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ROMAN REPUBLIC

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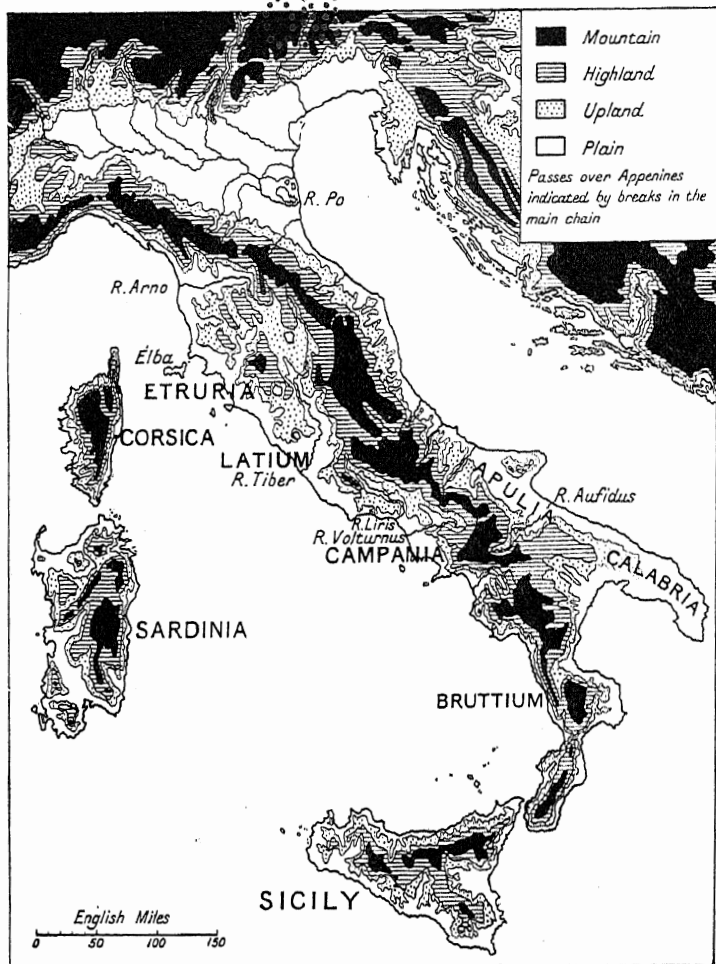
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# ITALY



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I. PHYSICAL MAP OF ITALY

# A HISTORY OF THE ROMAN REPUBLIC

BY

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WITH FOURTEEN MAPS

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## PREFACE

**T**HE History of the Roman Republic is concerned with a period of human development in which the bankrupt selfishness of small national states and dynastic empires, of which the Mediterranean world was then composed, was forced to yield place to the political and economic advantages of a universal commonwealth. It was also a period in which a Society, much bound by tradition and trained on educational methods which placed the formation of character before the free exercise of intellect, was somewhat suddenly subjected to the influences of a culture which, by encouraging men to think for themselves, broke down the old moral, political and religious conventions and bred an individualistic outlook upon life. Though historical parallels are notoriously misleading, such a situation can scarcely fail to hold a very special interest for ourselves. True that both economically and politically the world of to-day is very different from the Mediterranean world of antiquity, and that the solution of its difficulties is bound to follow very different lines. True, again, that Anglo-Saxon education has by no means been concentrated on character-building alone, and that the modern scientific outlook is far more genuinely constructive than the Stoic, Epicurean and Cynic philosophies of the Hellenic decadence. Nevertheless, the fundamental principles of human character do not change; and the study of its past developments must always form to some extent the basis for our approach to contemporary problems. . . . If Rome performed her great mission and the civilization of the Mediterranean world was saved—for a time, it was in the main because the Roman character in its essential qualities survived the assimilation of Hellenic thought—assimilating it indeed in the letter, but

missing its true spirit, only therefore in the ultimate issue to lose all.

I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to Mr. G. T. Griffith, Fellow of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, who has kindly read my manuscript, and to my colleague, Mr. F. J. A. Cruso, and Mr. D. C. Whimster, of Harrow School, who have kindly read through the proofs.

C. E. R.

WINCHESTER COLLEGE

*September, 1932*

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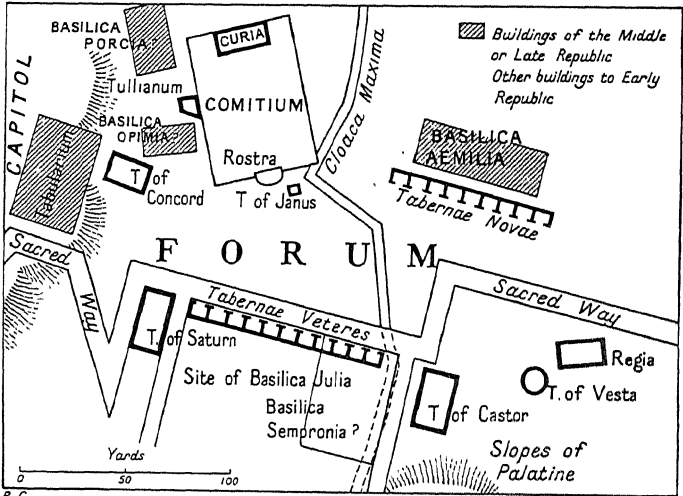
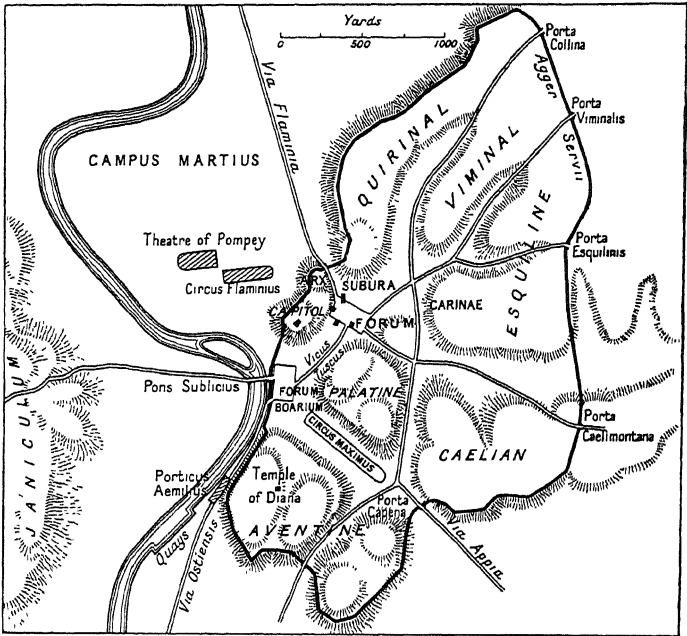
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II. ROME AND THE FORUM

# A HISTORY OF THE ROMAN REPUBLIC

## PART I

### CHAPTER I

#### LAND AND PEOPLE

**O**F all the countries of the European continent, Italy is beyond comparison the loveliest. To the modern traveller emerging from some tunnel through the Alps and journeying southward among her vales and mountains, it may well seem that he has reached the threshold of fairyland ; so radiant and delicate does her landscape appear under the soft enchantment of its Mediterranean sunshine. So poets and painters have loved Italy. And at her heart lies the city which more than any in the world has gripped the imagination of the traveller and the student. All roads lead, it has been said, to Rome ; nor indeed is it easy to realize how deeply the life of Western Europe is rooted in that for which Rome stood—first the Empire, which for four hundred years bound Gaul and Spain, Britain and the Balkans in one society, and which, when overthrown at last by the barbarian conquerors, bequeathed to them an indestructible tradition of ordered life and law and language that has served slowly but surely to transform them into the civilized nations of to-day : then secondly the Papal Church, which for an even longer lapse of time held Christendom together and which drew in a large measure its principles of state-craft from the model of the old Imperial rule. For the truth is that the Romans understood better than all other peoples of

antiquity how to organize human life ; and this knowledge they bequeathed to their posterity. So, for all the fairness of their country-side, it was not (as with the Greeks) any peculiar sense of beauty or of art that made their influence thus predominant in the evolution of mankind. Rather was it the richness of their own political experience and the shrewdness of their administrative efficiency. Artists and poets may have found their inspiration in the Italy we know ; but ancient Italy bred not dreamers, but men of action, great soldiers, great rulers, great engineers, men who were before all things sane, self-reliant, practical and tough.

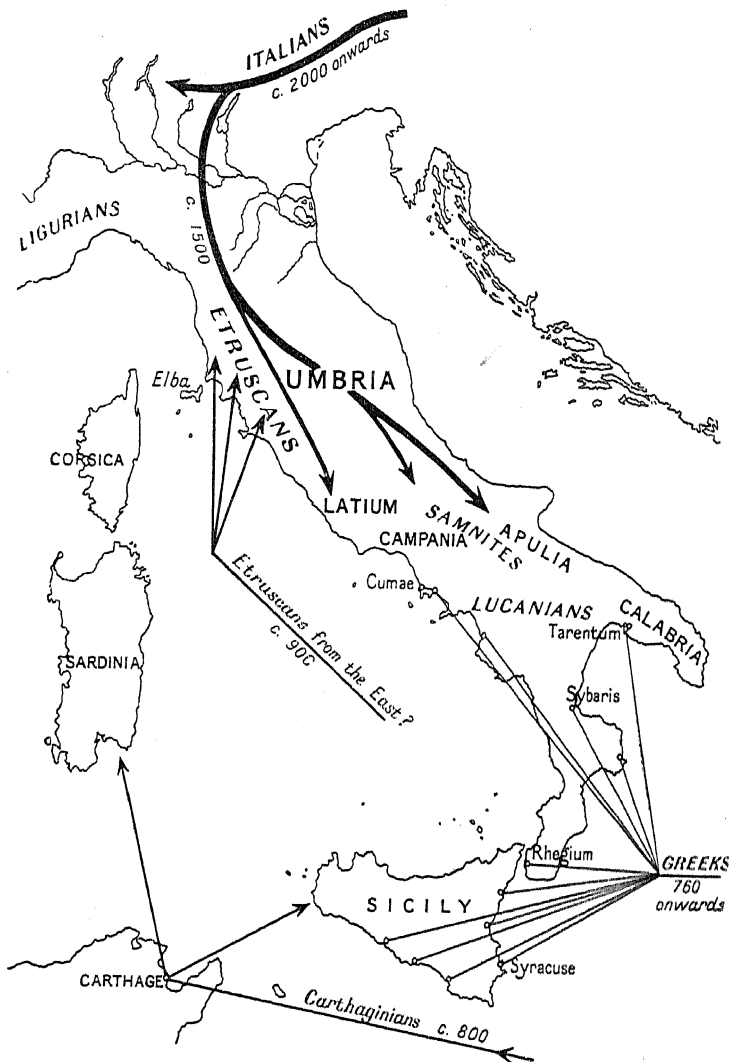
To some extent at least the character of a people is moulded by the environment in which they dwell ; and first and foremost it must be clearly grasped that Italy is predominantly mountain. Setting aside the Lombard Plain, whose wide well-watered basin of alluvial flats was regarded by the ancients less as Italian than as Gallic soil, the peninsula contains at least three-quarters of hill country to one-quarter of level ground. For the Apennines are no mere incidental feature of the Italian map. They are Italy itself. Beginning in its northern sector as a high, continuous range, then from the centre down divided into ridges by a series of broad valleys, this enormous limestone system not merely persists throughout the full length of the peninsula, but spans more than half its breadth from sea to sea. Upon the Adriatic side the coastal strip is negligible, in its northern half a mere riband barely admitting at some points the passage of a road, then (after the brief interruption of the fertile valley of the Aufidus) expanding towards the heel into a wide moorland plateau, but this so droughty, wind-swept and inhospitable as to play but little part in history proper. It was indeed of no small import to the early fortunes of the Italian folk that their more profitable lands faced not this way towards Greece and the old culture of the Orient, but towards the younger countries of North Africa and Spain. For very different is the other slope of the great watershed. Catching abundant moisture from the south-west winds, it secures considerable fertility even to the valleys which lie high among the mountains, and feeds not ungenerously the numerous



streams and rivers which now serve to water, as they once served to create, the rich alluvium of the Coastal plains. These plains are of no very great extent. Campania is equivalent in area to a fair-sized English county. Latium, the Roman Campagna of to-day, is upwards of a hundred miles in length, but a good walker could cross it at any point within a single day. Undulating in surface, broken by frequent watercourses and occasional low hillocks, its sodden clay, when drained, is particularly fertile—a quality due in part to an early deposit of volcanic ash from neighbouring craters. For volcanoes were once numerous along this western coast. Mount Vesuvius, in Campania, is of course still active. Others, such as the Alban Mount in Latium, became extinct only shortly before historic times. It was to the same volcanic activity that Etruria owed in the first instance its singular formation. It is a confused medley of pleasant valley and wild mountain, water-logged marsh and hill-girt lake—a district which geographically no less than historically lay somewhat separate and aloof from the rest of Italy.

Upon the early history of the country the volcanic nature of this western seaboard had a marked influence. Until some time near the close of the second millennium before Christ the frequency of eruptions must have rendered both Latium and Etruria insecure for human kind; and this region was apparently left almost untenanted by the primitive folk who in the Later Stone Age peopled the other parts of the peninsula. To judge by the finds of archaeologists, these aboriginals were a short, long-headed race, dwelling in rude wigwam huts and preferring pasturage or the chase to agricultural life. Though at one time widely scattered throughout the Italian uplands, they survived, like our own Ancient Britons, only in the wilder and less congenial districts, the Ligurian mountains above Genoa and the moors of Apulia and Calabria in the south-east. Here even in historic times their descendants were still to be found; elsewhere, like the Britons, they suffered early eviction or absorption at the hands of a more intelligent and virile stock—the true Italian race.

The Italians proper came from beyond the Alps. They belonged to that great family of migratory peoples whom we



III. ITALY, ILLUSTRATING EARLY MIGRATIONS

group together under the common name of Indo-European, a tall, fair race whose various branches have played so vital a part in the world's advance towards civilized existence. The original home of this versatile and vigorous folk lay, so far as we can guess, in the plains of the Danube basin; but when they set out upon their wanderings, its members scattered wide. For the language which they spoke and which they carried with them into many different lands, became the basis not of Latin only, but of Greek, of German and Anglo-Saxon, and of Sanskrit, the ancient sacred tongue of Hindustan.<sup>1</sup> The course of their wanderings has never been satisfactorily traced, but some time shortly before the beginning of the Bronze Age we find tribes of this people appearing south of the Alps (c. 2000). They settled first around the northern lakes, living in huts which for safety's sake they erected upon wooden piles planted well out in the water. From about 1500 onwards they began to transfer their dwellings to dry land; and here they did a curious thing. Mindful of their old method of protection, they started by building their new homes also upon wooden piles and surrounding them, when possible, by a wet moat.<sup>2</sup> Even where a supply of water was no longer procurable, they still clung to the tradition and plotted out their villages, as before, on a rectangular pattern, crossed by two main streets intersecting at the middle, and surrounded by a defensive mound and ditch. A strong vein of orderly conservatism ran through the character of this people; and hundreds of years later the Roman military camp still preserved the selfsame plan.

The southward infiltration of the various tribes was, of course, a lengthy process. But bit by bit all the best parts

<sup>1</sup> The kinship of these different languages may be illustrated by such a word as the Sanskrit *Pita*, Greek *πατήρ*, Latin *pater*, German *Vater*, and English *father*.

<sup>2</sup> After long years when these settlements had fallen into decay, their ditches and foundations filled up with agelong debris and the rotted stumps of poles. The rich mould thus formed has been used by modern peasants to manure their fields and is given the name of *terra mara* or 'fertile soil'. Hence the settlements themselves are known by archaeologists as 'Terra mara'.

of Italy were occupied<sup>1</sup>; and in north-west and south-east only were the aboriginal inhabitants left undisturbed. Even Etruria and Latium, where volcanic activity was at last dying down, were entered. Both here and in the adjoining district known as Umbria the settlers' cultural progress was comparatively rapid. By 1000 B.C. they knew the use of iron and (as excavation proves) were not unhandy craftsmen.<sup>2</sup> In the felling of the forests which then covered most of Italy, such skill must have stood them in good stead; and in their woodland clearings agriculture progressed apace. For the new-comers, unlike the aboriginal inhabitants, took kindly to farming. When a group of them settled, it was apparently the custom to apportion out the surrounding land to its individual members, setting aside a common waste for the grazing of all herds and a special demesne for the maintenance of the chief. The members of the group would not, as a rule, dwell separately on scattered farms, but with the same sociable instinct that marked their Hellenic cousins, they would group their homes together on some central ridge or hill-top. Such was the first stage in a political development from which eventually was to grow the City State.

Before, however, we say more of this, a distinction must be made between the tribes which settled on the coastal plain and the tribes which occupied the mountains of the hinterland. These latter—Aequi, Marsi, Hernici, Samnites and the rest—growing their corn and pasturing their flocks in the safe seclusion of their upland valleys, showed little tendency to pass

<sup>1</sup> Three different dialects of the Italian tongue distinguished the main branches of the race—the Umbrian, the Latin, and the Samnite dialects.

<sup>2</sup> This stage of Italian culture has been traced throughout the northern districts by the widespread discovery of cemeteries containing funeral urns, etc. A notable example was found at Villanova, near Bologna, and for this reason the term 'Villanovan' has been applied to the whole range of such settlements. It remains a moot point whether these northern tribes were simply the last comers of the migrant flow, bringing with them the knowledge of iron workmanship, or whether their cultural advance was rather due to commercial contact with Mediterranean peoples, e.g. with the Cretans to whose pottery and bronze implements the Villanovan bear a discernible affinity.

beyond the stage of which we have just been speaking. When a tribe made war, no doubt its scattered members would rally loyally to the common banner ; but the crisis over, there was little to encourage a lasting or more formal union. Cooped in their separate valleys by the surrounding ridges which formed a bar alike to hostile raid or friendly traffic, they had no incentive to coalesce round either a central stronghold or a convenient market. So these isolated communities of scattered dalesmen remained semi-civilized in political stagnation ; and the progressive development of a true city life was reserved for the dwellers on the plain below and in particular for the inhabitants of Latium.

Now between the various branches of the great Indo-European family there is to be observed a striking similarity of early institutions ; so that we find these Latins organized very much as were the Greeks, and, for that matter, as were the Anglo-Saxons too. Among all three the fundamental factor was the family ; and in the primitive Italian communities of which we are now speaking, political organization was based on groups of families termed *curiae* or 'brotherhoods'. By such family groups the votes were taken in the Assembly or *comitium* whose business it was to make laws and choose the chief. The position of the chief, too, was in essence patriarchal ; and his functions were simply those of the *paterfamilias* writ large. Thus, like the father, he held over those beneath him complete authority for life and death not only on the battlefield as leader of the host, but also in time of peace as supreme judge of the people. Like the father, too, he performed the priestly office of propitiatory sacrifice on behalf of those whose chosen representative he was. Finally, for the guidance and assistance of this chief, there was formed a council or senate of experienced elders (or 'patres' as they ever afterwards were called), who themselves were the heads of leading families. In these three institutions—popular assembly, executive king or chief, and senate of advisers—was contained the germ of the future constitution of the City State.

The change from village life to town life was, of course, not swift or simultaneous. But before the end of the seventh

century B.C. the villages of Latium were beginning to coalesce in what we may call cities. Many motives, no doubt, contributed to this end. The mountain-tribes of the hinterland were always predatory; and there was danger of attack, as we shall see, from at least one formidable neighbour. There was simultaneously a growth of commerce which often prompts an urban concentration. Last but not least, there was a neighbourly inclination to unite for religious rites and festivals. So, for one reason or another, groups of adjacent villages drew gradually together, and thus the towns were formed. Nor was this all. For the sense of religious unity extended also among all who called themselves Latins, and upon the basis of this tribal bond there grew up a sort of league or federation between the new-formed towns.<sup>1</sup> The centre of the common cult was Mount Albanus at the middle of the plain. Here once a year was held a general festival and here sacrifice was offered on the tribes' behalf to its chief god Jupiter. How far the members of the League were pledged to the preservation of a mutual peace or to concerted action in event of war, we have no means of telling. But it is safe to say that in the existence of this primitive federation lay the opportunity of any city which might stand forth to take the lead, and by the exertion of a directing will draw the bonds of political unity yet tighter. The opportunity arose, as often in history, through the intervention and temporary domination of an external power; and before we can carry further the story of the towns of Latium, we must first pause to consider what alien intrusion upon Italian soil was already threatening to disturb—as in the issue it was destined to accelerate—the cultural and political growth of the more truly native stock.

The fact is that the stolid Italian agriculturalist needed some impetus from without to stir him into life. Farmers are naturally conservative; and farmers the Italians remained, in sentiment at least, almost throughout their history. For even when the country as a whole had quite abandoned the economic effort to support itself, the cultivation of the soil remained a sort of national pride; and it was not for nothing

<sup>1</sup> These seem to have been about forty in number.

that Vergil, the laureate of the Early Empire, wrote a poem of two thousand lines on the way it should be done. The soil itself, as we have said, was fertile, producing corn and vines fairly adequate to the needs of the early population; and since manufacture for export was at no time seriously undertaken, there was little call or opportunity for large-scale commerce until the growth of empire and the necessities or luxuries of the over-swollen metropolis provided them. The Italians, moreover, were not by instinct sailors. Scarcely any of their cities were placed on the actual coast; and despite its lengthy seaboard, the country was ill-furnished with good harbours except in the south, where, as we shall soon see, Greek colonists were early in possession. In any case, the Italians strangely lacked the spirit of adventure which sent forth the mariners of this kindred race scouring every nook and corner of the middle seas. Cato, a typical Italian, declared that of three regrets with which a long life left him, one was for having made by water a journey which he might just as well have made by land. Such a temper, if left to itself, is instinctively conservative and tenacious of old custom; and had it not been for another countervailing and in some ways contradictory quality, the Italian would never perhaps have left his mark upon the world. For, if not adventurous, he was at least adaptable. When by force of circumstances he came into contact with foreign ways and foreign sciences, he was a ready learner, so that he could assimilate and, having assimilated, pass on to others a culture which of himself he would have been powerless to initiate. Thus, in its maturity and as a result of external influence, the Italian race, though not perhaps spontaneously artistic, was destined to produce much that was beautiful in literature and to evolve a style of architecture as noble as any in the world. Equally, too, in infancy, as we shall now see, the race showed itself teachable, and the young city communities of the Latin plain were to profit by an experience which, though a temporary menace to their political independence, yet did much to civilize their habits and even to consolidate their growing strength—the domination of the Etruscan Kings.

## CHAPTER II

## THE ETRUSCANS AND ROME

## I. ETRUSCANS AND LATIUM

**T**HE Etruscans are one of the enigmas of history. No one can tell from what stock they sprang. For though we possess 8,000 of their inscriptions, the key to their language has never been discovered. No one can even tell for certain from what continent they came. Ancient tradition<sup>1</sup> placed their original home in Asia Minor and corroborative evidence is to be found in their religious customs which at some points suggest affinity with Mesopotamian cults.<sup>2</sup> Be this as it may, they seem to have been a race of adventurous sea-rovers, who, like the Normans of a later epoch, descended in their ships upon some tempting sea-board and, finding it to their taste, made it a lasting home. Like the Normans, too, they were probably few in number, yet able, through the sheer dominance of their masterful personalities, to enforce their will upon the native race. They appear to have been of an unprepossessing character, dour, cruel and self-indulgent, greatly given to carouse and to the spectacle of barbarous sports. Their religion was unlovely, being much concerned with the search for omens in the entrails of slain beasts; and the impression given by the awful figures of their demon-deities is of a people boggy-ridden by the gloomy superstitions of a sinister creed. Their dead were buried with much lavish pomp; and numerous rock-hewn tombs, still extant, bear witness to their great material wealth. Wall-paintings found in these represent them as thick-set and heavy-limbed with supercilious, sensual features; and from

<sup>1</sup> Herodotus (I, 94) asserts that Lydians colonized Umbria, where they built cities and developed considerable sea-power.

<sup>2</sup> Some modern scholars dismiss as mythical this traditional view that Etruscan culture originated with foreign intruders from the Eastern Mediterranean. They regard it as a natural development of the Villanovan culture above mentioned, its language and other non-Italian characteristics being due either to racial intermixture with the survivors of the aboriginal stock or to commercial intercourse with Egypt and Phœnicia.



all we know of them they must have been hard task-masters to any whose fortune it was to fall beneath their sway.

Their arrival in Italy seems to have occurred in the tenth or ninth century B.C. and the district where they settled was the broken mountain country which lay between the Arno and the Tiber, and which was ever after to be known as Etruria or Tuscany. Here the more westerly portion of the Umbrian tribesmen would seem to have been completely mastered; so that these came to serve the conquerors much as the Anglo-Saxons of this island served the Norman overlords, supplying them with produce, furnishing the material for their armies, and labouring for the construction of their formidable castles. For the Etruscans were mighty builders and fortified their hill-top towns with solid walls of rude masonry such as may still be seen at Cortona or Volterra. Such architecture was something new in Italy and it stamps its authors as men of immense energy and resource. Nevertheless, the culture which it represented was not in the main original. For the Etruscans were great borrowers. The flourishing commerce which was the principal source of their wealth not merely supplied them with luxuries and jewels from Carthage, Egypt, Phoenicia and elsewhere, but it also brought them into contact with a civilization vastly superior to their own. For their chief debt was to the Greeks; and of these rival traders who first and last were to do so much for Italy, something must now be said.

The lands and islands of the Aegean basin wherein the Greeks had long since settled, were much worse off for arable than the Italian peninsula; and the settlers were early faced with the uncomfortable problem of a growing population and a shortage of supplies. They solved it by the expedient of sending out their surplus citizens as colonists; and, since the east was already populous, a large proportion of these very naturally sailed west. In the south of Italy and round the shores of Sicily they discovered a country tenanted only by backward peoples who made little serious resistance to their occupation. As early as the eighth century they planted settlements at Cumae just north of Naples, at Rhegium and Sybaris on the toe, and at Tarentum inside the heel of the

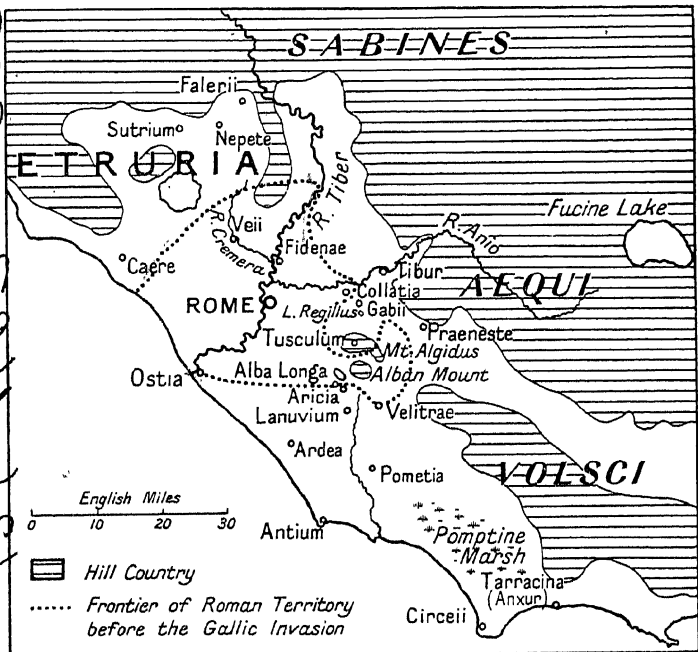
peninsula. At the same epoch Syracuse and other foundations were begun in Sicily, to be followed by many more during the next two hundred years. In their new quarters the colonists found land adequate to their requirements; but, what was more important, they found in many cases good harbourage for their ships, and the sea-going instinct which had brought them over, soon turned them into traders. Among the home-countries of Greece manufacture for export, more especially of pottery, was making progress, and by the seventh century a vigorous traffic was established across the Adriatic. Not a little of the ware found its way into Etruria; and along with it came much else that was even more valuable. From the Greek colonists the Etruscans had already learnt the important art of writing (which, since it had long been known in the eastern lands from which they hailed, they must have forgotten on their wanderings); and the script in which their language has come down to us, was a rude adaptation of the Hellenic alphabet. The Greek type of military equipment was likewise copied, in the shape of metal helmet and round or oval shield. Greek craftsmen were employed to decorate their temples with brightly coloured tiles. Statues were moulded from terracotta, and vases were eventually painted in imitation of Greek models. Thus from first to last it will be seen that Etruscan culture was a second-hand affair.

But it was none the less magnificent. These wealthy potentates could afford to purchase foreign luxuries with the products of their own manufacture. Their metal workers were perhaps the finest of all antiquity; and it may well be that the copper resources of Elba and of the hills about Volterra originally determined their settlement upon these coasts. From the Italian inhabitants of their domain they could exact tribute or farm produce. They could set them to build aqueducts or sewers; and in one district which they ruled, excavation has disclosed a system of land drainage so extensive that it could scarcely have been undertaken except by serf-labourers working under the direction of some overlord. All, in fact, that we know of these masterful men's methods points to a considerable talent for organi-

zation and a high degree of individual energy. For their success was not due to any unity of control. They acknowledged no common king, but their various towns, while linked in a loose federation, were ruled each by a separate and independent prince.

The sons or brothers of such princes were little likely to

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R. C.

IV. LATIUM DURING THE MONARCHY AND EARLY REPUBLIC

remain inactive when they might carve out neighbouring kingdoms for themselves, and the expansion of Etruscan power was a foregone conclusion. The Apennines were crossed and numerous cities planted in the valley of the Po. Southward, too, there lay a tempting bait in the rich Campanian country where the Greek colonists of Cumae

were already so prosperously installed. Early in the seventh century the attempt upon Campania was begun, apparently with some success. But, though a footing might be won there by the use of ships, the district could scarcely have been held in permanence without an overland approach; and directly across the route of such approach lay the Italian communities of the Latin plain<sup>1</sup> which already at this epoch (as we have seen above) were beginning to coalesce in cities for concerted self-defence. It was upon these cities, accordingly, that the Etruscans' effort now centred. From Veii which they had occupied betimes, they struck south across the Tiber, seized Fidenae, then Praeneste, and thus established an inland route into Campania. But it was not the best route. Some way below Fidenae and about a dozen miles from the coast, the Tiber is divided by an island in mid-channel, and a handy crossing-point thus furnished for the march of armies or the passage of peaceful trade. This important key-position is rendered easily defensible by the group of low hills which here straddle either bank; and to the advantage of the site the early Latins had not of course been blind. For on it stood a city which hitherto indeed has called for no special mention, but which towards the end of the seventh century, when the Etruscans were seeking to extend their hold over the southward route through Latium, became suddenly a central factor in the political situation—Rome.

## II. PREVIOUS HISTORY OF ROME

The origin of Rome is veiled in obscurity. Excavation has proved that there were settlements upon the site at least as early as 1000 B.C. The Romans themselves dated the city's foundation at 753; but since the early records were probably destroyed in the Gallic sack, such estimate was pure guesswork. In default of accurate knowledge they had recourse to legends; and these their earliest annalists

<sup>1</sup> The reason why the conquest of Latium was not undertaken *first* probably lay in the swampy character of its terrain, which required much draining before it could be properly exploited. This was subsequently carried out in some districts under Etruscan occupation.

borrowed or adapted from Greek writers, who, being interested in Italy as the home of their colonists, had sought to connect the origin of Latin towns with their own saga poetry and in particular with the mythological heroes of the Trojan War. Some adjustment of the Greek account was required to fit chronology, and the version which ultimately emerged was as follows :

Aeneas, the Trojan, having sailed to the Tiber mouth and founded Lavinium upon the Latin shore, his son Ascanius (or as the Romans had it, Iulus) proceeded farther inland to found Alba Longa. After a number of generations sufficient to span the required interval of time, the Alban throne descended to a certain Numitor but was usurped by his bad brother Amulius. His daughter Rhea Silvia, however, despite all the usurper's precautions, was wed by the god Mars and bore to him the famous twins, Romulus and Remus. These, though consigned to the waters of the Tiber, were washed ashore by a flood, and thanks to the maternal offices of a she-wolf, survived, grew up, slew Amulius, restored Numitor, and determined to build a new town for themselves. A dispute about the site was decided by omens in favour of Romulus's choice of the Palatine Hill. A wall was begun and Remus killed for ironically jumping over it. Refugees from other cities came at the founder's invitation to swell the population ; and wives were rudely captured from friendly Sabines at a religious festival.<sup>1</sup> Time healed the resulting feud ; and there followed the joint reign of the Sabine Titus Tatius who fell fighting at Lavinium and Romulus who was miraculously translated to the skies.

Such fairy-tales contain perhaps some foundation of fact. It seems almost certain that the earliest settlers whose cremated dead have been found hard by in the valley of the

<sup>1</sup> The origin of the story of the Rape of the Sabine women is doubtless to be traced to the Roman marriage custom, whereby the bride was forcibly carried over her future husband's threshold. The real motive of the act was probably connected with the belief in the magical influences surrounding a virgin bride, which had thus rudely to be snapped ; but the legend of the Rape was invented as an explanation by a later and more enlightened generation.

Forum must have made their original home on the Palatine Hill. Excavation further proves that some time in the eighth century the neighbouring hills were occupied by other squatters whose dead were not burnt but buried, and who hailed in all probability from the Sabine hinterland. Some sort of religious union was presently formed between the various settlements upon the Seven Hills; and in the course of the next century when similar acts of fusion were taking place, as we have seen, among many other village groups of Latium, these also coalesced to form one city—henceforward to be known as Rome. The name itself is of Etruscan origin; and it is likely enough that the act of political fusion which brought the city into being was due to the menace of Etruscan power. Apart from this, there is no real reason to suppose (as some historians have done) that Etruscan interference or even Etruscan influence was felt at Rome until half a century or more had passed. On this point tradition was quite definite, and tradition from this time forward can no longer be ignored.

It was during the course of the third century B.C. that the tales of Early Rome, long treasured by a people intensely proud of their ancestral lineage, began to take the shape in which we know them. A chronology based upon purely artificial calculations was worked out by the Elder Cato and Varro. By the first century B.C. legal experts and antiquarians were beginning to interest themselves in early political and religious institutions and to elaborate theories which not unnaturally were often coloured by their knowledge of later developments; and the version which finally emerged from this continuous rehandling is to be found very brilliantly and attractively told in the first Book of Livy. The details of the story are often, of course, more picturesque than credible; and due allowance must be made for the interpretations of historians whose methods were anything but scientific. Nevertheless, in its main outline at least, the tradition has much value and will be found to square not merely with probabilities, but also with known facts.

According to Livy's version, then, the three first kings,

out of the six who followed Romulus, were either of Latin or of Sabine stock. The first was Numa Pompilius, a Sabine<sup>1</sup> and son-in-law to Titus Tatius. He was a man of peace, and to him was ascribed the authorship of many of the city's religious institutions—in particular the annual cycle of public festivals and the foundation of the priestly 'colleges' or guilds. Behind this tradition we may probably detect a substantial element of truth. In primitive Rome religion, like much else, was in the main a family concern; and even festal celebrations at harvest-home and such-like must hitherto have been conducted by groups of families. But with the process of political amalgamation was closely connected, as we have seen above, a tendency towards religious union also; so that nothing seems more probable than that some early monarch, acting as the city's supreme religious representative, should have reorganized such festivals upon a broader basis and made them henceforward the business of the State.<sup>2</sup> For the better maintenance of the public cults, moreover, were appointed official guilds of *pontifices* or *flamines*. Apart from their sacred functions, these men remained mere laymen; for there was no such thing as a clerical caste at Rome. But the creation of their office marked the inauguration of a state religion which was in many ways unique in the ancient world; nor is it too much to say that it prepared the way for the institutional organization of the Imperial Christian Church.

The next king, Tullus Hostilius, was a Latin, and in contrast to his predecessor a man of war. His great achievement was the destruction of Alba Longa. Little heed need be paid to the romantic legend of the famous duel in which the three Horatii twins were pitted against the three Curiatii

<sup>1</sup> It is interesting to note that 'pompe' was the Sabine form of the Latin 'quinque' (= five), bearing an obvious affinity to the Greek equivalent *πέντε*.

<sup>2</sup> In the Calendar of Julius Caesar certain feasts were distinguished by larger lettering; and since these were mainly concerned with agricultural operations and thus characteristic of a primitive stage of society, the extreme antiquity of the cycle can scarcely stand in doubt.

of Alba and which notwithstanding the death of his two brothers the wife of the surviving Roman won. There seems, however, good reason for supposing that Alba was actually destroyed; for by the middle of the sixth century, the headquarters of the Latin League seems to have been transferred thence to Aricia.

Ancus Martius, the grandson of Numa and the third king to receive the throne, is also said to have made successful war on other Latin cities. But more interesting is the tradition that he threw a bridge on wooden piles across the Tiber and founded the port of Ostia at the river-mouth. Commercial motives alone can have dictated these activities; and the bridge itself could lead only to Etruria. Contact with the great traders of the north would now, in fact, appear to have begun; and from about the year 600 there is much evidence to show that Etruscan culture took root within the city. What is more, tradition asserted that two at least of the three succeeding kings were of Etruscan origin; and there can be little doubt that we have now reached the point at which, as we showed above, the Etruscans were pushing southward across the Latin plain and Rome thus became a vital factor in their policy.

### III. THE ETRUSCAN KINGS OF ROME

How the Etruscan Kings won the city remains something of a mystery. Tradition gives no hint of forcible capture, nor indeed, at the outset, of a foreign garrison. The first Tarquin, we are told, came to Rome in peaceful fashion, driving his wife Tanaquil unromantically in a cart; and like the kings that preceded him, he was promoted to the throne by popular selection. There was, we know, a quarter in Rome which went under the name of the *Vicus Tuscus* or Etruscan alley. From this we may infer that traders from Etruria had been allowed to settle in the city and that early in the sixth century one more masterful and ambitious than the rest was able, despite his alien origin, to establish himself at the head of affairs. In Greece during the same epoch Athens was under the control of the great merchant princes Pisistratus and his sons. And indeed in



many ways there is a curiously close parallel between the so-called tyranny of the Pisistratids and the rule of the Etruscan Kings at Rome. Both were established in power upon the basis of popular support. Both governed upon more or less constitutional lines and followed a patriotic and enlightened policy, adorning their city with many useful and splendid monuments and giving them larger ambitions and wider contact with the outside world. Both resorting, however, in their later years to insolent behaviour, met their fate at the hands of an outraged nobility and left to the republican democracies that followed them an undying detestation of monarchical power.

At the beginning of the sixth century Rome, as we have seen, was a city of no great account, little more than a coveted pawn in the Etruscan movement south towards Campania. There followed the reign of three kings, first Tarquin the Elder<sup>1</sup> of whom we spoke above, then Servius Tullius, an Etruscan by a somewhat late and dubious legend, a Latin by a more probable and earlier, but in any case a continuer of Tarquin's policy, and reputed (probably for no better reason than that his name was Servius) to have served in Tarquin's household as a 'slave'. Third and last came the second Tarquin whom tradition surnamed 'the proud', and whose unpopular régime was openly supported by military assistance from Etruria. When at the close of the sixth century this monarch was driven from power, Rome was no longer insignificant; she was a power in the land, and the success of the policy which thus transformed her status was due beyond a doubt to the Etruscan genius for commerce and organization.

The number of Etruscan merchants settled in the city can never have been large; for no Etruscan tombs have as yet been discovered in the vicinity. In the sixth century, nevertheless, trade grew at Rome. Even maritime traffic of some sort there clearly must have been; for in a treaty made with Carthage just before the century's close a guarantee was given that no Roman *ship* should sail west

<sup>1</sup> Tarquin almost certainly was a title, not a name: derived from an Etruscan word '*Tarchon*' = Lord or King.

of the Fair Promontory.<sup>1</sup> The Tiber-mouth offered a safe landing for the shallow-built craft of the day, and, as the river current was too swift for sailing, goods could be either rowed up-stream or carried by pack beasts. Probably, however, it was as a centre of overland traffic that Rome thrived most. She possessed the all-important bridge-head on the nearest caravan route between Etruria and the South. She commanded the approach to the valuable salt-beds at the Tiber-mouth; and there can be little doubt that toll-dues taken upon passing merchandise were a principal source of her revenue.

That her wealth was considerable under the rule of the later kings is best shown perhaps by the extensive improvements which were made during the period within the city itself. For though part of the labour which these works involved was imposed upon the unwilling citizens, yet heavy expenses must necessarily have been incurred by the purchase of material and the hire of foreign craftsmen. In any case, as we have said, the Etruscans knew how to make a town, and in the first place the planning of Rome was now seriously taken in hand. The use of the Forum as a burying-ground was discontinued from 600 B.C. onwards. Its low-lying marsh was drained by a vaulted sewer (*cloaca maxima*), which was cut down to the Tiber; and the site was thus rendered fit to become the market-place and the centre of public and political life. Then under Servius Tullius were built the city's first permanent defences. The 'Servian Wall', as it was called, was raised on a moated mound or *agger*, still traceable in parts, and if constructed of masonry would seem mostly to have been replaced after the Gallic sack of 390.<sup>2</sup> Its circuit represented some en-

<sup>1</sup> Probably Cape Farina on the African coast near Carthage. The object of the provision was to close the Libyan and Spanish ports to rival shipping and so give Carthage a monopoly of western trade. From the fact that Rome accepted such restriction of her activities at sea, it has been plausibly argued that these activities were as yet insignificant, and that the Carthaginian formula was one which the great trading city imposed indiscriminately on *all* neighbouring seaboard states seeking her alliance.

<sup>2</sup> It is possible, indeed, that the Servian 'Wall' originally consisted of no more than an earthen 'agger' and a timber palisade.

largement of the city's previous area ; for besides the Capitol, Palatine and other hills which surround the Forum, it enclosed the Aventine on the south-west and part of the Esquiline on the north-east. The most notable examples, however, of the period's architecture (as is generally the case in a primitive community) were to be found in the temples now erected to the gods. On the Aventine Servius Tullius built a temple to Diana, intended probably to be the centre of the federal cult of Latium. Its prestige, however, was easily eclipsed by the Temple of Jupiter which his successor, the second Tarquin, completed on the Capitol. This sumptuous shrine was constructed in Etruscan style, containing three aisles within to hold the images of Jupiter, Juno and Minerva, and furnished in front with a gabled portico supported on six columns. Its decoration consisted of brilliantly coloured terra-cotta tiles overlaying a timber structure ; and in contrast to the rude dwellings of the inhabitants below it must have presented an appearance of most imposing grandeur. We are told that they grudged the toil of its construction ; but in their eyes no less than in the eyes of neighbouring peoples we may well believe that the possession of such a monument lent a new air of dignity and importance to the growing town.

Among these later kings, however, we find something more than vigorous commercial and architectural enterprise. One at least of their number was a statesman ; and perhaps the most important achievement of the period was his thoroughgoing reorganization of Rome's civic life. It was universally reputed to have been the work of Servius Tullius<sup>1</sup> ; and, as might have been expected, was typical of a régime in which a new importance was coming to be attached to wealth. It divided all the citizens into 'classes' not according to birth or locality, but simply according to what each was worth ; and, as was his place in this new classification, so

<sup>1</sup> Rostovtzeff considers that the 'Servian' Constitution and in particular the military reorganization was really instituted after the Gallic sack of 390, when the necessity of incorporating the plebeian element as an integral part of the army became obvious and urgent.

was allotted to every man, from the richest to the poorest, his share of duty or of privilege. On the classification was based, in the first place, his contribution to the war-tax. This was the only form of levy employed in early Rome; and, since to facilitate its collection the population was further divided geographically into local wards or 'tribes', it came to be known as the 'tributum'. Next the classification determined in which rank of the army each citizen should serve. In days when individuals supplied their own equipment, such an arrangement was plain sense. The very rich who could afford to keep a war-horse, rode in the cavalry. The moderately rich who could afford heavy armour, served in the front ranks of the foot.<sup>1</sup> The remaining classes of poorer citizens who could afford no more than light equipment, marched in reserve. The numbers contributed by each class were reckoned, it would seem, by 'centuries';<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The classification, as it has come down to us, is as follows:—

Equites (Cavalry) . . . . .	18 centuries	} 98 centuries
Heavy Foot . . . . . over 100,000 <i>asses</i>	80 „	
Lighter Foot . . . . . { over 75,000 <i>asses</i>	20 „	} 93 centuries
{ over 50,000 <i>asses</i>	20 „	
Light Spearmen { over 25,000 <i>asses</i>	20 „	
Slings . . . . . { over 11,000 <i>asses</i>	30 „	
Smiths . . . . .	2 „	
Proletarians . . . . .	1 century	

The details of this schedule present great difficulties. In the first place, it is hard to see how at so early a date the value of men's properties could have been accurately assessed. Secondly, since Rome possessed no coined currency till the middle of the fourth century, the assessment by 'asses' looks like an anachronism. Lastly, the values given seem absurdly high for the period. In fact, the details of the schedule probably represent an attempt of later constitutional experts to reconstruct the original classification on the basis of later developments. In all likelihood Servius's methods of assessment were a rough calculation of acreage and number of herds, etc.

<sup>2</sup> In its political sense quite certainly, and in its military sense quite possibly, the 'century' had come by now to represent something more than a strictly numerical unit of 100. In his description of the German tribes (a people, we must remember, of kindred stock to the Italians) Tacitus speaks of the 'hundred' as a group of leading warriors and implies that in his day at least it was a title rather than an actual number. It may originally have been the quota contributed by each canton or group of families.

and, since the poorly equipped masses were clearly less useful as fighting material, it followed that the centuries drawn from their ranks were fewer than the centuries drawn from the well-equipped rich. This fact had, as we shall see, an important bearing on the political side of the Servian Reform.

In the main framework of the constitution, indeed, this reform produced no change. The Senate were still to sit, as before, and give advice. The Assembly of citizens was still to meet and make laws or choose the king. What Servius revolutionized was the method of voting in Assembly. The Roman voting-system was peculiar. Instead of the principle 'one man, one vote' the views of the people were ascertained by groups; and, though each man's individual vote would, of course, influence the verdict of his group, the group-vote was the unit that ultimately counted. Hitherto the old family-groups, termed 'curiae' or brotherhoods, had remained the basis of political organization; and in a primitive state of society where such a unit still had a strong religious association as well as a political, it was peculiarly difficult to break clean away from traditional usage. So for certain ceremonial purposes the Assembly-by-brotherhoods or *comitia curiata* was permitted to survive. Its more important functions, however, were transferred to another form of assembly brigaded according to the Servian classification. In the new Assembly—which for this reason was known as the *comitia centuriata*—the group-unit was to be the century, each 'class' being allotted the same number of centuries as it was due to supply to the army. The result was that the rich, though in a numerical inferiority, now commanded an actual majority of group-units and so could outvote the far more numerous poor. There was, indeed, some justice in a system whereby those who bore the chief burden of fighting and financing the city's wars, should also possess the chief voice in directing the city's course. But besides justice there was also deliberate policy; and the real effect of the Servian classification was to organize the community for almost every purpose as a soldier-state. The very word 'classis' appears originally to have borne a mili-

tary significance<sup>1</sup> and to have meant a 'call-to-arms'. For public business the Assembly-by-centuries was marshalled almost as for parade. It met on the Campus Martius or drill-ground. A bugler sounded the summons. During session a red flag was hoisted on the Capitol; and the discipline of the voters was much admired by those accustomed to the turbulence of similar assemblies in Greece. Thus early in its history, for better or for worse, was the stamp of militarism set upon the institutions of the Roman people; and the habit of orderly conduct and obedience to authority became with them a sort of second nature. For actual warfare they were superb material, dogged and tough to a degree, and already at this epoch their superiority in arms was beginning to give them an ascendancy over the neighbouring towns. For under the last three kings there was a marked advance in external no less than in domestic policy; and to this we must now turn.

Rome, as we have already hinted, was not the only city of Latium to pass under Etruscan control. Fidenae and Praeneste upon her eastern flank had early fallen victims; and now on the south Velitrae, Tusculum, Lanuvium and Ardea had suffered a similar fate. Latium was, in fact, being rapidly carved up into a series of Etruscan principalities; and it was in a measure due to the later Roman monarchs that its League did not suffer complete disruption. For their policy was manifestly to claim for Rome the hegemony of the Latin plain. We are told that the Elder Tarquin made war upon the Latins from whom he annexed Collatia. Servius Tullius is known to have made a treaty with them; and in building his temple to Diana on the Aventine he probably aimed at making Rome instead of Aricia the religious centre of the League. It was perhaps with the same intention that his successor, the second Tarquin, erected his great temple on the Capitol. But it was rather by war than by peaceful methods that

<sup>1</sup> 'Classis' (like the Greek *ἐκκλησία*) was derived from the same root as the Greek *καλέω* = call. So 'classicus' was the name given to the bugler who sounded the 'summons'. The term 'classis navalis' was applied to the fleet, and then later simply 'classis'.

this monarch sought to make his way. We are told that he fought against Gabii and Ardea, and even carried his arms as far south as Suessa Pometia near the Volscian border. Under his rule her oppression of the Latins made Rome downright unpopular; and, if evidence be needed of the wide area of her influence, it is to be found in the terms of the treaty above mentioned which Rome made with Carthage in the year of the Tarquin's fall.<sup>1</sup> For in return for certain restrictions upon the movements of Rome's shipping, the Carthaginians undertook to abstain from interference upon Latin soil, and 'to do no injury to the people of Ardea, Antium, Laurentum, Circeii, Tarracina nor to any other people of the Latins that are *subject to Rome*'. This condition reveals a Roman hegemony of Latium which can only have resulted from a deliberate policy upon the part of the later kings and which must have owed its stability, in part at least, to the city's military strength as reorganized by Servius and used by the second Tarquin.

The fact is—as might be inferred from his title of Superbus or the Proud—that this Tarquin was a man of more aggressive and imperious character than any of his predecessors. At Rome he seems to have maintained his power by means of an armed bodyguard and with the support of his brother-princes of Etruria. His rule, indeed, was so tyrannical as to bring upon the monarchy an odium which it had never previously excited; and his ultimate overthrow was not unmerited. The story is well known—how Sextus, Tarquin's son, outraged the noble lady Lucretia and how she, summoning her husband and his friends Valerius and Brutus, first made confession of her shame and then before their very eyes drove a dagger to her heart: how Brutus, vowing vengeance and rallying the people to the cause of liberty, drove out the Tarquin and his followers; and how these with the aid of Veii and other Etruscan towns, made an ineffectual effort to recover Rome (510). Armed intervention from Etruria is indeed one of the most marked

<sup>1</sup> Though unsupported by other historians, the evidence of Polybius, who apparently saw this treaty on the Capitol, is probably to be regarded as reliable.

features of the story ; for after Tarquin's repulse the famous Lars Porsenna of Clusium, raising the powerful levies of the north, came down on Rome, captured the Janiculan Hill which guarded the Tiber bridge-head and was only held back from crossing by the single-handed defence of Horatius Cocles, the celebrated hero of Macaulay's lay. The war dragged on, Lars Porsenna was joined by his son-in-law the Prince of Tusculum and by many Latin towns who detested Rome's hegemony. At one time he appears to have captured the city ; for an inscription of his has been found forbidding the inhabitants the use of iron weapons. Nevertheless, their spirit was not quelled ; and near Tusculum took place the culminating battle of Lake Regillus in which, according to the story, the great Twin Brethren, Castor and Pollux, appeared on snow-white steeds, fighting for Rome in the forefront of the fray. Their intervention was apparently decisive. The enemy was beaten and the city at last free (496).

Despite the excesses and the unpopularity of the last Tarquin Rome owed much to the period of Etruscan rule. It had made her in the full sense a city. It had raised her to a high position in the land. Above all, it had given her a political and military organization well fitted to carry her forward along the paths of future conquest. Of the customs and cultural tradition which it bequeathed to her, some traces at least may be noted. From Etruria came, as we may guess, the Hellenic type of armour which her soldiers used and presumably the tactics of the close-packed phalanx which naturally accompanied it. From Etruria came quite certainly the insignia of her magistrates—the ivory chair and the axes bound together in a rod-bundle called the *fascēs*. Thence, too, came a considerable elaboration of her augurs' art, the interpretation of omens found in entrails and the demarcation of the regions of the sky for the observation of the flight of birds. In the sphere of religion proper (of which more shall be said anon) we may at least notice one important innovation due to Etruscan influence ; for the deities of Rome, hitherto conceived as formless and invisible, were endowed with human shape



and their images set up in public shrines. It was indeed to the Etruscan artists, themselves borrowers in turn from the Hellenic models, that Rome's greatest debt was due. The erection of Temples by the later kings set a fashion which the Republic was not slow to follow. The walls of Servius, too, may have provided an example of solid masonry likely to exert an influence in days to come.<sup>1</sup> Above all, the arch itself, first introduced at Rome under the Etruscan Kings and so earlier perhaps than elsewhere in the peninsula,<sup>2</sup> cannot have failed to impress its value upon later Roman builders, and so to assist in the evolution of a style peculiar to their genius, in which the column-and-beam construction, first borrowed from the Greeks, was surmounted by the stately contours of arch or rounded vault. Its architecture is, as a rule, symbolic of a people's spirit ; and along with the architectural tradition which Rome took from the Etruscans, it may well be that she received another heritage. For it is not perhaps too fanciful to see in the massive and enduring dignity of her national character and institutions, as well as of her actual masonry, something which in the last resort was drawn from that proud, imperious people who had done so much to shape and launch her in the early years.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See, however, note on p. 20.

<sup>2</sup> The origin of the arch, so characteristic a feature of Roman building, is a much-debated question. It was known in Egypt as early as 3500. In Italy its use seems to originate with the period of Etruscan rule at Rome. There are small arched drains in the Forum dating from the sixth century, and probably the vaulting of the cloaca maxima belongs to the same epoch. The arched gateways in Etruria proper, e.g. at Perugia and Volterra, are not earlier than the fourth or third centuries B.C.

<sup>3</sup> It should not be forgotten that much Etruscan blood must have flowed in the veins of many noble families at Rome.

## CHAPTER III

## THE REPUBLIC AND ITS ORDEAL

## I. THE REPUBLICAN CONSTITUTION

**I**N the early stages of most political societies the backbone of the State was to be found in an aristocracy of landowners. For in days when the stern competitive struggle to survive turned mainly upon the possession and exploitation of the soil, it was inevitable that the successful landowners should take the lead. Such men (especially if they or their ancestors had been first-comers on the ground) would tend to arrogate to themselves the conduct of religious rites, to claim a superior knowledge of the law's unwritten custom, to raise their voice in political debate, in a word, to monopolize the control of public life at the expense of late-comers or less successful rivals. The exercise of power, moreover, begets exclusiveness; and an aristocracy of merit passes almost insensibly into an aristocracy of birth. For in order to reinforce and perpetuate their leadership these men would claim for their sons and successors the special prerogatives which they had themselves enjoyed; and so would arise the theory (to which their traditional monopoly of religious offices would lend an almost magical significance) that their families were endowed with a unique superiority of blood. So it was at Athens where in early days the well-born or 'Eupatrids' controlled the State; and so, too, it was at Rome where the self-styled noble or '*patrician*' families had come to form a caste from whose powers and privileges the rest of the citizens—the commoners or *plebeians*—were rigidly excluded. Even under the monarchy these patrician families must have been extremely powerful. To them far more than to the common people the elected kings must have owed their elevation to the throne and their security of its tenure; nor until the final crisis of the Regifugium is there any real evidence of friction. It is probable, indeed, that the Etruscan Kings attempted to broaden the basis of the aristocracy by extending a share of its privileges to other wealthy folk. The

Elder Tarquin, we know, had added a hundred new members to the Senate, and it is possible that these were representatives of the growing commercial element. But it is unlikely that the measure had any permanent result. Among a people who were almost entirely agricultural and who possessed no coined currency or other handy method of exchange, wealth was bound to consist mainly of property in land; so that the aristocracy of early Rome remained in any case an aristocracy of landowners. The chief effect of the Etruscan monarchy, indeed, had been to render this aristocracy still more exclusive. Under Servius's 'classification', as we have seen, the peculiar voting-system of the Centuriate Assembly had virtually established the ascendancy of the wealthier class as a constitutional right; and that right received, as it were, a further reinforcement from the circumstances which attended the expulsion of the Tarquin. For the work of liberation stood to the credit of the aristocracy; and to the aristocracy, as a natural consequence, fell both the duty and the opportunity of framing the constitution for the new Republic (509).

Aristocracies are commonly conservative; and Rome, in any case, where respect for custom was immensely strong, was not the place to look for sudden innovation. So, when it came to the point of establishing the Republic, very little in fact was changed. The Servian Constitution, which already held the field, was peculiarly adapted for the purposes of war, and at a time when the levies of Etruria were actively threatening the city's liberty, such a system had manifest advantages. So the Servian Constitution was allowed to stand. The supreme decision in the creation of laws and the election of the city's representatives was left, as before, in the hands of the Centuriate Assembly, in which the method of group-voting assured the richer classes of a clear majority. Only in the sphere of what we may almost call religious functions—such as the ceremonial investiture of elected magistrates—did the old Assembly-by-brotherhoods survive; and the office of *pontifex maximus* or high-priest, who now assumed the monarch's place at the head of the State-cults,

was equally divorced from all political authority.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, the monarch's more important powers as supreme executive, generalissimo and judge, were now vested in a new form of magistracy—the one genuine innovation of the Republican régime, the Consulate.<sup>2</sup> This office, though limited in tenure to one year, endowed its holder with an authority so complete and so unfettered that only a people inured to the arbitrary discipline of the drill-ground could long have tolerated it. More often than not, of course, Rome was at war; and it was inevitable that, as head of the army, the consul should wield wide powers. But even in time of peace his '*imperium*', as it was called, resembled less a civil than a military command. Thus over the lives of citizens he exercised an absolute discretion; and, though by an early concession,<sup>3</sup> appeal was allowed to the Assembly's verdict, this only applied within the radius of the city itself. Outside that limit there was no appeal. The consul was there considered to be 'on active service' and might scourge and execute at will.

Besides his military duties, the consul was also responsible for justice and finance; and for his assistance he was given two subordinates, called inquisitors or '*quaestors*', who, besides their function of criminal arrest, had charge of the State treasury. Even so the magnitude of his administrative task was excessive for one man. Yet it was not so much to ease the consul's burden as to set some limit to his tremendous power that he was invariably given a colleague—and a colleague with authority equal to his own. A talent for reconciling the most glaring contradictions and for work-

<sup>1</sup> The Rex sacrorum, another religious official, was clearly a survival of the monarchical régime.

<sup>2</sup> It is probable that the actual name of 'consul' was not employed for some while after the formation of the Republic; the first reference to it seems to be contained in the 'consular' power conferred on the Decemviri in 451. The title originally given to the supreme magistrate was 'praetor' = prae-itor or one who goes at the head of the host (whence the general's headquarters in camp was always known as the praetorium). Some authorities even doubt whether a *dual* magistracy belongs to the early period of the Republic.

<sup>3</sup> The Lex Valeria de provocatione or Valerian law of appeal passed in the first year of the Republic.

ing a system apparently unworkable, was always characteristic of the political life of Rome; but in nothing was it so clearly displayed as in the extraordinary fact that throughout five centuries of her history as a free Republic she annually elected a pair of consuls each armed alike with absolute authority and each entitled, if he wished, to place a decisive veto on his colleague's actions. As a precaution against the return of monarchy (for which it doubtless was designed) such a scheme had manifest advantages; but at moments of special crisis—by no means infrequent in the coming years—a divided control was apt to become intolerable; and in the last resort a 'dictator'<sup>1</sup> might be appointed to supersede the consuls normally for a period of six months. This exception apart, the dual system worked with surprising success. The men who were called upon to take office at Rome were bred to a strong tradition of cautious sanity and self-restraint. They were ready, as a rule, to subordinate their individual ambitions to the common weal; and, what perhaps was more important, custom demanded that they should listen to competent advice.

For it must not be forgotten that, as under the monarchy, so too under the Republic the executive was expected to rely in no small degree upon the guiding direction of the Senate. This body of approximately 300 elders, chosen in the first instance by the consuls and holding office for life, wielded an influence which was inevitably destined to increase with time. More easily convened and more fitted for debate than the unwieldy Centuriate Assembly, and able by virtue of their lifelong tenure to handle policy with more skill and continuity than consuls who kept changing year by year, this powerful body became insensibly the chief organ of government, until in the third and second centuries B.C. it ruled supreme in Rome, regulating and directing all acts of the executive, preparing legislative matter for discussion in the Assembly and finally, if need were, refusing

<sup>1</sup> Normally the consuls themselves appointed the dictator. As commander of the *infantry* he had no control over the cavalry, the commander of which he himself invariably appointed, as his *magister equitum* or 'master of horse'.

even to ratify the Assembly's vote. What, however, at the outset is more specially to be noted, the Senate was essentially an aristocratic house. It was in fact the stronghold of the narrow caste of the patrician families. Promotion to it was dependent, in early times at least, upon the consul's choice; and, if patricians were usually chosen, it was for the excellent reason that the consuls themselves were invariably patricians. For custom, long moulded by patricians in the patrician interest, declared that a mere plebeian, unversed in the interpretation of the State's unwritten code and ignorant of the high mysteries of religious lore, was unworthy to undertake an office endowed with so tremendous a responsibility and deriving its very sanction from the immortal gods.

The plebeian's disabilities were, accordingly, threefold. He might not hold the consulship; he was virtually excluded from the Senate; and in the Assembly, though he had his place therein, he was outvoted. Other grievances he had, both social and economic. But it was highly significant of Rome's future development that even among the more downtrodden of her citizens there existed at so early a date the rare political instinct which urged them at all costs to win for themselves their rightful place within the constitution. The plebeians were among the sturdiest agitators of history; and the story of Rome's progress during the next hundred and fifty years is largely the story of their long-fought struggle and of their slow but certain triumph. So much, however, were the varied fortunes of that struggle affected by the events of Rome's external history that it will be well to turn our attention first to these.

## II. EARLY WARS OF THE REPUBLIC: 500-390

Rome at the Tarquin's fall was still geographically a tiny state. Its territory extended up the Tiber very little, if at all, beyond the Anio, and down the Tiber to the river-mouth—an area certainly not greater than three or four hundred square miles. What importance it possessed lay, therefore, in the twofold heritage of the Etruscan rule—first, the beginnings of an external trade conducted in part at least

by sea and recognized apparently by Carthage as an unwelcome intrusion on her own preserves.<sup>1</sup> For such trade the patrician landowners, who were now Rome's governors, showed small concern. Farming was their business and as the treaty which they made with Carthage shows, they gladly relinquished or curtailed their liberty of sea-traffic to secure the *quid pro quo* of a free hand in Latium. As a result trade dwindled to nothing. Traces of foreign imports which even under the monarchy were inconsiderable, are almost wholly absent from the archaeological finds of the early Republic. For nearly two centuries the city would appear to have lost contact with the outer world; and her new governors, lacking the wider outlook of their commercially-minded predecessors, concentrated their attention on the other part of their heritage—the hegemony of Latium. Even this, as the immediate issue proved, they were incapable of maintaining.

In 509, as is indicated by the terms of the Carthaginian Treaty, such a hegemony was at any rate half-won. But it was deeply resented; and when, about the time that Rome drove out the Tarquin, the other Latin cities succeeded in ridding themselves of their own Etruscan masters, they seem soon to have used their new liberty to unite afresh in a League which not merely was independent of the unpopular city, but even ready to assist the late tyrants in destroying her. Lars Porsenna, as we have seen, received help from south of Tiber; and it was doubtless in a desperate effort to placate its growing enmity that Rome now came to an understanding with the new Latin League. On the initiative, it seems, of Spurius Cassius and in the second or third year after the Battle of Regillus, a treaty of alliance was arranged (493) in which Rome frankly abandoned her claim to the hegemony and took her place beside her sister towns on a footing of strict equality. The treaty enacted that even command in war was to be shared, and the spoils of victory evenly divided. Still more significant was the clause which provided that if a citizen of any allied town traded in any other, his contracts should be recognized therein

<sup>1</sup> See, however, footnote on p. 20.

as binding at law. So early a recognition of common private rights as between her own and her allies' citizens is characteristic of Rome's strong legal instinct. It formed the very foundation-stone of the system whereby she was so successfully to weld together the heterogeneous members of her future domain.

Such restoration of Latin unity came none too soon. Both from the Etruscans on the north and from mountain-tribes on the south danger was imminent and incessant, so that on and off throughout the century Rome and her Latin allies were fighting for very life. The brunt of the southern attack fell, of course, upon the Latins. Very early in the century the half-civilized inhabitants of the Volscian mountains which divide Latium from Campania, were tempted down from their less profitable uplands by the lure of rich farms and fair cities in the vale below (c. 480). From Tarra-cina to Antium they swept the coastal plain, and pushed past Velitrae towards Tusculum. A highly dubious legend brought even Rome herself within the ambit of their raids, telling how Coriolanus, driven under ban of exile to join the Volscian enemy and leading them back against his native town, was prevented only by his mother's prayers from putting it to the sack. Meanwhile from the south-east the Aequi, a neighbouring hill-tribe and allied to the Volscians, were battering at Latium's other flank; and towards the middle of the century disaster was but narrowly averted by another famous Roman, Cincinnatus, who, being summoned at the crisis to become dictator, was discovered on his farm, so the tradition goes, driving a plough-team in his shirt (460). It was not till thirty years later that the menace was finally removed by a great victory won at Mount Algidus (431). The lost ground was then gradually rewon, and till soon after 420 the Aequi were driven back upon their mountain fastnesses and the coast-plain cleared of the Volscians.

The energetic part which Rome had played in all this southern campaigning was the more remarkable, since meanwhile upon the north she was faced with a menace more peculiarly her own. For, though forced back behind the



Tiber, the Etruscans had not abandoned their designs on Latium. Veii, their chief city of the northern bank, still retained the important bridge-head at Fidenae and in the years after Regillus clashes with Rome were frequent. In 477 a band of Roman bravoës, drawn from the Fabian family, were utterly cut to pieces on the River Cremera, leaving only a weakly boy as sole survivor to bear home the dismal news. Rome rallied; but it was not till the beginning of the next century that she achieved her revenge. After a long-drawn struggle and a culminating siege—to which legend, in obvious imitation of the Trojan War, assigned ten years' duration (406–396)—the great Etruscan citadel was captured. Under Camillus, the foremost captain of the day, the Romans are said to have engineered a tunnel (though of this no trace remains) and appearing suddenly from the bowels of the earth, surprised the Veientines at a sacrifice. The town was sacked, its survivors enslaved and its territory parcelled out to Roman settlers. The Etruscan front thus breached, the way lay open to still further conquest, and within a few years the Roman frontier had been pushed forward some twenty miles north of Tiber. Thus in the course of the fifth century Rome had not merely *doubled* her territory, but had re-established her position as the foremost town in Latium. Though still nominally their equal, she stood forth among her allies as their leader in the struggle against the southern mountaineers and their bulwark against the Etruscan menace from the north.

The truth was, however, that the power of Etruria, once so formidable, was now upon the wane. Disunion, the old curse of her jealous principalities, had done its work; and in almost every quarter she was losing ground. In Campania, near Cumae, which her armies were besieging, a crushing blow was dealt her by the Greek inhabitants aided by their fellow-Greek Hieron the Prince of Syracuse (474 B.C.). An Etruscan helmet captured in the battle and dedicated at Olympia, is still preserved in the British Museum. Some forty years later (438) the descent of mountain tribesmen from the Samnite hinterland destroyed the last remnants of Etruscan occupation of the Campanian plains, and founded

there, as we shall later see, a powerful rival to the Greek cities of the coast. It was rather from the north than from the south, however, that the worst trouble was to come for Etruria—and not for Etruria only. Beyond the Alps, among the trackless swamps and forests upon either side of the Rhine, there had long roamed the restless hordes of a widely scattered people which on many occasions and in many different quarters was destined to be the scourge and terror of the Mediterranean world. These Celts or Gauls were a boisterous, adventurous race, hard drinkers, fickle in temperament, flashy in dress, impatient of the toil of agriculture, and preferring the excitement of the foray or the chase in which they prized alike the capture of a wild-beast skin or of a human head. Though in manners sheer barbarians, rushing naked into battle with a fierce bravado, they yet knew the use of iron weapons and the sweep of their huge claymores, wielded from all the height of their gigantic stature and with an irresistible élan, was something before which even the disciplined soldiery of southern Europe was apt at first sight to quail. Towards the end of the fifth century a tribe of these warriors, called the Insubres, crossed the Alps into the Lombard Plain, and there attacked, defeated and began to expel the Etruscan settlers. Bit by bit as fresh waves of them came down out of the passes, they pressed south across the Po. Some settled down, and taking to agriculture, became with time good farmers. But meanwhile marauding bands were still upon the warpath; and in 391 the Senones, under their chieftain Brennus, crossed the Apennines and appeared before Etruscan Clusium.

A desperate appeal for help went south to Rome; and her envoys, appearing at an unlucky moment, joined in a battle on the Etruscan side. Reparation was demanded for this violation of neutrality—and refused. It was no more than four days' march from Clusium to Rome; and presently came in the news, appalling even to the stoutest hearts, that the Gauls were on the move. Eleven miles from the city, where the River Allia joins the Tiber near Fidenae, the Roman army met the barbarian hordes, and

broke. On the morrow the city was entered. The streets were empty. But in the Forum, so the story goes, seated each on his ivory chair<sup>1</sup> and staff in hand, the Gauls found the elders of the State silent and motionless as statues, waiting, like the captain of a sinking ship, for fate to fall. An inquisitive fellow stroked the beard of one, and the old man, striking back, was promptly killed. The others shared his fate. Meanwhile the bulk of the inhabitants had taken refuge at the neighbouring town of Caere. Only on the Capitol did a patriot band hold out, and there for seven months defied repeated onslaughts. Once at the dead of night they were only saved from surprise by the timely clamour of some sacred geese kept hard by in Juno's temple. At length the Gauls wearied of the struggle and accepted gold to betake themselves off. Legend-mongers, eager to put a better face on the discreditable incident, related how Camillus, the hero of Veii's capture, being recalled from exile at the crisis and appearing in the Forum as the gold was weighed, called a halt to the proceedings and put the Gauls to rout. But Rome was in ashes. The blow to her prestige was terrible; and all the gains of a century's tenacity seemed for the moment gone. That she swiftly recovered all and more than all that she had lost, was a signal triumph for her people's spirit. But this consummation would never have been possible, had it not been for another triumph, won not against a foreign foe, but by a long and painful process of self-mastery—the triumph over the deep internal discord that divided her. For during the whole period of which we have been speaking, the struggle of the orders had run on. Happily the spirit of compromise prevailed. Step by step the old wrongs were righted,—and the breach narrowed until, shortly after the Gallic sack, the patricians made their crowning concession and the opposing factions were thus henceforward to be welded into a compact and harmonious whole.

<sup>1</sup> It is difficult to see whence Rome could at this date have procured a large supply of ivory; and Livy's whole story is obviously open to suspicion.

## III. THE STRUGGLE OF THE ORDERS: 500-367

Town life, by sharpening men's wits and promoting free discussion, encourages their sense of grievances; and at Rome the peculiar vigour of the plebeian agitation must have been mainly due to the urban concentration of many diverse elements—not least perhaps (since trading makes for progress) of the commercial element introduced under the patronage of the Etruscan Kings. The merchants, shopkeepers and handicraftsmen, many of whom had probably been induced to migrate from neighbouring towns, must have suffered much from the reaction of the Republican régime; and, owning no land themselves, such men would inevitably fall into some sort of dependence upon those who did. Others, too, were in the same predicament, farmers who through misfortune or inefficiency had lost their original holding and had sunk to the position of mere labourers on the farms of the more successful. Over all this miscellaneous class of landless commoners—the vast majority, no doubt, of the whole community—the big patrician landlords exercised a power both social and economic as well as political. Many plebeians were in a condition of recognized dependence, or 'clientship', upon patrician patrons, performing definite services in return for economic assistance or legal protection. Others, falling into debt and being unable to pay, had become the actual property of their creditors and served or were sold as slaves. For such flagrant abuses there was no redress. The only legal code was an unwritten custom and both its interpretation and its administration were in the hands of the patricians themselves, and these, trading on their monopoly of religious rites, treated the despised commoners as social pariahs, refusing even to give legal recognition to intermarriage between members of plebeian and patrician families. Though thus debarred from entering the charmed circle of the aristocracy, there were, nevertheless, some members of plebeian families who had risen to be men of substance, and who resented their exclusion the more bitterly because they were forced to bear the burdens without enjoying the privileges of such positions. These men

were doubtless the real leaders and fomenters of the plebeian agitation ; and abundant opportunity of making trouble was afforded them during the military crises of the fifth century. For war revealed the true importance of the plebeians' services. As soldiers—and herein lay the real strength of their position—they were indispensable ; and, if driven to extremities, they could even go 'on strike'.

Conceive, therefore, what must have been the patricians' consternation when in 494, at the close of a campaign against the Volsci, the plebeian members of the returning army, instead of re-entering Rome, marched off in a body to a spot some three miles distant, and there, on the Sacred Mount as it was called, announced their intention of founding a new city of their own. It was the high-handed severity of patrician magistrates generally, and their arrest of debtors in particular, which had brought things to this pass ; and the only condition on which the plebeian army could be got back again to Rome was the promise of some adequate protection. The form which this took was the creation of a new type of official called 'tribunes' who were to be in a special sense the representatives and champions of the common folk.<sup>1</sup> Over the vexed question of arrest the tribune was empowered to 'intervene' between the patrician magistrate and his plebeian victim. Day and night the door of his house was to stand open for instant appeal ; and in the discharge of his somewhat embarrassing duty, he was secured against physical violence by the guarantee that his person should be 'sacrosanct' or inviolate and his assailant would therefore be liable to a religious curse. The tribune's sphere of action was confined, it is true, to the radius of the city itself ; but so unique was the privilege conferred by his personal immunity that in process of time his power of *intercessio* or intervention developed into a political weapon, and was eventually employed to veto even the acts of the

<sup>1</sup> 'Trib-unus' seems originally to have been the title of the military leaders of plebeians recruited on the basis of territorial wards or 'tribes' ; cf. its use for the legionary officers 'tribuni militum'. There seems little doubt that already at this date the plebeians were accustomed to hold meetings known as the 'Concilium plebis', at which, of course, the newly-created tribunes would preside.

supreme executive—a curious constitutional anomaly which during the last century of the Republic led not infrequently to a complete political deadlock. At the outset the number of tribunes was fixed at two, but by the middle of the fifth century it had been raised to ten. They were of course to be plebeians, annually elected by the plebeian section of the population; and the Assembly of plebeian electors was convened and voted not by centuries or curiae, but by those geographical divisions which were known as wards or *tribes*—a unit suitably devoid of either military, religious or other hampering associations. This plebeian Assembly-by-tribes came later to assume a great importance as an organ both of debate and even of legislation; but in the first instance no such development was thought of, and it was sufficient for the agitators to have secured at least some recognition of their rights as citizens.†

Nevertheless, the institution of the tribunate was only a palliative and not a cure for the plebeians' troubles. Half the source of their discontent lay in the fact that in the absence of a written legal code, the patrician consuls were left free to interpret the unwritten custom at their own discretion, and very naturally did so to the advantage of their class. The grievance was so obvious that at length in 454 it was agreed to take the matter of codification in hand; and accordingly three commissioners were sent to Greece to study that country's laws. Two years later, after visiting Athens—then under the administration of Pericles—they returned and in 451 the normal constitution was suspended and instead of two consuls a Board of Ten, known as *decemviri*, was appointed with special instructions to formulate a code. The experiment was a success. Ten Tables of Law were drawn up; and, as the work was still considered incomplete, a fresh Board of Ten, five of whom were actually plebeians, was appointed for the following year. The dominating personality among them was Appius Claudius—the sole surviving member of the previous Board; and under his influence occurred a startling development. For, after producing two more Tables, the new Ten conceived, it would seem, the revolutionary idea of leaving the consular system

in lasting abeyance and constituting themselves a sort of permanent Directory. At the end of the year they refused point-blank to retire. Roman instincts, however, were strongly opposed to such irresponsible government. Indignation ran high; and the story of the incident which led to the would-be tyrants' overthrow is famous. Appius Claudius had fallen in love with a girl named Virginia; and being foiled in his suit, he put up a creature of his own to claim her as a runaway slave, then sitting himself in judgment on the case, adjudicated her to the plaintiff. Virginia's father, desperate at the thought of the girl's impending fate, obtained leave for a moment's parley, then snatching up a knife from a butcher's stall near by, and crying 'There is no way but this'—plunged it into her breast. The news of Appius's outrageous conduct caused a tremendous commotion. The soldiers then under arms went on strike once again and seceded to the Janiculan Hill beyond the Tiber. The Ten were forced to resign. Appius was arrested and committed suicide in prison. One of his colleagues was executed, and the rest sent into exile.

For the year 449 two consuls, Valerius and Horatius, were duly elected and among their first acts was the promulgation of the famous laws which were called after their name. Thereby the right of appeal to the Assembly was reaffirmed. The inviolability of tribunes received legal sanction; and the decisions of the plebeian Assembly-by-tribes were recognized if not as binding on the whole community (as Livy actually affirms), at any rate as a basis for further discussion. Above all, the Twelve Tables of Law drawn up by the two successive commissions were adopted as the code of the State. Great gain as it was that the laws should be definitely fixed and publicly known, it is unlikely that the Twelve Tables represented any signal advance on the existing tradition of customary usage. It is true that over questions of contract and property they display a clarity of conception surprising at so early a date, allowing a man full discretion in bequeathing his estate and treating even a verbal bargain as valid at law. This, however, merely goes to show that the Romans' commercial experience had already

taught them that appreciation of the rights of individuals which in later days was so notably to distinguish their unique system of jurisprudence. On the other hand, the Twelve Tables contained much that was crude. They permitted enslavement for debt. For private injury they provided no constitutional means of enforcing redress, leaving it to the plaintiff to exact for himself the adjudicated penalty or even, if need be, to retaliate in kind ('If a man break another's limb and satisfy not, on him may he retaliate'). Finally, what was particularly obnoxious to the plebeians, the Tables upheld the rule forbidding intermarriage between the orders. This particular grievance, it is true, was righted in the year 445, when the Lex Canuleia removed once for all this unpopular caste-legislation: and thus, socially at least, the plebeians obtained due recognition. But they were by no means satisfied. Politically they were as yet very far from enjoying equality. The offices of state were still barred to them, and the breaking of this barrier was henceforth to be the objective of their main assault.

