

Book XII.
Title II.

Concerning praetors, and the honor of the praetorship, and the abolition of the gleba, follis and seven solidi.
(De praetoribus et honore praeturae et gleba et folli et septem solidorum functione sublata.)

12.2.1. Emperors Valentinian and Marcian to Tatianus, Praetorian Prefect.

No one of honorable or worshipful rank (clarissimus and spectabilis), who lives in the provinces, shall hereafter be called to the praetorship; each shall be safe and secure at home enjoying his honor.

Dated at Constantinople December 18 (450).

Note.

The praetors of the Roman Republic were the judges of Rome. For a long time, there were only two, but later the number was considerably increased. They were the parties, under whom the Roman law developed and grew. But during the Empire, their functions dwindled to insignificance. C. 1.39. But it remained an office, which all senators were subject to be called on to fill, because praetors were required to give games for the benefit of the people, the expenses of which were very great. As to games given by consuls, see headnote to C. 12.3. The praetorian games seem not to have been less expensive. See Bury, 1 Hist. Later Roman Empire 18, 19; 1 Karlowa 891, 892. By the instant law all persons of honorable and worshipful rank (clarissimi and spectabiles), who lived in the provinces were excused from the praetorship. Again, by C. 1.39.2, the number of praetors was limited, and they were not compelled to incur any expenses, except as they wished. Special exemptions, too, existed for others. See note C. 12.10.2.

12.2.2. The same Emperors to the Senate.

We order that the tax on senators called the gleba or follis or the payment of seven solidi, and every contribution of this sort, as to persons, their property or lands, shall be utterly abolished, and the collection thereof forever cease.

Note.

The gleba or follis was a special tax on senators. A follis was originally a bag of coins, containing in value one pound of gold, and was used for large payments. The senatorial tax was known as follis, because the amount to be paid was fixed by so many bags. A pound of gold in Justinian's time was worth about \$216. Senators were divided into classes for the purpose of the payment of this tax. Very poor senators paid seven solidi, or about \$21 annually. These taxes were in addition to the regularly assessed property taxes. See note C. 12.10.2, and Bury, 1 Hist. Later Roman Empire 50; 1 Karlowa 892.