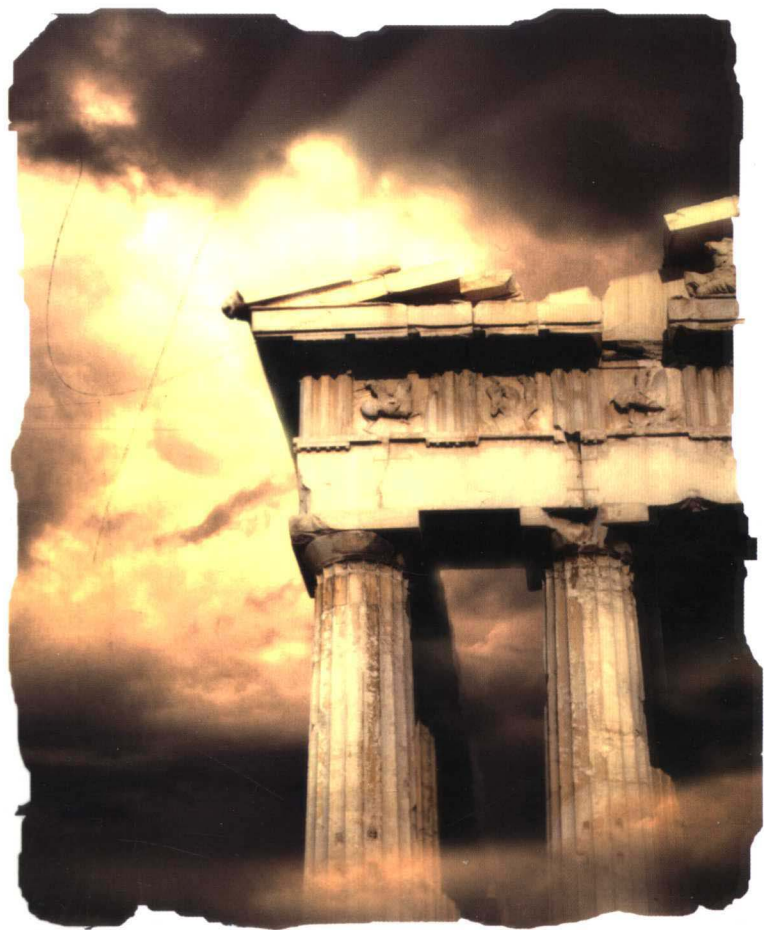


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*The Decline and Fall of the
Roman Empire*

罗马帝国衰亡史



W 上海外语教育出版社
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The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire

罗马帝国衰亡史

原著 Edward Gibbon

选注 郭飞 赵大昌

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二〇〇〇年一月

CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1	1
CHAPTER 2	45
CHAPTER 3	91
CHAPTER 4	125
CHAPTER 5	153
CHAPTER 6	184

Chapter 1

The Extent and Military Force of the Empire in the Age of the Antonines

IN THE second century of the Christian era^[1], the Empire of Rome comprehended^[2] the fairest part of the earth, and the most civilised portion of mankind. The frontiers of that extensive monarchy were guarded by ancient renown and disciplined valour. The gentle but powerful influence of laws and manners had gradually cemented the union of the provinces^[3]. Their peaceful inhabitants enjoyed and abused the advantages of wealth and luxury. The image of a free constitution was preserved with decent reverence; the Roman senate^[4] appeared to possess the sovereign authority, and devolved on the emperors all the executive powers of government^[5]. During a happy period (A. D. 98—180) of more than fourscore years, the public administration was conducted by the virtue and abilities of Nerva, Trajan^[6], Hadrian^[7], and

[1] Christian era 基督纪元, 公元。

[2] comprehended *vt.* 包含; 常作“理解”义。

[3] province 此处为古罗马帝国统治的意大利境外的行省。

[4] Roman senate 古罗马的元老院。

[5] devolved on ... of government (元老院) 将政府的一切行政权力移交给皇帝。
devolve on 移交。

[6] Trajan 图拉真(53?—117, 98—117 在位), 曾加强集权统治, 大兴土木, 向东方扩张领土, 直抵波斯湾。

[7] Hadrian 哈德良(76—138, 117—138 在位), 对外采取谨守边境政策, 对内加强集权统治, 数次巡行帝国各地, 在不列颠境内筑“哈德良长城”, 编纂罗马法典, 奖励文艺。

the two Antonines^[1]. It is the design of this, and of the two succeeding chapters^[2], to describe the prosperous condition of their empire; and afterwards, from the death of Marcus Antoninus^[3], to deduce^[4] the most important circumstances of its decline and fall; a revolution which will ever be remembered, and is still felt by the nations of the earth.

