. His emphasis is on the relation of the emperor to the senate. From this fact as well as because his interest was rather in the great movements of history than in the characters involved in them he is less valuable for this study, which is concerned mainly with human relationships.

His attitude throughout his work is coldly impartial. He carefully refrains from the slightest comment or interpretation of his own concerning the persons or events which he portrays. He was evidently extremely superstitious. His work is full of accounts of signs, omens, and portents of various sorts which he accepts with childlike credulity. It is impossible for the modern reader to refrain from wondering if he has the same credulity in regard to the sources for his history. His work is valuable for this paper chiefly because he gives some account of the relations of Tiberius and Germanicus before Tiberius' accession to the throne , a phase of the story untouched by the other authorities.

Suetonius was a biographer and a teller of tales rather than a historian. His interest was in people rather than in great events. Evidently he consulted many sources before he wrote his Lives but without much regard for their authenticity. If a tale was interesting, he told it without considering very much whether it was true. His attitude like Dio's was coldly objective and like him he refrained from comment on what he related. His attempt at impartiality was not particularly successful. Though he recounted the vices and virtues of the man he was describing in separate lists, the result was not a fair picture of his character mainly because of Suetonius' predilection for believing court gossip and old wives' tales. His work is valuable for our purpose because he corroborates Tacitus' account and adds more personal details of Germanicus. He gives a fuller account than Tacitus of the last days of Agrippina. Because of the loss of the portion of Tacitus' Annals dealing with this part of Tiberius' reign, it is very unfortunate that he says nothing at all about the plots in which Agrippina and her sons,Nero and Drusus, were supposed to have been implicated and mentions their deaths very casually.

Tacitus' Annals is at the same time the chief source for the story of Germanicus and his relations with Tiberius and the one which has been most discussed and questioned.

In a discussion of Tacitus' accuracy it must be borne in mind that by him and most other ancient historians, the modern idea that history is a science was not understood. Tacitus was much more of a moralist than a historian in the modern sense. He himself says of his purpose in writing history (Annals,III,65,1)."Exsequi sententias haud institui nisi insignes per honestum aut notabili dedecore quod praecipuum munus annalium reor ne virtutes sileantur utque pravis dictis factisque ex posteritate et infamia metus sit." Is it not inevitable that at least his interpretation of facts, if not his treatment of facts themselves, should be colored by such a purpose ?

To the ancients, history was a branch of rhetoric and Tacitus was a skilled rhetorician. Quintilian lays down the rule (IV,2,94ff. and discussion Jerome, Aspects of the Study of Roman History,pages 366-367) that each character in a historical narrative should conform to a certain "Color" that is type. Tacitus appears to follow this rule in the Annals for, even when the facts which he himself gives do not bear him out, his Tiberius is almost always a crafty and smooth villain and his Germanicus, a picturesque and idealized hero.

It is difficult to make any accurate estimate of the sources upon which Tacitus drew since he rarely makes specific references to them and none of them have come down to us. He does mention having used the memoirs of the younger Agrippina and considering her character it is pretty safe to say that her stories would require a good deal of testing. Many times he introduces a

story by " ferunt" or "traditur" thus making it clear that he does not vouch for its accuracy. He says explicitly that he does not believe some of the stories he tells.

Because of his continual use of innuendo his account needs the most careful analysis. Again and again his facts are favorable to Tiberius but he adds a derogatory remark which by its pointedness and brilliancy lessens the impression made by the facts. In reference to the death of Agrippina he says (Annals,VI.25.1)"Voluntate exstinctam nisi si negatis alimentis assimulatus est finis qui videretur sponte sumptus". The statement of Suetonius that she committed suicide, and the fact that, in her unhappy situation, suicide would have been the most natural course for the proud Roman lady to take seems to indicate that Tacitus' insinuations have very small foundation of fact.

Careful weighing of his account is also necessary because he reports again and again somebody's inmost thoughts. This report is, to be sure, highly interesting and effective from a literary standpoint, but of small value from the standpoint of history. How in the world could it have been possible for him or any one else to find out any such intimate details ? For example, when he discusses the reasons why Tiberius and Livia did not attend the funeral rites of Germanicus he says(AnnalsIII.5.1) "Tiberius atque Augusta publico abstinuere inferius maiestate sua rati, si oculam lamentarentur, an ne omnium oculis vultum eorum scrutantibus falsi intellegerentur".

Throughout the narrative of Tacitus, his prejudice against Tiberius and for Germanicus is apparent, though the reason for that prejudice is by no means clear. His facts have stood the test of time as to their accuracy; his prejudice is shown only in the interpretation of the facts.

II. Relations of Tiberius and Germanicus during the Life of Augustus.

The first time that we hear definitely of contact of Tiberius with Germanicus is when Augustus, seeking to make certain that some one, if not of his own blood, at least of his own choosing, should succeed him, adopted Tiberius and compelled Tiberius to adopt Germanicus. The fact that this adoption of Germanicus was forced on Tiberius by Augustus is mentioned by Tacitus, Dio and Suetonius. None of them give any clue to Tiberius' feeling in the matter, but some very interesting inferences may be drawn from the circumstances.

Dio says (55,13) that " he(Augustus) both adopted Tiberius, and sent him against the Celtae granting him the tribunician authority for ten years. Yet suspecting that he might lose his head and fearing a possible insurrection, he adopted for him also his nephew Germanicus, though Tiberius himself had a son." If Dio is right that distrust of Tiberius induced Augustus to compel Germanicus' adoption, it is easy to see how a proud and sensitive man, such as Tiberius was, would have been deeply hurt by his stepfather's lack of faith in him and that this hurt might have caused a certain amount of antagonism toward Germanicus.

Furthermore Tiberius had a son Drusus by Vipsania, the wife whom Augustus had forced him to divorce and whom he tenderly loved. Suetonius says(The Lives of the Caesars,III.7,3) " sed Vipsaniam et abegisse post divortium doluit et semel omnino ex occursu visam adeo contentis et umentibus oculis prosecutus est ut custoditum sit ne umquam in conspectum ei post hac veniret." We know from Tacitus that Germanicus was older than Drusus. Therefore as far as possible heirship to the throne was concerned, Germanicus would take precedence over Drusus. One can easily see how dear Drusus was to Tiberius for his mother's sake and how he resented being obliged to supplant him. This resentment would easily turn to antagonism toward Germanicus,

innocent though he was of any blame in the matter.

Three years after Germanicus was adopted, Tiberius was fighting in Dalmatia. Dio says (58,51) " Augustus began to be suspicious of Tiberius for he thought he might have overcome them sooner but was delaying purposely so that he might be under arms as long as possible with the war for an excuse." Though at that time Germanicus was only a quaestor, Augustus sent him to Dalmatia with an army apparently to act as a check upon Tiberius. Tiberius and Germanicus served together against the Dalmatians for two years. Then the older man returned to Rome but was shortly afterward sent back into the field by Augustus because affairs were not progressing satisfactorily. Finally the two together won a decisive victory.

Dio gives no information at all in regard to the feelings of uncle and nephew for each other during these campaigns. If Tiberius was angry because Germanicus was sent out apparently to spy on him or to supersede him, his feelings must have been soothed when Augustus ordered him to return to Dalmatia because Germanicus' leadership there was not successful.

III. Germanicus in Germany

When Augustus died five years later Germanicus held the chief command of the two armies in Germany with Caius Silius in direct charge of the one called the upper and Aulus Caecina of the one called the lower. When the news of Augustus' death reached Germany, Germanicus was away from both armies making a census of the Gauls.

Tacitus does his best to make Germanicus a heroic and romantic figure in the mutinies that followed. If the facts which Tacitus himself gives are carefully examined it is difficult to admire Germanicus as much as he does even though he deserves much honor for his refusal to attempt to make himself emperor with the aid of his devoted legions.

This is the story of the mutinies, as Tacitus tells it, but divested of the romantic glamour which he throws over it.

When the news of Augustus' death came to Germanicus he at once induced the Belgians and Sequaninns, of whom he was making the census, to take the oath of allegiance to Tiberius. Immediately after he had done so the news came to him of the revolt of the lower army under Caecina.