For the patricians, though now theoretically admitting the plebeians to social equality, still held jealously to their principle that only members of their own high-caste families were fit to hold the consulship; and rather than that so sacred an office should be contaminated by men of inferior blood, they preferred to evade the issue and suffer the office itself to pass temporarily into abeyance. In 444 the device was adopted of substituting in the place of consuls a new form of executive—six military tribunes endowed with consular power and drawn from the plebeian as well as the patrician class.<sup>1</sup> The experiment was popular, and for fifty out of the next eighty years the alternative to the consulship was preferred. The latter part of the period was a stirring and critical time. Rome was busily engaged in

<sup>1</sup> This innovation was doubtless some sort of a concession, though few plebeians, if any, held office before the end of the century. It may possibly have been a deliberate imitation of the *ιο στρατηγοί* of Athens which Roman commissioners had lately visited; and at any rate it was admirably suited, as Livy himself suggests, to the military needs of the period, when campaigns were being conducted upon several different fronts.



almost continuous wars, fighting back the Volsci and the Aequi in the south, grappling with her chief rival Veii in the north, and finally weathering the storm of the barbarian inroad. For the time being the feud between the orders was forgotten in the common effort of self-preservation, and the influence of these events on the political situation was therefore delayed. But their economic effects were far-reaching and of these, before we proceed further, something must be said. Warfare in ancient times bore hardly upon the rank and file of citizen soldiers who could ill afford the interruption of their bread-winning. Pay was not normally given until introduced under the stress of the protracted siege of Veii. Campaigns were for the most part short and sharp, and booty was considered adequate compensation. But fighting, it must be remembered, was normally confined to the best seasons of the year, and the yeoman soldier, having perforce to leave his farm to less efficient hands, often returned to find himself ruined. A failure of crops meant peril of starvation; and the poor man's sole resource was to borrow from the rich. Loans were forthcoming; for, though the only medium of exchange as yet was bronze weighed out in bulk, the business of usury was apparently well understood at Rome. Custom even permitted the borrower, as we have said, to pledge his person in default of repayment, and the execution of this bond or *nexum* was frequently enforced. Theory (though probably not practice) actually entitled creditors to kill a defaulting debtor and divide his corpse!

So throughout the fifth century there can be little doubt that famine was often rampant and misery acute. Various remedies suggested themselves. Cancellation of debts was discussed and rejected. In 439 distribution of cheap corn is said to have been attempted by Spurius Maelius, a rich plebeian; but the aristocracy scented dangerous ambitions and killed him for his pains. Another more promising method of relief seemed offered by a readjustment of the land-system. The State lands or *ager publicus* (originally perhaps the King's domains and now administered by the Republican Government) were normally leased out to individuals; and by a selfish use of their controlling power the patrician landowners

had acquired a virtual monopoly of such tenancies. During the early part of the fifth century the broad-minded Spurius Cassius and others had proposed that part, at least, of these State lands should be distributed to the poor; but the patriciate turned deaf ears. The subsequent extension of Rome's frontier provided, however, a better opportunity. It was a recognized custom to confiscate to the State a part, at least, of any conquered territory; and on such confiscated land it became usual to plant a 'colony' of Roman citizens, or (in recognition of their military aid) of Latin allies—in either case useful both as an outlet for surplus population and as a strategic garrison upon conquered soil. It is probable that as early as 467 Antium was thus colonized. But it was not until the annexation of Veii in 396 when colonies of Latins were simultaneously planted at Sutrium and Nepete, that any large distribution of public land was possible. Even so the method of assignment was much criticized, the patricians keeping for their own use much rough pasture which on their view was ill suited for small holdings. The plebeian protest was interrupted by the Gallic inroad. But when the city had recovered, a fierce controversy blazed up; in which this economic grievance was to bulk large beside the political grievances of which we have been speaking.

The culminating bout of the struggle between the orders began in 376. In that year two tribunes C. Licinius Stolo and his kinsman L. Sextius Lateranus brought forward proposals of reform dealing with land-distribution, debt and the consulate. Opposition, of course, was only to be expected; but how far patrician intransigence was already weakening is shown by the fact that in 384 C. Manlius, the patrician hero of the defence of the Capitol, had openly transferred his allegiance to the plebeian cause. The parties therefore were well matched, and the history of the next ten years is one long tale of stroke and counter-stroke, violence and intrigue. Tribunes vetoed tribunes.<sup>1</sup> Dictators were appointed. At

<sup>1</sup> It seems probable, however, that some features of the story are strongly coloured by the historians' knowledge of political conflicts of a much later date in which the weapon of the veto was notoriously misused.

one time sheer anarchy prevailed. But at last the spirit of compromise triumphed. In 367, thanks largely to the conciliatory dictatorship of the great Camillus, the Licinian proposals were allowed to become law. They were the very charter of plebeian liberties and the reforms which they effected covered a wide field—agrarian, economic and political. —

First, then, it was enacted that, though existing tenancies of public land should not be interfered with, the area leased out to any single individual should in future be limited to 500 jugera or roughly 300 acres<sup>1</sup>; nor was any one man to be allowed to graze more than 100 head of cattle or 500 sheep upon the common wastes. These rules which by the time of the Gracchi had become a dead letter, were to be revived in the course of their agrarian agitation and were to figure in the forefront of their programme of reform.

In the second place, the lot of debtors was alleviated by allowing them to deduct from the total they still owed the amount of interest they had already paid. The effects of the reform were disappointing. About twenty years or so later the introduction of a State coinage led to extensive borrowing, and there ensued a financial crisis so acute that in 343 the army, then engaged against the Samnites, again mutinied; and in the upshot a law is said to have been passed forbidding usury altogether. Such a step was clearly impracticable; and towards the end of the century<sup>2</sup> a far wiser method was adopted, whereby the State definitely stepped in between creditor and debtor, enforcing the acceptance of an equitable settlement in place of arbitrary execution of the bond. As a natural consequence, the custom of pledging the person, if not actually forbidden, was discouraged and the scandal of the enslavement of Roman citizens came virtually to an end.

If on its economic side the Licinian Reform was only the prelude to a completer legislation, politically at least it marked an epoch. For its most important provision (though it was by no means always observed) ensured that of the

<sup>1</sup> The Roman jugerum was roughly two-thirds of an acre.

<sup>2</sup> In either 326 or 313 by the *Lex Papiria*.

two yearly consuls one should always for the future be a plebeian. The fact was, however, that apart from the equity of such a compromise, the consulship itself was losing something of its unique authority. With the increase of Rome's territory and population, the complexity and bulk of public business had inevitably outgrown the effective control of a single pair of magistrates. Already in 443 their burden had been lightened by the institution of the Censorship. The censors were to be two in number, elected afresh at five-year intervals; and to them were thenceforward transferred various duties which must previously have fallen on the consul's shoulders—first, the arrangement of public contracts for land-tenancies, mine-leases, and such public works as road-making or building: second, the control of the civic register for purposes of tax-assessment and military enrolment; last but not least, the supervision of senatorial membership, carrying large powers of supervision not merely for political misconduct, but also (such was the value set at Rome on public decency) for offences against morality or social etiquette. From all this it will be seen that the censorship was a highly important innovation; and now, simultaneously with the Licinian Reforms, came the creation of other new officials:—first, the '*praetor*' who undertook the consul's function of administering justice<sup>1</sup>; and secondly, two '*aediles*'<sup>2</sup> (or, as we might say, mayors) who undertook the control of more strictly municipal affairs, the superintendence of the food-supply in time of famine, the upkeep of temples, and the organization of public games. Though at the time the tenure of the consulship alone was thrown open to plebeians, it proved impossible, now the caste-barrier was once broken, to maintain a patrician monopoly of other

<sup>1</sup> The praetor, who, like the consul, was invested with the '*imperium*', was also technically capable of exercising all the consular functions in the consul's absence. Thus, when provincial governors were later needed, extra praetors were created not merely as civil administrators, but as military commanders of the provincial garrison.

<sup>2</sup> In 367 plebeian aediles already existed; but the scope of the office was now enlarged and patricians admitted. In the following year a compromise was effected, whereby patricians and plebeians were elected in alternate years.

offices. In 350 a plebeian was first elected to the censorship ; in 337 to the praetorship. The quaestorship had been thrown open already in 447 ; and finally in 300 admission was granted to that innermost sanctum of patrician privilege, the Priesthood.

Thus in the growing machinery of public administration plebeian and patrician alike were both to play their part ; and to complete the process of political amalgamation there came in 287 the crowning admission of the plebeians' right to legislate. By the *Lex Hortensia* passed in that year the plebeian Assembly-by-tribes was given powers on a par with the Centuriate Assembly and its decisions or *plebiscita* became equally binding on the whole community. That two sovereign bodies should thus have existed simultaneously within the State is one of the most curious anomalies of the Roman Constitution, which, like the British, was only rendered workable by a combination of tact and regard for precedent. Nevertheless, the anomaly was not so serious as might at first sight appear. By a gradual growth of custom a division of functions became more or less established, the Centuriate Assembly electing the yearly magistrates, and the Tribal Assembly passing most of the laws (an arrangement which incidentally placed large powers of initiating legislation in the hands of the plebeian tribunes). Nor, in point of fact, did the personnel of the two Assemblies very materially differ. For, whereas the number of patrician families, being incapable of augmentation, inevitably dwindled, the plebeians, who were constantly increasing, came more and more to represent the vast majority of the community. It is even possible that after 287 patricians were admitted to the Tribal Assembly ; and in any case the old caste distinction ceased before long to have any real meaning. In short, with the reforms of the fourth century, the claim of the privileged few to rule the unprivileged many was once for all abandoned and Rome's Constitution was remodelled upon the broader basis of genuinely popular government. True, respect for birth and wealth remained a strong political factor. The Assembly still looked for leadership to men whose character and antecedents were well known ; and in the centuriate

elections the preponderant influence of rich voters served naturally to maintain a conservative tradition. Nevertheless, it was on the whole as a united, if not yet as a completely democratic state that the Republic prepared to go forward to the conquest of Italy and to her perilous encounter with yet more powerful foes.

#### IV. CITY, RELIGION, AND MORALITY

The Gallic sack was in more ways than one a turning-point in the history of Rome. If it marked the lowest point to which her fortunes fell, it was also the prelude to an astonishing recovery and an era of almost continuous advance. It led, as we have seen, to the composition of the century-long feud between the orders. Finally, such was the material havoc which the Gauls had wrought within the city itself, that their departure was necessarily followed by a general reconstruction and a new Rome arose quite literally upon the ashes of the old. The modern metropolis, covering as it does the greater part of the historic site, has rendered complete excavation impossible. But the Forum, the Palatine and certain other quarters have been thoroughly explored. Roman writers supply much useful information; and the result is that we now know almost as much about the ancient city as we are ever likely to know.

The Forum was, of course, the centre of Rome's life, and its broad oblong trough, when drained of the moisture which it gathers from the surrounding hills, was admirably adapted to this purpose. In the first instance, it served as the market-place (which is what its name implies) and throughout the early centuries of the Republic the shops of greengrocers and butchers lined its sides, until with the city's growth the demands of space and dignity made a clean sweep of these, and the business of petty huckstering was transferred to new squares specially designed for the purpose. In any case, even from the outset, the Forum's level expanse was employed for other uses—for public displays or games at festal seasons, for the funeral of prominent citizens, and, more important still, for the transaction of political business. At its north-west corner stood the *curia* or Senate House, said to have

been built by Tullus Hostilius, the early king. Opening out in front of the Curia was a square enclosure, the *comitium* or meeting-place where in early days the Assembly-by-tribes gathered,<sup>1</sup> until, outgrowing the space, it was compelled to move into the Forum proper. At the junction between Comitium and Forum stood the speaker's platform, to which in 447 the Twelve Tables were affixed for public view, and which after 338, when it was adorned by beaks sawn off some captured galleys, received its famous nickname of 'the Rostra'. Rising above this west end of the Forum and approached by an abruptly winding road, stood the Capitol—a hill of no great size, but steeply enough scarped to form at its crest a stronghold capable at least of defying the onslaught of the Gauls. Along the south side of the Forum lay the Palatine, a more imposing hill with a table-like surface more suitable to building, so that here the better-class Romans for the most part had their houses. The Aventine—situated southward again across a dip which formed the Circus Maximus or Race-course—had been ceded in the fifth century to plebeian agitators; but the most populous quarter of the city lay on the north side of the Forum, where a gradual swell of rising ground (somewhat unduly dignified by the title of the Quirinal, Viminal and Esquiline Hills) sheltered among its lower slopes and hollows the closely crowded tenements of the poor. For the opportunity of rebuilding these upon a well-considered plan was lost when after the Gallic sack a natural impatience led to haphazard methods and so helped to produce the slums which in later years were destined to be the curse of the over-swollen capital. The Servian Wall, upon the other hand, was very solidly reconstructed. By 390 it would seem to have fallen into bad disrepair; otherwise we can hardly explain the total failure to defend it. Such fragments of its masonry as now survive date almost entirely from this subsequent rebuilding. The Temples, on the whole, escaped the incendiarism of the Gauls, who, though barbarians, were extremely superstitious. Of these, Tarquin's great shrine to Jupiter stood, of course,

<sup>1</sup> The Centuriate Assembly met on the Campus Martius or drill-ground outside the north-west walls.

upon the Capitol; but the rest were mainly grouped around the Forum. Here was to be seen the Temple of Saturn, the first monument of the Republic and built, it was said, in 497; another to Castor, dating from soon after the Battle of Regillus; a third to Concord, dedicated by Camillus to celebrate the reconciliation of the orders in 367. In front of the Comitium stood the small square shrine of Janus, the doors of which were always open during time of war and closed only on the rare occasions when Rome was at peace with the world. Finally, close under the Palatine was the small circular chapel of Vesta in which was kept the sacred hearth symbolic of the genius of the State, as the domestic hearth was symbolic of the family. In it the Vestal Priestesses (vowed to perpetual virginity) tended, on pain of execution for neglect, the flame of an undying fire.

Such multiplicity of temples, which was only to increase as time went on, was the natural outcome of a polytheistic creed. But the tendency to augment rather than to diminish the number of their deities, was due, as we shall see, partly to the character of the Romans' own religion, and partly to their racial aptitude for borrowing the ideas of other peoples.

If we are ever in danger of forgetting how near in some ways the Romans were to savages, we need only to remind ourselves of their religious customs and beliefs. Even their public life was invaded by the grossest superstitions, so that the most important political discussion or the issue of a campaign might often be seriously affected by the peculiarities of a cow's liver or the direction of a crow's flight. Still more, of course, was the priesthood itself subjected to the most ridiculous taboos; and we are told that the *flamen* of Jupiter was not merely forbidden to bare his head indoors, approach a corpse, or eat raw meat or beans, but he might not even wear a knot about his person, or have his nails trimmed without burying the parings under a lucky tree. Nevertheless, despite the extreme antiquity of all this strange hocus-pocus, the religion of the Romans was not in its first origins either senseless or debased. In the primitive faith which the Italian peoples brought with them when first they came to settle, there had been much that possessed the makings of a



far nobler creed. They believed that all the world about them was permeated and inhabited by supernatural powers, invisible to mortal eye, but potent for good or ill. There were spirits in woods, spirits in rivers and water springs, a spirit of the sky and of the sea. There were even spirits of the small, insignificant things of daily life. Thus there was Vesta the spirit of the hearth, and Janus of the door; and even a nasty little spirit known as Blight or *Robigo*. Many spirits presided, as was natural, over the seasonal occupations of the agriculturalist's routine; and since prosperity depended on winning such spirits' favour, special days were annually dedicated to their propitiation. The Saturnalia, for instance (which, when the Roman world turned Christian, was to be utilized to celebrate the birth of Christ, and so to become our Christmas), had originally been the festival of sowing-time. As, however, the horizon of the Romans widened, the agricultural element in their religion sank more and more into the background; and they gave to their old rustic deities new attributes, transforming Mars, for example, into the God of War. But the tendency to personify even abstract qualities remained, so that the reconciliation of the orders in 367 was celebrated by the erection of a temple to Concordia, the spirit of domestic harmony. There was even a goddess of purification to whom they gave the name of Cloacina or patroness of drains!

This extraordinary elasticity of the Roman people's polytheism was, in fact, the principal cause of its gradual contamination and decline. For in religion, as in much else, they were great mimics, always ready, when brought into contact with foreign cults, to borrow or to imitate. Thus, from the Etruscan, as we have already seen, they very early learnt to endow their invisible spirits with a local habitation and a human form. So Jupiter, their sky-god, became a bearded figure moulded by foreign craftsmen upon the well-known model of Hellenic Zeus and housed in a temple on the Capitol. In very early days, too, was begun the fashion of adopting the deities of neighbouring towns with which a growing commerce gave them contact. Minerva, the patroness of arts and crafts, came probably from Etruscan Falerii,

and Castor and Pollux from Tusculum. An even more fruitful field for adaptation was found in the theogony of Greece, or rather of the Greek colonies of Southern Italy. Legend told how in ancient days a mysterious witch from Cumae had sold to the last Tarquin the precious Sibylline Books; and so perhaps began the thoroughgoing process of assimilation. As Jupiter had been identified with Zeus, so equally was Juno with Hera, Minerva with Pallas Athene, Mars with Ares, Ceres with Demeter. As a remedy for pestilence, Apollo was brought in from Cumae at the end of the third century B.C. Heracles was introduced in an Italianized form as Hercules. Even Bacchus, a most un-Roman god, eventually won his way and was identified with Liber.

Thus at almost every point the primitive animism of the old Italian faith was supplanted by anthropomorphic conceptions originating in Greece; and along with their human shapes the deities assumed, of course, the corresponding human qualities. It was by no means a wholesome change. Something of the mysterious awe surrounding the old cults was necessarily lost; and it was small gain indeed when in place of Jupiter, the spirit of all-pervading light, the witness of men's oaths, and the avenger of their perjury, was substituted the personality of the impressionable old despot who made habitual love to other people's wives and no less habitually deceived his own. The truth is that a religion which was in any way based upon the gross tales of Greek mythology could exercise none but a bad influence upon a people's morals, and that religion, once divorced from the live issues of daily conduct, was bound sooner or later to decline into pure superstition. So, with a monotonous effort to propitiate the unseen powers, the priesthood continued, as before, to offer sacrifice, watch birds, examine entrails, and engage the ignorant but pliable populace in a never-ending round of public mummery which, as time went on and, among the more educated at least, the habit of thinking grew, became only the more hollow and meaningless.

Yet there remained one element in the Roman people's faith which, because it was associated with the central institution of their social system, retained a special sanctity

and genuine importance—the religion of the home. For every individual family at Rome—or (since slaves and dependents were included in the term) every individual household—possessed its separate cult, its private altar, its peculiar gods. These were the Lares and Penates, connected in origin the one perhaps with the bounds and ways of the family estate, the other with the tutelary deity of the store-cupboard, but both alike honoured as representing in some peculiar sense the spirit of the house. Now such cults may not in themselves have had a deeply moral or religious value ; but they at least served as the focus and symbol of that deep and abiding instinct for family life which was the source of all that was best and noblest in the Roman character. The representative and priest of the domestic cult was the pater-familias himself. He served its altar. He embodied in his person the ‘genius’ of the home ; and thus armed with an authority deriving its sanction from the gods themselves, he ruled as absolute despot in his little kingdom. The social theory of the Romans set no limit to his arbitrary power. He could kill his children with nothing said ; and even so late as the time of Cicero a father put his own son to death for joining in the conspiracy of Catiline. Discipline of the severest type was, in fact, the keynote of his rule ; but it was discipline tempered by affectionate regard. Cato, the arch-Roman, considered a wife and a son to be the ‘holiest of holy things’. Over his wife indeed, as over his children, a man held an almost complete authority ; and in the eyes of the law she virtually possessed no independent rights. Nevertheless, as time went on, the tendency was more and more to establish an equality between the sexes ; and in practice certainly the Roman wife was no downtrodden creature. Her activities were not confined as were her Hellenic cousin’s, to domestic duties and the seclusion of the home ; and she often played an important part in the public life of the city. In early legends, such as the tale of Coriolanus, there were many instances of female heroism ; and in later days the mother of the Gracchi was so highly honoured as to be voted a public statue at her death. The influence of such women had a steadying effect even on the

political as well as on the private behaviour of their menfolk, and most of all perhaps upon their sons.

It was not the habit in the best days of the Republic to hire a nurse or tutor for a Roman boy. He grew up under his parents' eyes. He was encouraged to accompany his father in his business or sport. He listened—in silence—to his elders' improving conversation. Absolute and unquestioning obedience was the first rule of his life; and 'pietas' or loyalty to home and parents was the quality so especially esteemed that of all other qualities the poet Vergil chose it to characterize his hero Aeneas, the legendary founder of the imperial race. Strong home affections beget a natural pride in the family's honour and tradition; and for a member of the aristocracy at least the prime duty of life was to be worthy of his lineage. The ideal of conduct handed down from father to son through successive generations was clear-cut and well-defined. To be manly with a dogged endurance which flinched from no sacrifice and expected no reward; to be self-restrained with an austerity which imposed an almost puritanical suppression of the feelings, and a solemnity of outward demeanour which the strictest of Puritans might well have envied; last, but not least, to be a true and untiring servant of the public weal, setting the claims of country above private ambition or even domestic ties;—these were the virtues which every Roman father strove to teach his son. They were virtues freely exemplified in the great legends of the past; and from his father's lips a boy would hear and hear again the well-known tales of Horatius or Cincinnatus or the other heroes whose courage and self-sacrifice had saved the Roman state in days gone by.

Such an education in the moral virtues is most effective and most permanent only in a community where men are little accustomed to think for themselves. Under the disintegrating influences of a critical and individualistic philosophy even the traditions and conventions of Roman society were destined eventually to suffer sad decay. But meanwhile in the fourth century B.C. there was no encouragement and little opportunity for men to think. At a time when Athens had already produced the philosophy of Socrates, the history

of Thucydides and the great masterpieces of Attic drama, when Plato and Aristotle were actually engaged in speculations as profound as any the world has known, Rome possessed no literature at all. The most that even well-born citizens could do was to read and write. For the rest, the whole energy of their somewhat narrow souls was concentrated on the practical problems of agriculture, politics, and war.

The average Roman of this epoch, then, we must picture as a somewhat stolid, unimaginative farmer, cultivating with the aid of his family and perhaps a few free labourers an estate of modest acreage, the working of which he would certainly superintend in person and in all probability actively assist. Too cautious and thrifty to indulge in rash experiment or novel luxury, and intellectually too lazy to criticize or rebel, he was content to follow blindly in the routine of life prescribed by the immemorial custom of his forbears, obeying with superstitious scruple the quaintly elaborate but unwritten code of omen and taboo, sacrifice and festival which circumscribed and influenced at every turn his daily habits, social customs and even agricultural methods, not to mention public procedure at elections or debates; and on the strict observance of these, so he verily believed, must depend the prosperity of his farm and the well-being of his country. Politically he was proud of his rights as he was conscientiously zealous of his duties. Polling-day would normally find him—even at some personal inconvenience if his estate lay far from Rome—in the Campus Martius or the Comitium; and when important problems of policy or legislation were under discussion, he would follow with silent but sagacious interest the speeches delivered by his leaders from the Rostrum. Equally too, when spring brought round the season for campaigning, he would present himself without demur (though not perhaps without a grumble) to bear his part in whatever siege or expedition the occasion might demand. But, war or politics once over, he would return with relief to the more congenial business of getting in his harvest or marketing his produce at the nearest town. The Roman, in short, was of a type still commonly to be found in many a European country-side. That his descendants were fated to rule not merely Italy

herself, but the surrounding countries of the Mediterranean basin, was a development not even to be guessed at; nor is it easy to explain in any clear-cut manner the secret of that amazing destiny. It lay partly no doubt in the accident of Rome's geographical position which encouraged her expansion at the expense of northern and southern neighbours and at the same time gave easy access to the outer world of east and west; partly in the peculiar combination of practical intelligence and grim tenacity which characterized her citizens; but most of all perhaps in that deep-rooted political instinct which already, in the course of their commercial dealings and constitutional disputes, had taught them to set a high value on individual rights, and which, when they came in turn to conquer more distant peoples, did not allow them to forget that others have rights too.

## CHAPTER IV

### ROME'S CONQUEST OF ITALY

#### I. METHODS OF ORGANIZATION

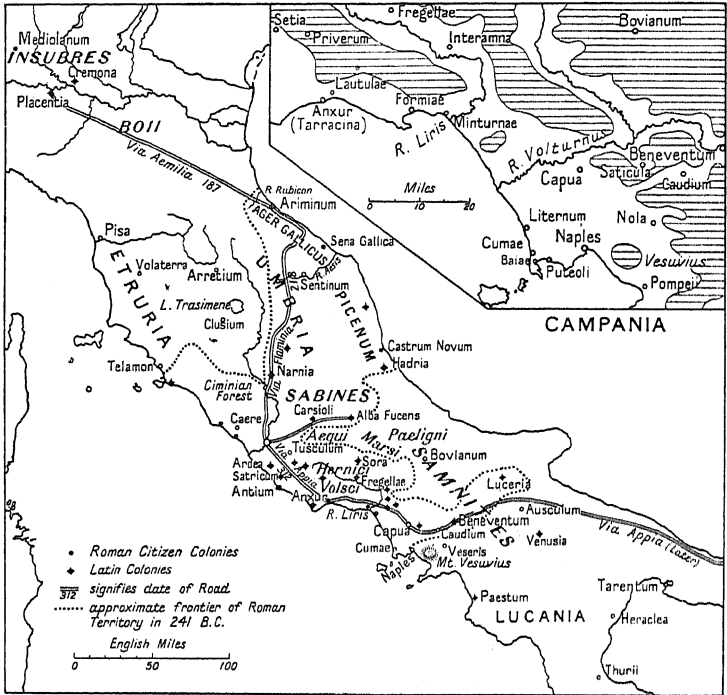
**T**O those who would study the influence of geography on political development, the history of the Greek and Italian peninsulas presents at once a striking parallel and a no less striking contrast. Both, in comparatively early times, produced a generous crop of so-called City States, insignificant in area if measured against the national units of our modern world, and containing a population which, if not actually domiciled, was at least closely grouped around a capital that served the triple purpose of military stronghold, commercial market and focus of political life. In Greece and Italy alike such City States were invariably situated in agricultural plains or valleys. But in Greece these plains were so far divided from each other by barriers of inhospitable mountains that the several states developed through their very isolation an intensely strong, but also intensely narrow pride of local independence. The result was that mutual jealousies, giving rise to an endless series of exhausting wars, proved an insuperable obstacle to

effective combination ; and though one state after another attempted a hegemony, no lasting unity was achieved until towards the end of the fourth century B.C. it was imposed, as it were, from without, by the semi-civilized but virile armies of a King of Macedon. With that consummation the history of the Greek City States as free and autonomous units came virtually to an end.

The very different fortune that was in store for Italy may be traced in a large degree to a difference of physical environment. The coastal plains which line her western seaboard, and in which nearly all her City States were placed, provided, as it were, a natural corridor yielding more or less easy access to the mountain valleys of the central hinterland or northward up the Tiber into the heart of Umbria and Etruria. For the passage of armies or of peaceful traffic these routes were equally available ; and the Etruscans, as we have seen, had already made good use of them to extend their loose dominion over Latium and Campania. But the opportunity of Rome was greater still. From her position at the centre of the corridor she was able not merely to penetrate with ease in all directions, but also strategically to divide her northern from her southern foes and thus deal with them piecemeal. Assisted by this accident of situation Rome proved strong enough to impose a lasting unity upon her sister towns and peoples, and so to achieve what, beyond the Adriatic, both Sparta, Athens and Thebes had each in turn failed to accomplish. Thus, whereas in Greece the City States' birthright of freedom was foolishly squandered and tragically lost, Italy under Rome's rule was destined to enjoy much of the benefit, if not the whole benefit, of that unique political experiment.

But strategical advantages alone would never have secured for Rome the mastery of Italy, had she not herself possessed a shrewd tact in the art of ruling it. In their own internal politics her people had displayed, as we have seen, a remarkable appreciation of the meaning of civic privilege ; and when they came in due course to face the difficult problems of organizing their conquests, they wisely remembered the lessons they had learnt. Citizenship, as they conceived of it,

conferred three main advantages: first, it safeguarded its holder from the arbitrary violence of magistrates or others, against which slaves and even aliens had no legal method of redress; secondly, in his private dealings—i.e. commercial undertakings, tenure of property, disposition of property by



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will, and last but not least, the contraction of marriage for the begetting of legitimate children—the citizen was assured of the sanction and protection of the Roman courts of law; thirdly, in public affairs, he was entitled to participate in the government of Rome by voting in assembly and standing for political office. The value of such threefold privilege was



clearly appreciated not merely by the Romans themselves, but also by their neighbours, when these came with time to recognize the growing importance of the Roman state and the superiority of the Roman legal code. In extending her rule, therefore, Rome's object was to render it acceptable by offering to others some measure of the rights and privileges which her own citizens enjoyed. She had indeed no set or rigid system. The various states of Italy differed widely from one another, some like the towns of Latium and Campania being politically advanced, others like the rude clansmen of Samnium being politically backward. In the treaties, therefore, which she made with each in turn, Rome's principle was to utilize, so far as possible, the existing form of government and to suit the terms of settlement to the character of each; and before we deal in detail with the course and issue of her conquests, it will be well first to say something of the methods she employed.

To impose a standing garrison of troops upon a conquered district had from time immemorial been the normal procedure of the conquering power. From this error Rome refrained. Her method of safeguarding her interests was far more subtle and far less obnoxious to the subject folk. It took the form of fortified 'colonies' of yeomen soldiers planted at strategic points on confiscated portions of conquered territory and there left to farm and trade in peaceful proximity to the old inhabitants.<sup>1</sup> The ties which bound such colonies to Rome were various. In some the settlers were specially privileged to retain the full rights of Roman citizenship. More frequently, however, in the so-called 'Latin Colonies', they were given a status analogous to the status of the old Latin League—that is to say, their members, whether Roman born or allies (for usually they were mixed), enjoyed the private rights, but not the political franchise of Roman citizenship. If they intermarried with Romans, their children became full citizens. If they migrated to the capital they became full

<sup>1</sup> These Roman colonies bore an obvious resemblance to the 'cleruchies' of citizen settlers which were planted by Athens on conquered territory; but they must be carefully distinguished from the Greek colonies which were normally independent of the mother-state.

citizens themselves.<sup>1</sup> In the management of their local affairs they were practically autonomous ; but, as representatives of Rome's authority, these far-flung communities of soldier-farmers did much to spread and popularize her political and social ideas throughout the more backward parts of Italy.

Confident in the staunchness and vigilance of these strategic outposts, Rome could afford to deal the more generously with the conquered folk themselves. Her methods were, broadly speaking, twofold. First, the more adjacent territory—including not Latium only, but South Etruria, the Aequan, Hernican and Sabine hinterland, and eventually Campania—was bit by bit incorporated as part of the Roman state. Its rural districts were placed under the supervision of Roman prefects. Its townships which were already experienced in the practice of self-government were exempted from such direct control, and except for the intervention of Roman assize-judges, were left free to manage their own local affairs. The constitution of these *municipia*,<sup>2</sup> as they were called, consisted, like the Roman, of elected magistrates, senate and assembly. Their magistrates became automatically full citizens of Rome. In some *municipia* the rest of the inhabitants became full citizens also ; but in most they received half-franchise only, carrying with it the private but not the public rights. It was understood, indeed, that when their worthiness was proven, the *municipia* of this second class might be promoted to the first ; but it was not until the beginning of the first century B.C. that the vast majority of Italian townships outside the area above mentioned were admitted to full franchise, and then only as the result of a bitter and bloody war.

<sup>1</sup> Later, the colonists, discouraged by the conditions of their new life or tempted by the counter-attractions of city life, often tended to return to the capital in such numbers that the colonies themselves found it difficult to raise their prescribed military contingents ; and as a result from 258 onwards these special privileges were summarily cancelled, though the prohibition of migration to Rome was apparently not always observed.

<sup>2</sup> The name implied that, as part of the Roman state, they undertook the burden (*munus*) of contributing to the war-chest.

In the second place, as this last fact suggests, the districts more remote from Rome were treated in a manner which, though imposing looser ties, yet offered correspondingly less prospect of real privilege. Nor indeed, at the time of their original subjection, were they mostly ripe for it. The Samnites and other mountain-tribes possessed as yet no towns at all worthy of the name; and their ill-knit clan-organization was no basis for direct incorporation in the Roman state. Even the northern Etruscans, though they had their towns, were regarded with intelligible suspicion as a race of alien habits and outlandish speech. The result was that the inhabitants of these remoter areas were not admitted to intimate relationship with Rome. They were simply bound to her by treaties of defensive alliance, which, while leaving them the right to manage their local affairs, permitted them no independent policy outside their borders, so that in the event of war their forces were virtually at the beck and call of the Roman Government. Nevertheless, despite their very obvious subservience, they were dignified by the title of *socii* or allies.

Thus the whole of Italy, when the work of conquest and settlement was over, was to be knit together in a sort of federal league, the status of whose members was bewilderingly various, ranging from 'Roman' colonies and municipia of full franchise, through 'Latin' colonies and municipia of half-franchise, to these semi-independent and self-governing 'allies'. Its connecting links, however,—as it might be the strands of some giant spider's web—all led direct to one centre. For in one all-important point Rome's method did not vary. The treaty of alliance into which she entered with each several tribe or city, was made with herself and with herself alone. Between tribe and tribe or between city and city no compact was allowed. 'Divide and rule' was here in fact, as later in her conquest of the world, the guiding principle of Rome's diplomacy. Her task was greatly facilitated by the Italians' persistent failure to make common cause against her; and how far their mutual jealousy served to keep the various states apart is shown not least by the history of the wars in which they were severally subdued.

To these wars, since we have now some understanding of the goal towards which they tended, it is now high time that our attention should be turned. From the time of the Gallic sack it took Rome just over a century to master the peninsula ; and, though, as we have hinted, diplomacy contributed in a very large degree to her ultimate success, yet the story of the struggle stands out as perhaps one of the most notable chapters in the annals of a great fighting race.

## II. ROME'S RECOVERY

When in 390 the Gauls were bought out of Rome with gold, the city's fortunes had reached their lowest ebb. Her very site was a heap of smouldering ruins. Old enemies took advantage of her downfall, the southern Etruscans to throw off her yoke, the Volsci and Aequi to renew their raids. Even her Latin allies were openly disaffected ; and it is little wonder that her citizens in sheer despair thought seriously of transferring their homes to the more defensible fortress of Veii. Thanks mainly to the efforts of the great Camillus, saner counsels prevailed. Rome pulled herself together, and by a reorganization of her army assigned the front rank in the battle-line not, as hitherto, to the more wealthy classes, but to the youngest and stoutest warriors. The Etruscan attacks were countered. The Volsci and Aequi were driven back and Latin Colonies planted at Satricum and Setia. The disaffected members of the Latin League were brought to heel, and Tusculum incorporated with the status of full franchise. After ten years of bitter faction the patricians and plebeians composed their differences and by the Licinian Reforms of 367 were laid, as we have seen, the foundations of an enduring unity.

In theory at least Rome was now a democratic state. True, the new democracy, as is commonly the case, was slow in getting into its stride. There were patrician attempts to go back on the reforms ; and on more than one occasion patrician representatives monopolized the consulship. Even such plebeians as came forward to take office were at first confined to a small ring of influential families ; nor must it be forgotten that the peculiar voting-system of the centuriate

assembly gave a permanent advantage to the wealthier class. Nevertheless, despite these obstacles, the political influence of the rank and file of citizens grew steadily, if for no other reason than that their numbers were growing too. For this growth there were a variety of causes. For one thing, the sons of freed slaves were admitted to the franchise. Then, too, by treaties made with certain neighbouring towns like Tusculum, the inhabitants, as we have seen, were converted into full Roman citizens; nor must we forget that, as Rome's territory increased and settlers were planted out on confiscated lands, these settlers frequently remained on the citizen-roll. By the middle of the fourth century the total number of Roman citizens had reached the neighbourhood of two hundred thousand males; and during the next fifty years, when Campania began to come under Rome's influence, the increase was still more rapid. Meanwhile, to include this growing population the number of the 'tribes' was frequently expanded; and the plebeian tribal assembly acquired by slow degrees a political authority more nearly proportionate to its numerical importance. There is therefore abundant reason for supposing that Rome's policy, during the vital years of her conquest and settlement of Italy, passed more and more into the hands of the main citizen-body. Even the Senate, leavened by the admission of plebeian office-holders, grew less representative of a narrow noble clique and more representative of the people as a whole.

Such a change no doubt was gradual; but almost from the moment when the Licinian laws were passed, a corresponding change comes over Roman policy. The economic stagnation which had marked the aristocratic régime of the preceding century was now replaced by a new spirit of enterprise. About the middle of the century came the introduction—long overdue—of an official currency.<sup>1</sup> This, of course,

<sup>1</sup> When a minted currency was now introduced at Rome in place of rude metal ingots valued by weight alone, the first coin was the 'as'—a pound weight of copper—very cumbersome even for domestic use and so impracticable for foreign trading that Rome took to using silver two-drachma pieces coined for her by Capua. About the beginning of the third century B.C. a great change occurred in the value of precious metals. Alexander's conquests had brought quantities of

promoted trade; and in 348 we find Rome entering on a new agreement with the great mercantile power of Carthage. Not much later the river-mouth at Ostia, so long unutilized, was fitted out as a regular harbour. There can in fact be little doubt that the influence of a small but growing business element was making itself felt at Rome. Even the artisans and menial workers were not without their champions. Appius Claudius, who was censor in 312, not merely built an aqueduct for the better watering of the city's more populous quarter, but asserted the right of the sons of freed slaves to hold political office. It was a telling symptom of the changing times that Claudius's own clerk, named Fabius, was elected to the aedileship, in which capacity he drew up an important handbook of legal procedure. So far had Rome travelled from the old days of patrician monopoly.

It is a commonplace of history that business habits breed a spirit of adventurous initiative; and we may safely infer that the growth of these at Rome was partly at least responsible for the audacious external policy which she pursued throughout this period.<sup>1</sup> The horizon of her outlook was expanding. The hegemony of Latium no longer satisfied her ambitions, and in the course of the long wars which now fall to be described, she showed herself ready to push farther afield and to embrace new opportunities and new responsibilities.

It took Rome a quarter of a century and more to re-establish completely the position which she had held before the Gallic sack. Apart from the troubles which had imme-

bullion into Europe, and the value of silver fell. Simultaneously the unsettled state of Northern Italy cut off the supply of the Etruscan mines, and, copper becoming scarce, its value rose. To rectify this change of values, the Romans cut down the weight of their copper coins till the *as* weighed only one-sixth of a pound. As things became more settled, the value of silver and copper underwent fresh changes, and to stabilize the confusion, Rome devised in 269 a new currency system which lasted with but one important change for centuries (see p. 116). It consisted (*a*) of a copper *as* weighing two Roman ounces, (*b*) a silver coin equivalent in value to 10 asses and known for that reason as a '*denarius*' or '*tenner*' (= the French franc), (*c*) a smaller silver coin called the *sestertius* =  $2\frac{1}{2}$  asses or  $\frac{1}{4}$  denarius, which became the normal unit for all monetary reckoning.

<sup>1</sup> See, however, p. 80.

diately resulted and from which, as we have seen, she successfully emerged, there still hung over her the constant and terrible menace of a renewal of the barbarian inroads. More than once, indeed, that menace became a reality. In 360 Gallic hordes forced their way to the very gates of the city before they were beaten back. In 358 they reappeared, and again in 350 when they suffered a decisive defeat. Legend told how on this occasion M. Valerius Corvus engaged in single combat with a gigantic Gaul, and how, when hard pressed, he was assisted to victory by the friendly offices of a crow which swooped down and tore at his opponent's face. However that may be, the energy of the Gauls would now appear to have slackened, and about twenty years later, in 332, they agreed to a definite peace. Meanwhile fresh Etruscan efforts had been defeated in the north. Latin towns which had aided the Gauls were punished for their treachery, and by the middle of the century Rome was once more mistress of all and more than all her old domain. From the Ciminian forest in Lower Etruria, which formed her northern frontier, the area of her power extended southward as far as the Pomptine flats which she had annexed and planted with citizens in 358. These abutted directly on the Volscian hills. Behind the Volscian hills lay Campania and the richest plains of Italy; and it now would not be long before Rome's opportunity arrived and her armies would be marching through the passes to those plains.

### III. CONQUEST OF CAMPANIA AND THE SAMNITE WARS

The population of Campania was more mixed perhaps than in any other part of Italy. Its original inhabitants of whom little is ascertainable but who were known to the Greeks as the Ausones, had now for some centuries been gradually civilized first by contact with the Greek colonies of Cumae and Naples and second by the intrusion of Etruscans from the north. By the middle of the fifth century, the Etruscans, as we have seen, had lost their hold, but the Greeks who had been mainly instrumental in expelling them, were not long to be left in undisputed enjoyment of those sunny shores. Towards the end of the century Samnites had descended

from the valleys of the hinterland, swept the country, captured Cumae in 428, and with the exception of Naples which the Greeks still held, become masters of the plain. Settling down to peaceful occupations these Oscans, as they were called, had developed Capua into a prosperous town, soon rivalling even Rome in size and forming the centre of a league of Campanian cities. They absorbed, too, much of the culture of their Neapolitan neighbours. But under the seductive influence of their new environment something of their old virility had been lost; and when in the course of time fresh parties of marauders came down from Samnium and these Capuan settlers found themselves involved in war with their old kinsmen of the dales, they appealed for help to Rome (343). Here then was Rome's chance of intervening in Campania. It is true that not a dozen years before she had allied herself with the Samnite mountaineers for defence against the Gauls; but she now threw the treaty overboard and sent an army south. Her intervention was successful. It saved Capua, and what was still more important it established for Rome herself some claim to a protectorate of the southern plain. When in 341 she made peace and renewed her alliance with the Samnites, she continued to keep a garrison at Capua.<sup>1</sup>

Less gratifying were the reactions of this Campanian enterprise upon the situation nearer home. The members of the Latin League, as we know, had long been restive; with the passing of the Gallic menace the most urgent need for military union disappeared; and now that they saw Rome embarking on adventures of which they themselves might be asked to share the burden and she gain all the profit, they felt that the time had come to make their stand and demand some part in the control of Roman policy. Accordingly in 341 they came forward with a remarkable proposal for the reconstitution of the Latin League. Taking their cue perhaps from Rome's treatment of Tusculum in 381, they demanded that,

<sup>1</sup> It must, however, be admitted that such intervention in a quarrel which was not her own and in violation of her treaty obligations was so entirely contrary to Rome's normal policy (see p. 146) that the whole story of the campaign must be regarded with grave suspicion.



in addition to the private rights which they already enjoyed at Rome under the terms of their old treaty, they should now receive the public rights of political enfranchisement, with a further understanding that one of the Roman consuls and half the Roman senate should be drawn from their own ranks.<sup>1</sup> From Rome's own point of view such a scheme was far too drastic. For with the sudden introduction of so large a mass of voters her assembly would have been swamped and her independence of action reduced to a mere shadow. So the proposal was rejected. No compromise seemed possible and the answer was war to the knife. Rome was in a strong position; for though the ungrateful Campanians now joined the Latins against her, she was able to link forces with her Samnite allies and so drive the enemy southward on the sea. The decisive battle took place on the Campanian coast<sup>2</sup> (340). Legend told of notable deeds performed by the two Roman consuls. One Manlius ordered his own son to execution for disobeying the ban which he had placed upon single combats between champions. His colleague, Decius Mus, vowing his life to the infernal deities, plunged with head veiled into the thickest mêlée and by the heroic sacrifice assured the triumph of his country's arms. The Romans followed up their victory by reducing the coastal town of Antium and after forcing the surrender of its ships, carried back their beaks or *rostra* to decorate the platform in the Forum at home. The collapse of the Latins rang the death-knell of their League. But the terms Rome gave were generous. Though forbidden to make alliance except with Rome herself, each was allowed a measure of Roman privilege varying in accordance with their history and position. Thus, the grant of full citizenship was made to Aricia, Lanuvium

<sup>1</sup> Such a claim is not quite what we should expect from people who were anxious to shake free from Rome; and it is possible that this traditional version of the Latin demands was an invention based on the events of the Social War at the beginning of the first century B.C.

<sup>2</sup> Livy gives two battles, one at Vesperis near Mount Vesuvius, the other at Trifanum, near the Liris-mouth. It is probable that the latter was the real site of the battle and that Livy has been led by a divergent tradition into supposing that there were two battles rather than one.

and other adjacent towns. Tibur and Praeneste, two proud and historic cities, were allowed to remain independent allies. The rest of the Latin towns continued, as before, to enjoy the private rights of citizenship, to which even Capua and other Campanian cities were now also admitted. So round Rome was formed an area the population of which was bound to her by ties not lightly to be broken and destined with the lapse of time to acquire increasing strength. The broadminded liberality which the Republic thus displayed in her treatment of conquered neighbours was something entirely new in the history of antiquity; and marking as it did the first step in her long progress to a world hegemony, it revealed in a significant fashion a peculiar fitness for her imperial destiny.

Having thus rid herself of the menace of a disaffected Latium, Rome clearly felt less dependence upon external aid and less scruple therefore about alienating her Samnite allies. Indeed, since the decline of the Etruscan power, these had become her obvious and natural rival. They were the most numerous and, from a military point of view, by far the strongest of all Italian tribes; and on their own ground at least they were very formidable opponents. Equipped with oblong or oval shield, short sword and a casting javelin or *pilum* for engaging at a distance, the Samnite warriors were used to fight in small detachments which could manœuvre steadily over the roughest terrain and were to prove at least a match for the closer-knit but slower-moving phalanxes of Rome. In the face of a common foe a spirit of ardent patriotism inspired these scattered dalesmen to a unity which was singularly lacking in the intervals of peace, and under their chosen generalissimo they would cling to valley after valley with a dogged resolution which accepted no defeat. Nor was it their military qualities alone which rendered the Samnites dangerous. A population fast outgrowing the limited resources of their mountain farms compelled them to expand; and it was inevitable that they should do so at the expense of their plain-dwelling neighbours. That sooner or later, therefore, a stern struggle lay ahead the Romans must have realized, but it is highly improbable

that they realized how stern. At any rate, they would seem to have taken little trouble to avoid occasion of offence.

For it was the Roman's aggressive policy which precipitated the conflict. Counting perhaps on the preoccupation of the Samnites (whom the Greek city of Tarentum, aided by Alexander of Epirus, was keeping busy in the south), they took every opportunity of pushing their frontier forward at strategic points. In 329 they seized Privernum, thus securing the Volscian hills, planted a colony at Anxur at the end of the Pomptine Plain, and a year later another at Fregellae which commanded the inland route between Latium and Campania. They were thus encroaching dangerously upon the country which the Samnite mountaineers most coveted for their own. Then in 327 came a golden chance of intervening at Naples. There faction was rife, one party of the citizens<sup>1</sup> hiring Samnites from the mountains, the other finding support in the Oscan town of Capua. It was on the invitation of the latter party that the Romans marched south and besieged the Samnite garrison in Naples. Operations outlasted the year, and for the first time in history a Roman consul was voted a prolongation of his term '*pro consule*' or 'as consul's substitute'. When at last intrigue procured the evacuation of the garrison, the Romans gained possession and made Naples an ally. But the fat was on the fire. The Samnites, now thoroughly alarmed at the spread of Roman power, made the attack upon their swashbucklers a *casus belli*.

A desultory war set in. Rome captured some positions on the south-west of Samnium, and made an alliance with the Apulians on its east. The Samnites attacked Fregellae, though at first without success. It was not, in fact, till 321 that a crucial engagement took place. Then, learning on false report that the Samnites had gone east into Apulia,

<sup>1</sup> These anti-Romans, so far as we can judge, were the descendants of men who about a century before had come in as refugees from the ancient Greek town of Cumae. For this reason they were known as 'old citizens' or *Palaeopolitae* in contradistinction to the inhabitants of the 'New City', Neapolis. These Neapolitans or 'new citizens' now formed the opposing faction.

the Romans imagined they saw their chance. Their plan was to push up through Samnium itself, and cutting the Samnite army from its base, force it to battle on the Apulian plains where level and open country would give their own phalanx a great tactical advantage. To this end the two consuls, Veturius and Postumius, marched up out of Campania to penetrate the Samnite passes. Near Caudium the road threaded a narrow gorge. Nothing suspecting, the Romans entered, emerged into the water meadows of the valley beyond, found the head of this valley barricaded with boulders and held by a strong Samnite force, then turned on their tracks—only to find the narrow gorge behind them blocked too. There was no escape. They made a desperate effort to break through, failed and were eventually starved into surrender. The terms imposed by Pontius the Samnite generalissimo were harsh. All Rome's recent acquisitions in the south were to be abandoned. Six hundred Roman 'Knights' were to be left as hostages. The rest of the captured troops were to disarm and march home in their shirts, after first passing, as a token of disgrace, 'under the yoke'—that is, a pair of spears set up on end and supporting a third on top. The consuls, having no other choice, accepted and, when the shamefaced army slunk back into Rome under cover of night, shut themselves up in their houses, leaving the Senate to make the best it could of a bad business. Tradition averred that the terms were never ratified, and that, by way of putting things right, the two consuls were handed over in chains to the Samnites who very naturally inquired when the rest of the army were coming. The tale is in all probability no more than an attempt of later generations to minimize the disgrace of the defeat. For in any case Rome must have been hard put to it to re-equip her army. The unconvincing story of her immediate and brilliant recovery may therefore be discounted and for five or six years it seems clear that she drew in her horns, awaiting the opportunity of her revenge. (321.)

Before the next phase of the struggle opens, we may make note of two measures now taken by Rome towards the achievement of ultimate victory. One concerned the organiza-

tion of her army.<sup>1</sup> Hitherto she had clung to the phalanx, a formation derived originally from the Greeks and consisting of heavy-armed infantry packed closely shield by shield and armed for offence with a long thrusting spear. Its tactics had been to crush or break down the opposing line by the sheer weight of its massed depth: but, though admirably suited to the traditional shock-battle fought out on level ground, it was almost useless either for manœuvre in rough country or for engaging a mobile enemy. The Romans' recent experiences of mountain warfare can hardly have failed to lay bare these obvious defects, and it seems almost certain that about this time<sup>1</sup> they remodelled their tactical formation to suit the new conditions. In imitation of the Samnite enemy they divided up their legion into small detachments, 120 strong and known as *maniples* or 'handfuls'.<sup>2</sup> Instead of moving ponderously in a serried rectangle, these maniples were able to deploy freely; and their normal method of attack was to advance in a series of three successive waves, first hurling from a distance their javelin or *pilum* (for this weapon, too, they now adopted from the enemy), then following up the volley to a hand-to-hand encounter with the stab of their short swords. So flexible was this formation and so adaptable to every circumstance of warfare that it remained the permanent basis of Rome's military methods, and more than anything else it was responsible in time to come for the almost unbroken record of success achieved by her army under all manner of conditions and against every sort of foe.

The second of Rome's measures was a further extension of her influence over Apulia; and realizing the strategical advantage of distracting the Samnites upon this eastern flank, she even planned to found a colony at Luceria. But, in order to reach the district, it was first necessary to cross

<sup>1</sup> It is also possible that this tactical reform took place simultaneously with the other military changes introduced directly after the Gallic sack (p. 62).

<sup>2</sup> A 'maniple' was composed of two 'centuries', which term was now merely titular and no longer implied the strict numerical unit of one hundred. The three lines were termed *hastati*, *principes* and *triarii*, the last-named alone being still armed with the thrusting spear or hasta.

the Apennines, and such a dissipation of her forces was risky in the extreme. It brought her, as we shall see, within an ace of disaster.

Hostilities were resumed in 316; and in the following year one Roman army was dispatched to seize Luceria, the other was besieging Saticula at the foot of the Caudine valley, when suddenly the Samnites broke out across Campania, reached the coastal route towards Latium and took it. At Lautulae, near Anxur, they caught the Roman army of reserve which had hurriedly been gathered, and broke it utterly. Northern Campania rose and joined them. They even got within twenty miles of Rome itself; and, though one at least of the absent legions must by now have hurried home, all hung on the behaviour of the Latin towns. Happily these stood loyal. Rome rallied and in 314 not far from the scene of her late defeat she won a crushing victory in which the Samnite losses amounted, it is said, to over ten thousand men. So the tables were turned. During the next two years the Lucerian colony was definitely founded on the Samnites' eastern front. Two others at Interamna and Saticula were set to guard Campania, and meanwhile a start was made upon the construction of a great strategic high-road from Rome towards the south.

These precautionary measures were taken none too soon. For before long the scene of operations shifted suddenly to the north, and the Roman legions were needed for other purposes than the protection of Campania. First in 310 came trouble with the Etruscans; and hardly had this been dealt with, when the tribes of the central Apennines began to stir. In 308 the Marsi, and then in 306 the Hernici, Aequi and Paeligni joined the enemy. They were rough and warlike peoples. Their country was wild and mountainous; but thanks to her command of the coastal corridor Rome was able to strike at discretion and divide her foes. By 304 the situation was mastered, even the Samnites agreed to terms of peace; and once and for all relinquished their claim to the hegemony of Campania. Thus the verdict of the Caudine Forks was very signally reversed, and it was clear that Rome's military reorganization was telling. Nevertheless,

such a conclusion was in no way decisive ; and it is significant that the terms imposed no loss of territory or independence upon the defeated enemy.

Rome used the respite skilfully. By planting colonies at Sora, Alba Fucens, Carsioli and Narnia she secured her control of the central Apennines. Thus the Samnites found themselves hemmed in upon the north as well as upon the east and west ; and their position began to look hopeless. In 299, however, came the opportunity for a last desperate throw. For the Gauls were once again upon the warpath. In Central Europe the restless tide of migration was still forcing fresh parties of barbarians southward. Some of these had recently descended from the Alps and stirred up their kinsmen of the Lombard Plain. Leaguering themselves with several Etruscan cities they hovered menacingly in the north ; and the Samnites, seeing their chance, renewed the war. But the Romans were now confident. With the accumulation of fresh allies and the foundation of new colonies, their military strength had steadily been growing, and they accordingly determined to do what they had never done before and strike home at the very heart of Samnium. In 298 they marched up into the passes and winning a brilliant victory, captured Bovianum, the ancient centre of the Samnite League. During the next year fire and sword went through the scattered villages of the dales. It seemed, indeed, as though the end had come at last. But there remained one danger. Away in the north the Gauls were still restless ; and in 296 the Samnite army, slipping away and marching rapidly up the eastern coast, joined them near Sentinum and prepared for a combined advance on Rome. Decius and Fabius, the two consuls, hurried after them and in the nick of time brought them to bay before they could cross the Apennines. In the ensuing battle the legions were confronted with what was perhaps the strongest combination they had yet met on any field. But they were now experienced veterans for whom even the barbarian onset had lost much of its terror, and the tragedy of the Allia was not repeated. Decius, in imitation of his father and namesake, sacrificed his life by charging into the thick of

the fray. His example braced the Romans and the day ended in a crushing victory. The surviving consul Fabius made an extended demonstration through Etruria; and in the following years the *coup de grâce* was administered to Samnium. Far down on her south-east border a colony was planted at Venusia (291) and, the ring of Roman outposts being thus completed, the irrepressible dalesmen were at last firmly held. Annexation was out of the question; and being unripe for special privilege, they were allowed to retain the rank of autonomous allies.

On the north-east the Sabine tribesmen were now admitted to Rome's confederation,—at first with the status of half-franchise—a stroke of policy which served at once to drive a wedge towards the Adriatic, thus isolating her northern from her southern neighbours and also to provide a useful barrier against the menace of the Gauls. Even so the last had not been heard of these inveterate enemies. In 285 and again in 283 came fresh incursions, supported (as usual) by certain Etruscan cities; but by a final victory won near Lake Vadimo, Rome compelled the Gauls to peace; and she took the opportunity of bringing the unstable folk of Etruria and Umbria more directly under her protectorate. To the Etruscans, indeed, she never gave her full confidence. The treaties concluded with their cities were made not, as with other allies, 'for ever', but for a specified term of years. With the single exception of Caere, they were allowed no grant of citizenship; and though Rome later intervened in 265 to enforce the liberation of their serfs, she left the old aristocratic landlords a complete freedom of control. So unwilling was she, in fact, to merge her destinies with this strange and alien people that until the period of the First Punic War when some coastal defence was needed, she refrained from planting her own colonies among them. Upon the farther side of the Apennines, however, she showed no such diffidence. A regular string of her outposts lined the northern Adriatic coast ranging from Hadria, first founded in 289, past Castrum Novum and Sena Gallica (283) to Ariminum (268). From the territory on which the two latter stations stood, the Gallic inhabitants had been driven out



(285), and it was annexed to Rome as far northwards as the River Rubicon. This Ager Gallicus, as it was called, served the purpose of a buffer against the Gauls of the Lombard Plain; and long after these had eventually been conquered, the Rubicon was still to remain the technical frontier of the Roman state.<sup>1</sup> Thus by the year 283 the fruit of Rome's long effort had been gathered. She was now undisputed mistress of all northern and central Italy. Only the extreme south remained outside the pale of her confederacy; and there, before she could make good her hold, a stern test—the sternest perhaps that she had yet encountered—was now immediately awaiting her.

#### IV. TARENTUM AND PYRRHUS

For some centuries, as we have already noted, the shores of southern Italy had supported a flourishing group of Greek colonies. These, though famous in their day both for their commerce and their culture, were now decadent. Their trade was dwindling; for Greece, since Alexander's conquest of the East, had ceased to look much to the west for her supplies; and Tarentum alone of these south Italian cities maintained a lucrative export, chiefly in wool and manufactured metal. Meanwhile the luxurious prosperity of their prime had left their inhabitants frivolous and soft. The bath-house and the theatre were now more to their taste than serious politics. They suffered much from mob-rule and windy demagogues; and with such distaste was military service regarded that they were quite incapable of vigorous self-defence. This was the more unfortunate, since the Italian tribes of the hinterland were robust and predatory. The Lucanians and the Bruttians, their immediate neighbours, and even, as we have seen, the more distant Samnites had for some while been troublesome; and long before this the Greek cities would have succumbed had not Tarentum used her wealth to hire protectors. Across the Adriatic soldiering was now a regular profession; and, given

<sup>1</sup> The frontier of Italy proper was at first drawn south of the Ager Gallicus along the line of the River Aesis; but was later advanced to the Rubicon by Sulla.

good pay and a leader, mercenaries would come. So first in 338 Archidamus of Sparta, Tarentum's parent-city, had brought an army over. A few years later it was Alexander of Epirus; and then at the close of the fourth century another King of Sparta. Thus the marauders of the mountains had been kept at bay; and when a little later Agathocles, the tyrant of Syracuse, attempted to build up an empire of Sicilian and south Italian Greeks, it looked as though the situation might still be saved. But at his death in 289 his work fell all to pieces; and once more the unstable leadership of Tarentum seemed alone to stand between the Greek cities and their fate.

But there was now an alternative champion. Rome's conquest of Samnium and the foundation of her new colony at Venusia had brought her into closer contact with the south; and though during the crisis of her recent wars she had gladly availed herself of the Lucanians' aid, she was equally ready to take arms against them at the invitation of the hard-pressed Greeks. The appeal came from Thurii in 282. The Senate, indeed, shrank from the venture; but by the *Lex Hortensia* passed five years previously,<sup>1</sup> the democratic Assembly-by-tribes had attained to sovereign power. The prospect of booty to be won in war, perhaps even of tribute to be wrung from a conquered enemy, appears to have stirred the ambition of the populace; and the go-ahead policy of its tribune-leaders now carried the day in favour of intervention. So a consul went south to protect Thurii. His assistance saved the Greeks; but the Tarentines, who were accustomed to regard Southern Italy as their own preserve, were furious at Rome's interference. A little later a squadron of ten Roman ships put into their harbour. Actually its appearance in these southern waters was a contravention of an old agreement; and making the most of the technicality the inhabitants of the town attacked the ships, sank four and killed their admiral. Envoys, sent by the Senate to protest, were refused a hearing. The silly mob scoffed at their bad Greek. A few hooligans pelted them with filth. 'It shall be wiped out in blood,' said a

<sup>1</sup> See p. 47.

Roman; and the order was given to march on the ill-mannered town.

Distrusting their own powers of resistance, the Tarentines sent post-haste to procure aid from Epirus. There the ruling prince was now a man of forty, named Pyrrhus, a son-in-law of Agathocles and a relative by marriage to Alexander the Great. He was an exuberant, chivalrous, but wholly unreliable adventurer, ambitious to emulate his kinsman's career of conquest, but lacking either the knowledge of the world or the steadfastness of purpose to achieve his aim. His chief strength lay in a talent for soldiering. He was a superb leader of men and had learnt war in the turmoil which followed on Alexander's death. The troops he brought over were many of them mercenaries trained in the tactics which had so recently overthrown the great Empire of the East; and the Romans therefore were now to meet what they had never met before—an army of professional fighters. It comprised a phalanx of heavy-armed foot—about 20,000 strong—marshalled in serried ranks to a great depth and with a front that bristled with the heads of their long lances; on the wings a well-drilled cavalry whose business it was, while the phalanx *held* the enemy, to turn his rear or flank; and last, what to the Romans was a terrifying novelty—the more so since horses, if untrained, will never face them—a herd of twenty elephants.

Near Heraclea in the summer of 280 the two armies met. The Romans with their allied contingents were in no numerical inferiority; and had it not been for Pyrrhus's cavalry, their more elastic line might well have enveloped the compact formation of the phalanx. As it was, the legions broke ineffectually against its front, unable with their short swords to get past the hedge of projecting lances. Their own cavalry turned at the approach of the elephants, thus exposing them to the attack of the opposing horse; and after a fierce and bloody conflict they were routed. The battle cost them over 7,000 men. But it cost Pyrrhus himself 4,000—a loss which he was less in a position to afford. Yet his sanguine optimism told him that a sudden dash on Rome would bring her allies over to his side, and not till he got within forty miles

of the city did he realize the error of his calculation. He retired, and made overtures of peace. At Rome, however, the war party was still in the ascendant, led now by the blind old censor, Appius Claudius, and Pyrrhus's terms were rejected.

In the heat of the crisis fresh levies had been raised for the legions, drawn for the first time in Rome's history from the lowest class of landless citizens. The winter was spent in drilling; and in the spring of 479 the consuls again marched south with not less perhaps than 40,000 troops. Pyrrhus, also reinforced by some Samnites and Lucanians, was planning to move up the Adriatic coast in the hope of detaching the northern Samnites to his side. The Romans met him near Asculum, east of Venusia, where the rough ground was suited to their own formation; and for a whole day they held the phalanx. On the morrow Pyrrhus drew them into more level country, and sending in his elephants to breach their front, drove them back with heavy losses to their camp. But once more the effort had cost him between three and four thousand men—another 'Pyrrhic victory'. Disheartened and impatient at the slow progress of his arms, he withdrew to Tarentum. He was disgusted with the feebleness of its Greek inhabitants, from whom he had expected considerable military assistance and whom he found to be a pack of incorrigible loungers. Once more he made overtures of peace.

But elsewhere events were moving. Sicily, as often, was in commotion. Syracuse had been attacked by Agrigentum; and seeing their chance, the Carthaginians decided to renew their attempts upon the island. The proximity of Pyrrhus, however, made them nervous; so they offered Rome the loan of ships and money, hoping thereby to ensure the prolongation of the Tarentine War and the detention of Pyrrhus in Italy. In this hope they were deceived. For no sooner had they laid siege to Syracuse than the cry went over for Pyrrhus; and Pyrrhus came (278). For two years he carried all before him, freed most of Sicily, meditated a descent on Carthage itself, abandoned the idea for lack of men, and—returned to Italy. The Carthaginians

attacked him *en route* and sank more than half of his ships. His case seemed desperate. Such help as he had got from the Samnites and Lucanians was now no longer forthcoming. His own forces had dwindled, and the Romans were stronger than ever. He tried by a night march to surprise one of their armies near Malventum, went astray in the dark, and when he met them, suffered severe defeat. Even some of his elephants were captured. He knew now that the game was up. His brief career in Italy had been like a whirlwind, and like a whirlwind he departed as suddenly as he had come. In the autumn of 275 he slipped away with troops now numbering perhaps a third of what he had brought over. Three years later he was killed in street fighting at Argos by a tile thrown by a woman from a house-top.

With the departure of Pyrrhus Rome's anxieties were ended; but she took careful steps to prevent the recurrence of trouble in the south. The old League of Samnite cantons was split into two halves, and between the northern and the southern portions a colony was planted at Malventum, now re-christened, for superstitious reasons, Beneventum.<sup>1</sup> Alongside the Lucanians, too, the ancient Greek town of Posidonia or Paestum was made a Latin colony (273). In 272 the resistance of Tarentum finally collapsed with the withdrawal of the garrison which Pyrrhus had left behind him. All things considered, the town was treated generously; for, though as a precautionary measure, some troops were posted on the citadel, it was received into alliance with some measure of autonomy. The other Greek cities of the south were also left as free allies; but in one important respect their status was peculiar. Upon all other members of her confederation Rome imposed the duty of furnishing troops at need. But these Greeks, as we know, were poor fighting material, and accordingly they were made responsible for what they better understood, the provision of a quota of ships. Naval organization was something comparatively new at Rome. In 311 two officials, called *duo-viri navales*, had been appointed to supervise the creation of a fleet. The ships, however, so far as we can judge, were

<sup>1</sup> That is 'Well-come' instead of 'Ill-come'.

few in number and insignificant in size ; and, since they were apparently not provided with decks for the operation of marines, they can hardly have been intended for anything more than the transport of troops or stores. No serious effort, indeed, was made to put the fleet on a real fighting basis until the struggle against Carthage in Sicily made such a step imperative. For the present Rome had little thought of overseas expansion. The organization and settlement of Italy absorbed all her energies.

For more than half a century now, with but little intermission, she had been engaged in a series of wars, each more exacting than the last ; and it goes without saying that the strain on her citizens had been tremendous. The loss of life alone must have been considerable ; but the most serious sacrifice perhaps was economic. For the men who had fought these wars were for the most part yeoman-farmers ; and the prosperity of their holdings cannot but have suffered severely by their frequent absences. Loss of time would mean loss of crops, fatal enough to a struggling man ; and the consequent distress—aggravated at times by the fluctuations of the currency and but little alleviated by the reform of the debt-laws<sup>1</sup>—must have compelled many to part with their farms to the large proprietors. Thus the class of landless citizens would threaten to swell ominously. Trade perhaps absorbed a few ; but Rome's foreign trade was as yet in its infancy. She had little she could export. All her corn was needed for home consumption, and, since the soil of Latium was showing signs of some exhaustion, she had even at times to import from Sicily or Africa. Her industries similarly were in the main confined to the provision of her own domestic needs ; and manufacture for export was scarcely attempted. The fact was that the surplus class of landless citizens who might naturally have turned their energies in this direction preferred to find some opening more suited to their agricultural habits ; and such an opening was actually afforded them by the system of colonial plantation. For the 'colonies' offered land allotments gratis to any who would go, and no doubt one of the

<sup>1</sup> See p. 45.

main reasons why the new democracy was so bent upon a policy of territorial expansion was to be found in a genuine land-hunger. Thus, economic as well as strategic considerations dictated the course of Rome's conquests, and imperialist ambitions were fostered by her own internal difficulties. The result was that the effort of brains which might under other circumstances have been turned to industrial, artistic or intellectual development, was almost of necessity concentrated on the practical problems of military and political organization.

Nothing, indeed, is more astonishing than the systematic way in which this people, otherwise so unscientific and uncultured, set about the solution of these problems. Already they had grasped how important to a ruling power is swift and easy overland transit; and they were beginning to develop what the Greeks, with their maritime proclivities, had scarcely attempted, the art of road-making. In days when macadam had not been invented and when low-lying country was undrained and apt after heavy rain to turn into a quagmire, the great military high-roads of Rome were of inestimable value, and for two thousand years and over they were to remain the best in Europe. They were more causeways than roads, always solidly built, often raised above the surrounding level, normally paved, and planned to run straight as an arrow from point to point. In later times they were to form the arteries of empire in many distant lands; but even in Italy of the third century B.C. a good beginning had been made. The Via Appia, first undertaken in 312, was carried southward into Campania, then across the Samnite passes and down to the new Apulian colony of Venusia. The great north road, later to be known as the Via Flaminia, already reached as far as Narnia; and eastwards a third struck up towards the central Apennines to Alba Fucens.

Such a system afforded passage not merely to Rome's legions,—for which no doubt it was primarily intended—but also to her officials and her merchants; and more than anything perhaps it facilitated and hastened the dissemination of her speech and habits throughout the scattered members

of her confederation. Thanks to her political methods such influences were spreading rapidly. Already a large central area (which included Latium, a narrow strip of South Etruria and after 268 the Sabine hinterland) had been incorporated in the full franchise of the capital, and was well on the way to being thoroughly Romanized.<sup>1</sup> Beyond this northwards to Caere, southwards to Naples and eastwards to Arpinum, lay a wider circle which had received half-franchise and was awaiting its promotion to full rights. Even the more outlying districts, though excluded from such privilege, contained many colonial outposts of Roman or Latin status, and partly from contact with these were rapidly learning to identify their interests with the interests of their suzerain; nor could there be any better proof of the soundness of Rome's methods than the loyalty with which these recent enemies were to stand by her in the coming ordeal of the Punic Wars.

The making of a nation had, in fact, begun; and something of what was taking place in Italy had already been realized by the outside world. Carthaginian diplomacy, as we have seen, had taken stock of Rome's growing importance; and her spectacular triumph over Pyrrhus and his Greeks had attracted the attention of an even more influential and more distant power. In 273 Ptolemy Philadelphus, who now ruled the Egyptian portion of Alexander's Empire, sent an embassy with friendly overtures to Rome and Rome for her part sent envoys back again. It is curious to contemplate the visit of these staid, somewhat boorish and, no doubt, much bewildered ambassadors to the brilliant and sophisticated metropolis of the Levant, now the second home of the intellectual and artistic culture of Greece. Not thirty years before their fathers had been engaged in a life-and-death struggle with a semi-barbarous tribe of neighbouring hillsmen. Now they found themselves treated on equal terms of courtesy by the proudest monarch of the day. It is not too much to say that their mission marked an epoch.

<sup>1</sup> The population of the Roman Confederation has been estimated at this period as about four millions. About a quarter of its area was in the hands of Roman citizens.



It meant that the first stage in Rome's course had been accomplished; that her horizon was opening on a wider and vaster destiny; that she was now a World Power.

## CHAPTER V

## THE FIRST PUNIC WAR

## I. THE CARTHAGINIAN EMPIRE

THE Mediterranean world of the third century B.C. fell into fairly well-defined halves. Greece, long accustomed by reason of her central position to send her wares and spread her culture across either surrounding sea, had ceased since Alexander's conquests to look much towards the west. For eastwards in the train of those conquests new opportunities were opening. The lure of trade beckoned. Towns, founded on the Greek model, attracted emigrants by the thousand; and thus around the shores of the Levant arose new centres of Hellenic civilization which were linked by both cultural and material ties to the old centres in Asia Minor or the Greek motherland herself. True, the political unity of Alexander's vast dominion was shattered at his death; and rival captains had carved out realms for themselves. The successors of Alexander's European viceroy ruled in Macedon, whence they aspired to the control of the small States and Leagues of Greece. The Seleucid princes ruled Syria, Mesopotamia and much of Asia Minor from their favourite capital of Antioch. Ptolemy and his successors held Egypt. But despite the obvious disunion of these principalities the common civilization which in one degree or another they all shared, tended to give to this eastern half of the Mediterranean a cultural unity destined to grow stronger with time and ultimately at the fall of the Roman Empire even to survive the disruption of its western provinces. The Greek language, somewhat debased in form, became by degrees the *lingua franca* of the Levant. Greek art and literature flourished in Pergamum and Alexandria. Greek thought penetrated

even among the exclusive Rabbis of Jerusalem. Thus, from the shore of the Adriatic to the banks of the Nile was developed a homogeneity of culture such that at the beginning of the Christian era a Jew of Tarsus could speak or write in terms equally intelligible to wisecracks at Athens or simple fisherfolk of Galilee, to natives of Iconium or Philippi, Caesarea or Troy.

Meanwhile over the western half of the Mediterranean such Hellenic influences had in the third century B.C. won as yet but little hold. True, Southern Italy and Sicily were inhabited by Greeks; and among these both Agathocles of Syracuse and Pyrrhus the Epirot had in turn aspired to build an empire on the model of the Empires of the Levant. Both failed, as we have seen; and of the two great powers which accounted for their failure, Rome was still comparatively untouched by Hellenic influences. The other, Carthage, belonged to an order of civilization widely removed in many ways from the ideas and habits of either Greece or Rome.

It was some time in the ninth century B.C., so far as we can tell, that colonists from Phoenicia had founded upon the northern shore of Libya the town known to the Romans as Carthago, but to its inhabitants themselves as Kirjath. By origin, therefore, the colonists were of Semitic stock, akin to the Canaanitish peoples of Palestine and more remotely to the Jews themselves. Their character was on the whole typical of their blood. Cruel they certainly were; for they would put prisoners to the torture and whole cities to the sword. By the Romans—though not always with justice—they were credited with acts of the blackest treachery, and, what was perhaps more genuinely repellent to the more light-hearted Aryans of Greece or Italy, their temper was marked by a dour, unnatural gloom which would appear to have had its source in a superstitious fanaticism. Their religion was gross and horrible, and its chief deities were Astarte the unedifying Moon Goddess, and Moloch the Fire Lord, into whose furnace at times of dire extremity they were even known to cast their children. Above all, like the Phoenicians from whom they sprang, they were great merchants. Their ships voyaged to Britain for tin. Their

caravans drew gold and ivory, slaves and precious stones from the dark interior of the Continent. One of their captains, Hanno, even explored its coast as far as the Equator. Of the early years in which their city grew from a Phoenician factory into an independent power little or nothing is known. But from the sixth century onwards they embarked on a deliberate policy of expansion. They conquered an extensive section of the hinterland from the native Libyans whom they reduced to serfdom. Over their Numidian neighbours of Africa and over Southern Spain they assumed a wide hegemony, planting colonies of Libyo-Phoenician half-breeds at appropriate points and annexing to themselves the trade-posts previously planted by Phoenicia. Sardinia, valuable for its metals, became theirs; and in the western end of Sicily the Phoenician posts passed also under their control. From these wide-flung dependencies they drew an immense revenue, partly through the imposition of custom-dues on traffic, and partly through direct tribute. Such resources gave them the means to raise at need not merely a powerful fleet for the protection of their trade-routes, but also a large mercenary army which they further reinforced with regiments pressed from their native subjects in Africa and Spain. The Carthaginian landlords and merchants were thus relieved from the necessity of personal war-service. They were, in fact, a ruling caste, living in luxurious ease, intensely jealous of their privilege, and governing their subjects with a selfish despotism typical of the East from which they hailed. The actual constitution of Carthage, however, was more akin to the Greek or Roman than to the Oriental type. She, like Rome, possessed two chief executive magistrates, a Council of influential citizens, and a popular Assembly. But, save in the event of some serious deadlock between the higher powers, the Assembly's voice counted for nothing; and in questions of policy and legislation alike the authority lay in the hands of the Council, guided by a smaller Committee or Board of its own members. The two chief magistrates, termed *Shophetim*<sup>1</sup> or Suffetes, were chosen

<sup>1</sup> The word is the same as that used in the Bible to designate the Judges' of the early Israelites.



year by year ; but their military commanders were wisely permitted a much longer term of power and were thus enabled to make war more efficiently than the changing consuls of Rome. Though often seriously hampered by the narrow-minded jealousy of the home government, these commanders were signally loyal to Carthage, and indeed the stability of her constitution, much admired by the philosopher Aristotle, was not least among the sources of her undoubted strength. She was beyond question the richest city in the world. Since the decline of the Athenian and Phoenician navies, she had been left without a maritime rival. The western waters of the Mediterranean were, in fact, little better than a 'Carthaginian lake' ; and, as the treaty made with Rome well demonstrates, her object was to close them, so far as possible, to all vessels but her own. Sooner or later it was evident that a clash was sure to come between this prosperous Semitic city and the growing power of Rome ; and it is not too much to say that the future destiny of the world hung upon its decision.

## II. THE FIRST PUNIC WAR

The inevitable bone of contention between the two rival empires was the island which lay between them—Sicily. On its western extremity, as we have seen, Carthage had long since acquired a footing at Panormus, Motya and Lilybaeum ; but her ambition was to win the entire island, and on more than one occasion she had made prodigious efforts to conquer the Greek cities which encircled its coasts. In 480, the year of Xerxes' invasion of Greece, a vast Carthaginian host under Hamilcar had been beaten back at the famous battle of Himera. Again, after the great Athenian débâcle towards the end of the century, the effort had been renewed. This time Himera was taken with circumstances of appalling horror, and the Sicilians then realized what Carthaginian conquest meant. But in the long-drawn struggle which followed, it was only the skilful leadership of the upstart tyrant, Dionysius of Syracuse, that had availed to save them. Nothing in fact but the presence of a genuine leader could hold the quarrelsome Greeks together. To-

wards the end of the fourth century it was Timoleon, the patriot crusader from Corinth, who beat back a fresh invasion. A little later it was Agathocles of Syracuse, who put up a stalwart defence and actually carried the war on to African soil itself. Through all these years, moreover, the Carthaginian hold upon the west end of the island had never been relinquished; and the disunion of the Greeks continually exposed them to renewed encroachments. Pyrrhus had found even Syracuse hard pressed, and after his withdrawal in 276 the Greeks seem to have lost heart and to have regarded submission as a lesser evil than perpetual war. The Carthaginians had been able to reoccupy the greater part of the island, and over the south-east alone did Syracuse, now ruled by the young soldier-tyrant Hiero, maintain a precarious dominion.

There remained, however, at Messana in the extreme north-east of the island one other independent and by no means insignificant community. In 289 some Campanian mercenaries, receiving their discharge at the death of their employer Agathocles, had seized this town, murdered its chief citizens, and calling themselves Mamertines or 'children of Mars', proceeded to harry and terrorize the surrounding country-side. In 265 they were beaten back by Hiero off Syracusan territory; and three years later, when he threatened to follow up his attack, they accepted the assistance of a Carthaginian garrison. The wisdom of this step was, however, challenged and it was presently resolved to appeal instead to Rome. So the trouble began. The Senate, true to its cautious conservatism, shrank from the venture; and seeing that Rome at this date possessed no warships of her own, their caution was not ill-founded. The popular party, however, was still in the ascendant; and it took a different view. Messana, by its very situation, commanded the narrow straits between Italy and Sicily; and its adhesion to Rome's alliance seemed to offer an admirable safeguard against any Carthaginian attempt to close and monopolize that all-important trade-route. So the Senate was overruled; the invitation of the Mamertines accepted, and in 264 Appius Claudius, a relative of the old censor,

was dispatched south with two legions. It was on the face of it a risky undertaking. The best that Appius could hope was to cross in the transports of the South Italian allies, with the almost certain prospect that, if he got to Sicily, he would eventually be marooned there by the Carthaginian fleet. But luck played into his hands. Encouraged by an envoy whom he sent ahead of him, the Mamertines compelled the evacuation of the Carthaginian garrison—whose commander, though technically correct in observing a strict neutrality, was very promptly crucified *pour encourager les autres*. Appius meanwhile slipped across the straits—here barely two miles in breadth—under cover of night, occupied Messina, and when the Carthaginians under Hanno, reinforced by an army which Hiero obligingly brought up from Syracuse, appeared before its walls, he beat them each in turn (264).