The principal conquests of the Romans were achieved under the republic^[5]; and the emperors, for the most part, were satisfied with preserving those dominions which had been acquired by the policy of the senate, the active emulations of the consuls^[6], and the martial enthusiasm of the people. The seven first centuries were filled with a rapid succession of triumphs^[7]; but it was reserved for Augustus^[8] to relinquish the ambitious design of subduing the whole earth, and to introduce a spirit of moderation into the public councils. Inclined to peace by his temper and situation, it was easy for him to discover that Rome, in her present exalted situation, had much less to hope than to fear from the chance of arms;

[1] two Antonines 指 Antoninus Pius 和 Marcus Aurelius Antoninus 两位古罗马皇帝。Antoninus Pius 安东尼·庇护(86—161, 138—161 在位), Hadrian 的义子和继承人。

[2] two succeeding chapters 下面接着两章。

[3] Marcus Aurelius (Antoninus) 马可·奥勒利乌斯(121—180, 161—180 在位) 新斯多葛派哲学的主要代表, 宣扬禁欲主义和宿命论, 对外多年用兵, 对内迫害基督教徒, 著有《自省录》12 篇, 死于军中。

[4] deduce v. 推论。

[5] The principal conquests ... under the republic 罗马人的主要征服地是在共和政体时取得的。republic n. 共和政体; conquest n. 征服; 征服地。

[6] the active emulations of the consuls 执政官们的积极争胜精神。consul n. (罗马帝国时期的) 执政官; 领事。

[7] The seven first ... of triumphs 七支第一流的百人队迅速取得一个接着一个的胜利。century n. 古罗马军团的百人队。

[8] Augustus 奥古斯都(63BC—14AD), 罗马帝国第一代皇帝(27BC—14AD 在位), 恺撒大帝的继承人, 在位时扩充版图, 励精图治, 文治武功俱有建树; 原名屋大维(Octavian), 元老院奉以“奥古斯都”尊号。

and that, in the prosecution^[1] of remote wars, the undertaking became every day more difficult, the event more doubtful, and the possession more precarious, and lest beneficial. The experience of Augustus added weight to these salutary^[2] reflections, and effectually convinced him that, by the prudent vigour of his counsels, it would be easy to secure every concession which the safety or the dignity of Rome might require from the most formidable Barbarians^[3]. Instead of exposing his person and his legions to the arrows of the Parthians^[4], he obtained, by an honourable treaty, the restitution of the standards and prisoners which had been taken in the defeat of Crassus^[5].

His generals, in the early part of his reign, attempted the reduction of Æthiopia and Arabia Felix. They marched near a thousand miles to the south of the tropic; but the heat of the climate soon repelled the invaders, and protected the unwarlike natives of those sequestered regions^[6]. The northern countries of Europe scarcely deserved the expense and labour of conquest. The forests and morasses of Germany were filled with a hardy race^[7] of barbarians, who despised life when it was separated from freedom; and though, on the first attack, they seemed to yield to the weight of the Roman power, they soon, by a signal act of despair, regained their independence, and reminded Augustus of the vicissitude^[8] of

[1] prosecution *n.* 进行。此词一般意为“起诉”。

[2] salutary *a.* 有益的(反思)。

[3] Barbarian *n.* 古代和中世纪未受希腊、罗马文化熏陶的外邦人。

[4] arrows of the Parthians 古代安息骑兵在退却或佯作退却时善于返身射回马箭, 又称 Parthian shot. Parthian *n.* 安息人(Parthia 安息, 亚洲西部古国, 今伊朗东北部。)

[5] he obtained, ... defeat of Crassus (奥古斯都大帝)收回了克拉苏当初战败时丢弃的军旗和战俘。Crassus, Marcus Licinius 克拉苏(115—53BC)古罗马政治家、统帅, 与恺撒、庞培结成“前三头同盟”。出征安息时战败被杀。