He hastened to their camp, entered it, and mounted the tribunal to address the soldiers, who gathered around him in a disorderly mass. He commanded them to separate into maniples. They replied that they would hear better if they were crowded together. Germanicus then asked that the standards be brought forward so that he could at least distinguish the cohorts. Tacitus says "tarde obtemperavere." (Annals I.34.4) The first part of his speech which had to do with the glories of Augustus and Tiberius and the condition of the government, the soldiers received graciously enough. But when he touched upon their mutiny there was a confusion of demands, complaints and offers of their assistance if Germanicus wished to seize the throne. When he heard these offers he leaped from the tribunal as if he thought himself contaminated by their treason. The soldiers threatened his life if he refused to return. Tacitus says(Annals I.35,5,6) "at ille moriturum potius quam fidem exueret clamitans ferrum a latere diripuit elatumque deferebat in pectus ni proximi prensam dextram vi attinuissent et miles nomine Calusidius strictum obtulit gladium addito acutiorem esse." Calusidius must have had sufficient sense of humor to distrust such heroics. The soldiers were so astounded by this extraordinary performance that they allowed Germanicus' friends to hurry him off to his tent.

There they held a consultation which, to judge from its results must have been hasty and panic stricken. They made up their minds that it was best to write a letter, Tacitus says politely(Annals I.36,4)"nomine principis"

promising complete discharges to soldiers who had served twenty years and qualified ones to those who had served sixteen years and that the money bequeathed to the soldiers by Augustus would be paid and doubled.

The men suspected that the fair promises of this letter were simply a means of reducing them to submission and demanded that they be immediately fulfilled. The matter of the discharges was simple enough but Germanicus and his officers had to have recourse to their private funds in order to scrape together enough to pay the legacies.

Germanicus then set out for the upper army where three legions took the oath of allegiance to Tiberius willingly. When the fourteenth hesitated he quickly won them over by offers of the same discharges and money which he had given to the soldiers of the lower army.

In the meantime the senate at the request of Tiberius had conferred proconsular power upon Germanicus, and deputies had set out from Rome to bring him the news of it. The deputies met Germanicus at the Ara Ubiorum where two of the legions who had received the benefits granted by the forged letter were in winter quarters.

Tacitus says (Annals I,39.3) "Pavidos et conscientia vecordes intrat metus venisse patrum iussu qui irrita facerent quae per seditionem expresserant".

In the middle of the night a mob of soldiers rushed to Germanicus' quarters, broke down the doors, dragged their commander out of bed and by threat of instant death compelled him to give them the standard. For the rest of the night the mob raged unrestrained. Plancus, the leader of the deputies, even though he was embracing the standard of the first legion, was saved from death only by the valor of the standard bearer, Calpurnius.

At day-break Germanicus, with Plancus on the tribunal beside him addressed the soldiers. He first endeavored to pacify them by imputing this second mutiny to the wrath of the gods, then explained the mission of the

deputies and finally reproved the legions for violating the "ius legationis". Tacitus says (Annals I,39,8),"Attonitaque magis quam quieta contione legatos praesidio auxiliarium equitum dimittit".

After this Germanicus' officers and friends blamed him for not setting out to the upper army. If he was unwilling to do that, they said, he should at least send his wife Agrippina, who was pregnant, and his little son Caius to a place of safety.

This latter he finally decided to do though Agrippina protested vigorously " cum se divo Augusto ortam neque degenerem ad pericula testaretur. " (Annals I.40.3) Strange to relate this decision of Germanicus put an end to the disturbance, for when the soldiers saw the little procession of wailing women headed by the wife of their commander setting out from camp, shame overpowered them. Some tried to stop Agrippina but the most of them rushed to Germanicus.

He addressed them in a speech which, as Tacitus gives it to us is eloquent, if somewhat over dramatic. The speech ends thus, "Discedite a contactu ac dividite turbidos; id stabile ad paenitentiam, id fidei vinculum erit". (Annals I,43,5)

The soldiers were still further softened by his words and ~~b~~ought him "puniret noxios, ignosceret lapsis, et duceret in hostem, revocaretur coniunx, redirat alumnus legionum, neve obses Gallis traderetur." (Annals I,44,1)

He offered the nearness of winter and Agrippina's approaching delivery as an excuse for not allowing her to return, but promised that little Caius should be brought back. As for the punishment of the guilty, he said, they could attend to that themselves. Germanicus permitted the soldiers to hold a rough form of trial after this fashion. The legions with drawn swords surrounded a platform to which the accused men one by one were brought by a tribune.

When the soldiers shouted out that a man was guilty, he was thrown down headlong among them by the tribune and forthwith butchered.

This disturbance had no sooner quieted down than Germanicus heard of a revolt of the legions under Caecina. He made arrangements to lead loyal troops to Caecina's aid and sent on ahead a letter saying (Annals I,48.1) "venire se valida manu ac ni supplicium in malos praesument usurum promiscua caede".

After Caecina had read this letter he took counsel with his officers and those of the private soldiers who were still loyal. They decided that, at a given signal, they would rush out and slaughter the disaffected who would be taken unawares. They carried out this plan and bloody strife between the loyal and disloyal soldiers followed.

Germanicus arrived shortly after the soldiers had become weary of bloodshed. He did not disapprove of this method of settling a mutiny strongly enough even to give a stern reproof to the man who had engineered it for Tacitus says (Annals,I,49,4) "Non medicinam illud plurimis cum lacrimis, sed cladem appellans cremari corpora iubet."

The soldiers then wanted to be led against the enemy to appease the ghosts of their slain brethren. Germanicus, who probably thought that giving them something to do and something new to think about was the easiest way to calm them down, yielded to them and led them into Germany. After the men had amused themselves for a while slaughtering Germans and devastating the country he led them back into winter quarters. Except for the devastation and slaughter the expedition accomplished absolutely nothing.

Tacitus says (Annals I,52,1,2),"Nuntiata ea Tiberium laetitia curaque adfecere:gaudebat:oppressionem seditionem, sed quod largiendis pecuniis et missione festinata favorem militum quaesivisset, bellica quoque Germanici gloria angebatur. Rettulit tamen ad senatum de rebus gestis multaque de

virtute eius memoravit, magis in speciem verbis adornata quam ut penitus sentire crederetur.[1] Tacitus adds almost in the manner of an after thought that Tiberius ratified the concessions Germanicus had made to the soldiers, and even extended them to the Pannonian army. Whatever his personal feelings may have been he certainly gave Germanicus all the backing he could possibly have desired.

Dio's statement(57,6) of Tiberius' feeling concerning Germanicus and his suppression of the mutinies is somewhat similar to Tacitus'. He says that Tiberius sent pleasing messages to Germanicus although he feared him because he had gained the favor of the legions. He adds the statement that Tiberius was suspicious both of Germanicus and Agrippina because he believed that they, like himself, said one thing and meant another.

From the story of the mutinies, as both Tacitus and Dio give it, it is possible to infer much as to the character and ability of Germanicus. From the story and from these inferences a good deal of light can be gained concerning Tiberius' attitude and conduct toward Germanicus in regard to his handling of the mutinies. The judgment which Tiberius then formed in regard to Germanicus' ability probably influenced him also in his later relations with him.

Germanicus was absolutely loyal to his adoptive father. When he received the news of Augustus' death he immediately began administraing to the Gallic tribes where he was taking the census, the oath of allegiance to Tiberius. When the soldiers of the lower army offered him their support if he wished to secure the royal power for himself, he rejected their offers disdainfully.

On the other hand Germanicus' conduct during the mutinies had shown conclusively that he was far from being an able leader of men. When the disturbance was just beginning, at the assembly of the lower army, he was unable even to compel the soldiers to separate into maniples. When the upper

army was excited by the arrival of the deputies from Rome, Germanicus had so little control over the soldiers that they dragged him out of his bed and forced him to produce their standard.

During the mutinies Germanicus proved that he was by no means an able administrator. He could answer the demands of the soldiers in reference to increased pay and discharges only by forging (to speak plainly) a letter from the emperor; an action which was at once a tacit confession of his inability to arrange matters for himself, and a piece of rather stupid trickery. He showed his lack of administrative ability when, instead of punishing the leaders of the mutiny himself, he allowed the soldiers to go through the travesty of a trial and slay whomsoever they pleased, and when he led the soldiers into Germany with no other object than to take their minds off the mutiny.

Tacitus says that Tiberius bestowed copious praises upon Germanicus in the Senate and confirmed the concessions which he had made. Tiberius' action was the best possible one from the stand-point either of ethics or expediency. He probably owed his throne to Germanicus. At least, if Germanicus had chosen to accept the offered help of the legions and to try to make himself emperor, Tiberius could have kept his throne only by means of a bloody civil war. Germanicus was tremendously popular with the legions and the people. Tiberius had no such personal following. If he had seemed to lack appreciation of their idol he would have seriously antagonized his new subjects who were none too fond of him as it was.

