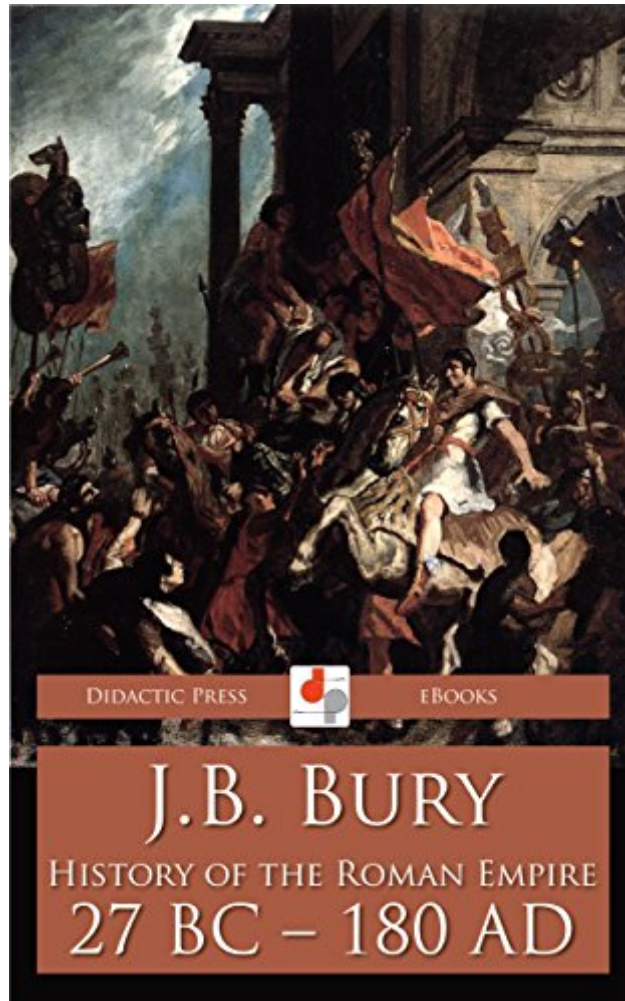




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Synopsis

C. JULIUS CESAR, the triumvir and the founder of the Roman Empire, was the grandnephew of C. Julius Caesar, the dictator, his adoptive father. Originally named, like his true father, C. Octavius, he entered the Julian family after the dictator's death, and, according to the usual practice of adopted sons, called himself C. Julius Caesar Octavianus. But the name Octavianus soon fell into disuse, and by his contemporaries he was commonly spoken of as Caesar, just as Scipio Emilianus was commonly called Scipio. The victory of Actium (Sept. 2, 31 BC), and the death of Marcus Antonius (Aug. 1, 30 BC) placed the supreme power in the hands of Caesar, for so we may best call him until he becomes Augustus. The Roman world lay at his feet and he had no rival. He was not a man of genius and his success had perhaps been chiefly due to his imperturbable self-control. He was no general; he was hardly a soldier, though not devoid of personal courage, as he had shown in his campaign in Illyricum. As a statesman he was able, but not creative or original, and he would never have succeeded in forming a permanent constitution but for the example of the great dictator. In temper he was cool, without ardor or enthusiasm. His mind was logical and he aimed at precision in thought and expression. His culture was wide, if superficial; his knowledge of Greek imperfect. In literary style he affected simplicity and correctness; and he was an acute critic. Like many educated men of his time, he was not free from superstition. His habits were always simple, his food plain, and his surroundings modest. His family affections were strong and sometimes misled him into weakness. His presence was imposing, though he was not tall, and his features were marked by symmetrical beauty; but the pallor of his complexion showed that his health was naturally delicate. It was due to his self-control and his simple manner of life that he lived to be an old man...

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