The Punic Government's claim to the hegemony of the island had thus been seriously challenged. The Republic which in the time of Pyrrhus they had regarded as a useful counterpoise against the Sicilians' resistance, had now entered the field as a rival to themselves. In such a state of affairs it was impossible for them to acquiesce; and war was inevitable. Dependent as they were, however, upon mercenary contingents collected, when necessity arose, from Spain, Gaul, Greece and even from Northern Italy, the Carthaginians were slow movers. Next year they tamely allowed Syracuse to be attacked and Hiero forced into the Roman alliance. Even in 262, when their base at Agrigentum was threatened, they retired within its walls and five months elapsed before Hanno at the head of a formidable army was sent to its relief—only to suffer a severe defeat. The town was sacked by the Romans and its Greek inhabitants sold into slavery. This high-handed act appears to have clarified the issue. For the Senate, so Polybius tells us, were now determined to master the whole of Sicily; and the Carthaginians, grasping the situation, began for the first time to exert their sea-power. It would seem, indeed, that their fleet had been no more ready than their army; for normally in peace-time it would be laid up in dock, and

before it could be put into commission, hiring rowers would have to be collected and trained. Now, however, in 260 a squadron was sent to cruise round Sicily and terrorize the coastal towns into submission. This stroke admitted of but one answer. If they were to avoid disaster, the Romans, too, must organize a fleet.

Hitherto, as we have seen, the Republic possessed no battleships of its own ; and even triremes such as the Italian Greeks employed, would have been no match for the great towering galleons of Carthage. It so happened, however, that at the outbreak of war an enemy quinquereme had been stranded off Bruttium, and taking this as a model, the Italian shipwrights set to work to build a hundred vessels of the larger type. During the period of their construction a scaffold of skeleton benches was erected on shore, and the novice crews trained to row at the word of command. But the Romans' real hope lay in the superiority of their marines ; and to facilitate the work of boarding-parties they adopted the ingenious device of fitting out each ship with a hinged gangway, which could be lowered by a pulley from the mast-head and was equipped with a grappling spike (nicknamed the 'Crow's bill' or *corvus*), to get a purchase on the enemy's deck. The sequel was astonishing. The reputation of the Punic navy, which in reality had for over a hundred years never been tested, proved a bubble ; and not once or twice but many times in the succeeding years, it collapsed before the young and totally inexperienced Roman fleet. In 260 after a first brush in which his vanguard was beaten, the consul Duillius won a crushing victory off Mylae, not far from Messana. Two years later a success was gained off Sardinia ; and Corsica was captured. Finally, near Cape Ecnomus on the southern shore of Sicily, Regulus and Manlius, the consuls for 256, defeated the enemy in a tremendous set battle, in which it is said that over three hundred vessels were engaged on either side. Meanwhile on the land-front the Roman progress had been slow but sure ; and the Carthaginians had been driven back upon Panormus and other fortified bases at the west end of the island. These, however, were too strong to be easily mastered ; and the



shortest way to win Sicily, as it seemed, was to strike direct at Carthage herself. Ecnomus was, in fact, merely the prelude to a still more audacious move. For the victors were already on their way to Africa (256).

Regulus's African campaign was perhaps the most notable incident of the war. He began it brilliantly. For, though winter was approaching and his colleague was recalled, taking with him the bulk of the army (so tenacious was the Senate of the annual routine of replacing both consuls and legions), he set to work to plunder the country, drove back with heavy loss the army which came out against him, and after proposing terms which could never have been granted, settled down to await the spring before making his attempt on the city. Carthage seemed doomed. But during the winter there arrived along with some Greek mercenaries a Spartan officer named Xanthippus. This man being a skilful tactician and a professional trainer of troops was commissioned to reorganize the Carthaginian army on Hellenic lines. Even the citizens themselves condescended to drill; and so effective were Xanthippus's methods that when he went out to meet the Romans, he practically annihilated them. Regulus himself was captured; and half a dozen years afterwards was sent on parole to Rome to negotiate an exchange of prisoners and convey overtures of peace. Later generations were never tired of telling the story—immortalized by Horace in his famous ode—how the brave fellow refused to recommend the proposals he had been sent to sponsor, and returned without a murmur to Carthage and captivity. There he died, so far as the evidence goes, from natural causes; and though legend declared that he was put to death by torture, this was probably an attempt to palliate the hideous revenge which was taken by his widow. As hostages for her husband's safety this lady had procured from the Senate two Carthaginian prisoners, and on learning of his death, she had them placed in a cask without food or water, and when one died, left the survivor to a lingering death beside the rotting corpse—a curiously grim commentary on one side of the Roman character.

With Regulus's failure the tide of fortune set in against

the Romans, more especially at sea. Long-distance operations were proving, in fact, too much for their mariners; and lacking skilled pilots (for it is doubtful how much use they made of either the ships or the crews of their South Italian allies), they found themselves less capable of facing a squall than of defeating an enemy squadron. First a fleet of 350 sail, dispatched to the relief of Regulus, was caught in a storm off South Sicily, and all but eighty foundered. In 253 a second fleet, returning homewards from a raid on the Libyan coast, was also wrecked. Meanwhile in Sicily itself things were going none too well. Though in 254 the great naval base and fortress of Panormus had been captured, the legions found it difficult to make further headway without command of the sea. In 250 they began the investment of Lilybaeum, employing catapults, siege engines and mining tactics which they had learnt from the Sicilians; but they made little impression. Next year what remained of the fleet was defeated in the adjacent harbour of Drepana,<sup>1</sup> and a large convoy of transports went down in a storm. It became impossible even to intercept the Carthaginian blockade-runners from revictualling Lilybaeum. After fifteen years of war it almost looked as though Rome had shot her bolt. She had lost in all at least 500 warships and twice as many transports; and, unable to build new ones from an exhausted Treasury, she was obliged to supply even her troops in Sicily by sending convoys overland. But her spirit was not crushed; and when about this time peace overtures were brought by Regulus, they were indignantly refused.

Had the Carthaginians now chosen to exploit their command of the sea, there is every reason to suppose that they might have come off victors. But their heart was not in the struggle. The powerful party of rich landlords, who had no small voice in shaping the Government's policy, were more concerned with the acquisition of fresh estates

<sup>1</sup> Of this defeat was told the famous story how before the engagement P. Claudius was informed by the augurs that the omens were against him, the sacred chickens which he carried on board would not eat. 'Then they shall drink,' replied Claudius and had them thrown into the sea.

in Africa than with the retention of an overseas empire ; and at this very moment their leader, known as Hanno 'the Great', was actually engaged in conquering more of the interior. It so happened, however, that in 247 there came to the fore a young general named Hamilcar Barca (or Barak). A real leader of men with an uncommon talent for organization and bold strategy, he was also an enthusiast for the war against Rome. His appointment to the Sicilian command changed the whole character of the campaign. By sea he even plundered the Italian coast. On land he refused pitched battle, and, seizing a hill-top called Ercte in the rear of Panormus, he thence began to wear the Romans down by a series of sallies and raids. Though the siege of Lilybaeum was obstinately maintained, its besiegers were thus baffled ; and it became more and more obvious that short of recovering the command of the sea, they never would take the fortress. At last the Senate determined to resume shipbuilding. Loans were raised from among the richer citizens. All contributed what they could. Even trinkets were surrendered to the Treasury ; and by one means or another two hundred new vessels were put into commission. In 242 the fleet put out under Lutatius Catulus and made for Drepana. Meanwhile the Carthaginian navy was lying idle at home, and so listless was the Government's policy that it was not till next year that it put in an appearance ill-manned with raw crews and accompanied by a heavy-laden convoy of cornships. Catulus met it outside Drepana, near the Aegates islands ; and though forced to fight head on to a strong westerly gale, he defeated it utterly. This was a crowning victory. The Carthaginians recognized that they were beaten ; and Hamilcar was empowered to make the best peace he could (241).

The terms which the Carthaginian generalissimo procured were severe upon his country. She was to pay Rome in twenty annual instalments an indemnity of 3,200 talents (or more than £500,000). She was to refrain from sailing her warships into Italian waters or recruiting mercenaries from North Italian tribes. Lastly, she was to abandon all claim whatsoever to Sicily.

## III. SETTLEMENT OF SICILY

The conquest of the island had been, as we have said, the real goal of Rome's tremendous effort. It had taken her just over a quarter of a century to achieve it; but it is improbable that the many problems which attended its achievement had been clearly visualized. With the addition of this rich and populous province to her already large domain, a new chapter opened in the history of Rome's imperialism. Hitherto in her dealings with Sicilian cities she had followed the lines of policy suggested by her treatment of her Italian subjects. With Hiero, for example, whose kingdom comprised perhaps a quarter of the island, she had contracted in 247 an alliance 'for ever', on terms which did not even oblige him to supply a contingent of troops. Messana, too, had been given a status analogous to that of the South Italian Greeks, and was made responsible for the upkeep of one warship. Certain other towns, in return for assistance rendered in the war, had been promised their autonomy; and Rome stood by her bond. Neither from these nor from Syracuse and Messana did she demand tribute any more than she had demanded it from her Italian allies. On the rest of the islanders, however, she now determined, for better or for worse, to impose the burden of a regular annual tax.

It was doubtless inevitable that in dealing with the bulk of the Sicilian natives, who, having no political life of their own, were incapable of admission to her confederacy, Rome should have undertaken to rule them as subjects rather than treat them as allies; and from this it naturally followed that she should also have required of them to contribute towards the machinery of government. But other considerations also weighed. In the first place, the expenses of this war had been very heavy, and the temptation to recoup herself was strong. In the second place, the exhaustion of the Latin farms and the growing substitution of vine and olive culture in place of corn production, made it imperative to find some alternative means of provisioning the capital; and Sicily was a natural granary. Finally, it was

Rome's habit, as we know, to accept the state of things she found existing; and it was nothing new for Sicilians to pay tithes. Some had paid them to Carthage, some to Hiero; and the latter's system of assessment was so much the more scientific that the organization which the Romans established was an adaptation of his scheme; and was actually given the name of the *Lex Hieronica*. Under its arrangements pastureland was liable to a money tax (*scriptura*) paid annually on every head of grazing stock. On crops a tithe was levied; and the corn thereby collected (after due deduction had been made for the needs of the garrison) was transported straight to Rome (where, incidentally, its effect was to lower the price of home-grown grain and so further to complicate the problems of the Italian agriculturalist). For the supervision of these levies a Roman quaestor was made responsible; but the actual collection of the tithes was farmed out to contractors—either Sicilians or resident Romans—who were entitled to recoup themselves for their trouble by exacting a fraction more than the prescribed tenth. On a broad estimate, the system worked very tolerably. It did not even place an excessive burden on the islanders, who, as we have said, were already accustomed to a similar exaction; and such injustices as they ultimately suffered were due rather to the irresponsible behaviour of the Roman officials themselves.

For it was speedily discovered that the province would require a governor. A legion was needed for defence; and some one had to command it. Disputes were bound to arise between provincials and Roman citizens; and somebody had to adjudicate. But for neither of these functions was a mere quaestor competent; so from 227 onwards two additional praetors were annually elected at Rome, one for Sicily, and the other for Sardinia (annexed in 239); and these were entrusted with consular power for the joint duty of military command and civil administration. Such power, as we know, was extremely autocratic and it gave the governor during his brief term of office the state and authority of a petty king. As Cicero's speeches testify, the governor's slightest word was law; and seeing how far removed he

was from the restraining influences of public opinion at Rome, it is little wonder that, as time went on, the praetor was often tempted to play the tyrant. The ultimate fruit of the system was the scandal of Verres' misgovernment. The truth is that the acquisition of Sicily worked no good on the Roman people. It saw the birth of a grasping spirit which was something new in their national diplomacy. Within the confines of Italy, where they had followed the dictates of their own political instinct, they showed little sign of wishing to abuse their power, and had treated their subjects with a liberal hand. But with the adoption of a theory of domination which in the last resort was derived from the East, came the temptation to regard the exploitation of provincials almost as a right. Nor was this all. For in its contact with the Sicilians the Roman character was exposed to an influence which in the long run perhaps was even more subtly dangerous. This influence was Hellenism.

Hellenism of a debased sort had long since, of course, been familiar to the Romans. A certain number of Greek customs and Greek forms of art had filtered through to them from Etruria; and later when they brought Campania under their sway they must have learnt some lessons of craftsmanship and commercial method. More recently, again, the conquest of Tarentum and other towns of South Italy had led to a closer acquaintance with Greek art and literature; and a certain Livius Andronicus, brought back prisoner from the war, had become a real pioneer in the translation of Greek poems and Greek plays. Nevertheless, it would seem to have been the occupation of Sicily which first awoke among the Romans a genuine and widespread interest in this rival civilization. Syracuse and other Greek towns of the island were centres of a luxurious and decadent culture in which upon the whole the bad traits of Hellenism prevailed over the good. Roman officers and legionaries wintering in these towns and hobnobbing freely with their inhabitants, learned to admire the ostentation of Hiero's frivolous court, and to appreciate the none too moral plays performed in the local theatres. As was natural, the fashions which they picked up during their foreign service crept back with

them to Italy. Plays were performed at Rome, written in Latin, but modelled on Greek comedies and reflecting the loose manners of the sophisticated provincials; and with that departure the staid puritanical morality of the Republic was subjected for the first time to an influence which was eventually to undermine the very foundations of its strength. It would, however, be a mistake either to exaggerate or to antedate this tendency. Rome was not Hellenized in a day. The stern restraints and conventions of her social life were too deeply rooted to be easily relaxed; and happily the high virtues of tenacity, self-sacrifice and courage which their discipline engendered were still unimpaired when there broke upon her the terrible storm of Hannibal's invasion.

## CHAPTER VI

## BETWEEN THE WARS

## I. ROME

**I**F Rome herself had stood up well to the test of a grueling war, so too had her Confederacy. Large and continuous demands had been made upon the military manpower of its members; but with the exception of Falerii, which presumably resented such demands and had to be brought to book in 241, there is no evidence of a wider disaffection. The war had, in fact, left Rome's power stronger than ever; and during the breathing-space of twenty-three years now allowed her before the struggle with Carthage reopened, much was done not merely to consolidate but even to increase her resources. Almost despite herself her influence and her commitments seemed to grow. Indeed, it was one of the ironies of her career of conquest that even if she wished it, she was unable to call halt; and though in 235 the gates of the Temple of Janus were solemnly closed as though at last her wars were over, yet after, no less than before, that significant gesture, we find her busy both by land and sea adding to her dominion.

The first addition was made at the expense of her late

enemy. After the peace of 241 Carthage had fallen upon evil days. Her mercenary troops had mutinied and with the aid of the disgruntled natives had brought the proud city almost to her knees. For a while Rome showed herself friendly, even forbidding her merchants to assist the rebels; but when in 239 the Carthaginian garrison in Sardinia turned traitor and appealed for her assistance, the temptation was too strong, and she responded. There was little to justify this act of almost naked aggression; and it was obvious that the Carthaginians were in no position to withstand it. They threw up the sponge, undertook to pay an indemnity of 1,200 talents and abandoned their claim to the island. In 227 it was made a joint province with Corsica; and apart from its great mineral wealth, Rome gained in it a valuable outpost on the western sea.

More novel, more interesting and certainly more justifiable was the enterprise which she now undertook on her east. Except for the clash with the armies of King Pyrrhus, Greece had hitherto scarcely entered the horizon of Rome's policy. She had never even sent an embassy thither. But she possessed, as we know, important stations on the eastern shores of Italy, and direct contact with the peninsula opposite could not be long delayed. Now, on the further coast of the Adriatic, north of Epirus, there lay a long tract of mountainous country known as Illyria, whose scattered tribes had recently combined under the leadership of a monarchy centred at Scodra, the modern Scutari. In 231 its crown had passed to a child and the power to the queen-mother named Teuta, a flamboyant, irresponsible lady who was easily persuaded by a few victories over her neighbours to imagine her arms irresistible. With her enthusiastic encouragement the Illyrians, who were natural searovers and had long been the scourge of the adjoining coasts, began to extend their piratical exploits southward and to interfere with the trade-route between Southern Italy and Greece. This was serious enough, but there was worse to follow. In 230 the pirates caught a party of Italian merchants and put some to death. The cautious Senate sent envoys to protest; and on their way home these were



set upon and one killed. The act admitted of no further trifling, and a fleet of 200 warships was dispatched to avenge it. It made straight for the island of Corcyra, which the Illyrians had just captured. The troops they had left there were under the command of Demetrius of Pharos, a dependent of Queen Teuta; and no sooner had the Romans arrived at the island than this slippery Greek changed sides and delivered it into their hands. An army was landed on the neighbouring coast and South Illyria rose in revolt against Teuta. When in 228 she submitted on terms she was forced to cede this rebel district to the turncoat Demetrius, and to promise that in future not more than two of her ships should sail south of Lissus. To make doubly sure, however, of safeguarding the seas the Romans kept Corcyra and a strip of Epirus on the mainland opposite under their own protectorate.

The consequences of this easterly extension of the Empire were momentous. For, little as they intended at this juncture to embroil themselves in the affairs of Greece, the Romans had taken a step from which they could not well draw back and which in the long run could hardly fail to lead them on. To the Greeks themselves the suppression of Illyrian piracy was a godsend. They loaded the Romans with compliments. Corinth invited them to co-operate in the Isthmian Games. Athens offered to initiate them into the Eleusinian mysteries. All, in fact, were delighted; but not so the ruler of Macedon, Antigonus Doson. This ambitious monarch not merely regarded Illyria as an ally, but aspired to the hegemony of the whole peninsula. At the moment, it is true, a revolt kept him busy in Thessaly, and his ambition seemed very far from realization. But in 224 chaos in the Peloponnese gave him his chance, and he was able, like Alexander before him, to take a League of many Greek States under his own patronage. But meanwhile he had by no means forgotten Illyria. There, while the Roman's back was turned (for, as we shall see, they were fully occupied in Italy), the unstable Demetrius had once more resumed his old game of piracy. Antigonus, perceiving his value as a bulwark against Rome, made much of him; and when on Antigonus's death in 221 Philip V ascended the

throne of Macedon, he, too, continued the policy of befriending the buccaneers. A year later Rome's patience was exhausted, and she struck. Demetrius's seat on the island of Pharos was captured, and he himself forced to flee for protection to the court of the indignant Philip. Thus for a second time the Macedonian interests in Illyria had received a rude buffet from the intrusion of Rome, and Philip did not forget the grievance. The Second Punic War gave him his opportunity. The actual assistance that he rendered to Hannibal was insignificant ; but it was enough to antagonize Rome ; and so step by step, through the indirect consequences of her Illyrian policy, she was led first to the subjugation of Macedon, and then finally of Greece.

The real reason for Rome's tardiness in suppressing Demetrius was, as we have hinted, the preoccupation of her forces with an enemy nearer home. For on her northern frontier trouble was once more brewing. In 232 the borderland district known as the *Ager Gallicus* had been parcelled out in small holdings to poor citizens from Rome. But the absence of a strong natural boundary left this outpost much exposed to the aggression of Gauls from beyond the Rubicon ; and among these a new fit of restlessness was already to be remarked. The Boii who lived south of the Po were inciting their kinsmen beyond the Alps to co-operate in a fresh enterprise of conquest and plunder. Large bands soon began to arrive ; and the movement spread not merely to the Lingones who abutted on the *Ager Gallicus*, but also to the Insubres of Lombardy and the Taurini who inhabited the neighbourhood of the modern Turin. By 226 a formidable host had gathered in which both cavalry and war-chariots were included. The Romans grew nervous, took a census of the military strength of their confederacy, and in 225 dispatched two consular armies to the expected point of attack. Thanks to these dispositions the Gauls, though breaking through into Etruria and there capturing much booty, were caught in a trap. For meanwhile a third army from Sardinia had landed behind them at Pisa ; and, being surrounded on three sides, they were brought to bay at Telamon upon the western coast. Forming a double line back

to back they fought with peculiar ferocity, and enormous numbers were either killed or captured. The Romans followed up their victory by forcing the Boii to make peace. The territory of the Insubres was next invaded, and in 222 their stronghold at Mediolanum or Milan was taken. With that the resistance of the Gauls collapsed, and the subjugation of the north (with the exception of the mountainous district of Liguria) appeared practically complete. In 218 two colonies were planted at Placentia and Cremona to act sentinel over the Boii and the Insubres respectively; and under the auspices of Flaminius, then Censor, the northern military high-road was carried as far as Ariminum. It is noteworthy, however, that the Gauls were not enrolled as members of the Roman Confederacy; and how superficial were their promises to keep the peace is shown by the alacrity with which but a few years later they flocked to join Hannibal's standard. Nevertheless, in extending their northern frontier to the Alps the Romans displayed a shrewd instinct. From every point of view it was highly desirable that the Po Valley should be regarded as a part of Italy itself.

As might be guessed, the adventurous spirit of democratic imperialism which had served to carry Rome into the war for Sicily was not without its influence on the events of these years. In particular, the distribution of the Ager Gallicus had been the occasion of a hot passage of arms between the government and the lower orders, in which the lower orders won. The Senate, feeling perhaps that the State Treasury could ill afford to sacrifice the rentals which might be gained by leasing the valuable lands of this confiscated area, had opposed their allotment to impoverished citizens. The proposal had come, however, from a liberal-minded tribune, C. Flaminius (destined one day, as consul, to win an unhappy notoriety in the disaster of Lake Trasimene); and under his leadership the tribal assembly had carried the day.<sup>1</sup> A few years later, in 218, the popular

<sup>1</sup> The Senate's opposition was probably based on the fact that for the proper defence of this important *frontier* territory the proposed allotment of small holdings, as compared with a regular colony, would be most unsuitable.

party followed up their victory with an enactment, which, by forbidding senators to own maritime vessels of more than a trifling capacity, had the effect of virtually excluding them from engaging in overseas trade.<sup>1</sup> It was probably felt—not perhaps without justice—that an interest in commerce would either warp the senators' judgement or at least distract their attention from the more vital problems of state. Nevertheless, the ban served no good purpose; for in the issue it led to an unfortunate cleavage between the governing class and the increasingly powerful and important section of financial magnates. Meanwhile, however, the passage of such a law is interesting proof of the ascendancy of the Assembly which passed it. The initiative in legislation now lay beyond a doubt with this tribal comitia, though the actual proposal of laws had always to come from a magistrate; and about this time, too (it may be in 241), even the comitia centuriata which elected the magistrates was to some extent reorganized and the voting power of the masses was more fairly distributed by the partial substitution of a tribal or territorial basis, in place of the old military units of the original Servian grouping.<sup>2</sup>

To all appearances, therefore, Rome was now a thorough-paced democracy. But appearances were deceptive, and the inevitable logic of her swift expansion tended more and more to concentrate the real power in the hands of the governing class. For with the growth of her imperial responsibilities new problems and new tasks were crowding in upon her; and a popular assembly, convened only at rare intervals and possessing no special gifts for the art of political debate, was incapable of maintaining a close or efficient control over the conduct of wars, the intricacies of foreign policy or the thousand and one details of daily administration. Such matters were bound to devolve upon men who could give their whole time to them; and even the character of legislation itself was apt to be modified by the way in which it was subsequently applied. So, although the tribal assembly might in principle create the laws, it was in reality the verdicts given in the praetors' courts which shaped the develop-

<sup>1</sup> The Lex Claudia.

<sup>2</sup> See also p. 205.

ment of Roman jurisprudence. The work of these courts was every year becoming more complex. The growth of commercial enterprise had necessitated special provision for foreign litigants, and in 242 an additional praetor, the *praetor peregrinus*, was appointed to deal with such cases. The familiarity thus acquired with the legal customs of foreigners proved a valuable stimulus to progressive ideas; and the praetors were thereby encouraged to approach new problems of litigation with an insight bred of wider experience. Though, as individuals, of course, they were replaced year by year, yet the precedents established by their predecessors' verdicts built up a body of tradition which was tacitly accepted; and even past legislation of the sovereign people was allowed, when proving unworkable or obsolete, to lapse into desuetude.

But, if the popular assembly could not control the work of the courts, still less could it control the difficult business of foreign affairs and finance. It might vote for the declaration of a war; but it fell to the Senate to direct the broad strategy of the campaign, to defray its cost, and to negotiate the peace. For such tasks the aristocratic house (for aristocratic in tone it undoubtedly remained) was in many ways excellently qualified. Recruited as it was from the ranks of ex-office holders, it contained within itself the concentrated wisdom of military and administrative experience. Even the consuls and other magistrates were compelled by a powerful tradition of constitutional etiquette to bow to the Senate's opinions; and, being often raw to their job, they were not, as a rule, sorry to have the responsibility of decisions taken out of their hands. It was beyond a doubt the salvation of Rome that such a body of stout-hearted, level-headed and genuinely patriotic deliberators should have been in virtual control of affairs when she came now to meet the terrible and prolonged ordeal of the Second Punic War; and the Senate's successful conduct of that war—not to mention the wars of conquest which almost immediately followed—served yet further to strengthen and consolidate its position as the corner-stone of Rome's political edifice.

## II. CARTHAGE

When we turn to study the history of Carthage during these crucial years, it must strike us at once as peculiarly unfortunate that the one event of outstanding importance is mere matter for conjecture. At some time between 264 and 237 Carthage must have lost her hold on Spain; for we know that in the former year it was still in her hands, and in the latter Hamilcar was compelled to reconquer it. That is all that can safely be said; but the loss of so valuable a dependency must have entailed a serious shrinkage of revenue; and this may well explain not merely why in the later stages of the struggle for Sicily the policy of the Carthaginian Government was so astonishingly nerveless, but also why at the close of the war they left their mercenary army unpaid. The army mutinied, as has been already stated; and there followed a conflict of hideous ferocity, which was known to historians as the Truceless War. The mercenaries killed, mutilated or tortured all who fell into their hands, and the Carthaginians replied by throwing their prisoners to be trampled by elephants. Under the stress of their peril the citizens rallied bravely; but it was only after three years of bitter fighting that the mutineers were wiped out. The Government's victory was due, however, not to the blundering tactics of Hanno their recognized leader, but to the young Hamilcar Barca who in the course of the crisis had once more been assigned the command. At the end of the war he was given an army to undertake the reconquest of Spain.

How far Hamilcar saw ahead of him it is difficult to say; but it seems pretty clear that his mind was set upon reopening the duel with Rome; and to that end it was first essential to build up a Spanish dominion which would provide both the troops and the money wherewith to achieve his revenge. In 237 he landed at Gades, began by reducing the south-west, and then turned to push his successes up the Mediterranean coast until in 229 he was drowned in a river near Helice. In succession to him came his son-in-law Hasdrubal who founded New Carthage on the south-east

coast to be the naval base, arsenal and fortified capital of the new Spanish Empire. Thence he further extended his control over the hinterland, exploited the silver mines in which the neighbourhood was rich, and, above all, enlarged his own forces by energetic recruitment from among the native tribesmen.

Meanwhile in one quarter, at any rate, the rapid progress of the Carthaginian arms was viewed with deep concern. At Massilia or Marseilles, beyond the Pyrenees, there had long existed a flourishing Greek colony which not merely drew to itself the trade of Gaul, but had also spread its feelers down the coast of Spain and founded there a series of commercial stations. Long rivalry between the Punic and Massiliot merchants had led more than once to war; and in the issue a line of demarcation between their respective spheres of influence had been drawn at Cape Palos. This agreed frontier had now been widely overstepped by two Carthaginian generals in succession, and the Massiliots were justifiably indignant. Rome was their ally by a long-standing friendship; and, though she herself cared little about trade, she had a very direct interest in the preservation of a city which now stood alone between Carthaginian encroachment and the approach to Italy. At any rate it is clear that on the Massiliots' representations she was induced to make remonstrance. Hamilcar in 231 had replied with the plea that he was merely engaged in the collection of revenue to pay off the war-indemnity. But such an excuse had worn somewhat thin; and Hasdrubal five years later was pinned down to a specific undertaking that he would *confine his activities to the south side of the River Ebro*.

So matters stood when he was murdered in 221. His place was taken by Hamilcar's young son, the famous Hannibal, who, while observing the guarantee to respect the Ebro frontier, proceeded to extend his hold over much of the interior. Meanwhile, however, the Romans had remained very far from easy about the situation in Spain; and some years before Hasdrubal's death they had taken the opportunity to make alliance with the independent native city of Saguntum. Saguntum lay south of the Ebro and so well within the sphere of influence allotted to Carthage;

nor had anything been said in the treaty to except it therefrom. Was Rome, then, within her rights in receiving its overtures? Or was she deliberately poaching on her rival's preserves? The point has been much disputed. But the Romans at any rate professed to think themselves on sure ground; and they chose to regard it as an act of flagrant hostility when in 219 Hannibal suddenly attacked the town and after a hard-fought siege of eight months succeeded in taking it.

The primary reason for his action is not far to seek. The existence of this independent and somewhat fractious State on the flank of his province was bound to be highly embarrassing, the more so in view of its recent alliance with Rome, and of the opportunities which its harbour would offer for the landing of a Roman force in his rear should he ever move to the invasion of Italy. But that Rome herself would disown that alliance, he can never for one moment have supposed; and there remains little doubt that his *coup* was intended as a point-blank challenge. War with Rome was, in fact, his real objective as it had been his father's. It was to prepare for such a war that Hamilcar had originally gone to Spain; and we are told that before leaving Carthage he had taken his young son, then but nine years of age, and bidding him lay his hand on the altar of Moloch, made him swear undying enmity to his country's arch-foe. Whether the story be true or false, it remains a fact that throughout his career Hannibal's unwavering ambition was to reduce Rome to impotence. But from the start, we must remember, he was playing a lone hand. For, though many merchants at Carthage must have approved his design, the governing caste were no fire-eaters. Their interests centred solely on their Libyan estates; and they had probably little real desire to revive the old struggle which twenty years before they had been so thankful to terminate.<sup>1</sup> Hannibal therefore cannot but have seen that,

<sup>1</sup> It must be remembered, however, that the Carthaginian navy was now in a very weak condition; and, when we allow for this, some credit must be given to the Carthaginian Government for its attempts to succour Hannibal, once his spectacular successes had roused their enthusiasm.



if war was to come, it must come because Rome and not Carthage demanded it. His seizure of Saguntum was, in short, a cleverly conceived device to force on a quarrel from which neither the Roman enemy nor his own fellow-countrymen could escape without the arbitrament of arms. If such was his object, he succeeded brilliantly. The Romans, it is true, were slow to take up the challenge. They made no move to help Saguntum, but contented themselves with sending legates to Carthage to demand satisfaction. The form which the demand took was the surrender of Hannibal—a patent absurdity; and after some discussion about the rights and wrongs of the case, Q. Fabius, the chief Roman envoy, gathered up his loose cloak in two folds, and holding these out, cried: 'I carry here War and Peace. Which of the two shall I give you?' 'Which you will,' came the answer—and he shook out the fold of War.

## CHAPTER VII

## THE SECOND PUNIC WAR

## I. HANNIBAL'S PROSPECTS

**T**O invade a foreign country unmapped and, save through the information of others, unfamiliar, traversing to reach it nearly a thousand miles of wilderness and a high range of snow-clad mountains, unable to count either on secure communications or the command of the sea or even the whole-hearted support of a home government—this would seem to be adventure enough to daunt the most adventurous. Yet Hannibal, if any one, must have known what he was doing. The choice of a land-route was, in the first place, practically forced upon him, since the defeats of the First Punic War had broken the spirit of the Carthaginian navy, and it could scarcely have undertaken to hold the Middle Seas. In any case, too, the mobilization of an adequate maritime transport would have been a lengthy business; and speed was for Hannibal's plans a first necessity. For he must rightly have divined the enemy's intention of

launching expeditions against Africa and Spain ; and, even if he did not actually hope to effect something of a surprise by appearing suddenly upon their unguarded northern flank, it was at least essential by forestalling such an offensive to gain the strategical initiative. But, beyond this, he was relying, for the success of his bold venture, upon two main calculations. Firstly, he understood on the report of spies that the Gauls of the Po Valley, resentful as they were of their recent subjugation, would rise in his support ; and in this hope he was not deceived. Secondly, since he pictured Rome as a despot power like Carthage, he believed that the Italians, too, would welcome him as their deliverer. To break up the Roman Confederacy was, in fact, the true objective of his mission ; and it was upon the error of this second calculation that all his plans made shipwreck. For the Italians had no grievance such as the Libyans felt against Carthage, and the very fact that their old enemies the Gauls were allied to the invader awoke in them an age-long terror which set them fighting no less for their own salvation than for Rome's. So in the first stages of the campaign, at any rate, his chief hope was belied and the Empire which Hannibal was challenging stood solidly against him. It could furnish a manpower which seemed well-nigh inexhaustible. According to the census taken during the recent Gallic scare, Rome could draw upon an infantry of 700,000 men and a cavalry of 70,000. Just over a third of these were actual citizens ; and, though some training would be needed to bring raw levies up to pitch, all alike were subject to a system of admirable efficiency. The infantry legions which were the core of the Roman army, still fought as they had learned to fight during the Samnite Wars. The small companies, called maniples, worked in three successive lines, heavily armed with helmet, cuirass and greaves and carrying a large shield, two casting spears and a sword. They were good marchers, carrying tools to entrench the camp in which they nightly made their quarters. Discipline was severe. The death penalty for cowardice was ruthlessly enforced ; and, as the First Punic War had proved, the dogged courage of the rank and file was sufficient to win victories, were they not unduly handi-

capped by the ignorance and inefficiency of their amateur commanders. This latter weakness, however, was inherent in the constitutional system of the Republican régime; and it was not until a series of almost irreparable disasters had awoken her to her peril, that Rome came to realize the futility of an annual change of leadership.

Potentially, then, the Roman army was the most powerful military machine then existing in the world; and against it Hannibal was preparing to take the field with what by contrast appeared a mere handful. For not even all the troops at his command could be used in Italy. A part of them he had to send across to mount guard in Western Africa. Another considerable force under his brother Hasdrubal he left behind in Spain; and with it was stationed the main body of the fleet, a small squadron only being sent to make descents on Lilybaeum and the Italian coast. Thus the troops available for the army of invasion were limited in number to about 50,000 infantry and 9,000 horse. But its quality was excellent. It was a veteran force, conscripted from the subject natives of Africa and Spain much as the Italian tribesmen were conscripted for the Roman service. The cavalry, in particular, were splendid troops, and nothing in Italy (where geographical conditions favoured horsemanship but little) could compare with the skilful riders from Numidia. Above all—and here lay the real difference between the two contending armies—the whole body had been trained for war and inspired to a real devotion by an incomparable commander.

No captain in antiquity can claim precedence over Hannibal. His control of men was unequalled; for, whereas Caesar or Alexander commanded their own countrymen, the Carthaginian could rely on no argument of patriotism to keep his motley host together through the distant and wearisome campaign. These men must have followed him for himself alone. His imperious authority held them in a sort of willing servitude; and their complete confidence in his genius was never falsified. His ingenuity of resource was unflinching, whether for ambush, for use of terrain or for swift tactical adjustment. There was a Semitic quality about his cunning;

and he was even known for purposes of gaining information, to go muffled in the disguise of cloak and wig. There was something Semitic, too, about the dogged pertinacity of the man. Nothing could turn him from his lifelong purpose of waging war on Rome, not even the disappointment of his early hopes and the sadly nerveless attitude of the home government. Yet autocrat though he was by temperament, he never fought for his own hand ; and with a selfless patriotism which is almost unique in history, he was content at the last to serve the country which had deserved so ill of him, by voluntarily relinquishing the power which a lesser man would have turned into a despotism. Of his personality, most unhappily, we possess but little knowledge, and what we do know is derived from Roman or pro-Roman writers. Yet it is hard to resist the guess that along with an iron strength of will-power and restraint, there was in Hannibal an underlying current of fanaticism. Like most Carthaginians, he was deeply superstitious. Many stories are told of his belief in dreams ; and before he set out for Italy we know that he paid a visit to the shrine of Moloch as though to renew the vow which many years before he had made at the same god's altar, standing there by his father's side. He was now twenty-nine years old, a wiry athlete, trained to run and box, capable of enduring the extremities of privation and fatigue and of sleeping in the roughest bivouac. Yet he was no mere soldier of the camp. He possessed, so far as we can judge, all the culture of Carthage. He certainly knew Greek, and was well versed in the history of Hellenic warfare. During his later years and in a political capacity he showed something of a statesman's vision. Diplomatic no less than strategical considerations played a large part in his schemes ; and, above all, he displayed, what is perhaps the true mark of really great commanders, a keen imaginative insight into the psychology of his opponents.

It was in the late spring of 218 that he set out for Italy.

## II. THE CAMPAIGN OF 218

What meanwhile were the Romans doing ? They had never for one moment dreamt, when they embarked upon

hostilities, that Italy itself was in any danger of invasion ; and in a leisurely fashion they had laid their plans for carrying the war into the enemy's country. One army under the consul Sempronius was to invade North Africa and on its way thither had already arrived as far as Sicily. Under Publius Scipio, the other consul, a second force over twenty thousand strong was to be transported to Massilia for the attack on Spain. These, too, had already started ; but when in late August Scipio arrived at the Rhône-mouth, he received the astounding information that so far from being, as he fancied, upon Spanish soil, Hannibal had already made the passage of that river and had disappeared eastwards for some destination unknown—unknown or but barely guessed at ; for though Scipio marched up the Rhône and actually visited the camp which Hannibal had just quitted, he seems scarcely to have realized what the enemy were after. He himself, it is true, returned at once to Italy ; but he returned alone, leaving his brother Gnaeus with the rest of the army to continue the invasion of Spain. There, as we shall later see, they did invaluable service in preventing reinforcements from reaching Hannibal ; but at this critical juncture the home front was everything, and their absence very nearly spelt disaster. For meanwhile Sempronius's army was still in Sicily, and though its African expedition was now countermanded, its return could not be expected for two months or more. Thus North Italy was left to the inadequate protection of new and half-trained levies at the very moment when Hannibal arrived.

Considering the nature of the country to be traversed, he had not made bad marching. He left New Carthage in May, and the Rhône in August. Guides had been sent him by the friendly Gauls and with their aid he made the passage of the Alps. It was some time in late autumn when he eventually descended on the Northern Plains. The latter stages of the journey had been terrible. During their ascent of the Alpine passes <sup>1</sup> the troops had been assailed by the terrified moun-

<sup>1</sup> Many efforts have been made to identify the pass by which Hannibal crossed the Alps ; but no certainty has been reached. The ancients seem to have been incapable of accurate topographical observation ;

taineers. Boulders had come hurtling from the heights above. Men and animals had been swept over the precipices. Stragglers seldom returned. The descent, though unopposed, was even worse. Snow had begun to fall, and the army in its passage first sank into the drifts, then trampled them to ice. The elephants—of which Hannibal had brought a couple of score with him—slithered and plunged in grotesque panic. At one point of the track a landslip had left a yawning gap, so that a new roadway had to be engineered, and Livy tells with picturesque exaggeration how vinegar was employed to melt the rocks. Meanwhile the privations had told severely on the troops. The survivors were sorry objects, sick and pinched with the cold to which few among them were naturally accustomed. Their ranks, too, were terribly depleted, and it was lucky indeed for Hannibal that his Gallic allies were prepared to make good the loss. He found them already under arms, resisting the plantation of the new Roman colonies; and marching south to their assistance he encountered north of the Po the first opposition of a Roman army.

For hither, Scipio, on his return from Massilia, had marched up the available troops. When it came to the point, however, he did not feel capable of sustaining a pitched battle; and as soon as a cavalry engagement on the River Ticinus went heavily against him, he wisely retired south of the Po, first to the neighbourhood of Placentia, then after a short interval to high ground behind the River Trebia, where Sempronius, freshly back from Sicily, soon joined him. Thus posted, the two armies would have been hard to dislodge; but Hannibal knew better than to assault their camp. His strategy was typical. One early December morning, when it was barely light, and sleet was falling fast, his skirmishers by feigned flight enticed the Romans out across the river,

and even Polybius, who made a careful study of the route a generation or two later, leaves us in complete doubt. His account seems to favour the Little St. Bernard (where it is said that elephants' bones have actually been unearthed in 1765) or less likely the Mont Cenis. There is little to be said for the accounts of Livy and Strabo which appear to bring Hannibal over further south.

already swollen breast-high by winter spate, and so on to the level plain beyond, where he had them at his mercy. Their cavalry was routed, their wings were enveloped, and finally on their rear came a surprise attack from a party hidden in the reed-beds of a neighbouring watercourse. Though completely surrounded and driven back upon the river, the legionaries fought with splendid courage; but no more than a remnant of 10,000 men succeeded in breaking through to safety. The victory was decisive of the fate of the Northern Plains. For now all the Gauls came out for Hannibal; and he spent the winter which was already well advanced in reorganizing the forces and curbing the impatience of these somewhat embarrassing allies.

### III. THE CAMPAIGN OF 217

Spring found the Roman forces carefully disposed to meet the coming advance out of the north. At Ariminum guarding the eastern road was the army of Servilius. At Arretium or Arezzo in Central Etruria lay his colleague Flaminius, the democratic hero of the agrarian struggles of fifteen years before, but, as the event was to prove, no strategist. Hannibal's choice fell upon this western route. He crossed the Apennines and descended into the Arno valley near Lucca. The snows were now melting on the hills above and the deep morasses of the flooded plain made marching terrible. Hannibal caught ophthalmia and lost an eye; but he brought his army—in which now was included a strong force of Gauls—safe through to the heights of Faesulae above the modern town of Florence. Thence he struck southwards through Etruria, plundering and burning with the deliberate calculation that Flaminius would be provoked into battle. But Flaminius refused to be drawn; and, when Hannibal went past him and swerved east among the hills, he set out in hot pursuit.

South of Cortona the road, as it skirted closely round the east side of Lake Trasimene, traversed first one and then a second narrow neck where the surrounding hills thrust forward two spurs to the lake shore—a spot which revealed itself to Hannibal's trained eye as the ideal place for an

ambush. On the spurs above either neck he posted light horse and his more trusted infantry. The level ground between the necks he left unoccupied, but lined with the Gauls and light-armed skirmishers the surrounding crescent of receding hills. So the trap was laid. Night came down, and all waited at their stations. Next day the sun was barely risen, and the morning mist still lay heavy over the borders of the lake when suddenly through the tense silence there fell on the expectant ears of the watchers on the hill-tops the sound of a column tramping along the road beneath. Wrapped in the wreathing vapour the Romans could neither see nor be seen. Suspecting nothing they entered the first of the two necks. Reconnoitre had been neglected; and not till the tail of their column had passed completely through, did they become aware of the presence of the foe. Then on an instant the hills were alive with shouting. The neck was closed behind them. The neck ahead was closed; and almost before they knew it they were attacked on all sides at once. Most were butchered where they stood. Some waded or swam into the lake, but these, too, were caught and killed. The lifting of the mist disclosed a scene of awful carnage. Flaminius himself fell fighting; and only a party of 6,000 succeeded in breaking through to safety, only to be overtaken on the morrow and forced to lay down their arms. The disaster was complete.

At Rome the news fell like a thunderclap. 'We have been defeated in a great battle,' was the praetor's dignified announcement. Consternation reigned. The appointment of a dictator, though now somewhat out of fashion seemed the sole possible expedient. Choice fell on Quintus Fabius Maximus, a typical aristocrat of the old school, a shrewd imperturbable soldier, a staunch upholder of religious custom and stubborn opponent of political reform. Under his direction preparations were hurriedly made for Hannibal's arrival. Bridges were broken down, weak points in the fortifications repaired, the walls manned. But Hannibal did not come. He had brought no siege-train with him, and an assault on the city's defences would have been a desperate task. His main hope was still to temporize, and, if he could, win over



the Italians to his side. After his two great victories he had ostentatiously released those among the captured troops who were drawn from Rome's confederates and he confidently expected such leniency to tell. The most likely area of disaffection lay, as he calculated, in Samnium and the south. So he struck south-eastwards, re-crossed the Apennines and passed down into Apulia, still plundering and burning as he went. Fabius raised new legions, picked up the army of Servilius, and then regaining touch with the enemy began his famous policy of 'delay'. In the vain attempt to draw him into battle, Hannibal moved camp this way and that, making deliberate havoc of the country-side. But, wherever he went, he found that Fabius dogged him, refusing alike to be drawn or to be shaken off. Once he crossed into Campania and on the return march through Samnium was nearly cut off in the passes. But his ingenuity saved him. He captured a herd of oxen, tied faggots to their horns, and setting these ablaze, drove off the startled beasts into the night. The Roman force guarding the pass-head went off in pursuit of what they fondly imagined to be Hannibal's army; and by morning that army had marched up through the gap and made good its escape. After further depredations of the eastern coast, it settled down to winter quarters in Apulia.

Despite their severe defeats, the balance of the year's vicissitudes seemed to favour the Romans. Heavy as had been their losses in the field, training would make these good. For their reserves of man-power were far from exhausted; and what was still more important, their allies remained staunch, turning a deaf ear to Hannibal's promises of freedom. The material damage was, of course, serious; but Central Italy was hitherto untouched; and if the next year's campaign brought nothing worse than the devastation of crops and homesteads, then ultimate defeat appeared a remote contingency. The most serious anxiety of the government was probably finance. To prevent supplies and reinforcements from reaching Hannibal by sea, the construction and maintenance of a strong fleet was essential; but to meet this heavy item of expenditure proved very difficult. For

one effect of the invasion had been a complete paralysis of business. Trade ceased. Money disappeared. Men simply took to hoarding; and in order to draw out these hidden reserves, the Senate was forced to a novel and very interesting expedient. What they did was to alter the currency, so that the *as* which hitherto had been reckoned as  $\frac{1}{10}$  of a denarius was reduced to  $\frac{1}{18}$ .<sup>1</sup> Its metal weight, however, instead of being lowered in a like proportion, was actually halved. The result was that to melt down the old and heavier pieces into the new and lighter ones was a transaction well worth while. So out came the hoarded money to be officially re-minted at the owner's profit; and by this ingenious improvisation the financial stringency was overcome.

It would have been well for the Romans had they been equally sagacious over the problem of the military command. Fabius's policy of delay, though obviously correct and within limits highly successful, had been causing much impatience not only at the capital where the populace grew restive, but within the army itself. The men nicknamed him 'Hannibal's lackey', and not the least violent of his critics was Minucius, his own Master of Horse. At one time this hot-headed lieutenant had won himself great popularity by achieving a trifling success during Fabius's absence, and by a ridiculous anomaly he was actually promoted to equal power side by side with the dictator himself. But now Fabius's six months of office were drawing to a close; and it was not to be renewed. Even the Senate's authority was visibly shaken by the strength of popular feeling; and for the year 216 two consuls were once again chosen. The patrician nominee was Aemilius Paullus; the plebeian one Terentius Varro, a vulgar, pushful braggart described by the aristocratic annalists of later days as a mere butcher's son. It was a choice which Rome was very bitterly to rue.

#### IV. THE CAMPAIGN OF 216

Hannibal wintered in Apulia, whence he could watch at his leisure for any signs of weakening among Rome's allies,

<sup>1</sup> The weight of the *denarius* was also slightly lowered. A *sestertius* still remained a quarter of a denarius, but henceforward = 4 asses.

and might also by way of the Adriatic coast-route keep touch with the Gauls of Lombardy and perhaps even with his brother in Spain. Communication by sea had now, too, been established with Carthage ; but this brought him neither reinforcements nor supplies. For commissariat, therefore, like most generals of antiquity, he was dependent upon the plunder of the surrounding country-side ; and apart from the fertile valley of the Aufidus, the whole eastern side of Italy was barren in the extreme. Thus by the end of winter the Carthaginian troops were on short commons ; and it was only by capturing, near Cannae on the lower Aufidus, a Roman depôt of munitions and supplies, that they were able to avert an awkward crisis. They were still in the same neighbourhood when at the beginning of spring the two consuls marched against them with some fifty thousand men. It was by far the largest force of citizens that Rome had ever put into the field. For the first time two consular armies had been combined in one (each consul taking command upon alternate days), and both the legions and their allied complements had been raised to an unprecedented strength. A supreme effort, in short, was to be made to end the war at a blow ; and the consuls had specific instructions to reverse the Fabian policy and engage in open fight.

Hannibal could have wished nothing better. Though his numbers by now must have fallen somewhat short of the enemy, the level ground of the Apulian Plain gave excellent scope for the manœuvre of his cavalry and he had so far taken the measure of the Roman generals as to fool them at every turn. Calculating the day of the hot-headed Varro's leadership he provoked a decisive engagement by the simple expedient of harrying the Roman watering-parties. Then, taking up such a position that the prevalent sirocco would drive blinding sand-clouds in his opponents' faces, he lured on their eager charge by yielding with his advanced centre ; swept away their flanking cavalry with his own Spanish and Numidian horse, and then swinging forward his wings on their now unguarded flanks, held the legions completely enveloped in a ring of steel. No escape, indeed, was possible ; and what followed was simple butchery. Packed in

a dense formation (for mistrusting his raw levies Varro seems to have relied upon sheer weight of numbers) the greater part of the Romans stood unable to draw their weapons, much less use them, and grimly waited until it was their turn to die. Enormous numbers were killed or taken captive. Varro almost alone among the officers escaped with a remnant to Canusium.

Rome was without an army and lay—or so it seemed—at the mercy of the victor. ‘In five days’ time’, said his officers, ‘we shall dine in the Capitol.’ Yet once again Hannibal did not march. Centuries later Roman school-boys are said to have debated in their weekly themes the motive of his historic refusal. But the truth is simple. As after Trasimene, so now the prospect of a siege must have daunted Hannibal; and, indeed, the destruction of Rome was never so much his aim as the detachment and liberation of her subject allies. So while the Senate with magnificent *sang-froid* suppressed all signs of panic, ordered the old men to the walls, raised a new force of boys and even slaves, and prepared to meet the assault which all considered certain, Hannibal turned aside into Campania to reap the fruits of his tremendous triumph. For now the loyalty of the Confederacy was shaken. The poorer classes in many subject towns saw a chance of improving their position at the expense of the wealthy citizens who governed in Rome’s interest and were the recipients of Rome’s favours; so the rot began. Capua, the second city in Italy, went over to the Carthaginian. Other Campanian towns followed suit. Some Samnites, and all the tribesmen of Lucania and Bruttium went with them. Happily the Greek cities of the south stood firm; and above all, throughout the length and breadth of Italy, the fortified Latin colonies refused to join the movement, remaining the impregnable bulwarks of Roman authority even in the chief areas of disaffection. Nor, badly as he needed it, was Hannibal able to secure a decent harbour in either south or west. Naples repelled his attacks and at Tarentum, as we shall see, the harbour fort defied him, even when the town was won. His communications with Carthage were accordingly little improved, nor was this his only em-

barrassment. For one thing, with the accession of new allies, the area available for plunder was considerably diminished. Then, too, garrisons were needed to hold what he had won ; and his forces, already far from adequate, were unavoidably dispersed. Thus, brilliant as was the outcome of this third year's campaign, it marked in reality the beginning of a slow decline in the invader's fortunes. The tale that the luxuries of Campania so sapped his troops' morale that they never afterwards recovered their true form, is probably no more than a tale ; but, be that as it may, the fact remains that, so far as the war in Italy was concerned, Hannibal had shot his bolt.

#### V. THE AREA OF CONFLICT EXTENDED

It should never be forgotten that from the first to the last of its fourteen years' stay in Italy Hannibal's original army received no reinforcement ; so successful were Roman operations on the Spanish front (save for one mistake, and that rectified at the Metaurus) in blocking the passage east. Yet without some further aid Hannibal could scarcely count on achieving complete victory ; and under the circumstances, therefore, it is by no means surprising that his strategical conceptions now underwent some change and that he endeavoured henceforward to extend the field of operations by calling fresh forces into play against Rome. In this the prestige of his successes greatly helped him ; and the final stroke of Cannae brought him at least one ally whose assistance, if timely given, might well have been decisive. Philip of Macedon had not forgiven Rome for her recent interference across the Adriatic ; and thinking to profit by her preoccupation, he had already been busy on the Illyrian coast. A month before Cannae he had actually meditated a sudden descent upon Italy ; but on learning a rumour of the Roman fleet's approach, incontinently abandoned it and opened negotiations with Hannibal. In the upshot a secret alliance was struck up, which, according to the terms as recorded by Polybius, pledged Philip to aid Hannibal in conquering Italy, provided Hannibal should afterwards help him to conquer Greece (215). What Philip's aid would mean was, however,

none too certain. On Greek soil itself he could, of course, embarrass Rome by attacking her Epirot territory; but whether Macedonian troops could cross the Adriatic, depended largely on the situation at sea. Much therefore hung on the attitude of Hannibal's home government and on their willingness to risk their precious fleet, and there seemed now some chance that they might. For at Carthage the news of Cannae had roused great enthusiasm. Even the lukewarm oligarchy were stirred by the hope of recovering the losses of the previous decades. Doubtless on Hannibal's suggestion, they promptly equipped an expedition for the reconquest of Sardinia; and before long there came an opportunity—more welcome still—of reasserting their hold upon Sicily. In 215 Rome's faithful ally, Prince Hiero of Syracuse, died. He was succeeded by his young grandson Hieronymus, and when next year the boy was murdered, the factious and dissolute city fell a prey to intrigue. Carthaginian agents were busy; and so successful were their machinations that they worked round the populace into declaring war against Rome. Other towns in the island soon joined the revolt; and the Carthaginian Government prepared to give vigorous assistance both by land and sea (213). Once Sicily could be secured, it was not impossible that Rome's command of the Adriatic might be challenged, and Philip's forces brought into play. Thus the area of hostilities was perilously widened. Rome was hard put to it; but she rose to the emergency, and in each of the new theatres, as we shall presently see, she was able to hold her own.

For slowly but surely the Republic was getting into her stride; and her talent for organization was beginning to tell. The importance of maintaining her naval supremacy was fully realized, and tremendous efforts were made to raise the needful revenue. The war-tax was doubled. State lands were mortgaged. Every possible economy was practised; and restrictions were even placed on luxuries of female attire, so that the trinkets thus released might be melted down for the use of the Treasury. Meanwhile corporations of rich citizens advanced loans on promise of repayment when the war was over. Other syndicates undertook contracts for the supply

of overseas forces. True, their bargains were not always scrupulously kept. For the government's guarantee to indemnify losses at sea tempted some into fraud, and rotten hulks laden with rubbish were deliberately scuttled so that claims might be made on the State as though for sound ships. But such scandals were rare. A cool, determined patriotism was the prevailing tone. The popular party being discredited by the disasters which had attended their policy, the Senate henceforward took complete control. There were no more wild experiments. Fabius and his fellow-veteran Marcellus, a leader as impetuous as he himself was cautious,<sup>1</sup> were elected consul again and again. Experienced officers were entrusted with prolonged command, especially in foreign campaigns; and in marked contrast to the feverish efforts of preceding years a serene clear-sighted policy marked the conduct of the war.

In Italy the Roman forces were divided into numerous small armies and distributed with skilful strategy at vital points. Hannibal was dogged at every step, but open battle was steadfastly avoided. So, while he was occupied in one district, he would learn that his Italian protégés had been attacked in another. If he went to their aid, the same trouble arose again in his rear. He was like a lion baited by a pack of dogs, making this way and that with a vigour that was still irresistible, but unable to force a decision on his elusive enemy. The whole character of the war, in short, was changed; and sieges, not battles, were now the order of the day. In 215 the issue centred mainly round Nola and Naples; but he could capture neither. Much of the next year he spent in defending Capua which, though an unprofitable ally, could not be abandoned and continued to hang like a millstone round his neck. In 212 he took the town of Tarentum, but the fort which commanded its coveted harbour held firm. Hannibal's case, in short, was far from promising. There were no further secessions among Rome's allies to encourage him. No help came through from Hasdrubal in Spain. Even the Gauls were tiring of the profitless

<sup>1</sup> These two were appropriately dubbed by one historian the 'shield' and 'sword' of Rome.

campaign and the flow of recruits from the north was seriously interrupted. Meanwhile, what probably was worst of all, in each of the new theatres of war the results were most disheartening.

For everywhere Rome was acting with energy. On her new eastern front she maintained a successful defensive. Philip had many enemies in Greece, and among them she was able to secure the assistance of the Aetolian League, and its powerful naval ally, King Attalus of Pergamum. Other states such as Elis, Messene, and eventually Sparta, joined the coalition; so that all Greece was soon in a turmoil and Philip was kept busy marching this way and that to chastise his enemies or save his friends. The Romans kept a firm grip on their Epirot outposts, and operating with a powerful fleet, made occasional descents around the coasts of Greece. Their presence proved sufficient to avert the intervention of the Carthaginian fleet, which from time to time made a timorous appearance in Hellenic waters. But their man-power was too fully occupied elsewhere to allow of a vigorous offensive; and after a few years, as we shall presently see, they were glad enough to terminate a futile struggle by an inglorious peace.

In the west it was different; for there vital interests were at stake and Rome was compelled to put forth all her strength. In 215, Sardinia, as we have said, was threatened by a Carthaginian attack, and the situation was further complicated by a general insurrection of the islanders. Prompt measures, however, were taken and the insurrection was well in hand before the Carthaginians arrived; and when they did so, they were decisively beaten. Next year the consul Marcellus was sent to mount guard over Sicily; and, though his presence failed in preventing the revolt of Syracuse, he lost no time, once the die was cast, in proceeding to its siege. The city itself, strongly placed on a broad peninsula, was further fortified by powerful walls, some eleven miles in length from sea to sea. Its defenders were equipped with the most scientific engines, constructed under the direction of the great mathematical genius Archimedes. Carthaginian blockade-runners kept them well supplied; and it was not



till the next year (212) that any real impression was made. Then, taking advantage of a festival when most of the sentinels were drunk, the Romans under cover of night succeeded in scaling the walls and taking possession of the western heights on the Plateau of Epipolae, which overlooked the town. In the course of the summer the Carthaginian army, which had come to raise the siege, and was encamped in the neighbouring marches, was wiped out by a terrible plague. Next year a Carthaginian fleet, dispatched for a last effort at relief, turned tail without a blow. After that it was not long before treachery did its work and the rest of the city fell into Roman hands (211). A ferocious sack ensued; and though against Marcellus's express orders, the famous Archimedes fell a victim, while engrossed, it is said, upon a mathematical problem. With Carthaginian support Agrigentum and other cities continued to hold out; but by 210 the island had been effectively reduced. The reorganization of the province (henceforth, of course, including the old Syracusan domain of Hiero previously exempted) was promptly taken in hand. A few cities were rewarded for their recent loyalty by grants of special status. Large confiscations were made at the expense of the disloyal and either returned to their former owners at a rental or leased out to Roman exploiters. All the remaining area—three-fourths of Sicily—was marked down as tithe-land.

On the ultimate outcome of the war, however, neither the recovery of Sicily nor the desultory struggle with Philip of Macedon could have any decisive influence. It was on the Spanish front, if anywhere, that the grand issue hung. For without reinforcements Hannibal himself could never conquer Italy; and so long as the Roman army in Spain continued to block their passage, it was only necessary for the Republic to hold on to achieve victory. However hazardous, therefore, had been the original decision to divert an army thither from the defence of Italy, its presence on the Ebro had proved more than justified. In 217 the enemy's attempt to break across that river had been successfully repelled; and thanks largely to the enterprise of the Massiliot warships their fleet was severely handled. In the same year another squadron, sail-

ing from Carthage to gain touch with Hannibal, found no stomach for the venture; and thus the Romans' mastery of the sea was definitely established. Nor on land were they long content with a mere defensive strategy. It was known that many of her Spanish subjects were far from loyal to Carthage; and a successful advance might well bring the waverers over. After his year of office Publius Scipio had been appointed proconsul to join his brother Gnaeus, and the two together undertook to carry the campaign beyond the Ebro frontier. In 216 they pushed some distance down the south-east coast, and, as was to be expected, somewhat weakened the enemy's hold over the neighbouring tribesmen. There for a while the situation rested. But in the year after Cannae the stimulus newly given to Carthaginian effort produced its effect upon the Spanish front. With powerful reinforcements Hasdrubal ventured once more to assail the line of the Ebro; and seeing how things stood in Italy, much turned on the Scipios' ability to hold him. When for a second time he was heavily defeated, Rome must have breathed again. Many tribes in Central Spain now responded to her advances, and Carthage was seriously embarrassed, the more so since she was threatened at home by the revolt of Syphax, a native prince of Libya (214-212 B.C.). Hasdrubal was actually recalled from Spain and the way thus opened to a fresh Roman advance. Saguntum was captured. A large part of the central plateau was overrun; and many of the tribesmen were enlisted as auxiliary troops. Not unnaturally, however, their allegiance proved unstable. On Hasdrubal's return in 212 they deserted their new masters; and in two successive battles round the Baetis Valley the Romans were overwhelmed. Both Scipios lost their lives; and with this terrible disaster all their gains in Spain were suddenly wiped out (211). Saguntum and one other fort alone remained to Rome south of the Ebro; and it seemed wellnigh certain that before long a new Carthaginian army would be marching upon Italy.

When later in the year it fell to the comitia to elect a new proconsul to replace the fallen general, there seems to have been some reluctance among the accredited leaders to

undertake so perilous a mission ; and the Assembly's vote was given to the dead proconsul's son and namesake, Publius Cornelius Scipio. Seeing that such high command was normally reserved for men of age and experience, the appointment was remarkable. For the young Scipio was still in his twenties and up till that time had held no important office. He had won his spurs, however, in the aftermath of Cannae when he took a leading part in the rally at Canusium ; and it was not difficult to recognize in him the marks of genius. In many ways Scipio was possessed of qualities most uncommon in a Roman. The peculiar charm of his personal presence is widely attested ; and to this were added rare gifts of imagination and initiative, which, while they fascinated his many admirers, awoke the nervous fears of the more old-fashioned senators. For Scipio belonged to a new school of thought. He became one of the pioneers of the growing interest in Greek culture ; and though far from being a thoroughgoing individualist, his liberal outlook made him impatient of the petty restraints of Roman public life. Equally, too, the more brutal traditions of Roman generalship made little appeal to his chivalrous temperament. He could quell a mutiny without bloodshed and capture a town without promiscuous massacre ; and even against Hannibal himself, as later events will show, he harboured no lasting grudge. Of his military capacity we shall find ample evidence in the history of his coming campaigns ; but the secret of his success is not least to be attributed to an unbounded and (strange to say) an almost superstitious confidence in his own powers. It would seem as though Scipio regarded himself as endowed with special inspiration from on high ; and tales were current of mysterious visits which he paid in secret to the temples of the gods. But, if he had a genuine faith in his own star, the popular belief in him, already strong enough at the outset, was to advance at the spectacular climax of his career to the point of sheer idolatry, which in a state less closely wedded to the republican tradition might well have raised its hero to an absolute autocracy.

The career which contained such promise of great things began brilliantly enough. Early in 209, while the enemy's

armies were still scattered, Scipio made a sudden dash and took Nova Carthago by surprise. Its capture not merely delivered into his hands large stores of grain and useful war-material, but it forced the enemy to fall back on distant Gades as their future base of operations. Scipio followed up his success by winning further ground for Rome and by opening up negotiations with the Numidian chief, Massinissa. In the spring of 208 he defeated Hasdrubal in pitched battle near Baecula; but owing to the difficult nature of the country was unable to follow up the pursuit. This failure to keep touch with the enemy was the more unfortunate, since Hasdrubal was at last determined, come what might, to march to Hannibal's aid; and later in the year, while Scipio was far away in Southern Spain, there came the appalling news that he had passed the Pyrenees.

#### VI. THE CAMPAIGN OF THE METAURUS, 207

The situation was, indeed, terrible; but before we can understand its full significance we must first describe the progress of events on the home front. There, as the years went on, it had become more and more evident that neither side could gain the upper hand, and that the struggle could only be ended by the exhaustion of the one or the other. Rome herself was suffering severely. The stocks of corn were running out, and to avert famine supplies had to be procured from Egypt and elsewhere. Funds were running so low that eventually it was found necessary to draw on the sacred reserve of the Treasury. At the same time troops were being raised in ever-increasing numbers. In 212 no less than twenty-five legions were under arms, and it is said that nearly a quarter of the Italian manhood was engaged by land or sea. So cruel indeed was the strain that in 209 twelve 'Latin' colonies refused point-blank to supply more men or money. At the moment the government wisely refrained from taking disciplinary measures, and happily the eighteen remaining colonies proved more staunch.

Meanwhile, despite her difficulties, Rome was slowly but surely regaining the ground which she had lost. In 212 a determined effort had been made to recover Capua. Three

armies settled down to its blockade. A double ring of palisaded entrenchments was constructed, the one against the sorties of the garrison, the other against Hannibal's efforts at relief; and so successful were these precautions that Hannibal, when he came, could effect nothing. His situation at this juncture was crucial; for failure to save Capua would imperil all prospect of winning more allies. But it was not like Hannibal to accept defeat. In a desperate effort to divert the besiegers from the threatened town he turned at last to march on Rome herself. He moved slowly up through Latium, burning right and left in his passage and driving a herd of terror-stricken refugees before him. Three miles from the walls of the capital he halted and pitched his camp on the River Anio, hoping that, given time, panic would do its work. But the Senate refused to be rattled. They recalled but a single army from the siege of Capua; and so great was men's confidence within the city that, when the ground on which the Carthaginian army was encamped was put up for public auction, it is said to have realized its normal price. Hannibal's bluff, in short, had failed, and he knew it. One day, with a party of horsemen, he rode right up to the Colline Gate, threw a spear into the city, then rode away again and disappeared with his army into the Sabine hills (212).

So Capua was left to her fate; and when they took the town the Romans made of it a terrible example (211). A number of its leading citizens took poison; but those who remained were first scourged, then beheaded. The mass of the inhabitants were sold as slaves. All rights of self-government were summarily withdrawn; and the surrounding country confiscated to Rome. Capua's punishment was intended as a warning to any who might think of joining Hannibal and the lesson went home. Two years later it was repeated at Tarentum; for, when the veteran Fabius, now consul for the fifth time, succeeded in taking the city, he sacked it utterly and sold 30,000 of the inhabitants as slaves. The reduction of these renegade towns was all the more timely since there were symptoms of disaffection in Etruria. Nor despite such minor successes did the Romans show as yet

any promise of putting an end to the war. If they engaged Hannibal in the open, they were as incapable as ever of beating him, and their only real hope lay in wearing him out ; and to this end nothing was more essential than to prevent reinforcements from reaching him. It will therefore be well understood with what horror they learnt in the autumn of 208 that Hasdrubal had eluded the vigilance of Scipio in Spain and was marching on Italy. The climax of the war was at hand.

It was by the western passes of the Pyrenees, and not by the eastern, which Scipio kept well guarded, that Hasdrubal had made his way into Gaul. He was apparently in no great hurry and he spent the winter months among the Arverni, a tribe which then occupied the district now known to us as the Auvergne. In spring when the snow was melted from the passes, he crossed the Alps and descending into the Lombard Plain picked up a force from among the Gauls and Ligurians who had received him with enthusiasm. Once again, however, he dallied, wasting much precious time in the vain attempt to capture the Roman colony of Placentia. Meanwhile he had dispatched a small posse of horsemen with orders to find Hannibal wherever he might be and warn him to make a rendezvous in Umbria. Had that rendezvous been kept, Rome would have been threatened by the combined advance of two formidable armies ; and as Hasdrubal's new troops can scarcely have fallen short of 20,000 men, there could have been no mistaking the gravity of the position. The choice of generals to deal with it had been the subject of much heart-searching. Fabius was now over eighty. Marcellus had recently been killed in a skirmish ; and the choice fell on C. Claudius Nero and M. Livius Salinator. With the spring of 207 Livius went north to keep watch on the Adriatic coast-route ; but at Hasdrubal's approach he moved to Sena Gallica, fourteen miles south of the Metaurus River, and there halted. Meanwhile in Apulia, closely watched by Nero's army and impatient for news of his brother's arrival, Hannibal was marching restlessly from place to place. Thus it was that Hasdrubal's dispatch-riders, instead of finding his camp, went astray and fell into

the hands of some Roman foragers. Nero took in the situation at a glance, and resolved on a bold stroke. Acting on his own initiative he left the bulk of his army to keep touch with Hannibal, and with a picked band of 7,000 men himself raced north. Reaching Sena Gallica he slipped unobserved into his colleague's camp. Next morning the double call upon the Roman bugles gave Hasdrubal the hint that he was confronted no longer with a single host. That night he fell back hurriedly, but went astray in the dark and when he reached the gorge of the Metaurus, missed the ford. The river was swollen in high spate, and, as he moved up the southern bank, the Romans next day closed in. His Gauls got out of hand, and in the ensuing battle he was utterly defeated. . . . Not many days later, as Hannibal was still waiting in Apulia, more impatient than ever at the unaccountable delay, something, flung through the air, pitched and rolled within the ramparts of his camp. Somebody picked it up. It was the head of Hasdrubal. Then Hannibal knew that he had lost the war.

#### VII. SCIPIO'S AFRICAN CAMPAIGN

Upon the Romans themselves the true significance of their victory was not lost. They realized now that they had only to hold on and time would do the rest. With a wise economy of effort they disbanded such allied troops as were not vitally needed either to keep watch on Hannibal or to prosecute the war in Spain. From Hannibal himself no serious menace was any longer to be feared. Of his original army only a remnant now remained. His once formidable cavalry had dwindled almost to nothing; and he could no longer even hope to win victories in the field. The lion's claws, in fact, were drawn, and like a beast at bay he retired into the toe of the peninsula where among the wooded mountains of Bruttium he managed to maintain himself for four years more. But it seemed as though nothing short of a miracle could save him now. The Romans were more than ever masters of the seas. In 205 they came to terms with Macedon; for, since their Aetolian allies had made a separate peace, their situation was embarrassing and it seemed wiser,

at any rate before invading Africa, to remove all possible menace from their rear. By now, too, the Carthaginian fleet was utterly demoralized, and since 208, when it had been defeated in home waters by a Roman raiding squadron, scarcely dared to show its face. It can hardly have been with much prospect of real success that in 205 a forlorn hope was dispatched to the relief of Hannibal; and sure enough it encountered a storm off the Sardinian coast, was scattered and went down before the Roman attack. In the same year Mago, Hannibal's youngest brother, who on Hasdrubal's departure had taken over the Spanish command, crossed by sea to Liguria where he maintained himself for some while; but his attempt came to nothing; and meanwhile his evacuation of Spain had there brought the Carthaginian resistance to an end.

That peninsula was henceforward at Rome's mercy. Already in 207 Scipio had to some extent retrieved his blunder of the previous year by winning a great victory near Ilipa, and after that it was merely a process of time before the rest of the country fell into his hands, including not merely the valuable silver mines—a very welcome assistance in Rome's future prosecution of the war—but also the great Carthaginian base at Gades on the Atlantic coast. Scipio, had he chosen, might well have reaped the credit of completing the annexation, but to tell the truth, he was no longer interested in what after all was no more than a side issue of the war. At first the fascination of his personality and his curious knack of understanding the native mind had gained him immense popularity. At one time he had even been offered the crown. But presently the tribes began to realize how little they had profited by the exchange of masters. There were rebellions which had to be put down; and meanwhile Scipio himself had come to see that, if the war was to be won, it must be won on African and not on Spanish or even Italian soil. Already, as we have seen, he had been in secret communication with Syphax and Massinissa, the two powerful chiefs of the Numidian tribesmen. He believed that their help would be forthcoming if Rome would but dare to strike; and his mind was now made up.



In 206 he returned to Italy and stood for the consulship, with the avowed intention of carrying the campaign across to Africa.

The Senate was not unnaturally perturbed. They saw Hannibal, if no longer really dangerous, yet still on Italian soil. The memory of Regulus's ill-starred expedition hung heavy on their minds; and the autocratic behaviour of this determined young general increased their hesitation. But Scipio was now the people's hero; and when he was elected to the consulship for 205, he made it pretty clear that if his intentions were thwarted, he would go behind the Senate's authority with an appeal to the sovereign people. The best his opponents could make of the situation was to concede his request for the command in Sicily and simultaneously to vote him an inadequate contingent of troops. But he appealed for volunteers, and so great was now the glamour of his name that the deficiency was soon made good. He crossed to Sicily to prepare for the coming campaign, sent his friend Laelius ahead in 205 to discover the state of things in Numidia, and in the following year set sail himself for the African coast. His passage was unopposed—a significant comment on the enemy's naval morale—and he landed near Utica, thence hoping to arouse the nomad tribes on whose adhesion he was counting.

But meanwhile such a calculation had been rudely upset by a curious little drama which had been enacted in Numidia. The centre of this drama, if the picturesque story is true, was a certain beautiful lady, Sophonisba by name, who was the daughter of Hannibal Gisco, the Carthaginian leader. Both Massinissa and Syphax, the two Numidian chiefs, were suitors for her hand; and Syphax, being accepted, had followed up his marriage by transferring his allegiance to the Carthaginian side. He then turned upon his unsuccessful rival and drove him ignominiously from hearth and home. So instead, therefore, of arriving at the Roman camp with his tribesmen at his back, the unfortunate Massinissa came as a refugee with no more than a handful of troopers. To Scipio the defection of one prospective ally, closely followed by the defeat of the other, was a serious disappointment, and

the combined forces of Syphax and Gisco pressed him so hard that he was obliged to abandon the siege of Utica and retreat into winter quarters on an adjacent headland. Next year, however (203), he managed to defeat them in two successive battles. Syphax fled and Massinissa, being dispatched to hunt him down, caught Sophonisba too, married her and then, since Scipio showed strong disapproval of this Carthaginian connexion, calmly sent her a cup of poison with which to end her life.

Meanwhile the prestige of the Roman success had done its work. The fickle Numidians swung round to the side of the victors and the Carthaginian Government, now thoroughly alarmed, first sued for peace; and then under the influence of the war-party, resolved on one last effort. Mago and Hannibal had been recalled from Italy. Mago died on the voyage; but Hannibal, embarking from Croton while the peace parleys were in progress, made the African coast to the south-east of his city and set to work to make the best use he could of the dispirited home-levies and the remnant of his own veteran force. Next year (202) he moved south-westwards, making for the interior, where he won some successes against Massinissa's tribesmen, and finally near Zama, some five days' march from Carthage, was brought to battle by the Roman host. On that last stricken field not even the genius of Hannibal could avail against the manifold difficulties under which he laboured. The Numidian cavalry, once his most dreaded arm, were now ranged on the side of the enemy. The charge of his elephants miscarried; for the Romans opened lanes in their battle-line and the bewildered beasts either charged harmlessly through or turned in blind terror to trample their own ranks. Finally, the half-trained mercenaries of his front line broke under the charge of the legions; and at this the African and Carthaginian reserves fled incontinently from the field. The victory was complete. Carthage was down; and Hannibal, escaping from the scene of the disaster, advised his fellow-countrymen to make peace.

The terms were far more severe than those which had been offered a twelvemonth earlier. Carthage was to pay within

fifty years an indemnity of 10,000 talents. Her great fleet, with the exception of ten vessels which were left her, was towed out into the harbour and there solemnly burnt. She was to abandon her claim to all foreign possession; and within Africa itself to allow Massinissa an independent status as King of all Numidia. More galling still, her foreign policy—her right, that is, of making war and even of settling disputes with her immediate neighbours—was to be subordinated to the control of the Roman Government. She became, in fact, no better than a vassal of the victor state; and there is little wonder that before many years were out, she was suing for the more privileged title of *socius* or ally.

#### VIII. CARTHAGE IN DEFEAT

It was during the tragic years of his country's humiliation that Hannibal showed the true measure of his greatness. To comment further upon the quality of his military genius would here be superfluous; it is written clearly enough in every detail of the campaigns above described. But Hannibal's patriotism was not confined to winning battles for Carthage. When the final blow had fallen and all his hopes went out, he set patiently and unselfishly to work to rebuild on better lines the shattered fortunes of his unhappy country. There the burden of paying Rome her huge indemnity was causing great distress. The selfish oligarchy with characteristic meanness mismanaged its collection; and the over-taxed populace grew more and more resentful until in 196 they called upon Hannibal to take control. Being elected suffete, he made that office once more a real power in the land. He broke the back of the oligarchical régime by introducing a system of direct democratic election to the supreme Council of State. Finally, he reorganized the public finances in so effective a manner that at the end of five years it became possible to offer Rome immediate and complete settlement of the indemnity. What, however, is even more remarkable, he made no selfish attempt to perpetuate his power. Though he might well have relied on both populace and army to support him in such an attempt, he calmly laid down his office at the appointed term, and when

in 195 the Romans, growing nervous of his success and prompted by the mean calumnies of his political opponents, demanded his surrender, he refused to bring the State into trouble on his own behalf and went voluntarily into exile.

We shall hear of him again ; but in the meanwhile, and partly no doubt as a consequence of his reforms, Carthage began once more to thrive ; and had it not been for the Roman ban upon all independent action—a ban which permitted Massinissa to encroach at will upon much of her richest territory—she might have recovered, if not her old position, at any rate her old prosperity. But from Rome jealous eyes were watching her. For there the horror of the Hannibalic invasion had sunk deep into men's memories ; and commercial rivalry sharpened the desire for a complete revenge. So it came about that before the fallen city could fairly raise her head again, the blow was to be struck and Carthage wiped out of existence as though she had never been.

## CHAPTER VIII

### EFFECTS OF THE SECOND PUNIC WAR

#### I. ROME'S SUPREMACY IN ITALY

**I**T has been said—and there is no real exaggeration in the statement—that the Second Punic War was the most important war of all time. Rome's conclusive victory decided, in fact, the whole future trend of Mediterranean history. It gave her unchallenged control of the Western Seas, the mastery of the surrounding coasts, and, what is more, the power to move forward, whenever she chose to do so, to the conquest of Greece and the Levant. At Zama, therefore, one may fairly say, the fate of the civilized world was determined for six centuries to come ; and little though she realized on what a vast destiny she then was entering, Rome was nevertheless shrewdly conscious of her own power. Her temper changed. She began slowly but decisively to assume the airs of a despot-state, a rival—though not at

the outset a deliberately acquisitive rival—of the great Empires of the East ; and during the next fifty years, as we shall see, she grew less and less sensitive towards the rights and feelings of those peoples whose countries fell under her control.

Meanwhile even within Italy itself the events of the war had changed the whole character of her hegemony. She had entered on that war as the leader of a miscellaneous body of confederates, whose rights for the most part she had scrupulously observed and whose political institutions she was proceeding by cautious degrees to assimilate to her own. But a life-and-death struggle is no time in which to cultivate the niceties of constitutional development. Rome's back was against the wall ; and only by exercising an absolute and arbitrary control could she hope to win through at all. So she had ruled like a dictator. She used up men remorselessly and in her efforts to secure more she had made almost intolerable demands upon her confederate's loyalty. When her loyalty failed her, as at Capua and Tarentum, she struck back with a ferocity which must have cowed the rest. Even the twelve 'Latin' colonies, which had pleaded their utter exhaustion, were not long allowed immunity, and in 204 they were compelled to provide double contingents and even to pay a tax. At the end of the war the Bruttians, who had harboured Hannibal's expiring efforts, were far more severely treated. For their land was confiscated and they themselves reduced to serfdom.