It is easy to believe that Tiberius was not over sincere in his praises of Germanicus. Since he was a good general and an excellent administrator, he must have seen Germanicus' weakness in both instances.

Dio makes the statement (57.6) that Tiberius feared Germanicus because he had gained the favor of the legions and was suspicious of him because he believed he was not sincere. He seems to give Tiberius credit for less common sense than I believe he had. To be sure, Germanicus with eight devoted legions at his back had tremendous power; but if he had had any desire to try to become emperor with their aid he could have had his campaign well begun before Tiberius even heard of it. Instead, he proved his loyalty to Tiberius by every means in his power.

So far Tiberius' conduct toward Germanicus according to Tacitus himself, had been faultless. Immediately after his accession to the throne he bestowed proconsular power upon Germanicus. Furneaux says in his note on Annals I, 14,5, that this was probably a renewal, in consequence of the death of Augustus, of the power which he had previously held. He praised him in the senate for the suppression of the mutinies and confirmed the concessions which he had made to the soldiers.

The statements of both Tacitus and Dio as to Tiberius' attitude are hard to credit, simply from the stand-point of common sense. From the facts as both authors give them Tiberius had absolutely no ground for either suspicion or fear of Germanicus. He was probably glad that the mutinies were suppressed but at the same time he must have realized that if Germanicus had been a stronger leaderof men the trouble would not have been so long continued or so serious.

In the late winter or very early spring of the year following the mutinies, a triumph was decreed to Germanicus though the war was still continued, an honor, which Furneaux says(note on Annals I.55,1) was "unusual though not without precedent".

This seemed to inspire him with extraordinary zeal for warfare for unusually early in the spring he began on his next campaign. He made a sudden attack upon the Chatti, the modern Hessians. He took them by surprise and easily defeated them. After killing a large number of them and devastating the country he led his army back to the Rhina.

Soon after he reached the river, ambassadors came to him from Segestes, one of the leaders of the Germans who had sided with the Romans. Segestes begged Germanicus to rescue him from his enraged countrymen. Germanicus promptly marched back and rescued Segestes along with numerous relatives and friends. In this battle he recovered some of the booty taken by the Germans at the defeat of Varus.

The rescue of Segestes excited the Cherusci and other tribes near the Chatti to such an extent that it seemed advisable to Germanicus to strike at them before they could join forces to make an attack upon him.

It is unnecessary to follow all the movements of the campaign. It is enough to say that Germanicus finally came to the Teutoburg forest in the depths of which lay the still unburied bodies of Varus and his army. Germanicus stopped in the forest long enough to perform the last offices for his unfortunate countrymen, placing the first sod on the tomb with his own hands.

In speaking of the effect of this action upon the "morale" of Germanicus' army, Tacitus says(Annals I. 62.1)"Igitur Romanus qui aderat exercitus sextum post cladis annum trium legionum ossa nullo noscente alienas reliquias an suorum humo tegeret, omnes ut coniunctos, ut consanguineos, aucta in hostium ira, maesti simul et infensi condebant." He adds the following concerning Tiberius' view of the matter.(Annals I.62.3)"Quod Tiberio haud probatum seu cuncta Germanici in deterius trahenti, sive exercitum imagine caesorum insepultorumque tardatum ad proelia et formidolosiorem hostium credebat; neque imperatorem auguratu et vetustissimis caerimoniis praeditum attrectare feralia debuisse." This is one example of Tacitus' wholly unjustifiable use

of innuendo. Possibly Tiberius did disapprove of the burial of the bodies of Varus' army. Perfectly valid reasons for such disapproval are given by Tacitus himself so why add that he did not like it because he always disapproved of Germanicus?

After the burial ceremonies, Germanicus pursued the Germans into the forest and fought a battle which Tacitus says resulted in a draw. From this statement it is fairly safe to assume that it was a victory for the Germans.

Germanicus took part of the army back to the Rhine by water. The remainder, under the command of Caecina, went by land. The Germans attacked those who took the land route and it was only by the consummate generalship and remarkable valor of Caecina that they reached the Rhine.

At the camp on the Gallic bank of the Rhine there was disturbance bordering on panic, for the report had reached it that the army had been surrounded and that a body of Germans was on the march toward Gaul. Some of the soldiers were so mad with terror that, regardless of what might happen to their countrymen on the other side of the river, they wanted to demolish the bridge across the Rhine to save themselves from the horde which they imagined was approaching.

Agrippina with little Caius was in that camp awaiting her husband's return. She made herself popular with the soldiers by distributing clothing and medicines to the wounded or needy , and when she forbade the panic stricken men to destroy the bridge, they obeyed. When the legions finally returned, she stood at the end of the bridge she had saved, and thanked and praised the men as they came across it.

From the facts as Tacitus gives them, it appears that Agrippina deserves only credit. She had given aid to needy and wounded soldiers and had prevented the destruction of the bridge. The worst thing that the facts might permit to be said about her is that her personal greetings and praises of the soldiers were somewhat over ostentatious. There is no proof that they were not

perfectly sincere and spontaneous.

These are Tiberius' thoughts concerning the conduct of Agrippina as Tacitus gives them: "Id Tiberii animum altius penetravit non enim simplices eas curas nec adversus externos militem quaeri, Nihil relictum imperatoribus ubi femina manipulis intervisat, signa adeat, largitiones temptet, tamquam parum ambitiose filium ducis gregali habitu circumferat Caesaremque Caligulam appellari velit. Potiorem iam apud exercitus Agrippinam quam legatos, quam duces; compressam a muliere seditionem cui nomen principis obsistere non quiverit." (Annals I. 69, 4,5,6)

These thoughts are not notable for common sense. He seems to have made a great deal of conduct, harmless if the worst interpretation is given to it, most praiseworthy if it is considered in the most favorable light possible. Furthermore when it is borne in mind that up to this time Tiberius had been scrupulously careful to express only approval of Germanicus' conduct whether he deserved it or not. How such feelings (granted Tiberius had them) could have come to the attention of Tiberius or anybody else, is hard to understand.

In connection with this episode the sinister influence of Sejanus on Tiberius is first mentioned by Tacitus. He says that Sejanus fostered this jealousy of Agrippina's influence with the deliberate plan of making Tiberius hate and distrust both her and her husband in the future. Before this is taken seriously, however, it is necessary to accept the fact that Tiberius was jealous.

The fact that Spain, Italy and the Gauls rivalled each other in offering arms, horses and money to help make good the losses of the army incurred on the march under Vitellius is an indication of the tremendous cost of this futile campaign.

Germanicus seems to have had some regrets for the useless suffering of the soldiers that he had caused; for, while he accepted from the States, horses and arms for the war, he made presents to the soldiers from his own purse, and visited and praised the wounded.

The next year, Germanicus took the army into Germany by water, for he had learned by the experiences of the previous year that on the long and toilsome marches through the German forests and swamps, his men were exposed to unnecessary hardships and dangers and valuable equipment was frequently lost.

After some smaller engagements, one of which proved disastrous to his cavalry, Germanicus crossed the Weser and encamped within sight of the enemy's camp fires.

On the eve of what he knew would be a decisive battle, Germanicus decided that it would be advantageous for him to find out what the spirit of the soldiers was. After night fall, therefore, he wrapped himself in the skin of a wild beast, by way of disguise, wandered about the camp and stood outside the tents listening to the conversations going on in them. Tacitus relates with great gusto the praises of himself that he over heard.

In the morning Germanicus delivered an eloquent speech to his men and lead them into a battle which proved to be a decisive victory for the Romans. Tacitus says (Annals II,18,1) "Quinta ab hora diei ad noctem caesi hostes decem milia passuum cadaveribus atque armis opplevere."

After the battle, the Romans erected on the field a mound ornamented with captured arms, and inscriptions containing the names of the defeated tribes. This filled the Germans with fury and determination to conquer.

They took a position between a river and a forest and awaited the coming of the Romans. In this battle Germanicus shows again his lack of real leadership and his tendency to be theatrical. He fought at the head of his

men with his helmet removed, in order, Tacitus says (Annals II,21,4) that he might be more easily known. Apparently it did not occur to him that he would be recognized as easily by the Germans as by his own men, and that a live leader would be far more valuable than a dead one. Of course his courage must be honored, though his judgment cannot be. Of the result of the battle, Tacitus says,"Legiones ad noctem cruore hostium satiatae sunt. Equites ambigue certavere." Evidently the Romans were not completely victorious.

