

The Crucifixion

Crucifixion is a very ancient form of capital punishment. It was known by the Assyrians and Babylonians of Old Testament times. It was used by the Greeks. When Alexander the Great captured Tyre on his march eastward, he crucified a thousand captured citizens of the city. The Romans adopted it, but used it only on slaves and the lowest classes of foreign criminals. Roman citizens were exempted by law from suffering this form of death.

Cicero the Roman statesman calls it "the most cruel and most frightful means of execution." Josephus recoils from it as "the most pitiable of all forms of death." This typically Roman death penalty was unknown in the Jewish penal code.

Three kinds of crosses were in use at the time: the so-called St. Andrew's Cross (X, the *Crux decussata*), the Cross in the form of a T (*Crux Comissa*), and the ordinary Latin Cross (+, *Crux immissa*). It is generally believed that Jesus was crucified on the last of these three. Also, the inscription board would most easily be mounted on this one, and in addition the testimony of those who lived nearest the time is in favor of this type of cross (Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, and many others).

The palace gates opened. A strange procession emerged onto the road to Golgotha. Artists trying to portray that scene usually show the Saviour in spotless garments. Why not present the picture as it must have been: The Prisoner was a miserable sight. For long hours He had undergone tortures of mind and body. His hair was matted with blood from the thorns. His clothing was ripped and torn. His body battered and bruised. He had been struck and beaten, first by Jews and then by Romans. A Roman scourging would render the strongest body a wreck for weeks. Jesus was still bleeding from all this torture. His body must have been wracked with pain at every step.

Crucifixion was a very cruel death, a torturing death. First came the terrible scourging with leather thongs to which were fastened sharp pellets of lead and iron as well as, sometimes, knucklebones. The victim was stripped and tied to a post. The man's back was soon ripped to pieces, and many lost consciousness. Some went mad. Christ was scourged twice, and following the second scourging the cross was placed upon His shoulders.

The scourging always preceded the crucifixion,--Josephus tells us this twice. It was a Roman custom to scourge condemned criminals before the sentence of death was executed. This was considered to be a part of the punishment.

It was also the custom of the time to turn condemned criminals over to the soldiers and the populace for torment, mockery, and ridicule, as an additional part of their punishment. Of this humiliating experience Jesus had also received more than the usual portion. Three times He was buffeted and persecuted in this manner: by the Jews, by the soldiers of Herod, and by the soldiers of Pilate. Said Tacitus, the Roman historian, "To the sufferings of those who were put to death were added mockery and derision."

In addition, the crown of thorns had been pressed into His head earlier. Mark 15:17. Experts say that it was woven from the Syrian Christ's-thorn (*Paliurus spina-christi* or *Zizyphus jujuba*). This is a bush or small tree, ten to fifteen feet high, with plain white twigs. Its stipulae have each two strong thorns which curve backward. According to Dr. G. E. Post, who is an expert on these matters, this plant grows in the region of old Jerusalem, especially in the area where Golgotha is said to have been.

It was the custom of the time for the victim to carry his own cross to the place of execution. This practice was followed in the crucifixion of Jesus. "Then delivered he Him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led Him away. And He bearing His cross went forth into a place called the place of a

skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha: where they crucified Him, and two other with Him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst." John 19:16-18. Of this ancient practice, Plutarch, a Greek historian of the first century, says: "Every kind of wickedness produces its own particular torment; just as every malefactor, when he is brought forth to execution, carries his own cross."

The cross was borne to the execution by the One who was to suffer on it--perhaps with His arms bound to it with cords. Frequently, the neck of the victim was fastened within the "patibulum," two horizontal pieces of wood, fastened at the end, to which the hands were bound. Ordinarily, the procession was headed by the centurion, or rather, preceded by one who proclaimed the nature of the crime, and carried a white, wooden board, on which it was written. Commonly, also, it took the longest road to the place of execution, and through the most crowded streets, so as to attract the greatest public attention. Scripture tells us that "the place . . . was nigh to the city." John 19:20. But whether they took a short route to it that day or not, we do not know. A pilgrim from Bordeaux who visited Jerusalem in the year 333 specifically mentioned "the little hill of Golgotha (Monticulus Golgotha) where the Lord was crucified." In its full length, the journey from the Praetorium to Golgotha could not have been a long one. Execution would take place outside the city. Pilate would not dare outrage Jewish feelings by crucifying anyone within the walls of the Holy City.