Rome, in short, now declared herself absolute mistress of her allies' destiny. In other words, they were confederates no longer, but subjects, and the world outside appears to have clearly recognized that Rome and Italy were henceforward one. Nor did the capital city seek to conceal the fact of her supremacy. Very soon she even discontinued the traditional process of political amalgamation. In 188 Arpinum and two other towns were admitted to full rights ; but it was the last extension of the franchise, and until the great rebellion of 90 B.C. when the whole of Italy was to win the citizenship by force of arms, the position of the allies grew rather worse than better. For one thing their troops

were most inequitably employed on services which for one reason or another the Roman citizen disliked. This grievance, indeed, was so bitterly felt that many inhabitants of the so-called 'Latin' towns migrated to the capital<sup>1</sup>; and in 187 a complaint was raised by delegates from these towns that with their dwindling population it was impossible to furnish their full military quota. In the upshot 12,000 persons who had thus migrated were struck off the citizen-roll. Ten years later a similar eviction took place; and although such high-handed action was a response to outside pressure, there can be no doubt that the citizen-body itself was becoming increasingly jealous of its special privileges—not least among which was the occasional distribution of cheap corn at the capital—and increasingly averse from the admission of fresh participants.<sup>2</sup>

If this was their method of rewarding the faithful services of loyal allies, it was little to be expected that in their treatment of the Gauls—an alien people and a recent enemy—the Roman Government would show a more generous spirit. The reconquest of the Northern Plains was not undertaken immediately after Zama; for a fresh war with Macedon then occupied the Republic's energies. In 196, however, it became known that Carthage was still busy inciting the tribes beyond the Po, and a campaign was at once undertaken in which the Insubres suffered final defeat. Meanwhile the Boii, though thus completely hemmed in on north and south, remained recalcitrant; and it was not till 191 that they received their *coup de grâce*. Few of them now remained; and a large part of their territory was confiscated outright. Fresh colonies were planted at Mutina, Parma and elsewhere; and the great Flaminian high-road was carried north as far as Placentia. Finally, in 181 a colony was planted at Aquileia, far away at the head of the Adriatic, designed at once to

<sup>1</sup> Economic pressure also helped to drive them there; see p. 60.

<sup>2</sup> The practice, too, of establishing such 'Latin' colonies now fell into abeyance. During the second century the colonies planted were almost exclusively composed of full Roman citizens; and during its first quarter even such plantations were suspended owing to shortage of men.

control the Veneti and to bar the passage of the eastern Alps. But the danger of fresh irruptions from the tribes beyond still constituted a menace; and to trust their Gallic kinsmen overmuch seemed scarcely politic. So prudence dictated that Cisalpine Gaul should be treated as a province and placed under the surveillance of a garrison. In some respects, however, its status was peculiar. No tribute was demanded; and instead of a special governor the consuls of the year were directly responsible for its administration. The tribes north of the Po were allowed to retain their native organization by cantons; but in the southern districts especially, the immigration of settlers from the rest of Italy hastened the inevitable process of Romanization. For the fertility of these plains soon attracted yeomen farmers who had failed to make good elsewhere; and a peculiarly virile and thrifty stock grew up which was later to produce not merely first-rate soldiers but also among other men of genius the poet Vergil and the historian Livy.

The rounding off of Rome's dominion was completed in 180 by the reduction of the savage mountain district of Liguria. It proved no easy business; and the inhabitants were considered so dangerously intractable that forty thousand of them were bodily transported from their homes to the vales of Samnium. Such treatment, which smacked of the methods of Oriental despotism, was a naked acknowledgement of the change which was coming over Rome's political outlook; and the fact is that even before she was fairly launched upon her career of world-conquest, the temper of her citizens had already begun to harden. The imperial spirit was coming to the birth.

## II. POLITICAL SUPREMACY OF THE SENATE

To ascribe any conscious direction of policy, whether foreign or Italian, to the mass of Roman voters would, nevertheless, be a considerable mistake. The initiative in such matters lay more than ever with the Senate; and, if one consequence of the Hannibalic war had been to strengthen Rome's supremacy in Italy, it had also served to strengthen the supremacy of the governing caste at Rome. The early

years of the campaign had signally discredited the democratic party, whose nominees, Flaminius and Varro, had brought the city so near to complete disaster; and the senatorial gang of staunch Conservatives had thereafter been given a free hand. The requirements of active service, too, had depleted the comitia; for men cannot fight and vote. So public opinion, even if it had the will, lacked the weight to challenge the Senate's authority; and the impulse towards democracy, which before the beginning of the Punic Wars had seemed so vigorous, now visibly declined. It was not till the days of the Gracchi that the mass of Roman voters showed any real interest in politics; and by then the mass of voters had degenerated into a selfish, good-for-nothing mob.

The Constitution, it is true, remained unchanged. Theoretically, at least, the Assembly was still sovereign. But much of the more urgent and more complicated business—especially in the realm of taxation and finance—was henceforward not referred to the Assembly's vote at all. The Senate's decisions—or *senatus consulta* as they were called—were deemed sufficient authority on which magistrates might act; and by the development of this method of transacting business the House began to assume wide powers which certainly did not belong to it by constitution and which often bordered as much on the legislative as on the administrative sphere. The only real rival to the Senate's authority was now to be found in the executive officials. We have seen how Scipio was prepared in the last resort to defy its opposition to his African campaign; and it is clear that the war-time habit of granting lengthy terms of power to proconsular commanders was calculated to encourage a dangerous irresponsibility in ambitious individuals. It is therefore not surprising that directly the war was over, the Senate reverted to the earlier rule, and normally curtailed proconsular appointments to the strict limit of one year. What, however, is even more to be noted is the persistent tendency to confine the tenure of the more important offices to members of a narrow clique comprising perhaps two score of families. Time after time in the annual lists of magistrates we find the same names recurring—father and son and grandson after him. It became, in fact,



extremely difficult for any one to take office who could not command through his family connexions the goodwill of this hereditary nobility. A large number of the voters were in one way or another dependent on the patronage of the leading families; and in return for legal or other forms of assistance were ready enough to support its candidates. Apart from this it was natural among so conservative a people that an exaggerated estimate should be placed on the value of good breeding. So the social upstart or *novus homo*, as he was called, remained a rare phenomenon in politics; and there are notorious instances where officers of proved merit were unrewarded by further promotion simply because they lacked the qualification of high birth. Even the tribunate—that traditional bulwark of the lower orders—fell almost completely under the thumb of the governing class: and it was not till the latter half of the second century that the brothers Gracchus revived its old association with the popular cause. Rome, in short, was henceforward ruled by an oligarchy, patriotic, resolute and within narrow limits competent, but obstinate, exclusive and disastrously blind to the problems which its own policies were laying up in store for generations to come.

### III. ECONOMIC EFFECTS

Nor was it merely in the political sphere that the power of the few was increased at the expense of the many. For one important and interesting result of the war was a concentration of wealth in the hands of the upper classes. Many who did not belong to the senatorial nobility had found vast opportunities for gain during the war in the undertaking of State contracts for the building of ships or the provisionment of troops, and during the peace that followed they were to find even greater opportunities in exploiting the provincials of Sicily and Spain. The rise of these entrepreneurs was a new and not very wholesome feature in the history of the Republic; and towards the end of the second century we shall hear much more of them as the political antagonists of the senatorial nobility. Meanwhile, however, even for these nobles themselves the aftermath of the war brought immense

compensations of a different sort. This may at first sight seem surprising; for their chief interest, as we know, lay in the ownership of land, and for the past fifteen years, as we also know, the Italian country-side had suffered terribly. Its southern districts never really recovered from the damage inflicted by Hannibal's depredations. Not merely had crops been destroyed and farms burnt, but there had been a wholesale exodus of refugees from the devastated areas, so that entire villages were untenanted and country towns reduced to the size of mere hamlets. Thousands of yeomen farmers saw themselves ruined and lacked heart to resume what must have seemed a hopeless task. Thousands more who had been absent upon active service for many years together, now elected to stay with the legions, preferring the regular pay and adventurous excitements of a soldier's life to the precarious livelihood and humdrum toil of agriculture. Added to all this, we must remember the terrible toll which the war had taken upon the manhood of Italy. Between 225 and 204 the numbers on the citizen roll had sunk by nearly a quarter from 291,000 to 214,000. The allies had certainly suffered at least as heavily; and it is therefore not surprising that for thousands of vacant farms no tenants were forthcoming.

It was precisely here that lay the opportunity of the wealthy senators. There were many, as we have seen, who at the crisis of the struggle had advanced large loans to the State; and as this money was gradually refunded, these men naturally looked round for methods of investing it. Commercial undertakings were virtually barred to them by the Lex Claudia of 218<sup>1</sup>; but ownership of landed estates, on the other hand, conferred a dignity which was much coveted. So, when small holdings were going cheap, they bought them up. When lands had been confiscated to the State (as in Lucania and in the Apulian territory of Tarentum),<sup>2</sup> they took them on lease at favourable terms. Often,

<sup>1</sup> See p. 102.

<sup>2</sup> Most of Southern Italy, in fact, became at this time '*ager publicus*', that is, property kept in the hands of the State and leased out on a fixed rental, instead of being assigned to regular colonists, as had

where fields had simply fallen into waste, they quietly annexed them to their own estates. So, in one way or another, large properties or *latifundia* became increasingly common, especially in the centre and the south; and the change, needless to say, had a profound effect not merely upon agricultural methods but upon the whole social condition of the country.

Hitherto, as has frequently been said, the business of agriculture had been carried on by yeomen farmers, who worked the land themselves with perhaps a hand or two to help them. But the new capitalist proprietors, who lived at Rome and only on rare occasions visited their estates, were, for the most part, not practical farmers. A good return on their investments was all they desired and it mattered nothing to them how they got it. Now slaves at this moment were going extremely cheap, since the war-captives flooded the market; and the temptation to employ servile labour was wellnigh irresistible. The plantation system by which Carthaginian landlords exploited their Libyan estates, provided a useful model; and during the years after Zama it became more and more the fashion for Roman landlords also to work their newly acquired properties with gangs of slaves superintended by a bailiff. The rough hill country of the south, which was peculiarly suited to the pasturage of sheep, was utilized for ranching and agriculture proper declined. The central regions, especially in the vicinity of Rome, were turned to a different purpose. Corn-growing was ceasing to be profitable, for the exigencies of war had encouraged the importation of cheap supplies from Egypt and elsewhere; and the surplus of the Sicilian tithes was regularly used by the government to keep the urban population fed. So in Latium certainly, and probably in Etruria, the large proprietors now began to abandon unremunerative crops in favour of vineyards, market-gardens and, above all, olive

hitherto been the normal practice with confiscated territory. It was the lessees of such *ager publicus* that Tiberius Gracchus wished to dispossess in favour of citizen settlers. In Campania, however, the land confiscated from Capua was leased back to its original occupants while remaining technically the property of the State.

orchards. These would normally be worked by servile labour, assisted perhaps at the vintage or the olive-harvest by hirelings from the towns. As an inevitable consequence, therefore, not merely in the South, but also in Central and Northern Italy, large numbers of the free population were driven off the soil. Some went to take up new lands in the Valley of the Po ; but the majority drifted to the towns, and more especially to the capital itself, where the hope of employment was at best precarious and the consequent congestion only made conditions worse. Thus the gulf between rich and poor grew steadily wider ; and in their selfish pursuit of wealth, the senatorial oligarchy was unwittingly bringing into existence a mob of semi-idle and impoverished citizens, which was to prove in later days one of the most serious complications of the Government's task.

It would be a mistake, however, in describing post-war Italy, to paint the picture too dark. It naturally took time before the evils of which we have been speaking could reach their full effect ; and meanwhile the spirit of the people was high and their confidence in the future seemed well justified by their triumphant emergence from the perils of the past. Despite a signal failure of nerve on one or two occasions, the mass of the nation had stood the searching test with a fine endurance. Their leaders had met crisis after crisis with an imperturbable resolve which has ever since been the admiration of the world. The actual fighting quality of the troops had improved out of all knowledge ; and the experience gained in the course of the campaign had produced a large body of seasoned veterans. Many of these, as we have said, had become wedded to the trade of arms. It was from such that Scipio had been able to draw large bands of volunteers ; and they remained available to form the core of future armies, more especially when these were needed for service overseas. In the coming wars not merely were such professional soldiers a most valuable asset, but their very existence was a positive temptation to put them to some use. Thus were sown the seeds from which in the ultimate issue was to spring a more deliberate and aggressive militarism than the history of the Republic had hitherto displayed.

## IV. THE ROMAN CHARACTER AND HELLENISM

On the Roman character, as might have been expected, the war had exercised no very refining influence. With the notable exception of Scipio, military leaders had shown little generosity or sympathy for conquered foes ; and the conduct of campaigns had normally been ruthless, sometimes treacherous. The custom, too, of enslaving prisoners of war—a practice which had rarely been adopted during the conquest of Italy—introduced a new and dangerous element into Roman society. For now in their homes as well as on their farms the rich began to keep large staffs of menial slaves. The effect of this could only be to brutalize the owners, and ugly tales of callous inhumanity are henceforward not uncommon. During the coming years, in fact, there is plenty to show that in essentials the national character was little changed, or, if changed, only for the worse. That the average Roman still possessed many sterling qualities, goes of course without saying. He had courage, self-control, thrift, a high sense of public duty and, within somewhat narrow legal limits, of justice too. But he was a hard man, hard upon others as he was hard upon himself, giving no quarter and expecting none. In business affairs he was excessively grasping and close-fisted, but as compared with men of other nations, he had a reputation for honesty and his word was his bond. Towards inferiors and especially towards slaves (unless they were actually members of his household circle) he would show scant consideration ; and he would certainly not have been shocked by Cato's callous maxim that farm-hands, rendered useless by infirmity or age, should be sold off like animals. The finer feelings, in short, were singularly lacking from the Roman's composition. There was nothing in the stern social discipline of his life to cultivate a real understanding of his fellow-men ; and his insensibility was simply the moral counterpart of an undeveloped intellect. He disliked the trouble of thinking and regarded it as a superfluous, if not a dangerous, habit. His narrow range of ideas he took ready-made from his seniors ; and he was complacently convinced of their infallibility.

Stiff in opinions, inflexible in conduct, he was, at his best, of a type familiar enough in the pages of our own national history. Such men are of the highest value, if set in the right place. Being first-rate disciplinarians, they make fine regimental officers; but they are not necessarily suited to posts of administrative responsibility; yet, as Rome's empire spread, it was for posts of this latter sort that men were needed; and from their ignorance and lack of sympathy there resulted, as was but natural, much tragic blundering.

But now upon this somewhat unpromising material had been brought to bear a cultural influence not indigenous to Rome. In the past, as we have said, the intellect of her citizens had been miserably starved. Education was rudimentary; for a native literature was still almost wholly to seek. The growing habit of litigation did something to promote a nimbleness of wit; and practice at the bar furnished a fair training for political debate. But poetry and philosophy were things unthought of until contact with Hellenism had brought the city into touch with all the rich exuberance of its imaginative fancy and the profound depth of its ethical and metaphysical speculation. At many points during the last half-century such contact had been growing; and in various ways Greek influence was producing its effects. These tended at first, as we have seen, to be of a somewhat frivolous character. Plays and especially comedies had become popular at Rome, the more so since their performance was a welcome diversion from the stern realities of war. Aristocratic officials financed their production and patronized the authors. Comedies were translated or adapted from Greek models by such men as Livius Andronicus, Naevius and a little later Plautus. A more serious note, too, was beginning to be struck. Andronicus had translated the *Odyssey*. Naevius wrote a poem on the Second Punic War. Ennius composed tragedies, planned also on the Greek model; and, more ambitious still, a full-length epic on the past history of Rome. The same theme inspired a prose-work by a senator named Fabius Pictor, the first genuine history that the country had produced. It was, however, a telling symptom of the extreme reverence felt for the literary pre-eminence

of Greece, that his annals were actually compiled in the Greek tongue. The fact is that the more intelligent Romans were fully conscious of their own intellectual shortcomings. They saw that by comparison with their next-door neighbours they were little better than barbarians; and when the great masterpieces of Hellenic literature began to arrive in the city, they were studied with eager enthusiasm. A small but influential section of the aristocracy, among whom the great Scipio, Flamininus and Aemilius Paullus were the leading spirits, became earnest admirers of all things Greek; and they entertained, as we shall presently see, a keen interest in and perhaps some real sympathy towards the country to which they owed their new enlightenment.

Such influences, of course, took many years to mature; and the time has not yet come to gauge their full effects upon the Roman character. But for a proper understanding of the century which now follows, it is essential to realize that while the majority of men at Rome remained comparatively illiterate and narrow-minded, a few at least among their leaders were beginning to think along wider and more liberal lines. The result was that during the crucial years in which the Republic was reaching forward towards her imperial destiny, we find a perplexing riot of conflicting impulses. A new spirit of adventure vies with the old native instinct of cautious self-interest. Profession and practice are often strangely at variance; and wars, begun with the ostensible motive of liberating oppressed nationalities, end in discreditable scenes of needless plunder and bloodshed. Even at home the inbred habit of conservatism gives way at times to audacious experiment; and abroad we find, instead of the old insularity of outlook, a rash acceptance of imperial responsibilities with which the machinery of republican institutions was utterly inadequate to cope. Rome, indeed, could not help herself. Often against her better judgement circumstance urged her on; but the very rapidity of her overseas expansion was destined to bear the bitterest of fruit for her own no less than for many other peoples. Seen in the long perspective of time, it can hardly be disputed that her rule bestowed on the countries which she conquered

great and permanent advantages of orderly life and systematic government ; yet in the process she inflicted upon the human race an amount of misery and suffering which it is hard to forgive.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE EXTENSION OF THE EMPIRE: FIRST PHASE

#### I. POLICY IN WEST AND EAST

**T**HAT the fruit of the Republic's victory over Carthage would sooner or later be an extension of her overseas empire was, of course, a foregone conclusion. But this is not to say that a deliberate scheme of conquest was consciously present in her leaders' thoughts. On the contrary, it was perhaps almost as true of Rome as of Great Britain that she acquired her world-dominion in a fit of absence of mind. The traditional principle of her foreign policy was against interference in the affairs of other peoples, unless it were to support an ally or to punish the infringement of a pact.<sup>1</sup> Thus, technically at least, she was hardly ever the aggressor ; and in almost every instance the acquisition of fresh territory was the consequence rather than the deliberate purpose of her wars.

So it was now. Her victory over Carthage had left her supreme in the West. Had she chosen to exploit her opportunity, there was no single power at all capable of effective opposition ; and even the conquest of Gaul itself might well have been antedated by a hundred and fifty years. But of this there was no thought. It was enough for Rome's present purpose that having acquired a footing in Spain she should make that footing good. The Carthaginian maritime posts from New Carthage to Cadiz were already in her hands, and therewith was secured to her a coastal strip of no very considerable depth, but containing the valuable mines which

<sup>1</sup> The religious formulae which from time immemorial had been employed in the hallowing of Rome's treaties and other diplomatic procedure, prove conclusively that war was expected to meet with divine favour only if undertaken in a just cause against an unjust foe.



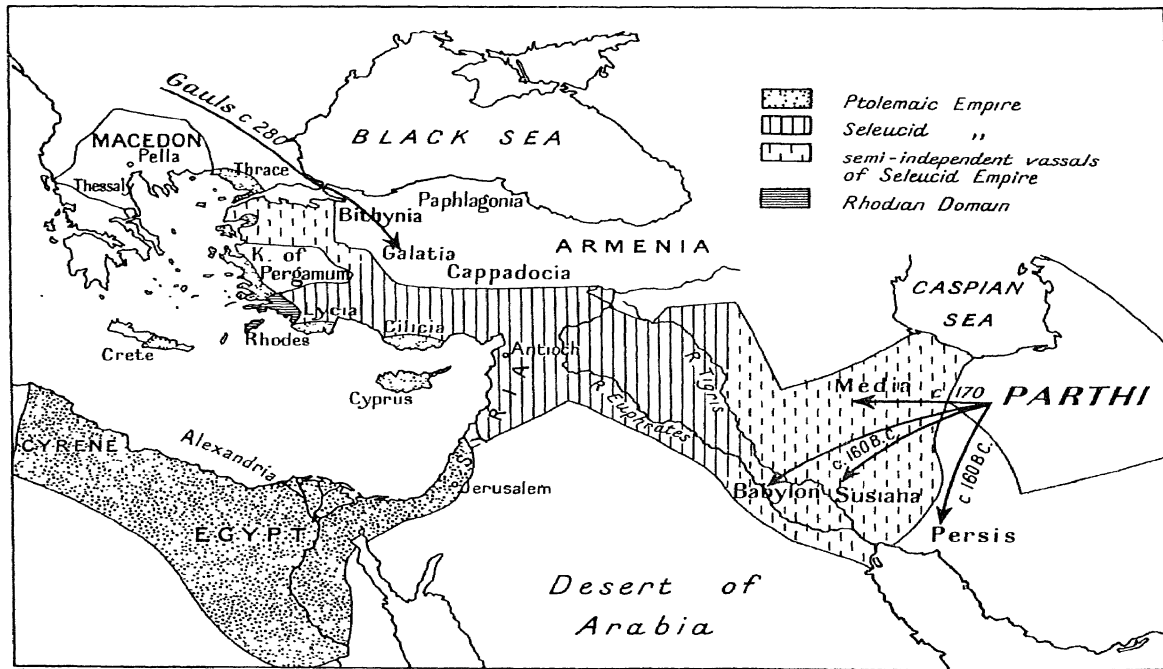
lay behind New Carthage. In the interior, indeed, were many powerful tribes which had never been subdued; and for the peaceful maintenance of Roman rule it was essential that sooner or later their resistance should be overcome. For the moment, however, the main task was to organize the coastal strip and its immediate hinterland. Its straggling length and the inadequacy of military communications made a division of administrative spheres desirable. So as early as 205 two separate governors were sent out; and in 197 the territory was definitely divided into two provinces—Hither Spain which centred on the Ebro basin and Further Spain which lay around the Straits of Gibraltar and the valley of the River Baetis or Guadalquivir. To govern these two additional praetors were created. A fixed annual tax,<sup>1</sup> to be collected by the natives themselves, was imposed upon their several communities; and enlistment for military service, which had hitherto been conducted on a voluntary system, was made compulsory. As a result, the tribesmen soon began to resent the rule of their new masters; and in 195 a general insurrection necessitated the dispatch of the consul Marcus Porcius Cato to cope with it. His energy restored partial order. His firm but austere just administration won considerable respect; and his shrewd exploitation of the silver mines opened up a fruitful source of revenue. His successor, Aemilius Paullus, continued his policy; and a good deal of fighting went on for some years. A standing garrison was maintained in the peninsula, enlisted on terms of lengthy service; but so unpopular with her own citizens was the dreary banishment which this involved that Rome with great injustice took, in the main, to employing the troops of her Italian confederates. Such service was no sinecure; for the natives remained restive; and the great tribes of the interior which lay outside the borders of Roman occupation, proved a constant source of trouble till towards the middle of the century, as we shall see, prolonged and arduous campaigns were undertaken to subdue them. Even so the extreme north-west long retained its freedom; and it

<sup>1</sup> This was probably paid part in metal from the mines, part in produce of the soil.

was not indeed until the reign of Augustus that the entire peninsula was permanently mastered.

The truth is that among the half-savage tribes of Western Europe there existed a spirit of fierce independence which sturdily resisted the constraints of alien government ; and it would have gone hard, indeed, with Rome, if in every land she conquered, she had met with folk so difficult to tame. Very different, however, was the reception that awaited her when she turned her attention towards the East. There, indeed, were monarchs of historic standing, highly civilized and to all seeming powerful. But the appearance of strength was deceptive. The peoples over whom the princes of Egypt, Syria and even Macedon ruled were for the most part of heterogeneous race, owning no heartfelt allegiance to their suzerain. Thus the native levies, though supplemented by mercenary contingents, were on the whole unreliable ; and with their defeat the resistance of such princes was apt to collapse like a card-castle. A victory here and a victory there, and entire provinces would fall into the victor's hands.

But though the East, as the ultimate sequel was to prove, afforded a comparatively easy prey, Rome had there as yet few interests—and, we may almost say, no footing—which might suggest a forward policy. When, some twenty years before, she had first crossed the Adriatic, she had gone solely to put down piracy ; and it was for the same reason that she had subsequently retained an isolated outpost on the Epirot shore. Again, when in 216 she had embarked on what is known as the First Macedonian War, she had done so simply because Philip was threatening to help Hannibal. In the course of the desultory campaign her own imminent peril at home had prevented her from doing much more than protect her Epirot outpost ; and though she bore Philip a grudge not readily to be forgotten, yet at the conclusion of her peace with him in 205 she had demanded no further territory. Nevertheless, the mere presence of her commanders on Greek soil had forged links by no means negligible. In their anxiety to stir up trouble for Philip they had made a temporary alliance with the Aetolian League. Pergamum,



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VII. EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN, ILLUSTRATING THE EMPIRES OF ALEXANDER'S SUCCESSORS

too, had joined the coalition and so had certain states of the Peloponnese. In some degree, therefore, Rome was already committed to a policy of championing the liberties of Greece against the encroachments of the King of Macedon; and when at the termination of the Punic War those liberties seemed once again threatened, it was bound to be a serious question what her attitude should be. To the war-weary populace, indeed, the prospect of a renewal of hostilities was utterly distasteful. They felt neither desire nor obligation to undertake a crusade on behalf of these petty Greek states. Such a view was not shared, however, by the most influential party at Rome. Scipio now stood at the height of his power. Members of his family filled in succession the more important offices. The Senate could not but listen with deference to his views; and there can be little doubt that for some years to come he and his friends directed the policy of the State. What is certain is that this policy was dictated by a new interest in the affairs of the East, bred partly perhaps from a genuine sympathy for the small and struggling peoples of Hellas, but still more from the vague mistrust of the great powers who now were menacing their liberties.

For it was not from Philip only that the danger threatened. Of the three main inheritors of Alexander's Empire—the Kings of Macedon, the Seleucids of Syria, and the Ptolemics of Egypt—none was more pacific or more scrupulous than the other. They had never worked in harmony together; and mutual jealousies kept them interminably plotting to increase their own dominions at the expense either of one another or of small independent neighbours. The game of intrigue was now still as active as ever; and precisely at the moment of which we are here speaking there had been hatched a cynical scheme for a fresh reshuffling of the cards. Amongst other issues it concerned, as we shall see, the fortunes of certain Greek states in which some Romans, whether wisely or unwisely, felt keenly interested. But before we can appreciate the full bearing of the situation, we must pause to examine more closely the history and grouping of these three successor powers.

## II. THE SUCCESSORS OF ALEXANDER

First, then, of Macedon. The homeland of Alexander and the chief source from which he had drawn the troops for his conquest of the East, it was still in these days a compact national state. But the drain of past wars had reduced its population; and its professional army, though trained to the famous phalanx tactics and once reputed irresistible, was no longer very considerable in numbers. Over the Greek peninsula its kings claimed the hegemony which Alexander had asserted, but which others had maintained with very varying success. Thessaly, though rebellious, acknowledged their rule; and the vigorous policy of Antigonus Doseon had secured him a footing in the Peloponnese. He had captured and held Corinth, the key position on the Isthmus, had overcome Sparta, now a small, but quarrelsome state, and had taken under his patronage the confederacy known as the Achæan League which included most of the remaining cities. Towards his successor Philip the Achæans had grown less and less friendly. But the real thorn in his side, as we have already hinted, was the rival League of Aetolia, formed of tribes lying north of the Corinthian Gulf, and in contrast to the decadence of their more civilized neighbours, still vigorous, warlike and predatory. Athens, once the leader of Greece, was now of little account. Though, like Sparta, independent in status, she had relinquished all military ambitions. Her energies were almost wholly devoted to the pursuit of philosophic inquiry and men from all quarters of the Mediterranean world congregated in her lecture halls. She had declined, in fact, into what we may call a University town. Thus there remained in Greece no single state still capable of rallying to a common resistance the ranks of these quarrelsome and factious leagues and cities. Even their trade had languished. The commercial prosperity which had once made Athens famous had passed elsewhere; and on the further side of the Aegean something of the old vitality was even now to be discovered in the Kingdom of Pergamum and the island-state of Rhodes.

Intellectual vigour had passed eastwards too; and even

the wisdom of Athens herself was now partially eclipsed by the new centre of learning which had grown up in Egypt. The Ptolemies were great patrons of art and literature; and thanks to their efforts Alexandria had become the most cultivated city in the world. Poets and scientists, professors and pupils of many nationalities continued there to foster with commendable zeal, but perhaps excessive pedantry, the intellectual tradition which they had inherited from Greece. Hand in hand with this culture went an immense prosperity. As a commercial link between the Mediterranean and the East, the realm of the Ptolemies had grown rich; and a strong mercenary army, supported from the resulting revenues, was at least adequate to control a submissive population and to hold a frontier which surrounding deserts rendered easily defensible. The maintenance of outlying dependencies, won by the naval activities of the early Ptolemies, was, however, a less simple proposition. These were widely scattered, including not merely Cyrene, Cyprus and the southern parts of Syria, but also a group of Aegean islands, together with a strip of the Ionian coast and a few towns in Cilicia and Lycia. These latter, in particular, were held on a loose rein, and what prey could have been more tempting or more calculated to awaken the rapacious instincts of Egypt's two rival powers?

Of these the Seleucid Dynasty remains now to be described. Theirs had once been by far the most extensive of the Successor Empires. For originally it had stretched from the shores of the Aegean to the plains of the Punjab. But it had proved too unwieldy to hold long together. Its remoter eastern dependencies had fallen away. Beyond the Euphrates had arisen the powerful native Kingdom of Parthia. Armenia, though part of the original Persian Empire, had never even been mastered; and thus the Oriental half of the Seleucid realm was now practically reduced to Northern Syria and its immediate neighbourhood. In Asia Minor equally much ground had been lost. Its northerly provinces, Bithynia, Cappadocia and Pontus, had almost ceased to acknowledge any tie of allegiance. About 280, moreover, a wandering horde of Gallic tribes had burst across from Thrace and

occupied the central region which after them was to be known henceforward as Galatia. The north-west of the peninsula, thus severed from its Syrian suzerain, had asserted its freedom under the leadership of Attalus of Pergamum (241-197) and became a compact and prosperous little kingdom celebrated alike for its commerce and its art. Meanwhile the vigorous island-state of Rhodes had annexed to itself a portion of the adjoining coast ; and thus little more than a strip along the southern littoral remained to the Seleucid Dynasty.

But in 223 there ascended to the Syrian throne a man who was little content with so humiliating a state of affairs. Antiochus the Great had wide ambitions ; but in particular he saw in the comparative weakness of Egypt a golden chance for recovering lost ground. Now in 204, the year after Philip of Macedon had made his peace with Rome, Ptolemy IV of Egypt died, and left as his heir an infant boy aged five. The moment for a *coup* had clearly come ; and with a cool effrontery which recalls the Machiavellian diplomacy of sixteenth-century Europe, Antiochus and Philip proceeded to enter on a secret compact to divide between them the Ptolemaic realm. Though the terms were never actually disclosed, they can be inferred with tolerable certainty. Cyprus, Southern Syria and (if he could get it) Egypt were to go to Antiochus. Philip for his part was to have Cyrene and Ptolemy's Aegean dependencies. But when in 202 he began to lay hands on the latter, he soon found that he had unwittingly stirred up a hornets' nest. Nervous for their own security, the two independent states of Pergamum and Rhodes had headed a coalition against him ; and after three years of desultory warfare by land and sea he was not very much nearer to the attainment of his goal.

In 201 Rome's peace was made with Carthage ; and in the summer of the next year a Roman embassy, headed by Marcus Lepidus, presented themselves for audience at the King's headquarters. Their demand was a categorical 'hands off the States of Hellas' ; and Philip must assuredly have known that this meant trouble. The best he could do for the moment was to laugh aside the issue by replying that

he could excuse so pert a message from an ambassador so young and so good-looking. Not thus, however, was Rome to be fobbed off (200).

### III. THE SECOND MACEDONIAN WAR

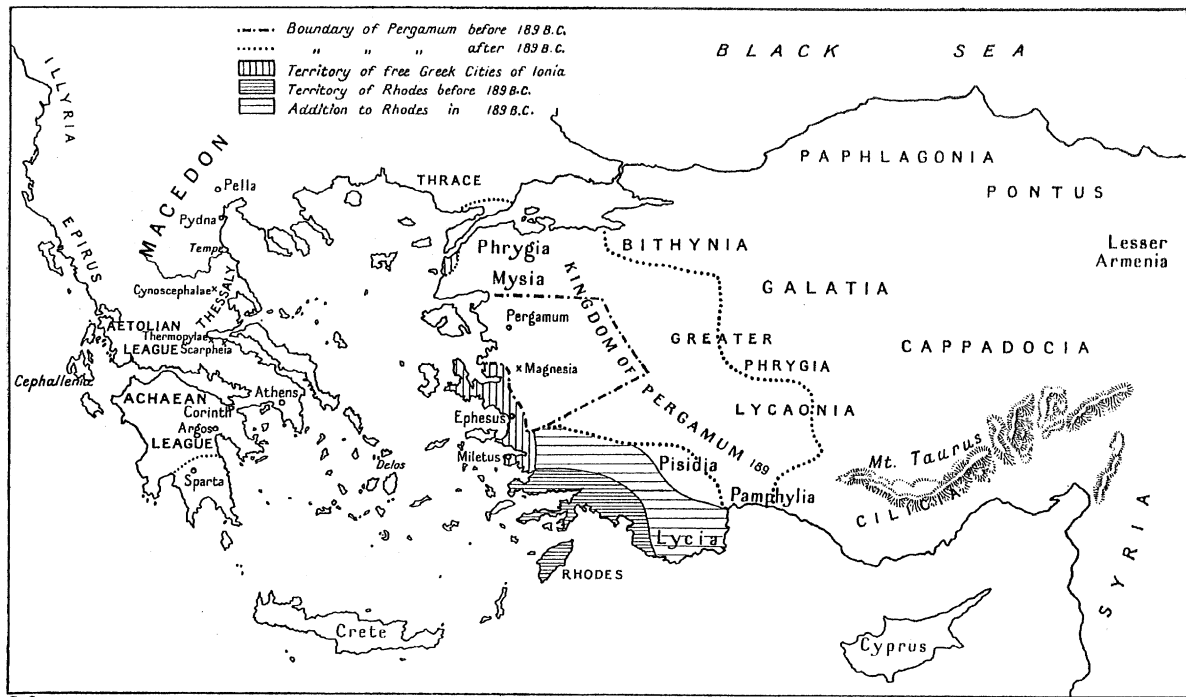
In the whole sordid business of these dynastic quarrels Rome, as is obvious, was not directly concerned. With Egypt, it is true, she had a long-standing treaty, renewed as recently as 210, and to an increasing degree she was coming to rely upon corn-supplies from the Nile. With some Greek states, too, as we have already seen, she had formed connexions, though not perhaps of a very binding sort. What, however, mattered infinitely more, was that since her victory over Hannibal her military prestige had risen very high. The eyes of the East were upon her; and as soon, therefore, as her hands were set free by the conclusion of her peace with Carthage, she was naturally regarded in the light of a possible champion by the victims of the aggression of the two great robber powers. Appeals, indeed, were now coming in thick and fast. Egypt had already appealed to her on the strength of the old treaty. Attalus of Pergamum appealed. Rhodes appealed. Finally, some say (though this is much more doubtful), that when Philip encouraged a neighbouring tribe of ruffians to invade Attica, Athens appealed too. At Rome these representations produced the desired effect; nor is it difficult to imagine with what flights of eloquence the trained diplomatists of Greece would dazzle the slow intelligence of a hesitating senate or what glib play they must have made of the perils attendant on a policy of neutrality. Of the details of the debate we are unhappily ignorant; but it is clear that the Scipionic party carried the day. So in the summer of 200 the die was cast. The war-weary comitia, indeed, was all for peace; and at their first meeting they actually rejected the motion out of hand. But the Senate would not accept their refusal; and finally, by what arguments we do not know, they were persuaded into a declaration of war.

The Second Macedonian War, as it is called, was fought with comparatively small Roman forces, assisted, as time



went on, by more and more Greek states. Athens, Rhodes and Pergamum were of course already allies ; but during the first winter they were joined by the Aetolians (who were intent on wresting Thessaly from Philip) and a year or two later by the Achaean League. Eventually even Nabis, the mercenary swashbuckler who now ruled the roost at Sparta, threw in his lot with them. At first the forces of the coalition made only moderate progress. But in 198 the enthusiasm of the Greeks was greatly stirred by the arrival of Titus Quinctius Flaminius, the consul for that year. Like Scipio, this young man was an ardent Philhellene, with a keen imaginative appreciation of Greek institutions ; and, as it proved, an over-sanguine belief in the political capacity of these now-decadent states. Previous to his arrival, the Romans, acting from Illyria as their base, had worked through to the Thessalian plain where they were joined by their Greek confederates ; but as the result of Flaminius's first year's campaigning Philip was beaten back from Thessaly on to the Vale of Tempe and made overtures for peace. The negotiations came to nothing and in the summer of 197 Flaminius brought the enemy to battle near Cynoscephalae, or the Dog's Heads Hills, some distance south of Tempe. For the first time since the war with Pyrrhus the Roman maniple formation encountered the Macedonian phalanx and this time beat it utterly. Though peace followed in due course, the settlement was difficult and could not be hurried. What, however, is most important to note, is that the Roman Senate, rather than the Allies in council, dictated the terms of that settlement. The Republic, in fact, was not merely undertaking the responsibility of redefining the frontiers of Greece, but, as the issues proved, was virtually committing herself to guaranteeing their permanence.

It was a thankless task. Nor did its difficulties in any way arise from the attitude of Philip. Being now at Rome's mercy he was compelled to pay a large indemnity and to disgorge all his possessions outside Macedon itself. The real trouble arose when the Senate's commissioners began to apportion the territory thus freed between the various members of the coalition. As among the states of the



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VIII. GREECE AND ASIA MINOR, ILLUSTRATING MACEDONIAN AND ANTIOCHAN WARS

Balkan peninsula when liberated at last from Turkish misrule, so then among the petty towns and confederacies of Greece there was endless back-biting, jealousy and greed. Towards their saviours, it is true, they were at the moment full of gratitude; and when in July 196 Flamininus appeared at the Isthmian Games to proclaim the Freedom of Hellas, they gushed over him with excitable fervour and went home to erect temples in his honour. But no sooner was his back turned than they began to dispute the justice of the territorial redistribution. It was not that Rome had taken anything for herself; but, as is usual in such settlements, she had failed to please all parties. Thus, instead of giving Thessaly to the Aetolians, she had there set up independent confederacies, modelled partly on the political machinery of the Achaean League, partly on her own institutions. Being baulked of their expectations the Aetolians were furious, and very soon, as we shall see, they began to look elsewhere for a champion. Nabis of Sparta was equally incensed because he had been compelled by force of arms to relinquish his hold on Argos (195 B.C.) The truth was that the Greeks were quite incapable of harmonious self-government. Flamininus, carried away by his enthusiasm for the intellectual pre-eminence of their past, and not a little flattered by their extravagant eulogies of himself, had mistaken these glib intriguers if not for a nation of Aristotles and Platos, at any rate for sagacious politicians. For the most part, in reality, they were men of straw, utterly lacking in stability of character, in a sense of common patriotism, or even, as will soon be shown, in the most elementary instincts of gratitude. The chance for revealing their true colours was not very long delayed.

#### IV. THE WAR WITH ANTIOCHUS

For, even before Rome had time to make her final exit from the Greek arena, there had already entered a new candidate for power. Antiochus of Syria, after trying a bout or two with the forces of Egypt, had seen a better way to the attainment of his ends, patching up the quarrel and eventually in 194 marrying his daughter to the boy-king

Ptolemy ; and meanwhile since the East now seemed unlikely to offer further scope for his aggrandisement, he had turned, jackal-like, to see what pickings were to be found in the West. The Seleucid Empire, it will be remembered, had originally extended over nearly the whole of Asia Minor. In view of recent events this seemed an excellent opportunity to recover some of it ; and what better to begin on than the Greek states of the Aegean sea-board which Philip had just attempted to filch away from Ptolemy, but had now been forced by the Roman intervention to disgorge ? To forestall possible objections, Antiochus astutely obtained from Ptolemy permission to lay claim to them ; and in 197, the very year when Flaminius was attempting to reorganize Hellenic independence, he had actually been engaged in the annexation of Greek towns in Asia Minor which by the Roman formula of liberation were now supposed to be free. More audacious still, in the following year, he crossed the Hellespont into Europe ; and on the plea that they had once belonged to his own ancestral realm, proceeded to lay hands upon certain parts of Thrace which Philip had recently vacated (June 196).

If Antiochus had rashly mistaken Rome's recent withdrawal from Greece as a sign of weakness, he was to suffer a rude awakening. His impudent encroachment was more than the Senate could tolerate ; and they ordered him to withdraw. But the Seleucid's ambitions were aroused. He had no intention of being browbeaten by Rome ; and presently there appeared at his side a councillor whose sole purpose it was to push him into war with her. For Hannibal, banished from Carthage in 195, and seeking a harbourage from the persecution of his foes, found it appropriately enough at this Oriental monarch's court. In exile he lost nothing of his hate for Rome, and as soon as he had won Antiochus's ear he bent all his powers of persuasion to induce him to strike first and to strike direct at Italy. A swift blow, he declared, would bring Carthage out in arms against her oppressor. Philip could certainly be won over ; and so, too, perhaps could Eumenes, who in 197 had succeeded Attalus on the throne of Pergamum. Thus the combined forces of the Mediterranean

world would be simultaneously launched in what should prove an overwhelming onslaught upon the common enemy. It was a grandiose scheme of strategy; but Antiochus, instead of adopting it, preferred a middle course.

At the moment a spirit of unrest was smouldering in Greece. Though the Romans had by now evacuated the peninsula, the peace they had imposed remained most unpopular. Nabis of Sparta made a move to recover some lost territory (193); and though he himself was presently murdered by Aetolian agents, he had set the flame alight. Meanwhile the Aetolians had already determined to go behind the back of their Roman allies and to call Antiochus in; and Antiochus, attracted by the prospect of forming a coalition of Greek states, responded. In 192 he hurried across with a wholly inadequate contingent and landed in Thessaly. Apart from the Aetolians very few Greeks actually joined him, and Philip himself hung jealously aloof. The Romans, having no choice, declared war (192). In the following spring the consul Glabrio took an army across and brought the King to bay in the famous Pass of Thermopylae. Cato, in command of a detachment of troops, took the circuitous mountain-path, by which nearly three centuries before Xerxes had turned the Greeks' position—and with the same result. Antiochus's army was completely defeated. He himself was lucky to escape with a mere remnant and make his way safely to Ephesus (191).

But now that Rome had set her hand to the work, she was in a mood to complete it. The suppression of so dangerous a rival in the East was clearly to her interest, and not content with expelling Antiochus from Greece, she determined to drive him out of Asia Minor too. One of the consuls for 190 was Lucius Scipio whose more celebrated brother, now known by the proud title of Africanus, was associated in his command; and together the two set out by land for Ionia. Meanwhile Antiochus's navy, defeated by the Roman and Rhodian contingents, lost the command of the Aegean and he soon offered terms. But nothing less than his complete evacuation of Asia Minor would satisfy the Scipios. So the war ran on; and later in the year the two armies met in

pitched battle at Magnesia. By now all the native levies of the Seleucid realm had for once been called into play, and it was a truly Oriental host that Antiochus commanded—camel corps, elephants, scythed chariots, phalanx and a horde of light-armed troops so numerous and unwieldy that the Romans could scarcely see the full extent of their deployment. Though their own forces were by no means considerable, they now had Eumenes and other allies with them; and breaking in upon the crowded mass of their opponents, they soon had it in indescribable confusion. It was, in short, a crowning victory. Hannibal, whose surrender was demanded, was forced to fly once more; and Antiochus bowed to his defeat. His enormous prestige had burst like a bubble before the tried legions of Rome. He accepted the Taurus Mountains as the future boundary of his domain, thus virtually abandoning all claim to Asia Minor; he surrendered his fleet and undertook to pay an indemnity of 15,000 talents (189).

It remained for Rome to settle Asia Minor as she had already settled Greece. Eumenes of Pergamum was, of course, the chief candidate for her favours; and with the object, it would seem, not merely of rewarding his recent services, but of establishing his kingdom as a sort of counterpoise against Antiochus, he was granted immense territorial gains in the interior, so that his kingdom not merely stretched from the Hellespont and the Bithynian border on the north to a point on the south coast where it included a portion of Pisidia and Pamphylia, but extended so far east as to abut on Cappadocia and the Taurus Mountains. To overawe the restless Galatian tribes of the interior a special campaign was undertaken by the new consul Volso which ended in making them vassals to the Pergamene throne (189). Of the small Greek cities of the Aegean sea-board, some were given their freedom, and others handed over to Rhodes. In Greece proper it remained to teach the Aetolians a lesson. Their League was attacked and overwhelmed, assigned the position of a subject ally, and forced to cede the little island of Cephallenia which had some value as a naval base in the southern Adriatic. With this solitary annexation as the

reward of all her trouble, Rome was content to withdraw her armies, and leave the Greeks, as best they might, to work out their own salvation (189).

In the very nature of things, however, it could not be long before her intervention would again be needed, and meanwhile the astonishing ease with which her victory had been won can hardly have failed to make a deep impression on the minds of many at Rome. The soldiers had seen how hollow was the reputed strength of the East. They had also seen its luxury and wealth. The Galatian campaign, in particular, had yielded enormous booty. Wagon-loads of gold and other loot had been brought home in the train of the army, so that the triumphal procession of the returning general was doubtless a first-rate recruiting advertisement; and the eyes of home-staying citizens must have opened wide to see what glittering prizes Oriental conquest had to offer.

On Roman mentality the effect of this sudden influx of wealth—not a little of which found its way into private pockets—was doubly disastrous. It encouraged a new fashion for extravagant expenditure; and it whetted men's appetite for more. A frantic craze for money-making set in; and not the least significant phenomenon of the period was the swift rise of a capitalist class, eager to exploit, whether at home or abroad, every opportunity for financial operations. Avarice and imperialism go often hand in hand; nevertheless, when we seek to lay our finger on the original motive of these easterly campaigns, begun as they were over issues in which Rome was not directly concerned and ended by settlements from which she claimed no territorial gain beyond an insignificant island, it would be ridiculous to set them down to mere rapacity. The truth was far more subtle and more complex. In the first place, the instinct of self-preservation played a large part. The Romans were still profoundly ignorant of the real state of affairs in the East; and swayed by the representations of those Hellenic states which Philip or Antiochus were threatening, they not unnaturally formed a vastly exaggerated notion of these two monarchs' military strength. Nor did the superficial know-

ledge of past history which some of them had recently acquired, do much to reassure them. Was it not possible that either Philip or Antiochus might prove to be a second Alexander? And if their aggrandizement was allowed to go unchecked, who could tell where it would end? What policy, then, could be more prudent than to take the bull by the horns? Rome must keep the two great powers at a distance, and taking advantage of the national resistance which their schemes were arousing in Greece, must constitute that country an independent buffer-state against further risk of encroachment. It was a bold, and, were it not that its premises were false, even a statesmanlike conception; nor is it difficult to see how strong an appeal it must have made to men of large ideas like Scipio and his fellows. For it was not a little flattering to their national pride that their country should become the arbiter of other people's fortunes and cut a fine figure among those whom all accounted the great ones of the earth. There is abundant indication, too, that among these leaders there was a lively satisfaction at intervening at the side of a people whose culture they so greatly admired. Flaminius most certainly felt a sentimental pride in re-establishing the 'liberty' of Greece: and we can hardly doubt that Scipio's whole policy was coloured by his interest in that country's past. . . . Yet, when all is said, the gratification of a few individuals' vanity was scarcely enough to justify the expenditure and effort which these wars had involved—least of all in the eyes of the average Roman. For the average Roman was little prone to take long views. He liked, above all, to see good value for his money; and it would therefore be surprising if under a constitutional system which gave free scope for expression of opinion and so for alternation of policy, a reaction had not ultimately set in. Flaminius and the Scipios were not the only leaders at Rome. In due course others came to the fore who held a very different view of foreign policy; and the spirit of international adventure was gradually to be replaced by a spirit of more narrow-minded and self-regarding nationalism.



## CHAPTER X

## THE EXTENSION OF THE EMPIRE: SECOND PHASE

## I. CATO AND THE REACTION AGAINST HELLENISM

**I**NTO lands where it penetrated Hellenism came often as an apple of discord, dividing men into opposing camps of supporters and antagonists. In Palestine, as we well know, it produced two factions, on the one hand the pro-Hellenist Sadducees, open-minded, sceptical and easy-going; and on the other the anti-Hellenist Pharisees, narrow, conservative and fanatical, zealots for the purity of their national creed. It was the same at Rome; for there too, while some ardent spirits welcomed the new enlightenment, the opposition of others was slowly gathering strength. Nor was such opposition without its justification. Not merely did the Hellenic culture run counter to much that was fundamental in the Roman social system; in many ways its fruits were even demonstrably bad. For, whatever might be said in praise of their intellectual heritage, the Greeks were now a decadent race, loose in their morals and superficial in their tastes. As it so happened, too, the type of Greek who most frequently reached Rome was not the best. The majority hailed from the Hellenized countries of the Levant where they had added to their own national shortcomings the voluptuous habits of the East. Nor must we forget that the cooks and comedians, financial clerks and dancing-girls who were procured by Roman nobles or brought home by Roman officers from their campaigns, were drawn almost entirely from the servile class; and they were not a very reputable collection.

The shock to the susceptibilities of strait-laced Romans can easily be imagined; and there naturally arose not merely a cry of protest, but a strong self-conscious effort to stem the rising tide of demoralization. To uphold the dignity of Roman life and manners became with some a regular crusade, and the leading figure in it was the well-known figure, Marcus Porcius Cato. It must not for one moment be imagined that this man was a mere boor. To a marked natural ability

he added a lifelong practice of intellectual study. As a pleader in the courts (and he was an inveterate litigant) he won considerable renown for the vigour of his rhetoric. He investigated Rome's antiquities, compiled a history and wrote a treatise on Farm-management and other topics. At an advanced age he even learned the Greek tongue. But the free thought and moral licence of the Hellenic movement frightened him. He saw with clear eyes the mischief which such influences would work upon the conventional fabric of Roman society; and he set himself heart and soul to combat the growth of what he was pleased to call 'the many-headed hydra'.

To be 'a hundred per cent. Roman' became, in fact, the avowed object of his life; and in his personal habits he pursued this ideal to the point of sheer absurdity. The pattern on which he strove to model himself was the soldier-agriculturist of the good old days. He drove the plough with his own hand, wore cheap clothes of coarse cloth, allowed no plaster or whitewash on the walls of his house, and observed the simplest diet. When on active service he drank nothing but water, and even as consul insisted on drinking the same wine as his slaves. In his official capacities he practised a like austerity. Economy of public funds was a downright obsession with him. As Governor of Sardinia in 198 he made his circuits on foot, attended only by a single officer. At the end of his Spanish campaign in 195 he left his war-charger behind him rather than burden the State with its transport. Most remarkable of all, however, was his conduct of the censorship to which he was elected in 184. Its wide, ill-defined powers of supervising public morality and in particular of investigating the personal record of senators, was developed under his hands into a formidable instrument of puritanical tyranny. The smallest deviation from the old-fashioned standards of decorum was rigorously punished; and one man was actually struck off the senatorial roll for having kissed his own wife in public. The old laws against extravagance, passed at the crisis of the Hannibalic war, were now revived. The contents of ladies' wardrobes and gentlemen's plate-chests were investigated, and taxed out of all proportion to their value. The selfishness of the rich was

sternly discouraged ; and those who drew on the city fountains to supply their private houses, were forced to demolish the pipes. Expenditure on public utilities, on the other hand, was not stinted ; and a large court of justice was built in the Forum and named after its author, the Basilica Porcia. Thus in opposition to the growing spirit of individualism, Cato strove to uphold the sound old Roman principle that private interest must be subordinate to the State.

Between this bitter antagonist of Hellenism and the rival party of its supporters a clash was sooner or later inevitable ; and even before his elevation to the censorship Cato had begun to organize an attack on those who had been most active in the recent Greek adventure. He arraigned Glabrio, the victor of Thermopylae, under whom he himself had served, for misappropriation of booty, and the commanders of the Galatian expedition for their encouragement of looting. Finally he had the courage to assail the Scipios themselves—Lucius was accused of having taken bribes from Antiochus and pocketed a part of the indemnity. The account-books were produced, and the case looked black against him, when with characteristic impetuosity his brother, the great Africanus, suddenly interrupted the trial and in full view of the astonished court tore up the incriminating documents. No act could have been more un-Roman ; and it seemed at least to lend colour to the suspicions with which in some quarters its author had long been regarded. So, though Lucius was condemned, the vendetta ran on, and Africanus himself was to be the next victim. The second day of his trial fell by a singular coincidence on the anniversary of his great victory at Zama. Turning to the assembled people he reminded them of the great debt the country owed him ; and leading them off forthwith to give thanks on the Capitol, he left the unfortunate tribune who had brought the charge to develop his arguments before an empty Forum. Nevertheless the tide had begun to turn against him. Public opinion viewed with concern the recent increase in the political influence of powerful personalities ; and wisely realizing his own unpopularity Scipio withdrew from public life. In 187 he retired to his house at Liternum where three years later

he died, complaining bitterly of his countrymen's ingratitude. Such an end was scarcely worthy of so remarkable a personality. He had saved Rome from her greatest peril, bringing to a victorious end the war which has been called 'the most important war in history'; but he was much more than a soldier of genius. He had that freedom from prejudice which is the sure mark of great minds; and, when the move was made to procure the banishment of Hannibal from Carthage, a rare generosity prompted him to speak out for his old adversary. His whole public career was a protest against the Senate's growing monopoly of power; and, though the protest was ultimately ineffective, the breadth and independence of his outlook place him in the van of that line of liberal statesmen which was presently to be continued by the Gracchi brothers and to find its climax in the life of Julius Caesar himself.

Their victory being thus won and the stage left clear, Cato and his party lost no time in bringing their influence to bear upon State policy. They stood, as we have said, for an uncompromising nationalism. As regards Italian affairs, they took a selfishly narrow view. 'Rome for the Romans' would seem to have been their motto; and it must have been due largely to them that the extension of the franchise to Italian towns was brought abruptly to an end. Their views about foreign policy followed not dissimilar lines. The enlargement of the Empire made no appeal to them. Rome's existing dependencies seemed more than sufficient; and they would have been well content to concentrate on the better organization and exploitation of these. That their attitude towards the provincials was not naturally illiberal, is shown by Cato's championship of the Spanish natives against the misconduct of their governor (see p. 183). But for the inhabitants of the Greek peninsula who were not Rome's subjects, and on whom they looked with the profoundest contempt, they acknowledged no responsibility. Entanglements in that quarter they regarded as highly impolitic, and the tremendous effort of the preceding decade as utterly unjustified by its results. It was indeed no part of the national character to give something for nothing.

The appeal which such views made to the crude instinct of self-interest must explain the success which attended the attack upon the Scipios' party; and though Cato and his friends were by no means in permanent control of affairs, they paved the way for a reaction against the recent phil-Hellenist policy which, as time went on, became more and more discredited. Yet the problem of Greece itself remained; and much as the Roman Government might dislike the trouble and expense of active intervention, they found it impossible to wipe their hands of all responsibility. The line of policy they actually adopted was at once astute and discreditable. The endeavour was made to play off one set of Greeks against another and to drive various states, so far as possible, into political isolation. Thus, while individual members of the Achaean League were encouraged to deal separately with Rome, the League itself was severely reprimanded for entertaining the friendly overtures of the King of Pergamum (185). Even in individual cities faction was fomented, and pro-Roman agitators, drawn mostly from the rich and aristocratic sections, were deliberately abetted. 'Divide and rule' became, in fact, a conscious weapon of diplomacy; but, though it kept Greece constantly upon the rack of turmoil and intrigue, such a policy could not for long postpone the uncomfortable necessity for renewed intervention. Again and again senatorial commissioners crossed over to Greece, now to settle a quarrel between Sparta and the Achaean League, now to order Philip of Macedon to refrain from extending his frontiers. But the situation, so far from improving grew steadily worse; and the time was to come when mere words, however imperious, could no longer suffice.

## II. THIRD MACEDONIAN WAR

So things ran on for a couple of decades after the close of the Antiochan War. Meanwhile old figures were disappearing from the stage, and new taking their place. Hannibal, after his flight from Syria, had wandered first to Crete and finally to the court of Prusias, King of Bithynia. Even there the long arm of Roman vengeance pursued him, and when

threatened with extradition, he committed suicide by taking poison—a miserable end to a career which stands out as almost unique in the military annals of antiquity, but a career in which talents of the highest order had been squandered on an enterprise of futile havoc and bloodshed (182). Before this, too, in 187 Hannibal's old protector, Antiochus, had died, and his throne was filled first by Seleucus IV, and then in 175 by an ambitious but unbalanced monarch of whom more will be heard presently—Antiochus Epiphanes. In 179 the throne of Macedon, too, passed into new hands. Philip's declining years were spent in reorganizing the resources of his kingdom and plotting to renew the war on Rome. Perseus, his son and successor, was sly and calculating as compared with the headstrong father, and possessed of more talent for organization and intrigue than real strength of character. Even before his accession he was notoriously anti-Roman; and when his elder brother, Demetrius, had returned from successful negotiations with the Senate, he had actually procured his execution on the strength of a forged letter. Once on the throne he laid his plans shrewdly for re-establishing the power of Macedon. He built up a formidable and well-disciplined army, kept his treasury well stocked and began to put out feelers to the surrounding states. Contrary to Rome's stipulations, some northern tribesmen were drawn into alliance. In the Greek cities the anti-Roman democrats were flattered by his encouragement of their nationalist aspirations, and there seemed to be a real danger of a hostile combination of Hellenic states. By degrees the situation grew tense. In 172 Eumenes, King of Pergamum, now, as always, the suspicious opponent of Macedonian pretensions, travelled to Rome to open the Senate's eyes to the impending danger. On the way home he was waylaid at Delphi. A boulder thrown from the hillside knocked him on the head and he was left for dead. It was at once believed that Perseus was at the bottom of this outrage; and, if tales were true, he had even planned to poison Roman envoys on their way to Greece. Late in 172 war was declared on Macedon.

For some reason or other the Senate would appear to have

minimized the seriousness of its task. The army sent over, though containing many veteran volunteers, was numerically inadequate. It may be, too, that recent experience had made the government shy of entrusting such overseas wars to men of real ability; for the men to whom the command was at first assigned seem to have lacked either military talent or political vision. When it was vital to conciliate the restive Greeks, they outraged public feeling by looting works of art. Their troops became demoralized and the campaign in Thessaly made little headway. Perseus held many good cards in his hands. The Epirots had joined him (171); and a little later the Rhodians, nettled by the interruption of their trade, and not a little nervous of falling victims to Roman aggression, took up an insolent attitude towards Rome. Had he, in fact, possessed an ounce of real audacity, Perseus might easily have done more than merely hold his own. As it was, however, when it came to action, this master of intrigue lacked nerve. Once in 169 when he had the enemy trapped in the hill-country near Tempe, he lost his head at the crucial moment and beat a hasty retreat on Pydna. The lost chance did not recur; for in the following year a man came out to command the Roman army who was by no means a nonentity.

Aemilius Paullus belonged to the circle of the Scipios, into whose family his own son was actually adopted. He was an ardent Hellenist, procuring for his children Greek tutors not merely of literature and rhetoric, but even of sculpture and painting. None the less he retained all the old-fashioned Roman qualities, and was a pious, high-principled and devoted servant of the common weal. At the front his authority soon made itself felt. He tightened up the lax discipline of the troops, and when in 168 he brought Perseus to battle near Pydna, he made short work of him. The engagement significantly disclosed the tactical weakness of the Macedonians' formation. Their solid phalanx at the first crashed through the more flexible Roman line, but its order being deranged by rapid movement over broken ground, the maniples rallied and fighting their way into the gaps won within an hour a complete victory. Perseus fled, but was

hunted down in the Aegean and taken prisoner to Rome where, clad in black, he marched in the train of Aemilius's triumphal procession.

His country was now at the conqueror's mercy ; but when faced with the problem of what to do with it, Rome hesitated, and shy of the responsibility of outright annexation, took an unsatisfactory middle course. Macedon was not to be governed or even taxed as a province. But, while left nominally free as an autonomous ally, it was to be rendered harmless by dismemberment. Accordingly it was split up into four separate states. As an obstacle to their reunion, intermarriage or transactions in property between the citizens of state and state was stringently prohibited. The monarchy, not unnaturally regarded as a source of danger, and traditionally obnoxious to Roman ways of thought, was to be suppressed outright ; and in its place republican constitutions were to be imposed. The work of drafting these was entrusted to Aemilius and ten commissioners. As befitted a phil-Hellene he undertook the task in an enlightened spirit and evolved an elaborate and very interesting constitution, under which elected magistrates of each of the four states were to be responsible to a standing council of representative delegates drawn from the several communities. He made a mistake, however—not uncommon to well-meaning politicians of the liberal type—when he thus sought to introduce, among a people politically backward, institutions which only a long habit of self-government would justify. The experiment brought no contentment, and within twenty years it was to have crashed to the ground.

The rest of Greece did not altogether escape the consequences of Rome's displeasure. After the capture of Perseus, the investigation of his private papers disclosed a network of plots in which many Greek democratic leaders were implicated. A thousand of these were accordingly deported to Rome to keep them out of mischief and to secure some sort of guarantee for their followers' good behaviour (165). The Rhodians also had been awkwardly compromised by their independent attitude ; and, lest a worse fate should befall them, they accepted the status of *subject-ally* to Rome.



This step (which gave her not merely the control of her allies' foreign policy, but the right to demand their assistance in her wars) marked an important stage in the development of Rome's imperialism; and hereafter in her relations with her foreign satellites, she tended more and more to replace the loose ties of temporary friendship by permanent treaties which imposed on them an obligation indistinguishable from vassaldom. Illyria, meanwhile, was brought under the direct control of the consuls and administered by them along with Cisalpine Gaul. The fact is that, however sincere her intentions of withdrawal, Rome was more deeply committed than ever to the control of the adjacent peninsula. The whole troublesome problem was, indeed, getting on her nerves. The old spirit of forbearance was dead; and it was a significant symptom of a hardening temper that even so genuine a phil-Hellene as Aemilius Paullus could resort to appalling barbarities of revenge. Before quitting Greek soil he fell on the Epirots who had assisted Perseus, destroyed seventy of their towns so effectively that they never really recovered, and sold a hundred thousand of the population into slavery (167). It is small wonder if a settlement attended by so much harshness brought with it no lasting peace. A strong anti-Roman feeling persisted throughout the entire peninsula.

### III. FINAL CONQUEST OF MACEDON AND GREECE

Two more decades passed in apparent tranquillity; but the tranquillity was only on the surface. In Macedon, as elsewhere, the richer classes, being favoured by Rome, and enjoying under the Aemilian Constitution a monopoly of political power, remained loyal to the settlement; but the populace, chafing under its political and other disabilities, were discontented and ripe for revolt. Then in 149 there appeared in the country an adventurer named Andriscus, giving himself out falsely to be the natural son of Perseus and a claimant for the throne. All the fierce spirit of a freedom-loving people flared up at his call. Thousands flocked to him. Neighbouring tribes from Thrace lent aid, and a Roman force was annihilated. But such success was

brief; and in 148 an army under Metellus defeated Andiscus. So the revolt was crushed; but it had been the last straw to Rome's patience. Macedon was now definitely reduced to the status of a province to be garrisoned by Roman troops and administered by a Roman governor (146).

Meanwhile almost simultaneously and with singular futility the Greek states of the Peloponnese had played into the conqueror's hands. For many years the agitations of the popular party had been crippled by the detention of their leaders at Rome. But on the suggestion of the historian Polybius, who was one of them, and thanks largely to the influence of his patrons the Scipios, the surviving exiles had recently been repatriated; and some of these, thinking to take advantage of Rome's preoccupation in Macedon, were foolish enough to resume their old pretensions to an independent policy. In 149 the Achaean League, as so frequently happened, had fallen foul of Sparta. A dispute had arisen about some local boundary; and Sparta, though now under compulsion a member of the League, and so technically subject, as her opponents argued, to the League's decisions, had thought fit to appeal to Rome over the League's head. To this Diaeus, one of the returned exiles and now the elected President of the League, took strong exception; and in the upshot the Achaeans proceeded to take the law into their own hands and attack Sparta. A stern message from Rome, announcing her intention to detach not merely Sparta but Corinth and Argos, too, from the membership of the League, merely provoked a fresh outburst of resentment, and thirty pro-Roman Spartans were arrested and thrown into jail. Finally, when senatorial legates appeared at Corinth, the League capital, there was a scandalous scene, the giddy mob losing its head and hissing them in the theatre. This was an insult which Rome was little likely to forgive; but, as though it were not enough, the League defiantly plunged into war against Sparta (147). Such behaviour could not be tolerated; and the Macedonian affair being now cleared up, Metellus marched south. At Scarpheia, in Locris, he met and defeated a Greek force which had crossed the isthmus to coerce some laggard

northerners ; but his term of office was up, and it was left to his successor Mummius to complete the campaign. Outside Corinth he scattered the weak forces of the League and after a brief siege entered the city. Mummius was a crude uncultured fellow, an upstart in politics, and without much knowledge of the world ; and even if Corinth's insolence had merited some chastisement, he badly overdid it. This rich and famous city with centuries of proud history behind it, once the foremost mart of the Aegean and the meeting-place of East and West, was treated by the Roman boor as though she had been some nest of common pirates. Her entire population was sold into slavery. Her splendid buildings were burnt to the ground, and the matchless treasures of Hellenic art, of which her private houses and public squares were full, were sent off in shiploads to Italy. So little, indeed, did Mummius appreciate the unique quality of these masterpieces that he stipulated with the contractors—it was a common formula—that should any be damaged or destroyed in transit, they were to be replaced by others of *similar value* ! (146)

With the sack of Corinth all semblance of Greek liberty vanished. The Achaean League was broken up ; the several states were isolated from one another by various restrictions ; and, though a century was to elapse before the country was to be constituted a regular province, it was kept under the close surveillance of the Macedonian Governor. The more favoured cities, Athens and Sparta, were declared 'free states', immune from all burdens and subject to Rome in foreign policy alone. The rest were not even allowed to choose their own form of government, for constitutions of an aristocratic type, calculated to promote the Roman interest, were now imposed upon them. As a special mark of degradation the territory of Corinth and one or two others suffered confiscation. Such a settlement was not unjustified ; but to a race which for many hundreds of years had enjoyed the opportunities and the excitements of a free political life, it was a cruel blow ; and though Polybius strove hard to reconcile his countrymen to their fate, the salt had gone out of their life. Except for Athens, which remained the

home of philosophers and the favourite resort of young Roman students, a blight settled on the country ; and this people, once so vehemently alive with wit and energy, sank into a dull inertia of impoverishment and despair.

#### IV. THE FALL OF CARTHAGE

That such would be the ultimate outcome of Rome's dealings with Greece, any clear-sighted prophet might have foretold ; and the Senate's inability to make up its mind was indirectly responsible for much needless misery and bloodshed. Even Cato, who felt, as we know, small sentiment for Greek freedom, was curiously unwilling to face the plain logic of the situation. After the fall of Perseus he had advocated withdrawal, thinking it impracticable for Rome to rule Macedon. Then, when there arose the question of repatriating the Greek democrats, he is said to have remarked with cynical indifference that it made little odds whether a party of old fogies were buried by Italian undertakers or by Greek. Such evasions of responsibility were, of course, inexcusable ; and Cato himself did not live to see their tragic and inevitable issue. But, before he died he had prepared the way for a brutal stroke of policy far more tragic and utterly without excuse—the destruction of Carthage.

Since her defeat at Zama and despite the humiliating terms which were then imposed upon her, Carthage, as we have said, had recovered much of her old prosperity ; and her recovery would have been even more rapid had it not been for Rome's jealous and often demonstrably unfair application of those terms. The chief thorn in her side—as Rome fully intended that it should be—was the growing power of the Numidian chief Massinissa, who, by the encouragement of settled habits among his restless tribesfolk and by the introduction of more civilized settlers from Greece and Italy, had steadily built up the foundations of a promising industrial and commercial enterprise. His main ambition, naturally, was to increase his realm at the expense of Carthage, and before long he had laid claim to a fertile strip of coast-land—now the modern Tripoli—which had formerly been a posses-

sion of the Numidian Kings. By the terms of her treaty Carthage was forbidden to make armed resistance; but seeing that the same treaty also guaranteed her against further loss of territory, she seemed to have a strong case when the dispute was submitted to the Senate's decision. Nevertheless the award was given against her; and Massinissa gained the coveted land.

Encouraged by this success, the Numidian continued his policy of encroachment and in 153 the Senate was forced to send out commissioners to inquire into the rights and wrongs of the case. Cato, who was one of them, was profoundly impressed by what he saw at Carthage—fleets of merchantmen, crowded docks, sumptuous living and every evidence of a renewed prosperity; and he returned home convinced that so rapid a recovery was a genuine menace to Rome. It was probably, however, more on economic than on military considerations that Cato's policy was based. From Plutarch we have a story how he produced in the Senate a bunch of huge Libyan figs and bluntly intimated to his audience that the country which had grown them was but three days' sail away. The argument went home; for whether or no (as some assert) the prosperity of the Carthaginian plantations was already threatening competition to the Italian agriculturist, there can be no question that the annexation of those plantations would open a rich field of exploitation to the Italian capitalist. A new spirit of avarice was abroad in Rome, bred of the recent and extraordinarily rapid increase of personal wealth, and (in this case at any rate) ready to prompt a war of naked spoliation; and Cato was voicing this spirit no less than the national craving for a complete revenge when he demanded that Carthage should be struck down in cold blood. Henceforward, whatever the subject of debate before the Senate, he made it a practice to wind up his speech with the celebrated slogan, 'In my opinion Carthage must be destroyed'. Opposition, indeed, was raised by Scipio Nasica, Africanus's son-in-law, and by other members of the aristocratic party, who apparently believed that the removal of all rivals from her path would spell decadence for Rome. But it was Cato's voice

that triumphed; and although in 149 death removed him from the scene before the final blow was struck, the unhappy city's fate was as good as settled.

Events within Carthage herself precipitated the crisis. Since Hannibal's banishment the oligarchical clique had resumed their old ascendancy, and being at no time very whole-hearted in their hostility to Rome, they had latterly been willing to swallow almost any humiliation rather than risk the perils and financial sacrifices of an open breach. But the patriot party was by no means extinct; and under the dual affront of Numidian aggression and Roman injustice, they began to raise their heads. They first insisted on the expulsion of Massinissa's supporters from the city; then when in 151 he threw down the gage of war, they accepted it in flat defiance of their Roman suzerain. Though their forces were badly beaten, and their oligarchical opponents, resuming power, made due apology, such evidence of repentance came too late. Under one clause of the treaty of 201, Carthage, as we have said, was forbidden even to defend herself by force of arms; and by the violation of that clause she had given the war-party at Rome precisely what they wanted—a *casus belli*. In the selfsame year as the Macedonian rising the two consuls set out for the African coast (149).

The expedition had got no further than Sicily, when the Carthaginian Government made up their minds to abject surrender. Hostages were sent, and were accepted; and when finally the Romans appeared before their walls, they delivered over all war material which the public arsenals contained—200,000 sets of weapons and 2,000 catapults. But as yet nothing whatever had been said about Rome's terms; and by a piece of sharp practice which it is impossible to condone, it was not until Carthage lay thus disarmed and helpless, that the sentence was actually pronounced. A very terrible sentence it was. The city itself was to be utterly destroyed; and the inhabitants, 700,000 in number, were to make what shift they could to rebuild their homes elsewhere, *provided that the chosen site should be over ten miles from the coast*. To a commercial population, dependent for

its livelihood on the proximity of the sea, submission to such terms pointed only to one end. It meant slow extermination.

But the last act of the tragedy was yet to be played out—What Semites, when driven to extremities, can do, the resistance of Tyre to Alexander and of Jerusalem to Titus has borne historic witness; and the people of Carthage were now to show themselves true to the spirit of their race. They had still their walls; and behind the shelter of these they prepared defiance. For a month the Romans dallied expecting the opposition to collapse; and during that month the Carthaginian garrison was somehow re-equipped, all hands labouring feverishly at the work of manufacture, the men forging weapons and moulding bullets from every scrap of metal that the town would yield, the women even plaiting their long hair into strings for the improvised catapults. Meanwhile the craven authors of the surrender had been put to death; and patriot commanders had taken their place. One Hasdrubal, by birth a Numidian, commanded the garrison. Another, known as Hasdrubal the Fat, collected an army which, operating in the open, managed to get supplies into the town. A third, Himilco, succeeded in winning over some Numidians to the Carthaginian side. The result was that when the siege was begun in earnest, it made but little headway. Situated on the spur of an isthmus, the fortified area could be approached by land from one side only; and the Roman commanders whose energy was chiefly expended on the reduction of outlying townships, failed even to establish a complete blockade. Their successors in 148 scarcely advanced affairs much further; and the single individual who made any reputation for himself was a young military tribune named Scipio Aemilianus. The son of Aemilius Paullus, the conqueror of Perseus, and the adopted heir of the great Africanus, he inherited alike the tastes and talents so closely associated with those two famous names. In the field his leadership had already saved the day in more than one critical engagement; and as a diplomatist he had been instrumental, on Massinissa's death, in apportioning the royal power of Numidia between his three jealous sons. It

was little surprising, therefore, that by the end of the year the impatient Roman public was clamouring for his appointment to the African command; and, young though he was—for he was barely thirty<sup>1</sup>—Scipio was elected consul for 147.

Under his energetic leadership the siege at last moved forward. His attempt to capture the suburb named Magalia or Megara failed; but the erection of a line of earthworks across the isthmus enabled him to cut off the city from revictualment by land. It remained to complete the blockade by sea; and in order to prevent the coming and going of enemy vessels he determined to block the harbour-mouth. So for months the Romans laboured on the construction of a gigantic mole nearly a hundred feet in breadth—only to find on its completion that the Carthaginians had secretly cut a fresh exit from an inner harbour and so enabled a newly built fleet of vessels to slip out as before. These were soon defeated, however, by the blockading squadron, and all external sources of supply being thus cut off, distress became acute within the city. Yet, enfeebled as they were by starvation and disease, the garrison fought with the courage of despair when the final assault came. The outer defences being carried and Magalia entered, they retreated foot by foot upon the citadel or Byrsa, barricading the narrow streets, and holding house after house until the storming parties breached the walls and drove them back. The end came in a fearful scene of conflagration; and as the ancient city went up in flames, it is said that Scipio wept. What the fire spared, was later, on the orders of the senatorial commission, laid level with the ground. By the settlement thereafter imposed, Carthaginian territory was made into a province. Much of the land was confiscated as *ager publicus*, and by its sale or lease to Roman companies not merely were the expenses of the war partially made good, but an immense source of wealth was opened to the growing class of capitalist exploiters. Utica and six other cities which had taken the Roman side were allowed to remain autonomous. Numidia, too, was to rank as a free allied state.

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<sup>1</sup> On the irregularity of his appointment, see p. 206.



Macedon, Greece, Carthage, all conquered in these few short years—it is an astonishing record of activity. But, though each of the three conquests was in its way important, it was perhaps the overthrow of Carthage that mattered most. For it meant that Rome was left without a possible rival on the water and stood forth as undisputed mistress of the Mediterranean world. From Gibraltar to the Bosphorus her authority was absolute. The Greek states of Asia Minor were more or less under her thumb; and the decaying monarchies of the Hellenized Levant found themselves completely overshadowed. Since her victory over Antiochus, it is true, Rome had made no further advance in this quarter; but she had by no means neglected to keep an eye on the East and by upholding the integrity of Egypt against Syrian aggression she had even contrived to bring that country still more closely under her own protectorate. The threat to Egypt had come from the new Seleucid monarch, Antiochus Epiphanes, who ascended the Syrian throne in 175. Temperamental and ill-balanced, if not downright mad, this extraordinary man conceived an exaggerated passion for Hellenic culture, keeping a pretentious court, building with liberal prodigality and currying favour with the old Greek states of the Aegean basin. Egypt was, of course, his traditional rival; and to maintain his claim to Palestine and the adjacent country, he had gone to war with the reigning Ptolemy, defeated him and marched on Alexandria. At this point, however, he was approached by a Roman envoy, Popilius by name, with peremptory orders to withdraw; and the tale is told how, when Epiphanes demurred, the Roman took his staff and tracing a circle in the sand round the astonished King, forbade him to step out of it till he had given his reply. Nonplussed by such firm handling, Epiphanes gave in and evacuated Egypt forthwith (168).

By this diplomatic victory Rome assumed at a stroke the virtual hegemony of the East. Henceforward she had her finger in almost every pie. Thus, when Epiphanes, in a fit of Hellenism run mad, attempted to coerce the Jews into adopting the worship of Olympian Zeus, it was to Rome that the Maccabean leaders of the national revolt appealed; and

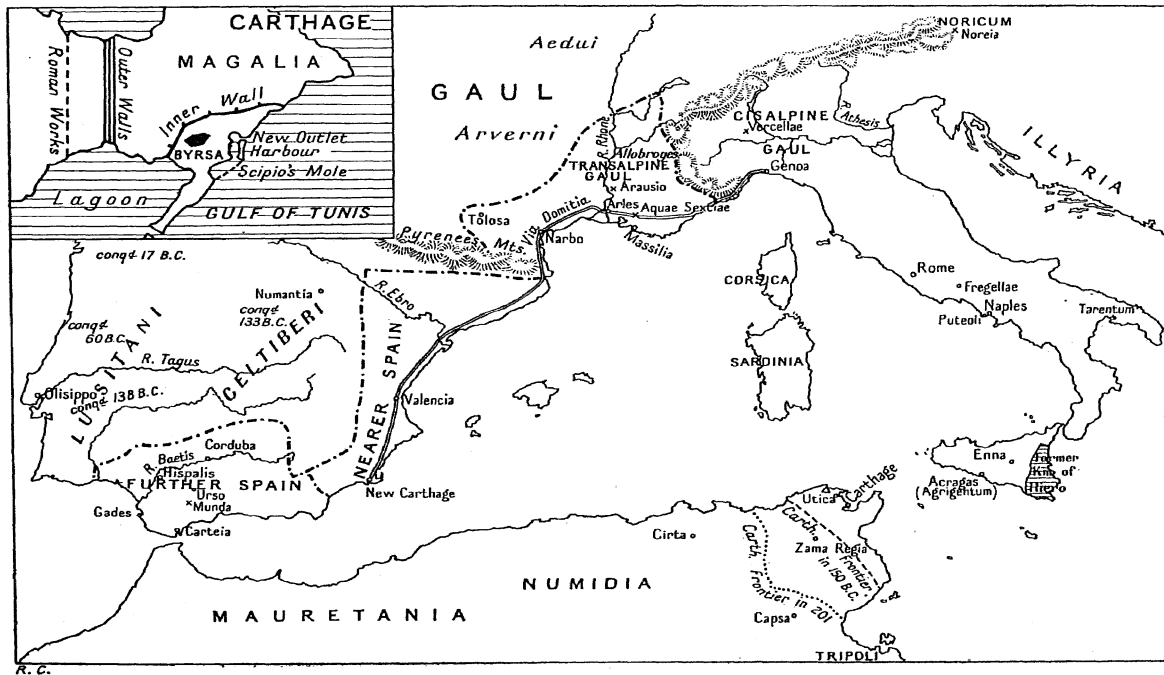
she gave them moral, though not military, support. Then again, when the succession to the Egyptian or the Syrian throne was in dispute, the Senate frequently lent the backing of their official recognition to this or that claimant; and though they refrained from active intervention, diplomacy was usually sufficient to achieve their ends. Meanwhile the rising strength of Parthia and Armenia weakened still further the dwindling prestige of Syria; and when Rome once again should go forward to the conquest of the East, it was no longer in the successors of the Seleucid realm that she would find her most serious adversary.