[6] sequestered regions 偏僻地区。

[7] hardy race 强悍的民族。

[8] vicissitude *n.* 盛衰, 兴败。

fortune. On the death of that emperor, his testament was publicly read in the senate.^[1] He bequeathed, as a valuable legacy to his successors, the advice of confining the empire within those limits, which Nature seemed to have placed as its permanent bulwarks and boundaries; on the west the Atlantic Ocean; the Rhine and Danube on the north; the Euphrates on the east; and towards the south, the sandy deserts of Arabia and Africa.^[2]

Happily for the repose^[3] of mankind, the moderate system recommended by the wisdom of Augustus, was adopted by the fears and vices of his immediate successors. Engaged in the pursuit of pleasure, or in the exercise of tyranny, the first Cæsars^[4] seldom showed themselves to the armies, or to the provinces; nor were they disposed to^[5] suffer, that those triumphs which *their* indolence^[6] neglected should be usurped^[7] by the conduct and valour of their lieutenants. The military fame of a subject^[8] was considered as an insolent invasion of the Imperial prerogative^[9]; and it became the duty, as well as interest, of every Roman general, to guard the frontiers intrusted to his care, without aspiring to conquests which might have proved no less fatal to himself than to the

[1] On the death ... in the senate. 在奥古斯都皇帝驾崩后,他的遗诏在元老院公开宣读。testament *n.* 遗嘱。

[2] He bequeathed. ... of Arabia and Africa. 他遗赠忠告将帝国限制在那些疆界之内,作为对后世的一笔宝贵遗产,即大自然仿佛已设置了永久性的屏障和边界;西至大西洋;北到莱茵河和多瑙河;东至幼发拉底河;南至阿拉伯和非洲的沙漠。

[3] repose *n.* 平静;休息。此处为“和平”之意。

[4] Cæsar *n.* (现拼作 Caesar, 本书其他注释同) 罗马帝国从奥古斯都至哈德良的帝王及以后王储的称号。caesar 又作“暴君”讲。

[5] be disposed to do sth. 想去做某事。

[6] indolence *n.* 懒散。

[7] usurp *v.* 篡夺。

[8] subject *n.* 臣民;子民。

[9] prerogative *n.* 特权。

vanquished barbarians.〔1〕

The only accession〔2〕 which the Roman empire received, during the first century of the Christian era, was the province of Britain. In this single instance the successors of Cæsar〔3〕 and Augustus were persuaded to follow the example of the former, rather than the precept〔4〕 of the latter. The proximity of its situation to the coast of Gaul〔5〕 seemed to invite their arms; the pleasing, though doubtful intelligence, of a pearl fishery〔6〕, attracted their avarice; and as Britain was viewed in the light of a distinct and insulated world〔7〕, the conquest scarcely formed any exception to the general system of continental measures. After a war of about forty years, undertaken by the most stupid, maintained by the most dissolute〔8〕, and terminated by the most timid of all the emperors, the far greater part of the island submitted to the Roman yoke〔9〕. The various tribes of Britons possessed valour without conduct〔10〕, and the love of freedom without the spirit of union〔11〕. They took up arms with savage fierceness; they laid them down, or turned them

〔1〕 without aspiring ... vanquished barbarians. 不奢望轻举妄动征服别人, 弄不好使自己与被征服的异邦人两败俱伤。

〔2〕 accession *n.* (权力、地位、领土等的)获得; 后常跟介词 to。

〔3〕 Caesar, Julius 恺撒大帝(100—44BC)罗马统帅、政治家, 与庞培、克拉苏结成“前三头同盟”, 后击败庞培, 成为罗马独裁者(49—44BC), 后被共和派贵族刺杀; 订定儒略历法, 著有《高卢战记》等。

〔4〕 precept *n.* 教训。

〔5〕 Gaul *n.* 高卢(古欧洲西部地区, 包括今法国、比利时、卢森堡, 以及荷兰、瑞士、德国和意大利北部的部分地区; 曾为古罗马帝国的一部分); 现常指法国。

〔6〕 pearl fishery 珍珠养殖(采获)术。

〔7〕 as Britain ... insulated world 因为不列颠被看做一个不同的和孤立的世界。
in the light of 按照; 借助; 当作;