This was the last important battle before the time of year forced Germanicus to return to winter quarters. The larger part of the army, led by Germanicus himself, was proceeding thither by water when a great storm overtook them, and many of the ships were wrecked. Germanicus' galley was driven on shore where he was obliged to remain for several days. In this crisis he showed that he had good intentions, but little common sense and a tendency to become theatrical in a crisis. He spent his time in lamentations concerning the disaster, and attempts to commit suicide. He did not yet understand that a live leader is considerably more useful than a dead one, even though the dead one has committed suicide from the best of motives. Finally the storm subsided, and what was left of the fleet reached its destination.

When the Germans learned of this disaster they hoped for a successful renewal of the war. Reports of this feeling reached Germanicus, and he resolved to attack immediately. The army in two divisions, one led by Caius Silius and one by Germanicus himself, advanced into Germany. Tacitus gives no details of these expeditions, but he makes it plain that they were successful, by quoting words of the German prisoners, (Annals II,25,5) "Quippe invictos et nullis casibus superabiles Romanos praedicabant qui perdita classe amissis armis post constrata equorum virorumque corporibus litora eadem virtute, pari ferocia et velut aucti numero irrupissent."

When the army was led back into winter quarters, they were so delighted with their victory that they forgot all about the misfortunes at sea, particularly as Germanicus restored to the men everything they claimed to have lost in the shipwreck.

IV. Germanicus in the East

Soon after he was established in winter quarters Germanicus was recalled to Rome by Tiberius. He asked for one more year to complete the conquest of the Germans, but was refused graciously and tactfully, and at the same time decidedly.

The next June the triumph, which had been voted to him two years before was celebrated with great magnificence. Tiberius distributed largess to the people in the name of Germanicus, and named him his colleague in the consulship.

At this time there were disturbances in several of the eastern provinces of the empire. At the request of Tiberius the senate gave Germanicus power superior to that of the governors of the provinces, and sent him thither to adjust matters. At the same time he removed Creticus Silanus, whose daughter was betrothed to Germanicus' son, from the governorship of Syria, and put Cnaeus Piso in his place.

Tacitus ascribes evil motives to Tiberius, both for recalling Germanicus from Germany and for sending him to the East, and posterity has to some extent, at least, followed his lead. It is my personal belief that from the stand-point of advantage to the state, Tiberius was justified in both moves, and that there is absolutely no evidence that he had any feeling of hostility to Germanicus.

Let us consider first the matter of his recall from Germany. This is what Tacitus says in reference to it.(Annals II,26,3,4,5,6) "Sed crebris epistulis Tiberius monebat rediret ad decretum triumphum: Satis iam eventuum, satis casuum. Prospera illi et magna proelia: eorum quoque ~~quae~~ dinisset quae venti et fluctus, nulla ducis culpa, gravia tamen et saeva damna intulissent, se novens a divo Augusto in Germaniam missum plura consilio quam vi perfecisse. Sic Sugumbros in deditionem acceptos, sic Suebos regemque Maroboduum pace obstrictum. Posse et Cheruscos ceterasque rebellium gentes quoniam Romanae ultioni consultum esset, internis discordiis relinqui. Precante Germanico annum efficiendis coeptis, acrius modestiam eius aggreditur, alterum consulatum offerendo, cuius munia praesens obiret. Simul adnectebat, si foret adhuc bellandum relinqueret materiem Drusi fratris gloriae qui nullo tum alio hoste non nisi apud Germanias adsequi nomen imperatorium et deportare lauream posset. Haud cunctatus est ultra Germanicus quamquam fingi ea aequo per invidiam parto iam decori abstrahi intellegeret."

Possible there was some hypocrisy in these letters of Tiberius', but if there was, it looks to me like kindly hypocrisy. Tiberius might, with a very good reasom, have ordered Germanicus home because he had been far from successful in his campaigns, instead of mentioning his hdavy losses incidentally. The only result of two campaigns, or three, if the expedition after the quelling of the mutinies is considered a campaign, which ~~was~~ were very costly both in men and in equipment, was the slaughter of many Germans and the devastation of much German territory. Tacitus admits himself that Germanicus did not gain a decisive victory, for he says (Annals II,26,2)"Nec dubium habebatur, labare hostes petendaeque pacis consilia sumere, et si proxima aestas adiceretur, posse bellum patrari." The fact that Dio(57,18) makes only very brief and casual mention of these campaigns is further evidence

of their lack of importance. Suetonius seems to contradict Dio and Tacitus somewhat, for he says(Lives of the Caesars III,52,2)"Germanico usque adeo obtrectavit ut ea praeclara facta eius pro supervacuis elevarit et gloriosissimas victorias ceu damnosas rei publicae increparet." He gives no facts in support of this assertion, however.

I have tried to prove that Tiberius was justified in recalling Germanicus, and that therefore his motive was not ill-feeling toward him. Let us now turn to the positive side of the subject and notice the kindliness in Tiberius' letters. In the first place he did not order Germanicus' return; he politely requested it, at the same time stating, that when he arrived he would receive the consulship and the honors of a triumph. To be sure he referred to the heavy losses of the campaigns, but only after he had mentioned the successful battles, and he attributed the losses to misfortunes. He ended with the half jesting but wholly gracious and kindly request to Germanicus, that he would leave Drusus, his adopted brother to whom he was devoted, some chance to gain glory in Germany. If Tiberius had any other feeling for Germanicus besides fatherly affection, I can see no evidence of it in the fact of his recall or in the manner in which it was done.

It seems just as impossible to blame Tiberius concerning Germanicus' mission to the East as to censure him concerning Germanicus recall from Germany.

Tacitus quotes Tiberius' words to the senate in reference to Germanicus' appointment. "Nec posse motum Orientem nisi Germanici sapientia componi; nam suam aetatem vergere, Drusum nondum satis adolevisse." (Annals II,43,1) Since Tacitus probably had access to the records of the senate, his report of this speech is no doubt reasonably accurate. Certainly it is a perfectly sensible statement. As the disturbance in the East involved disputed successions, some one having the prestige of a member of the imperial family was needed to settle them. Germanicus was the logical one to send, both because

of his age and his ability to gain friends. On such a mission as his was, an engaging personality is a most valuable asset.

At the same time Tiberius was perfectly aware of the lack of initiative and mental energy that went along with Germanicus' amiability and, of course, of his youth and inexperience. He, therefore, appointed as governor of Syria Gnaeus Piso, a man older and more experienced, and possessing all the driving force Germanicus lacked, but without his likeableness. This looked like a good combination, since one man's qualities supplemented the other's. It proved, however, a disastrous mistake.

In the first place, Piso superseded a man whose son was betrothed to Germanicus' daughter. This fact furnished an additional subject for criticism for those who claimed that Tiberius had a grudge against not only Germanicus but his whole family. Piso though much older and more experienced than Germanicus was subordinate to him, and since he was a proud and violent person with a great thirst for power he was not content to be under the authority of the younger man. Finally Piso had a wife, Plancina, who outdid her husband in ambition and besides was entirely unable to get along with Agrippina.

Tiberius' idea of sending some more experienced, forceful man to Syria to act as aid and adviser to Germanicus was a good one, but he made a mistake in choosing his man for the purpose .

Tacitus speaks in two different places of Tiberius' motive in sending Germanicus to the East. In the Annals II,5,1 he says "Ceterum Tiberio haud ingratum accidit turbari res Orientis, ut ea specie Germanicum suetis legionibus abstraheret novisque provinciis impositum dolo simul et casibus obiectaret." In another place (Annals II,42,1) he says "Amoliri iuvenem specie honoris statuit struxitque causas aut forte oblatas arripuit." It is evident that Tacitus means that Tiberius sent Germanicus into the East because he feared him on account of the power he had gained from the devotion of his

legions in Germany and wanted an opportunity to get rid of him. Tacitus gives no authority for these statements of ideas which any monarch with an average amount of common sense would have kept to himself.

Possible Tiberius feared somewhat the power that the command of eight devoted legions gave to Germanicus, but he must have had some faith in his adopted son's loyalty to him for when he sent him to the East he gave him more authority than any Roman with the single exception of Pompey had ever had before. If his object was to get rid of him he certainly took a clumsy way to go about it.. It would have been much easier and much less liable to discovery, to have him poisoned in Rome than in Antioch.

The chief problem to be considered in studying Germanicus' stay in the East, is that of his relations with Piso, and the bearing that they have on the question as to the cause of his death. Some further evidence as to Tiberius' attitude toward him can be gathered from the account of his Egyptian travels.

