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A PAPER ON CICERO.*

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WHEN Marcus Tullius Cicero was born, Rome was in a troubled state. She had reached great power, and the individual wealth of her citizens had produced many improvements and luxurious modes of living, but very little, if any, refinement of taste. Men and even women were brutal in their tastes. For amusement they loved to gaze on scenes of bloodshed. Unless the stage was left reeking in blood, but very little amusement was given. Unfortunate victims torn to pieces by wild beasts; gladiators, hard and fierce, slashing here and there with rude swords, formed the favourite entertainment of the Roman gentleman and lady. It is little to be wondered at, then, if we find blood-shedding among the Romans a common, almost every-day occurrence. In their political disturbances their streets often ran with blood, and every one who

rose to any high place in the State did so at his peril. This had been the case long before Cicero's time for active work in the State. Tiberius and Caius Gracchus were splendid men. Sons of an excellent mother; feeling in every throb of their heart the welfare of the people whose they were, and in whom they rejoiced; grieved in heart and soul at their poverty and oppressions, they devoted their lives to help them and procure such legislation as would put them above misery and want. But the savage character of the age soon bore them down, and crushed them with violent and bloody deaths.

Then there appeared on the scene Caius Marius, born at Arpinum, the place which was destined ere long to be also the birthplace of Cicero. Brave and excellent as a warrior in the first part of his life, Marius ended his days in an unworthy thirst for office. The city he had saved from savage

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