## CHAPTER XI

### PROBLEMS OF THE EMPIRE: ITALY AND ROME

**T**HE series of victorious campaigns which filled the middle years of the second century B.C. were followed by a period of comparative tranquillity as regards external affairs; but before we pass on to deal with the coming crises of internal politics due partly to the over-rapid growth of the Empire and partly to the economic condition of Italy itself, this seems no bad moment to take stock of the problems which both the Empire and Italy presented.

It will be best to begin, however, by saying something in detail about one or two individual provinces. Taken in the chronological order of their acquisition, the countries now under the direct rule of Roman governors were as follows:—Sicily (acquired at the end of the First Punic War), Corsica and Sardinia (acquired in the interval before the second), Spain (soon after its conclusion), Macedon (in 147), Carthage (in 146); to which were presently to be added the province known as Asia in 133 and part of Transalpine Gaul in 122. Of these Spain, Asia and Transalpine Gaul seem to call for some special mention, not least because in them both the virtues and the vices of Roman rule were very significantly displayed.



IX. MAP ILLUSTRATING SPANISH, GALLIC AND PUNIC WARS OF SECOND CENTURY B.C.

## I. SPAIN, ASIA, TRANSALPINE GAUL

It would be a grave mistake to suppose that Roman provincial administration was invariably and uniformly bad. For had such been the case, the Empire could never have risen to be the great and enduring institution which it ultimately became. It is true, of course, that many governors were mainly intent on feathering their own nests, and that grave scandals of official misconduct were only too common. Nevertheless it must also be remembered that scandals are apt to bulk larger in history than the record of dull duties faithfully performed, and that even the acceptance of occasional bribes or the use of undue severity did not necessarily prevent a man from carrying out his ordinary routine in a conscientious manner. Occasionally, too, in the history of Roman rule we may meet with governors who were something more than conscientious and who were capable of approaching the problems of their province with a broad-minded sympathy rare enough in the history of imperial administration until comparatively recent times. Such a man was Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus, the father of the two celebrated reformers, who in 179 was sent out to Hither Spain. A friend of the Scipios, he shared their enlightened outlook; and although he was compelled to inaugurate his rule by crushing a serious revolt of the Celtiberian tribesmen, it was his subsequent measures of pacification which won him a real title to fame.<sup>1</sup> He revised the treaties with the native communities, placed the system of land-tenure on a more equitable basis, and by founding several towns in the interior, endeavoured to stimulate an interest in the arts of peace. To keep the wilder spirits out of mischief he encouraged enlistment in the auxiliary regiments attached to the Roman garrison, and even got some of the chiefs to undertake posts of command. As a result of such sound policy, Spain enjoyed a period of tranquillity for nearly a generation after him; and even at Rome a more liberal attitude would seem to have prevailed. In 171 the first

<sup>1</sup> Yet this same man is said to have boasted that during his rule of Sardinia he had killed or captured 80,000 natives!

'Latin' colony to be founded outside Italy was established at Carteia near Gibraltar and specially designed to meet the needs of the numerous half-breeds who were the offspring of intermarriage between Roman legionaries and native women. In the same year claims for redress against official extortion were brought by the Spaniards in the civil court at Rome, and received the backing of some leading senators. The culprits went into exile to escape heavy damages; but though new regulations were promulgated, their successors continued their malpractices and feeling became more and more embittered until shortly before the middle of the century a twofold revolt flared up among the two great tribes of the interior, still virtually independent and acknowledging only in the loosest fashion the suzerainty of Rome—the Lusitani who inhabited what is the modern Portugal, and the Celtiberians of the Central Plateau.

The Lusitanian revolt was the first to break out and the first to be crushed. It began in 154 when a band of warriors broke across the frontier of the Roman province on a free-booting expedition. Other tribes were soon drawn in; and for some years the war ran a chequered course until in 150 the praetor Galba succeeded in defeating the rebels and forcing them into surrender. His triumph was marred, however, by one of those acts of black treachery which only too often in the course of these wars dishonoured the good name of Rome. For no sooner were the Lusitanians at his mercy than Galba went back on his promises, and falling on in cold blood, either massacred or enslaved many thousands of their helpless warriors. Even at Rome this ugly incident was strongly criticized; and Cato, then an old man well on in the eighties, came forward to prosecute its author. But at the trial Galba posed as an injured innocent, and by parading his family in dire distress, so worked upon the feelings of the court that he obtained his acquittal. Meanwhile his treatment of the Lusitanians was to cost Rome dear. Among the survivors of the massacre was a young man named Viriathus, who from a mere shepherd had risen, like David of old, to command a band of braves. Under his leadership guerrilla warfare was maintained for

eight years more. In 148 the Roman governor was defeated and killed. In 141 a consul, sent out to end the campaign, was cut off among the mountains and forced to grant the rebels very favourable terms. But these, though ratified by the Senate, proved worthless. For Caepio, the next governor, disowned them, and renewing the war, pressed the enemy hard. Negotiations were begun, and while they were in progress, he bribed some Lusitanian traitors to murder Viriathus in his sleep. Characteristically enough, he never paid the promised bribes (140).

With the loss of their leader the resistance of the rebels weakened fast, until in 138 the consul D. Junius Brutus, operating from the Atlantic where he organized a fleet, succeeded in wearing them down. By various measures of pacification—the transference of many mountaineers to lowland districts, the settlement of the leading guerrillas in a new Latin colony at Valentia and the fortification of Osilippo (Lisbon) on the Tagus—he established Further Spain in something like permanent security. As for the Lusitanians, however, they remained for another century and more outside the effective organization of the Roman rule.

Meanwhile in the adjoining province there had been an even more protracted struggle against the Celtiberians of the Central Plateau, and there, too, the examples of Roman bad faith had been not a whit less disgraceful. The outbreak itself was originally due to the Senate's denial of the natives' right to fortify their towns, a right which they claimed to have received under the Gracchan settlement; and on many subsequent occasions concessions granted by one general were cancelled by the next. Though most of the rebel country was very soon reduced, such methods could bring no permanent peace, and a desultory war ran on until in 143 the news of Viriathus's success across the border encouraged the Celtiberians to a fiercer effort. Henceforward the struggle centred round their stronghold of Numantia which for eight whole years defied all efforts at capture. In 137 the consul Mancinus was cut off with 20,000 men, and complete disaster was only averted by the intervention of Tiberius Gracchus, son of the former governor who had

been so popular, and soon himself to be the leader of reform at Rome. He happened at this juncture to be serving as Mancinus's quaestor, and his very name so won the Spaniards' confidence that he was able to procure the release of the captured army upon terms. These—needless to say—the Senate refused to ratify; and though, as a sop to their conscience, they gave orders for Mancinus to be stripped, bound and handed over as a prisoner to the enemy, this very inadequate compensation was not in fact accepted. By 135 things had come to such a pass that Scipio Aemilianus, the conqueror of Carthage, was, contrary to rule, elected to a second consulship and sent to the Spanish front (134). The army which he found there was utterly demoralized, the camp overcrowded with civilian hangers-on. When he had at length restored a proper discipline, he proceeded to the investment of Numantia, surrounding it with a double ring-wall five miles in length and thereby starving the unhappy garrison until after horrible scenes of cannibalism they were driven in 133 to make complete surrender.

Spain's resistance was ended; and it would have been ended much sooner had the Romans only known how to behave like gentlemen. It was a serious symptom of the growing deterioration in their character that faith was so frequently and so callously broken. Even after the war was over, the bad tradition of extortionate and brutal government persisted, leading in the next century to the serious insurrection under Sertorius; and it was only after the passing of senatorial rule that any serious effort was made to study the interest of the subject race. Nevertheless, in the long run the good influences of Roman administration triumphed. The natives settled down to peaceful habits. Agriculture thrived. Mining and other industries were developed; and the civilizing effects of town-life hastened the complete Romanization of the province. By the time of Augustus the Latin tongue was widely spoken; and under its cultural influence the peninsula was later to produce such well-known writers as Seneca the philosopher and Lucan and Martial the poets. Ultimately, too, the privilege of municipal self-government was widely granted, crowning a pros-

perity which was perhaps unique among the provinces. In short, once Roman rule was accepted, the natural vigour of the Spanish stock was enabled to develop along lines which without such discipline would have been impossible.

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It was in no doubtful sense a tribute to the advantages of Roman administration that in the very year of Numantia's surrender the Senate was presented, in a different quarter, with the gratuitous addition of a brand-new province. In 133 died Attalus, King of Pergamum, the next successor but one to our old friend Eumenes. He left no heir behind him; and in his will he bequeathed the bulk of his very extensive dominions to the Roman People. It may well be that with the object-lesson of Macedon and Greece before him, he had come to realize that sooner or later the countries of Asia Minor, too, were bound to fall under the direct control of the Imperial State, to which indeed he was himself already a vassal. Yet he would not seem merely to have been taking the line of least resistance; for the fact that he excepted from the general bequest of his domain the Greek cities which were capable of governing themselves, seems to point to a sane political outlook; and it would not be surprising if Attalus genuinely believed that the more backward of his subjects would benefit under the rule of Rome. If such were his hope, it was to be sadly falsified. The bequest was, of course, accepted; and the pretensions of Attalus's half-brother Aristonicus were swept aside and his resistance crushed. The vast treasure of the dead King was transported to Rome, and the consul for 128, Aquileius by name, proceeded to dictate the settlement of the new province. Under the influence of bribes from neighbouring princes, he was induced to concede the more outlying portions of Pergamene territory—Phrygia to Mithridates of Pontus and Lycaonia to the Cappadocian King. What remained became the Roman province of 'Asia'. The responsibilities for its government were taken lightly. Piracy, which the Pergamene and Rho-



dian fleets had long suppressed,<sup>1</sup> was allowed to break out afresh; and kidnaping for the slave-market became the scourge of the Aegean coasts. Meanwhile the opportunities of wealth to be sucked out of the province were unscrupulously exploited by the politicians at Rome. In order to win for his own schemes of Italian reform the support of the great financial magnates of the capital, Caius Gracchus, as we shall see, made over to them the privilege of farming the taxation of Asia. Scandalous abuses were the result and under the twofold extortion of corrupt governors and avaricious collectors, the unfortunate inhabitants suffered more perhaps than any other of the subjects of Rome.

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Even if it be to anticipate chronology somewhat, it will be well to mention here one further extension of the provincial system—Transalpine Gaul. For, though it was not effected until 122 B.C., this acquisition served to round off the Empire of this period, to the limits of which no further addition was made until the great wars of conquest undertaken by the famous generals of the succeeding century.

The story of the formation of this Transalpine province is an interesting indication of a new trend in Roman policy, traceable to the growing influence of a powerful capitalist class. Towards mercantile interests generally, as we have frequently noted, the governing clique of landowners had shown a not unnatural indifference; and in very marked contrast to the rival policy of Carthage, Rome had made no attempt whatever to impede or challenge the trade of other peoples. Here, for instance, in Southern Gaul was the Greek colony of Massilia, for hundreds of years a thriving port and the gateway for the produce of the Celtic hinterland; and nothing would seem more natural than that the Romans should have been jealous of so prosperous a neighbour. Yet on the contrary they had always treated

<sup>1</sup> Rome's policy was definitely to curtail the power of Rhodes, and by encouraging the activities of the rival port of Delos, which she placed under Athenian control, did much to damage Rhodian prosperity.

Massilia in the most friendly fashion, recognizing her sphere of influence as extending from the Rhône valley as far as Genoa, and even restricting the vine-culture of adjacent tribesmen in the interest of her vintners. On at least one occasion too (151 B.C.) Roman troops had assisted her against the raids of her less civilized neighbours; and from 125 onwards another campaign was undertaken in her aid, this time against the Allobroges and the Arverni, two powerful Gallic tribes. It was of course successful; and in the upshot the Massiliots, to whom security of trade meant everything and territorial issues very little, agreed that Rome should annex a strip of country skirting along the coast-line to the east of them and passing round their rear (122). The main object of this annexation was undoubtedly to provide passage for a military high-road connecting North Italy with Spain, and along this route the *Via Domitia* was subsequently built. But ideas of another order were also in the air. It was about this time that Caius Gracchus, hoping to relieve the economic distresses of his countrymen by an expansion of their trade, had initiated a scheme for settling Roman citizens at advantageous commercial sites both within and outside Italy; and in 118, though Gracchus himself was dead, a colony of this sort was planted at Narbo, some distance to the west of Massilia. Its foundation was inaugurated by a commission under Licinius Crassus, a prominent figure of the Roman financial world; and besides its natural function as a strategic outpost, the settlement undoubtedly served as a useful trading-centre in competition with Marseilles. The new province which came thus to be known as Gallia Narbonensis, and which, thanks to ancient associations, still retains the title of Provence, was fairly extensive, its frontier marching north-east along the Rhône-bank as far as Geneva and reaching westwards beyond Tolosa or Toulouse. On the north-west it was flanked by the friendly tribe of Aedui, which out of jealousy of its neighbours had joined the Roman alliance in the course of the past wars, and which for the same reason was destined to serve the Romans as a useful 'cat's paw' in the course of future ones. For it was from Narbonensis, still bounded

by the frontier just described, that Caesar sixty years later set forth to the conquest of the rest of Gaul.

For the time being, then, Rome's advance in East and West was ended. There had been much that was ugly in her treatment of her subjects; but there was also much gain. The tribal feuds and border raids which had been the age-long habit of the primitive west were now prohibited; and even in the Greek peninsula, that cockpit of interminable wars, the Pax Romana reigned. The taxation imposed was not on the whole excessive—in Macedon it was but one-half of what had previously been levied by the native kings—and of this, we must remember, only the surplus went to Rome, the main part being devoted to ends of which the provincials themselves reaped the chief benefit. For it paid, first, for the upkeep of the garrison which guarded the frontier and enforced the peace, and second, for the maintenance of the governor and his staff whose presence made in the long run for a higher standard of administrative efficiency. For to western countries at any rate, the Romans, whatever their blunders, had much to give, bringing with them those orderly habits of life and government which were their peculiar gift, improving communications, building bridges, roads and harbours, opening up new opportunities for industry and commerce, and last but not least, introducing methods of administration and justice based on a wide experience of the custom of many nations and destined to mould and influence the institutions of Western Europe for all future time.

## II. METHODS OF PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION

Though in the practical sphere the Romans were peculiarly adaptable, their mental processes were sluggish. They clung instinctively to the formulæ of the past; and if confronted with new political problems, they preferred, rather than invent a new machinery, to make shift by re-adapting the old. So, when provincial governors were first needed, they began, as we have seen, by electing additional praetors; then after the middle of the second century B.C. when the accumulation of judicial business required the presence

of these at the capital, they took to sending out ex-consuls or ex-praetors, after their year of office at home was over, to spend another year in administering a province. Such governors did not, of course, go single-handed; and to each was assigned a considerable retinue of assistants—a quaestor or financial secretary (who, since the office represented the lowest rung in the political ladder, was nearly always a young and untried man): a small military staff: some civilian *legati* or attachés: and a fair number of clerks. When he reached his province, a governor's powers, as we have seen, were extremely autocratic—far more autocratic, indeed, than the powers of the home magistrates had come to be. He had no prying Senate at his elbow, no colleague to interfere, no tribune to veto his measures; so that during his year of office, whatever might be said or done at the end of it, he had the provincials almost entirely at his mercy; for, not being Roman citizens, they possessed even in matters of life and death no appeal against his decisions.

Nor, when we come to consider it, was such arbitrary power unnatural in an office which in the first instance at any rate (like the consulship before it), was primarily of a *military* character. For chief among the governor's functions were the command of the garrison troops, the protection of the frontier, and the preservation of internal order. This would in itself seem to be a sufficiently heavy responsibility. Yet the proper ordering of a province would necessarily involve much else besides; and with a staff of men generally new to the province (even if not new to their job), and with nothing whatever corresponding to what we should nowadays call a permanent civil service, it was a manifest impossibility for a governor, however energetic, to control every detail of local organization. This the Romans clearly recognized—and in the original charter or constitution of each province we invariably find that the senatorial commissioners who framed its terms endeavoured to utilize, so far as possible, the administrative machinery which they found existing there already. Thus, while prohibiting alliances or federal leagues whose strength might prove a menace to security and peace, they left individual communities as

active political units to continue their functions as before. Such political units, though termed indiscriminately 'civitates' or states, would of course differ widely in character, ranging from the tribal communities of more backward western countries to the highly developed urban communities of the Hellenized east; and the character of each unit went far to determine what functions might safely be left in its charge. Thus in Spain, where the assessment and collection of taxes would have been extremely difficult, the tribes were left to find in their own way the total which was annually demanded. To enforce some uniformity of justice, on the other hand it was necessary for the governor travelling on circuit to supervise the decisions of the local courts. Then again, where the practice of self-government was already well understood, as in the Hellenic city states of Sicily or Asia,<sup>1</sup> these were normally left free to manage their own affairs and administer their own laws and finance, subject only to the governor's right to scrutinize and, if need were, even to overrule. Sometimes such cities were placed in a specially privileged position, which left them immune from the galling burden of taxation, though liable to supply contingents in time of war; and their relation to the suzerain being regulated by special treaty, they were known as 'civitates foederatae' or treaty-states. A very few, termed 'free states', were allowed an unrestricted autonomy, except of course in the field of foreign policy. Privileged states of either class were technically outside the governor's jurisdiction. It remains, however, an undoubted fact that the general tendency of Roman policy was rather to degrade than to elevate the status of allied communities of whatever class; and, in the case of the less privileged at least, it would seem that the terms of their charter were often loosely drawn and in the absence of any authoritative check it was possible for the governor to reinterpret or even violate those terms at will, so that the limitation which the

<sup>1</sup> In these and other provinces which had once been ruled by kings, the Roman governor was really occupying the position of the old native monarchs such as Hiero of Syracuse, Attalus of Pergamum, or the Kings of Macedon.

charter placed upon his powers was not in practice a very serious one.

But, be that as it may, it is clear that by this system the burden of the governor's administrative duties was enormously eased. After a fashion, indeed, his province might be counted on to run itself, leaving him free to interfere as much or as little as he pleased. Normally the Roman preferred to avoid giving himself unnecessary trouble; and the attitude of Gallio in the New Testament was typical, refusing to be bothered with squabbles which seemed to him unimportant or with charges which he did not fully understand. Much of Rome's reputation for tolerance was founded upon the inertia or indifference of her representatives. It would have been well for the provinces if the average governor had been equally indifferent to opportunities of another sort—opportunities which most unhappily were thrown but too often in his way. From the moment when he first set foot within his province, he was besieged by deputations and appeals. From all sides came requests for special favours and indulgences; and there was always a *quid pro quo*. Presents were showered upon him, and bribes freely offered by individuals or communities anxious to interrupt the course of justice, to avoid the billeting of garrison troops, or to escape the expenses of entertaining his fastidious staff. In a materialistic and money-grabbing age, when the race for wealth was eager, such temptations were difficult to refuse, the more so since the provincial governor was not of necessity a wealthy man. For one thing a political career was in itself a costly business. Electioneering expenses were heavy; and the tenure of office, so far from bringing in money, would often mean a further outlay—an aedile, for example, being expected to spend lavishly out of his private purse on the provision of public entertainments. The result was that a man was often badly out of pocket by the time he gained his province; and even there, it must be remembered that though given a certain allowance for equipment he was paid no salary. It is therefore not surprising that a bad tradition grew up. A term of governorship came to be regarded as a legitimate

opportunity for recoupment ; and the acceptance of bribes was by no means the worst form of malpractice. Black-mail was a not uncommon method. In requisitioning supplies for the garrison troops it was easy to order delivery at some inconvenient centre and then in lieu thereof demand a handsome *douceur*. Some governors made no pretence at concealing their extortions, and a curio-hunter like Verres did not even draw the line at open theft.

It must not be supposed, however, that the authorities at Rome were wholly blind to the scandal. Already in the first half of the second century the civil action brought by the Spanish provincials had set men thinking ; and by the Lex Calpurnia passed in 149 B.C. a serious effort was made to deal with the problem. Instead of leaving cases of provincial extortion to be dealt with by the unwieldy comitia, one of the praetor's courts was set on a special footing and devoted exclusively to the investigation of such charges. 'Quaestio perpetua de pecuniis repetundis' or 'standing commission of inquiry for the recovery of moneys' was the title given it ; and its procedure, too, was something of a novelty. For the Jury who sat in this court were appointed to act as the Assembly's representatives ; and though the case was tried under the praetor's chairmanship, the actual verdict was to be theirs not his, and was decided by a majority of their votes. This change, which as other praetorian courts were in due course specialized, was adopted also in them, would appear at first sight to have been an excellent institution ; but experience proved that Roman jurors were sadly venal ; and, despite the most stringent laws against it, bribery became the curse of the whole judicial system.

As far, too, as the interests of the provincials were concerned, the new court proved disappointing. In the first place, action could not be taken until the expiration of the governor's term ; and by then he might well have done damage for which no restitution of money could adequately compensate. Then again, there were all sorts of obstacles in the provincials' path. Witnesses were slow to come forward, knowing that evidence given against one governor

was likely to arouse the displeasure of the next. The journey to Rome was tedious, the stay there expensive, and the proceedings often intolerably prolonged. In the actual court, too, the dice were loaded against them. It was difficult to get a lawyer of repute to take up their brief; and, above all, the composition of the jury was most inimical to their success. For the jury in this court were Senators, in all probability therefore ex-governors themselves, but in any case little likely to vote against a member of their own class. Even when Caius Gracchus took this privilege from the senators and gave it to his friends the financial magnates, the provincials' case was little bettered. As far as the Asiatics at least were concerned, the change simply meant that they were out of the frying-pan of pro-consular extortion into the fire of the tax-collectors' greed. For the governor, knowing that in the event of a prosecution being brought against him the financiers would have the decision of his fate, was naturally shy of interfering with the irregularities of their agents. So either way the provincials suffered; and though the composition of the jury underwent some subsequent changes, it remained difficult for them to secure a conviction.

The Romans must have their due of credit. To have set up such machinery for the protection of their own subjects was a most praiseworthy achievement; and no other nation in antiquity would have been so scrupulous. But the truth was that under the existing system of provincial administration there was no real hope of improvement; and, though at Rome a few earnest politicians were distressed at its abuses, there was lacking the width of vision to suggest thoroughgoing reform. Even the individual governor was powerless to effect much, for his tenure of office was short, and whatever he did, his successor might promptly undo again. Lack of continuity was, in fact, the most serious defect of the whole system; and for this the Senate itself was largely to blame. They were too pre-occupied with other issues to exert an authoritative control, too suspicious of what an ambitious governor might do to allow him wider scope. In rare instances, it is true,



his allotted term might be extended from one year to two or even three. But when at length Julius Caesar was permitted to spend a whole decade in Gaul, the Senate's worst fears were realized, and he came home with an army more loyal to him than to them—to prove himself their master. With the end of the senatorial supremacy, however, disappeared the chief obstacles to provincial reform. The Emperors could afford to take a wide view and to trust their subordinates. Longer terms of governorship became common. Men were selected for their proved efficiency. They were even paid a salary; and as time went on, a regular service of imperial agents was gradually built up.

### III. ITALY AND ROME

One very good reason why under the Republic the provinces were to receive less attention than they deserved, was that a far more urgent problem lay at Rome's very door—it concerned the economic condition of Italy herself. At the close of the Second Punic War, as we have seen above, the tendency had been for land to pass into the hands of a comparatively small number of extremely wealthy owners; nor was the effect upon agriculture as a whole to be considered inimical to progress. Large estates can be run more economically and more scientifically than small holdings; and in the South especially the process of recovery from the widespread depredations of Hannibal's troops was unquestionably hastened by the change. Corn-growing, as we have said, was largely left to the remaining yeomen of the central Apennines or to the new settlers of the Po Valley; and the arable plain-lands adjacent to the capital were for the most part turned to other uses—more especially to the culture of the olive and the vine. Methods were becoming more scientific, and books on the subject were coming into existence. Cato's *Treatise on Farming* advocated intensive cultivation with the aid of crop-rotation and the use of manure. Another treatise by Mago, a Carthaginian, had been translated into Latin and helped to popularize the system which had proved highly successful on the great plantations of Libya. In both books the

employment of servile labour was treated as a factor essential to success; and it was this new development which so seriously imperilled the stability of national life. In the upland ranches of the South large gangs of slaves were kept as herdsmen, housed, as a rule, in filthy barracks, and treated with indescribable brutality; and the effect was to produce a peculiarly savage and dangerous type of slave, much given to brigandage and capable at worst, as we shall later see, of organized revolt. Even the lowland farms of the centre were now mainly worked by slave-gangs, managed by slave bailiffs in the interest of the absentee landlord. As a result, the free peasantry and yeoman farmers—once the backbone of the country and the reservoir of Rome's military strength—were slowly driven off the soil. They tended to crowd into the towns, and above all into the capital; and thus to the problem of a depopulated country-side was added the complementary and much more serious problem of an over-crowded metropolis, for the needs of which the output of home-grown corn had long since proved quite inadequate.

The city at this period contained inhabitants numbering perhaps not much short of half a million all told, and under normal circumstances such a population could only be supported by either industry or trade. Yet at Rome neither industry nor trade were being seriously developed; and, as a result, a large section of the proletariat can never have been secure of regular employment, but must have lived from hand to mouth, always on the border-line of hunger and more and more dependent, as time advanced, on the corn-dole supplied to it by friendly demagogues. There was of course a very large number of petty handicraftsmen and shopkeepers—cobblers, bakers, metal-workers, greengrocers and the rest—who made some sort of livelihood by supplying the needs of their neighbours. Unfortunately, however, the number was not nearly so large as it might have been, simply because their richer neighbours did not choose to utilize their services. For among the leading families there still lingered an old tradition—a survival from the epoch of an agricultural society—that a household should be self-

contained and self-supporting, and instead of employing their poorer fellow-citizens, these rich folk preferred to rely on the unpaid labour of their own domestic slaves. So strong, in fact, was this tradition that there had grown up a sort of aristocratic contempt for all huckstering and handicraft. Even the wealthy capitalists, though not strictly of noble blood, were sensitive to it; and so long as they could make large profits by banking, money-lending, financing contracts for public works and so forth, they scorned to enter what to them appeared the disreputable field of industrial enterprise. It was only among the Graeco-Italian inhabitants of Campania, where ore transported from Elba was worked up into implements and utensils, that anything like manufacture on a large scale was even attempted. And what was true of industry was largely true also of trade. The Roman capitalists with money to invest did not choose to trade themselves, though they might lend to those who did. Since Rome, too, had little or nothing to export, there was no inducement to skippers to bring their vessels to a port where a return cargo would be lacking. So, in point of fact, Ostia was scarcely used by merchantmen; and, like St. Paul on his famous last journey, consignments for the capital were landed further south and brought up overland. For once again it was the Greek inhabitants of Southern Italy, with their ports at Puteoli and elsewhere, who were the real merchant-carriers of Italy. On their ships were exported such commodities as the country could furnish—more particularly wool, Campanian manufactured implements, wine, and to a small extent olive-oil. Indirectly, of course, such trade brought money to the pockets of the capitalists and landowners of the metropolis. But the commercial interest proper was as yet so little represented in Roman politics that the government, as we have said, took no pains to assist and protect it. In their treaties with other states, though they insisted on an open door for Italian merchant shipping, they claimed for it no preferential treatment nor sought to interfere with its competitors.

In spite of all this, Rome was not a poor city. On the contrary, during the first sixty or seventy years of the second

century she had grown immensely rich ; and if we ask whence her riches came, the answer is that this came from the plunder of her provinces. Such plunder, it is true, took different forms and reached Rome through many different channels. To begin with public channels, there was the surplus which remained of tithes or tribute when the needs of the provincial governor or garrison had first been satisfied. Part of this came to Rome in the shape of corn to be sold or in later times given gratis to the needy populace. Next, there were the revenues from mines or rents from the *ager publicus* in Carthage or elsewhere. Last but not least, there were the huge indemnities which had been paid by defeated enemies, and perhaps equally important, the vast quantities of loot brought home from victorious campaigns. When in 167 Aemilius Paullus conquered Perseus of Macedon, the amount of treasure he brought home with him was such that for over a hundred years to come no war-tax upon property had to be levied within Italy itself. Thus, apart from customs levied at the ports, a 5 per cent. tax on the manumission of slaves, the rents of Italian *ager publicus* and the fines imposed by the courts, the Roman Exchequer was entirely dependent on what came from subject peoples.

But this is only one-half of the story. For by various means individuals, too, made enormous sums out of the provinces. Governors and their staffs came home with pockets full. Tax farmers made handsome profits on their contracts. Usurers and financiers lent money to the victims of either extortion and charged interest at exorbitant rates.<sup>1</sup> So in this way or that wealth flowed into Rome ; but instead of being turned to sound economic uses which would have given employment to the urban proletariat, it was frittered away with foolish extravagance on commodities bought from abroad. For with the influx of new wealth had come new ways of spending it. Contact with the East had bred a taste for luxuries undreamt of by the sober Roman of the good old days. High living became the fashion ; and by the beginning of the next century ostentatious expenditure had run to extraordinary lengths. Plutarch gives an amazing

<sup>1</sup> Forty-eight per cent. is said to have been charged by Brutus.

picture of the style kept by Lucullus, the prince of epicures—opulent mansions in town and country, galleries full of Greek works of art, terraced gardens with comfortable nooks for sun or shade, sea-water reservoirs to supply fish for the table, costly sideboards studded with jewels and loaded with precious plate, banquets at which even the normal fare for a small party of friends cost £2,000 an evening. The preparation of food became a science. Plutocrats vied with one another in the ingenuity of their menus; and gourmets plumed themselves on the proficiency of their chefs. Not least, indeed, among the luxuries which the new wealth brought to Rome were the slaves who ministered to the wants of the nobility. The slave population of the city at the middle of the first century was almost certainly in the neighbourhood of a quarter of a million. A wealthy man's establishment might well run into hundreds; and these included not merely menial servants for domestic offices, but secretaries, clerks, tutors and copyists whose Greek education fitted them for functions beyond the powers of the dull-witted Italian. For the vast majority of slaves came to Rome from Hellenistic countries. The wars of conquest had flooded the slave-market; and when these ceased, professional kidnappers maintained the supply. The island of Delos was the principal centre of the traffic; and on one occasion, we are told, as many as 10,000 slaves were sold there in a single day.

So in this way, as in many others, the Mediterranean World ministered to the increasingly luxurious tastes of the great metropolis. Indeed, the real reason why the wealth of the provinces was not rapidly exhausted by the depredations of Roman governors and collectors, was simply that the wealth thus wrung from them went back in due course to purchase commodities which the provinces alone could supply, and so became once more available material for fresh depredations. Viewed from an economic standpoint, Rome was, in short, a parasitic capital, producing very little that other countries wanted and preying upon them to supply the necessities of a needy and half-idle proletariat or the whims of a wasteful aristocracy.

## IV. ROME. PUBLIC AND PRIVATE BUILDINGS

It is not to be imagined that Rome at this epoch was the only important city in the world. Large urban populations and elaborate town-planning were a feature of the age; and if some stranger, familiar with the great Hellenistic centres, had paid a visit to the Italian capital, it is improbable that he would have been greatly impressed. It is true that under the influence of the new enthusiasm for Greek culture a more dignified and sober style of architecture was now to supersede the garish tile-covered buildings of the old Etruscan style. The great difficulty, however, under which Roman architects laboured, was the complete absence of a handsome stone or marble in the neighbourhood of the city. The stone most commonly used for public buildings was the local *tufa*, a soft drab-coloured volcanic formation which for the sake both of appearance and of durability was normally overlaid with a coating of white stucco. This was probably the material, and the Greek style undoubtedly the model, of such temples as were built in Rome during the third and second centuries. Of these, however, there is no call to speak, for they have not survived<sup>1</sup>; and in the Forum itself, which is our principal concern, all the temples then existing seem to have dated from the epoch of the Early Republic, since which time its valuable space had not unnaturally been devoted to secular uses. Already as early as 338 B.C. the shops of the butchers and greengrocers had been removed to make room for the growing businesses of bankers and money-lenders. Then in the course of the Hannibalic War a great fire had made a clean sweep of much of the northern side, and thus cleared the way for the erection of several useful public buildings during the next half-century. The need for these was urgent; for with the growing complexity of judicial business the discomfort and inconvenience of transacting it in the open air had become serious. So first Cato in his censorship of 184, then Aemilius and Fulvius, his successors in 179, and finally

<sup>1</sup> Their general appearance may be inferred from the extant remains of second-century temples at Pompeii.

the elder Gracchus in 170, had commissioned contractors to set up public halls or Basilicas.<sup>1</sup> As their very name implies, the model for these buildings was taken from the Hellenistic architecture with which during the campaigns of this epoch the Romans had become increasingly familiar. Their pillared porticoes or colonnades which must have opened on the Forum, would provide convenient shade or shelter for those who met to converse or transact business; so that, apart from their primary function as Halls of Justice, these Basilicas came to form the focus of an increasing financial activity; and even the political assembly, held now in the Forum proper outside the old comitium, must have gained both comfort and dignity from the close proximity of their stately façades.

The Forum, in short, was no unworthy centre of the city's public life; outside it, however, there were still comparatively few monuments of note until the censors Aemilius and Fulvius undertook their ambitious programme in 179 B.C. They added a fish-market, not far from the Forum, a theatre (most probably of wood), an emporium flanked with colonnades and adjoining the River Tiber, where incidentally they built a line of quays and planted the foundations of the first stone bridge. Their systematic planning of this riverside area—a conscious imitation, it would seem, of Greek originals—must have stood in strong contrast to the haphazard irregularity with which the Forum had grown up, and still more to the chaotic medley of narrow roads and alleys which rambled through the inhabited portions of the town. The houses of the nobility, grouped on the higher and more salubrious ground, were doubtless at this epoch beginning to attain some elegance of plan and decoration, which included the use of coloured mosaic for the floors, and walls painted in imitation of elaborate marbling. But such elegance was confined to the interior. For the Roman house, like the Greek, faced inwards, the rooms being grouped around a central courtyard, which, except

<sup>1</sup> To these three Basilicas, known as the Porcia, Aemilia and Sempronia, was added in 121 a fourth which was called the Opimia (see plan).

for an open skylight, was conveniently roofed in. The external frontage presented a dead blank wall, varied only by occasional recesses which served as stalls for petty traders; and since unbaked brick was the ordinary material, the general appearance of the Roman streets can hardly have been other than monotonous and mean.

The quarters of the poor in the low-lying districts were unhealthy in the extreme, and as the population grew, became intolerably congested. Originally the Romans were accustomed to confine their houses to a single floor; but by now the habit of adding upper stories was being forced upon them by the exigencies of space. Such additions were made of timber; so that fires were very common, and in the first century Crassus with lively ingenuity grew rich by the simple process of buying up houses cheap when a conflagration threatened and then fighting down the flames with his private fire brigade. Capitalists like him developed even further the unfortunate precedent of the many-storied house; and vast tenements arose known as *insulae* or islands, large blocks, that is, surrounded by a street on every side, and containing scores of tiny chambers in which the poorer classes huddled for meals or sleep like rabbits in a warren.

The contrast between the condition of the upper and lower classes must, indeed, have been an outstanding feature of Roman social life. Yet, like most aristocracies, the small governing clique were complacently indifferent. They simply regarded the poor slum-dweller of the Subura or the Caelian as an unpleasant sort of animal, disgusting to contemplate but useful on occasion and comparatively harmless so long as he was fed. Even to philosophers, with all their lofty sentiments, it never occurred to be sorry for his miseries; and as for fearing him—the apparent strength of the existing order seemed to preclude all serious danger of open revolution. Yet the danger was not wholly unreal.



## PART II

### CHAPTER XII

#### THE CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUE

THE Roman Government was on its trial, faced by the manifold problems described in the last chapter, but totally incapable, as the issue was to prove, of solving them. The story of its test and of its failure is the story of that long and sternly disputed struggle which was to begin with the tribunate of Tiberius Gracchus in 133 B.C. and only to end with the victory of Julius Caesar at Pharsalia just eighty-five years later. The real marvel is that the obsolete machinery of the Republican Constitution withstood the strain so long. Originally framed to meet the modest requirements of what was then no more than an insignificant city-state, it was demonstrably unfit to meet the complex responsibilities of a large and growing Empire. Yet so skilful were the adjustments to each fresh set of circumstances, effected by the exercise of a rare political tact; so well cemented by the conventional courtesies of public life was the solidarity of the governing class itself; so deeply rooted, above all, was the national loyalty to the venerable institutions of the Republican régime, that somehow the fabric held together; and even amid the shocks of repeated internal crises Rome never once lost control over her imperial possessions. Such an achievement says more perhaps for the character of the men who worked under the constitution than for the constitution itself. Nevertheless the constitutional situation was one of extraordinary interest; and if we are to follow intelligently the events of these eighty-five years, we must now turn to study its various elements in closer detail.

## I. THE SENATORIAL ASCENDANCY

The Constitution of Rome was not a written or formal constitution. Like the British, it had been built up for the most part on the foundation of usages and precedents, for which, though tacitly accepted by all parties in the State, there was no positive sanction in law. The principal and inevitable result of such elasticity had been, as we saw above, a gradual accumulation of power in the hands of the Senate. For, whereas the popular assembly met only at rare intervals and (excepting the censors) no magistrate held office for more than a single year, the Senate was a permanent, unchanging body; its sessions were frequent and its members were nominated for life. By the very character of its composition, too, it contained most of the best brains of the community. For, when vacancies occurred, the censors filled them up with men who had already held office, and as a rule high office, in the State. For reasons which shall later be discussed, such office went almost exclusively to members of a narrow ring of aristocratic families; and it will be readily understood that between men who were bound together by ties of blood, intermarriage and social intercourse, there had grown up a strong sense of mutual loyalty or *esprit de corps* which forbade the pushing of political disagreement to the point of violent extremes. So magistrates accepted without question the Senate's right to order them about. Africanus's defiance of the House's authority had found no imitators; and since his fall there had been, as we have said, a noticeable tendency to entrust important foreign command to men of little character. Throughout the period of expansion, too, the need for a strong central control was obvious and there was nothing to prevent the Senate from maintaining and even increasing those wide powers of administration which they had assumed during the hurly-burly of Hannibal's invasion. The recruitment of the army, the disposition of its units, the control of foreign policy, and what became increasingly important, the direction of finance, were now the accepted prerogatives of the House. In exceptional cases it even claimed

the right of appointing judicial commissions for the trial of high treason<sup>1</sup>; and at anxious moments of the coming internal crisis, a 'senatus consultum ultimum' or, as we might say, the proclamation of martial law, was to be regarded a legitimate weapon against the agitations of the reforming party.

There was, in fact, no single sphere of importance which the authority of the Senate did not invade. The executive magistrates were little more than its tame agents. Its 'consulta' or decrees decided much that would formerly have been matter for the Assembly's vote; and only on questions of peace or war, of appeal from the death-sentence, or of far-reaching constitutional reform was the Sovereign People consulted at all. Yet the Roman Constitution, it must be remembered, was in theory a democracy; and though by now such theory had worn a trifle thin, the famous phrase, 'Senatus Populusque Romanus', implied at least some partnership of power; and it remains to ask wherein lay the people's share of it.

## II. THE ASSEMBLY AND THE MAGISTRACIES

One all-important function which the Assemblies still retained was the election of the magistrates. In principle, seeing that their choice was free and that the old distinction between patrician and plebeian families had long since lost all meaning, this right should have given them some real control over the personnel of the executive. In point of fact, however, no body of electors could have been less adventurous than the Comitia Centuriata which was responsible for appointments to the three major offices—the consulship, praetorship and censorship.<sup>2</sup> For the reorganization of this comitia, to which we referred above (p. 102), while equalizing the voting power of the five Servian classes and so depriving the rich of their old preponderance, involved also a subdivision into senior and junior voters which meant that half the voting-power lay in the hands of men

<sup>1</sup> See p. 245.

<sup>2</sup> The aediles, quaestors and tribunes were elected by the Tribal Assembly.

of forty-six or over. As a natural consequence, the whole tone of the centuriata remained strongly conservative, and in its choice of men it tended always to play for safety, preferring those of known and approved antecedents. The bribery of electors, too, was becoming all too common and neither frequent laws against it nor the introduction of secret ballot in 139 did much to check the abuse. The result was that candidates who lacked the hall-mark of aristocratic birth and the support of aristocratic purses, had small chance at the polls; and year after year the representatives of the big houses filled the offices of state.

There remained but one serious danger to the senatorial ascendancy—a danger at which we have not infrequently hinted. What if some magistrate, more independent or ambitious than the rest, should turn traitor to his class and defying the unwritten etiquette of public life, should attempt with popular backing to establish himself a master of the State? But this danger, too, had been foreseen and remedies provided. By legislative enactments passed on more than one occasion, a decisive check had been set upon the over-rapid rise of young men to high office or the prolongation of such office beyond a single year. In particular the Lex Villia of 180 B.C. laid down strict regulations for the successive stages of a political career. The routine prescribed was as follows:—Till his twenty-eighth year a man was liable for service with the army, in which (if an aristocrat) he would hold commissioned rank as *tribunus militum* or legionary officer.<sup>1</sup> On reaching twenty-eight he could stand for the quaestorship and, if successful, serve his political apprenticeship as financial secretary either at home or in the provinces. After an interval of two years, that is to say at thirty-one, he might pass on to the aedileship—an office concerned with municipal organization in general (such as the care of streets and buildings), but more particularly with the provision of public entertainments and the control of the food-supply. At thirty-four (or, if he skipped the aedileship, at thirty-one) he might take the praetorship either presiding in the courts or maybe com-

<sup>1</sup> See p. 270.

manding an army in the field ; and after another two years' interval, at thirty-four or thirty-seven, would come the crowning dignity of the consulship, carrying with it the command of the army, the presidency of the Senate and supreme executive power. For those who had achieved the consulship there still remained what was reckoned the summit of a political career, the Censorship with its wide powers over the composition of both Senate and Assembly, and heavy responsibilities for the regulation of state-contracts and supervision of public works and the control of revenue. . . . From all this it will be seen that age and experience—both mellowing influences—were essential conditions for the attainment of the consulship ; and though re-election to that office after a ten-years' interval was permitted by old custom, even this was prohibited by a law of 151. That much serious wastage of talent and efficiency was involved by these regulations is obvious enough. It is as if in our own history the premiership of Pitt or Gladstone had been confined to a single year or if every cabinet minister, as soon as he was beginning to master the technique of his department, were compulsorily retired. But the Roman Senate was not really concerned about efficiency. The interest of their order stood paramount ; and this, so they conceived, would best be served by dealing out an equal portion of power to as many of its members as might be, but allowing no one a whit more than his fair share.

### III. THE ASSEMBLY AND LEGISLATION

It can hardly have escaped notice that in what we have been saying no mention has yet been made of one very important office—the Tribunate. The fact was that, thanks to the peculiar circumstances of their original institution, the tribunes stood on a unique footing. Theirs was not in essence an executive office at all : for its main power was to prohibit rather than to initiate action ; and their one positive function was to conduct the deliberations of the Tribal Assembly.<sup>1</sup>

Here, then, we come to the second department of the Sovereign People's authority. For it was in this Tribal

<sup>1</sup> Praetors might also introduce proposals before this body.

Comitia rather than in the more venerable Centuriata, that was to be found the true expression of the popular will. By its tradition, machinery and composition, it was essentially democratic, allowing no undue advantage to either wealth or age; and naturally enough the popular leaders had more and more insisted that it and it alone should be the final arbiter of legislative proposals. During the third century, indeed, this Assembly-by-tribes had seemed likely to win complete control over national policy. But in the course of the great wars the Senate's silent usurpation of powers had checkmated this development. The lost ground had never been recovered; and though the tribes were still summoned to vote on any constitutional change of importance, the initiative seemed to have passed out of their hands. The tribunes were now rather the tame agents of the Senate than the champions of the democratic cause. When legislative proposals were before the House, they were called into consultation; and the Bill having been drafted, it simply remained for them to summon the Assembly and get the tribes to register their formal sanction.

Tribunes, in short, like all the other magistrates, had come to accept the tacit understandings which governed public life and of which the main object was to safeguard the senatorial supremacy. It would even seem that they acquiesced in a rule which forbade their re-election to a second year of office or at any rate to a second year of office in immediate sequence to the first. If any further check were needed upon the dangerous self-assertion of would-be demagogues, it was supplied by two laws, the Lex Fufia and the Lex Aelia, which were passed in 153. These applied to the Tribal Assembly a rule, already operative in the older Centuriata, whereby any of the higher magistrates possessed the right to interrupt or to postpone proceedings by a religious ban. He had simply to report that the omens were unfavourable or even that he himself was engaged in prospecting for omens; and public business came automatically to a standstill. This cynical use of an old superstition, in which few, if any, of the aristocracy can any longer have believed, is perhaps a measure of the contempt they now

felt for the Assembly of the Sovereign People; and when we come next to consider of what elements in actual practice that Assembly was composed, we shall be forced to admit that such contempt was justified.

#### IV. THE ROMAN STATE AND THE CITY MOB

The Roman People, it is well perhaps to remind ourselves, was very far from being identical with the inhabitants of the Italian peninsula. In the first place, Cisalpine Gaul, though south of the Po, at any rate largely confiscated to Rome and containing several 'citizen' and 'Latin' colonies, did not as yet enjoy any real political status, being governed, as we have seen, by the yearly consuls as a province. Again even south of the Apennines, the last hundred years had seen very little political advance. For apart from the central area which was the true Roman State and which, though thickly peopled, included at most but a third of the peninsula, the remainder of the population was still without the franchise. In other words, they were not citizens, but *socii*. For the most part agricultural—though tending more and more, as we have seen, to concentrate in towns—and (if we except the Greek cities of the South) still tribally organized, these *socii* or allies preserved a virility and toughness which were disgracefully exploited by their suzerain. Under the terms of the treaties originally imposed on them, they were compelled to furnish men for provincial garrisons (a duty which the pampered citizen-body now did its best to shirk) and for the continuous wars of conquest from which they themselves derived no material profit, not even an equal portion of the largess distributed to the troops at the close of each campaign. Yet in return for such services these unfortunate 'allies' received no privilege. Neither in the direction of Rome's policy, nor in the choice of her magistrates, in the creation of her laws, nor even in the legal benefits afforded by her civic courts, did they enjoy any share whatsoever. The fact was that quite soon after the close of the Hannibalic War Rome's earlier and more generous policy of promoting her Italian neighbours through a probationary period of half-franchise to a

status of complete incorporation, had come abruptly to an end<sup>1</sup>—so jealous had the citizen-body become of extending to others the material and political advantages which they themselves enjoyed. Even the half-franchise 'Latin' colonies, which of course were freely scattered throughout this 'allied' area, now received scant consideration; and if their folk migrated to the capital, it was only with the greatest difficulty that they could win their way on to the civic roll. Apart, therefore, from a few outlying Roman (or citizen) colonies,<sup>2</sup> the full franchise was confined to the central area adjacent to the capital itself and comprising Latium, a strip of South Etruria, the Sabine and Aequan hinterland as far as the Adriatic seaboard, and—from 189 when the privileges cancelled during the Punic Wars were restored—Campania.

The inhabitants of this area, then, were the true *Populus Romanus*, who, if they cared to take the trouble of exercising their privilege, were the rightful constituents of the Tribal Assembly. But how many did in practice take the trouble? Seeing what was the length of the journey and the loss of time involved, it is hardly to be supposed that the farmer of the Sabine Hills or the shopkeeper of Campania would travel frequently to Rome. It was as much as could be expected if he came in to cast his vote at the magisterial elections in the autumn of each year. So, unless some peculiarly important issue was known to be at stake, the Tribal Assembly which gathered in the Forum consisted mainly, if not wholly, of the inhabitants of Rome itself. True, these should technically have been confined to the four urban tribes alone and therefore incapable of commanding a majority of the votes<sup>3</sup>; but in actual practice

<sup>1</sup> See p. 135.

<sup>2</sup> During the second century a fair number of these had been founded. For the system of 'Latin' (or half-franchise) colonies had practically lapsed since the end of the Punic War owing to the difficulty of finding men ready to exchange full citizenship for the limited Latin franchise; and perhaps, too, to the unwillingness of the Exchequer to sacrifice the rentals of *ager publicus* for the purpose.

<sup>3</sup> The group-unit which counted in the Tribal Assembly was, of course, the tribe, as was the century in the *Centuriata* (see p. 23).



their strength was evenly distributed throughout the whole voting body of five-and-thirty tribes. The explanation of this anomaly was twofold. In the first place, when citizens from some outlying town or district migrated to the capital, they still continued to be reckoned as members of the tribe to which they originally belonged. In the second place, it would appear that when freed slaves or (as was more usual) the sons of freed slaves received the franchise, the censors instead of enrolling them in the four urban units, deliberately spread them out over all the thirty-five. For the censors, acting in the interest of the senatorial oligarchy, saw clearly that it would serve that interest best if *the city populace controlled the Assembly's vote. The city populace itself—by methods which the oligarchy well understood—could be in its turn controlled.*

These methods were not creditable. Bribery we have already mentioned; but there were others more subtle. Festivals of a religious or semi-religious character were very frequent at Rome. Sometimes no work would be done for as much as ten days together; and on the shrewd hypothesis that a mob can never be dangerous so long as it is kept tolerably amused, all manner of entertainments were provided free during these holidays. Chariot-races would seem to have been the favourite form of spectacle; but plays and processions<sup>1</sup> were also popular. It was the business of

<sup>1</sup> The triumphal procession of victorious generals was especially elaborate and impressive. Plutarch gives a lively picture of the triumph of Aemilius Paullus—temples begarlanded and reeking with incense; spectators clad in holiday white crowding the scaffold-stands erected along the route; three days devoted to the celebrations: on the first, the artistic loot of the campaign, 'images, pictures, and colossal statues': on the second, captured accoutrements conveyed in wagons, followed by a train of men carrying drinking vessels of every description: on the third day, trumpeters, gold and silver vessels of sacrifice, oxen with gilded horns, vessels loaded with gold coin, an enormous gold bowl made on Aemilius's instructions, then Perseus's panoply and diadem conveyed on his own war-chariot, after which followed first 'his governors, masters and preceptors all in tears', then his children, and finally the King himself in a state of abject terror, closely accompanied by his friends and the favourites of his court, next 400 gold coronets presented to Aemilius by Greek cities and immediately

aediles, in particular, to provide good public shows, even to the point of supplementing the official allowances out of their private purse; and so zealous were they in obtaining wild animals for exhibition that in course of time the more interesting species appear to have become extinct in Mediterranean countries. Gladiatorial contests were not as yet included in the official programme; but candidates for magistracies, intent on vote-catching, found it a good advertisement to indulge the popular taste for blood.

Not less important than the amusement of the mob was the satisfaction of its stomach. As the poorer classes were almost wholly vegetarian and bread the staple of their diet, this problem was fairly simple; and it had long been part of the government's policy and of the aedile's duties to see that the supply of corn was both adequate and cheap. The regular importation of the surplus left over from provincial tithes made it possible to do so without financial loss to the State, until C. Gracchus's well-meant scheme of reorganization began to produce a deficit. The precedent was disastrous; for, if Gracchus had been able to bring down the price of corn to half the market level, subsequent politicians, intent on winning the mob's favour, brought it down lower still, until shortly before the fall of the Republic, allowances were actually distributed gratis and Julius Caesar found no less than 320,000 persons in receipt of the State dole.

From such a development it is obvious enough how short-sighted was this policy of 'Bread and Circuses'. To the governing class themselves it was even a potential source of danger; for it offered an easy opportunity of mob-leadership to the ambitious politicians of the future. And, truth to tell, Rome was now ripe for the appearance of the demagogue. The character of her populace was rapidly changing and for various reasons it was no longer the body of shrewd and sober burghers that it once had been. Depress-

preceding the great general himself riding in a chariot, robed in purple and gold and carrying a laurel branch—behind him the ranks of his veteran army also carrying laurel and chanting a hymn of victory as they marched.

ing economic conditions drove many men of the best type to join the new citizen-colonies founded during this century. The removal of their sterling influence from the sphere of city politics was the more unfortunate, since meanwhile the less desirable section of the proletariat was constantly being swelled by the enfranchisement of freed slaves or freed slaves' children. These recruits to the citizen-body were not of course Italian born, but mostly of Greek or Oriental origin ; and although their nimble wits ensured their rapid rise to freedom, their loose and feeble character made them bad citizens. It was indeed a real tragedy when the purity of Roman blood began to be contaminated by the admixture of this alien element. The mob took on something of the greedy and fickle temper which marked the political assemblies of the Hellenic decadence. Corruption, as we have said, was rampant ; and popular support was readily given to the highest bidder. Hooligans and wastrels furnished plentiful material for the promotion of mob-violence. Rioting became common ; and political adventurers took to recruiting private retinues of swashbucklers. At times the prospect of popular revolution loomed ominously near.

Yet the very qualities which made the Roman mob an apparent menace to the existing order, deprived it in reality of any genuine power to harm. It was too fickle to follow a consistent leadership, too greedily jealous of the material advantages of citizenship to work in harmony with the other great body of Italian discontent—the unenfranchised ' allies '. Its political stupidity made the task of the would-be reformer wellnigh impossible ; and for the demagogue, as was natural, its support proved a broken reed. There were moments during the next seventy or eighty years when appeals to vulgar passion gave rise to ugly incidents ; but the real danger to the senatorial régime came not so much from popular violence as from the disciplined forces of the great military commanders ; and in the final revolution which brought about its overthrow the part played by the Sovereign People (except as the instrument of passing such great men's legislation) was almost negligible.

## V. THE EQUITES

It remains to mention one comparatively new but very important element in Roman Society destined to figure largely in the approaching crises, and, from a natural jealousy of senatorial pretensions, to throw its weight on the democrat side.

As in England during the earlier part of the nineteenth century there was a sharp distinction drawn between the titled aristocracy and the plain business man, so in Rome at this epoch there was a very similar cleavage between those engaged in ruling and those engaged in finance. With the former class we are already well acquainted—the senatorial families of ‘noble’, or, as the word implies, ‘known’ lineage, treasuring proudly in the ante-rooms of their houses the busts of ancestors who generation by generation had held high offices of state. Like our own aristocracy, these men were mostly landowners. Not merely therefore was their wealth considerable, but it came to them unearned by any effort of their own. If they served as magistrates, they received no salary. If they practised at the Bar—the one ‘gentlemanly’ profession—they took no direct fee. Business was barred to them by custom and even by law; for by the Lex Claudia of 218 senators and senators’ sons were forbidden to engage in any enterprise which might take them out of Italy. It was not perhaps unnatural that they were a trifle contemptuous of a *bourgeoisie* whose career was centred, and whose livelihood depended, upon transactions with hard cash.

The men of this second class were none the less extremely wealthy; and ever since their first appearance as public contractors at the time of the Punic Wars, their importance had steadily been growing. Their activities fell, roughly speaking, into two departments, though in actual practice these two might well overlap. Some turned their attention to banking and money-lending. For as, in ways we have already described, enormous resources of wealth accumulated at Rome, there was a natural demand for men to manipulate the business of credit and exchange. Officials or private persons, travelling in the provinces or elsewhere, required

foreign drafts arranging for them. The purchasers of houses needed to raise money upon mortgage, and merchants on the security of their ships. Candidates for office or spend-thrifts who had overspent their income wanted loans. As time went on, even provincials, faced with the demands of Roman tax-collectors, were forced to turn to Roman money-lenders to supply the ready cash. The lowest rate of interest charged was 12 per cent. per annum; but higher rates—reaching in one known case to 48 per cent.—were frequently exacted according to the borrower's situation; and since such business is always lucrative, the 'negotiatiores', as this class of men was called, must have made enormous profits.

The second form of financial enterprise was concerned exclusively with the undertaking of state contracts for public works of one sort or another; and the men engaged in it were known accordingly as 'publicani'. They would not themselves, of course, be actively concerned in the execution of the contract, but would simply hire the services of architects or road-makers or whatever else were needed; nor must they be confused with the 'publicans' of the Gospels who acted merely as their collecting agents. Furthermore, since in such contracts the outlay was often large and since a single individual could seldom command resources sufficient for the purpose, it was the invariable custom of these publicani to unite together in 'societies' or (as we should call them) joint-stock companies. They were willing to accept money for investment from the general public, so that senators and others who had funds to spare would frequently entrust them to these recognized experts; and when we remember what are the ramifications of financial influence, it is not difficult to see how powerful the capitalists of either class were likely to become.

It was, however, the shrewd eye of Caius Gracchus that first perceived their potential value as political supporters. Being virtually debarred from an official career by the character of their profession and their social status (for the aristocratic families, though willing to make use of him, affected to look down upon the business-man), the bour-

geois capitalists were naturally jealous of the Senate's monopoly of power and were ready enough to follow Gracchus's lead, more especially as he made over to them the very valuable prerogative of farming the taxes of the new Asiatic province. Far more important, however, because it gave them a recognized status within the constitution itself, was Gracchus's judicial reform which assigned to them the right, held formerly by senators, of forming the jury-panels in cases of extortion. As a convenient method of fixing the qualification for this privilege, recourse was had to the property classification (traditionally ascribed to King Servius) whereby any man possessing wealth of 400,000 sesterces or over (equivalent roughly to £3,000) was rated as an 'eques' or member of the cavalry. The original meaning of the term was by now quite obsolete; and it is probable that many of these financial magnates had never even bestridden a horse. None the less 'equestrian rank' as so determined, carrying with it (as it was now to do) this coveted judicial privilege, was very highly esteemed. From a social point of view it gave the financiers a distinction which they had lacked before; though they were still felt to be inferior to the senatorial order, it was something at least that they could now boast an 'order' of their own. It was a telling sign of their enhanced prestige that towards the middle of the first century a law was actually passed assigning them seats of special honour in the theatre, though *behind* the senators.

But the political results were of greater consequence still. For what had previously been a mere group of individuals with only their profession in common, became henceforth a power within the State and a party with a more or less united policy. The Equites, in short, were to play an important rôle in the politics of the future; but to attempt more precisely to describe it would be to anticipate the events of the succeeding century and the course of the long-drawn struggle in which the various forces of a gathering discontent were pitted against the vested interest of the senatorial oligarchy, but in which at the last both senate, populace and knights alike were destined to bow before the commanding genius of a soldier autocrat.

Such, then, was to be the final issue of the political problem. But it was no mere accident of history due simply to the sudden appearance of a powerful personality. On the contrary, it was the nemesis inevitably attending a constitutional system which in its ultimate origin was founded upon militarism, and which with the growth of an Empire won and held by the sword, was bound more and more to entrust a power less and less easy to control into the hands of its military chiefs. In sum, the real menace to the senatorial régime lay not in the discontent of the mob, nor in the self-assertion of tribunes, nor in the financial influence of the Knights. It lay simply in the fact that the chief executive officials, whether at home or in the provinces, were the commanders of the legions as well. Military power is in most states held under control by subordination to civil authority. But if civil authority and military powers are combined in one person, the combination can remain innocuous only so long as the ambitions or aspirations of the individual are outweighed by his loyalty to the Constitution. Such loyalty had hitherto been the almost invariable habit of the conventional Roman mind. But minds do not run in a groove for ever. The claims of the State over the individual, accepted without demur by an unsophisticated society, are apt to be challenged when men begin to think for themselves. This was what was now beginning to happen at Rome, where the traditional collectivism was being rapidly discredited and, for reasons which we shall discuss in the next chapter, Individualism was taking its place.

## CHAPTER XIII

### HELLENISM AND ITS FRUITS

#### I. EDUCATION

**N**O picture of Rome at this period would be at all complete, and no proper understanding of the succeeding period would be possible, unless some account were given of the enormous psychological change which had

come over her people (or at least over the upper class of them) as the result of closer contact with Hellenic culture. Little more than a century earlier, before, that is, the beginning of the Punic Wars, they had still been living, so to speak, in a backwater. Their educational methods were rudimentary. They had no literature, no philosophy, no history worth the name. Of the great scientific discoveries of the Greeks, and in particular of the Greeks of Alexandria, they would seem to have been almost wholly ignorant. It was actually impossible for them to tell the time of day with any accuracy until in the year 263 a sundial was brought from Sicily; and even then its incorrect setting for the new latitude was apparently ignored until another century had elapsed.

But in the meantime there had come to the Romans, from Sicily also, their first real taste of what Hellenism meant; and the Hannibalic War once over, dealings with the Greek states of Macedon, Athens, the Achaean League and Asia Minor, to say nothing of the Hellenistic monarchies of Syria and Egypt, brought ample opportunities for fuller knowledge. Not merely did Roman delegates, officers and business-men make first-hand acquaintance with both the old and the new centres of Hellenism, but in ever-increasing numbers Greeks found their way over to Italy as diplomats, traders, architects, craftsmen,<sup>1</sup> and most of all, as slaves. More important, however, for our present purpose were those, whether slaves or freemen, who came to Rome to teach. We have seen how Aemilius Paullus procured Greek instructors for his sons; and the fashion spread. A knowledge of Greek became almost a necessity for an educated man; and so great was the zeal for the new enlightenment that in some households a Greek philosopher was kept as it might have been the private chaplain at some Elizabethan nobleman's seat.

The most influential student of Hellenic thought was Scipio Aemilianus, Aemilius Paullus's eldest son and the conqueror of Carthage, one of the noblest and most charming characters in the whole range of Roman history, a perfect blend

<sup>1</sup> The hostages of the Achaean League during their detention at Rome seem to have exercised a great influence.



of the new intellectual culture with the high moral principle of the old régime; and into his society were gathered not merely famous Greek savants such as Polybius the historian and Panaetius the philosopher, but also a large number of Roman noblemen. The Scipionic Circle, as it is called, included in fact all the ablest and most thoughtful men of the day, soldiers and politicians as well as orators and writers. At the meetings of their *salon* conversation ranged over all manner of subjects, and the vogue for free discussion which these ardent spirits set resulted in a general broadening of the Roman mind. Meanwhile the opposition of the reactionaries was slowly breaking down. True, as late as 155, Cato was still able to procure the abrupt dismissal of certain Greek diplomatists whose lectures on philosophy appeared to him demoralizing; but it was no longer possible to keep the young men of Rome in a cloistered ignorance. Cato had fought a losing battle; and in his generous tribute of admiration to Aemilianus he seems to have admitted his defeat. For better or for worse Hellenism had come to Rome to stay.

The most immediate and perhaps the most important result was a complete revolution of educational methods. The stern moral discipline of the old domestic upbringing was rapidly becoming a thing of the past. Fathers were too much occupied or too often absent to pay personal attention to the training of their children; and although, if they could afford it, the more particular still preferred to pay for private tuition at home, most parents now would send their sons to a school. This meant, in the first place, that the boys were thrown into daily and hourly contact with the society of Greeks; for not merely would the schoolmaster almost certainly be a Greek, but so too would be the 'pedagogue' or flunkey whose business it was to see them safe to school and back again. Not all Greeks, of course, were vicious or unwholesome characters; but even the best of them could scarcely take the place of the sound parental discipline of the earlier times; and some loss of moral tone was quite inevitable, the more so since the Roman, while admiring the Greek's brains, continued always to regard him as an inferior sort of being. Intellectually, on the other

hand, the gain was undeniable. Indeed, if education was to be literary at all, it was almost bound to be concerned very largely with Greek, seeing that few Latin masterpieces as yet existed, and these, as we shall later see, all based upon Greek models. So when about the age of twelve, after having mastered the elements, a boy passed on to the so-called Grammar School, at least as much of his time would be given to the study of Homer, Hesiod and other Greek authors as to the native works of Ennius, Plautus or Terence. Long passages of poetry were committed to heart, but attention was also paid to their elucidation and in the first century lectures were given on formal grammar and prosody. Elocution and declamation, too, played an important part in the curriculum; for Roman parents were nothing if not practical; and seeing that either a political or a forensic career was alone considered proper for a 'gentleman', oratorical instruction was greatly in demand. Accordingly when between his fourteenth and seventeenth year a boy received the *toga virilis* and so came formally of age, he would naturally pass on to the schools of rhetoric. These would seem to have been run altogether on Greek lines, and as time went on, it became more and more the fashion to spend a year or so at some foreign centre of learning such as Athens, Rhodes or even Alexandria. At Athens philosophy, too, might be studied; but elsewhere, whether at home or abroad, the tendency was to concentrate entirely upon rhetoric—a tendency which somewhat cramped the development of Roman thought and encouraged a facility for plausible argument in preference to a genuine pursuit of truth. So, although such training was instrumental in producing the immortal works of Cicero—one of the greatest literary influences the world has ever known—yet it was also responsible for a certain over-emphasis on style and a superficiality of thought which characterizes much Latin poetry as well as prose.

## II. LITERATURE

Before we turn to consider the psychological effects of the new Hellenic atmosphere, it will be well first to say

something about the earlier phases of this native literature, in which, it need hardly be said, the influence of Greek models is to be observed at every turn. Indeed, before the time when Romans first came under that influence, it would be difficult to detect in them the smallest promise of any literary capacity. Of such fragments as we possess of primitive Latin verse, the following may serve as a sample. It is the opening of the Song of the Arval brothers—a rustic priesthood, and dates from the time of the monarchy:

ENOS, LASES, JUVATE :

NEVE LUE RUE, MARMAR, SINS INCURRERE IN PLEORES  
SATOR FU, FERRE MARS, LIMEN SALL. STA BERBER.

To our ears such lines seem to contain as much real sense of poetry as we might expect to find in a Hottentot war-chant. If writing is to become literature at all, moreover, it must be designed upon some pattern or given some artistic form; and for this the Romans appear altogether to have lacked the inventive faculty. Their native metre called the Saturnian was based on a triple beat helped out by alliteration<sup>1</sup> and was crude in the extreme; and though Andronicus used it in his translations from the Greek, it was swiftly superseded by the hexametrical Greek metre. Again the one literary form indigenous to Italy, the *satúra* or satire, was chiefly distinguished by its complete formlessness.<sup>2</sup> As its very name implied, it was a 'hotch-potch', a medley of topical criticism strung together at haphazard without pattern, plot or plan. In short, it is no exaggeration to say that in every literary genre—epic, lyrical, elegiac, historical or biographical—the Latin writers were borrowers from the Greek.

<sup>1</sup> e.g. this line from Andronicus's *Odyssey* :—

tópper fácit hómines | út priús fuérunt

('quick she turned them to men as they were before'),

which is stressed as in the nursery rhyme :—

The quéén was in her chámber | eáting bréad and hóney.

<sup>2</sup> Satire seems originally to have been a sort of miscellaneous dramatic entertainment in which the actors improvised a good deal of topical fun. Rude mimes were also indigenous to Italy and farces in which the actors wore masks originated in the debased Greek civilization of Campania (*fabulae atellanae*).

Yet from the very outset there was to be remarked among such writers certain high qualities of beauty which are peculiarly their own; and of none is this more true than of Ennius the acknowledged father of Roman poetry (239-169). A teacher of Greek, translator and adapter of Greek tragedies, and imitator of the Greek hexameter (by the application of which quantitative system in the place of the old stress accent he determined the future principles of Latin prosody), Ennius nevertheless achieved in his great historical epic, the *Annals*, a massive dignity which even Homer scarcely rivals. Such fragments as remain to us, if often clumsy, have a rich sonority through which there seems to ring that moral earnestness and haunting tone of melancholy that was later to form the special charm of Vergil's genius.<sup>1</sup> In his very choice of a theme, too, the author of the *Annals* set a fine tradition—for from it Vergil inherited the ideal of using poetry to glorify the State; and it was mainly on account of the noble political purpose underlying his poem that the Romans—most politically minded of all ancient peoples—looked back to Ennius as in a peculiar sense the national bard.

To a far lesser degree can qualities distinctively Roman be attributed to the two great comedians of the period—Plautus (254-184) and Terence (185-159). The plays of both (we have twenty by the former and six by the latter) were closely adapted from Greek originals—not the comedies of Aristophanes and his contemporaries, but the works of Menander and other authors of the so-called New Comedy of fourth-century Athens. In these the farcical and often fantastic plots which turned largely on the adventures of lovers, the tyranny and meanness of parents and the intrigues of witty and precocious slaves, were enlivened by a considerable skill in delineation of character. Such subtlety, while duly appreciated by a smart Athenian audience, was vastly above the heads of the stupid Roman mob; and in

<sup>1</sup> For example, this passage from the First Book of the *Annals* :—

Quamquam multa manus ad caeli caerulea templa  
Tendebam lacrimans, et blanda voce vocabam.  
Vix aegro tum corde meo me somnus reliquit.

order to cater for their coarser taste, Plautus felt obliged to introduce a good deal of vulgar jest and broad buffoonery, spicing his dialogue with jocular allusions to the crucifixion of slaves and other brutal Roman punishments. The result is that in his plays much of the delicacy of the original was lost. Terence, a far greater literary artist, kept much closer to his models; and though he must have given satisfaction to his more educated patrons (who were, of course, responsible for the production of the plays), he won little popularity with the groundlings. There was, in fact, something slightly exotic about these adaptations of an alien drama, in which the Greek costume as well as the Greek nomenclature was actually retained. Attempts to introduce a purely Roman comedy in which actors wore the *toga*, instead of the Greek *pallium*, were made by Afranius (c. 120 B.C.), but not apparently with much success.<sup>1</sup> The truth was that the Romans with their strong sense of public decency shrank from encouraging a drama of contemporary life, in which topical allusions and caricature of political personalities would have been considered subversive of good discipline.

The criticism of men and manners was accordingly left to the pen of the satirist; and towards the end of the second century there arose a man whose social status (he was of the equestrian order) entitled him to lash the foibles and vices of Roman society in a very vigorous fashion. The works of Lucilius (180-102 B.C.) are only known to us through fragments; and from these it is pretty clear that they possessed no poetic merit whatsoever—in the judgement of Horace he went to work in the slipshod fashion of a man who polishes off 'a couple of hundred lines before luncheon and as many more after it'—yet he must have been a man of real originality; and despite the bitterness of his personal attacks he was highly esteemed at Rome and an honoured member of Scipio's *salon*.

In the literature of every nation prose is a later development than verse; and if in the third and second centuries

<sup>1</sup> Roman tragedies and historical plays were also written by Pacuvius (c. 220-c. 130 B.C.) and Accius (c. 170-c. 86 B.C.), but had no lasting vogue.

Rome produced little prose of note, this is the less surprising since Greek was at first the favourite medium of the more learned authors. In the native tongue the best-known writer was Cato. His treatise on agriculture is the sole early prose-work which remains to us; and even this has been much re-written by some later editor. Cato, too, helped to establish the fashion of publishing set speeches; and there can be small doubt that oratory was the most notable achievement of the age. The two Gracchi, in particular, were distinguished for their eloquence; and though no more than quotations from second-century speeches now remain to us, the testimony of Cicero leaves little question of their high quality. It was typical, once more, of the Roman mentality that apart from oratory the ablest minds turned instinctively to the study of law; and the latter part of this period saw the rise of such eminent jurists as Mucius Scaevola and Sulpicius. The abstract speculations of philosophy, on the other hand, made little appeal to this eminently practical folk; and though Greek theories of ethics exercised, as we shall see, a considerable influence on Roman conduct, there was a lack of originality in Roman thought, and, for some time to come at least, no philosophic literature of real importance.

### III. RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY

The formal religion of the Roman Republic had undergone comparatively little change since the time when anthropomorphic conceptions of the deity, emanating originally from Greece, had been superimposed upon the primitive animism of the Italian race. The effect of the Punic Wars, indeed, had been somewhat to strengthen the regular performance of the public rites. During those years of stress superstitious terrors had run riot. The most ridiculous omens were solemnly reported and solemnly believed. Strolling soothsayers found ready listeners; and after the disaster of Cannae, in particular, there had been a signal failure of nerve. The populace clearly felt that the old gods were deserting them, and in a frantic effort to seek new protection, they turned to all manner of strange foreign cults

and practices, even burying alive some unfortunate human victims to propitiate the spirits of the dead. Hitherto, on the whole, it had been contrary to the habit of the Roman Government to check the free development of religious usages ; but now, if only to stop the rot, they felt compelled to intervene. They strictly forbade all forms of worship not recognized by the State and ordered all books of illicit magic to be surrendered in the Forum before a certain date. Yet feeling presumably that the people's shaken confidence in the old religious nostrums required the reassurance of something wholly new, they gave their subsequent sanction to certain innovations. Of these the most important was the introduction of the cult of Phrygian Cybele or the Great Mother. It may be that her connexion with Troy—the traditional cradle of the Roman race—suggested that the goddess would exert a special providence in aid of its stricken fortunes. In any case the Sibylline books were searched ; an appropriate mandate discovered ; and in 204 the worship of this semi-oriental deity was duly established on the Palatine. Again, nearly twenty years later, when the wild ecstatic cult of Dionysus began to spread like wildfire through Southern Italy and even to penetrate the capital itself, the Government, as before, took fright, making fierce efforts at suppression and actually executing a number of the votaries. Nevertheless, eventually they allowed the new cult to remain, though under a strict supervision. Their reluctant acquiescence betrays a growing consciousness that the traditional forms of worship were failing to satisfy the vulgar mind ; and it may be that already in a dim, superstitious fashion men were beginning to grope towards those more mystic forms of worship which in later times came far nearer to supplying their spiritual needs than the unedifying deities of a Hellenized mythology.

Nor was it the vulgar mind alone which was feeling dissatisfaction. For different reasons and with very different results (for it turned them not to mystics but to sceptics) the educated class were also undergoing a revulsion against the traditional forms of worship. Not indeed that these were at all openly abandoned. On the contrary, the annual

round of meaningless ceremonial was conducted with as much punctilio as ever. Processions marched, sacrifices were offered, and aristocratic augurs studied the colour of entrails or the flight of birds with even greater zeal than formerly. For the governing class, whatever their private views about such mummary, had a very strong conviction of its political importance. They were behaving, in fact, much as might some English squire of the nineteenth century who having lost all faith in Christianity itself, but feeling the Established Church to be a bulwark of the Constitution, would persist in regular attendance at the weekly services to set a good example to his tenantry. They felt, in other words, that the State ritual was a harmless but salutary institution which helped to keep things going as they had always gone and to teach the lower classes to know their proper place. But meanwhile, however he might act in public, an increasing familiarity with Greek ideas made it next to impossible for the educated Roman to accept in his heart of hearts the superstitious absurdities of the State cults. Attempts had indeed been made by Greek philosophers to reconcile the old mythology with a more enlightened outlook, by giving a rational explanation of its tales. Thus, according to Euhemerus who wrote at the end of the fourth century, the gods were no more than the great men of the past deified by the reverent imagination of their posterity. His treatise was translated by Ennius, and had some vogue at Rome. But even there such evasions could not long satisfy inquiring minds, and these turned naturally to the study of the more thoroughgoing systems of Greek philosophy which endeavoured to explain the whole nature of the Universe, and what in Roman eyes mattered a great deal more, to unravel the problems of human conduct and human happiness.

Of such philosophic systems (and there had, of course, been many) two in particular now held the field, the one founded by Epicurus, an Athenian thinker of the early third century, the other by teachers who because their favourite place of resort was a *stoa* or colonnade in the Athenian market-place were known as the Stoic school. To Epicureans



and Stoics alike there was common ground in the doctrine, inherited in the last resort from Socrates himself, that in *knowledge* lies the solution of all human difficulties. There, however, their ways parted. The Epicureans believed that the Universe, being compounded of a purely fortuitous aggregation of atoms, is governed by no absolute law and that the gods neither exercise control over terrestrial matters, nor interest themselves at all in human affairs. Men should therefore not base their lives on *a priori* standards of right and wrong which have no foundation in reality, and should reject all conventional claims of religion, state or family, which, being merely the outcome of false terrors or of convenience, can have no binding force. For only by experience or experiment can the individual determine what course will on the balance afford him the greatest measure of satisfaction; and his sole hope of happiness will accordingly depend on forming a right knowledge of what is *pleasurable*. A dangerously elastic creed; for, whereas by finer natures pleasure might be interpreted as the pursuit of contemplative study and a life immune from cares, to the vast majority it would mean at best a life of pure self-seeking and at worst of gross self-indulgence. Arriving in Italy at a moment when wealth and luxury were already undermining the national morale, the Epicurean philosophy gave a disastrous impulse to the prevailing temper of materialism. Every young sensualist could find in its tenets (as he might nowadays find it in the theories of Freud) a convenient justification for his own excesses; and even among the more respectable it encouraged an inclination towards idle habits and frivolous amusement. In the first century B.C., indeed, Lucretius the poet upheld with the fierce sincerity of a prophet its higher and nobler aspect, pleading with men to cast from their eyes the scales of a blind conventionalism and to learn to see in the pure light of their own reason how illusory were the terrors and how degrading the ritual of their superstitious creeds. There lay, so he believed, the source of more than half the crimes and miseries of human life.

Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum.

Yet in his desire to free mankind from the tyranny of

false loyalties, Lucretius over-stated his case. A philosophy which found no room for the claims of patriotism or for domestic ties could never be representative of the best spirit of Rome ; and it was to the stern social idealism of the rival creed that her more serious-minded citizens inevitably turned.