〔8〕 dissolute *a.* 荒淫的。

〔9〕 submitted to the Roman yoke 屈服于罗马人的奴役。

〔10〕 valour without conduct 勇猛而无谋略。

〔11〕 love of freedom without the spirit of union 热爱自由而无团结精神。

against each other with wild inconstancy; and while they fought singly, they were successively subdued. Neither the fortitude of Caractacus, nor the despair of Boadicea^[1], nor the fanaticism of the Druids^[2], could avert the slavery of their country, or resist the steady progress of the Imperial generals, who maintained the national glory, when the throne was disgraced by the weakest, or the most vicious of mankind. At the very time when Domitian^[3], confined to his palace, felt the terrors which he inspired; his legions^[4], under the command of the virtuous Agricola^[5], defeated the collected force of the Caledonians^[6] at the foot of the Grampian hills^[7]; and his fleets, venturing to explore an unknown and dangerous navigation, displayed the Roman arms round every part of the island. The conquest of Britain was considered as already achieved; and it was the design of Agricola to complete and ensure his success by the easy reduction of Ireland^[8], for which in his opinion, one legion and a few auxiliaries were sufficient. The western isle^[9] might be improved into a valuable possession, and the Britons^[10] would wear their chains with the less reluctance, if the

[1] Boadicea 包迪西亚(?—62)古不列颠爱西尼人王后,夫死后,领导反罗马人的起义,战败后服毒自尽。

[2] Druid 德鲁伊特,古代凯尔特人中一批有学识的人,担任祭司、教师或占卜者等。

[3] Domitian 图密善(51—96),罗马皇帝(81—96在位),专横暴戾,对外穷兵黩武,对内恐怖统治,导致众叛亲离,终被其妻及廷臣谋杀。

[4] legion n. 古罗马军团(约有3000至6000名步兵,辅以数百名骑兵)。

[5] Agricola, Gnaeus Julius 阿格里科拉(40—93),古罗马将领,77年任罗马执政官,早年曾出征不列颠,后任不列颠总督(77—84)。

[6] Caledonians n. 古代苏格兰人。

[7] Grampian hills 格兰扁山脉(苏格兰北部)。

[8] easy reduction of Ireland 轻而易举地征服爱尔兰。reduction 这一词义是古义。

[9] The western isle “西岛”指 Ireland。

[10] Briton n. 大不列颠人;这里尤指“古代不列颠岛南部的凯尔特人”(又译作“布立吞人”)。

prospect and example of freedom were on every side removed from before their eyes.

But the superior merit of Agricola soon occasioned his removal from the government of Britain^[1]; and for ever disappointed this rational, though extensive scheme of conquest. Before his departure, the prudent general had provided for security as well as for dominion^[2]. He had observed that the island is almost divided into two unequal parts by the opposite gulfs, or, as they are now called, the Friths of Scotland^[3]. Across the narrow interval of about forty miles, he had drawn a line of military stations, which was afterwards fortified^[4] in the reign of Antoninus Pius^[5], by a turf rampart^[6] erected on foundations of stone. This wall of Antoninus, at a small distance beyond the modern cities of Edinburgh^[7] and Glasgow^[8], was fixed as the limit of the Roman province. The native Caledonians preserved in the northern extremity of the island their wild independence, for which they were not less indebted to^[9] their poverty than to their valour. Their incursions were frequently repelled and chastised^[10]; but their country was never subdued. The masters of the fairest and most wealthy climates of the globe turned with contempt from gloomy hills assailed by the winter

[1] But the superior ... government of Britain 但是阿格里科拉的显赫功绩很快招致他被罢免不列颠(总督)官职。occasion *vt.* 引起; 惹起。

[2] dominion *n.* 统治; 领土。

[3] Friths of Scotland 苏格兰河口湾。

[4] fortify *vt.* 设防于; 加固。

[5] in the reign of Antoninus Pius 安东尼·庇护在位期间。

[6] turf rampart 用草皮覆盖的防御土墙。

[7] Edinburgh 爱丁堡(苏格兰首府)。

[8] Glasgow 格拉斯哥(苏格兰中南部港市, 英国造船业中心)。

[9] for which they ... to their valour 该定语从句是个非限制性从句, 用以补充说明, 意为: 他们(指“古苏格兰土著居民”)能保持独立, 既得益于他们的勇敢, 又得益于他们的贫穷。be indebted to ... 受惠于……, 负债于……

[10] be chastised 遭惩罚。

tempest^[1], from lakes concealed in a blue mist, and from cold and lonely heaths, over which the deer of the forest were chased by a troop of naked barbarians.