When one to be crucified left the courtroom, he was often stripped of his clothes. In this condition, as was mentioned above, he was forced to walk through the busiest parts of town, carrying the cross, and whipped and mocked all the way. In this case, we are told that after His scourging they "put His own raiment upon Him, and led Him away." Matthew 27:31. One of the old classical authorities, Plautus by name, said: "Patibulum ferat per urbem, deinde affigatur cruce -- Let him bear the cross through the town, then let him be nailed to the cross." The soldiers in charge of the execution formed a bodyguard which accompanied the victim to the place of crucifixion, not only to prevent the victim from escaping but to prevent friends and relatives from attempting a rescue.

The Way of the Cross must have been thronged. The city was crowded for the festival season of the Passover. While the majority may have reviled the prisoner on the way to the execution, there must have been many who looked on now with honor and pity. Those who had known Jesus or had listened to His words, and there were many such in the multitude, must have turned from the scene with pain akin to heartbreak. Although only four soldiers were officially necessary for the actual execution, there must have been a large detachment present to preserve order.

And what was ahead? Crucifixion. Sometimes criminals were tied to the cross by the feet and outstretched arms. Others had their feet nailed to the upright of the cross and their hands spiked to the crosspiece, care being taken not to injure arteries or sever large blood vessels lest the agonies of the victim be shortened by excessive bleeding. Either method ensured a long, lingering death with the maximum of torture and pain. Reliable historians report cases of crucified persons living for days, while enduring all the torments of death from hunger, from thirst, from exposure, from fever, and from excruciating pain simultaneously. The horrors of this type of punishment were held up as a deterrent to hardened criminals. They were told that their bodies would be suspended until the carrion birds had stripped the bones,--and even the bones themselves would be denied burial.

The place where Jesus was crucified is called Calvary in Latin, and Golgotha in Hebrew. The Greek word is Kranion. The name means "skull," and is spoken of as "the place of a skull." in Scripture. Some consider this to mean a place of skulls--where men died and bones were laying around--a place of death. Others think it to be a place that resembled a skull because of the shape of the summit of the hill on which it occurred. North of Jerusalem is what is know as "Gordon's Calvary," which, seen from the wall of the city, somewhat resembles a skull, with two caves below the brow suggesting eyes. While we are told that the place "was nigh to the city," the exact location can only be a matter of conjecture. Jesus was crucified outside of the wall, but until we can identify the exact location of the north wall in the time of Christ. we may never know with certainty the exact location of Calvary. The traditional site is inside the present north wall, and covered by the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, which was begun in 325 A.D. following a visit to Jerusalem by Helena, the mother of Constantine the Great. Inside the tottering structure, is to be found a fourteen-foot hillock called "Calvary" rising to the balcony level. Gordon's Calvary, which today is more countrified in appearance, was first identified in 1849 by Otto Thenius. Near it are adjacent gardens that would remind one of the description in John 19:41.

According to Mark 15:25, Jesus was crucified at "the third hour, "or nine o'clock in the morning. Two thieves were crucified at the same time, one on either side of Him. Thus was fulfilled the prediction of the prophet that "He was numbered with the transgressors."

Before being crucified, Jesus was stripped of His outer garments, which probably consisted of a cloak, a sort of shirt, a girdle, and a pair of sandals. The soldiers divided these among themselves, casting lots over them. "They crucified Him, and parted His garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted My garments among them, and upon My vesture did they cast lots." Matthew 27:35. This is the prophecy of Psalm 22:18. This, too, is a Roman custom, and the record of it is another evidence of the truthfulness of the Biblical account.