The Stoic doctrine was as austere and uncompromising as the Epicurean was lax. Regarding the Universe not as a shifting conglomeration of atoms, but as a permanent organism governed by unalterable law, it taught the existence of an all-pervading world-spirit or divine principle of Reason, Right and Justice, to live in harmony wherewith is the whole duty of man. So, to steer his course aright through the changes and chances of this mortal life, the individual must above all be wise—wise to discriminate between the solid substance of what is truly good and the empty husk of illusory desire—and being wise he will become ‘ the master of his fate and captain of his soul ’, virtuous in the midst of all temptations and happy even though he should suffer on the rack. It was a noble and unworldly ideal ; but terribly cold and inhuman, involving as it did not merely indifference to physical suffering, but the suppression of all such softer emotions as pity or love, which inevitably tend to weaken or disturb the individual’s self-sufficiency. So, in its purest form at any rate, it was a trifle too abstract and unpractical for the more common-sense Roman minds which could scarcely swallow the doctrine that pain was not an evil or be interested in arguments about the indestructibility of matter. Happily, however, this defect in it was realized by Panaetius, the Greek teacher, who became for them its chief interpreter. As a protégé of Scipio, he came naturally into contact with many influential members of society ; and serving as it did to counteract the many demoralizing tendencies of the day, the adapted Stoicism of Panaetius may be said to have moulded on more wholesome lines the best ethical and political thought of Rome’s future.

It was not indeed difficult to co-ordinate the theory of this austere philosophy with the equally austere practice of the Republic’s old-fashioned morality. But it was singularly opportune that just at the moment when the conven-

tional basis of that morality was crumbling, there should have been supplied this new basis of rational thought. In other words, what had formerly been held to be right simply by custom or by instinct, was now shown to be right on intellectual principles; and if the New Stoicism was an advance upon the old, it was precisely because so far from remaining in the realm of abstract theory it had now to be applied to the practical problems of life. To examine in detail this new Stoic philosophy would here be impossible; and as a permanent contribution to thought, the value of its various tenets was patently unequal. Thus, it mattered comparatively little that, in order to justify Italian polytheism, Zeus was identified as the supreme Spirit of the Universe of which the other gods and goddesses, as subordinate spirits, represented respectively the component parts. But it mattered very much that the old Roman insistence on the complete subordination of the individual to the State should be explained and reinforced by the doctrine that all human law is derived from this supreme Spirit of Justice and Reason and that all ordinances of State are therefore to be considered not as originating in mere convenience, still less in sheer imposture, but as being rooted in the fundamental principles of Right and Wrong. Indeed, it was in its application to the problems of jurisprudence that the effect of Stoicism was most marked. For Rome's earlier legal writers had been content with little more than the conscientious compilation of precedents and formulae; and the systematic correlation of these formulae and the definition of their underlying principles was reserved for such men as Scaevola and Sulpicius, who, though not themselves professed Stoics, were undoubtedly much influenced by Stoic doctrines. So, the codification of law, which was perhaps Rome's greatest intellectual gift to the world, received for the first time—though by no means for the last—a decisive impetus from the stimulating thought of the Greeks.

When all is said, however, it was not so much as a method of thinking that Stoicism appealed to the Romans, but rather as a way of living life. Its lofty conception of the great-souled hero unflinchingly faithful to his ideal of duty and,

though the very heavens should fall, indifferent to his fate, was exactly suited to the temper of a people who, as somebody has said, had always been unconscious Stoics; and in the troublous times ahead when all that made life worth living for the free Roman citizen seemed lost, it was only by the aid of this grim philosophy that many remained able to possess their souls.

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#### IV. INDIVIDUALISM

What, then, in sum total, we must conclude by asking, was the effect of these influences—educational, literary and philosophic—upon the governing class at Rome? Intellectually, of course, the gain was obvious; and for the task which lay ahead of them—the task, that is, of governing a Mediterranean Empire—the value of the training they received from Greece was beyond all estimate, not merely because more than half the population of that Empire was composed of Greek-speaking peoples, but because, so far as we can judge, the mental capacity necessary for its organization and administration could scarcely have been evolved in any other way. Again, the refining influence of Hellenism upon the Roman character is not by any means to be ignored. The leading personalities of the last generation of the Republic were at all events great gentlemen, a trifle pompous perhaps and apt to take themselves a good deal too seriously, but dignified, courteous and (as their private correspondence proves) astonishingly sympathetic. Few more charming letters have ever been penned than those which passed between Cicero and his various friends.

But, if we turn to the reverse side of the picture, the loss is no less plain; for there is ample evidence of a serious deterioration in both social and political standards. The obligations of Home and State—once the twin anchors of the Roman's life—were less and less observed. Divorce became increasingly common<sup>1</sup> and was often undertaken without a shadow of excuse. Attendance to public duties grew noticeably slack; and in the first century B.C. the Senate House itself was frequently more than half-empty. In the

<sup>1</sup> See p. 425.

second place, it must be admitted that the culture of the Hellenized Roman was often little more than skin-deep; and beneath the apparent refinement of his manners was still to be discerned the coarser fibre of his native temperament. The widespread taste for brutal spectacles, the inhuman treatment of agricultural slaves, above all, perhaps, the hideous excesses of internecine conflict which fill the history of the next hundred years with tales of massacre and bloodthirsty reprisal—all serve to show how superficial was the hold of the new enlightenment on all but the finest minds. Superstition, too, still lingered, where religion had been lost, and even in genuine devotees of Hellenism produced the most surprising inconsistencies. Thus, Sulla, for example, habitually carried an amulet; Caesar repeated a spell when he mounted his carriage; and Crassus (of all men!) could be terrified by a chance word of imagined ill-omen overheard at a street corner. The explanation of all this is not very far to seek. It was partly that Rome's education had been too rapid to sink deep, partly that the moral character of her teachers commanded no real respect. But perhaps the most important cause for the superficiality of her culture lay in the fact that it had been in no sense a natural or spontaneous growth. For the Roman was not by temperament a thinker. He could assimilate ideas at second-hand; but in real originality he was almost completely lacking; and it is hardly too much to say that he was incapable of mastering an intellectual problem *for himself*. The result was that his Greek education, while sufficient to upset the equilibrium of his old conventionality, left him much at the mercy of convenient catchwords and plausible half-truths.

But whether men's thought be shallow or whether it be deep, the fact remains that to think at all is in many ways a perilous business. In Greece itself, when the fifth-century sophists had first begun to popularize the art of philosophic speculation, the immediate effect had been to make men critical of the old religious and political traditions; so that from a blind, unquestioning patriotism, they had turned to a self-conscious analysis of their own feelings and desires.

Thenceforward personal rather than public interests became the mainspring of their lives; and the consequent demoralization of City State politics had tended in its turn to drive men back—the best men especially—still more upon themselves. Even of the Stoics it may be said that their philosophy was in essence self-regarding and that in their very insistence upon duties they were principally concerned to ‘save their own souls’. So from the fourth century onwards Individualism had been the keynote of Greek history; and of the last century of the Roman Republic, for broadly similar reasons, the same holds true. As the title-headings of the succeeding chapters will serve well enough to show, not merely national but international issues were to turn on the actions and ambitions of outstanding personalities. Not that all were pure self-seekers; for, though there were many such, it is beyond question that the Gracchi and Julius Caesar, for example, had the welfare of their country most genuinely at heart. But the very independence of their outlook made them incapable of that tame acceptance of the existing order which had been the mental habit of their forefathers. To the long persistence of this uncritical attitude had largely been due the fact that for more than three hundred years the Republic had gone steadily forward without any serious break in its constitutional development. But now that men were arising who placed the dictates of their own conscience or of their own ambitions above the exacting claims of the traditional conservatism, it was clear that revolution could not be very far ahead.

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE GRACCHI

#### I. TIBERIUS GRACCHUS'S LAND ACT

**I**N the year 164 there had been born to Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus, the consul, censor and governor of Spain, and his wife Cornelia, the daughter of Scipio Africanus, a son who, according to a not uncommon custom, was named after

his father. The father died early; but Cornelia was a model mother and took extraordinary pains over the education of her children, procuring the services of a certain Stoic tutor named Blossius of Cumae. Kinship with the Scipios, moreover, brought the young man into touch with all the best brains at Rome—C. Laelius and M. Scaevola the jurist amongst others; and he thus enjoyed not merely the advantages of a strict domestic upbringing, but also a close familiarity with Hellenic thought and culture. The result was an extraordinarily interesting combination of moral austerity and intellectual conceit. Strongly emotional but containing his emotions under an iron control, Tiberius lacked the geniality of his excitable younger brother; but he also lacked Caius's adaptability and breadth of vision. When faced with a problem, he saw only the shortest cut to its solution; and confident in the infallibility of his own judgement and shutting his eyes to further difficulties or deeper issues, he prepared to ride rough-shod over all opposition to the attainment of his goal. If one were to seek a parallel in history, his impulsive, obstinate and self-opinionated courage reminds one most strongly perhaps of Thomas à Becket; and indeed it is often of such stuff that martyrs have been made.

His first office, the quaestorship, took him, as we have seen, to Nearer Spain. Passing on his journey thither through the valleys of Etruria, he noted the widespread evidence of rural depopulation. Slave gangs were everywhere, and free labourers scarcely to be seen. Tiberius, we are told, was profoundly impressed. Not that he was by any means the first man in Rome to be perturbed over this agrarian problem. It needed no special perspicacity to realize that a state dependent for its very existence on the steady recruitment of its army could ill afford to suffer the extinction of its sturdy yeoman class.<sup>1</sup> Equally obvious was it that a possible solution lay ready to hand in surplus population of the overcrowded metropolis—in itself a serious

<sup>1</sup> The danger of a large servile population, on the other hand, was emphasized in 133, the very year of Tiberius's tribunate, by a terrible slave revolt in Sicily (see p. 274).

problem; and already as far back as 151 C. Laelius, the friend of the younger Scipio, had framed an abortive project for resettling urban citizens on the land. Such a scheme was, of course, nothing new in Rome's history. For precedent it was only needful to go back to Flaminius's allotments of conquered Gallic territory not a hundred years before; but even Flaminius had had to force his policy through in the teeth of strong aristocratic opposition, and there was now the further obstacle that nowhere within Italy itself was conquered territory available for distribution. True, land could have been found for the poor by breaking up and confiscating the large estates; and his tutor Blossius could have told Tiberius how in comparatively recent times this had actually been done at Sparta on the advice of a Stoic philosopher. But the large estates of Italy were mainly in the hands of the Roman aristocracy; and under the circumstances it was inconceivable that the Senate would assent to such a measure. There remained one possibility. In the past, whether during the process of her original conquests or more recently by her punitive confiscations at the close of the Second Punic War, the Republic had taken over large tracts of Italian country as state lands or *ager publicus*. Some parts of this *ager publicus* were still regularly let out on annual leases; but over others state tenants—some noble, and some poor—had been granted or had established a claim to permanent occupation, known in legal language as *possessio*, or, as we should say, 'squatter rights'. Normally indeed they were expected to pay either a tithe or a small fixed yearly rental; but its collection was by this time very laxly administered, and since many of the 'squatter' occupiers could point back to a length of tenure of a hundred years or more, it would seem on the face of it a gross injustice simply to turn them out. Technically, on the other hand, it was still within the power of the State to resume its right of ownership; and if a constitutional pretext were needed for so socialistic a measure, it might be found in the old Licinian laws—by this time a dead letter—which forbade any single individual to occupy a holding of more than 500 acres. The reinforcement of this limit would set free an



area of *ager publicus* fully adequate to the requirements of landless citizens; and such was accordingly the proposal with which Tiberius Gracchus came forward when in 133 he entered upon his famous tribuneship.

Before drafting the Bill he had consulted several eminent jurists in the Senate, and among the more enlightened members of that body he could count on the support of such men as Appius Claudius and Publius Licinius Crassus. But an attack on vested interests is a sure way to rouse strong feeling; and the majority of the governing class were loud in their denunciations. The first outcry, however, was nothing to the dismay when against all recent precedent—for such a thing had not been done within living memory—this impudent young tribune proceeded to ignore the Senate's opposition and lay his Bill direct before the Sovereign Comitia. Of the preliminary harangue with which he introduced the measure, some fragments have come down to us,<sup>1</sup> and in their bitter eloquence we can still discern the passionate sincerity which lay behind them. But material interests count for more than rhetoric, and Tiberius had, as it seemed, a comparatively easy task before him. How far the urban voters were genuinely interested is difficult to tell; for town-dwellers are seldom over-eager and indeed not always suited to the toils of agriculture. But, as Tiberius's speech suggests, there must have been many ex-soldiers who were wanting land; and the still numerous yeomen of the country-side appear to have been attracted by the prospect of bettering their position, and to have

<sup>1</sup> 'The wild beasts of Italy have dens and holes to hide in; but when the wars are over and the brave men who have spilt their blood for her come home again, they find nothing that is theirs except the daylight and the air. Hearthless and homeless, they must take their wives and families and tramp the roads like beggars. What mockery it is when the general bids his soldiers fight for their ancestral sepulchres and the gods of home. How many, think you, in the ranks to-day still own an altar that their fathers built or a tomb where their dead repose. They fight and fall to serve no other end but to multiply the possessions and comforts of the rich. We call them the World's Masters, and not a man among them all has a square foot of ground that he can call his own.'

flocked in to back the Bill. The opposition, on the other hand, was numerically weak, being practically confined to the larger landowners and any whose votes they could influence or buy. Apart from these, the most serious protest was to come from the Italian Allies, many of whom, whether as communities or as individuals, had in the past been granted squatter rights on *ager publicus*, and now bitterly resented the prospect of eviction. But Allies had no votes ; and though their grievances eventually did much to turn even Gracchus's senatorial friends against the Bill, they could have no immediate bearing on the question of its passage. Meanwhile its enemies were leaving nothing to chance. They had their plan.

The clerk of the Assembly was reading aloud the preamble of the Bill, when suddenly the blow fell. A fellow-tribune, Cn. Octavius by name, and a personal friend of Tiberius, rose and interposed his veto on the whole proceeding. He seems to have been an honest man, but how far his step was justified has been endlessly disputed. The tribunician veto was by origin intended to protect plebeian citizens against official tyranny ; and this use of it to obstruct the legitimate expression of the popular will was, to say the least, undemocratic. But the veto was a game at which more than one could play. Tiberius's blood was up, and he proceeded to lay his ban on all public business whatsoever. It would be difficult to exaggerate the dangerous character of the situation. The machinery of government was at a standstill. The law-courts stood empty. The treasury was closed. Gangs of roughs were collecting, and free fights took place in the Forum. Yet so far nothing had been done which could positively be shown to violate the Constitution.

It is less easy to say the same of Tiberius's next step. He had only a few months of office in which to carry his reform ; and he was not given to patience. If Octavius could not be persuaded to withdraw his veto (and handsome offers of compromise had certainly been made to him), then Octavius should be removed by a vote of the Assembly. The legality of such a course was almost certainly open to question. True, there had been occasions when consuls had been

suspended ; but the position of a tribune was in some ways different ; and the inviolability of his person was the very essence of his authority. Nevertheless the motion for Octavius's deposition was put and was carried. There was an undignified tussle and the unfortunate tribune was dragged by main force from the rostrum.

This obstacle removed, Tiberius proceeded unabashed to the passage of the Bill. Its original drafting had been slightly modified. For whether out of pique or because of the disputes which he saw it would involve, Tiberius had now struck out a clause which guaranteed outgoing occupiers some compensation for the improvements they had made upon their farms.<sup>1</sup> The rest of the enactments were as follows :—(1) Occupiers of *ager publicus* were to relinquish all in excess of 500 acres per man with an additional allowance of half that acreage for each son up to two ; (2) The land thus vacated was to be divided up into thirty-acre plots which were to become the inalienable holding of the future lessees at no more than a nominal rental ; (3) Finally, for the purpose of seeing the reform carried through, a Commission of Three was to be appointed. It was typical of Tiberius's tactlessness that the commission was allowed to become a purely family concern, consisting of himself, his younger brother Caius, and his father-in-law Appius Claudius. Wide powers were involved in the execution of their task ; for to launch the new settlers it was essential to provide them with implements and stock ; and if anything further were needed to exasperate Tiberius's opponents, it was supplied by his method of financing this outlay. As it so happened, the Pergamene treasure, bequeathed to Rome by King Attalus, had just fallen in. The disposition of this enormous legacy, as of all other public moneys, should by custom have been the Senate's prerogative, but what was their dismay when with the Assembly's approval Tiberius insisted on earmarking the treasure for the Commissioners' use.

The fact was that as the result of the young tribune's

<sup>1</sup> Almost certainly not a compensation in the form of money from the Treasury ; but perhaps some remission of rental on the acreage remaining to them.

whirlwind tactics all constitutional precedents were being rapidly undermined. For not merely was the Assembly reasserting its authority in a style unheard of since the epoch before the Hannibalic War; the tribuneship itself was tending to assume an entirely novel series of administrative powers—a tendency which subsequently Tiberius's younger brother was to carry very much further. It is little wonder, therefore, that the reformer's enemies began to suspect him of revolutionary intentions. He was aiming, it was said, at a despotism after the fashion of the ancient Greek tyrants. A rumour was even current that a gold crown and purple robe, kept back from the Pergamene treasure, were being reserved for his personal use. Such talk was of course arrant nonsense; but, mere surmise apart, his opponents could still point to the indisputable fact that he had laid hands on a sacrosanct tribune; and if one thing was certain, it was that on the day when he laid down his office, he would be impeached for high treason.

It was upon such an atmosphere of exaggerated suspicion and exasperated nerves that there fell like a thunderclap the startling news that Tiberius intended to stand for re-election to a second term of office. Traditional usage, as we have shown in a previous chapter, appears to have discountenanced such immediate re-election; but of its absolute illegality there must have been some question; for Tiberius at any rate was seemingly unconscious of taking a revolutionary step. Nevertheless it was clear that one re-election might very well lead to another, and consciously or unconsciously he was opening the way to a permanent dictatorship. The electioneering programme which he now put forward lent colour at any rate to his opponents' charge of demagogy; for amongst other proposals—some of which seem to have foreshadowed the subsequent legislation of his brother<sup>1</sup>—it is said to have included a relaxation of the terms of military service. To the tribal comitia this prospect naturally was not unpalatable; and the voting was in fact already going in favour of his candidature, when proceedings

<sup>1</sup> One rather doubtful authority asserts that he intended to enfranchise the Allies.

were suddenly interrupted on the question of its legality. From that moment, apparently, Tiberius was convinced that his life was in danger. Friends rallied round him; and during the next few days he did not stir abroad without an accompanying bodyguard of his supporters. When at length the tribes reassembled to continue the interrupted election, plans had carefully been laid in anticipation of an attack. If Tiberius raised his hand to his head, it was to be the signal for concerted resistance. He was standing on the slopes of the Capitol overlooking the crowded and excited Forum. Presently a friend struggled through with a message—the aristocrats were arriving and they were out for murder. Tiberius raised his hand; and snatching up planks and benches to make improvised bludgeons, his followers broke up the knots of the opposing faction. . . . Meanwhile the Senate had been sitting in the Temple of Fides. There had been hot discussion; and the extremists, led by Scipio Nasica, the doyen of the House, urged immediate declaration of war upon the ‘tyrant’. The consul refusing (for, as it so happened, he was Mucius Scaevola), they determined to take the law into their own hands; and with a determined retinue of partisans at their heels, they made for the Capitol. In the affray which followed some three hundred lives were lost; and Tiberius, clubbed on the head with a footstool, fell dead.

Thus for almost the first time since Rome became a Republic, blood had been spilt in a political quarrel. ‘Who takes the sword must perish by the sword.’ It was peculiarly ominous that it was members of the Senate, the appointed champions of public law and order, who had spilt it.

## II. SCIPIO AEMILIANUS AND THE ITALIAN ALLIES

It is customary with historians to write Tiberius Gracchus down an utter failure; and there is no denying that the most important legacy of his career was the tragic precedent of civil violence for which partially at least he shared the blame. Nevertheless it does not appear that his agrarian reform was wholly ineffectual. For although his death was followed by political reprisals and many of his chief supporters

were condemned by a senatorial committee to death or banishment, his Land Commission was allowed to continue its work, tempered by the substitution of Licinius Crassus in the dead tribune's place. The progress of its activities is attested by numerous inscriptions; and—though the inference is not certain—the sharp rise in the census lists, from 318,823 in 131 to 394,726 in 125, seems to indicate that upwards of eighty thousand citizens had been resettled on the land.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, however, it is equally clear that much serious friction was caused by the process of eviction. Individual occupiers, as was but natural, stood firm upon their title; and endless litigation was needed to disprove it. So great, in fact, was the irritation caused by the enforcement of the Act that in 129 the decision of disputed cases was taken out of the hands of the Commissioners and entrusted to the consuls of the year. Owing to the consuls' frequent and perhaps deliberate absences the result can only have been to impede, though not wholly to suspend, the operation of the reform—doubtless to the extreme satisfaction of the big landowners. The satisfaction of the big landowners was, nevertheless, not the primary intention of the change; for it was made at the instance of Scipio Aemilianus, to safeguard the interests of those individuals or communities among the Italian allies who were liable to be losers by the Act.

During his Spanish campaign Scipio had found himself in command of regiments composed of Italians; and their cause, it would seem, made a strong appeal to his sympathies both as a soldier and a philanthropist. Indeed, he was among the very first of Roman statesmen to realize how harsh and how impolitic was the Republic's treatment of these long-suffering subjects. Though providing the battle-fodder for her interminable wars, they possessed, as we have shown above, no civic rights whatever, and therefore, when threatened with a summary cancellation of their squatter

<sup>1</sup> Such settlers would, of course, have been technically citizens previous to their assignment of land; but it would seem that only landholders and not mere landless vagrants were included in the censors' lists as eligible for military service.

rights, no constitutional appeal against the Commissioners' decision. On his return from Numantia Scipio was met with a request to act as their legal representative. He acceded; and the change which he procured in the adjudication of the Land Act gave the allies at least some respite from the impending confiscations. It would seem, however, that this did not content him, and that he further intended to take some definite steps to improve their political position. Whatever his proposals were, they never saw the light of day; for on the very morning when he was to have addressed the Assembly on the subject of his policy he was found dead in his bed. Foul play, though suspected, was never proved; but in any case it was a tragic end to what was itself, in some ways, a tragic career. Compelled by circumstances to become the executioner of Carthage and the extinguisher of the great Spanish revolt, Scipio was at heart more a lover of learning and a student of books than a practical man of affairs. His cultured and magnanimous spirit was too refined for the crude violence of contemporary politics; and though his talents and achievements placed it well within his power to have become a real national leader, he remained to the end that somewhat pathetic figure—an ineffective idealist.

The explanation of Scipio's failure lay largely perhaps in his hatred of extremes. For, like many liberal-minded statesmen, he found it impossible to identify himself fully with either of the two political parties. On the one hand, he could not share the narrow-minded selfishness of the conservative majority in the Senate—now coming to be known under the name of 'Optimates'; and he was, in particular, an unsparing critic of their provincial maladministration against which he is known on more than one occasion to have instituted legal proceedings. On the other hand, as a constitutionalist, he could not approve the reckless and irregular tactics of the Gracchan democrats. Even the tragedy of the Capitol seems to have roused in him no qualms<sup>1</sup>; and during the years which immediately followed

<sup>1</sup> He is said to have quoted from Homer's *Odyssey*:  
'So perish likewise all who work such deeds.'

it he had used his great prestige in the Assembly to check the progress of reform, successfully resisting in 131 a proposal brought forward by Tiberius's friend Papirius Carbo to legitimize re-election to the tribunate.

After Scipio's death, however, there was no one left to hold a balance between the two opposing parties, and the issue between them became once more acute. The democrats renewed their efforts, with the result that Papirius's proposal was passed into law; and by a still more skilful stroke of political strategy they took a leaf out of Scipio's book and assumed the championship of the Italian allies.<sup>1</sup> It would scarcely seem, however, that their motives were as disinterested as his. The Allies' opposition was now the chief obstacle to the execution of the Land Act; and to placate such opposition, it seemed well worth while to offer them the franchise, the more so since the votes with which the franchise would endow them would presumably be cast on the democrat side. Indeed, seeing how unstable was the Assembly's attitude—for, as events will show, the Roman mob was anything but wholehearted in the interests of reform—the acquisition of fresh support was essential to the cause; and, although most Italians lived too far from Rome to allow of regular attendance at comitia, yet there were, we know, already residing in the capital itself a number of immigrants from allied communities or 'Latin' colonies, and once the franchise was extended, their number could not fail to increase, until eventually it might prove a powerful or even a decisive factor in the party struggle. For this reason, if for no other, the enfranchisement of the allies would have been a real advantage to the democrats and correspondingly a serious blow to their senatorial opponents; and it was doubtless with the intention of forestalling such a measure that the latter determined to strike first. In 126 they persuaded the Assembly to take the drastic step of expelling all 'aliens' from the capital; and though this measure was probably aimed, in its primary intention, at the summary removal of Italian agitators, yet its further

<sup>1</sup> It is, of course, possible that Tiberius had already taken this line. See p. 238, footnote.



advantages, from a conservative point of view, are not difficult to see. Next, in 125, when as consul for the year the democrat Fulvius Flaccus brought a motion for Italian enfranchisement, they somehow induced him to abandon the proposal and then hurried him off—well out of harm's way—on a military mission to Liguria. Expectations had run high among the Allied communities; and this frustration of their hopes caused the 'Latin' town of Fregellae to come out in open revolt. But its courageous stand found no imitators. The revolt was promptly crushed, the town utterly destroyed; and the episode was meanly utilized to discredit the democrat leaders—Caius Gracchus himself amongst others—by charges of complicity. As Gracchus had only just returned from his quaestorship in Sardinia, he was able to clear himself with ease; and at the summer election of 124 he stood for the tribuneship to which he was duly elected for the following year.

### III. CAIUS GRACCHUS

From the series of events which we have just described one obvious fact emerges. The Roman Assembly, though ready to follow the reformers in their agrarian agitation, was equally ready to follow their opponents when it came to be a question of the Italian franchise. The reason for this is not difficult to see. The possession of civic rights, as we have remarked already, entitled the holder to some valuable material privileges. In particular the distributions of cheap corn, not infrequently made by grateful foreign princes, successful generals or ambitious politicians, were confined to citizens and citizens alone; and hungry stomachs were justly sensitive to the arithmetical argument that the smaller the number of candidates for such gratuities, the larger would be the share for each individual man. The same argument probably applied to the bribes so freely lavished by seekers after office, and, most certainly, to the accommodation at public entertainments which citizens tended to monopolize. On these rather than on purely political grounds, the urban populace resented any talk of an enlargement of the citizen-body as bitterly as the British

voters of the rotten boroughs resented the Reform Bill of 1832. Thus the democrats were placed in an uncomfortable dilemma. If they proceeded with their land schemes, they would offend the Italian allies; if they sought to placate the allies by an offer of enfranchisement, they would offend the city mob; yet short of some such measure they could never be secure, under the prevailing conditions of corruption and intrigue, of maintaining a permanent control of the comitia.

Such, then, was the complicated situation which confronted Caius Gracchus when in the year 123 he entered on his tribuneship—a senatorial majority so narrowly selfish that they shut their eyes to every current issue except the need of restoring their own damaged authority and so scared by his brother Tiberius's bold challenge that they would scarcely listen to any counsel of prudence or reform; an Assembly dominated by an inconstant and venal mob which had no further idea of policy than to distribute its favours to whichever party could make the most tempting bid; and finally a condition of affairs both at Rome and in Italy which no decent-minded patriot could contemplate with other feelings than disgust and despair.

Happily Caius Gracchus was a statesman of no common order; and it is probably no exaggeration to say that his mind was one of the most supple and ingenious in history. Like his elder brother, he was a red-hot enthusiast; but unlike him, he made little effort to control his passions. On the platform he would work himself to a frenzy of excitement, striding to and fro on the rostrum, flinging his toga from his shoulders in the energy of his gesticulations, and, if stories are true, even employing a slave with a pitch-pipe to prevent his voice mounting to a hysterical shriek. It is not in such a temperament to do anything by halves; and Caius was undoubtedly a good hater. Among his earliest measures were, the outlawry of Popilius, the consul responsible for the execution of Tiberius's partisans, and then an attempt (which he subsequently abandoned) to debar the ex-tribune Octavius from holding further office. Nevertheless, to attribute these personal attacks to pure vindictive-

ness would probably be wide of the mark ; for the punishment of Popilius, at any rate, was clearly meant to challenge the Senate's assumed right of prosecuting for high treason. In any case it would be a palpable error to interpret Caius' career as one long vendetta against his brother's murderers. He was too great a man for such meanness ; and violent as were his emotions, they can seldom be said to have either warped his judgement or hindered his practical efficiency. His powers of application were extraordinary ; and at the height of his power he was controlling with apparent ease the work of half a dozen departments at once. Again, as compared with Tiberius whose only method of meeting opposition was the not very intelligent procedure of direct frontal attack, Caius was a past-master of political strategy. Men have called him an opportunist, and have said in particular that by his introduction of the corn-dole he merely solved one difficulty by creating a worse. Yet, viewed as a whole, his various policies will be seen to present a plan so nicely co-ordinated and so comprehensive that there seems scarcely to have been a single problem of the day—social, political or economic—for which he did not offer some sort of a solution. All this was to be accomplished, or rather, to be attempted within the brief space of two years. But it is particularly unfortunate that we do not know for certain the precise chronological sequence of his numerous legislative acts. What, however, seems certain is that during his first year of office, he made no attempt to raise the question of the Italian franchise. This most thorny of problems he wisely left on one side until he should have given himself full time to consolidate his own position.

The initial need of a tribune who intended to carry far-reaching reforms through the medium of the tribal Assembly, was to secure so far as possible a permanent control over the city populace. Caius's method of achieving this control is amongst the most criticized of his acts—the institution of the corn-dole ; yet even here there is much that may be said in his defence. In the past there is every reason to believe the administration of the corn-supply to have been erratic and inefficient. It was entrusted, as we have seen,

to aediles who were normally young and inexperienced and who in any case held office for no more than a single year. There was no adequate means of storage, so that a bad harvest or delay in transport might at any time create a shortage; and Gracchus's determination to place the whole system on a more scientific basis is deserving of all praise. He had large granaries built to hold a satisfactory reserve, and arranged for a regular distribution of 5 modii per month to every citizen resident in Rome who chose to apply in person. This meant, on a rough estimate, a 2-lb. loaf per diem, a bare subsistence for a small family. The financial side of the arrangement presented no special difficulties; for a large part of the supply the State derived gratis from the Sicilian tithe-surplus; and on this score presumably Gracchus must have calculated that the Treasury could afford to charge the recipients *only half the normal market price* and still be well in pocket.<sup>1</sup> But here the trouble began. For, in the first place, he was badly out in his reckoning; and the dole became a serious drain on the funds of the Exchequer. Nor was this the worst; for one effect, as is obvious, was an unhealthy pauperization of the urban proletariat, and incidentally a direct encouragement to wastrels from outside to come in and swell their ranks. Finally there can be little question that the prices procurable by Italian agriculturists (and among them the small-holders newly launched under the Land Act) must have been somewhat affected by the artificial cheapening of corn at the capital.<sup>2</sup> As against this last objection Gracchus might plausibly have argued that a systematic rationing, even if uneconomic, would be less likely in the long run to dislocate the market than the irregular distributions and occasional gratuities of former days. On the broader issue he would probably have met

<sup>1</sup> Charitable corn-doles were a device occasionally employed in the socialistic democracies of the Greek decadence; and Gracchus may well have been following this precedent.

<sup>2</sup> The larger landowners tended to abandon corn production, especially in the vicinity of Rome, and it was the remaining yeomen of the more distant districts who still continued to grow corn, mainly for local needs. This doubtless explains why, after Gracchus's death, no outcry was raised against the continuance of the dole.

the strictures of his critics by saying that the corn-dole was a temporary measure designed to meet an acute need during an interim period, until the other reforms which he had in view should have restored a more general prosperity.

For Gracchus did not deal merely in palliatives. On the contrary, most of his measures were strikingly constructive; and there was something almost uncanny about the skill with which he laid his finger on the crux of every problem. Within Italy itself, where the days of self-contained agricultural communities were now gone by and where town and country were with every year becoming more and more interdependent, he saw that an improvement of transport facilities was essential to progress; and we find him accordingly building roads of commercial rather than strategic importance, constructing bridges over rivers and causeways across marshes and even modifying the gradient on the steeper hills. His brother's Land Commission was revived and resumed its operations; but partly because (first perhaps of Roman politicians) he perceived the paramount necessity of stimulating overseas trade, and partly too, it may be, because he saw that the town-bred Roman was more likely to make good as a merchant than as a farmer, he deliberately set out to plant new citizen colonies at sites of obvious commercial potentialities. His choice fell on Capua, the old Campanian capital, reduced to a mere village at the close of the Punic War, but conveniently near the thriving centres of Puteoli and Naples; at Tarentum which was to be given the resounding name of Neptunia; and—by far the most interesting of all—on the desolate peninsula on which once had stood the city of Carthage and which also was to be re-christened as Junonia. This last idea of planting Roman colonists beyond the seas was a departure of rare originality; and though, as we shall see, it was doomed to frustration through the malice of Caius's enemies, the policy of a transmarine extension of the citizenship was ultimately to become the very corner-stone of Rome's future imperial system.

The foregoing series of measures, all calculated to benefit in one way or another the citizen-body of Rome, was further

reinforced by a military reform for bettering the lot of the citizen-soldier, first by forbidding the enlistment of lads under seventeen, and second by making State provision for the clothing which hitherto the rank and file had found out of their own purse. The result of such measures, and in particular of the cheapening of the corn-dole, was to win for Gracchus the enthusiastic backing of the urban proletariat ; and henceforward in the Assembly he could do pretty well as he pleased. Yet knowing the weathercock ways of this demoralized body of voters, he was far too shrewd a hand to rely upon its support alone. His interest in commerce, moreover, of which we spoke above, must have brought him closely into touch with middle-class merchants and, in particular, with big business men ; and although as yet their political status was merely that of the ordinary voter, their support in the vicissitudes of the party struggle was not a factor to be despised. It was probably in the first year of Caius's tribuneship that a chance was offered him of doing them a good turn. Since the acquisition of the new province of Asia, its taxes had been collected, as under its native kings, through the agency of local authorities. But in bad years the lump sum demanded of them was not too secure of payment ; and financial considerations must have suggested to Gracchus that it might be better to substitute a tithe on annual produce and, in imitation of the Sicilian system, to entrust its collection to capitalist contractors. He accordingly arranged that this extremely lucrative privilege should be put up for auction not in Asia, but at Rome ; and, seeing what was the scale of the contract, it was a foregone conclusion that it would be knocked down to one of the big ' publican ' syndicates. To suppose that Gracchus himself foresaw the deplorable consequences is a palpable absurdity. In Sicily, as we have seen, the system of ' farmed ' collection worked tolerably well. The substitution of the tithe in place of the fixed tribute was calculated in bad years to bear less heavily on the natives, and there is no reason to suppose that its introduction was unpopular. It is therefore hardly fair to lay the blame on Gracchus if almost from the outset the capitalists proceeded to exploit

the Asiatics in a scandalous fashion. What does less credit to his foresight is that within the next few months he deliberately removed the only constitutional means of controlling them.

This blunder, nevertheless, was in a sense incidental to a much larger scheme which, in its first conception at least, bore all the marks of statesmanship. The form of constitution towards which Gracchus's reforms were tending was obviously that of a sovereign popular Assembly, to which the Senate should be subordinate and the magistrates directly responsible. A large part of this programme he had already achieved. Not merely had the Senate been rendered practically powerless to control or impede legislation. It had also lost its favourite means of ensuring the subservience of magistrates by rewarding the subservient alone with big provincial plums; for this abuse had been stopped by one of Gracchus's measures enacting that henceforward the assignment of prospective proconsular vacancies should be made *before* and not after the consular elections. The Senate, therefore, was no longer in itself very greatly to be feared. Nevertheless, in a State of such strongly conservative traditions, there remained the uncomfortable certainty that, for some while to come at least, the senatorial aristocracy would continue to supply the majority of candidates for office and so to monopolize the chief administrative posts. In other words, administrative policy, especially in the provinces, would still to a large extent remain in the hands of the old governing class; and for this there seemed no remedy except to modify the character of that class by an infusion of fresh blood. Gracchus apparently thought that this might be accomplished; for there is authority for believing that he entertained a project for leavening the Senate with a large admixture of members drawn from the capitalist class. To carry so sweeping a reform, however, must have seemed beyond his power; and he was forced to fall back upon a second best and to constitute of the capitalists a new and rival 'order' to act watchdog, as it were, over the misdemeanours of the old.

This he did by his famous judiciary law which handed

over to those whose property qualification entitled them to rank as Equites or Knights<sup>1</sup> the privilege of forming the jury panels in the standing court for extortion. Henceforward, therefore, if a provincial governor should lay himself open to public prosecution, instead of being able to count on the indulgence of a jury very largely composed of ex-governors like himself, he would find himself compelled to face an unsympathetic court of capitalist 'Knights'. Yet the reform, as we have hinted, possessed one serious defect. For if a governor had his methods of extortion, the capitalists, as tax-collectors, equally had theirs; and, as the issue proved,<sup>2</sup> their new judicial power enabled them to see to it that any governor who attempted to interfere with their excesses was made to rue it on his return to Rome.

A still worse result, perhaps, of this well-meant reform was the bitter antagonism which such conflict of material interests created between the old order of Senators and the new order of Knights. For it is undeniable that the system which was intended to provide a constitutional check deteriorated rapidly into a vulgar struggle of class. Yet once again we must be fair to Gracchus. For it is at least possible that the elevation of the Knights to a place within the constitution represented in his eyes an intermediate stage to the attainment of his original ambition, and that he genuinely hoped that rather than endure the persistent interference of this jealous and critical body, the Senators would sooner or later prefer to admit the Knights into real partnership. Nor, in any case, is Gracchus to be airily condemned if, having regard to the future welfare of Rome and her dependencies, he was inclined to put more faith in the shrewd common sense and wider knowledge of the world to be found in the untried *bourgeoisie* than in the proven incapacity and blind intransigence of the old senatorial stock.

It was a striking testimony to the extent of Gracchus's authority that when there arose the question of selecting the

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 214.

<sup>2</sup> e.g. Rutilius Rufus, who in 99 B.C. tried to protect the provincials of Asia against the extortions of the publicani, and was subsequently accused and convicted by the Equites (see p. 278).



personnel for the new equestrian jury-panels, the drawing up of the list was left to his personal discretion. Nor can there be much doubt that by this time he had already secured his re-election to a fresh term of office, and perhaps had already entered upon his second year. Thus strongly entrenched, he wielded a power which it is no exaggeration to call autocratic. Every one's eyes were upon him. Ambassadors from foreign states were glad to wait on him. His numerous administrative activities kept a throng of folk perpetually dancing attendance. Architects came to consult him about the plans for the new granaries, engineers to discuss the building of new roads, land-surveyors to report progress on the laying out of his new colonies. All these responsibilities he carried with an air of patient affability and an easy mastery of detail. Even the Senate which a few years before had considered it *de rigueur* for a tribune to consult *them*, was now ready to listen attentively when he condescended to give an outline of his plans; and he did so, it would seem, with a disarming moderation. He was getting into his stride.

Yet the Senate, though cowed, were not beaten; and it was now high time for them to show their hand. So firm, however, was Gracchus's hold upon the people that an overt challenge seemed useless; and the only real hope was to discover some underhand method of weakening or destroying his popularity. To this end another tribune, named Marcus Livius Drusus, a man of great oratorical powers, was deliberately put forward as a counter-demagogue; and giving himself out to represent a Senate miraculously converted to the people's cause, he proceeded to outbid Gracchus for the Assembly's favour. Thus, whereas Gracchus had proposed to found two or three colonies of a commercial type in Italy, Drusus proposed to found twelve on the old agricultural pattern; and, where the Gracchan Land Act arranged that the new settlers should pay a trifling rental, Drusus for his part proposed that they should have their allotments free. It was an ominous sign that the hypocrisy of this programme was apparently not realized even by those whom it chiefly concerned.

The most crucial point, however, on which the two rival tribunes differed was over the vexed question of Italian enfranchisement. Drusus's policy was extremely shrewd. Well knowing its unpopularity with the existing citizen-body he scouted the idea that Latins or allies should be admitted to their ranks; but to make up for the disappointment of the Latins' hopes, he proposed to abolish what had long been a standing grievance with their soldiery—the liability to scourging at the order of Roman officers. Gracchus, on the other hand, was contemplating a measure of enfranchisement far more carefully thought out than the scheme recently put forward by his friend Fulvius Flaccus. His proposal was that the allies generally should be given the so-called 'Latin' or half franchise, which would give a legal sanction under Roman law to their *private* contracts in connexion with marriage and trade (and which most probably in Gracchus's eyes implied a further prospect of ultimate promotion to full political rights). Meanwhile the thirty communities already possessing the 'Latin' franchise were to be allowed their choice whether (*a*) to accept immediate and complete incorporation in the Roman state, which, while conferring the vote—a somewhat doubtful boon to the more distant—would also necessitate a contribution to the Treasury in the event of war-taxation, or (*b*) to retain their present status of political autonomy with the added privilege of 'provocatio' or appeal from arbitrary arrest or sentence to the Assembly's verdict. This last suggestion was specially designed to meet the notorious scandal—most bitterly resented among Latin towns—that they were frequently subjected to irresponsible maltreatment from passing Roman magistrates. As evidence of this scandal Gracchus quoted in one of his speeches a typical selection of disgraceful incidents—of an inhabitant of Venusia brutally beaten to death for having jeered at a young Roman official's newfangled sedan, or again of the Mayor of Teanum who was actually scourged because the town bath had not been cleared quick enough to please a consul's wife. Such behaviour was intolerable; and had the right of 'provocatio' been open to the sufferers, not even the Roman mob, with all its anti-Latin bias, would have

refused them some redress. On the more general question of reform, however, the Roman mob was less likely to be generous; and as against Drusus's far less revolutionary proposal, it would have needed all Gracchus's authority and eloquence to carry it through. It is therefore not surprising that when voting-day came round, it seemed wiser to the democrats to postpone the franchise issue; for at this highly critical juncture their leader was no longer on the spot.

The curious episode of Gracchus's African mission—for to Africa he had gone—was perhaps the most serious tactical blunder of his whole career. Nothing seems more certain than that the secret of his ascendancy at Rome lay largely in the magnetic quality of his personal presence. The very life-like picture of him which we have from Plutarch makes this abundantly clear; and, seeing how vital to the success of his cause was the maintenance of his control over a notoriously fickle Assembly—the more so since that control was now challenged by a rival—he could very ill afford to absent himself from the city even for a single day, much less for seventy. But he was one of the Commissioners for the planting of his new commercial colonies. Those which it was intended to found in Italy were somehow hanging fire; and it was apparently on the resurrection of the ruins of old Carthage that Gracchus now pinned his chief hope. So he determined to superintend its foundation in person. These new Gracchan colonies were planned on a very much larger scale than the old strategic colonies of the past. There were to be no less than 6,000 allotments at Junonia and to make up the quota Gracchus had to invite settlers drawn from Latin and allied communities as well as from the citizens proper—a sad commentary on the lack of enterprise existing among the urban proletariat. The inaugural ceremonies were duly performed. The appointed area was marked out with boundary stones; according to ancient custom a plough was driven round it; a standard was flown—and then Gracchus came home again to find that during his absence his own popularity had already begun to wane. Fulvius Flaccus, his chief lieutenant, had been

anything but tactful. His Carthaginian colony roused no enthusiasm; and among his conservative opponents it was most unpopular. Many of them, in all likelihood, had invested money in the syndicates which leased the confiscated land in Africa, and resenting the prospect of competitors to these lucrative plantations, they did their level best to discredit the whole scheme. Superstitious objections were urged; and stories of bad omens were sedulously spread—that Scipio had cursed the site, that hyenas had dug up Gracchus's boundary stones during the night, that the standard-pole had broken more than once. But it now scarcely needed even such fatuities to turn the folk against the great reformer. Secure of its corn-dole, the mob, with a mob's ingratitude, was tiring of its benefactor. When his Franchise Bill came up for decision, he failed to get it through; and worse was to follow. In the course of the summer came the elections. Gracchus, of course, stood for re-election once more. Harvest was in progress at the time and his rustic supporters could not leave their farms. He was not re-elected.

During the few months of office still remaining to him Caius could do nothing except look forward with impotent foreboding to the day when, as a private citizen once more, he would be compelled to face the vengeance of his foes. But even when his period of tribunician power ran out, he was still a colonial commissioner; and it was only natural that the first object of attack should have been the policy on which this official status rested. The new consul Opimius moved in the Senate for the cancellation of the new settlement at Carthage. A Bill was put before the Assembly. Feeling ran high; and though Gracchus himself was for peaceful methods at all costs, some of his followers, and Fulvius Flaccus in particular, were in a hot mood. Supporters were rallied from the country-side, and when the Assembly gathered, many carried swords under their cloaks. During the ceremonial preliminaries, one of Opimius's attendants flung an insult at Gracchus. A democrat stepped forward and struck the man dead. Then suddenly a thunderstorm broke and the Assembly dispersing, a riot was narrowly

averted. Nevertheless, the one rash blow had played into the hands of the senatorial party.

By next morning they had armed their partisans; and these ostentatiously proceeded to parade the corpse of the murdered man in the Forum. When Gracchus attempted to interrupt comitial proceedings with an expression of apology, he was accused of the technical but very serious irregularity of 'diverting the Assembly'. A hurried meeting of the Senate declared a state of emergency within the city, and empowered the consul to take what measures he deemed fit for the preservation of the Republic. The legality of such an 'ultimate decree' became later the subject of bitter controversy; but at the heat of a crisis constitutional theories go for nothing. Flaccus was known to be concentrating his supporters on the Aventine. An ultimatum summoning both him and Caius to appear before the House was met by counter-proposals for a general amnesty. Finally, negotiations breaking down, Opimius declared the two democrat leaders to be public enemies, set a price on their heads, and proceeded to the attack. After a fierce tussle the hill was carried and Fulvius Flaccus killed. Gracchus, who had been utterly disheartened at the turn affairs had taken, was with difficulty persuaded to flee. Towards the Tiber bridge, he fell and wrenched an ankle, struggled on amid a cheering but unhelpful crowd, entered a sacred enclosure in the neighbourhood of the Janiculum, and there persuaded a slave who was now his sole companion to stab him to the heart. When the pursuit came up, his head was cut off and carried to the consul. It is said that its captor received its weight in gold.

It is commonly maintained that Caius Gracchus was an unpractical idealist who as the result of his well-meant efforts left the Roman proletariat demoralized and Roman politics the cockpit of bitter party antagonisms. But, though statesmanship, like anything else, must be judged by its fruits, there are one or two factors which should here be borne in mind. In the first place, Gracchus's period of power was, through no fault of his own, extraordinarily short;

and it seems certain that a man who was able within two years to accomplish so much had not in that time exhausted the resources of an abnormally fertile brain. The general constitutional scheme which he would seem to have had in view was that of a thorough-paced democracy led by himself in an elective but more or less permanent capacity such as had secured for Pericles the prolonged leadership of Athens. It was to be a democracy, moreover, not narrowly confined to an electorate which in practice was virtually identical with the worthless urban mob, but a democracy enlarged and reinvigorated by the incorporation of the sound Italian stock. The fundamental objections to such a scheme were twofold—partly geographical and partly psychological. For first, it would never have been possible, short of the invention of some machinery for elective representation, for more than a tiny fraction of the inhabitants of Italy to exercise a real control over the central government: nor, again, is it by any means certain that the mentality of the race, whether Roman or Italian, could ever have adapted itself to a democratic system of government which among the livelier city-states of Greece had worked for a while with tolerable success, but which even there had scarcely proved equal to the management of an overseas Empire. The most serious criticism, in fact, which can be levelled against Gracchus's constitutional dream, is that it looked better on paper than it was likely to work out in real life. In other words it was—what we should naturally expect from a man of his years and of his intellectual antecedents—the outcome rather of keen study of political theory than of mature experience of political practice. Yet even for ourselves, well knowing as we do what was to Gracchus a dark and hidden future, it is far from easy to suggest a course which he should or might have taken. At a time when Rome was fast sinking into a state of hopeless and helpless demoralization, he put forward an ideal which, whatever its faults, at least inspired the men of succeeding generations to a more active effort at reform. His programme outlived him. Some parts of it were in time translated into fact; but not one of the democrat leaders who attempted to follow in his wake proved capable of initiating a compre-

hensive policy, until at length Caesar undertook the task in a very different rôle.

## CHAPTER XV

## MARIUS AND THE SENATE

## I. THE SENATORIAL REACTION

GRACCHUS and Fulvius Flaccus having fallen and their movement being thereby left without a leader, the senatorial counter-attack could have free play. After the 'battle' of the Aventine, the consul Opimius condemned to death without trial 3,000 democrats. Women were even forbidden to make mourning for the dead; and though many folk persisted in paying pious homage to Gracchus's memory, all open opposition was completely cowed. When two years later the author of this hideous reprisal was impeached by a tribune before the centuriate assembly, his acquittal gave the endorsement of public opinion to the legitimacy of the Senate's 'ultimate decree'. Meanwhile steps were being taken to modify or in some cases to abolish the agrarian and colonial measures of the Gracchan régime. In 121 the small-holders settled under the Land Act were empowered to sell their plots; and in consequence the farms began to pass back into the hands of the big proprietors, till it was said (though doubtless with much exaggeration) that the lands of Roman Italy were vested in the ownership of no more than 2,000 persons. In 118 the Land Commission was dissolved, and the allotment of small-holdings thereby brought to an end. Finally, in 111 all those who still held *ager publicus* on 'squatter' tenancy were granted absolute possession free of rent or tithe.<sup>1</sup> In other words, the State's claim upon such land was abandoned once for all. Future schemes of redistribution were therefore rendered impossible except by legitimate purchase or outright confiscation; and the big aristocratic landowners

<sup>1</sup> This did not apply to the State ownership of large tracts of pasture, nor, it seems, to certain agricultural lands in Campania.

could once more feel themselves comparatively secure. As for the colonial policy of Gracchus, the year of his death must certainly have seen the cancellation of his Carthaginian settlement. But what is very remarkable is that in 118 (as we saw in a previous chapter) a transmarine colony of a commercial character was planned in the new province of Transalpine Gaul. This can only have been due to the influence of the Knights whose interest in commercial undertakings must on this occasion have carried the day, though we may shrewdly guess that some Senators, too, whose money was invested with capitalist syndicates regarded the scheme with approval. Similar financial considerations may also serve partly to explain why no very vigorous attack was made on the new constitutional powers of the Knights. For though about 111 some attempt was on foot to repeal the Gracchan jury-law, it came to nothing. Certain alterations were made in judicial procedure ; but the Knights' monopoly of the panels was allowed to stand unchanged.

The Senate's counter-attack had proved, in short, a very mild affair. Their victory of 122 had restored to them, indeed, their old pre-eminence ; but the very circumstances under which that victory had been won had given them a terrible fright, and they simply did not dare to follow it up to its logical conclusions by openly attacking either the powers of the Assembly, or of the Knights or even of the tribunes. Yet things in Rome were never the same again : and the ultimate result of the Gracchan revolution was to leave weakened and discredited every political element within the State. It had shown that the Senate's position was not impregnable ; and the prestige of the Order never recovered from the shock. It had given the Assembly a new appetite for power and had simultaneously proved that the Assembly was unworthy to wield it. Last but not least, the use to which the tribunate had been put, had broken the fine old tradition of magisterial harmony. It opened opportunities for the dangerous self-assertion of individual ambitions. It taught tribunes to employ their prerogative of veto for factious and anti-social ends. It encouraged demagogic appeals to the worst instincts of the mob, and so tended to



produce in the holders of the office a complete bankruptcy of statesmanship. Though such men were often employed to forward the interests of ambitious magnates, the tribunate itself was never again a great independent power in politics ; and the real leaders of the future, as we shall very soon see, were to owe their influence not so much to the fact that they were magistrates as to the fact that they were military chiefs.

## II. THE WAR AGAINST JUGURTHA

One of the final tests of the efficiency of an administration—more particularly in an imperial and militarist state—is its capacity for the successful conduct of war ; and even the Roman public would not long tolerate the bungling of a government which knew neither when to begin a campaign nor how to end it. It is sometimes said that the Senate's foreign policy during the next few years was intended to divert men's thoughts from the domestic situation ; but in truth not even the tribunate of Caius Gracchus did so much to undermine the prestige of the governing class as their failure to deal faithfully with the irresponsible antics of a petty Numidian prince.

Numidia, which after Zama had been assigned the status of a vassal ally, had passed first from Massinissa to his son Micipsa, and then on Micipsa's death in 118 had been bequeathed by him in joint succession to his two sons Adherbal and Hiempsal and a nephew named Jugurtha. Jugurtha, who became henceforward the villain of the story, was in many ways a typical Numidian. In his early days he had been a handsome young dare-devil whose breezy bonhomie had won the admiration and friendship of many Roman subalterns alongside whom he had served with distinction in the Numantine War. But beneath this attractive exterior was concealed a character of peculiarly treacherous and calculated cunning. A shrewd observation of his messmates' talk and habits had suggested to him that in the intrigue and corruption then so prevalent in Rome might be found fit instruments to the achievement of his personal ambitions ; or, in other words, that if he for his part could get his way in Africa, the suzerain power might

easily be squared. No sooner, therefore, had he entered upon his joint inheritance than he laid plans for the removal of his two inconvenient cousins. Secret agents procured the assassination of Hiempsal ; Adherbal was driven out, and fled to Rome ; and it only remained for Jugurtha, now master of Numidia, to convince the Senate of the justice of his claim. The description of what follows comes down to us from Sallust, a historian who as the friend and admirer of Julius Caesar was notoriously eager to emphasize the venality and incompetence of the ruling caste. Some allowance, therefore, must probably be made for exaggeration due to this bias. Nevertheless it seems certain that when Jugurtha set out to offer bribes to Roman politicians, there were plenty of Roman politicians only too ready to accept them. As a result, the Senate itself became divided into two conflicting camps of Jugurtha's supporters and Jugurtha's enemies.

In the immediate issue the latter proved the stronger ; and in 116 a commission was sent over which divided Numidia between the rival claimants. Nothing daunted, Jugurtha once more attacked Adherbal and drove him into Cirta on the north-west border. While pressing the siege, he contrived somehow to fob off with specious promises two successive embassies of Roman protest. Then capturing Cirta, he impudently proceeded to massacre a large number of Italian merchants and settlers who had joined in the defence. The fat was now on the fire. Tribunes were beginning to make open denunciation of the Senate's weakness ; and no doubt in capitalist circles there was natural indignation at the damage done to the commercial interest. If only to silence criticism, therefore, the consul for 111, one L. Calpurnius Bestia, was sent over with an army to bring the defiant prince to book. But the campaign, after a promising start, was never really pressed home. The motive is not wholly clear ; but anxiety for their northern frontier where the restless movement of fresh barbarian hordes was becoming a grave menace, must have weighed heavily with the Senate, and made them naturally nervous of fresh military commitments. At any rate, peace was hurriedly patched up in Numidia. It is highly probable that money passed ; for

Jugurtha got off lightly with a small indemnity and was duly reinstated. This done the consul came home and then the storm of indignation burst. A tribune carried the motion for a full investigation. Jugurtha was even summoned to Rome to give evidence in person; and interesting disclosures were eagerly awaited. But barely had the inquiry opened when, despite the protests of a howling mob, another tribune rose and interposed his veto. Nevertheless, Jugurtha's presence in Rome had serious consequences. For there was also, as it happened, then present at the capital a certain cousin of his, Massiva by name, whom certain mischief-makers egged on to assert a rival claim to the Numidian throne. Jugurtha, who stuck at nothing, very promptly had him murdered and then smuggled the assassin out of Italy. This was more than even the Senate could tolerate. Jugurtha's person was protected by his guarantee of safe-conduct; but he was sent about his business. He left, so the story goes, with the cynical farewell, 'A city for sale—to the man whose purse is long enough.'

The war was now reopened (110); and the consul Albinus was sent to the front. During a temporary absence, he left an incompetent brother in charge; and under this leadership the army went off on a wild-goose chase after Jugurtha, with the lamentable result that it was cut off in the desert, its camp carried by a surprise assault, and every man compelled to pass under the yoke (110). At Rome panic-mongers raised an outcry for a fresh inquiry, and this time the anti-senatorial party had its way. Both Bestia and Albinus were condemned and sent into exile; and incidentally Opimius, the old enemy of the Gracchi, suffered the same fate.

It is highly improbable that all this uproar was simply due to tribunician agitation and the mob's excitability. There can be little doubt that the capitalist class (and under their influence perhaps some senators) perceived in the conquest of Jugurtha an opportunity for fresh annexations which might be turned to their own use. They had already made a good thing out of the confiscated plantations of Carthage; and the prospect of rich openings to be found in Numidia may well have given an edge to the new determina-

tion to see the war through. At any rate the consul Metellus, sent out in 109 to take over the command, was the right man to do it ; for he was of incorruptible honesty and, what is more, a competent soldier. He took with him a brilliant staff which included P. Rutilius Rufus, the writer of a drill-book, and Caius Marius, a member of the equestrian order, who had won his spurs under Scipio at Numantia and more recently held provincial command in Further Spain. With the aid of such lieutenants Metellus soon reorganized the slack and dispirited army ; when Jugurtha offered submission, played him skilfully, even turning the tables and corrupting *his* ambassadors with gold ; and then, when all was ready, marched into enemy country. After a single pitched battle in which Jugurtha's ambushade and the superiority of his cavalry very nearly brought disaster, the Romans settled down to the ineffectual siege of Zama Regia ; and the Numidians fell back on their favourite guerrilla tactics.

The situation was baffling. All Metellus's efforts to capture the person of Jugurtha, whether by negotiation or by stratagem, proved equally unavailing ; and though his command was prolonged into a second year, the end of the war seemed as far off as ever. But Metellus's ill-success was Marius's opportunity ; and this ambitious lieutenant began to play with the idea of supplanting his commander-in-chief. As the summer elections of 108 drew near, he asked for furlough to go home and stand for the next year's consulship. Metellus refused ; and sneeringly remarked to the equestrian upstart that it would be time enough for such notions when his own son—then a lad of twenty—was of age to be his colleague. Marius persisted, made much mischief in the army and eventually getting his way, arrived in Rome a bare fortnight before polling-day. In a whirlwind electioneering campaign he played disgracefully to the gallery. He had already made his mark on the popular side, when as tribune in 119 he had introduced a law to prevent aristocratic tampering with voters at the polling-booths ; and now by bitter detraction of other generals' qualities and blatant advertisement of his own he contrived to secure not merely his election to the consulship, but, in flat defiance of the Senate's expressed

wishes and in violation of their traditional prerogative of assigning provinces, his appointment to the African command.

Marius's first duty was to raise the troops he needed for a conclusive campaign. A free hand had been given him for the usual conscript levy which, according to past precedent, should have been drawn exclusively from men who held some property. But here there arose a difficulty. For, even despite the Gracchan land-schemes, the class of small property-holders eligible for recruitment was by this date none too numerous. The strain of prolonged campaigns had told so severely on their diminished ranks that foreign service was now most unpopular and even a generation earlier towards the close of the Numantine War tribunes had actually intervened to stop a consular levy. For Marius's purposes a force of disgruntled yeomen was comparatively useless. On the other hand, he was now the hero of the city populace; and having set his heart on an army which should be bound by a personal allegiance to its chief, he deliberately broke with the traditional system and enlisted volunteers from the pauper population of the capital—the class technically known as 'capite censi' or men who, in default of a property qualification, were rated by their 'head' alone. Among them, doubtless, were many veterans who at the end of past campaigns had preferred a city life to the resumption of their farming; and with these as a stiffening there was an excellent opportunity of converting the new material into a highly efficient force. Marius himself was of the type of which good drill-masters are made, and he possessed in addition a cool head for strategy. His quaestor, Lucius Cornelius Sulla, was an interesting contrast—a notorious figure in aristocratic society, with a somewhat lurid reputation for loose habits and low companionship, a suave and courtly manner, and some knowledge of the ways of the world. He was at first left behind to raise a troop of horse in Italy, but on his arrival at the front, he took naturally to soldiering and developed a marked ability. His talent for diplomacy, too, was likely to prove invaluable on the very side where his chief was weakest; and the two between them formed so strong a combination that it seemed only

a matter of time before Jugurtha should be laid by the heels.

Progress, however, proved lamentably slow. Marius sent mobile columns ranging through the country, marched deep into the southern desert to reduce the oasis fortress of Capsa, and by the end of 107 had more or less secured the eastern half of Jugurtha's kingdom. But the western half remained unsubdued; and beyond it lay Mauretania (now the modern Morocco) whose ruler Bocchus had recently thrown in his lot with the rebels. So the next year (106) was mainly occupied in a determined sweep towards the Mauretanian border, and Bocchus, alarmed for his safety, sued for peace. Sulla's gifts of address and trained intelligence made him the obvious man for the mission, and he succeeded not merely in bringing Bocchus to terms but in persuading him to turn traitor to his ally. Jugurtha was lured into a conference, kidnapped and delivered over captive into Sulla's hands (105). He was eventually carried back to Rome, where, after gracing the triumphal procession of the victorious general, he was sent to his death in the hideous underground prison at the foot of the Capitoline Hill.

Before this, however, Marius was detained in Numidia by the work of settlement and it was not till late in the year 105 that his task was finished. The country was too wild and its population too elusive to be held easily as a province. So Bocchus was rewarded by a grant of its western districts and the remainder was entrusted to a native prince named Gauda, also a grandson of Massinissa. As for Marius himself, on his return to Rome, he found, as we shall see, fresh work to do; and more spectacular victories soon eclipsed the importance of his African campaign. But meanwhile the real credit for its final *coup* lay rather with the aristocratic lieutenant than with the bourgeois commander-in-chief; nor was Sulla backward in making the most of his achievement. He had a representation of Jugurtha's capture carved on the signet which he used for official documents. He made no secret of his jealousy of Marius; and between the two there soon sprang up a coldness which was to develop, as time went on, into a ruinous political antagonism.

## III. MARIUS AND THE CIMBRI

For a proper understanding of the events of the next twenty years it is essential to grasp the contrast which lay between the characters of these two men. Marius, who for the moment alone concerns us, was, as his very name suggests, a man of the people. For from the same instinct of gentility which prompts the modern fashion for the hyphenated surname, it had long since been customary with aristocratic Romans to employ, as a distinction from the vulgar herd, a third name or cognomen, denoting some particular *family* branch of a larger group or clan.<sup>1</sup> Marius, for his part, was plain Caius Marius. The son of a farmer of Arpinum, he was without educational refinement and lacked a knowledge of Greek. Even after he had risen to the forefront of politics, his speeches remained the jest of high society; nor was his grammar, we are told, altogether beyond reproach. In character, on the other hand, he possessed the vigour and toughness of his class. He could bear a painful operation of the surgeon's knife without a tremor; and throughout his long and chequered career he never knew when he was beaten. Nor was he wanting in a certain shrewd intelligence. After the Numantine War, where his efficiency attracted Scipio's notice, he had taken to business and done well. He had a natural insight, too, into the mind of the average man, and when he turned to politics, his rapid rise first to the tribunate in 119 and then to provincial command in Spain was proof of the mob's appreciation. The bluff outspokenness of his coarse invective no doubt made more appeal to them than the high-falutin speeches of the Hellenized aristocracy; and they felt him to be one of themselves. To the governing class, on the other hand, the rise of this pushful vulgarian

<sup>1</sup> The cognomen was rarely found before the third century and was first adopted by patrician families.

The three Roman names were: *praenomen* or individual name, e.g. Publius; the *nomen* or clan name, e.g. Cornelius; and the *cognomen* or family name, e.g. Scipio. To these might be added as a mark of special honour an *agnomen*, e.g. Africanus. To Publius Cornelius Scipio Africanus would correspond with us such a name as John Feverell-Smith (inverted in the Latin) Viscount Waterloo.

was most distasteful ; and although from his marriage to a lady of the Julian house (an aunt of the great dictator) we may infer that Marius was no actual outcast from good society, there can be little doubt that he felt himself cold-shouldered. The snubs of Metellus and his like rankled ; and a deeply-rooted animus against the aristocracy became the guiding motive of his subsequent career.

Personal prejudices apart, however, the fact remained that Marius had been carried to the African command on the wave of an anti-senatorial agitation, and his return with the added prestige of a victorious general offered exciting possibilities of political developments. What use he would actually have made of his opportunity we can do no more than guess. But Fate intervened. While Marius had been in Numidia, the barbarian hordes which had long been hovering in the north were again upon the move. Before he got back to Rome, they had broken into the province of Transalpine Gaul ; and not many folk in Italy can have slept easy in their beds when in early October came the terrible news that the army of defence had met them in pitched battle and had been annihilated almost to a man. Party politics could count for little now.

The tragedy did not come without a warning. For several years already there had been a fresh tide of restless movement among the savage peoples of Northern and Central Europe. One German tribe, the Cimbri, hailing probably from the Baltic, had trekked south-westwards, carrying their wives and families in hooded caravans and moving in fitful and erratic stages in quest of plunder or more congenial homes. They crossed the Rhine valley in its lower reaches, then halting on the Meuse, deposited their belongings under the charge of a strong guard and set out on their adventures into the unknown south—a formidable army of fierce, fair-haired giants, well armed with copper helm, mail coat and long iron claymores, and accustomed, we are told, to charge into battle in a serried mass linked man to man by chains. Striking down into Noricum (the modern Austria) they seemed on the point of penetrating to the North Italian plains. Papirius Carbo, the consul for 113, had been sent hurriedly



to Illyria, and pushing thence into the heart of Noricum, he met the barbarians in the neighbourhood of Noreia, only to be beaten back with heavy loss. Despite their success, however, the Cimbri swerved away and two years later, when next we hear of them, they are back once more in Gaul drawing bands of adventurers from the Tigurini and other tribes along with them and hanging threateningly above the valley of the Rhône. The peaceful Gallic peoples who lay on the northern border of the Transalpine province and who were well disposed towards Rome, retired into their fastnesses. These the Cimbri were incapable of reducing and, tiring at length of plunder, they sent an embassy to M. Junius Silanus, the Roman governor, requesting of him a grant of lands for settlement. The Senate instructed a refusal. Silanus attacked and suffered complete disaster (109). Yet once again the Cimbri after their aimless fashion drifted off into the west; but in 107 the Tigurini cut up a fresh Roman army in the neighbourhood of Tolosa or Toulouse.

Such a sequence of reverses was becoming serious; and in 105 the army of Caepio, the Transalpine governor, was reinforced by a second under the consul Manlius, who, being (like Marius) an upstart from the ranks, was soon at loggerheads with his aristocratic colleague. The rift proved fatal; for when the Cimbri came marching south, the two generals' plans were divided. While Caepio stood on the defensive, Manlius sent forward an advance guard under his lieutenant Scaurus to attack the enemy. It was wiped out of existence. That same day (6 October), the two main armies—now combined in one, though their leaders were still quarrelling—was defeated at Arausio (now Orange) and suffered the same fate. The province was thus at the barbarians' mercy. The road to Italy itself lay open; at Rome the unforgotten horror of three hundred years before surged up into men's minds. Panic reigned. Then just when all seemed lost, the Cimbri, lured by some tale of riches to be won in Spain, swerved west again and crossed the Pyrenees (105).

So Rome was given a breathing-space. Yet, seeing that already on no less than five occasions her legions had gone down before the fury of the barbarian charge, not even a

breathing-space would much avail her, unless good use were made of it to create an army capable of withstanding the next onslaught with better prospect of success. It was just at this moment that Marius returned from Africa; and happily for the Republic, she found in him a man equal to the task. He was once more to be consul; and when at the beginning of 104 he undertook the reorganization of the national defence, he not merely had behind him the army which he himself had trained during the African campaign, but he was also able, without fear of opposition, to develop the new methods of recruitment which he had recently employed in raising it. Some such reform was, in fact, long overdue; for the old methods no longer served. The citizen militia, upon which for many centuries the Republic had relied and which until the era of long foreign wars had been annually raised and annually disbanded, was drawn, as we have said, from the landowning classes only. This property qualification, though relaxed for a time during the Punic Wars, appears afterwards to have been maintained, until, with the gradual expansion of the large estates and the consequent dwindling of the yeoman class, the sources of recruitment began to dry up; and though an increasing share of military burdens had been thrown on the shoulders of the allied contingents, it was obviously impossible—in view of their political dissatisfaction—to depend on these alone. There was therefore no alternative but to waive the property qualification and, as Marius had done, to throw open the legions to all who cared to enter them. The opportunity of regular pay as well as of occasional plunder appears to have attracted not merely many veterans, but a host of unemployed or semi-employed townfolk. Having no farms to till, moreover, such men had no objection to staying with the colours; and this was precisely what Marius himself desired. The main object of his reform, in short, was to create a standing army of long-service regulars; and henceforward there can be little doubt that enlistment in the legions was normally for a period of sixteen or twenty years.

Here, then, was material of which a skilful general might make something vastly superior to the antiquated short-

service militia; and it stands to Marius's credit that, not content with revolutionizing the personnel of the army, he also recognized the need for a thorough overhauling of its tactical formation. The particular changes which he introduced were no doubt primarily dictated by the character of the enemy he had to meet; but they became so permanent a part of the Roman military system that it is worth while to dwell upon them.

In order, however, to grasp their full significance we must first glance back at the system which till then had been in use. A Roman army, if commanded by a consul, was normally composed of two legions, if by a praetor of one legion of citizen soldiers, reinforced by contingents both of horse and foot drawn from the Italian allies. To each legion were attached six military tribunes, young aristocrats as a rule, who from 207 onwards were elected by the Assembly and who, besides a variety of administrative duties, commanded in rotation. From very early days the proper complement of a legion had been 4,200 men (not including the squadron of 300 citizen troopers which frequently accompanied it); but, during the Punic Wars and after, this number was frequently raised to five or even six thousand. Its battle formation was as follows:—ahead went the light-armed skirmishers or *velites*—1,200 strong and drawn from men of the poorer class only; then came the main body, consisting entirely of heavy-armed troops, and advancing always in three successive lines—first the *hastati*, composed of younger men and 1,200 strong; next the *principes* or men in the prime of life, also 1,200 strong; and as a last reserve the *triarii* or older men, 600 strong.<sup>1</sup> Each line was divided into sections known as *maniples*—a unit composed of two so-called 'centuries' of 60 men; and these sections were so spaced out that the intervals between them were equivalent roughly to one section's breadth, the section in each of the two rearward lines exactly covering the gaps in the line immediately ahead of it. Tactically, of course, this arrangement gave

<sup>1</sup> The *principes* and, oddly enough, the *hastati*, were both armed with the casting-javelin or *pilum*: the *triarii* alone retained the old thrusting-spear or *hasta*.

great flexibility of manœuvre, permitting the *principes* to move up into line with the *hastati* or the *hastati* to fall back into line with the *principes*; and against the Macedonian phalanx and other enemy formations it had proved on the whole most successful. But against the reckless onrush of the massed barbarian hordes Marius evidently distrusted it. For he seems to have abolished the *velites* altogether, and in order to consolidate his frontage, to have adopted instead of the *maniple* a much larger unit, the *cohort*—600 strong, one-tenth, that is, of the legion (now permanently stabilized at 6,000 men), and consisting of six *centuries* (now raised to their proper complement of a hundred men apiece).

The object of the change was not in any sense a return to the old close-knit phalanx; for open-order fighting—with a space-allowance of about 1 yard per man—was still the normal practice. But the cohort formation gave a much greater cohesion, and, since the old distinction between *hastati*, *principes* and *triarii* was now abolished, a much greater homogeneity of personnel; and as time went on, two lines were often used instead of three. Efficiency of drill and discipline, moreover, was far more easily attainable in a force of regulars. Regimental *esprit de corps* became an important factor; and to give it further stimulus, Marius seems to have introduced a legionary standard, the famous *aquila* or eagle. Henceforward, too, the importance of the military tribunes, who were often too young and inexperienced to make good officers, was gradually diminished; and by Caesar's time, if not before, their place at the head of the legions was taken by *legati* selected by the commander-in-chief. In any case, the real backbone of the legion was to be found in the centurions, and, more perhaps than in most armies, the staunchness of these non-commissioned sergeants was the secret of the Roman infantry's success. When after the Social War of 90 B.C. the Italian allies gained the political franchise and thereby became eligible for enlistment in the legions, the consequent amalgamation served not merely to remove a long-standing source of jealousy, but also to introduce a much-needed element of sturdy rustic folk. Their value as foot soldiers, moreover, made it undesirable

henceforward to waste any Italians on auxiliary arms ; and for slingers, bowmen, skirmishers, and more especially for cavalry—a branch of the service in which Romans proper had never excelled—the Republic was beginning more and more to rely on volunteers or auxiliaries drawn from the subject peoples of Spain, Gaul and other provinces. Nevertheless the foundation of her military supremacy continued to reside in the national force of professional soldiers of which Marius in a real sense may be considered the creator.

For our knowledge of Marius's reforms we are unfortunately much dependent on scattered clues of indirect evidence ; and chronological data are almost entirely lacking. It seems fairly safe, however, to assume that the tactical reorganization which we have just described, was carried out in the two years of respite which preceded the return of the Cimbri from Spain. Marius, we know, made the head-quarters of his army in the neighbourhood of Arles, near the Rhône-mouth ; and since he relied for his supplies upon sea-transport, he occupied the months of waiting in cutting a canal to give an improved approach. Meanwhile, when not employed upon digging operations, his troops were hardened and kept up to pitch by the discipline of long marches. These they performed in full equipment, carrying a special pack which the general himself had invented and which won for them the derisive nickname of 'Marius's mules'. Another technical improvement which is also set to his credit, was the fitting of the pilum with a blade which swivelled back on striking and so rendered the weapon useless to the enemy. Thus the long delay, though tedious, was not without its value. At Rome the public confidence in Marius was well sustained ; and he had been re-elected to a fourth year of consulship when in the spring of 102 the barbarians once more appeared in the offing.

In the campaign that followed the Romans had to meet not simply a wild onrush of determined fighters, but a not unskilful strategic disposition of their several tribal bands. The Cimbri, freshly back from their raid into Spain, and the Tigurini, who had stayed behind in Gaul, were dispatched round the north of Switzerland to push through the Tyrolese

passes upon the plains of Lombardy. Meanwhile two allied tribes, the Ambrones and the Teutons, were to march direct through the Transalpine province. Their blow very naturally fell first ; and failing to make any impression on the Roman camp, they took the road for Italy. Marius followed them at leisure, caught them at Aquae Sextiae (or Aix) and by skilful encirclement accomplished their complete destruction. The butchery was tremendous and the fields, we are told, were so drenched with blood that for many years they produced a bumper corn-crop. (102.)

This brief campaign was scarcely over when news came in from Italy that Catulus, the other consul who had been sent to meet the Cimbri, had been forced to fall back from the line of the River Athesis or Adige, leaving Transalpine Gaul at the invaders' mercy. Happily, however, the Cimbri appear to have had no stomach for the crossing of the Po, and still ignorant of their confederates' fate, moved vaguely west to meet them. Marius returned to Rome where for a fifth time he had been elected to the consulship ; and in the spring of 101 he marched north with fresh reserves to reinforce the army of Catulus and his own veteran legions from Provence. The Cimbri, who apparently were still searching for the Teutons, seemed in no haste for battle ; but at last in August they were brought to a decision on the Raudine Plain near Vercellae, between Milan and Turin. Their enormous battle-line, a good three miles in breadth, threatened at one moment to break the Roman front ; but the heat of the Italian summer had sapped their northern vigour ; the dust-clouds of the plain choked their throats ; and they were overwhelmed. It is said that 120,000 were slaughtered on that day. So Italy was saved ; and another five centuries were to pass by before the grim nightmare of the barbarian menace should again disturb her peace. (101.)

#### IV. MARIUS'S POLITICAL FAILURE

Very different, one would think, from Marius the hero of the petty Numidian War was the Marius who now returned to Rome with the honours of his two tremendous triumphs thick upon him, to be acclaimed by all as the saviour of his

country and elected for a sixth time to the consulship. What was still more important, he now had behind him an army which had just fought two victorious campaigns under his command, and which having received from him a promise of suitable rewards, was naturally devoted to the person of its chief. This was indeed a new and disquieting factor in Roman politics and a factor which not once or twice in the succeeding century was to upset the calculations of the senatorial oligarchy. Yet Marius, armed though he was with this formidable weapon and now doubly entitled to the admiration and gratitude of the Roman proletariat, was to prove unequal to his opportunity, and instead of initiating some great reform or even pressing home the advantage of his supporters, he allowed the leadership to pass into the hands of two rascally demagogues and his great authority thus to ebb ignominiously away.

In order to appreciate the situation at Rome in 101 B.C., we must first glance back at what had been going on during Marius's three years' absence. For the Senate, already shaken as it was by the events of the Numidian War, this had been a difficult and anxious time. Quite apart from the barbarian menace, the responsibilities of Empire had been more than usually perplexing; and in more than one area of Roman control had arisen awkward problems of administration. In the East, for example, the scourge of piracy, unsuppressed since the disappearance of an independent Pergamene and the decline of the Rhodian navy, was becoming intolerable. Corsairs from the coasts of Pamphylia and Cilicia swept the seas, interrupting commerce, kidnapping ships' passengers and raiding coastal towns to supply the slave-market on which Roman capitalists drew for their plantation-gangs. Torn between the conflicting interests of the peaceful trader on the one hand and the plantation owners on the other, the Senate gladly sheltered itself behind the traditional policy of naval inaction. At length, however, it became evident that something must be done; and in 103 a fleet was got together, drawn mainly no doubt from the Greek vassal states, and the praetor M. Antonius was sent out to suppress the nuisance. After

reducing the pirate strongholds, he seems to have formally annexed the southern seaboard of Pamphylia, Pisidia and Cilicia. At any rate, for some years these were apparently controlled by a provincial governor, and thus temporarily at least the activities of the kidnappers were kept within bounds.

Meanwhile in Sicily there had been another and more tragic issue to their horrible traffic. There, as in North Africa and Italy itself, the large estates of the Roman or Greek proprietors were worked by servile labour imported mainly from abroad. To freeborn men plunged suddenly, through no fault of their own, into the ghastly conditions of these slave plantations, there was every incentive to strike a blow for liberty. Brutal ill-treatment had hardened their nerve. In numbers and virility they were far superior to their pampered masters, and anything seemed better than the life they led. A mere spark, in short, would suffice for an explosion. Already in 134, as we have mentioned, one such explosion had actually taken place. A Syrian slave at Enna and a Cilician desperado at Acragas had headed the revolt. Huge bands had joined them, numbering, it is said, 200,000 slaves in all. Two consuls in succession had been sent to restore order and had failed. It was not till 131 that the rising was stamped out. Nothing, however, had been done to ameliorate conditions; and at the time of which we are speaking the plantations and the slave trade were alike in full swing.