Such was the state of the Roman frontiers, and such the maxims of Imperial policy^[2], from the death of Augustus to the accession of Trajan. That virtuous and active prince^[3] had received the education of a soldier, and possessed the talents of a general. The peaceful system of his predecessors^[4] was interrupted by scenes of war and conquest; and the legions, after a long interval, beheld^[5] a military emperor at their head. The first exploits^[6] of Trajan were against the Dacians, the most warlike of men, who dwelt beyond the Danube, and who, during the reign of Domitian, had insulted with impunity^[7] the Majesty of Rome^[8]. To the strength and fierceness of barbarians, they added a contempt for life, which was derived from a warm persuasion of the immortality and transmigration of the soul^[9]. Decebalus, the Dacian king, approved himself a rival not unworthy of Trajan^[10]; nor did he despair of his own and the public fortune, till, by the confession of his enemies, he had exhausted every resource both of valor and policy. This memorable war, with a very short suspension of hostilities, lasted five years; and as the emperor could exert, without control, the whole force of the state, it was terminated by an absolute

[1] assailed by the winter tempest 遭冬天暴风雪袭击的(丘陵)。

[2] maxims of Imperial policy 帝国政策的箴言(即奥古斯都固守现有疆域的遗训)。

[3] That virtuous and active prince 那位有大丈夫气概的积极进取的君主(指图拉真)。

[4] predecessor *n.* 先皇;前任。

[5] behold *v.* 看见;看。

[6] first exploits 初建功勋。

[7] with impunity 不受惩罚地;安然无恙地。

[8] the Majesty of Rome 罗马帝国陛下的尊称。

[9] which was derived ... of the soul 来自于对灵魂不灭和灵魂转生说的狂热信仰。transmigration of the soul 灵魂转生说;轮回。

[10] approved himself ... of Trajan 证明自己与图拉真是棋逢对手,不相上下。

submission of the barbarians^[1]. The new province of Dacia, which formed a second exception to the precept of Augustus, was about 1300 miles in circumference^[2]. Its natural boundaries were the Dniester^[3], the Teyss^[4] [Theiss modern form], or Tibiscus, the Lower Danube, and the Euxine Sea^[5]. The vestiges of a military road may still be traced^[6] from the banks of the Danube to the neighborhood of Bender, a place famous in modern history, and the actual frontier of the Turkish and Russian empires^[7].

Trajan was ambitious of fame; and as long as mankind shall continue to bestow^[8] more liberal applause on their destroyers than on their benefactors^[9], the thirst of military glory will ever be the vice of the most exalted characters. The praises of Alexander^[10], transmitted by a succession of poets and historians, had kindled a dangerous emulation in the mind of Trajan. Like him the Roman emperor undertook an expedition against the nations of the east, but he lamented with a sigh, that his advanced age scarcely left him any hopes of equalling the renown of the son of Philip^[11].

[1] it was terminated ... barbarians 以异邦人(指 Dacians)的彻底臣服而告终。

[2] in circumference 周长(约 1300 英里)。

[3] Dniester 德涅斯特河(注入黑海)。

[4] Theiss (古称 Teyss)又称 Tisza,蒂萨河(多瑙河支流)。

[5] Euxine Sea 即“黑海”(= Black Sea)。

[6] The vestiges ... be traced 一条军用大道的遗迹仍依稀可辨。

[7] Turkish empire = Ottoman empire 奥斯曼帝国,系奥斯曼土耳其人建立的军事封建帝国(1290—1922)。Russian empire 俄罗斯帝国,指十月革命前的俄国,通称沙俄。

[8] bestow sth. on sb. 把……赠予……

[9] benefactor 恩人。

[10] Alexander 此处指 Alexander the Great 亚历山大大帝(356—323BC)马其顿国王(336—323 在位),即位后,先后征服希腊、埃及和波斯,并侵入印度,建立亚历山大帝国。

[11] but he lamented ... son of Philip 但他长叹一声道,他年事已高,没有多大希望可与亚历山大大帝的名望相匹敌。Philip 指马其顿国王腓力二世(382—336BC),亚历山大大帝之父;故 the son of Philip 即亚历山大大帝。