The story of Germanicus' journey to the East is more like the account of a trip taken by a gentleman of leisure, who had literary tastes, than that of a man on an urgent political mission. He visited all the historic spots on his way and some that were off his direct route. He stopped at Athens, where he won the affection of the Athenians because he showed his homage for their ancient city by going about with only one lictor though he was entitled to have twelve.

On the other hand, Piso's main concern seems to have been to reach Syria as soon as possible. He stopped in Athens long enough to make a speech to the citizens in which he censured Germanicus severely. By taking the shortest possible course through the Cyclades he overtook Germanicus at Rhodes, where, when his galley was driven on the rocks by a sudden storm,

his life was saved by Germanicus ' sending a boat to his rescue. Tacitus makes the statement, that this action of Germanicus was a particularly noble one, because he had already recognized Piso as his enemy. He gives no facts to support the assertion, however.

Piso hurried on to Syria and reached it ahead of Germanicus. He made use of the time before the arrival of his superior by relaxing discipline, among the legions. He even removed tribunes and centurions who were noted for the strictness of their discipline, and replaced them by dependents of his own. Plancina did her part too, by mingling with the legions and throwing out insults to Germanicus and Agrippina.

Though Germanicus knew of Piso's efforts to undermine his authority, he hastened on to Armenia where he settled the question of the succession to the throne. He then reduced Cappadocia to a province.

He ordered Piso either to send part of his legions into Armenia under command of his son, or to lead them thither himself, but Piso failed to obey. After this refusal, Germanicus met Piso at Cyrrhus but the interview resulted in nothing but enmity between them.

The next summer Germanicus spent in Egypt. He pretended that he was there to look after the affairs of the province, and to prove it he opened the granaries and reduced the price of grain. He was really a tourist, however, and traveled about the country to see its various wonders. He made himself rather ridiculous by going about in Greek dress in imitation of Publius Scipio. Tacitus says,(Annals II,59.3) "Tiberius cultu habituque eius lenibus verbis perstricto, accerrime increpuit, quod contra instituta Augusti non sponte principis Alexandriam introisset." Suetonius comment on the same incident is,"Quod vero Alexandriam propter immensam et repentinam famem inconsulto se adisset, questus est in senatu." (Lives of the Caesars,III.52.2). Tiberius could not be blamed for censuring Germanicus severely. In entering Egypt

without permission he had violated one of the most stringent laws of the empire. Ferrero says (A Short History of Rome, The Empire, Page 187) that he was violating a second law" when to remedy a famine in that country, he distributed to the people the contents of the imperial granaries reserved for the use of Italy."

Germanicus returned from Egypt to Antioch to find that all his orders had been set at naught by Piso. Tacitus says :"Hinc graves in Pisonem contuneliae, nec minus acerba quae ab illo in Caesarem intentabantur." (Annals II,69.2) This seems to mean nothing more dignified than a violent quarrel between the two.

After the quarrel, Piso made up his mind to leave Syria, but when he heard that Germanicus was ill, decided to remain.

When good news of Germanicus' condition was made known in Antioch, the inhabitants in their joy flocked to the altars offering sacrifices. When Piso heard of it, he sent his lictors to drive the victims from the altars.

When Germanicus grew worse again, Piso went to Seleucia to await there the outcome of his illness.

In the meantime, Germanicus was slowly dying, his illness increased by his belief that he was being poisoned by Piso and practiced upon by incantations, also through his agency.

He wrote a letter to Piso renouncing his friendship. Tacitus says, (Annals II.70,3.) "addunt plerique iussum provincia decedere." At any rate, Piso departed taking care that his progress should be slow enough so that he would not have far to return in case Germanicus did not recover.

When Germanicus was conscious that he was dying he made, according to Tacitus, a somewhat long and grandiloquent speech to the friends who were gathered around his bed. In this speech he proclaimed his belief that he was dying because of the arts of Piso and Plancina, appealed to them to tell

Tiberius how he had been persecuted and plotted against, and besought them to avenge him. He then turned to Agrippina, Tacitus reports his words to her thus: (Annals II,72,1,2)"Tum ad uxorem versus per memoriam sui, per communes liberos oravit, exueret ferociam, saevienti fortunae submitteret animum, neu regressa in urbem aemulatione potentiae validiores irritaret. Haec palam et alia secreto, per quae ostendere credebatur metum ex Tiberio." Soon after these speeches, Germanicus died.

V. Events Following Germanicus' Death

Before his body was burned it was exhibited naked in the market place at Antioch. Tacitus, Suetonius and Dio comment differently on the evidences as to whether he was poisoned. Tacitus says, (Annals II,73.5.6) " Praetuleritne veneficii signa parum constitit: nam ut quis misericordia in Germanicum et praesumpta suspicione aut favore in Pisonem pronior, diversi interpretabantur." Suetonius says,(Lives of the Caesars,IV,1.2)"Diuturno morbo Antiochiae obiit, non sine veneni suspicione. Nam praeter livores, qui toto corpore erant, et spumas, quae per os fluebant, cremati quoque cor inter ossa incorruptum repertum est, cuius ea natura existimatur ut tinctum veneno igni confici nequeat." Dio states explicitly that his death was caused by the plots of Piso and Plancina. Of course, as scientific evidence these statements amount to absolutely nothing. They merely go to show somewhat, the feeling of his own time concerning the cause of his death.

After Germanicus was dead and Piso had left the province, there was a violent debate among the senators there as to who should become the governor in Piso's place. They finally appointed Cneius Sentius, though the whole proceeding was extremely irregular, and the appointment probably not valid.

When the news of Germanicus' death reached Piso and Plancina, they immediately manifested great joy. They offered sacrifices to the gods, and Plancina put off the mourning she had been wearing for her sister.

Piso was somewhat doubtful whether to return to Syria or to go to Rome and clear himself of the charge of murder, that he knew was in the air. He finally decided upon the former course. After sending a letter to Tiberius in which he accused Germanicus of banishing him from the province, because of his own plots against the state, Piso returned to Syria. He collected an army by more or less questionable means, and civil war with the forces of Sentius followed. After Sentius had defeated him thoroughly, Piso asked permission to remain in Syria until the emperor could be consulted in regard to his case. Although Sentius did not accede to his request, he gave him safe conduct to Roma.

Piso's whole conduct in the East, especially his relations with Germanicus and his insolent rejoicing after his death, makes the charge that he murdered Germanicus, whether at the instigation of Tiberius, or on his own initiative, a most improbable one.

Even before his arrival in Syria, Piso showed that his aim was to set aside Germanicus and gain the entire control of Syria. If he had been sufficiently deep in the secret counsels of Tiberius to be employed to murder his adopted son, the rather crude and clumsy methods that he used to gain power would have been unnecessary. In particular, he would have acted very differently after the death of Germanicus. Instead of making an attempt to get back his governorship of Syria, by what amounted to civil war, he would have waited quietly and unobtrusively for a reward from his master.

It is equally improbable that Piso murdered Germanicus on his own initiative. If Germanicus was murdered at all, it was by some sort of slow poison, and, therefore, by deliberate plan. Even before his arrival in Syria, Piso showed open hostility to Germanicus. This hostility became more manifest

and bitter till Germanicus' death. If Piso had planned to murder Germanicus, he certainly would not have called attention to his ill feeling for him by open disobedience, and violent quarrels,

When the news of the illness of Germanicus was spread among the Roman populace there was an outburst of wild grief, and wilder accusations of the unpopular emperor, and his even more unpopular mother. The people maintained that Tiberius and Livia had sent Germanicus into the East with the definite purpose that he should be murdered by Piso and Plancina.

At the announcement of his death, without waiting for a formal decree of mourning by the senate, the people deserted the courts, and closed their shops and their houses. All over the city, groans and wails were heard.

The contradiction of the report that Germanicus was dead, by some merchants who had left Syria while he was still living, produced violent demonstrations of joy. Tiberius realizing that the people would inevitably find out the truth, paid no attention either to the report or the demonstrations of joy.

The senators showed their grief by voting many extravagant honors to be paid to the memory of Germanicus. When one of them proposed that the medallion bust of Germanicus placed among those of other dead orators should be of gold and larger than the others, Tiberius considered that it was time some restraint should be put upon their enthusiasm. Tacitus says(Annals II 83.4),"asseveravit Tiberius solitum paremque ceteris dicaturum: neque enim eloquentian fortuna discerni et satis illustre si veteres inter scriptores haberetur."