Now in 104 the Senate, needing military assistance for the Cimbrian War, demanded a contingent from the vassal-prince of Bithynia and was met by the excuse (no doubt exaggerated) that half his available soldiers were at that very moment in bondage on Roman territory. The Senate, on the strength of his complaint, ordered an inquiry into the forcible detention of free allied subjects; and Nerva, the governor of Sicily, began to execute the order. Prompt protest from the owners caused him to stay his hand; but meanwhile the excitement of the slave population had risen to boiling-point; and on the frustration of their hopes they broke into open revolt, appointed a king who took the title



of Tryphon, collected arms enough to defeat the troops which the governor brought against them, and in so doing captured more. Soon at least two large and well-drilled armies were in complete control of the island. The Greek and Roman inhabitants cowered helplessly behind town-walls; and Rome, preoccupied as she was with the barbarian peril, was slow to act effectively. In 103 Lucullus was sent out, but failed and was exiled for his failure. His successor, Servilius, suffered the same fate. At length, in 101, the Teutones being now destroyed and the Cimbrian peril correspondingly less acute, superior forces was brought to bear in Sicily and the consul Aquilius put an end to the revolt. It had cost, it is said, a hundred thousand lives in all; and the whole hideous business had been a timely warning such as any wise society would have done well to note. But Roman society had no eyes for anything beyond its own material interests; and the suppression of the Sicilian slaves was not so much a triumph for the cause of order and justice as for the capitalist clique who for the moment at any rate appear to have been uppermost at Rome.

For meanwhile the successive failures of the senatorial oligarchy—in Africa, in Gaul and now in Sicily—had played into the hands of its opponents; and democrat leaders, supported and primed by capitalist wire-pullers, were in almost complete control. The panic created by the barbarian invasion furnished ample opportunity to discredit the ruling class by playing upon the fears of the mob; and when military disaster produced the usual outcry for some aristocratic scapegoat, the motive behind it lay as often as not in mere moves of party tactics. Thus in 105 the Knights were greatly gratified at the opportunity of revenge on Caepio, who, unhappily for himself, had survived the tragedy of Arausio. His offence had been that in the previous year he had struck at their monopoly of the law courts by introducing a law to grant senators admission to the panel. So when his military failure laid him open to attack, not much time was lost in bringing him to book. In 104 he was charged with having filched some treasure which had been

captured at Tolosa ; and rather than face his trial he fled into exile. The full control of the jury courts was forthwith restored to the Knights, and it was now their turn to attack a senatorial monopoly—the College of Augurs. Hitherto this body, which through its control of State ceremonial enjoyed large opportunities of political obstruction, had been filled exclusively by the method of co-optation and hence had naturally remained an aristocratic preserve. In the same year as Caepio's fall, however, a modified form of popular election was substituted in place of co-optation and a chance of entry thus secured to candidates of bourgeois origin and democratic sympathies. The author of this reform, one Domitius, was himself a man of some repute ; but the principal agents of the anti-senatorial agitation were a pair of out-and-out demagogues, named Saturninus and Glaucia. A craving for power at all costs was apparently the governing motive of their brief but ruinous career ; and as they could scarcely hope, even during his long absence in Gaul, to oust Marius from his place at head of the popular party, they tactfully posed as his champions by proposing African allotments for his Numidian veterans. Meanwhile, to ingratiate themselves with the mob, they lowered still further the price charged for the corn-dole ; and having thus secured the Assembly's support, they could snap their fingers at the Senate's opposition. For a couple of years they carried all before them ; and then—inconveniently for their plans, as it must have appeared—Marius himself came home from the wars.

There was never a more melancholy anti-climax than this homecoming. To begin with, the Senate meanly insisted on his sharing his triumph with Catulus. Then, when it came to politics, this man of the camp and the drill-yard found himself completely outshone by the two glib democrat leaders. Though a good hand at invective, Marius was incapable of planning or expounding any large constitutional measure. His platform speeches lapsed readily into stammered incoherence, till he was forced to get others to compose them for him ; and the best he was able to do was to drive a bargain of alliance with the two demagogues. When he entered on his sixth consulship for the year 100, Glaucia as

praetor and Saturninus as tribune were to be the recognized spokesmen of his views. Their programme was a debased imitation of the old Gracchan policy. Land allotments for Marius's veterans were to be found in Cisalpine Gaul (over which, as a conquered territory outside her confederation, the Republic could still assert a claim). Transmarine colonies were to be planted in Greece, Macedon and Sicily; and by way of establishing beyond dispute the sovereign authority of the comitia, a measure was appended rendering liable to impeachment any one guilty of 'impairing the majesty of the Roman People'. Furthermore, in order to secure this legislation against danger of repeal, it was required that every magistrate and senator should take an oath to support it—a monstrous attempt to stereotype the Constitution, which Marius himself at first resisted. Eventually he took the oath, but Metellus, his old Numidian rival, held out and retired into exile rather than yield. Feeling ran high. Riots were frequent; and when by an irregular and deliberate subterfuge the whole group of measures were put to the vote *en bloc*, it was carried only by methods of wholesale intimidation.

The crisis came to a head at the summer elections of 100 B.C., when Glaucia was standing for the consulship; and Memmius, a rival candidate, was set upon by a party of democrat roughs and clubbed to death. The Optimates in turn began to arm; and finally, as though in preparation for a *coup d'état*, the two demagogues seized the Capitol. The Senate, nerving itself at last for action, issued the 'ultimate decree' empowering the consuls to 'preserve the State'. For Marius, who was one of them, here was a nice dilemma; for to obey the Senate was to destroy his friends; yet he obeyed; and with a strong retinue of senatorial partisans proceeded to his duty. The water-pipes which supplied the hill were cut, and the democrat defenders were forced into surrender. Then, contrary to Marius's express promise, a massacre ensued; and both Glaucia and Saturninus were among the victims. Sick at failure, embittered and utterly discredited, Marius determined for the time being to abandon the struggle. Finally, when the motion was

passed for the recall of Metellus, his inveterate foe, he left Rome and set out on a tour in the East. It was perhaps the one dignified action of his life.

## CHAPTER XVI

## THE RISE OF SULLA

## I. DRUSUS'S FAILURE

**M**ARIUS'S departure from Rome cleared the air for the moment; but it did nothing to remove the permanent sources of friction between the Senate and the Knights. The temporary *rapprochement* which had been forced on these rival parties by the necessity of showing a common front to Saturninus's revolutionary excesses was unhappily short-lived; and the undignified squabble soon resumed its futile course. For some years, it is true, there was no open conflict; and apart from a Bill which the Senate got passed in 98 prohibiting methods of block-legislation such as the democratic leaders had recently employed,<sup>1</sup> there would seem to have been no political measure of importance, much less any far-reaching attempt at constitutional reform. Neither party, in fact, possessed a definite policy; and their antagonism took the shape of mean judicial attacks upon individuals. Thus, in 95, C. Norbanus, an old enemy of the Senate and the tribune responsible for Caepio's prosecution at the end of the last century, was arraigned under the new law of High Treason. The best aristocratic talent was brought to bear against him, but without avail; and rightly or wrongly he was acquitted by the equestrian jurors. The fact was that the Knights' control of the courts still gave them the whip-hand; and two years later they used it for a most scandalous act of political reprisal. In 98 Rutilius Rufus, a Stoic idealist and an intimate of Scaevola the famous jurist, had gone out on his friend's staff to the province of Asia; and by their creditable attempt to protect the natives against the extortionate

<sup>1</sup> See p. 277.

exactions of the capitalists' collectors, the two had aroused the keen resentment of that powerful class. Scaevola himself, as high pontiff, was immune from attack; but in 92 Rutilius was brought to trial on a trumped-up charge of extortion; and in the face of all the evidence was condemned to exile by the equestrian court. Much feeling was aroused, for this seemed a point-blank challenge to senatorial government; and it was no surprising sequel that an attempt was now made to solve what was fast becoming an intolerable situation.

The new project of reform came from one Marcus Livius Drusus, almost certainly son of the man who a generation earlier had been put forward by the Senate to oppose the younger Gracchus. Though a stiff, puritanical fellow with strong aristocratic connexions, he saw the necessity of moving with the times, and as tribune for 91, he set out, like his father before him, to capture the support of the mob. Fresh distributions of land were promised in Italy and Sicily. The corn-dole was once again to be cheapened, and this on so lavish a scale that before the year was out, Drusus was driven to debasing the currency and issuing coins of silver-coated copper. Such demagogic proposals were, however, no more than a stalking-horse for the reformer's main design—the composition of the quarrel between the rival orders, probably with a view to the Senate's advantage. According to his scheme, the courts were to be taken out of the hands of the equestrian jurors and restored to the senatorial nobility; but in compensation for the loss of their judicial privilege 300 equites were to be promoted to the Senate itself. This ingenious compromise—which there is some reason to believe Caius Gracchus had envisaged—seemed to have much to recommend it; but it failed to give satisfaction to the bulk of either party. The more reactionary senators disliked the concession to the despised *bourgeoisie*. The equites for their part were deeply suspicious of anything calculated to break up the solidarity of their order. From both sides, therefore, Drusus soon found himself faced with most determined opposition. Nevertheless he persisted and was eventually successful in carrying

a Bill in which, contrary to the recent enactment against block-legislation, all his heterogeneous proposals—for colonies, corn-dole and judicial reform—were simultaneously included. This subterfuge, though doubtless necessary at the moment to placate the urban voter, was in the long run fatal to the Bill's success; for on the strength of the irregularity its enemies were able to procure the Senate's ruling that it was null and void. Such failure to command support from the very body in whose interest he was working was perhaps the final verdict on Drusus's statesmanship. The truth is that he possessed neither the strength of character nor the political acumen which might have made it possible to carry with him both Senate and Assembly. The situation, in fact, was getting wholly beyond his grasp; yet ignoring the fierce opposition he had already aroused by his handling of one thorny problem, he was meanwhile preparing to plunge headlong into another. During the few months of office which still remained to him, he undertook to champion the unpopular cause of Italian enfranchisement.<sup>1</sup>

No question of the day was indeed more urgent. Rome's long-suffering confederates, who for the most part had stood by her loyally in the hour of her greatest peril and who almost without a murmur had borne the brunt of many an overseas campaign, had at length been awakened by the events of recent years to a burning sense of their inequality. Close on the heels of the Numantine War, the protracted length of which had placed an almost intolerable strain upon their patience, there had come the agitations of the Gracchan period, playing alternately upon their hopes and fears. First threatened by eviction from their farms on *ager publicus*, then buoyed for a moment by the expectation of the franchise, only to see their hope frustrated by the bigotry of the Senate and the selfish jealousy of the pampered city mob, they had begun to take new stock of their situation. The disabilities under which they

<sup>1</sup> It is not improbable that this proposal to enfranchise the Italians was partly forced upon Drusus by the necessity of placating their opposition to his new land distributions on their territory. Such opposition is certainly mentioned as existing in Etruria and Umbria.

laboured were, indeed, many and various—the subordination of their troops to Roman commanders in whose election they themselves possessed no voice at all; the exposure of their persons to the arbitrary violence of Roman officials and that without opportunity of appeal or redress; their inability even to enter upon legal action save through the friendly offices of some noble Roman patron and before the tribunal of a Roman judge. For these disabilities and many others there was but one remedy, the franchise. Yet the attainment of the franchise now seemed, if anything, further off than in the days of Gracchus. Since then, too, even the chance of migrating to the capital and so worming a way on to the civic register had once again been summarily cancelled. For in 95 the consuls had held an inquiry into illegitimate enrolments, with the result that many Italian residents had been struck off the lists and some whose disorderly conduct during the recent agitations had rendered them particularly obnoxious to the Senate were packed off to their original homes. This high-handed act aroused great anger throughout the length and breadth of Italy; and by the year of Drusus's tribunate secret societies were forming in the majority of the townships, prepared, if peaceful methods failed them, for a recourse to arms. While the constitutional controversy was raging, the opponents of Drusus's reform had made great play of the rumour that he was hand in glove with the ringleaders of this revolutionary movement. That he had indeed been asked to support it is probable enough; and the more he came to realize the instability of his own position, the stronger must have been the temptation to set himself at its head. To this temptation Drusus finally yielded; and as soon as his Bill for judicial reform had been passed by the comitia, he set to work to frame another for the enfranchisement of the Italians.

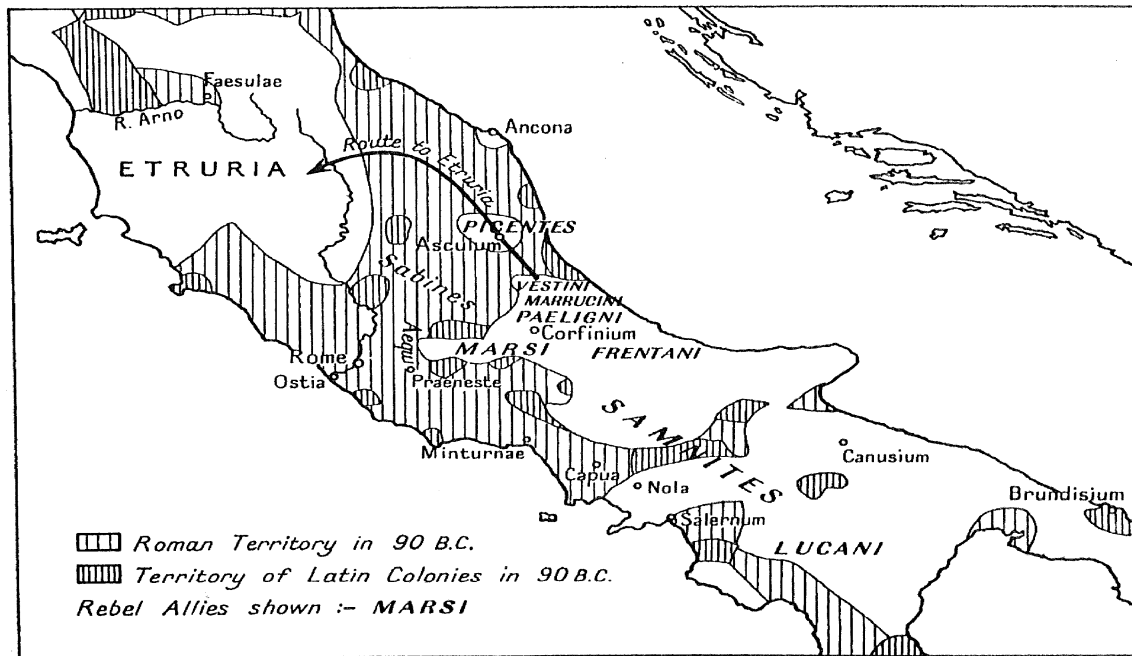
It is difficult perhaps not to admire his courage; but he was playing with fire. The majority of the Senate were now dead against him; and even his supporters in the Assembly were indignant at his new move. But Drusus took no heed; the Italians, it is said, were sworn on oath

to back him to the death; and none could tell to what appalling crisis things were tending. Then one evening as he was making his way home from a mass meeting in the Forum, he was struck by an unknown assassin and fell mortally wounded with a knife deep in his groin. This fatality seemed to sound the knell to the Italians' hopes. Activity was redoubled in the centres of disaffection. Drilling was rumoured to be secretly in progress; and the Senate dispatched officers to various parts of the country to control the situation. Before three months were out, the explosion came. One of these officers was murdered at Asculum and all Romans resident in the town were massacred. In a twinkling half Italy was up in arms. The revolt had begun.

## II. THE GREAT REBELLION

The momentous upheaval which is known to history as the Social War was no haphazard or unpremeditated affair. On the contrary, the rebel organization was, as we have seen, already far advanced before the outbreak. As soon as their formal demand for the citizenship had been rejected by the Senate and it became evident that no compromise was possible, the insurgents constituted themselves into a new federal state to be known under the name of Italia. Its capital was fixed at Corfinium, almost due east of Rome in Paelignan territory. Here were to meet the federal council or senate composed of 500 representatives from the participating tribes; and, since it was out of the question to convene a general assembly from among folk so widely scattered, this senate must presumably have been entrusted with the making of the laws and the choice of the executive officials who in imitation of the Roman model were to consist of two consuls and a dozen praetors. At the outset the area included in the secessionist state was limited to the uplands of the centre and the south. It comprised eight tribes—the Marsi, Paeligni, Marrucini, Frentani, Samnites, Lucanians and the unenfranchised portions of the Vestini and the Picentes. The Apulians at first hung back; and what was perhaps decisive of the ultimate issue,





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X. ITALY ILLUSTRATING THE GREAT REBELLION AND OTHER WARS OF FIRST CENTURY B.C.

the Etruscans and Umbrians never joined effectively in the revolt; so far were these northern peoples still divided from the south by differences of dialect and local custom. Even more important, when we come to measure the balance of the opposing forces, is the fact that Rome on her part was able to command the loyal support not merely of the districts already fully enfranchised—the Sabines, Aequans, South Etruscans and Campanians—but also of the semi-privileged Greek cities of the south, and above all of the ‘Latin’ colonies which were widely scattered through the disaffected area. From such loyalist districts she could count on drawing forces not equal indeed to those of her opponents who comprised the toughest element of Italian manhood, but by no means insignificant in numbers and almost certainly superior in their training and equipment. Her hold upon the seaports of the West and South gave her access at once to overseas supplies and to valuable reinforcements from Numidia and other dependencies. Of such resources as she possessed, moreover, she was able to make the most effective use. Her practised methods of organization, the incomparably greater experience of her high command, and, above all, the immense strategical advantage of her central situation, all these combined to save her from what, on the face of it, must have seemed overwhelming odds. Last, but not least, there still remained in the character of her governing class something of that shrewd instinct of political moderation which had served her so well in days gone by; so that when it became clear that she could never by force alone achieve a permanent solution of the Italian problem, she did not shrink from the unpalatable alternative; and by a series of timely concessions she was able not merely to avert the impending catastrophe of utter ruin, but to weld the disgruntled peoples of the entire peninsula into a truly national state.

When the campaign opened, Rome found herself compelled to a war upon two fronts; for her enemies’ strategy was directed towards driving a wedge westwards to the coast on either flank of Latium and so denying her armies access either to the rebel centres of the south or to the

still wavering north. Of these two offensives the southern was so far successful that Campania was deeply penetrated; and first Nola, then the coastal town of Salernum were captured and held. Apulia meanwhile was overrun and coerced into joining the movement, so that practically the whole of Southern Italy was soon in rebel hands. In the north, equally, things at first went ill for Rome. Several minor defeats were suffered. Then the main army was overwhelmed by the Marsi and the consul Rutilius Lupus fell in the fighting. His death, however, cleared the way for the appointment of Marius to the northern command; and he soon restored the balance. The issue turned mainly on the town of Asculum, a key position commanding the corridor along the eastern coast, the capture of which would cut off the rebel south from approach to the waverers of Umbria and Etruria. The Romans laid it under siege; but the enemy made strenuous efforts to avert its fall; and, as the year advanced, the results of the northern campaign remained still inconclusive.

Rome, however, was learning her lesson; and before the year 90 ended, the second consul L. Julius Caesar, returning from his command of the army in Campania, struck out a new line of policy. By the *Lex Julia* which he carried, an offer of the franchise was unequivocally made to all allied communities which had either never taken up arms at all or were prepared to make immediate surrender. The effect of this stroke was instantaneous. Etruria, which by this time had actually risen, accepted the offer. The resolution of many other tribes was visibly shaken; and by the spring of 89 it may fairly be said that Rome had the situation in hand.

The new year's changes in the high command were important. Marius, who was no favourite with the powers at home, was now retired. Of the two consuls, Pompeius Strabo (the father of Pompey the Great) who, like Caesar, was known to be sympathetic to the rebels' demands, took over the command of the northern front, where Asculum was now captured. Meanwhile his fellow-consul was soon killed in battle with the Marsi; and Sulla, who had already

served as legate in both theatres, was assigned the supreme command in Campania. His military powers had greatly developed since the days when he served his apprenticeship in the Jugurthine War; and before long he was able to deal a crushing blow at the whole rebel position. Striking up into the heart of Samnium, he there routed the army of the vigorous tribesmen and so succeeded in cutting in two the remaining centres of disaffection. The war was not yet over; but the real danger was past. The reduction of scattered strongholds, such as the Campanian town of Nola, was now merely a matter of time; and meanwhile by a second measure of prudent concession all real reason for a continued resistance had already been removed. In the earlier part of 89 a law had been passed on the initiative of two tribunes, Plautius Silvanus and Papirius Carbo, making the offer of citizenship to all *individual* Italians who should appear in the presence of a Roman magistrate and register their names before the expiration of sixty days. The offer was not disregarded. Men had flocked in their thousands to enrol as citizens; and by this remarkable surrender of the very principle for which she had gone to war, Rome not merely did much to weaken the ranks of the secessionists, but also to pave the way for a permanent and satisfactory settlement. By the end of 89 the Samnites and Lucanians alone remained obdurate; and their admission to the franchise was accordingly delayed. Otherwise, south of the Po, every freeborn inhabitant of the country (not even Gauls excluded) became a citizen of the Roman Republic with full legal and political rights. Some measures were taken to institute in towns thus newly incorporated those methods of municipal government which already prevailed in the old; and which placed the control of finance and the supervision of the executive magistrates in the hands of a local council or senate. Though it remained for Julius Caesar to initiate a more thoroughgoing system of local self-government, these measures marked an important phase in the progressive development of imperial organization; and terrible as had been the losses which the war inflicted upon the manpower of both combatants—losses comparable only to those

suffered in the course of the Hannibalic invasion—the value of the political lesson which it taught the victors was perhaps worth the heavy cost.

It would have been well for Rome and for Italy had the conduct of affairs at the capital itself been worthy of the liberal spirit in which this great settlement was concluded. Yet, incredible as it may seem, not even the terrible dangers of the Great Rebellion had availed to put a stop to the mean intrigues and petty jealousies of the old party struggle. That the concession of the franchise should have been the subject of hot dispute between the progressive and reactionary sections of the Senate was indeed natural enough; but it was highly discreditable that attempts should have been made to exploit the Italian situation for personal ends. The opportunity arose in connexion with the assignment of the newly enrolled voters to their place among the 'tribes'. The reactionary party, with whom Sulla was identified, was in favour of confining them to eight tribes only and thus depriving them of their legitimate influence at the polls. The progressive party, led by a young tribune, Sulpicius Rufus, was on the contrary desirous to distribute not merely Italians, but freedmen voters also in such a way that they might have a real voice in the comitia's decisions. The latter policy was obviously more correct; but the justice of Sulpicius's cause was badly compromised by the method he employed to win Marius's support. It so happened at this moment that Rome's Asiatic province was threatened by an invasion from Mithridates, King of Pontus. Indeed, one of the main reasons for the Senate's speedy surrender to the Italians' claim had been the knowledge of this impending danger; and it was already settled that Sulla, who had been elected consul for the year 88, should undertake the campaign in the East. But the ambitions of Marius were not yet quenched. He was still smarting under the slights of the aristocratic party and he expressed his readiness to throw his weight upon Sulpicius's side on condition that the command against Mithridates should be transferred from Sulla to himself. Sulpicius acceded; and though such an act of transference was entirely unconstitutional, he pro-

ceded to incorporate the proposal in his programme. He had the freedman class behind him—a dangerous and rowdy element in which Oriental blood was strong. Rioting broke out, and Sulla himself was forced to leave the capital and went to join his army in Campania. Finally, with the aid of much intimidation, Sulpicius's laws were passed and the command against Mithridates voted to Marius.

Sulla was lying with his army before Nola (where some rebels still maintained an obstinate resistance); and on receipt of the news his decision was soon made. He told his legions bluntly that, if his command were interfered with, they would lose their chance of winning rich spoils in Asia Minor; and with their enthusiastic approval he proceeded to march on Rome. The city was utterly unprepared for a defence. By long constitutional custom no military force had ever been allowed to enter its sacred limits; and it is not difficult to picture with what feelings the horrified burghers viewed the spectacle of Sulla's legions marching through the gates. There was some hot street-fighting before the democrats were scattered. Sulpicius was eventually killed by a slave and his bloody head set up to decorate the rostra. Marius fled and was publicly declared an outlaw. His escape from Italy was an amazing series of adventures. Sailing from Ostia he was driven by winds on to the coast of Southern Latium. There he first evaded the pursuit by swimming out to a passing ship; and then, when the crew refused to carry him, by sinking himself to the neck in the mud of a neighbouring marsh. In this undignified posture, he was eventually discovered and haled before the magistrates of Minturnae and by them condemned to death. But he succeeded, so the story goes, in scaring the executioner into precipitate flight by sitting defiant in a dark corner of his prison and exclaiming in loud tones, 'Wouldst thou dare slay Caius Marius?' Released, he took ship for Africa, meaning to throw himself on the mercy of the Numidian King; and finally, being ordered by the governor to quit the mainland, he took refuge on an adjacent island where he was promptly joined by his son, the younger Marius. We shall hear of him again.

Meanwhile at Rome Sulla had everything his own way; and his first and obvious task was to repeal the recent legislation of Sulpicius. But he went further than this; and as the acknowledged representative of the reactionary party he proceeded by various measures to strengthen the foundations of oligarchical government. To the Senate itself he added 300 new members selected for their conservative tendencies. The power of the popular Assembly he so far curtailed as to make it obligatory that all legislative proposals should receive the preliminary assent of the House. He would even have procured, if he could, the election of his own nominees to the consulate for the following year; but the cowed and compliant populace had by now recovered sufficient spirit to resist his wishes; and one of the two candidates elected was Lucius Cornelius Cinna, a patrician turned democrat and a wire-puller of dangerous ambitions. It was no very good omen for the pacific termination of the late disorders that such a man should be left at the head of affairs when Sulla set out for the East. Yet Sulla himself could scarcely stay. For had he remained in Rome, he would have been forced to make his choice between acquiescing tamely in the inevitable reaction against his recent policies or once again asserting his authority by methods of main force. Nor in the latter case was it too certain that his troops, if cheated of their Asiatic campaign, would continue to support him. By profession, moreover, as we shall later see, Sulla was a constitutionalist; and early in the year 87 he set sail for the East.

There is no stranger anomaly in the whole range of Roman history than the foregoing episode of Sulla's *coup d'état*. Here was a man who by every association of birth, career and party was closely identified with the old Republican tradition, yet striking a serious if not a mortal blow at the most fundamental article of the Republican faith. For by his military descent on Rome Sulla had done much more than to violate a long-established custom. He had proved once and for all that a general who could command the loyal backing of his troops might override the recognized machinery of political authority and dictate his wishes as

an autocrat—a curious achievement for a constitutionalist. Yet Sulla's whole character, when we come to examine it further, was compounded of queer contradictions. For in the first place this champion of the old régime was by no means a disciple of its austere moral code; on the contrary, he was a shameless debauchee, varying his bouts of abnormally hard work by orgies of intemperate self-indulgence. Wine and women were his favourite pastime; and, as he advanced in years, a blotched purple complexion like 'mulberry spotted with meal', became the notorious symptom of his gross excesses. In part such lack of morals was unquestionably due to habits contracted in the course of a riotous youth; but something, too, must be attributed to the pernicious influence of a shallow Epicurean philosophy. For, if not a serious thinker, Sulla was at least strongly attracted towards Hellenism, admiring Greek works of art and taking pains when occasion offered to collect the manuscripts of lesser-known Greek authors. On him, as on so many, the effect of the new culture was gravely demoralizing; and the sceptical outlook which it engendered made him openly contemptuous of all conventional restraints, whether social, moral or political. Sulla, in fact, like Dionysius of Syracuse, was a complete law to himself, utterly callous of human life or suffering, cruel or merciful as the whim might happen to take him, and, so far as we can judge, entirely without remorse. Indeed, the supreme self-confidence with which he confronted life is one of the most remarkable things about him. In his memoirs he boasted of decisions taken at the most critical occasions on the mere impulse of the moment. Faith in his own star was a downright obsession with him; and (what again was strangely contradictory in this free-thinking, cynical Hellenist) he was superstitiously convinced that he himself was under the special patronage of the immortal gods. He even assumed the name of Felix 'the Lucky' and Epaphroditus 'the devotee of Venus'. He wore a small figure of Apollo under his cuirass; and believed most profoundly in the significance of dreams. The truth is that Sulla did nothing by halves. He was thorough in his work and thorough in his pleasures; and



he had a strange power of pursuing with an equal pertinacity two courses which at times seemed diametrically opposed. Of his personal ambition his rivalry with Marius is obvious proof; yet no man was ever a more whole-hearted servant of the aristocratic cause. At the climax of his career, when Rome lay at his mercy and he might have ruled her as a despot, he suddenly handed over the reins of power to the Senate and retired to a life of besotted dissipation. Was this an act of patriotic self-sacrifice, or was it the outcome of that most un-Roman quality, an artistic temperament? Sulla was certainly a man of moods, quick, Plutarch says, to laughter and moved easily to tears. A whimsical humour seems to play round all his actions; and it is hard to believe that there was much in life that he took altogether seriously. He tasted its vicissitudes, as a connoisseur tastes wines, enjoying their variety, Quite certainly he enjoyed them to the full; and even on his deathbed, we are told, he was comforted by visions of a most reassuring character.

### III. SULLA AND THE MITHRIDATIC WAR

It must seem strange that a King of Pontus—a state of which hitherto scarcely a mention has been made—should suddenly have become an enemy so aggressive and so formidable that for the better part of two decades his movements remained the most anxious concern of the Republic's foreign policy. The explanation, however, is not far to seek. Her victory over Antiochus at the beginning of the previous century, while giving Rome a wide, if somewhat ill-defined, hegemony over the states of Asia Minor, had also very effectively suppressed what had previously been the dominant power in the Levant. The prestige of the Seleucid monarchy never recovered from the blow. Weakened by a long series of dynastic quarrels, it sank swiftly to the level of a second-rate power; and the field was thus left open to other candidates for an Oriental supremacy. It remained, of course, Rome's interest and indeed her duty to maintain, so far as possible, the peace of the Asiatic peninsula, the more so when a direct territorial responsibility was

thrust upon her, first by the bequest of the Pergamene domain in 133 and then just thirty years later by the necessity of safeguarding the southern sea-board against piratical anarchy. Nevertheless, their preoccupation with more pressing problems nearer home had made it difficult for the Senate to attempt more than a diplomatic interference in the affairs of the East; and the remoter states at any rate were little likely to be hampered in their schemes of consolidation or aggrandizement. For the moment, perhaps, it was of small consequence to Rome that the Kings of Parthia should revive on the Mesopotamian plains something of the lost magnificence of the old Persian Empire, or that in the wild mountainous district northward to the Caucasus, the rival power of Armenia should develop strength enough to dispute those kings' possession of the Upper Tigris. What was to prove, however, a very genuine menace to Rome's whole position in Asia Minor was the emergence of a third principality on the shores of the Black Sea—the Kingdom of Pontus.

At the time of Antiochus's overthrow and Rome's first settlement of the peninsula, Pontus had been a state of insignificant proportions. Neighbours of much greater strength surrounded it, on the east Armenia, on the south Cappadocia and the turbulent Celtic tribes of Galatia, and on the west Bithynia. Even the serviceable harbours of the Black Sea littoral, such as Sinope and Amastris, were held by Greek colonies of ancient standing. But during the second half of the century, Pontus began to expand. First Mithridates III (156–121) won possession of the seaports, and of these made Sinope his capital. He was succeeded by his young son Mithridates IV, who turned out to be a man of most commanding personality, a wiry athlete of extraordinary endurance, a skilful organizer, no mean tactician and, unlike most other monarchs of these upstart eastern kingdoms, a profound admirer of Hellenic culture. When he came of age in 114, he set to work at once to increase his hereditary domain. An invitation from the Greek cities of the Tauric Chersonese (which we now call the Crimea) took him over to assist them against the Scythian marauders of

the Russian steppes ; and so enabled him to win the hegemony of this important trading-centre and of the coastline westwards as far as the Danube-mouth—an achievement which not merely gave him control of the Russian corn-supply, but also valuable resources of timber for the construction of an efficient fleet. Once master of the Euxine he devoted himself to the task of inland expansion. On his eastern frontier he succeeded in winning the small district known as Lesser Armenia. Next, turning in the opposite direction he first persuaded Nicomedes of Bithynia to go shares in the annexation of the intervening state of Paphlagonia (105), then fell out with his friend over the disposal of Cappadocia, and on seizing it, was ordered by Rome to withdraw in favour of a native claimant Ariobarzanes (96). Presently, however, he returned to the attack and induced Tigranes of Armenia, whose daughter he wedded, to turn Ariobarzanes out. The Senate were by now feeling very uneasy and in 92 Sulla himself, being sent out as provincial governor of the Cilician sea-board, undertook a campaign for the chastisement of Tigranes and actually penetrated inland as far as the Upper Euphrates. Though thus foiled in his designs on Cappadocia, Mithridates soon resumed his policy of aggrandizement—this time at the expense of his western neighbour Bithynia. Rome, who could ill tolerate so close an approach to her own provincial border, once more gave him peremptory orders to withdraw ; and then on her ambassador's most ill-advised suggestion the Bithynians undertook an invasion of Pontus. This challenge at once put Mithridates on his mettle. He was well informed of the progress of the great Italian Rebellion ; and calculating shrewdly upon Rome's exhaustion, he proceeded at once to his most cherished ambition—the conquest of her province of Asia (88).

It was not fifty years since that province had been formed ; but under the twofold system of repressive government and extortionate taxation the natives had already come to regard their new masters with an implacable loathing. In Mithridates, therefore, they recognized a welcome saviour. He had secret agents in most of their towns ; and no sooner

did his strong Pontic army sweep over Bithynia and scattering the weak forces which Rome had upon the spot, take possession of the town of Pergamum itself, than the population rose as one man against their oppressors. The province was swarming with Romans and Italians—tax-collectors' agents, merchants, money-lenders, and the like—and nothing could now save these miserable creatures from the wrath of their late victims. Eighty thousand are said to have been butchered in cold blood. Mithridates meanwhile was carrying everything before him. The Roman defence of the Bosphorus had broken down before his powerful fleet. The Aegean lay at his mercy. The important trading-centre of Delos was attacked; its temple treasure was captured and another massacre of Italian merchants took place. Meanwhile Athens, which under the Roman settlement of Greece had retained a position of nominal independence, had been watching with interest the spectacular collapse of her suzerain's forces in Asia. A hot fit of insubordination seized her; and under the leadership of Aristion—a philosophy-teacher turned tyrant—she threw in her lot with the victor. A Pontic army under Archelaus came over; and most other Greek states soon joined the revolt. At the same time a second Pontic force, under Mithridates' son Ariarathes, was raising the Thracian tribes in the north for an invasion of Macedon. It looked for the moment as though the entire peninsula would be lost to Rome; but by now the crisis of the Italian Rebellion was over and troops could be spared for the East. In the spring of 87 Sulla landed with five legions on the Epirot coast.

The situation was not promising. Sulla had no naval force whatever to pit against the powerful Pontic fleet; and so gravely did this hamper him that he presently dispatched his quaestor Lucullus to collect what ships he could from Rhodes, Egypt and other Levantine allies of Rome. Meanwhile he rightly saw that the reduction of Athens would furnish the key to the recovery of Greece; and driving Archelaus's army back upon the city, he laid it under siege. The fortifications were strong (though the long walls to the sea no longer existed) and it was not until the spring of

next year (86) that famine and disease reduced the garrison to impotence. A terrible sack ensued and the tyrant Aristion was captured and killed. Archelaus, however, still maintained his position on a hill-top commanding the Peiræus harbour; and from here he presently moved off to join a fresh Pontic army which was advancing through Macedon from the north. The Roman governor Sentius, falling back, made touch with Sulla; and the two armies met the enemy on the Boeotian plain near Chaeronea. The battle proved a brilliant triumph for Roman strategy. Only a remnant of the enemy made good their escape; and Sulla, no doubt with an eye to propaganda at home, coolly published his losses at fifteen men (86). In the spring of next year a second Pontic army, transported by sea, was similarly defeated under Archelaus's command near the neighbouring town of Orchomenus (85). By this time Lucullus had returned with a considerable naval contingent, and was gradually regaining the control of the seas. The fickle states of Greece, at almost the first sign of Roman recovery, had returned to their allegiance; and in Europe at any rate it was abundantly clear that Mithridates' great effort had failed.

But meanwhile there had arisen an awkward complication of Sulla's task. His departure from Rome, as he himself must doubtless have foreseen, had been followed by a democratic reaction. The story of that reaction will presently be told; but here it is sufficient to say that Marius had returned from Africa and with the aid of Cinna and some Italian malcontents had seized the capital. It was an inevitable sequel to this turn of events that an attempt should be made to challenge Sulla's control of the eastern campaign. The first step was formally to cancel his command and declare him a public outlaw. Then, shortly after the battle of Chaeronea, Valerius Flaccus, who on Marius's death became Cinna's colleague in the consulship, crossed over to Greece with a democrat army, accompanied by a certain hot-headed and unscrupulous soldier, Caius Flavius Fimbria. Their troops, however, were badly out of hand. Their advance-guard actually deserted to Sulla; and, avoid-

ing further risk of a decisive clash of loyalties, the two democrat leaders made off towards the Hellespont and crossed into Asia. They there fell to quarrelling. Fimbria had his chief murdered; and assuming command of the army, drove Mithridates to evacuate Pergamum and take refuge on the island of Delos. Here, if Lucullus had been willing to lend the assistance of his squadron, the King might well have been captured. But, as Sulla's lieutenant, Lucullus would have no dealings with Fimbria; and so far from co-operating against their common enemy, the two rival leaders seemed now to be principally concerned as to which of them should have the credit of winding up the war.

After the final defeat of Orchomenus, Archelaus had once again made good his escape; and acting as go-between for Mithridates, he soon opened negotiations with Sulla. With characteristic subtlety the offer was made to place Pontic forces at the Roman general's disposal for use against his political opponents at home. But Sulla would not bate his terms—the surrender of Archelaus's fleet, the evacuation of all Asiatic territory outside the ancestral Pontic realm, and the payment of a comparatively small indemnity. Knowing that Fimbria's operations would help to put on the screw, Sulla gave Mithridates time to think the matter over and meanwhile himself moved northwards to join Lucullus at the Hellespont and thence cross to Asia Minor. Near the site of ancient Troy the King came to a rendezvous. His extravagant behaviour had long since alienated even those very Greek cities who three years previously had welcomed him as their saviour; and he was now ready to agree to the terms which, all things considered, were surprisingly light. The fact was that Sulla was impatient to get back to Italy. The settlement made, he proceeded first to deal with Fimbria, whose troops on his approach came out in mutiny and conveniently murdered their leader. Sulla placed them under Lucullus's command to mount guard on the province and himself set out towards home (autumn, 84). The work of settling Asia was in reality but half-done; and he left a terrible state of things behind him. The provincials he punished for their disloyalty by the most

oppressive exactions. The accumulation of large funds for his coming operations in Italy was essential to his purpose ; and he squeezed their pockets dry. To meet his demands they were forced to borrow heavily ; and though, to spite the Marian capitalists, he abolished the tax-farming system and substituted a levy of fixed annual tribute,<sup>1</sup> Roman exploiters and money-lenders were once more at their old game ; and meanwhile the disturbance caused by the war had given an opportunity to the pirates to resume their depredations on the coasts. But Sulla characteristically had finished with Asia. His attention was now concentrated on the situation in Italy ; and he spent the winter in Greece, drinking waters for the gout and interesting himself in the acquisition of classic manuscripts at Athens. In the spring of 83 he crossed the Adriatic and landed with his army at Brundisium.

#### IV. SULLA AND THE DEMOCRATS

During Sulla's four-year absence much had occurred in Italy ; and to Italy it is now time that our attention should be turned. Of the two consuls whom Sulla left behind him, one, as we have said, was Lucius Cornelius Cinna, a democrat nominee, but without vision, scruple or even common patriotism. Despite his promise on oath to respect the Sullan settlement, this man proceeded, as soon as it was safe, to revive the Sulpician proposals for a fair distribution of Italian and freedmen voters among all thirty-five tribes. The malcontents—amongst whom were, of course, a goodly proportion of hooligans—at once rallied to his side. Octavius, the other consul, being Sulla's nominee and the Senate's champion, prepared to meet force with force ; and a free fight ensued, in which large numbers of democrats were killed and Cinna driven from the city an outlaw. Retiring to Campania, he there succeeded in enlisting the support not merely of such Samnites and Lucanians as were still under arms, but of the Roman army of the south. The younger Marius joined him. Soon, too, came the older Marius, now well over seventy, a horribly sinister

<sup>1</sup> The old system was restored under Pompey's consulship in 70 B.C.

figure, *farouche*, revengeful, his mind still harping on his late privations, his beard and hair studiously unkempt. When he landed in Etruria and began to rally a band of desperadoes and ex-soldiers round him, Cinna, disregarding the advice of the saner heads, struck up an alliance, and the two made common cause against the Senate. So, while Marius with some ships took Ostia, Cinna from the south and his lieutenant Sertorius from the north closed in on Rome, which, cut off from provisionment by land and sea alike, was soon on the brink of starvation. At the eleventh hour the Senate made a desperate but vain attempt to placate the southern rebels by an offer of the franchise which had hitherto been denied them. Plague broke out among the senatorial troops, and their best general, Pompeius Strabo, died of it. Surrender was inevitable; and the democrats were soon in possession. Cinna had promised mercy; but Marius's pent-up passion for revenge now found its opportunity and he saw red. For five days there followed a reign of terror, which, despite what had gone before, outran all precedent—parties of ruffianly freedmen patrolling the streets, killing ferociously at Marius's least nod and hunting down the victim of his will; mutilated corpses littering the roadway; more heads set to decorate the rostra; properties and houses confiscated wholesale and knocked down to the highest bidder: among the victims two members of the Caesar family, two Crassi, Marcus Antonius the orator and other prominent men; and of the conservative section of the Senate scarcely a survivor left. No wonder Sertorius, a man of real character, was disgusted. Even Cinna quailed; and eventually they engaged a company of Gauls to fall on the murderers in their sleep and put an end to them (87).

But with this partial cessation of the blood-letting no real settlement followed. For the year 86 no consular elections were held. Marius and Cinna nominated themselves; and when on the thirteenth day of his office the old man died of fever, Valerius Flaccus was put in his place and sent out, as we have seen, to challenge Sulla's position in the East. For the three following years Cinna remained thus



autocratically at the head of the State, posting his nominees to the chief offices, packing the Senate with his partisans, and making no attempt whatever at real constitutional reform. Sulla's arrangements, indeed, were all annulled. It is probable that the jury-court panels to which, by a new arrangement made in 88, some senators had been admitted, were now restored exclusively to the Knights. A financial crisis, too, due partly to the breakdown of credit and partly to the interruption of the Asiatic revenues, was averted by withdrawing the large quantities of bad money which had got into circulation and by remitting debtors three-quarters of their liabilities. But such measures were of no more than passing importance. Every one knew that the day was coming when Sulla and his army must return; they knew, too, what to expect. For under the new régime Sulla had been declared an outlaw, his house at Rome demolished, and it was little likely that he would deal tenderly with the men who had thus used him. So, though the Senate (which despite a largely democrat personnel was now moderating its views) attempted to institute negotiations, Cinna and Carbo, his colleague for 84, determined on armed resistance. Strong support was forthcoming not merely from the Italians generally (who, remembering Sulla's conduct during the Great Rebellion, feared the effect of his return upon their new-won rights), but also from many capitalists at Rome who had acquired houses or properties through the recent confiscations and were apprehensive of the results of a fresh political upheaval. Cinna himself was anxious to forestall Sulla's arrival by crossing to Greece and fighting out the issue there, and an advance-guard was actually sent over; but before more could follow, Cinna was murdered at Ancona by the mutinous troops. For the moment it looked as though a compromise might even now have been effected. The Senate still played for peace, apparently giving the new Italian voters their fair distribution among the tribal units and showing a strong disposition to make what terms it could with Sulla. But the extremists prevailed; and on the eve of Sulla's landing the two democrat consuls, Cornelius Scipio and Junius Norbanus, took command of the troops, while

Carbo went northward to raise further reinforcements in Cisalpine Gaul (84).

Sulla, it must be remembered, was as much a diplomatist as a soldier, 'fox and lion rolled into one'; and when he landed at Brundisium in the spring of 83 he made no sudden dash on Rome. His enemies' numbers were overwhelmingly superior and, advancing slowly northwards, he set himself to allay or conquer opposition as he went. His undertaking to respect the political rights of such Italian communities as would treat with him secured the neutrality of all save the Etruscans and the Samnites. Near Canusium he drove back Norbanus and shut him up in Capua. In North Campania Scipio's troops deserted to his side; and by the approach of autumn Southern Italy, with the exception of Samnium, was definitely won. After wintering in Campania, Sulla advanced towards Rome in the spring of 82, defeated the younger Marius who took refuge in Praeneste; and then occupied Rome without a blow. Meanwhile in the north, where Norbanus had joined him, Carbo was still massing an enormous army, held in check for the moment by Sulla's two able young lieutenants, M. Licinius Crassus and Cnaeus Pompeius, the son of the senatorial general who had died four years before. There was much marching and counter-marching; but by a series of brilliant engagements the various contingents of the democrat leaders were beaten and dispersed. It remained to reduce Marius at Praeneste, to all appearances a simple task. But, as Sulla moved southwards, a force of Samnites under their native leader Pontius, created a startling diversion by making a sudden dash on the capital. They had already encamped outside the Colline Gate, when Sulla, sending on his cavalry ahead and marching his infantry throughout the night, arrived in the nick of time to save the city. The same afternoon, utterly worn out as his men were, Sulla gave battle; and after the fiercest conflict of the whole civil war, fought under the very eyes of the horrified citizens, he won a complete victory. The Samnite general died in the fighting. The prisoners taken were butchered in cold blood in the Circus Maximus; and the story is told how, when the startled

Senate overheard their dying shrieks, Sulla grimly ordered the debate to continue, 'It was merely some malefactors suffering for their crimes.' Guerrilla warfare was for a while maintained in various parts of Italy; but with the fall of Praeneste and the suicide of Marius hostilities were virtually at an end.

From first to last these wars and political massacres had accounted in all for half a million lives; nor did it diminish the tragedy that this appalling sacrifice had been the outcome of fratricidal strife. The antagonism of Italians and Romans was, of course, comprehensible; but the readiness with which the legions had turned their swords on their fellow-countrymen can only be explained partly by the denationalizing effect of professional soldiering in foreign lands, partly by the very mixed blood of the urban proletariat, which not merely furnished demagogues with ruffianly retainers, but filled even the ranks of the army with half-caste adventurers. Rome, in fact, was paying dearly for the rapid growth of a servile population which hailed largely from the East and was incapable of assimilating the national habits of decency and restraint; and though the political leaders must bear the major portion of the blame, the scandal of the hideous excesses which even now were to follow was intensified by the part which influential freedmen played in them.

#### V. THE SULLAN SETTLEMENT

Sulla had a long score to pay off against the defeated party; and the mask of clemency which he had hitherto worn from motives of policy was henceforth to be dropped. His friends the senatorials had been slaughtered ruthlessly in the Marian massacres. It was the turn of the other side to suffer now. Sulla, as we have said, never did anything by halves and he deliberately set out to exterminate all members of the equestrian or democrat faction who had taken sides against him. At first he proceeded by promiscuous massacre. Then on request he drew up lists of proscribed persons whose lives and properties were thereby forfeit and whose murderers were entitled to a substantial

reward. After two or three lists had been published, he callously announced that 'those were all he could remember for the moment'; and no doubt enjoyed the jest at the expense of his crestfallen audience. No one could feel safe, more especially as Sulla's friends and favourites began to manipulate the lists and secure the inclusion of men whose wealth or properties they coveted. 'My Alban villa pursues me,' cried one quite blameless citizen, when he read his own name among the rest. A certain Greek freedman called Chrysogonus, who was a member of Sulla's suite, was reputedly at the bottom of some peculiarly vile work; and the young Marcus Tullius Cicero made a name in the courts by his plucky defence of one victim of this man's persecution. Life became a gigantic gamble. Fortunes changed hands with bewildering rapidity; and we hear of one common sergeant who acquired an estate worth a hundred thousand pounds. The worst elements of society thus profited at the expense of the best; and the foulest passions were aroused by the double opportunity of enrichment and revenge. Mutilation and even worse atrocities were not uncommon. One of Marius's sons was flogged through the city and then put to death with torture. In some cases murders previously committed are said to have been indemnified by the retrospective inclusion of the victim's name upon the lists. Altogether it is reckoned that some fifty democrat senators, sixteen hundred knights and two thousand other persons lost their lives in these proscriptions. The experiences of the Terror—more frightful perhaps than anything that occurred before or after—left an indelible imprint on the memories of every class at Rome.

Sulla's treatment of the Italian communities which had opposed him, if less bloody, was equally uncompromising. In some the local leaders were hunted down and killed. In others such as, for instance, Volterra and Arretium, the inhabitants were condemned to the loss of their citizen rights. But the favourite method of reprisal was by confiscation of land. The Samnites and Etruscans suffered the most severely. A good many estates were knocked down under the hammer to capitalist exploiters; and the economic

evils of the *latifundia* were thereby intensified. The main purpose, however, to which the confiscated lands were put was to make provision for Sulla's veterans. The number of these was immense, probably not less than 100,000 men; and unfitted as most of them were to the drudgery of the farm, their settlement on the land did little to restore a healthy tone to agriculture. Among them, too, were many provincials, enlisted in Spain or Gaul; and their enfranchisement, though on general grounds an act of justice, was scarcely calculated to consolidate Italian unity. Far less justifiable was Sulla's wholesale liberation of the slaves of the proscribed, over ten thousand in number. In gratitude to their benefactor these took the name of *Cornelii*; and the support of their votes, as doubtless was intended, did much to strengthen his hand at the capital. Not that Sulla really needed such political props. His military victory—not to mention the stern measures which followed it—had made him absolute master of Rome. None could dare to dispute his will; and he caused himself to be appointed Dictator, not as under the earlier Republic, for a term of six months, but for an indefinite period and with virtually unlimited power to amend the Constitution as he might think fit.

Sulla's constitutional reform was perhaps the most thorough-going piece of reactionary legislation known to history. He deliberately undertook to put back the clock by a century at least and restore to the Senate the political supremacy which it had held at the hey-day of its prime. To this end the first essential was to limit the sovereignty of the popular Assembly, and in particular to destroy the tribunician initiative in legislation. The tribune's powers, accordingly, were drastically curtailed. The use of his veto, for example, was restricted to its original purpose of protecting individual citizens against summary arrest. The corn-distributions which, since Gracchus's day, had formed so large a part of the tribune's functions and the basis of his popularity, were discontinued; and the further to discourage ambitious politicians from undertaking the office, its tenure was made a complete disqualification for the higher magistracies. More important still, it was laid down that no measure might

be brought before the Assembly<sup>1</sup> which had not first received the approval of the Senate itself. Henceforward, in fact, the House was to possess not merely absolute control of administration and policy, but also a decisive voice in all matters of legislation—and that not by the vague unwritten convention of accumulated precedent, but by the unequivocal definition of a statutory code.

That such tremendous powers could only be placed with safety in the hands of a strictly conservative body was of course a fundamental principle of Sulla's whole reform. The three hundred new members whom now once again he drafted into it, were, if equestrian, at any rate equestrians strongly sympathetic to the senatorial order. For its future recruitment, moreover, his scheme was a definite advance on the old-fashioned method of arbitrary selection. The censor's prerogative of personal choice was abolished. Twenty quaestors were to be annually elected and on vacating office were to be automatically entitled to a seat in the House. By this arrangement a dual advantage was secured—first, that the personnel of the Order would be continuously replenished by the regular absorption of men in the very prime of life; and second, that even the more restive and irresponsible spirits would thus at the very outset of their careers be subjected to the mellowing influence of its predominantly conservative tone.

Rapid promotion up the official ladder was not, however, any part of Sulla's intention. On the contrary, he now revived and in many respects strengthened the restrictions of the earlier *Lex Annalis* which during the last fifty years had been frequently and flagrantly disregarded. According to his revised scheme of the *cursus honorum*, no one could become quaestor under thirty, praetor under thirty-nine or consul under forty-two. Nor was it permissible either to attain the higher offices without first passing through the

<sup>1</sup> Though in practice there was now little difference between the *comitia tributa* and the *comitia centuriata*, Sulla seems to have revived the latter as the main organ of debate, doubtless because its traditional associations and more orderly character were more in keeping with the aristocratic régime he was re-instituting.

lower or to hold the same office twice within a period of ten years. In taking such precautions against the likelihood of abuse of executive power Sulla was merely following a well-established Republican tradition; but in dealing with the regulation of provincial commands he struck out a line which showed at once a genuine appreciation of the Empire's importance and a remarkably shrewd insight into its administrative problems. The old haphazard system, whereby consuls or praetors were not infrequently entrusted with overseas commands, possessed the obvious disadvantage that it weakened the home executive; and for this reason the practice was already somewhat discountenanced; Sulla proceeded to sweep it clean away. Henceforward during their year of office such magistrates were bound to remain at Rome; then on the expiration of that term they were to be automatically posted with pro-magisterial powers to the governorship of a province. The normal complement of two consuls and six praetors was raised, by the creation of two additional praetors, to a total of ten; and in this manner was secured a correct number of pro-magistrates available annually for ten provinces. For besides the existing nine—Sicily, Sardinia and Corsica, Hither Spain, Further Spain, Macedon, Africa, Asia, Transalpine Gaul and Cilicia—Cisalpine Gaul also was now almost certainly assigned a provincial status; and the military forces placed at its governor's disposal (though forbidden to cross the new frontier line drawn at the Rubicon) were henceforth regarded as sufficient provision for the defence of the Italian peninsula. From this it followed that the consuls themselves were no longer to hold the position of national commanders-in-chief, and the complete decentralization of the military system which this change involved was destined to have far-reaching results. For since a provincial governorship almost invariably carried with it the command of a body of troops, it will be seen that under the new system a vital distinction was introduced between the home magistracies (which, as time went on, became more and more concerned with purely municipal affairs) and the provincial pro-magistracies which, by virtue of their military character, assumed an

increasing, and often even a dangerous, importance in the progressive development of the imperial rule. Nevertheless it should be remembered that under Sulla's Constitution these pro-magistrates remained strictly subordinate to the authority of the Senate itself, with which rested in the first place their initial assignment to the various provinces, the localization of their military activities (for without leave no governor was permitted to operate outside his appointed frontier), the limitation (or occasional prolongation) of their official tenure, and finally, on the expiration of that tenure, the power to pass judgement on their administrative acts.

For, as a crowning dispensation of his constitutional reaction, Sulla, of course, restored to the Senate the control of the judicial machinery. In other words, the jury-panels were once more to be drawn from the Order, nor was their jurisdiction any longer confined to cases of provincial extortion. During the last half-century, by stages of which unfortunately the details are obscure, it seems probable that the system of standing courts or *quaestiones perpetuae* had been extended to cover such crimes as high treason and probably riot. What is certain is that Sulla not merely regularized the distinctive functions of these courts but definitely added to their number. Besides those above mentioned (that is, the courts known as *de repetundis*, *de maiestate* and *de vi*), we know of four others: a court of embezzlement of public money (*de peculatu*); of corrupt practice at elections (*de ambitu*); of assassination (*inter sicarios*); and of fraud (*de falsis*). Normally these courts would sit under the presidency of a praetor; but, as the number of praetors was insufficient to cover all,<sup>1</sup> a special *judex quaestionis* was sometimes appointed. The number of the jury itself seems to have varied considerably; its members were always chosen by lot from the panel, and their verdict, given by secret ballot, was decided by the majority vote. The senatorial monopoly of the panels was not long allowed to stand; but the systematization of judicial procedure was permanent, and marking as it did an important stage in the evolution

<sup>1</sup> The praetor urbanus and the praetor peregrinus still held their courts as before.



of judicial machinery, it reflects special credit on Sulla's genius for organization.

Under the Constitution as above described the Senate emerged with all the powers—and indeed more than all the powers—that it had ever previously enjoyed. It held the control of administration and policy, the initiative in legislation, the monopoly of the courts, the supervision of the executive magistrates; and thus, apart from the fact that the Assembly elected those magistrates, its sovereignty might be considered complete. As an attempt to solve the many problems of the Roman political world, the Sullan Code was comprehensive, thoroughgoing and logical. At the moment and under the circumstances no other solution would seem to have been practicable. For the only two alternatives to senatorial sovereignty were mob-rule or autocracy. The former, we need hardly say, had been utterly discredited. For the latter Sulla himself showed no inclination. Indeed, an indefinite continuance of his despotic power would not merely have been inconsistent with his lifelong championship of the aristocratic cause, but, so far as we can judge, it would have run completely counter to his personal tastes. Whether he genuinely believed in the Senate's capacity to carry on the government, we cannot tell. But a more profound insight into the character of Roman institutions might have disabused him of such a notion. For, as with British institutions, the whole secret of their strength would seem to have lain in their elasticity. So much in them was based upon the tacit acceptance of precedent, etiquette and unwritten convention, that, despite its apparent contradictions, the various elements of the Constitution had somehow worked in harmony, and violent clashes had for the most part been avoided through a common loyalty to the Republican ideal. Once, however, the old spirit of political compromise was gone and the unity of the Orders destroyed, it was no real remedy to substitute for such flexible machinery the cast-iron system of a formal code. Given a renewal of the inevitable clash between individual ambition and the oligarchical interest, no amount of rules and regulations would avail to prevent a capitalist like Crassus from

utilizing his wealth to manipulate elections, nor a general like Caesar from leading his army across the forbidden frontier of the Rubicon. In point of fact, it did not take as long as that before the fabric of Sulla's Constitution had begun to crumble. Nothing could restore to the Senate the authoritative prestige which its own previous shortcomings had so effectively destroyed; and it very soon proved incapable of maintaining the position to which Sulla had lifted it. Though his constructive reform of the judicial and provincial systems retained a permanent importance, the reactionary part of his programme could not last. Within a dozen years the restrictions he had placed upon democratic agitation had gone completely by the board; and the party struggle was soon at its height again.

The fact is that, viewed as a whole, Sulla's political acts, like his life, were without true consistency. By the fatal precedent of his own irresponsible autocracy he had destroyed men's faith in the possibility of a lasting equilibrium; and the cause of constitutional government never afterwards recovered from the blow. True, in establishing his code he made a fair show of observing the regular forms of procedure; and most of his measures would seem to have taken the form of laws duly sealed with the Assembly's approval. But every one knew that behind the legislator stood the all-powerful soldier; and his appointment to the dictatorship only thinly disguised a rule of sheer terrorism. Even when elected to the consulate for the year 80, he preferred the abnormal position which his dictatorial powers conferred. In the following year, however, he refused re-election as consul, and scarcely had his successors entered on their office when he suddenly announced his intention of throwing up the dictatorship too and retiring into private life. The strange thing was that he meant it. He dismissed his retinue of lictors; and walked quietly away to his home. Such an act, as he knew well, exposed him at once to the vengeance of his enemies. Yet nobody dared touch him, and the story is told that when some ribald fellow threw an insult at him in the streets, he even took it in good part.

So the curtain was rung down upon the penultimate scene of Sulla's long career; and a change of rôle was entirely suited to the actor's taste. His spell of hard work was over; and it was the turn for pleasure now. Retiring to his villa near Puteoli in Campania he devoted himself to the society of witty and dissolute companions, and a life of unwholesome debauchery. Towards the end he is said to have been afflicted by a peculiarly loathsome disease. The tale may well be due to the malice of his enemies; but he was clearly failing. One day in 78 he summoned to his house a local official who had openly defied the claims of the State Treasury; and in a fit of passion he had the man strangled before his very eyes. The excitement of the scene was too much for him. He broke a blood-vessel and within twenty-four hours he was dead. Rome gave him a public funeral; and an epitaph was set up over his monument, composed, it is said, by his own hand: 'No friend ever did him a good turn and no enemy a bad, but he was repaid to the full.' It was no bad summary of Sulla's career, revealing as it did at once his strength and his weakness. Had his aims been as lofty as his methods were thorough, he would have been a great man.

## CHAPTER XVII

## THE RISE OF POMPEY

**D**ESPITE the apparent solidity of Sulla's work of reconstruction, recent events had produced at Rome a state of uncertainty and bewilderment probably unique in her history. The kaleidoscopic vicissitudes of the fierce party struggle, the sweeping changes in the personnel of either party wrought by the havoc of successive massacre and counter-massacre, the rapid alternations of wealth and ruin, driving some to reckless desperation, enriching others with ill-gotten gains, and creating a general atmosphere of nervous suspicion and mean cupidity—all these things had tended to upset the normal alignments of

the Roman political world. Men seem to have lost their bearings, the preservation of their skins or the replenishment of their pockets outweighing the customary loyalties of caste or comradeship ; and, as a result, the old lines of demarcation between a governing aristocracy and a money-making *bourgeoisie* became more and more confused or obscured. Broadly speaking, it is true, the senatorial conservatives still hung together against the factious agitations of a heterogeneous opposition. Even outsiders, too, like Cicero, when promoted to the Order, might stand out as staunch supporters of its constitutional tradition ; and, when sufficiently scared by the prevailing chaos, the very knights themselves could be rallied to the cause of stable government. On the other hand, there was an increasing number of men who, though senators by rank and members of established senatorial families, had lost all sense of allegiance to the old régime, and who in steering the course of their careers were actuated mainly by motives of financial interest, political opportunism or personal ambition. Thus Crassus, for instance, was essentially a man on the make ; Catiline was desperately in debt ; Caesar, at one period at any rate, was both. To such men the humdrum routine of the *cursus honorum* and senatorial debate made little appeal ; and they turned inevitably to the more exciting and more repaying opportunities which were still to be found in mob politics. For, much as he hated and despised the proletariat, not even Sulla himself had dared to push his oligarchical reform to its logical extreme. He had left to the comitia its time-honoured prerogative of electing the annual magistrates ; and so long as this power remained to it, the control of the comitia was bound to be the object of an unscrupulous and disreputable competition. To dignify by the name of democrats the vote-catching adventurers who angled for the favours of the hungry urban rabble would clearly be a misnomer. Democrats, after Gracchus's style, they certainly were not. They possessed no consistent programme ; nor can any of them have seriously believed the Roman democracy to have been capable of solving the urgent problems of domestic policy, let alone of imperial rule. They simply made use of the conventional democrat

'platform' to further the ends of their own individualist ambition and in so doing to undermine the already shaken authority of the senatorial government. So it was that for a quarter of a century and over there ran on this unedifying yet intensely fascinating struggle—on the one side the ruling oligarchy, increasingly helpless, yet not for that reason the less intransigent; on the other side, the mob swayed by the skilful manipulation of political adventurers and bribed by the long purses of their capitalist backers;—and meanwhile slowly emerging into greater and greater prominence, the threat of intervention by the armed forces of the State which at length, under the leadership of a demagogue turned soldier, were destined to settle the quarrel of the parties by destroying once for all the power of both.

#### I. LEPIDUS, SERTORIUS AND SPARTACUS

The opening act in the drama was to take the form of an attempt which follows hard on Sulla's death, to overthrow his constitution by a violent *coup d'état*.

During his year of office—the very year of Sulla's death—Marcus Aemilius Lepidus, an ambitious aristocrat who contrary to the ex-dictator's wishes had been elected to the consulate, had made a bid for popular leadership by proposing a revival of the corn-dole and the reinstatement of those who had suffered exile or eviction under the recent Terror. He was strongly opposed in this policy by his colleague Catulus, a stalwart senatorial; and in the following year he accordingly determined to carry it through, if possible, by force of arms. He collected in Etruria a motley array of peasants, dispossessed by Sulla, political exiles, disgruntled veterans and liberated slaves; and these were preparing to march on Rome when Catulus met and defeated them, driving Lepidus himself to flee the country. The task of rounding up the remaining bands of rebels was entrusted to the young Cnaeus Pompeius, formerly one of Sulla's most brilliant lieutenants. He was by now unquestionably the ablest general at the Senate's disposal; and reluctant though the Senate might be to accord promotion to real military genius, this particular commission was to prove the prelude

to far greater things. Indeed, since professional troops were inevitably more loyal to their immediate chief than to the central government, the man already at the head of an army in Italy was in a strong position to dictate his wishes; and Pompey, who had set his heart on obtaining an important provincial command, was careful not to disband his men till his request was granted (77).

The opportunity of active service abroad was not at the moment very far to seek. Largely as a result of Rome's domestic preoccupations the Mediterranean World was in an unsettled state. On the Macedonian frontier there was constant fighting. At sea the pirates were once more busy with their depredations. In the East the King of Armenia was extending his realm over Cappadocia and southward, too, along the Syrian coast. Mithridates of Pontus was watching the chance to renew his old schemes of aggrandizement; and, though actual hostilities were here delayed till 74, it was already obvious that serious trouble was brewing. The most urgent problem, however, lay in Spain, where a most singular situation had arisen; and to understand its origin a word or two of explanation will be needed.

In 83, during the earlier stages of the struggle between Sulla and the Marians, Sertorius—perhaps the most capable and certainly the most high-principled of the democrat leaders—had been sent out to secure the command of the Nearer Spanish province. Driven out, however, by the arrival of Sullan troops, he was compelled to take refuge on the north-west coast of Africa. Here three years later he received an invitation from the natives of Lusitania to come over and assist them in an insurrection against Rome; and with his acceptance was begun a career as romantic as any in history. For, once Sertorius set foot in Spain, his presence worked like magic. It would seem to have flattered the natives' pride to have a Roman at their head. They obeyed him like children; and the further to play on their superstitious credulity, he even put it about that a certain snow-white fawn, a pet presented to him by its rustic captor, was the intermediary of the goddess Diana and could mysteriously impart to him the gift of second sight. Thousands flocked

to his standard. Many bound themselves under an oath to live or die with him ; so that he soon had abundant material for a formidable army which he equipped and trained after the Roman model, and despite all the efforts of the official governors, his influence rapidly extended over the greater part of the peninsula. The use he made of his ascendancy was extremely enlightened. For he possessed a constructive genius very rare among his countrymen : and first perhaps of any before Julius Caesar, he conceived it as a matter of deliberate policy to Romanize the provincials, encouraging their nobility to wear the toga and even organizing a school where they might send their sons to study Greek and Latin. So far indeed from wishing to detach Spain permanently from the Empire, it was rather his object to make of it a rallying-point whence the defeated Marian faction might recover its hold on Italy. Many prominent refugees joined him and of these he actually constituted a mimic senate. Finally in 77 his cause was reinforced by the arrival of Perpenna with a remnant of Lepidus's army which had eluded the vigilance of Pompey.

In the following year Pompey himself, having obtained or rather extorted from the Senate this coveted command, came against them. Despite his youth—for he was barely thirty and had held as yet no magisterial office—he had been given proconsular powers conjointly with Metellus Pius, the existing governor. A natural jealousy prevented the two generals from acting in effective harmony ; and for some years they failed to make any appreciable headway. Among the mountainous country and ill-watered valleys of the hinterland the guerrilla tactics of the insurgents were extremely difficult to overcome. Sertorius, moreover, who planned things on a big scale, had been looking round for allies among the enemies of Rome. He was apparently in league with the piratical commanders ; and, when in 74 the second Mithridatic War began, he struck an advantageous bargain whereby, in return for the loan of some Roman officers and men, the King should send him money and a squadron of forty ships. Nevertheless, Sertorius's star was slowly on the wane. The Spaniards somewhat resented his arbitrary

discipline; and among the more dissolute and selfish of the Marian officers there was a growing tendency to challenge his right of leadership. Perpenna for his part was playing a traitor's game; and one night in 72 Sertorius was assassinated by the tipsy diners at the head-quarters mess. With his death the forces of rebellion lost cohesion; Perpenna was captured and summarily executed; and though a few inland towns continued to hold out, the province was soon pacified. Sertorius's work, however, was not wholly wasted. His enlightened policy had laid the foundation of a more liberal treatment of the native population; and to reward the services of loyal Spaniards, Pompey himself was authorized to make individual grants of Roman citizenship.<sup>1</sup> But he had no profound interest in the settlement of the country; and by the autumn of 71 he was hurrying back his army by land to Italy.

At home during his absence there had been very important and very terrible happenings; and for the proper understanding of these a few words of explanation are once more required. In the course of the last hundred years the large-scale employment of slave labour in agriculture (the beginnings of which we noted at the end of the Second Punic War) had grown to alarming dimensions. On the upland ranches of the South especially where no real skill was needed for tending sheep or cattle, slaves of the more savage and unmanageable type were utilized in vast numbers. They were housed in horrible barracks called *ergastula*, where they were brutally maltreated and at nights for safety's sake were often kept in chains. Roaming the hills by day they frequently used their liberty to prey on passing travellers; and, as they were armed for the defence of their herds against wild animals or robbers, they were clearly a potential menace not merely to the safety of private citizens, but even to the stability of the State. Already, as we have seen, the adjacent island of Sicily had experienced two slave risings of a peculiarly obstinate and ferocious character, and it needed only an opportunity and a leader to precipitate a

<sup>1</sup> Caesar's favourite engineer and friend, Balbus, was one of those enfranchised.



similar catastrophe within Italy itself. In 73 B.C. the horror happened. A Thracian slave named Spartacus, assisted by a band of fellow-gladiators, broke out from their quarters at Capua, and began to lead a bandit's life on Mount Vesuvius. Attempts to capture them were beaten off. The news of their success spread rapidly; and first by scores and then by hundreds slave herdsmen from the upland farms or slave-workers from Campanian factories trooped out to swell their numbers. Before long South Italy was at the mercy of these desperadoes. Villages were burnt and plundered; travellers robbed and killed. Spartacus wisely did what he could to restrain their worst excesses; and since many of his followers were of north European origin,—some taken by Marius in the barbarian wars, some captured in skirmishes on the Macedonian frontier—his original intention was to move north through Italy and make for home and safety across the Alps. But this movement, though it reached Picenum, was presently abandoned; and the rebel army swept back into Lucania. It now numbered something in the neighbourhood of a hundred thousand men, equipped with good weapons either captured or manufactured, and including even a troop of cavalry. The Roman public had at first awoken slowly to the true nature of the peril; but by this time panic prevailed and the Senate appointed Marcus Crassus, who like Pompey had formerly been one of Sulla's officers, to take the field with no fewer than six legions. He drove Spartacus back into the extreme tip of the peninsula and there pinned him to the coast by a line of strong entrenchments. The bandit chief cut his way through; and after a series of engagements was eventually defeated and killed in 71. Crassus celebrated his victory by crucifying 6,000 of the prisoners along the Appian highway from Capua to Rome. He had delivered the country from a nightmare as hideous as any it had known; and by rights he should have been the sole hero of the hour. But at the last moment the unique credit of his triumph was partially obscured by a mere accident. A forlorn hope of the insurgents, making its way north to escape from Italy, fell in with Pompey's army as it returned from the Spanish campaign, and of

course was cut to pieces. And on the score of this success Pompey coolly put forward the claim that, whatever Crassus might have done to break the back of the rebellion, he himself had stamped it out.

The two generals were now face to face. Crassus was nominally the Senate's champion; Pompey the favourite of the populace. Both were hungry for power and there was no love lost between them. None could tell but that the tragedy of the recent civil war might not now be re-enacted. Saner counsels, however, prevailed. The magisterial elections were imminent; and the two rivals were persuaded by friends to compose their differences and combine in a joint-candidature for the consulship. Under the Sullan *Lex annalis*, it is true, neither of them was technically entitled to stand; but the Senate, having no choice, agreed to waive the age-limit in their favour. Both were elected and entered office for the year 70 B.C.

## II. THE CONSULSHIP OF POMPEY AND CRASSUS

The personal antagonism of Pompey and Crassus was in some degree a reflection of the complete contrast of character which lay between them. Crassus possessed precisely the qualities which Pompey lacked. He was a born schemer, quick-witted, persuasive and perfectly unscrupulous. During the Sullan proscriptions a shrewd eye for financial opportunities had enabled him to make such advantageous purchases of property that, when prices resumed their normal level, he found himself possessed of prodigious wealth. This wealth he utilized firstly in profitable investment with the tax-collectors' syndicates, over which he presently acquired a sort of unofficial dictatorship, and secondly in extending his political influence by the tactful advance of loans to young men of manifest promise and slender purses—Julius Caesar amongst the rest. By these means he secured and maintained a position in the State which was out of all proportion to his intrinsic worth. For, except as a financier and a wire-puller, Crassus's talents were mediocre. He was no great speaker, though he appeared often in the courts. What success he won as a general was mainly due to his

ruthless enforcement of discipline ; and during the Servile War he is said to have punished the cowardice of a certain detachment by the summary execution of one man in every fifty. But in later years his conduct of the ill-starred expedition against the Parthians, which was destined to cost him his life, proved him no real strategist.

Pompey, on the other hand, was a soldier pure and simple, and a soldier of a very high order. His great capacity for organization, his popularity with the rank and file, the spectacular victories of his Oriental campaign were to earn him the reputation of being the foremost captain of his day ; and until the emergence of Julius Caesar, that reputation was justified. But here his claim to greatness ended. There is an entertaining story told by Plutarch, how when Pompey was at the height of his power the scurrilous tribune Clodius, being anxious to discredit him, collected a crowd of rough fellows in the Forum and asked a series of pointedly insulting questions : ' Who is our profligate cock-of-the-walk ? Who is tied to his wife's apron strings ? Who scratches his head with one finger ? ' At each question came an answering roar of ' Pompey ' from the delighted rabble ; and the great man, so Plutarch assures us, was put completely out of countenance. The anecdote is not without significance. For, when it came to the sharp thrust and parry of party politics, Pompey was as helpless as a child. A well-meaning, but unimaginative soul, morally far above the low level of contemporary society whose vices had no attraction for his blameless temperament, a model husband devoted to his home, generous in an age when most were cynics and capable of treating even defeated foes with a humanity all too rare in ancient history—he was either too narrow in outlook or too irresolute to get his way at Rome. Ambitious he certainly was to the point of sheer vanity, and could never bring himself to relinquish his appetite for power. But, though the immense prestige of his military successes was such that by merely raising a finger he might have made himself master of Rome, he could never summon the nerve to take the plunge. When his popularity waned through an enforced inaction, he adopted a pompous pose of dignified

aloofness; and knowing himself no match for the sharper wits around him, he affected a reputation for inscrutability by never speaking his real mind. Nevertheless, every one respected him for the good fellow that he was; and the real tragedy of his life seems that he came at a time when great decisions were required. For of these he was incapable. In politics it was typical that he generally relied on others to make up his mind for him. At one time Cicero had his ear; then falling for the moment under other influences, he incontinently shut his doors on his old counsellor. At various periods of his career we accordingly find him siding now against the Senate, and now for it, first the friend and associate of Julius Caesar, then finally his mortal foe. No wonder that in his portraits Pompey wears the puzzled look of a man for whom life has been too difficult.

The policy which Pompey was to follow as consul for 70 B.C. was determined partly by the necessity of carrying out the wishes of his democratic following and partly by a personal interest in obtaining a free hand for his own future career. On both scores it was essential to attack the Sullan Constitution which not merely muzzled the popular Assembly, but seriously limited the scope of magisterial or pro-magisterial power; and Pompey was thus doubly committed to a programme of repeal. Crassus, on his part, was for sitting on the fence, anxious to keep in with the Senate and at the same time to stand well with the Knights. But his opposition was overruled; and it was soon a foregone conclusion that the Sullan Constitution would in the main be swept away. Already, indeed, popular agitation had done much to weaken it. In 75 the rule disqualifying tribunes for election to further office had been disannulled. Meanwhile the inadequacy of the corn-supply, aggravated as it was by piratical activities, had begun to arouse much discontent; and two years later the practice of cheap distributions had once more been resumed. To complete the destruction of the Sullan system, the reformers now proceeded to concentrate upon two principal ends: first, to restore the tribunician right of initiating legislation in the tribal Assembly, and second, to revive the censor's power of suspending undesirable senators—

a power which of course was very promptly utilized to remove certain reactionaries obnoxious to the democratic cause. These ends achieved, it remained to deal with the vexed question of the law-courts. The senatorial jurors had proved no better than the Knights, and their methods were so corrupt that no magistrate or governor of the opposing party could expect to gain fair treatment at their hands. The solution now put forward was based upon a compromise ; but this originated, as far as we can judge, not so much from any statesmanlike desire for an equitable settlement, as from the disagreement still existing between Pompey and Crassus. In any case a Bill was framed by Caesar's uncle, Cotta, and duly passed by the Assembly, whereby in future the jurymen were to be drawn conjointly from three different Orders—the senators, equites and the *tribuni aerarii*, a class of which little is known, but which probably was composed of men rating next after the Knights on a property assessment. The arrangement was so far successful that for the remainder of our period it was permitted to stand.

Thus, as a result of the year's legislation, the old republican system was completely restored ; and the democratic leaders were now free to shape their policy unimpeded either by the Senate's power of veto over the Assembly's measures or by the menace of reprisal from the senatorial courts. It can scarcely be said, however, that Pompey or Crassus possessed a constructive policy. Their outlook was limited to their own personal ambitions ; and it was not easy to decide what their next step should be. Provincial commands were, of course, constitutionally their due ; but neither chose to take them. Pompey, acutely conscious that he could only shine in a military capacity, was watching for the chance of some major operation and, since the one important campaign of the moment—the Mithridatic War—was already, as we shall see, in other hands, he was compelled to bide his time. But inaction greatly irked him, and with no very good grace he retired into his shell. Crassus, on the other hand, was in his element at Rome. During his year of office he had won much popularity by lavish expenditure on public entertainment and in particular by providing a gigantic feast

at which tables were laid for no less than ten thousand diners. The wider opportunities, too, which the recent reforms had opened to political adventurers exactly suited his talent for intrigue ; and in competition with Pompey, towards whom his animosity was unabated, he knew that he could play his cards most effectively by remaining at home.

It must not, however, be imagined that Pompey was the only man who needed watching. Others were now coming to the fore, who were soon destined to play important parts in the political game. There was the young Julius Caesar, for example, intellectually at least a far more dangerous partisan of the democratic cause. Though a member of one of the oldest and most aristocratic among Roman families, he was, as we have seen, a nephew by marriage to the great Marius and his political views were determined no less by this accidental connexion than by his own natural independence of character. During the Terror he had narrowly escaped the fate of many Marians ; having married Cinna's daughter, he was ordered by Sulla to divorce her, and refusing, only saved his life by flight. After serving a campaign in Asia Minor, he had returned for a while to Rome where he made himself conspicuous by the fastness of his life and the extravagance of his hospitality. But he was soon off again eastwards, this time to study rhetoric at Rhodes. While cruising in the Aegean he was caught and held to ransom by pirates ; and Plutarch tells the story how he jokingly warned his captors that they would one day rue his detention and how, on regaining liberty, he kept his word, and returning with some borrowed ships, hunted down and crucified many members of the gang. After seeing some further service in the Mithridatic War, he was now back in Rome once more, and had thrown in his lot with the reformers in their attack on the Sullan Constitution. His ambition was self-evident ; and already, despite his years (for he was only just turned thirty), he had secured his election to the distinguished life-office of pontiff. Yet Caesar was nothing if not shrewd ; and he had no desire to compromise his future by any premature attempt at self-assertion. The constitutional opportunities of the *cursus honorum* were for

the moment his natural stepping-stone to power ; and in 68 he was content to go out as quaestor to the province of Further Spain.

