

FROM CONQUEST TO CHARTER

himself organised an expedition to these shores, and landed here, but withdrew his legions before he had time to make any real conquest. The Britons, with their long, streaming hair, their bodies stained blue with woad, seemed to the cultured Romans contemptible, and the land itself a dreary, uncultivated waste.



Boadicea

It was not till a hundred years later, A.D. 43, that the attention of Rome was again turned to this country. This time the Romans came determined to make it a Roman province. The Britons fought hard for their independence. Great leaders rose up from time to time, determined to resist the Roman rule. Chief among them was Caractacus, who in the end was taken as a prisoner to Rome, where he exclaimed in wonder at that city on the seven hills, with its palaces, its temples and its magnificent buildings: "How is it that you who live in mansions should covet our hovels?"

Another name that stands out prominently on the roll of British heroes who resisted the might of Rome is that of Boadicea, the warrior queen who led her people to battle and fiercely urged them on till at last, when all was lost, she took poison to escape the indignity of capture by the Romans.

Then the Romans ruled in Britain for over three hundred years, and did much to make it a more habitable land. They hewed down forests, drained marshes, made roads; they built walled cities, and so solid was