"And they gave Him to drink wine mingled with myrrh: but He received it not." Mark 15:23. This was "the death draught." It was dispensed as an act of mercy. Similar acts are frequently recorded on other occasions. We read in an old Jewish Baraita: "Anyone who is led out to execution is given a small piece of incense in a beaker of wine to numb his senses . . . The good women of Jerusalem have a custom of dispensing this generously and bringing it to the victims." Moldenke, who has done much research into Biblical plants, has this to say: "Wine mixed with myrrh was given to Jesus just before the Crucifixion to lessen the pain, just as in the days before anaesthetics, intoxicating drinks were poured into the unfortunate patients on the eve of big operations." The drink offered to Jesus was a mixture of frankincense and myrrh poured into a cup of vinegar. Its purpose was to produce stupefaction in order to render the victim partially unconscious to the pain caused by the nails. This Hebrew custom was sponsored by wealthy Jewish women of Jerusalem. Lightfoot tells us that "some of the wealthy ladies of Jerusalem charged themselves with this office of mercy. "Jesus, however, refused the drink and endured with all His senses the torture of being nailed to the cross. His mind must be clear in this final hour, as in every other in His earthly life.

Roman soldiers were accustomed to drinking a thin, sour wine. Sometimes, in the field, they drank acetum, or wine soured to the vinegar stage, diluted with water or oil. This was known as posca, according to the Roman historian, Pliny the Elder. It has been suggested that the drink offered to Jesus was this posca, to which myrrh had been added as a narcotic. Narcotics made from plant extracts had long been in use.

The punishment of crucifixion was invented to make death as painful and as lingering as the power of human endurance. Here is one description of how it occurred: First, the upright wood was planted in the ground. Next the transverse (horizontal) wood was placed on the ground. This piece was called the antenna. The sufferer was laid upon it, and his arms were extended, drawn up, and bound to it. Then a strong, sharp nail was driven, first into the right, then into the left hand (the clavi trabales). Next, the sufferer was drawn up by means of ropes, perhaps ladders; the transverse either bound or nailed to the upright, and a rest or support for the body (the cornu or sedile) fastened on it. Lastly, the feet were extended, and either one nail hammered into each, or a larger piece of iron through the two. And so might the crucified hang for hours, and even for days, in the unutterable anguish of suffering, till consciousness at last failed.

In some cases, the whole cross was first erected, and then the victim lifted up to it, and only after that, the nails fastened into his arms and feet. However, we are told in *Desire of Ages*, that in the case of Jesus, He was first nailed to the cross, and then it was lifted and thrust heavily into the hole previously made for it. "As soon as Jesus was nailed to the cross, it was lifted by strong men, and with great violence thrust into the place prepared for it. This caused the most intense agony to the Son of God." --page 745.

It is said that the use of the cross as an instrument of punishment had its origin in the ancient practice of fastening a criminal "to a tree, which was termed accursed," and was later known as "the cross." The cross was therefore still spoken of as a "tree" in the days of the apostles. Peter wrote: "Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed." 1 Peter 2:24. The cross as first used by the Babylonians during the reign of Semiramis was in the form of a T, for Tammuz, one of the names of Nimrod, her husband.

Of the ancient cross, Renan wrote: "A piece of wood was fastened to the upright portion of the cross, toward the middle, and passed between the legs of the condemned, who rested upon it. Without that, the hands would have been torn and the body would have sunk down. At other times, a small horizontal rest was fixed beneath the feet, and sustained them."--*The Life of Christ*, page 364. Irenaeus, an early Christian writer,

said: "The structure of the cross has five ends or summits, two in length, two in breadth, and one in the middle, on which the crucified person rests." Justin Martyr, another early writer, mentioned a projecting end from the middle of the upright post "like a horn, on which the crucified persons are seated." And Tertullian wrote of "the projecting bar which serves as a seat." Stroud described the cross as "having a short bar or stake projecting from its middle."--The Physical Cause of the Death of Christ, page 35-36.

On some occasions criminals were bound by cords to the cross. The usual method was nailing. This was the practice of the Romans and Carthaginians, though not of the Egyptians--who only bound their victims.

Artists usually picture Christ as nailed in the palm of the hand. However, since the whole weight of a man's body would be upon the hands, a nail placed there would not have the necessary support and would drag through the tendons. So it was customary to drive a nail through the wrist. Between "the bones of the wrist there is a free space, bounded by the capitate, the semi-lunar, the triquetral and the hamate bones," generally known as "Destot's space." Historical anatomists tell us that those who were skilled in executions knew exactly where to drive the nail both for security and for the infliction of greater pain. The nail would go right against the large median nerve, which serves all the sensory nerves of the hand, and when the hand was stretched, the slightest movement would cause the most excruciating pain. The Flemish artists Rubens and Vandyke depict the crucifixion in this way. We are told that archaeology confirms it.

"Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS. This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin." John 19:19-20. This inscription contained the name of the condemned, His place of residence, and the charge on which he was sentenced to be crucified. Matthew declared that the inscription was "set up over His head." It was doubtless nailed to the top of the upright beam of the cross. The accusation was written in the three leading languages spoken in Palestine, so that all could read it. Hebrew was the national dialect of the Jews; Greek was the universal tongue of the civilized western world; and Latin was the official language of the judicial and executive power of the then ruling empire. Geikie declares that the three languages were a symbol of "the relation of the cross to all the nationalities of the world."

It was customary to carry this board before the prisoner, and there is no reason for supposing any exception in this instance. The inscription as given by Matthew exactly corresponds with that which Eusebius records as the Latin titulus on the cross of one of the early martyrs. The place of the crucifixion was near to the great road which led from the North to Jerusalem. On that particular Feast-day, when, as there was no law to limit, as on the weekly day of rest, travel to a 'Sabbath day's journey,' many would pass in and out of the City, and the attention of the crowd would naturally be arrested by the spectacle of the three Crosses. Equally so, they would have been impressed by the Roman titulus over the Cross of Christ.

This act of Pilate in having the title affixed to the Cross of Christ was also a well-established Roman custom. Suetonius, a Roman historian of the first century, describes an execution by order of Domitian as follows: "He exposed the father of the family to the dogs, with this title, 'A gladiator, impious in speech.'" The victim was the father of a family who had spoken disrespectfully of a fellow gladiator. Dion Cassius, a Greek-Roman historian of the second century, A.D., described a crucifixion scene thus: "Having led him through the midst of the court or assembly, with a writing signifying the cause of his death, and afterward crucifying him." On such occasions the placard was either carried before the victim or hung around his neck.

And now comes the scene of the final death watch on Golgotha. Events have moved toward inevitable climax with startling rapidity. Jesus had been taken prisoner before dawn on that fatal Friday in the spring of 31 A.D. It is said that it occurred on April 7. Now, even before mid-afternoon of that same day, His - mutilated body, stripped of its few poor garments, hung on the cross. The silence, seeming strange after the tension and tumult, is broken only by the agonized moaning of suffering men, an occasional call of ridicule directed to the One in the midst, and low weeping of a few women who watch from afar.

Out of sympathy, one among the crowd filled a sponge with the rough wine of the soldiers, and fastened it on the stem ('reed') of the caper ('hyssop') plant, which is said to grow to the height of two or three feet.

And then came His last words: "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit." The word, "commend," in its

New Testament sense, means not merely commending. It means to deposit, to commit something to another for safe keeping. He spoke those words for you and for me. How many thousands have whispered them when dying! They were the last words of Polycarp, of John Huss, of Martin Luther, and of Melanchthon.

"And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost." Mark 15:34,37. What was the cause of Jesus' death? Of recent years scientific investigations carried out by medical specialists in Cologne have attempted to answer the question. In the case of a person suspended by his two hands the blood sinks very quickly into the lower half of the body. Within as little as fifteen minutes, blood pressure has dropped by 50 percent, and the pulse rate has doubled. Too little blood reaches the heart and fainting ensues. This leads to a speedy orthostatic collapse through insufficient blood circulating to the brain and the heart. Death by crucifixion is therefore due to heart failure (coronary insufficiency).

There was another way in which the victim could obtain relief from the suspension from his arms, and consequent relief from the pooling of blood. And this was by the nails in his feet: One way in which they were attached to the beam was in this manner: The cross would be raised in an upright position after the hands were nailed. The victim would thus be suspended by his hands, and his knees would be flexed and the feet crossed, and one long spike would be driven through both feet. This was done not so much to take the weight off the hands as to permit the victim to raise himself up at times in order to expel the air from his lungs--for if he did not do this he would soon die of asphyxiation, or lack of air. In this way life was prolonged, and also the suffering.