In the meantime, Agrippina, undisciplined in her grief, as she was in every other emotion, had embarked for Italy with the ashes of her husband. In spite of the hardships of a winter voyage, she did not once interrupt her journey till she reached Corcyra. She rested there for several days and then proceeded to Brundisium where she was met by a great multitude, all of whom displayed the outward signs of passionate grief.

Tiberius had sent two practorian cohorts to meet her and had directed the magistrates of the towns, through which she passed, to show her suitable honors. Germanicus' ashes were carried to Rome by tribunes and centurions. The towns through which she passed showed their sorrow by funeral solemnities, the elaborateness of which differed according to the wealth of each. In every town there was wailing and grief.

When the funeral train entered Rome it was met by the consuls, the senate and a multitude of the populace. Tacitus describes them(Annals III, 2.5) as "disiecti et ut cuique libitum flentes." Neither on that day nor when Germanicus' ashes were placed in the tomb of Augustus, did Tiberius, Livia or Germanicus' mother, Antonia, appear in public.

On the day that Germanicus' ashes were placed in the tomb of Augustus, the people were even more unrestrained than they had been, in the expression of their grief. Tacitus gives a graphic picture of the confused conditions in the city. (Annals III, 4,1,2) "Dies quo reliquiae tumulo Augusti inferebantur, modo per silentium vastus, modo ploratibus inquies; plena urbis itinera, collucentes per campum Martis faces' Illic miles cum armis, sine insignibus magistratus, populus per tribus concidisse rem publicam, nihil spei reliquum clamitabant, promptius apertiusque quam ut meminisse imperitantium crederes."

It was now several months since the death of Germanicus, and Tiberius realized that the poeple must return to sane and normal living. He, therefore, published an edict in which he reminded them that a great people should be dignified in their grief, and commanded them to return to their customary duties and amusements.

From the time that the news of Germanicus' illness reached Rome until Tiberius issued his edict bidding the people return to their normal pursuits, with the exception of his failure to show himself to the people while funeral honors were being paid to Germanicus, Tiberius' conduct was marked by sanity and

steady good sense. He restrained the sentimental grief of the people, and at the same time paid suitable tribute to the memory of his adopted son.

The one inevitable comment on his failure to be present at the funeral of Germanicus, and to insist that his mother and sister-in-law should also be there is, that it was extremely unwise and displayed lack of ability to enter into the feelings of the people. By it he exposed himself, and in a lesser degree Antonia and Livia also, to much not unreasonable criticism. He was not sufficiently popular for it to be prudent for him to defy public opinion in so cavalier a manner. Tacitus' comment follows,(Annals III,3,1, 2,3),"Tiberius atque Augusta publico abstinuere inferius maiestate sua rati, si palam lamentarentur, an ne omnium oculis vultum eorum scrutantibus falsi intellegerentur. Matrem Antoniam non apud auctores rerum, non diurna actorum scriptura reperio ullo insigni officio functam, cum super Agrippinam et Drusum et Claudium ceteri quoque consanguinei nominatim perscripti sint, seu valetudine praepediebatur, seu victus luctu animus magnitudinem mali perferre visu non toleravit. Facilius crediderim Tiberio et Augusta, qui domo non excedebant, cohibitam, ut par maeror et matris exemplo avia quoque et patruus attineri viderentur."

There is another explanation for the absence of Tiberius, which is, at least, as plausible as the one Tacitus gives. Tiberius was extremely reserved and extremely shy. It seems to me perfectly possible that he shrunk from displaying his grief, even to a most sympathetic populace.

Except for the inferences that may be drawn from Tiberius' absence from Germanicus' funeral, there is nothing in the accounts of any of the ancient writers to show conclusively whether he grieved deeply for Germanicus or not. That he restrained the people in their sentimental expressions of grief proves nothing at all. Then he was the ruler not the man.

Although the ceremonies in connection with the funeral of Germanicus were over and the people had been ordered by Tiberius to resume normal living, their minds turned to demands for vengeance upon Piso, whom they persisted in considering the murderer of Germanicus.

Piso and Plancina were traveling slowly toward Rome. Piso, who evidently realized from the beginning that the cards were stacked against him, stopped in Illyricum to try to win Drusus to his side. Drusus, however, was polite but non-committal. While his father stopped in Illyricum, Piso's son went on to Rome where he was to try to get the favor of Tiberius for his father. Tiberius as well as Drusus was non-committal, for he simply received the young man with the courtesies that he was accustomed to bestow upon young noblemen.

The last stage of Piso's and Plancina's journey to Rome was the sail down the Tiber. They angered the populace by landing at the tomb of the Caesars. Then they increased their wrath because, looking very cheerful and attended by a numerous suite, they walked in broad daylight through the multitude on the river bank. They heightened the feeling against them still further by having their house near the forum gaily decorated and holding a feast in it that night.

VI. Trial of Piso for Murder of Germanicus

The next day charges were brought against Piso by Fulcinius Trio. His right to do so was questioned by Vitellius, Veranius and others who claimed that they had been with Germanicus and were carrying out his last instructions. They settled the matter by having Trio bring charges against Piso for his manner of life preceeding the death of Germanicus, and the others make the definite murder charge.

The accusers requested Tiberius to take the trial into his own hands, and the accused did not oppose his doing so. He very wisely turned the case over to the senate after he, with a few friends, had heard both sides present their arguments.

The strength of public sentiment against Piso is shown by the fact that before he obtained advocates for the coming trial, five men refused his request that they should act in that capacity.

Tiberius opened the trial by an eminently fair and moderate speech, "meditato temperamento". In it he made a clear cut distinction between his personal feelings as the adopted father of Germanicus, and his duty as emperor to see to it that Piso should receive strict justice.

Then the trial begun. Piso was accused, first of extortion in Spain, second, of corrupting discipline among the legions in Syria on account of hostility to Germanicus and desire for a revolution, and third, of killing Germanicus by poison and incantations. To describe the exact way in which he did the poisoning, the accusers brought into court an absurd tale. They claimed that at a feast given by Germanicus in his own house, Piso had himself poisoned some food that Germanicus took. The final charge was that Piso had borne arms against the state.

In regard to everything but the poisoning the defense was weak, for there is small reason to doubt that the other charges had a solid foundation of fact. As far as the poisoning was concerned the defense showed the absurdity of the story, offered the slaves of the defendant to be tortured and requested that Germanicus' slaves, who had served at the banquet at which the poison was alleged to have taken place should be tortured also.

At this point most unfortunately there is a gap in the manuscript of Tacitus. From one or two words that remain it is inferred that the omitted portion refers to a change in the manner of conducting the trial, possibly an adjournment, and the bringing forward of some new evidence.

The first complete sentence after the gap, tells of demonstrations against Piso made by the populace, outside the Senate House, which were so violent that it was necessary to send Piso home in a litter under escort of a tribune of the praetorian guard.

In the meantime Plancina was doing her best to look out for herself. At first she professed to be loyally willing to share her husband's fate, whatever it might be, but when she felt sure that she had secured her own safety through Livia, he discovered that she had decided to make a separate defence.

Plancina's desertion so discouraged Piso that it was only through the advice of his sons that he came back to face his trial another day. Then he saw still clearer indications that things were going against him. Tacitus says(Annals III,15,4),"Nullo magis exterritus est quam quod Tiberium sine miseratione, sine ira obstinatum clausumque vidit,"

That evening Piso, after writing something which he sealed and gave to his freedman, had his bath and dinner in the usual way. Late that night after Plancina had left his bed chamber, he ordered the door to be shut. In the morning he was found dead, stabbed through the throat. A sword lay on the floor beside him.

At this point in his account Tacitus puts in a story which he frankly confesses is court gossip. I give it in his own words. (Annals III. 16,1) "Audire me memini ex senioribus visum saepius inter manus Pisonis libellum, quem ipse non vulgaverit; sed amicos eius dictitavisse, litteras Tiberii et mandata in Germanicum contineri, ac destinatum promere apud patres principemque arguere, ni elusus a Seiano per vana promissa foret; nec illum sponte exstinctum, verum immisso percussore."

In the senate Tiberius made careful inquiries concerning Piso's last hours, and then read aloud the note which Piso wrote the evening before his death. In it Piso declared his innocence, and begged pathetically that his sons might not suffer because of him. He did not mention Plancina at all.

