

three days, destroying the finest parts of the city; and soon after this calamity a fearful pestilence broke out, carrying off thousands of people in all parts of Italy. The last year of Titus's reign is marked by the inauguration of the Colosseum, which had been commenced by his father, and by the building of the Thermæ, or Baths, which bear his name. After his death, in September A.D. 81, all Romans mourned as over the death of a father. During his reign the frontiers of the empire were not disturbed by foreign aggressions, while Agricola was successfully engaged in the conquest of Britain.

Titus was succeeded by his brother, *Domitian*, who had already become notorious by his tyrannical disposition and many acts of cruelty. At first, however, his conduct was better than his reputation, but after some time he showed himself in his true light as one of the most detestable tyrants that ever disgraced a throne. Hosts of informers again arose, as in the worst days of his predecessors. In order to ingratiate himself with the soldiers, he increased their pay; and to obtain the means for this and his other extravagances, he had recourse to wholesale confiscations, and wealthy persons were treated as criminals solely that the tyrant might gain possession of their property. He scarcely took pleasure in anything except in the fights of gladiators and in torturing his victims, though he was not devoid of some talent, and even dabbled in literature and poetry. In A.D. 83 he undertook an expedition into Germany, and built the frontier wall between the free Germans and those who were subject to the empire. Agricola was pursuing his victorious career in Britain, but as he thereby excited the jealousy of the emperor, he was recalled, A.D. 85. In the year following, the Dacians crossed the Danube, and defeated a Roman army, whereupon Domitian himself took the field against them; but as the German tribes allied with Rome refused to support him, he was obliged to purchase peace of the Dacian king, A.D. 90. Notwithstanding this, he did not scruple on his return to celebrate a triumph over the Dacians, and even assumed