It is a well-authenticated fact that victims of crucifixion did not usually die for two days or even longer. On the vertical beam there was often a small support attached called a "sedile" (seat) or a "cornu" (horn). If the victim hanging there eased his misery from time to time by supporting himself on this, the blood returned to the upper half of his body and the faintness passed. When the torture of the crucified man was finally to be brought to an end, the "crurifragium" followed: his legs were broken below the knee with blows from a club. That meant that he could no longer ease his weight on the footrests and heart failure quickly followed.

But Jesus never received this leg-shattering, or "crurifragium." "Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with Him, But when they came to Jesus, and saw that He was dead already, they brake not His legs." John 19:32-33. Why a crurifragium so quickly? Because the Jewish leaders had requested it of Pilate. The day of the crucifixion was "the day before the Sabbath" Mark 15:42, Luke 23:54. In addition, according to Scripture, the bodies of those hung on trees, were not to remain hanging overnight. Deuteronomy 21:23.

Jesus died of a broken heart. The fact that both blood and water flowed from His pierced side establishes this. As early as 1847 Dr. W Stroud in his book, Physical Cause of the Death of Christ, suggested that the blood and water was evidence that Jesus died of a physical rupture of the heart. His heart was broken not because of suspension on the cross, for it is well known that victims of crucifixion survived for more than one day, Origen, who lived in the time when crucifixion was still practiced, tells us that the majority of those who underwent the experience lived through the night and day following.

Here is how Cunningham Geikie describes the whole thing: "The suffering in crucifixion, from which death at last resulted, rose partly from the constrained and fixed position of the body, and of the outstretched arms, which caused acute pain from every twitch or motion of the back, lacerated by the knot, and of the hands and feet, pierced by the nails. These latter were, moreover, driven through parts where many sensitive nerves and sinews come together, and some of these were mutilated, others violently crushed down. Inflammation of the wounds in both hands and feet, speedily set in, and ere long rose also in other places, where the circulation was checked by the tension of the parts. Intolerable thirst, and ever-increasing pain, resulted. The blood, which could no longer reach the extremities, rose to the head, swelled the veins and arteries in it unnaturally, and caused the most agonizing tortures in the brain. As, besides, it could no longer move freely from the lungs, the heart grew more and more oppressed, and all the veins were distended. Had the wounds bled freely, it would have been a great relief, but there was very little lost. The weight of the body itself, resting on the wooden pin of the upright beam; the burning of the sun scorching the veins, and the hot wind, which dried up the moisture of the body, made each movement more terrible than that before. The numbness and stiffness of the more distant muscles brought on painful convulsions, and this

numbness, slowly extending through two or three days, at last reached the vital parts, and released the sufferer by death."--The life and Words of Christ, pages 781-782.

The Messiah would die of a broken, or ruptured, heart. The fortieth Psalm is a Messianic prophecy, and in verse twelve, speaking of the troubles that would encompass Him, climaxing in His death, we are told, "Therefore My heart faileth Me." The sixty-ninth Psalm tells us the thoughts of Jesus on the cross, in which is a forecast of the cause of His death: "Reproach hath broken My heart; and I am full of heaviness: and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none. They gave Me also gall for My meat; and in My thirst they gave Me vinegar to drink. "Psalm 69:20-21.

From the Biblical account of the death of Jesus it is evident that His sudden death resulted from a ruptured heart. Earnest Renan tells us: "The peculiar atrocity of crucifixion was that one might live three or four days in this horrible state upon the instrument of torture. The hemorrhage from the hands quickly stopped, and was not mortal. The true cause of death was the unnatural position of the body, which brought on a frightful disturbance of the circulation, terrible pains of the head and heart, and, at length, rigidity of the limbs. Those who had a strong constitution only died of hunger . . . Everything leads to the belief that the instantaneous rupture of a vessel in the heart brought Him . . . to a sudden death."--The Life of Jesus, pages 367-368.

Geikie adds: "The immediate cause of death appears, beyond question, to have been the rupture of His heart, brought about by mental agony."--The Life and Words of Christ, page 78& Living as He did in such close harmony with the laws of nature, there can be no question but that Jesus had more than an ordinarily strong physical constitution. Under ordinary circumstances, He should have lived several days on the cross before death came.

When Joseph of Arimathaea went to Pilate for the privilege of burying Jesus, we are told that "Pilate marveled if He were already dead: and calling unto him the centurion, he asked him whether He had been any while dead." Mark 15:44. It was almost an unheard-of-thing for a crucified person to die within two or three days unless death was hastened by other means. Jesus did not die as the result of the crucifixion. But rather, He died very suddenly in the midst of terrible agony of mind and spirit.

