

VI. *An Account of a BOOK.* Guilhelmi Mufgrave Reg. Societ. utriusque Socii, *GETA BRITANNICUS. Accedit Domus Severianæ Synopsis Chronologica: & de Icuncula quondam M. Regis Ælfredi Dissertatio.* 8vo. Iſcæ Dumnoniorum. MDCCXV.

**T**HE Author, having ſome <sup>1</sup> Years ſince publiſh'd a Comment on *Julius Vitalis* his Epitaph, which, (together with his Monument) is to be ſeen at *Bath*; does now preſent the publick with another Volume of *Belgic Antiquities*; intending hereby, to illuſtrate part of a Statue, which was found likewiſe near that City, and is at this time immured near the Monument aforeſaid, at the eaſtern End of the Abby-Church, looking toward the Grove.

This Fragment of an Equeſtrian Statue, is in *Baſſe Relief*: The Rider has in his right Hand a *Haſta pura*, and a *Parma* in his left; as in *Fig. 1.* of the Book. It appears from <sup>2</sup> *Dio* that *Caius* and *Lucius*, Cæſars, (the Nephews, and adopted Sons of *Auguſtus*) had each of them a *Parma* and an *Haſta* given him: and there being no Inſtance of this Honour paid to any of an inferiour Rank among the *Romans*, but only to ſuch as were of very great Quality; if not to *Cæſars* only; we are from hence be allowed to think, *That this Statue represented ſome Perſon of that Quality.*

But to diſcover the particular Perſon, (if it might be done) the Author compar'd a very good Draught he had procur'd of this Horſeman, with ſuch *Roman* Coyns.

<sup>1</sup> Iſcæ Dunmon: MDCCXI.

<sup>2</sup> Lib. LV.

as He could meet with. This Comparison shewed a great Resemblance between the Face in the Statue, and that in two of *Geta's* Coyns.

This Argument, drawn from the Similitude of Faces (of great force to determine the Reader's Judgment in favour of *Geta*) is farther confirmed by the Horse; a Creature of which *Geta* was very fond; insomuch, as that He affected to be represented under the Figure of *Castor*, (as the *Roman* Emperors often were under the Figures of their Gods) of whom it is said, *Castor gaudet Equis*; — Of this Figure there is in <sup>3</sup> *Oiselius*, a Coyn of *Geta's*, very much to this purpose; represented *Tab. IV. fig. 5.* of this Book.

These things bring to mind, the Authority which *Geta* had in *South-Britain*: where (as <sup>4</sup> *Herodian* affirms) all matters were under his Administration, during the Stay which *Severus* and *Caracalla* made in the North; which was a Year, or more. In this time, *Geta* had it in his Power, to do many things, in favour of Cities and Countreys, here in the South. The great Generosity of his Mind prompted Him to publick Works; such as are, to this day, attested by <sup>5</sup> Inscriptions, with his Name in them: and it is highly probable, [That this Statue was erected to *Geta* on some such account.]

If this be granted, (as from the concurrence of so much, and so good Testimony, it seems highly probable) here is a large and pleasant View opened into Antiquity; not of late taken notice of by any Writer: It shews, that *Geta* was a great Benefactor to *old Bath*; either by laying, in a perfect Morals, the Foundation of that Town; or by preserving the *Hot-Springs* entire, from the influx of

<sup>3</sup> *Tab. XLII. 1.*

<sup>4</sup> *Lib. III. Sect. XLVIII.*

<sup>5</sup> *Gruteri Thes. Inscriptioum, pag. CLVII. 2, 3, 4, 5.*

other Waters; or both : Works of great Munificence, and becoming *Geta's* Spirit. By these, or some such Ways, it is probable, this People was obliged to *Geta*; but no one is more probable, than that of preserving the *Aquæ Calidæ*; which were in those days so famous, as to give a Denomination to the place. It is well known, That *Rome* had her *Thermæ Severianæ* and *Antoninianæ*, so called from their respective Founders; the former being built by *Severus*, the Father; the latter by *Antoninus*, the Brother, of *Geta*: so that to take care of Baths, was a sort of Greatness, that Family seemed to delight in; and *Geta* may reasonably be supposed, to have his share of this Delight.

From the great probability of this Opinion, the Author has, out of Love to his native Country, and the Honour due to *Geta*, collected and put together, what He can meet with relating to that Emperor. He has made a new Edition of *Geta's* Life, from the *Historia Augustæ Scriptores*; restoring it to its true Author, *Julius Capitolinus*; and explaining it, with the Notes of *Casaubon*, *Gruter*, and *Salmasius*; to which he has added some of his own. He has reprinted all the Inscriptions he can meet with, of *Geta's*, and many of his Coyns; with short Notes on both.

After all this, He is not so far engaged in this Opinion, but that if, (by any Inscription on the Basis of this Statue, or any other testimony) it shall hereafter appear, that this Fragment deserves another Explication, he shall readily comply with any such clearer Testimony: being no way disposed, to give farther credit to this broken Monument, than shall answer the imperfect Condition it is now in.

To this Dissertation, *de Geta Britannico*, He has added the Chronology of his illustrious House; shewing, how his Father, *Severus*, from a private Gentleman in *Africa*,

came by degrees to be Emperor of *Rome*; and indeed one of the Greatest, that ever *Rome* had: How He, with his two Sons, *Bassianus* and *Geta*, (three *Roman* Emperors) resided, at one and the same time, here in *Britain*) and from hence sent their Imperial Edicts, Orders, and Dispatches, into all parts of the Empire: and after an amazing Greatness of about twenty four Years, and a Course of almost all Virtues and Vices, at length tumbled down; submitting to the Accidents and Fate of other Men; and were all buried at *Rome*, in the *Septizodium* built by *Severus*.

To these Memoirs of *Geta*, the Author has subjoyned a Discourse, concerning that curious *Cimelium*, which was, some Years since, found at *Athelney* in *Somerset*. It did belong to K. *Ælfred*, and is now in the Possession of Col *Palmer* of *Fairfield*, in that County. Beside the critical use made of it, by the learned<sup>1</sup> Dr. *Hickes*, our Author writes of it, as an undeniable Instance of the use of Images, coming from the Heathens into the Christian Church.

The Book is adorned with several Cuts, of the Broken Statue at *Bath*, of two of *Geta's* Silver-Coyns, of the *Septizodium Severi*, (out of *Perac*) and three sides of the *κεφάλιον Ælfredi*.

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<sup>1</sup> In Thesaurο Ling. Septentrionalinm. non ita pridem edito.

E I N I S.

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