The senate after two days of argument pronounced sentence. Piso's name was to be stricken from the records, part of his property was to be confiscated, and the son who was involved with him in Syria banished and partly disinherited. Plancina was pardoned at the request of Livia. Tiberius practically annulled this sentence, for he allowed Piso's name to stand on the records, and permitted no penalty to be inflicted on young Piso. He also vetoed proposals made in the senate to erect a golden statue in the temple of Mars the Avenger, and an altar dedicated to Revenge.

Three questions arise in connection with the trial of Piso. Was any evidence brought out by it, or by the events connected with it, that Tiberius was implicated with Piso in the murder of Germanicus? Was any evidence brought out that Piso murdered Germanicus ? In answering these two questions it is necessary to bear in mind that we have not the complete account of the trial. What attitude did Tiberius show from the time formal charges were made against Piso ?

Let us consider the first question first. Tacitus evidently believed most firmly that Tiberius was implicated. He shows his belief by repetitions of the statement that the people believed Tiberius guilty and by subtle innuendo.

The story that Piso had letters containing instructions from Tiberius against Germanicus which Sejanus prevented him from producing as evidence, Tacitus admits is gossip. It is besides, most <u>improbable</u> gossip. In the first place what reason could Tiberius have had for writing such letters? He had ample opportunity to give Piso his orders before he left Rome, and to

put such instructions in writing would have been an extremely unsafe performance. The charge that Piso was assassinated, which is another part of the same tale, is another piece of improbable gossip. The only possible reason for having Piso killed would have been the fear that he might produce those incriminating letters. If such had been the case, the murder would have come sooner, for each day that Piso lived would have been an added risk for Tiberius.

Was any evidence brought out at the trial which proved Piso guilty of the murder of Germanicus ? Absolutely none. No sane man would have attempted to poison another by the method his accusers claimed that Piso used.

By some, Piso's suicide has been taken as an admission that he was guilty. But it seems to me that other, far more probable causes for it can be imagined. Piso knew that public opinion was very much against him, and that his condemnation was practically certain. His wife had deserted him to save herself. If he committed suicide there was, at least, a possibility that his sons would get some of his property. Under those conditions to a Roman of the old school, as Piso was, though he was perfectly innocent, to commit suicide was the absolutely logical thing to do.

What was Tiberius attitude throughout the proceedings? He put aside personal feeling and became the absolutely impartial judge. Since he knew the belief of the people that he shared with Piso, guilty knowledge of Germanicus' death, he very wisely refused to take complete responsibility for the trial. Because the senate were much less excited over the matter than the common people, and also because Piso was one of their own class, Tiberius arranged that he should be tried before them rather than in the ordinary court.

Tiberius' noble speech at the opening of the trial showed clearly his desire that absolute justice should prevail. I quote the sentence that seems to me to be the keynote of it.(Annals III,12,8) "Defleo equidem filium meum semperque deflebo: sed neque reum prohibeo quo minus cuncta proferat, quibus

innocentia eius sublevari aut si qua fuit iniquitas Germanici, coargui possit, vosque oro ne quia dolori meo causa conexa est, obiecta crimina pro approbatis accipiatis."

Tiberius' absolute fairness and large mindedness were shown by his refusal to allow Piso's name to be struck off the records, by his merciful treatment of young Marcus Piso, and by his not permitting the erection of statues in honor of avenging gods to commemorate the trial.

VII. Summary of the Attitude and Conduct of Tiberius toward Germanicus

Let me now summarize the conclusions I have drawn from the various phases of Germanicus' career as to Tiberius' conduct and attitude toward him.

Tiberius' whole conduct toward Germanicus, as far as there is record of it, manifested consistent justice which was often tempered by kindness. His first independent act in relation to Germanicus was the conferring of proconsular power upon him shortly after Tiberius came to the throne. The kindness of this act is more apparent than its strict justice. After the mutinies in Germany during which, although he had shown personal loyalty to the emperor, Germanicus had been far from successful in coping with the situation, Tiberius not only praised him in the senate, but conferred upon him the unusual honor of a triumph, while the German war still continued. He gave Germanicus two years as commander in Germany. At the end of them, though Germanicus had again partially, at least, failed as a leader, he recalled him from Germany in a most kindly manner, heaped honors upon him on his return, and then sent him into the East in a most responsible position. Sending Piso with him was a mistake in choosing the man, nothing worse. It looked as if the presence of Piso, who was a much older man and more experienced, would be a great advantage to Germanicus. Tiberius was fully justified in rebuking Germanicus sternly for his trip into Egypt, for the young man broke one of the

strictest laws of the empire, with no valid excuse. Tiberius has been severely blamed for not appearing at the funeral rites of Germanicus. The explanation that it was due to shy shrinking from exposing his grief to the public eye, and to his failure to realize the wrong interpretation that the people would put on it is, at least, as plausible as the one discreditable to him, which Tacitus gives. After Germanicus' death, Tiberius conducted the trial of his supposed murderer with absolute impartiality.

One of the best ways to judge of a man's attitude is by his conduct. If this test is applied to Tiberius' attitude toward Germanicus it indicates that he certainly had no antagonism toward him, and probably in spite of Tacitus' many innuendos, did have considerable affection. The only verbal expression of affection for Germanicus of which we have record is his noble and touching speech at Piso's trial in which he says:"Defleo equidem filium meum semperque deflebo." (Annals III,12,8)

Because Augustus sent Germanicus into Pannonia as a check upon Tiberius, and because he compelled Tiberius to adopt him, thus superseding his own son Drusus, it would have been perfectly natural for Tiberius to have felt somewhat antagonistic toward Germanicus, and to have regarded him as a good deal of an interloper. Germanicus had a tremendous personal following among people of all classes. Tiberius because of innate shyness and reserve was absolutely unable to gain such popularity, though he desired it intensely. Under such conditions jealousy of Germanicus would have been only human. If Tiberius had such feelings, he also had such entire control over them, that he did not allow them to influence him in the smallest degree in his relations with Germanicus.

VIII. Attitude and Conduct of Tiberius toward Germanicus' Family after his Death

It is impossible to come to any very satisfactory conclusion in regard

to Tiberius' relation with Agrippina and her children after the death of Germanicus, because of lack of data. The part of Tacitus' Annals which must have contained the account of the final accusations of Agrippina and her sons, Nero and Drusus, the exile of Agrippina, the exile and death of Nero, and the imprisonment of Drusus, has most unfortunately been lost. In the part of the Annals, which we have, the references to the alleged plots of Agrippina and her elder sons, are exceedingly vague. Suetonius' account of the history of the family is bare of detail, Velleius Paterculus is totally silent on the subject, and Dio nearly so.

Tacitus' first mention of Agrippina after Germanicus' death is in connection with the death of Tiberius' son Drusus, which occurred four years after Germanicus'. The death of Drusus had aroused the hopes of the people that some member of Germanicus' family might be made Tiberius' heir. Unfortunately Agrippina, with her accustomed lack of self control, showed her hopes in that regard so plainly that she attracted the attention of Sejanus. He had no mind that anybody but himself should be Tiberius' heir. He, therefore, took crafty measures to arouse the suspicions of Tiberius and Livia, that Agrippina had designs of making herself empress.

After this we hear no more of her for three years. Then Tacitus tells three stories, two of which are also told by Suetonius, which show both Agrippina's violent disposition, and lack of common sense, and the attitude of half amused tolerance that Tiberius had toward her.

A certain Claudia Pulchra, Agrippina's cousin, was arrested on the charges of adultery and witch craft. Agrippina chose to consider that these charges were simply a pretext for attacking Claudia, because of her friendship for herself. Accordingly she betook herself in high wrath to Tiberius, whom she found offering sacrifices to Augustus, and upbraided him violently because he abused the descendants of the divinity to whom he was sacrificing. Tiberius'

reply to this amazing statement was a Greek verse to the effect that she was not injured because she was not empress. Suetonius says (Lives of the Caesars, III,53,1) that Tiberius never afterward conversed with her, and I for one, do not blame him. Incidentally Claudia was condemned.

Not long after this Agrippina had a fit of illness. While Tiberius was paying her a visit, she suddenly burst into tears and implored him earnestly to find her a second husband. It is possible that the real motive for this request was a political one, and that Tiberius realized it. If Agrippina was really plotting against Tiberius, a husband to be at least the nominal leader of the plot would have been very useful to her, since women did not play a very active part in the political life of the Rome of that day. Whether or not Tiberius considered that some such idea as this was back of her request, he made no answer to it.