The death of Christ immediately followed a loud and piercing cry. Matthew 27:50, Luke 23:46. Usually, at the time of death, the voice is the first organ to fail. It grows weaker and fainter until it becomes inaudible. The loud and piercing cry of Jesus indicated great physical strength, which could suddenly be terminated only by the rupture of the heart. "The cause now assigned for the death of Christ, namely, RUPTURE OF THE HEART FROM AGONY OF MIND, has been proved to be the result."--Dr. William Stroud, The Physical Cause of the Death of Christ, pages 155-156.

It was separation from the Father that broke the heart of Christ and caused His death. He bore our sins, so that we might come back to God. But at Calvary the bearing of those sins brought a separation that killed Him. It broke the heart of Christ. Our sins have separated between us and our God--and Christ bore the separation that we might return. You and I caused the sufferings and the death of Christ.

Behold the love of God for a world that does not love Him. Oh, my friend, just now as you read this tract, won't you accept Him as your Saviour. There may never be a better time. God calls us to Himself, but Satan is ever near to whisper that it isn't the "right time." But how much more time can you count on? At this moment you know what you should do. And you know that if you wait till that "better time," you might never come.

Whether you are in the office or the shop, in a car or at home--just now go to a quiet place, or bow your head or kneel down right where you are--and tell God what you've done, and ask Him to forgive you. Tell Him you want to belong to Him from now on. Give Him your will and your plans. Surrender all that you have and are to Him. Tell Him that He shall have the first place in every plan and action for the rest of your life. Tell Him you are tired of the desolation you've made of your life. Ask Him to send His Holy Spirit and His angels to guard and protect you from Satan's power and to give you strength to obey His Ten Commandment Law. For the sake of His own dear Son He will do it. He will strengthen you and ennoble you as you come to Him and determine to stay by His side. He will restore to you the years the canker worm has eaten, in place of all the wasted past, He can and He will give you a wonderful future in exchange.

The more earnest is your cry, the more abundantly will He be able to help you in what is ahead. And as you found Him, so walk with Him. As a little child coming home to Father, you found the best Friend you will ever have. And as a little child--stay with Him--all the way to the end.

May God bless you, and write me, won't you? I want to hear from you, and when you write I'll send you encouraging materials that will help you in your new life.

"The life of Christ, the holiest among the mighty and the mightiest among the holy, has lifted with its pierced hands empires off their hinges and turned the stream of centuries out of their channel, and still governs the ages.-- *Jean Paul Richter*.

"Will Jesus ever be surpassed? Nineteen hundred years have passed, and his equal has not risen. This is not true of the world's other great ones. Every generation produces geniuses worthy to be compared with those who have gone before. It can be said of no one man, 'He stands alone; he has no rival; no equal; no superior.' But this is true of Jesus. Nineteen hundred years, instead of diminishing his greatness, have accentuated it."--*Editor, The Los Angeles Times*.

"I am far within the mark when I say that all the armies that ever marched, and all the navies that ever were built, and all the parliaments that ever sat, and all the kings that ever reigned, put together, have not affected the life of man upon this earth as powerfully as has that one solitary life--the life of Christ."-- *Phillips Brooks*.

"There lives at this time in Judea, Jesus Christ, whom the barbarians esteem as a prophet, but his followers love and adore him as the offspring of the immortal God. He calls the dead from their graves, and heals all sorts of diseases with a word or a touch. He is a tall man and well shaped, of an amiable and reverend aspect, his hair of a color that can hardly be matched, falling into graceful curls, waving about and very agreeably crouching upon his shoulders, parted on the crown of the head, running as a stream to the front after the manner of the Nazarites. His forehead is high, large and imposing; his cheeks a lovely red; nose and mouth formed with exquisite symmetry; his eyes bright blue, clear and serene, look innocent, dignified, manly and mature. He rebukes with majesty, counsels with mildness; his whole address, whether in word or deed, being eloquent and grave. His manners are exceedingly pleasant, but he has wept frequently in the presence of men."--*Letter by Publius Lentulus, to the Roman Senate. circa A.D. 33*.