

converted it into an empire. Apparently the form of government was not changed but he took to himself the power formerly enjoyed by the Imperator (commander-in-chief of the legions), the Tribune, the Censor, and the High Pontiff, thus making himself a real king, although without sceptre or crown. The Senate having now but a semblance of authority accepted this servitude because it brought peace and order to Rome; Octavius moreover satisfied the people by a free distribution of wheat and amused them by shows and games innumerable.

Rule of Augustus. — (29 B. C. - A. D. 14). — 50. Having become emperor under the name of Augustus, Octavius reigned forty-four years. Assisted by his able councillors Agrippa and Mæcenas, he spent his reign in organizing the empire which comprised all the countries bordering on the Mediterranean, Spain, Gaul, Italy, the Balkan peninsula, Asia Minor, Syria, Egypt, Tunis, Algeria and Modern Morocco.

The provinces were ruled by legates who were responsible to the Emperor. The taxes were distributed with justice. New routes were constructed and military posts established for the protection of the State. The city of Rome was so embellished that Augustus could boast of having entered it a city of bricks and transformed it into a city of marble.

The Empire was now sufficiently extended and Augustus saw the necessity of defending it. Stationed fleets and camps on the frontiers served to protect it against pirates and the barbarians from the north of Europe, Asia, and from Africa. Towards the end of the reign of Augustus (A. D. 9), three Roman legions under Varus were annihilated by the Germans in a forest of Westphalia.

The Age of Augustus. — Besides restoring peace to the world, Augustus gave his name to the greatest century of Roman literature. Livy, (Titus Livius), Rome's national historian and the poets Virgil and Horace, sounded the praises of the prince who so generously gave them his protection.