While Agrippina's wrath at this rebuff was still smouldering, Sejanus sent messengers to her to warn her that Tiberius was planning to poison her, and that she should refrain from eating anything at his table. She did not have sense enough to conceal her fears. Instead, she sat grimly silent refusing to taste a mouthful of food. Naturally Tiberius' attention was attracted to her and perceiving what her idea probably was, he took an apple from the dish, which stood in front of him, and passed it to her with his own hand. Even this, Agrippina refused to taste. Instead, she passed it to one of the slaves. Tiberius turned to his mother and remarked, probably with a quiet smile, that it was no wonder that he was severe with a person, who thus accused him of being a poisoner. From this episode, a rumor got abroad that Tiberius was planning to destroy Agrippina. Since Agrippina lived unmolested some five years longer, there is no reason to take this episode as an indication that Tiberius had any such intention.

After this, Agrippina is mentioned only in connection with the alleged plots of her elder sons, Nero and Drusus. I shall now give what account we have of their relations to Tiberius up to the time that they were accused of being implicated with their mother in plots against his throne.

When both boys came of age, special honors were conferred upon them in the senate at the request of Tiberius. After the death of the elder Drusus, Tiberius had the boys brought into the senate house, and in a touching speech lamented that by the death of Drusus they had been a second time left fatherless, and consigned them to the care of the senators.

The next year when the priests offered their customary prayers for the prosperity of the emperor, they included the names of Nero and Drusus in their petitions. This seemed to rouse the jealousy and suspicion of Tiberius, for he reprimanded the priests severely, asking them whether this flattery of Drusus and Nero was due to the threats or the entreaties of Agrippina. On the other hand, he made a speech in the senate in reference to the same thing in which he said, according to Tacitus,(Annals IV,17.3) "Ne quis mobiles adulescentium animos praematuris honoribus ad superbiam extolleret." This sounds much more like sound common sense than either jealousy or suspicion.

From this time on, Tiberius became increasingly suspicious of both young men. How much of this suspicion was due to the machinations of Sejanus, it is impossible to determine.

Two years after this, Sejanus took advantage of having saved Tiberius' life, at the risk of his own, to plant still more seeds of suspicion in his mind. Sejanus also endeavored to set the brothers at odds with each other by arousing their jealousy. Tacitus does not make it clear whether there actually were plots in which the young men and their mother were implicated. He seems to be interested simply in depicting the evil influence which Sejanus had over Tiberius.

In two years more Tiberius withdrew to Capri. This was also two years after the dinner at which Agrippina had refused to taste the apple. In connection with Tiberius' withdrawal, Tacitus mentions for the first time that Agrippina along with her sons was accused by Sejanus of complicity in these plots. He says,(Annals IV 67,5,6)"Manebat quippe suspicionum et credendi temeritas, quam Seianus augere etiam in urbe suetus acriùs turbabat, non iam occultis adversum Agrippinam et Neronem insidiis. Quis additus miles nuntios introitus, aperta secreta velut in annales referebat, ultroque struebantur qui monerent perfugere ad Germaniae exercitus vel celeberrimo fori effigiem divi Augusti amplecti populumque ac senatum auxilio vocare. Haque spreta ab illis velut pararent, obiciebantur."

After the death of Livia, the affairs of Agrippina and Nero came to a crisis. Tiberius despatched letters to the senate in which he accused Nero of immorality, and Agrippina of haughtiness and a stubborn spirit, but did not make clear the penalty which he desired to be inflicted on them. The senate were greatly perplexed as to what action Tiberius desired to have them take. While they were discussing the question a mob gathered outside the senate house, carrying images of Nero and Agrippina, and making such violent demonstrations in their favor, that the senate dared take no drastic action that day. Anonymous attacks on Sejanus were circulated, and he retaliated by complaining of the senate and the people to Tiberius. Tiberius finally gave orders that it should be left to him to deal with his daughter-in-law and grandson.

At this point the break in the narrative of the Annals occurs.

From Suetonius we get the information that Agrippina was exiled to the Island of Pandateria, and Nero to the Island of Pontia, that Drusus was imprisoned in a lower room of the imperial palace. Of the death of Nero, Suetonius says,(Lives of the Caesars,III,54,2)"Putant Neronem ad voluntariam

mortem coactum cum ei carnifex quasi ex senatus auctoritate missus laqueos et uncos ostentaret."

The accounts given by Tacitus and Suetonius of the deaths of Agrippina and Drusus are the same in essentials.

Both Tacitus and Suetonius relate that Drusus was starved to death, and so tortured by hunger that he ate the stuffing of his couch. Tacitus adds the lurid story, that a minute account of Drusus' life in prison and the cruelties practiced upon him by his keepers was read aloud to the senate after his death, at Tiberius' order and in his presence.

Suetonius says that Agrippina committed suicide by starving herself to death after having been kept alive for a time by forcible feeding. Tacitus says,(Annals VI,25.1)"Voluntate exstinctam nisi si negatis alimentis assimulatus est finis qui videretur sponte sumptus." They both agree that Tiberius heaped base slanders upon her memory, and that he took a great credit to himself for not having had her strangled, and her body thrown out on to the Gemonian stairs.

It is a relief now to turn to a discussion of Tiberius' treatment of Germanicus' daughters, and of his youngest son, Caligula.

When each of the three daughters came to the proper age, Tiberius saw to it personally that they were betrothed to suitable young men. It is pleasant to notice that even the first one of these betrothals took place after Tiberius had become suspicious of Nero and Agrippina.

Tiberius was also uniformly kind to Caligula, whom he summoned to Capri shortly after his retirement thither. He made him his heir, though he seems to have had some doubts of his complete worthiness for the position, and kept him at Capri till his death.

From even the meagher information we have concerning Tiberius' relations with Germanicus' family after his death, it is pretty clear that he had no animosity against Germanicus' family as a whole, because they were his family. In the first place he made Caligula his heir. Then he exercised a fatherly care over the marriage of Germanicus' three daughters.

There is much that is puzzling about the later relations of Tiberius with Nero, Drusus and Agrippina. His seeing to it that special honors were conferred upon both Drusus and Nero by the senate at their coming of age, and his appeal to the senate in their behalf after the death of the older Drusus, show that up to that time he had a fatherly affection for the young men. His treatment of Agrippina in connection with her appeal for Claudia Pulchra, her request for a second husband, and her refusal to eat at his table, shows that up to that time he did not even take her very seriously. What the cause of the change was, will probably never be known. His ordering the story of Drusus' sufferings in prison to be read before the senate in his presence, and his senseless insults of Agrippina's memory, seem to me to point to the possibility, at least, that his mind had become deranged from morbid brooding.

IX. Conclusion

The more I study the attitude and conduct of Tiberius toward Germanicus and his family, the more thoroughly I am convinced that on the whole, Tiberius was fair to them in deeds, words, and even in thoughts.

SUMMARY

Material, for a study of the attitude and conduct of Tiberius toward Germanicus and his family, is found in the works of the four ancient authors, Suetonius, Dio, Velleius Paterculus and Tacitus. Tacitus' Annals is the most important source.

Tiberius and Germanicus served together in the Roman army in Pannonia, before Tiberius was emperor.

When Tiberius came to the throne, Germanicus was in command of the Roman army in Germany. After the news of Augustus' death and Tiberius' accession to the throne reached them , there were mutinies among the legions in Germany. Germanicus succeeded in quelling them, though he displayed poor qualities of leadership in the process. Tiberius,nevertheless, praised him in the senate, and caused a triumph to be granted him although the war ~~was~~ still continued.

Germanicus spent the next two years in command of the army in Germany. He was only moderately successful in his campaigns.

At the end of the two years Tiberius recalled him, and sent him to the East with extraordinary powers to settle disturbances in the Roman provinces there. At the same time he sent out Piso as governor of Syria. Germanicus and Piso were absolutely unable to work together. Germanicus fell ill and died, and Piso was accused of having poisoned him.

Piso returned to Rome to stand trial for the murder of Germanicus. No real evidence of his guilt was brought out at the trial. Piso committed suicide before the end of the trial. This was probably not an admission of guilt.

Tiberius' conduct toward Germanicus was always just, and usually kind. His attitude, as far as can be judged from his conduct, was also just and kind. He may have been jealous of Germanicus' popularity, but his conduct gave no indication of it.

After Germanicus' death, Tiberius was at first kind to his wife Agrippina, and to his two elder sons, Nero and Drusus, but for some reason that the authorities do not make clear, he became suspicious that they were plotting against him; exiled Nero and Agrippina, and imprisoned Drusus, and finally caused the death of all three.

He personally arranged marriages for Germanicus' three daughters. He was uniformly kind to his youngest son, Caligula, and made him his heir.

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