Yet the success of Trajan, however transient, was rapid and specious^[1]. The degenerate Parthians, broken by intestine discord^[2], fled before his arms. He descended the river Tigris^[3] in triumph, from the mountains of Armenia^[4] to the Persian gulf^[5]. He enjoyed the honour of being the first, as he was the last, of the Roman generals, who ever navigated that remote sea. His fleets ravaged the coast of Arabia; and Trajan vainly flattered himself^[6] that he was approaching towards the confines of India^[7]. Every day the astonished senate received the intelligence of new names and new nations, that acknowledged his sway. They were informed that the kings of Bosphorus^[8], Colchos, Iberia^[9], Albania^[10], Osrhoene, and even the Parthian monarch himself, had accepted their diadems^[11] from the hands of the emperor; that the independent tribes of the Median^[12] and Carduchian hills had implored his protection; and that the rich countries of Armenia, Mesopotamia^[13], and Assyria^[14], were reduced into the state of provinces. But the death of Trajan soon clouded the splendid prospect; and it was justly to be dreaded, that so many distant nations would throw off the

[1] specious *a.* 此处为古义“赏心悦目的”。

[2] intestine discord 内讧。

[3] Tigris 底格里斯河(在西南亚,流经土耳其和伊拉克)。

[4] Armenia 亚美尼亚(西亚古国,现构成一地区,分属俄罗斯、土耳其和伊朗)。

[5] Persian gulf 波斯湾(简称海湾,在伊朗和阿拉伯半岛之间)。

[6] flatter oneself 自以为,自信。

[7] confines of India 印度疆界。

[8] Bosphorus 博斯普鲁斯海峡地区。

[9] Iberia 伊比利亚(古地区名,在今外高加索西北部的格鲁吉亚一带)。

[10] Albania 阿尔巴尼亚。

[11] diadem *n.* 王冠,冕。

[12] Median *a.* (古)米堤亚(Media)的; Media 米堤亚,或译米太,伊朗高原西北部一个奴隶制国家,约公元前8世纪建国。

[13] Mesopotamia 美索不达米亚,亦称“两河流域”,即底格里斯和幼发拉底两河流域平原,在今叙利亚东部和伊拉克境内。

[14] Assyria 亚述(古代东方一奴隶制国家)。

unaccustomed yoke^[1], when they were no longer restrained by the powerful hand which had imposed it.

It was an ancient tradition, that when the Capitol^[2] was founded by one of the Roman kings, the god Terminus^[3] (who presided over boundaries, and was represented according to the fashion of that age by a large stone) alone, among all the inferior deities, refused to yield his place to Jupiter^[4] himself. A favourable inference was drawn from his obstinacy, which was interpreted by the augurs as a sure presage that the boundaries of the Roman power would never recede^[5]. During many ages, the prediction, as it is usual, contributed to its own accomplishment. But though Terminus had resisted the Majesty of Jupiter, he submitted to^[6] the authority of the emperor Hadrian. The resignation^[7] of all the eastern conquests of Trajan was the first measure of his reign. He restored to the Parthians the election of an independent sovereign^[8]; withdrew the Roman garrisons from the provinces of Armenia, Mesopotamia, and Assyria, and, in compliance with^[9] the precept of Augustus, once more established the Euphrates as the frontier of the empire. Censure^[10], which arraigns^[11] the public

[1] throw off the unaccustomed yoke 摆脱不习惯的枷锁。

[2] Capitol (古罗马 Capitoline 山上的)朱庇特神庙; 现指(美国)国会大厦。Capitol Hill 指代(美国)国会。

[3] god Terminus (罗神)忒耳弥努斯(界标之神)。

[4] Jupiter (罗神)朱庇特(主宰一切的主神, 相当于希腊神话中的 Zeus 宙斯); 木星。

[5] which was ... would never recede(界标之神不愿让位给主神朱庇特)被占卜官们解释为罗马帝国的边界永远不会后退的可靠预兆。augur *n.* (古罗马用观察飞鸟行动等方法预卜未来的)占卜官; presage *n.* 预兆。

[6] submit to 屈服于。

[7] resignation *n.* 放弃(图拉真一切向东征服的成果)。

[8] He restored to ... an independent sovereign 他(指哈德良)把独立君主的选举权归还给安息人民。sovereign *n.* 君主。

[9] in compliance with 遵照……, 依从……; 此处意为: 遵照奥古斯都的遗训。

[10] Censure *n.* 经元老院通过对王公大臣的公开谴责。

[11] arraign *vt.* 指责; 控告。