Slightly more to be reckoned with as being by some years Caesar's senior, but still immature for the highest offices of State, was Marcus Tullius Cicero, the famous orator. The son of a knight of Arpinum, he had no aristocratic connexions behind him, and when election to the quaestorship won him a seat in the Senate, he was entirely dependent, as a 'new man' in politics, on his personal efforts alone. His brilliant forensic gifts, however, had already made their mark. Since his successful defence of the young farmer Roscius against the intrigues of Sulla's freedman, he had been inundated with offers of briefs, and though he tactfully made it his practice to avoid the invidious task of undertaking prosecutions, he steadily increased his reputation. Study at Athens and Rhodes had further developed his oratorical powers ; and in the very year of Pompey's consulship he had found opportunity to display them in a *cause célèbre*. From 73 to 71 Sicily had been suffering under the administration of the notorious Caius Verres ; and on the expiration of his tenure, the provincials, deciding to prosecute, placed the case in the hands of Cicero, who had previously served among them in his capacity as quaestor. Verres' influential friends made desperate efforts to avert or postpone the trial, even putting forward a sham accuser, against whom Cicero was forced in a preliminary suit to establish his prior right to prosecute. With Verres, too, was bound to lie the sympathy of the jury, who were still at this date senators ; and it was clear that all Cicero's skill would be needed to secure a conviction. A hurried visit to Sicily had, however, armed him with much damning evidence—of extortionate manipulation of the corn-exactions, of thefts of innumerable works of art from public temples as well as from private houses, of hideous acts of personal revenge or official cruelty, culminating in the summary crucifixion of Roman citizens. Not all the truth, we know, lay on Cicero's side ; for some of Verres' victims were Italians who had taken to piracy and in all probability deserved their fate. Nevertheless, the indictment was so

overwhelming that before the trial was half over, Verres threw up the sponge and retired from Italy. Thus had been won an unprecedented triumph over the forces of senatorial corruption ; nor was Cicero the man to minimize his success. The full speech which he was intending to deliver had the case run out its course he subsequently published in an elaborated literary form ; but what he had actually accomplished sufficed to establish his reputation as the foremost orator of the day. It is difficult for us in these times to realize how often in the past mere eloquence availed to determine the greatest issues and sway even the destinies of nations. But the Romans were peculiarly susceptible to rhetorical appeal. Cicero, in short, was a made man ; and though in 70 B.C. he stood as yet on the threshold of his political career and had still to make his choice between espousing the Senate's cause or maintaining a more natural allegiance to the Knights, the time was not far distant when the power of his resounding periods would have the magical effect of drawing those jealous Orders into a temporary union.

There is one other personality of whom mention must be made—Lucius Licinius Lucullus, not merely because he was an influential and ambitious aristocrat, a strong champion of the Senate and (as his service in Sulla's eastern campaign had proved) an organizer of no mean ability ; but also because he was at present in charge of Rome's most important military operation—the Mithridatic War. Before more is said, however, it will be necessary to describe the origin and course of this struggle.

### III. THE SECOND MITHRIDATIC WAR

By the terms which Sulla had imposed in 83, Mithridates, as we have seen, had got off very lightly. He had drawn in his horns for the moment ; but seeing Rome crippled and distracted by the events of the Civil War, he watched the chance for his revenge, built up his fleet by hiring Greek mariners and trained his large army to a state of high efficiency with the aid of exiled Roman officers. In 75 the chance came. For in that year Nicomedes of Bithynia



died; and following the example of Eumenes of Pergamum, bequeathed his kingdom to the Roman Government, which promptly accepted the bequest and made Bithynia into a province. Mithridates had long coveted this neighbouring country, and he now proceeded to denounce the will as a forgery and declare himself for the rival claim of a supposed son of the dead king. Then, counting on the support of the Bithynian natives, who were already learning to resent Rome's tax-collecting methods, he prepared to lead his army across the frontier. He had chosen his moment and laid his plans with skill. Knowing of Rome's preoccupation with the Spanish revolt, he had lost no time, as we have seen, in getting into touch with its protagonist Sertorius. In the pirates, too, who acted as his go-between for these negotiations, he had no despicable allies. The Thracian tribes on the Macedonian border were acting largely under his influence; and a still more important—though as the issue proved a far from dependable—confederate was his own son-in-law Tigranes of Armenia, now the most powerful monarch of the Orient, whose realm extended from the Caucasus to Palestine, and who in pride at the number of his vassal princes, had assumed the resounding title of the 'King of Kings'. The menace, in short, was one which the Roman Government could not possibly ignore. Lucullus, one of the consuls for 74 (and presently to be assigned the province of Cilicia), was sent out and took the field with a force of five legions. His colleague Cotta assumed the command at sea. The inadequacy of naval preparations, however, allowed the enemy to win a considerable initial success and to overrun completely the Hellespontine region. The arrival of Lucullus from the south and the timely reinforcement of the fleet sufficed to turn the tables. In 73 and 72 the Pontic coastal cities were gradually mastered and Mithridates driven back and back until his army dwindled to nothing and he himself was forced to take refuge at Tigranes' court.

Lucullus, well knowing that so long as he was at large, there would be no peace in Asia, demanded his surrender; and therewith the struggle began to enter a new phase. Hitherto dynastic jealousy had prevented the Armenian

King from assisting the cause of Pontic aggrandizement ; but the father-in-law's humiliation was the son-in-law's opportunity ; and, when directly challenged to surrender Mithridates, Tigranes prepared for resistance. Lucullus was therefore faced with the necessity of pushing his campaign yet further eastwards. In 69 he set out accordingly into Southern Armenia and proceeded to lay siege to Tigranocerta, the new and sumptuous capital which Tigranes himself had founded in imitation of the Hellenistic cities of the Levant. An enormous Oriental host marched down to its relief but was crushingly defeated ; and the capital fell. Considering the comparative smallness of his forces Lucullus had worked wonders. He had overrun Pontus, scattered Mithridates' army and now even humbled the ' King of Kings ' himself. It is little wonder if his head was somewhat turned. Though honourable peace might have been had for the asking, he made no effort to conclude the struggle, but laid his plans on an ever-widening scale. His objective for 68 was to be Artaxata, the old Armenian capital, lying far away north-eastwards towards the Caspian Sea. He even entertained the vision of invading Parthia and coercing its powerful king to render him assistance, But very soon it became clear that his ambition had overreached itself. The leadership of men had never been Lucullus's real forte. For he was too harsh a taskmaster and at this critical juncture his troops' allegiance failed him. Many of them, having first been brought to Asia under Fimbria's command, had already been absent from Italy for nearly twenty years. They were utterly sick of campaigning. Political agitators from Rome were spreading disaffection in their ranks ; and the prospect of a winter spent among the Armenian wilds was the last straw. They flatly refused to march, and Lucullus was compelled to call the expedition off. Worse still, renewed trouble was arising in his rear, where Tigranes with indomitable spirit had collected a fresh army and was rapidly recovering his native kingdom. Failure stared Lucullus in the face ; and, as was inevitable, the moment was seized by his enemies at home to renew their political attacks.

Originally appointed as the Senate's nominee, he naturally

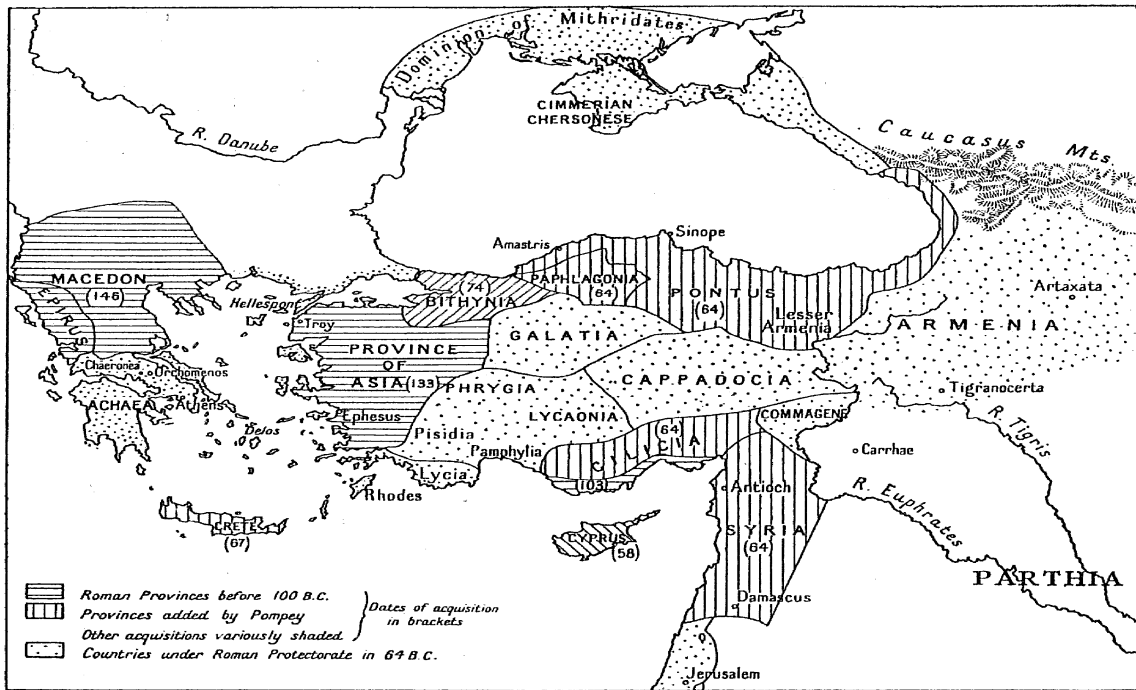
found little favour with the democratic régime inaugurated by Pompey and Crassus ; and his unpopularity had been yet further increased as an indirect result of his administrative methods. For in the intervals of warfare he had not neglected his province of Asia and after his first two years of campaigning against Mithridates, he had set himself to rectify the appalling financial chaos which he there found to have resulted from Sulla's punitive exactions. In their endeavour to meet the call of the indemnity demanded of them, the provincial communities had borrowed heavily not merely from the Greek or Italian bankers of the coastal cities, but also from the rich corporations of Roman tax-collectors. The rates of interest charged had been so exorbitant that their indebtedness which at first had been roughly five million pounds had gradually mounted to nearly six times that sum. Private individuals were in no better case ; and many were even forced to satisfy their creditors by selling their children as slaves. It was a situation which Lucullus found it impossible to tolerate. To attack the vested interests of the financial magnates he must have known to be a risky undertaking ; but wide reading and the study of philosophy had bred in him an independence of outlook rare among Roman governors and he decided on drastic measures. The rate of interest chargeable on loans was cut down to the normal level of 12 per cent. per annum. Two-thirds of the existing public debts were written off and the remaining third made payable in four yearly instalments, while in the case of private liabilities the creditor had to be satisfied with one-quarter of the debtor's annual income. Thus Asia was saved from bankruptcy and began once more to prosper ; but the man who had saved it incurred the deep displeasure of the great capitalists in Rome. They had begun a vigorous agitation for Lucullus's recall : and, as soon as his Armenian failure exposed him to attack, the blow fell, and in 67 B.C. he received the news that he was to be superseded.

He came home a disappointed and disillusioned man. To the disgust of the Senate who had looked to find in him a champion against Pompey and the democrats, he at once abandoned politics, and retired to live a life of refined, but

self-indulgent ease, keeping open house to his friends with an elaboration of luxury and splendour which made his name a byword among Roman plutocrats. It was a sad ending to a career which might have rendered real service to Rome. For Lucullus was clearly a man who, side by side with a firm allegiance to the constitutional tradition, possessed an unusual liberality and breadth of outlook. In other words, his patriotism did not blind him to the claims of other peoples; and the acts of his provincial administration alone proved him capable of placing the welfare of the down-trodden native not merely above the interests of his rapacious fellow-countrymen, but even above the more personal considerations of his own popularity. In his military capacity, too, while over-eager in the pursuit of spectacular triumphs, it would not seem that he was thereby committed to a policy of territorial expansion. Through his defeat of Tigranes' army and the capture of Tigranocerta, he had automatically freed the coast of Syria from its recent vassalage to the Armenian crown; annexation would have been easy and would have won him much credit at Rome; but he preferred to restore the country to its legitimate sovereign of the decayed Seleucid House. Such a policy was thoroughly in keeping with the old *laissez-faire* attitude of the earlier Republic and met doubtless with the approval of a Senate already overburdened with the responsibility of twelve existing provinces. But times were changing and other views prevailed. The same capitalist party which had resented Lucullus's interference with their exploitation of provincials were ready to welcome fresh additions to the Empire which would mean fresh opportunities of profit for themselves. That party was now in the ascendant; and, since more provinces would mean more tribute for the public treasury, the hungry mob of the capital were no less sensitive to the advantages of a progressive Imperialism. So, while the Senate was nervously averse to a policy of expansion and still more nervously jealous of the man who might undertake its execution, the opponents of the Senate were not merely resolved on such a policy, but were equally agreed about the man. In other words, the East was to be conquered; and Pompey's hour had struck.

## IV. POMPEY AND THE EAST

One reason why Pompey had not before this date been sent to supplant Lucullus in the Mithridatic command was that his talents had in the meanwhile found alternative employment. For an enemy worthy of his steel, if not elsewhere available by land, was at any rate forthcoming at sea, where piracy from a long-standing nuisance had recently grown into a positive menace. It was a situation for which Rome had only herself to blame. Her Government, as we have often said, had never much concerned itself with protecting commercial interests, and as one by one the leading maritime powers of the Mediterranean had been conquered and disarmed, no serious effort had been made to undertake the duty of patrol which their fleets had previously served. So piracy, going thus unchecked, had become a thriving profession. Men of all countries, including even political exiles from Italy, had taken to the seas. Large and well-organized flotillas, with regular bases and arsenals in Crete, Cilicia and elsewhere, had received encouragement and recognition from Mithridates, Sertorius and other enemies of Rome. From the Levant their activities had extended audaciously to western waters. Roman troops had on occasion been prevented from crossing the Adriatic. Roman squadrons had been defeated; and peaceful Roman travellers been made to walk the plank. Ostia had actually been entered and its shipping burnt. The more adventurous of the marauders even ventured inland; and it was as much as travellers' lives were worth to proceed along the coastal portions of the Appian Way. Worst of all, perhaps, the corn-supply had been frequently interrupted; and the populace of the capital was more than once half-starved. Such action as had been taken produced no permanent effect. In 79 and the following years P. Servilius Vatia had suppressed some Cilician strongholds, receiving the reward of a triumph and the title of Isauricus; during the Mithridatic War Mark Antony's father had received a similar commission which he notoriously abused; and in 69 Caecilius Metellus had acted more effectively in Crete. Truth to tell, however, such



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piecemeal efforts were foredoomed to failure. For, driven from one base, the pirates could always find another; and since Roman governors might not act outside their provinces, effective co-operation was impossible. What in reality was needed was that some single commander should be entrusted with the task of suppression; and, though the Senate naturally shrank from committing such wide powers to a man whom they so much mistrusted, Pompey was clearly the man for the job. If the Senate, however, was unwilling to act, the rehabilitation of the tribunate in 70 B.C. had provided an alternative method of appointment. Pompey's supporters, both rich and poor alike, were growing restive, and in 67 a tribune named Gabinius brought forward a Bill for the purpose. Feeling ran high and at one time the mob rushed the Senate-house. A rival tribune's veto was swept aside and eventually the Assembly, with the approval of Caesar, Cicero and most other thinking men, proceeded to vote to a person unnamed the sole and extraordinary command of the Mediterranean basin. The commission was to last three years. It empowered the holder to operate with full proconsular power in any province up to fifty miles inland from the coast-line; and it was accompanied by a grant of over one million pounds.

Pompey's nomination to the post followed as a matter of course. The armament at first suggested did not satisfy his requirements, and he eventually obtained leave to raise 500 warships, 120,000 infantry and 5,000 horse. In point of fact, he never found it necessary to raise anything like that number. With swift decision he divided the Mediterranean into thirteen districts, each of which he placed under a lieutenant. Then closing the exits at Gibraltar and the Bosphorus, he began a methodical sweep of the seas. Within forty days he had cleared all waters west of Sicily. Most of the pirates retreated to the Levant and after a brief visit to Rome, where he received a remarkable ovation, Pompey set out in pursuit, coasted round the Peloponnese, defeated a strong concentration of the enemy off the Cilician coast,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The piratical bases in Crete had already been dealt with by Metellus, see above.

and then one by one reduced their various strongholds in that region. Within seven weeks of his departure from Brundisium, he had completed the task assigned to him. It was typical of the man's generosity that instead of crucifying or enslaving his prisoners he planted them as settlers in different parts of the Empire; and it is said that the old Cilician farmer described by Vergil in his Fourth Georgic was in all probability one of these regenerate pirates.

Bread was now plentiful and cheap at the capital and Pompey was the hero of the hour. At the conclusion of his campaign he had left the bulk of his army in Cilicia and proceeded quietly to the province of Asia. What was to follow he clearly anticipated and no doubt to a large degree manipulated through his agents at Rome. For there the agitation about the Mithridatic command had now reached a head. Lucullus, as we have seen, had been utterly discredited. His Armenian campaign had ignominiously collapsed. Mithridates was openly defying him; and in the previous year (67) it had already been decided that he should be superseded. Cilicia had at once been taken from him. Glabrio, the consul for that year, had been promised Bithynia and commissioners were on their way to constitute a new province in Pontus. Nevertheless public dissatisfaction was far from being allayed by these makeshift appointments; and it was felt that for a successful termination of the war a stronger hand would be needed. Accordingly in 66 a tribune named Manilius proposed in the Assembly that Pompey should be given sole command in the East, including the control of the three provinces, Cilicia, Bithynia and Asia, and coupled with the right to declare war or conclude peace at his own discretion. Never in the whole course of Roman history had powers so tremendous been conferred upon a single individual, not even on the great Scipio Africanus himself. The die-hards of the Senate were of course up in arms, but were powerless. Cicero made himself the chief spokesman of the Bill, Caesar, perhaps discerning in its provisions a useful precedent for obtaining one day a similar command for himself, lent it support; and the Assembly gave their assent (66).



So Pompey took over the command in Asia; and by immediately annulling all his predecessor's arrangements, proceeded to signalize a complete break with past policy. There was now to follow a campaign of deliberate conquest unprecedented in the annals of the Republic. It was more indeed of a parade than a campaign. Pompey's forces were strong; for besides the troops he took over from Lucullus, he had several legions of his own. But material resources were, in fact, of far less consequence than the immense prestige of his name. Mithridates scarcely even stayed to put up a proper fight; and after a series of rear-guard actions he fled first to Armenia, then, realizing he was not wanted by Tigranes, to his own dependency in the Crimea. There he maintained himself for two years more, acting still with furious energy (though he was nearly seventy), planning even to march on Italy by way of the Danube and the Alps and struggling desperately against the disaffection of his army and the treachery of his sons. At last in 63 from utter weariness he ended his own life—still so stout of frame to the end that the poison he first took proved ineffectual<sup>1</sup> and he was compelled to get a Gallic officer to slay him.

For Pompey it would have been useless to pursue the defeated enemy into these distant parts; and after following his track as far as the Southern Caucasus and there undertaking a campaign against the local tribes, he turned back to gather the fruits of his tremendous triumph. For already on the defeat of Mithridates the resistance of Armenia had collapsed. Tigranes had appeared at the Roman camp and offered abject submission. He was allowed to retain his kingdom as a vassal prince—a position in which he was intended to serve as a useful bulwark against the neighbouring power of Parthia. The Parthian King Phraates had meanwhile been growing nervous, and demanded that the Euphrates should be recognized as the frontier between himself and Rome—an arrangement which Lucullus had previously

<sup>1</sup> The story was that for many years Mithridates had been in the habit of taking small doses of poison as an antidote against possible attempts to poison him, and had so rendered himself immune.

conceded. Now, however, his request met merely with the ambiguous reply that Pompey would do what was just.

It was a fatal error ; for thus was lost the chance of coming to terms with a people who were destined in the near future to cause serious trouble to Rome. But the truth is that Pompey was relying on his country's traditional policy of playing off one native power against another and so of weakening both. By taking his side against Tigranes the Parthians had already served his turn ; and they were now no more to him than one among many elements in the grandiose imperial scheme that he was framing. For, even if he had no definite mandate to extend the Empire's frontier, Pompey was clearly expected by his supporters at home to do so ; and since the opportunity lay ready to his hand, he proceeded methodically about his task. After his wild-goose chase into the Caucasus in 65, no more serious fighting was required of him ; and his next three years were spent in annexing, settling or re-partitioning, on a scale never hitherto attempted, the lands of the Near East.

In Asia Minor itself, besides the old province of Asia, Cilicia was greatly enlarged by the addition of territory on the east and the north-west ; and in Bithynia were incorporated the coastal districts of Paphlagonia and Pontus. The central region of Galatia was allowed to retain its native organization of independent cantons, but was placed under a local chief named Deioterius who had proved himself loyal to Rome's interest. Lycia and the Kingdom of Cappadocia were similarly treated and left as free client-states. Far more important, however, than these natural and perhaps necessary measures of reorganization was Pompey's treatment of the Syrian coast. The peoples of that district had never made war against Rome ; they had not even given assistance to her enemies. Originally the centre of the old Seleucid realm, their country had fallen, as we saw, under the sway of Armenia ; and then after Tigranes' defeat, had been restored by Lucullus to Antiochus, the legitimate sovereign of the Seleucid House. Pompey, however, had other ends in view ; and he was determined that here was the place

to carve out a new province for Rome. In 65 his lieutenant Gabinius had already been sent forward to keep a watch upon the district ; and in the following year Pompey himself marched down through the passes of Mount Taurus, quartered himself at Antioch and then, despite the protests of the Seleucid monarch, proceeded to dictate the terms of annexation. The only serious trouble arose over the settlement of Palestine, a former dependency of Syria which, as we saw in an earlier chapter, had achieved its liberation under those famous champions, the Maccabees brothers. During the lapse of some years, the leadership of the Maccabean family had sadly degenerated. Discreditable and bloody disputes had arisen over the tenure of the high-priesthood, now the sovereign position at Jerusalem ; and at the very moment of Pompey's approach faction was still rife. In 69 Hyrcanus, the legitimate holder of the office, had been dethroned by Aristobulus, his ambitious brother, assisted by the priestly caste of semi-Hellenized Sadducees. Rallying to his side the more popular party of the Pharisaic priests, he had called in some Arabian allies and an Edomite prince called Antipater ; and with their aid had engaged in blockading his brother upon the Temple Hill. On the orders of Gabinius, who favoured Aristobulus, the besiegers had been forced to desist ; and now that Pompey had reached Syria, the two rival candidates went together to his head-quarters to urge their respective claims. Pompey, however, would only temporize and in 63 marched down upon Jerusalem. Hyrcanus's supporters admitted him to the city ; but Aristobulus had meanwhile determined on resistance and ensconced himself once more upon the Temple Hill. A regular siege followed, in which the Romans were greatly assisted by the defenders' religious scruples about work on the Sabbath day. After three months the walls were breached and a massacre took place in which many priests were slaughtered at the very altar. Pompey, though forbearing to lay hands upon the Temple treasure, insisted on entering the Holy of Holies ; and Jewish omen-mongers of a later generation noted with satisfaction that from that moment his luck turned and the future was to bring him

nothing but disappointment, decline of power and, in the last issue, an ignominious death.

Hyrchanus was now duly re-installed as High Priest and civil ruler over a somewhat curtailed Palestine, which he governed precariously under the baleful influence of his scheming adviser Antipater, and which after various vicissitudes passed eventually to Antipater's son, the famous Herod. Jewish independence, however, was to be no more than nominal. For the country was placed under the close supervision of the governor of the new Syrian province; and an annual tribute was to be levied—a mark of subservience which, though actually far from oppressive, made its collectors, the publicani, particularly obnoxious to this freedom-loving race.

It was indeed a significant feature of Pompey's whole settlement that contrary to the usual practice of leaving autonomous allies immune from other burdens than the provision of troops on demand, he imposed on most of the new Asiatic vassals the obligation to pay taxes: and it is calculated that the revenue accruing to Rome from the East was multiplied fivefold as the result of his additional exactions. Apart from this, however, he appears to have followed the old *laissez-faire* principle traditional to the Republic, and to have interfered little, if at all, with the existing methods of government. States of backward development were left under the rule of their native chiefs or kings. Cities, on the other hand, which already possessed democratic institutions, were permitted to retain them; and oligarchical constitutions were only imposed when an old city was restored or a new city founded. It is noteworthy, however, that during Pompey's stay in Asia much was done to encourage the scattered rural population to concentrate in towns; and of the thirty-nine new foundations officially ascribed to him, some became, in due course, of genuine importance. Yet in this policy again he was not, in point of fact, striking out on a new line, but was merely continuing a process which had been going on ever since Alexander's conquests had hellenized the East; so that the impetus now given to urban civilization, though doubtless intended

to promote commerce to the advantage of Roman capitalists, is in no sense to be regarded as a deliberate endeavour to spread Roman habits or ideas. On the contrary, the culture of these new towns as of the older ones remained essentially Greek. In most there were Greek schools; in many lecture halls where professors taught philosophy or rhetoric, and theatres in which classical Greek masterpieces were acted. Even Jerusalem came to have her Greek gymnasium; and, as the evidence of the New Testament shows, the debased Greek lingo, called the *Koiné*, was spoken almost everywhere in the Levant. Roman governors made it their regular practice to translate their edicts; and Pilate, writing the superscription of the Cross, wrote in Hebrew, Greek and Latin. To have changed the natural current of this cultural development would have been a difficult, perhaps an impossible task. Pompey at least was not the man to attempt it. He simply accepted the situation as he found it; and thus it was decided for better or for worse that the eastern half of the Empire should remain for ever morally, intellectually and to a large extent politically distinct from the European half.

The time was now drawing on when the great work of settling Asia might be considered complete. Egypt, oddly enough, Pompey made no attempt to touch. Yet he seemed in no special hurry to return to Rome. His homeward journey was, in fact, a sort of leisurely rehearsal for the triumph which he was to celebrate with unprecedented splendour when he reached the capital. He was bringing with him, as overwhelming evidence of his achievements, enormous quantities of booty wrung from the nine hundred cities he boasted to have captured, together with a train of hostages which is said to have included no less than three hundred and sixty-two princes, Aristobulus of Judaea among them. On his voyage he put in for a while at various important Greek centres, such as Mitylene, Rhodes and Athens, and there, as though to parade his interest in their culture, he listened with patronizing condescension to the recitations of poets and the complimentary declamations of rhetorical professors. The slowness of his progress had at least the

desired effect of rousing the expectation of Italy to a fever-pitch of excitement. What line of action he would pursue when at last he should arrive was matter for grave speculation. Would he lay down with equanimity the tremendous powers he had enjoyed during these six years past—or would he assume, like Sulla, an autocratic authority untempered by Sulla's predilection for the senatorial cause? No one could say. But before we proceed to unfold the answer to these questions, we must turn back to survey the situation in the capital itself, and to describe the events which had been passing there during the great man's lengthy absence.

#### V. THE SITUATION AT ROME

Among all the events of this critical decade the passing of the Gabinian and Manilian laws was beyond doubt the most important—not so much on account of the magnitude of the powers thereby conferred, as because they were conferred by a direct vote of the people against the Senate's will. In other words, the safeguards of the Sullan Constitution had completely broken down; and there was now no concealing the uncomfortable truth that a single individual might thus at any moment become master of the State. For, just as compliant tribunes had once served as the Senate's henchmen, so they could now promote the interest of the would-be autocrat; and even after his normal course of offices was run, he could continue through their agency to dictate the Assembly's policy, resume by the Assembly's vote executive authority, gain command of the legions and in the last resort employ them, as Sulla had employed them, to override all forms of constitutional authority. In short, while the Sullan Constitution was dead, the precedent of Sulla's own autocracy remained. Nevertheless that precedent was most unpopular. The evil memory of the Terror discouraged its repetition; and during the next two decades the chief competitors for power preferred, as we shall see, to pursue more legitimate methods. For a period, therefore, Rome was to be subjected to the rule of what in the American phrase we may term 'bosses'—men, that is, who, though not of necessity magistrates themselves contrived to procure

the appointment of their nominees to office and so to direct affairs of State in whatever way they chose.

Now in order to secure their nominees' election or the popular endorsement of their nominees' proposals it was of course essential for these 'bosses' to control the city mob. For owing to the infrequent attendance of non-resident voters, the recent extension of the franchise had made little real difference to the character of the comitia. The idle and pampered proletariat of the capital was still to all intents and purposes the Sovereign People; and the keener grew the competition in canvassing their favours, the more discreditable grew the methods of the rival candidates. Wholesale bribery was, of course, the most effective; and it was the main source of Crassus's influence that he could utilize his immense wealth in making loans to such men as he favoured for election. Caesar, who was one of these and who a little later is said to have owed him no less than £200,000, made the most spectacular use of the money; and during his aedileship in 65 he exhibited a gladiatorial show of unprecedented attractions. The more vulgar arts of demagogy, however, were little to Caesar's taste; and, lacking as he did the resources of a Crassus or the prestige of a Pompey, he knew that he could only succeed as the leader of a more or less stable party. So it was to serve his career, no less than to suit his principles, that he now took his stand definitely upon the democratic programme which from its Gracchan authors had passed down in due succession to the followers of Marius. In the course of his aedileship he caused a tremendous stir by replacing in the Forum the statues of his famous uncle which Sulla had removed; and it was wholly in keeping with this gesture of Marian sympathies that he revived the old demand for a widening of the franchise and advocated its extension to the Gauls beyond the Po. Yet to suppose that Caesar genuinely counted on rebuilding the stricken commonwealth upon the unstable basis of popular sovereignty would probably be an injustice to his practical sagacity; and, though he was often forced to use the mob for the ends of his personal ambition, he gave abundant evidence that he disliked and distrusted mob-rule.

There were others, however, who were far less scrupulous and who were ready to climb to power by appealing to the worst instincts of the greedy and disorderly rabble. Of this type, as we shall presently see, was Lucius Sergius Catilina, an aristocrat turned demagogue in the desperate hope of retrieving his own fortunes, and prepared, in the last resort, to encompass his ends by a reckless plunge into anarchy.

In this welter of intrigue and revolutionary menace, and with a government whose authority grew yearly more precarious, it is little wonder that all decent folk were feeling grave alarm or that the two opposing elements of better-class society—the senatorial nobles and the equestrian *bourgeoisie*—began insensibly to draw nearer to each other. There were many circumstances that favoured such a *rapprochement*. The compromise recently effected over the composition of the juries had removed the chief source of their past disagreement. Their daily association, too, not merely in the courts, but over business transactions and in social intercourse,<sup>1</sup> threw the members of both classes increasingly together; and in any case it was self-evident that to the vested interests of finance and property in which both were so deeply involved, the maintenance of political stability was absolutely essential. The time, in short, was ripe for Knights and Senators to forget past differences and close their ranks against the growing violence of the populace and the revolutionary agitation of its self-appointed leaders; and it was into the cause of such a coalition that Cicero now threw himself with all the ardour of his idealistic temperament and his matchless powers of speech. A ‘*Concordia Ordinum*’ or ‘*Union of the Orders*’ became henceforth his watchword; and his most cherished ideal was to reinforce that union by enlisting the approbation of the absent Pompey. For it must never be forgotten that throughout this critical period the impending prospect of Pompey’s return from the East hung like the shadow of an approaching storm. The vic-

<sup>1</sup> A Bill passed by Roscius Otho in 67 assigned to the equites the fourteen rows in the theatre behind the senatorial seats in the orchestra—a mark of social recognition which they very highly prized.



torious general's views, as we have seen, were a most uncertain quantity. He had begun his career as a Sullan. During his consulship he had turned democrat; and, since nobody knew what his next step might be, it was now the object of every political group at Rome either to win his adhesion, or, failing that, to fortify its own position against the unpredictable consequences of the great man's homecoming.

Among the various groups or parties now existing at Rome we may therefore distinguish some three or even four: first, the Senate, still in the main unswervingly conservative and led by the stalwart reactionary Catulus, the *princeps* or doyen of the House; second, the Knights, now inclining somewhat, under Cicero's direction, to the senatorial side, but still often swayed by the shifting opportunism of their great magnate Crassus to continue their backing of their more traditional allies—the Marian democrats; third, these Marian democrats now learning to rally round the leadership of Caesar, and normally supported by the voting-strength of the proletarian masses. Fourth and last we perhaps may add those men like Catiline and his equally turbulent associate Calpurnius Piso, who, while masquerading as respectable politicians and as such deluding even the watchful eyes of Cicero himself, were ready at the dictates of their own ambition to strike out on the desperate venture of a revolutionary *coup d'état*.

These groups, as we have intimated, were neither clear-cut nor exclusive. The individuals that composed them might hang together on one issue, then part company on another and form some fresh coalition. Nor was there anything in Rome which might be called in our modern sense a party-organization. True some political use had recently been made of the working-class guilds or *collegia*—associations originally formed between men of a common craft for purposes of religious worship or to defray the funeral expenses of their needy participants. But, seeing the danger of their exploitation for anti-social ends, the Senate in 64 issued an edict for the suppression of all but a few specially privileged guilds. To secure a following, therefore, among the lower-class voters, the political leaders were mainly dependent

upon their individual efforts or resources. Members of influential aristocratic houses could normally count on the support of large numbers of clients and other poor dependents. Ex-generals might retain the loyalty of their discharged veterans; and despite frequent enactments to prevent corruption, the well-to-do could bribe. Men who, like Cicero, enjoyed no such special advantages, were compelled to a personal canvass and would often journey far afield in the hope of persuading the outlying voters to come in and back them at the poll. Last but not least, the violence of the times encouraged still more disreputable methods. Picketing and intimidation were all too common; and the less scrupulous adventurers found it easy to collect and arm large gangs of idle roughs who were only too ready to earn a little money by the congenial occupation of hitting their employer's opponents on the head.

The year 66—the year of Pompey's appointment to the Asiatic command—was particularly stormy. Riots were frequent; and on more than one occasion the proceedings of the courts were interrupted by the mob. But the climax of the season's excitements was reached in the dispute which raged round the choice of consuls for the following year. Two popular democrats were actually elected; but by the Senate's intervention were disqualified for bribery; and two leading conservatives, Torquatus and Cotta, were promoted in their stead. Now it so happened that Catiline, freshly back from the governorship of Africa, had been intending to put up as a candidate, but, finding himself threatened with prosecution for provincial maladministration, was thereby debarred from standing. With characteristic impatience, he resolved, in collusion with Piso, on a desperate *coup d'état* which was timed for the 1st of January in 65. Torquatus and Cotta, who would enter office on that day, were to be assassinated. What was then to follow is by no means clear. It was said that Caesar and Crassus were both privy to the plot and were to assume a leading part if it succeeded. Nevertheless, tales put about by their political enemies are inconclusive evidence against them. Caesar, as we have said, was no lover of violence; and to Crassus's financial

interests anarchy would have been fatal. So, though we may well believe that the fear of being overshadowed by the brilliant successes of the absent Pompey inclined the two democratic leaders towards some decisive action, it is on the whole unlikely that they were prepared to do more than watch events from the background and profit by the issue in whatever way they could. However that may be, the plot was discovered in advance. The Senate armed the consuls, and discreetly got Piso out of Rome by sending him to govern Hither Spain (66).

Though thus thwarted for the moment, Catiline was determined to repeat his bid for power. His trial for extortion came on in the course of 65; and the strange thing is that Cicero thought seriously of undertaking his defence. In any case he was acquitted, and thus free in the following year to put up for the consulship of 63. Crassus and Caesar were prepared to back him for one, and C. Antonius, Mark Antony's uncle, for the other of the places. Thus the combination behind the two candidates was strong; and at this moment, as it happened, an attempt was being made yet further to strengthen the democrat position by enfranchising the Gallic population of the lands beyond the Po. This measure, originally conceived by Caesar, had been sponsored by Crassus as censor in 65; but had been frustrated by the opposition of Crassus's colleague Catulus. Now again in 64, through a senatorial tribune's veto, it suffered the same fate. Despite this set-back, however, 'the democrats' position was so powerful in the Assembly that both their nominees would almost certainly have succeeded, had it not been for the unusual energy and eloquence of a rival candidate—Cicero. For the great orator, while carrying with him the support of many prominent Knights, was now definitely prepared to range himself upon the senatorial side. His past friendliness for Catiline was quite forgotten; and he spoke out vigorously against the anarchical tendencies of his opponents. They replied with vulgar abuse; and the contest was a bitter one; but when it came to the declaration of the poll, Cicero and Antonius were elected; and Catiline left out—a close third Autumn, 64).

## VI. CICERO'S CONSULSHIP, 63 B.C.

The character of the man who in this critical year 63 was to win the reputation as the saviour of his country is a study of peculiar fascination. Thanks to the publication and survival not merely of his speeches and philosophic treatises, but also of his private correspondence, Cicero is probably better known to us than any man in antiquity. He must have been a very charming personality—somewhat resembling in cast of mind and manners the social and political leaders of eighteenth-century England—courteous, considerate, polished, dignified and witty. His culture was, of course, the product of the various influences of Hellenic thought and letters with which he was so deeply imbued. But the true Roman strain in him was not obliterated. It peeps out, on its less admirable side, in those occasional tasteless jests in which he would indulge at the expense of his opponent's personal appearance, or in his still stranger lapses into what we should think gross superstition. On its better side it was responsible for the strong moral tone which so markedly pervaded both his public and his private utterances, for his earnest conception of patriotic duty, for the high value he set upon respectability of life, and, above all, for his tireless devotion to the Republican tradition and even (when his political views had definitely crystallized) to the senatorial cause. Much of all this may probably be attributed to the fact that he was born and bred in a stratum of society in which the old Roman virtues of thrift, honour and sobriety were still esteemed and which was not yet so thoroughly contaminated by foreign luxury and licence as was the aristocracy proper. On the other hand, he laboured under the parvenu's common weakness of regarding those above him in the social scale with exaggerated respect. He was never quite at his ease with the great hereditary nobles, addressing them even in his letters with ill-concealed embarrassment; and at the same time, as though suffering from what it is nowadays fashionable to call an 'inferiority complex', he frequently reacted in the opposite direction by laying extravagant emphasis on his personal achievements.

For there can be little doubt that a somewhat blatant habit of blowing his own trumpet was Cicero's method of concealing a latent self-distrust; and in a man naturally so sensitive it was the more creditable that he should have braced himself to acts and decisions demanding the highest degree of moral courage.

Before the time came, however, for the culminating test of Cicero's qualities, there were several minor storms to be weathered. For his democratic opponents, though sustaining a rebuff in Catiline's defeat, were still as active as ever. At the moment their principal concern was naturally with Pompey, whose five-year term of command in the East would presently be up; and seeing to what a position of power his military successes had now raised him, they were anxious, if possible, to counterbalance it by securing a post of similar importance for one of their own number. The idea, in point of fact, was not a new one. A couple of years back an abortive effort had been made to give Caesar a military command in Egypt. The excuse for such intervention had no doubt been a trifle thin. It was based upon a rumour that the present ruler, Ptolemy the Piper, was without authentic title, having fraudulently suppressed his predecessor's will which bequeathed the kingdom to the Roman people; but, though the tale was far from proven, Crassus had come forward in 65 with a proposal for annexation and for the appointment of Caesar to establish a new Egyptian province. Such a stroke, had it succeeded, would have been a fine set-off to Pompey's annexation of Syria; but the proposal had been strongly opposed by Crassus's colleague Catulus, and it had been allowed to drop.

The democrats, however, were not to be put off; and in the last days of 64 there had been launched a scheme which in the magnitude of its conception and the subtlety of its implications revealed the master-hand of Caesar's political genius. The shape it took was a revival of the old Gracchan plan of land allotments for needy citizens, but on a scale far greater than even Gracchus himself had ever dreamt of. It was proposed to set up a board of ten commissioners (of whom Caesar would unquestionably have been the chief)

with a tenure of office extending for five years and with powers of an extraordinarily far-reaching character. In the first place, all remaining *ager publicus* in Italy was to be placed at their disposal for redistribution. But since the available area was practically confined to the public leaseholds of Campania, it was proposed to make provision for the purchase of further lands from private owners; and in order to meet the cost of such purchase, a large fund was to be formed, partly by the sale of state property in various provinces, more particularly in those which Pompey had recently annexed in the East, and partly by laying under requisition the enormous booty which Pompey was known to be bringing home with him. The proposal, in short, envisaged a gigantic effort to solve the most urgent of Italian problems without recourse to confiscation or cancellation of squatter-rights. Its primary advantages were obvious—the gradual rehabilitation of a free landowning peasantry and the corresponding dispersal of the parasitic mob of the metropolis. But the Bill possessed a further and not less important object. For not least among the dangers which threatened the security of the State was the existence of large bodies of ex-soldiers who, under the Marian system of long-term recruitment, were thrown back from time to time on civil life without prospect of regular employment, and who in default of better occupation remained ready to enlist under any such revolutionary leader as might either claim or purchase their allegiance. Sometimes, it is true, the provision of land for his veterans had been the personal concern of their commanding general; and both Marius and Sulla had found farms for their men. But as an attempt to regularize the system of allotment the new Bill was a great advance on such haphazard methods; and as a political manœuvre (which was doubtless no small part of its authors' intention) its peculiar subtlety lay in this, that Pompey's troops, now due for their discharge, would receive the reward of their past services from other hands than Pompey's. For, despite the free use that was to be made of the fruit of all his recent labours, Pompey himself was debarred by absence from election to the board of executive commissioners. Thus the wind would be taken

completely out of his sails ; and to suppose that he would ever have acquiesced without a struggle in such a triumph for his political rivals is contrary to all we know of him. Cicero at any rate foresaw the danger ; and apart from his mistrust of Caesar and the democrats, he was now counting on Pompey's support for the new ' Union of the Orders '. So he threw all the weight of his authority and eloquence into the scale against the Bill, even frankly suggesting that the very vagueness of its wording was intended to give Caesar scope for laying hands on Egypt, and so furnish him with an excuse for obtaining the grant of an army. The controversy was hot ; but, just as the Bill had, in the first instance, been proposed by a young tribune named Servilius Rullus, so another tribune of the opposing faction was found to impose his veto. The upshot was that the democrats, perceiving what opposition their proposal had roused, decided not to push it (Spring, 63).

As compared with this grandiose measure of reform their next effort was something of an anti-climax. In the present state of political uncertainty they knew that decisive and perhaps revolutionary action might almost at any moment be forced upon them ; and conscious that, when it came to the pinch, all their schemes might be frustrated by a senatorial decree proclaiming martial law, they were anxious to challenge the legitimacy of this ' ultimate decree ' by means of a test case. Now at the end of the previous century, it will be remembered, such an ' ultimate decree ' had been in fact passed by the Senate empowering Marius to suppress seditious democrats who had seized the Capitol ; and on the strength of it their leader Saturninus had been killed. The man who had been responsible for his death—Rabirius by name—was still alive ; and Caesar now got one of his henchmen to take proceedings against him, not through the normal channel of the standing courts, but by an antiquated form of trial (disused, it is said, since the days of the Kings), under which, if condemned, the unfortunate man would be gibbeted on a cross in the Campus Martius. It is scarcely likely that Caesar really counted on the execution of this obsolete barbarity ; but, since the issue was inevitably forced to an

appeal before the Centuriate Assembly, he gained his object by giving the case the fullest possible publicity. The revival of old precedents, however, was a game which two could play. It was still the rule that whenever the Centuriate Assembly gathered, a red flag should be hoisted on the Janiculum, and the lowering of this flag had served in more turbulent times as a warning of an enemy's approach and a signal for the centuries to disperse to arms. Some one with a sense of humour must have remembered this device; for, while Rabirius's trial was in progress, the red flag was suddenly lowered; and the people, taking the cue, broke up the meeting. Caesar had the good sense to accept this turning of the tables; but if he thought to have established any permanent deterrent to the use of the ultimate decree, the subsequent events of the year were to prove him much mistaken.

So far, then, there was little to show for the democratic party's agitations; and, although by transferring the right of appointment to the popular electorate and distributing bribes on a most lavish scale, Caesar had secured his own promotion to the influential office of High Pontiff, this was in itself a meagre triumph to set off against the solid progress of the anti-democrat forces. Much therefore seemed to hang on the result of the consular elections which were to take place in October. Catiline was once again a candidate; but, though still standing in the popular interest, his programme was beginning to outrun the limits of what Caesar could approve. He was desperately in debt himself; and he had gathered round him a group of associates who were in no better case. Behind the scenes there was much wild talk of measures to be taken in the event of Catiline's success, of cancelling all debts, proscribing the rich, and sharing out the more lucrative provincial posts amongst the plotters. Cicero's authority seemed the chief obstacle across their path; and threats against his life were so circumstantially reported that he appeared on polling-day with a cuirass under his cloak. The electors were impressed by the peril; and though Catiline posed as the champion of the poor and the oppressed, the votes once more went against him (October, 63).



Events now moved rapidly. Seeing that he could not get his way by peaceful methods, Catiline was determined on a resort to violence. His lieutenant, Manlius, was to raise the standard of revolt in Northern Italy; and he was then busy in Etruria recruiting Marians whom Sulla had dispossessed or veterans whom Sulla had planted on the land and who had made a mess of farming. In Rome Catiline himself was apparently arranging for a simultaneous *coup d'état*. If tales were true, the city was to be fired at various points. Cicero was to be assassinated and the reins of government seized. On the night of October 20th, Crassus appeared at Cicero's house and handed him an anonymous letter which gave warning of the plot. On the 22nd, at Cicero's urgent request, the Senate passed the 'ultimate decree' empowering him to take what measures he thought fit for the safety of the State. No regular police force existed at Rome; no standing army in Italy; and it was not till the consul had obtained such powers that he could begin even to raise troops. Now, however, Cicero took swift and vigorous measures. He expected the outbreak on October 28th, but nothing occurred that day. Was it possible that the danger had been exaggerated? Nobody could tell. The city was in a parlous state of nerves. There had been a financial panic and the value of property had dropped with a rush. At such a time ready credence is given to the wildest rumours. Cicero himself was certainly ready to believe the worst. But he had as yet no conclusive evidence of the conspirators' intentions. On November 6th, however, he received secret information of another impending attempt upon his life; and after reinforcing the guard around his house, he summoned a meeting of the Senate on the 8th. Before a crowded house—in which Catiline sat haggard and aloof in gloomy isolation—he unfolded the story of this latest plot in the first speech of his famous series. Still feeling, however, that the evidence was short of what he wanted, he refrained from the decisive step of arrest or prosecution. Nevertheless, by the vigour of his denunciation, he had succeeded in forcing his opponent's hand. That night, leaving Lentulus and Cethegus to continue preparations in the city, Catiline set

out for the north to join Manlius's camp at Faesulae in the hills above Florence. Letters protesting his innocence and declaring that his followers, in taking arms, were acting in self-defence alone, were countered by Cicero's insistence on the reality of the peril ; and soon Catiline and Manlius were proclaimed public enemies ; and large rewards offered for information against them.

It was not until early in December that conclusive evidence of their guilt was at last placed in Cicero's hands : and the manner in which he obtained it was as follows : There happened to be in Rome at this moment two representatives of the Allobroges, a tribe of Transalpine Gaul, who had been sent to tender complaints before the Senate concerning the behaviour of the provincial governor and certain Italian usurers. In the course of their visit they had been approached with the suggestion that their ends could be best attained by persuading their countrymen to plan an insurrection in sympathy with Catiline's *coup*. Their hearts misgiving them, however, they reported the matter to one of Cicero's friends. They were told to get the treasonable proposal in writing and then to set out quietly towards home. At the Mulvian Bridge, two miles outside the city, they were waylaid by governmental officials and brought back under guard. A meeting of the Senate was immediately called. Lentulus and Cethegus had meanwhile been summoned and a large store of arms discovered at the latter's house. Confronted with the incriminating letters, they were dumbfounded. Denial was useless. They and their accomplices were laid under arrest and placed in the custody of various prominent senators.

Two days later (December 5th) a full-dress debate was staged in the Temple of Concord close under the Capitoline Hill. On Cicero's instructions the speeches were even to be taken down in shorthand. The general verdict of the speakers was for the execution of the prisoners, until it came to Caesar's turn. He was clearly in a very delicate position, well known in the past to have been Catiline's political backer, and in all probability his confidant ; but he took the ingenious line that though guilt was proven, the enforcement of the death-sentence would set a dangerous precedent

for the future exploitation of the 'ultimate decree', and that, rather than provoke a reaction by undue severity, it would be wiser to keep the prisoners in custody for life. The House was visibly impressed; and the issue hung in the balance. Cicero rose; and in a speech of cool, well-balanced argument made it clear that he, as consul, was prepared to do his duty. Finally Cato, who, like his great-grandfather before him, was an uncompromising champion of the old régime, wound up the debate with a vigorous demand for the death-penalty. The motion was put and carried by a large majority.

Cicero was resolved to leave no loophole for an escape or a rescue; and though the winter daylight was already failing when the House broke up, he gave orders for an immediate execution. Under his own escort the prisoners were conducted to the foot of the Capitol, lowered into the subterranean dungeon (said to have been constructed by King Tullius) and there strangled. A huge multitude hung round expectantly in the dusk; and coming out into the Forum Cicero pronounced, with a simple dignity befitting the occasion, the single word 'Vixerunt', 'they have lived'. It was the proudest moment of his whole career. He had saved the State. But, as his critics lost no time in pointing out, he had put Roman citizens to death without a formal trial; and this was not by any means the last he was to hear of it.

#### VII. POMPEY'S RETURN

When the year 62 opened, Manlius and Catiline were still at large. But their army was rapidly dwindling and the governmental forces were already closing in. On January 5th they were surrounded in Picenum; and after a desperate resistance overwhelmed. Catiline himself fell fighting gamely to the last. So ended the Great Conspiracy; and as it now remained merely to hunt down and punish a few surviving members of the gang, the Senate were justifiably pluming themselves on the success of their measures, when a democrat proposal was suddenly put forward that Pompey should be recalled to deal with the emergency. As the emergency was palpably over and done with, the only object of this move

can have been to make bad blood between Pompey and the Government; and when Caesar, now just entering on the praetorship, gave it his backing, feeling ran so high in the Senate that it was actually decided to depose him from his office. At this the mob, with whom he was now immensely popular, proceeded to gather round his house and clamour for him to lead an insurrection. Characteristically enough, he would have nothing to do with them; and in recognition of his self-restraint the decree of deposition was withdrawn. Pompey, in any case, was not recalled; and as the time for the elections drew on, a message came from him demanding their postponement until he could support his own candidates in person. The request was one which no ordinary magistrate would have dared to make; and on the initiative of Cato, now a tribune, and the leading spokesman of the senatorial die-hards, it was refused. Such defiance of the great man's wishes was decidedly audacious. Six years of absolute authority in the East had made Pompey little accustomed to have his wishes crossed; and, as the remaining months of the year 62 slipped by, the minds of Cicero and many others must have gone through much anxious speculation over the inscrutable enigma of his real intentions.

The interval of waiting was enlivened by an unsavoury little scandal in high society, which, indirectly at least, was destined to have important consequences. At the beginning of December the mystic rites of the Bona Dea, in which women alone were permitted to participate, were being celebrated in Caesar's official residence, when a certain notorious young rake named Clodius was discovered in the building disguised in female clothes. Though Clodius was a partisan of the democratic faction, Caesar as High Pontiff was in no position to ignore the incident; and since it had given rise to much vulgar gossip in which his own wife's name was coupled with that of Clodius, he at once took steps to divorce her. At the inquiry conducted at the Senate's instance, the charge of sacrilege was eventually rebutted by Clodius's plea of an alibi; but so near did Cicero's evidence go to securing a conviction that he became henceforth the object of a vindictive rancour which was one day to cost him dear.

Meanwhile, during the earlier stages of this trumpety agitation, the great army of the East had been crossing the Adriatic. In the last days of December its transports arrived at Brundisium; and on the eve of 61 Pompey himself landed. Italy was in a ferment of excitement, and then just when every one was expecting him to set himself at the head of his legions and march on the capital, he quietly ordered them to parade before him, addressed them in a few gracious words of gratitude, and—told them to disperse to their homes. With Sulla's opportunity well within his grasp, Pompey had definitely rejected Sulla's choice. To explain in any complete sense the motives of this great refusal is clearly beyond our power. Good nature must unquestionably have played its part: for Rome could scarcely have been won without a struggle and Pompey was not the man to wade through slaughter to the throne. Apart from this, it is by no means unlikely that with characteristic vanity he overrated his own powers and that knowing his popularity with the people he genuinely believed that by his prestige alone he would be able to carry all before him.

If such was his calculation, a bitter disappointment was in store for him. For his troops once disbanded and his uniform doffed, Pompey the private citizen was as little capable as ever of holding his own in the intricate manœuvres of the political struggle; and now that he was no longer formidable, the very men who had so recently been angling for his favour, lost no opportunity of snubbing or belittling him. On his first appearance in the Senate-house Crassus made an elaborate speech extolling Cicero's administration of two years before and passing over in silence the great conquests of the East. Cicero, though genuinely eager to capture Pompey's support for his cherished coalition of the Orders, was not a little piqued by his standoffish attitude and in private letters poked fun at 'the Great Man'. Cato and the extreme conservatives had never attempted to conceal their animosity and they now did everything they could to thwart his wishes. His triumphal celebrations, of course, they could not well prevent; and the spectacle of that imposing procession was the most gorgeous and extended that the citizens had ever

witnessed. But, though his veterans were acclaimed with honour through the streets of Rome, the scheme for land-allotments which Pompey himself had promised them was argued down in the Assembly. Worse still, his provisional settlement of the new Asiatic provinces was still awaiting the seal of official sanction; and when Lucullus re-entered politics to oppose the confirmation of his old rival's measures, Cato and others showed their animus by insisting upon discussion of the settlement clause by clause; and after much dilatory debate the whole question was left in the air. Meanwhile the one man on whose assistance Pompey could almost certainly have relied was no longer at hand. For, his year of office over, Caesar had thought it advisable to accept the post of governor in Further Spain. In various ways, indeed, his position at Rome had recently become embarrassing. Though still undisputed leader of the democratic party, the suspicions roused by the Great Conspiracy had lost him much credit with more respectable folk. His electioneering expenses, too, had been enormous, and he was so heavily in debt that only when Crassus came forward as security would his creditors acquiesce in his leaving Italy. Last, but not least, with Pompey once more on the spot, he was in no little danger of being overshadowed. A year's absence, however, might very well serve to redress these disadvantages. It would give time for Pompey's popularity to wane; and, it might be, for his not unnatural jealousy to cool. The longer he was left to struggle single-handed against the forces now opposed to him, the more obvious it became that he needed some clear brain and steady hand to guide and reinforce his faltering decisions; and when the time came for Caesar to resume his place at the centre of affairs, he was to find a Pompey disillusioned by the factious postponement of his two principal measures, and, if only for the sake of securing their adoption, disposed to make common cause with even a manifest rival.

## CHAPTER XVIII

## THE RISE OF CAESAR

## I. HIS CHARACTER

A MODERN French writer tells the story how once in a railway compartment he observed a little girl deeply engrossed in a book of Roman History, and how, as she turned the pages, he noticed her eyes dancing with excitement, and inquiring the cause, received the reply, 'You see I am just coming to Julius Caesar.' It scarcely needs this anecdote, however, to emphasize the glamour which has always surrounded the personality of this greatest of all Romans. There was clearly some unique quality of magnetism about him. Even his portraits give a hint of it, not so much by the look of concentrated purpose in the knit brow, set lips and deliberate eye as by the undefinable air of dignity and grace which seem to betoken the great gentleman. Few even among his opponents were wholly insensible to the spell of it; and Cicero, writing in later days about a visit from this man who had destroyed all that for him made life itself worth living, is forced to confess himself completely charmed after an evening's conversation. Among his friends Caesar could count men of every type and station, winning subordinates especially by his generous loyalty. The mob idolized him. To soldiers his mere presence at their side was a guarantee of victory. His way with women was irresistible.

Caesar himself was conscious of his power and used it to the full. Mastery of men was indeed a necessity of his nature. He would rather, he declared, be head of a small country town than play second fiddle at Rome. At what stage of his career he began consciously to aim at the monarchy is, nevertheless, hard to determine. For he was a realist rather than a dreamer, living much in the moment and, though ready enough to take his opportunities, content to concentrate upon the immediate task in hand. The mere fact that ten years of his prime were to be spent on a more or less gratuitous campaign of conquest, is evidence

not indeed of indifference to his political future upon which its ultimate bearing was obvious enough, but of a degree of patience and detachment perhaps even more remarkable. His political conceptions, moreover, were very gradually developed; and there is little to show that he troubled his head greatly over problems until it was clearly in his power to deal with them effectively. So it is all-important to remember that between the astute and cautious wire-puller who watched from behind the scenes of the Catilinarian conspiracy, and the mature statesman who employed his brief period of autocracy to remodel the institutions of the Roman State, there lay not merely twenty years of accumulated experience, but a corresponding growth of widening vision. It was, in short, half the secret of Caesar's amazing genius that, unlike Alexander, he reserved his strength and cultivated his natural powers by a lifelong habit of self-discipline. The very style of his writings reflects the quality of his mind. He goes straight to the point, wasting no words on effect or embellishment. Nor can it be considered an unimportant accident that in boyhood his tutor was not a Greek, but a Gaul from the Po Valley. For, though he had of course the full Hellenistic culture and even studied rhetoric under the famous Molon of Rhodes, there is small reason to suppose that speculative argument or literary finesse made much appeal to his severely practical mind.

Take him for all in all, then, Caesar would seem to have been a true son of Rome. He possessed something of the old Roman sense of decorum, divorcing his wife because, in his celebrated phrase, she should have been above suspicion. He possessed the old Roman abstemiousness in food or drink; and though this was in part a precaution for a health not too robust (for he was subject, we are told, to some sort of fit or seizure), he was capable, on campaign, of extraordinary fatigues, taking his sleep in travelling coach or litter in order to waste no moment of the journey. Like most Romans, too, he was not scrupulous or squeamish about the means of obtaining his ends. He would slaughter or even mutilate rebellious Gauls as a warning to their



fellows; and to satisfy a political grudge, he abandoned Cicero to the vengeance of his minion Clodius. Where clemency, on the other hand, seemed more repaying, his generosity was notable and he never followed Sulla's precedent of massacring political opponents. During the earlier stages of his career he was undeniably canny, feeling his way forward with deliberate caution and careful to compromise his future by no false step. But this was only one-half of Caesar, and if we would estimate his genius, the less important half. For once he had resolved upon his goal and the 'die was cast', nothing could equal the swiftness of his decisions, the lightning rapidity of his movements, or the reckless audacity of his initiative. He crossed the Adriatic, in his offensive against Pompey, with a force numerically so inferior that the odds against his success seemed overwhelming; and then, impatient for the arrival of further reinforcements, he tried to put back in an open rowing-boat upon a sea completely commanded by the enemy fleet. Such confidence in his own star gave him a moral ascendancy over a more timorous foe; and in the event his calculations, however rash, were seldom falsified. It was this singular combination of cool judgement and fearless enterprise, of patience and impetuosity, self-control and self-assertion, opportunism and statesmanship, that won for Caesar not merely the mastery of the Roman World, but the claim to have laid the foundations of the greatest imperial experiment in history.

## II. CAESAR'S CONSULSHIP

Owing to delays caused in part by his financial embarrassments, it was not till the summer of 61 that Caesar reached Further Spain. He had previously served in this same province as quaestor, and on his staff he had a certain engineer called Balbus who was a native of the country and a firm friend of his own. Some sympathy with the provincials was therefore to be expected of him; and it seems to have found expression not merely in the measures which he took to relieve them from the burden of debts contracted with Italian money-lenders, but also in the im-

provements which he introduced in the institutions of the great commercial city of Cadiz. Apart from this, his governorship was not marked by any important new departure of policy; and indeed he has been accused of occupying much of his time on unnecessary campaigns across the frontier. As the still restless tribes of Lusitania fell under the sphere of his control, it may well be that some action in this quarter was needed; but it is also more than likely that Caesar welcomed the opportunity of testing and developing his own powers of military leadership—powers which hitherto had found little or no scope, but which, as he himself may very well have realized, were bound to play a vital part in his subsequent career. Nothing, certainly, was now more manifest than that the man who would ultimately rule the roost at Rome must be the man who could command the allegiance of her armies. Nevertheless, the winning of a few minor victories in Spain was clearly an inadequate basis on which to found a military dictatorship; and when the moment came for Caesar to return home and renew his bid for power, he had still to rely chiefly, if not exclusively, on his skill as a political wire-puller. It was certainly no disadvantage that his empty pockets had during the course of his governorship been tolerably well filled.

He left Spain shortly before election-time in the autumn of 60 B.C.; and having set his heart on obtaining the consulship for the following year, he actually forwent his title to a Triumph in order that he might be free to enter the city in a private capacity and so comply with the formal regulations of candidature. His twelve months' absence, as we have already suggested, had done much to smooth his path. For one thing, the coalition between Senators and Knights which Cicero had been so sedulous to foster, had practically broken down. The cause of the rupture sprang from a financial disagreement. In making their bid for the right to collect the revenues of Asia, one of the big equestrian syndicates had apparently over-estimated the probable yield; and foreseeing that, squeeze the provincials as they might, they would never be able to recoup themselves, they had applied to the Senate for a substantial rebate on their

original bargain. Crassus, who on this occasion acted as their spokesman—deliberately intending, it would seem, to force a quarrel—had named a sum to which Cato and the more conservative section of the Senate were unable to agree. Cicero, in his efforts to maintain the coalition, actually lent his support to the syndicate's request; but his efforts had proved unavailing; and the Knights under Crassus's leadership were now beginning to look round for some anti-senatorial who, if elected to office, would be strong enough to implement their demand. Meanwhile Pompey, as we have seen, had equally good reason to be disgusted with a government which would neither make provision for his discharged veterans nor confirm his settlement of the East; and the only thing that prevented him from joining forces with the disgruntled equestrian faction was an inveterate dislike and jealousy of Crassus himself. Caesar, for his part, was hampered by no such personal antipathies. He had long been a political associate of Crassus; during the last two years, at any rate, he had avoided giving any ground of offence to Pompey; and if by pledging himself to the redress of their respective grievances, he could unite the two rivals in support of his own candidature, he would clearly be in a position of overwhelming strength. In such delicate negotiations Caesar's tact was unrivalled; and he succeeded brilliantly. Though Crassus and Pompey were still far from making friends, they both agreed to back Caesar for the consulship; and thus was formed a coalition of the three great political 'bosses', which is known to history as the 'First Triumvirate'.

Although at the outset this arrangement remained a secret from the Roman public, the issue of the elections could now scarcely stand in doubt; and Caesar was definitely assured of the next year's consulship. Nevertheless the senatorial party were determined that, if possible, he should be given a conservative colleague. So special funds were raised and a shameless campaign of bribery was undertaken. So much seemed at stake that even Cato, despite his high Stoic principles, acquiesced; and these methods were so far effective, that at the declaration of the polls the other place went to

a rather stupid and extremely obstinate reactionary named Bibulus (Autumn, 60).

But, Bibulus or no Bibulus, Caesar had climbed a' last to the top of the tree; and seeing that he had behind him the backing of both the middle class and the mob, it seemed as though nothing could stop him now. In many minds there must have been an expectation of sweeping and revolutionary reforms. Yet, when it came to the point, Caesar attempted nothing of the sort. It may even be questioned whether he saw his way as yet to any permanent solution of his country's problems. But if he did so, he most certainly understood the limitations of his opportunity; and he was not, like Gracchus, in an impatient hurry to force on constitutional changes which at the end of his year's office might well be swept away. One or two useful measures, it is true, must be placed to the credit of his consulship. He introduced the practice of publishing a record of senatorial proceedings in the so-called 'Acta Diurna' or Daily Gazette which was posted on a board in the Forum. Without altering the composition of the juries, he improved the method by which their verdict was given, making each of the three classes vote apart and thus exposing bias or corruption to a greater risk of detection. He also re-enacted and strengthened by various additions the regulations dealing with proconsular extortion or corruption, and in particular with a governor's freedom to make war outside his province. But such trifling reforms could scarcely merit the title of true statesmanship; and the really important legislation of the year 59 was dictated wholly and solely by motives of sheer opportunism. For having bargained his way into office, Caesar was in duty bound to make his bargains good. Besides arranging for the ratification of Pompey's eastern settlement, he proceeded to introduce bills to provide allotments first for Pompey's veterans and then for impoverished members of the proletariat. The details of these bills followed much the same lines as those of Rullus's abortive proposal. Provision was made for the state-purchase of lands by drawing on the new revenues of the East; but the bulk of the settlers, so far as we can see, were to be

planted on the *ager publicus* still available in Campania. As this involved the displacement of flourishing state-tenants in favour of men who had no aptitude and perhaps little real taste for farming, the scheme was very far from being economically sound. But the resistance offered by the conservative faction was based not so much on genuine principles as on a hearty dislike of Caesar's demagogic ascendancy. The result was that the passage of the first Bill was very bitterly contested; and its promoters, impatient of irrational obstruction, had recourse to the most cavalier methods. When in the course of debate Cato tried to talk out time, Caesar came within an ace of committing him to prison. When Bibulus, finding argument to be useless, announced that he would watch the sky for unpropitious omens, and so bring all public business to a standstill, Caesar—with more justification—ignored this farcical abuse of an obsolete superstition; and since the Senate would not even bring his Bill to a division, he proceeded to submit it directly to the Assembly's vote. There were ugly scenes in the Forum. Bibulus had a bucket of filth poured over his head and was knocked off the rostrum by a party of roughs. The city was full of ex-soldiers hoping to profit by the impending allotments; and, since there was no regular police force to maintain proper order, their presence dominated the whole situation. Pompey, as their former commander, had only to speak the word and all constitutional government would have been at an end. He is even said to have remarked that, 'if the opposition took the sword, he would take both sword and buckler'; and there can be no doubt that the threat had its desired effect. Resistance collapsed. Many prominent senators, including Cicero, left Rome for their country estates. Bibulus meanwhile had shut himself up in his house and spent his eight remaining months of office in a pertinacious but futile vigil for celestial 'signs' and equally futile denunciations of the Triumvirs. For all the impression he made, he might just as well have abdicated; and wags who saw the humour of the situation are said to have dated their documents 'in the consulship of Julius and Caesar'.

The wags, as often, were not very far wrong. For the rest of the year Caesar's position was virtually that of an autocrat; and, though Cicero asserts that his popularity was waning, he seems to have done much as he pleased. Acting through the Assembly alone and without further reference to the Senate's authority, he satisfied the grievance of the equestrian syndicate by remitting one-third of the sum which they were committed to pay in respect of their contract in Asia. In a similar fashion, he carried through the ratification of Pompey's eastern settlement by means of the Assembly's vote alone. The requirements of his two great partners had thus been loyally fulfilled. But, from his own point of view at any rate, the most urgent problem was to obtain a proconsular appointment which would place him in a position of prolonged military command; and here again it was necessary to override the Senate's previous dispositions. For, in deliberate anticipation, it would seem, of his ambitious designs, it had been arranged that the consuls for the current year should subsequently be posted to jurisdictions of no special importance. This arrangement Caesar now brushed contemptuously aside and insisted on receiving nothing less than Illyria and Cisalpine Gaul conjointly, with a tenure of five years. But, though such a command would give him a force of three legions together with the control of the whole frontier-line of northern Italy, it was still far from contenting him. The opportunity of active campaigning was what he most desired; and it so chanced at this moment, as we shall later see, that Transalpine Gaul was in a condition of great unsettlement which sooner or later could scarcely fail to necessitate some military action. Nothing was more calculated to fit in with Caesar's plans than a chance of emulating in Europe the conquests which stood to Pompey's credit in the East; and he therefore made no concealment of his own desire that his commission should be extended to include not merely the existing coastal province of Narbo, but the whole unconquered hinterland of Transalpine Gaul. The surprising thing is that the Senate, either because they knew that refusal would be useless, or because they hoped thereby to

keep their arch-enemy well employed, proceeded to sanction this additional appointment. Little can they have dreamed how momentous would be the consequences of their concession—first for the future of the Roman Commonwealth itself, and then, in remoter issue, for the whole subsequent development of European civilization.

This prolongation of his official status for a further period of five years was of course sufficient to secure Caesar against any immediate danger of attack from his political enemies. But it also entailed five years of absence from the capital ; and even though his head-quarters should lie no further off than the north side of the Apennines, it would still be no easy matter to control affairs at home from a distance. Caesar was well aware of the difficulty and had made his dispositions. Pompey's continued allegiance he had more or less assured by giving him his own daughter Julia in marriage. Crassus could almost certainly be counted on to back what was so obviously the winning side. Even among his political opponents there were only two whom Caesar had real cause to fear—Cicero and Cato ; and he was preparing to leave behind him a lieutenant who had full liberty—and it may even be full instructions—to deal with these two effectively.

It is a singular reflection on Caesar's political standards that the man whom he chose for this purpose was the man who had previously done him a grave domestic injury—the infamous scoundrel Clodius. To secure Clodius's services was not difficult. He notoriously wanted the tribuneship and the opportunity of mob-leadership which it offered ; but being debarred therefrom by the accident of his patrician birth, he could only become eligible by technical adoption into a plebeian family, and this Caesar as High Pontiff and Pompey as Augur obligingly arranged for him. His election to the tribuneship followed as a matter of course ; and even before Caesar left the capital this unscrupulous adventurer had embarked on a reckless programme of demagogic legislation designed to win for him the favour of the mob and to sweep away the Senate's power of interference. First, the small nominal payment still demanded from the

recipients of the corn-dole was abolished; and the rabble henceforward kept in good humour by gratuitous distributions. Then the recent law for the suppression of the workmen's guilds was repealed, and organization of hooligan gangs once again legitimized. Finally, superstitious devices for the obstruction of public business such as Bibulus had lately employed, were declared invalid; and the censor's power of arbitrary ejection from the Senate was seriously curtailed. By such measures Clodius swiftly established his leadership of the comitia. He was well known to have the approval of the Big Three behind him; and his task of dealing with Caesar's two principal opponents was therefore comparatively straightforward.

The removal of Cicero was unquestionably the more urgent, since there was always a certain danger that he might establish a hold over Pompey. Accordingly in the early spring of 58 Clodius produced a Bill—couched indeed in general terms, but very patently referring to the Catilinarian executions—whereby anyone responsible for the death of Roman citizens without trial should be declared a public outlaw or (as the technical phrase ran) 'interdicted from fire and water'. Cicero realized at once that the Bill was aimed at him, and he lost his nerve completely. Instead of preparing, as he should have done, a reasoned defence of his own consulship, he went round making abject appeals for sympathy and protection. The Senate, though anxious to interfere, were impotent. Many of the Knights donned mourning as a token of their sorrow; but every one knew well that Cicero's fate depended on the attitude of the Triumvirs—and the Triumvirs made no move. Caesar, who was still in the neighbourhood of Rome, took refuge in hypocritical evasions. Pompey, though pledged to uphold the measures taken in 63, now turned a deaf ear to all representations; and it became clear that nothing could stay the course of Clodius's revenge. In the middle of March he introduced a further Bill, this time outlawing Cicero specifically by name. On friends' advice the unfortunate orator had already fled to Southern Italy; and he at once perceived that no other course was left but to quit the



country. Taking ship from Brundisium he travelled by way of Dyrrachium to Macedonia where the friendly governor entertained him. At home the question of his recall was already being mooted; but the harm already done was past retrieving. By his undignified behaviour Cicero himself had revealed his utter incapacity for the leadership of a united constitutional party; and a blow had been dealt to the senatorial cause which seemed to set the seal upon its bankruptcy (Spring, 58).

In the meantime, Cato, its most stalwart champion, had been got out of the way in a more legitimate manner, having been sent off on an official mission in connexion with a new acquisition in the Levant. For there the tentacles of Roman imperialism were gradually extending their hold. It is true that in the course of Caesar's consulship and in return for a large bribe Ptolemy Auletes' claim to the Egyptian throne had been given official recognition. But his brother's rule in Cyprus, a former dependency of the Ptolemaic realm, was not allowed to go unchallenged. Clodius, who bore a personal grudge against its inoffensive monarch, now declared for annexation; and, seeking to kill two birds with one stone, he proposed the name of Cato as a suitable commissioner. Cato was most unwilling to go; but his rigid Stoic principles allowed of no disobedience to the State's commands; and, when the comitia insisted, he gave way and went off East. The senatorial party was thus left without effective leadership; and Clodius was undisputed master of Rome. Armed gangs of hireling ruffians paraded the streets. On more than one occasion there was fighting in the Forum; and for the remainder of the year the city was subjected to a rule of sheer terrorism. Even Pompey was powerless; and, though Clodius actually overrode some details of his eastern settlement, he could make no show against the demagogue's nimble tactics. Meanwhile Caesar, who might, if present, have called a halt to these anarchical proceedings, was no longer on the scene. In late March he had left Italy and plunged into the task of military conquest which for the ten succeeding years were to occupy the greater part of his thoughts and energies.

## III. CAESAR IN GAUL, 58-55

There can be little doubt that Caesar undertook the Gallic command, in the first instance, as a means of obtaining a large body of troops at his disposal and of acquiring some greater experience in the art of handling them. But there is also much to show that he envisaged from the outset a deliberate scheme of conquest and annexation. Such a policy of unprovoked aggression was something wholly new in the annals of Roman imperialism (for even Pompey's campaign in the East had been no unnatural sequel to the protracted annoyances of the Mithridatic imbroglio); and what motives, beyond the desire for personal distinction, were originally present in the mind of Caesar, it is almost impossible for us to tell. His own 'Report' or Commentaries were clearly written and published with intent to justify his departure from the traditional policy of *laissez-faire*, and more particularly from the rules which he himself had laid down in restriction of the initiative of provincial governors. But no plea that he was acting in accordance with senatorial instructions or in defence of friendly tribes could really explain in any adequate sense the strategical dispositions of his first three years' campaigning; nor, on the other hand, can it escape notice how sedulous he was to win the genuine allegiance of the Gauls themselves, sparing them, as a rule, from massacre or enslavement and exhibiting against German tribes only the full weight of Rome's heavy hand. Towards the Celtic peoples he would seem indeed to have felt some genuine sympathy. There is some reason to believe that in the course of his journey between Italy and his Spanish province he had already taken stock of Gaul's potentialities; and it is not wholly impossible that, realizing the moral degeneracy of Rome's eastern provincials, he had foreseen how much the Empire might be benefited by the incorporation of her unspoilt and virile stock. What in any case seems certain is that, once he had set his hand to the undertaking, his growing vision caught some glimpse at least of its transcendent importance; so that, when he should naturally have returned home to reap a personal



XII. MAP SHOWING CAESAR'S CAMPAIGNS IN GAUL

advantage from his swiftly won successes, he preferred to remain in Gaul and pursue less selfish ends by settling and consolidating the vast area which he had added to the Roman realm.

When in the year 58 he first assumed control of the Transalpine province, its frontier still ran, as in the previous century, from a short way beyond Tolosa on the west until reaching the Rhône valley it followed the upper waters of that river as far as the Lake of Geneva on the extreme north-east. In this north-eastern angle dwelt the powerful but somewhat disgruntled folk of the Allobroges. Almost due north of these the Aedui and their confederate tribes, though falling outside the limits of the province proper, had from the first been friendly towards Rome. This connexion had stood them in good stead; but in more recent years, their security had been threatened by the pressure of the Arverni on their western and the Sequani on their eastern flank. Now, to assist their efforts, the latter tribe had called in from across the Rhine a band of German warriors called the Suebi, led by their ambitious chieftain, Ariovistus; and, as so often, the hirelings, once arrived, refused to quit. Their appetites had been aroused by what they saw of Gaul; and they compelled the Sequani to permit their settlement in the fertile plains of what is now Alsace. At Rome the danger of their presence upon Gallic soil and their evident determination to extend their conquests aroused, indeed, some qualms; but no definite action was taken; and an appeal from the loyal Aedui, when hard pressed in 61, had merely evoked a vague senatorial order that the provincial governor should protect such tribes as were well disposed towards Rome. Caesar, during his consulship, had actually arranged that the Sueban chief should be recognized as the Roman People's 'friend'. It is not, however, to be supposed that Caesar was deluded. What really mattered for his purpose was to keep Ariovistus quiet until he himself should have had time to deal with a still more pressing menace to the peace of Gaul.

For in the meantime, driven by that restless urge which so often set the barbarian peoples of mid-Europe moving

bodily towards the west, the Helvetii of northern Switzerland were also intent on seeking a new home across the Gallic frontier. Two years had been spent in making their arrangements. Wagons were procured; supplies of corn got ready; and finally in the spring of 58 they prepared to set out—an enormous host nearly four hundred thousand strong, including women and children—upon their adventurous march. Of the two available routes into Gaul, they naturally preferred the easier one which should have led them across the Rhône at Geneva and along its southern bank through the corner of the Roman province occupied by the Allobroges. After making formal request for leave to do so, they were about to take this route when Caesar made a sudden appearance on the scene. Travelling at incredible speed, he had traversed nearly seven hundred miles from Italy in little over a week; and ignoring the invaders' request for a safe passage, he proceeded to beat them back when they tried to cross the Rhône. They then turned to pursue the alternative and more difficult route which led along the northern bank through the defiles of the Jura Mountains; and with the acquiescence of the Sequani they thus passed on westwards into the country of the Aedui. The ravages which they inflicted on this pro-Roman tribe, coupled with their recent attempt to force a way through Roman territory, gave Caesar a double pretext for offensive action. He was in no hurry, however; and deliberately allowed them to continue on their way while he fetched up reinforcements from Cisalpine Gaul. Then, following on their tracks, he gave battle near Bibracte, the Aeduan capital, and won a decisive victory from which the survivors, not much more than 100,000 in number, were shepherded back to their original homes in Switzerland.

The Helvetian irruption had served Caesar's purpose well—so well indeed that we may suspect him of doing less than he might have done to stop it. For he now found himself established in the very heart of Gaul and, what was still more important, he had arrived there as the champion and protector of the Celtic peoples against the terrible menace of intruding hordes, staved off for a while by Marius half

a century before, but now once more becoming acute. After his defeat of the Helvetii, therefore, Caesar received the grateful thanks of many Gallic chieftains who nervously besought him to complete his work by accomplishing the destruction of the Suebi too. Nor were their fears ill-founded. At this very moment large bands of fresh Sueban warriors were reported to be preparing for the passage of the Rhine ; and to crush Ariovistus before this reinforcement reached him was obvious strategy for Caesar. So, ignoring the recent treaty of friendship, he descended into the Alsatian plain and after some futile parley proceeded to defeat the Sueban chief and drive him, with a remnant of his forces, into flight beyond the Rhine. Winter was now approaching and Caesar himself returned into Cisalpine Gaul to transact the judicial and administrative business which there required his presence. But instead of withdrawing his legions behind the Roman frontier, he left them quartered, under the command of Labienus, in the country of the Sequani—an ominous decision in which the northern tribes of the interior were not slow to recognize a menace to their future liberty.

Beyond the line of the Seine and the Marne rivers lay a large group of tribes, reputed to be the most warlike in all Gaul, most of which were probably of Celtic, though some of German, origin, but all of which were embraced under the common title of Belgae. During the early months of 57 news began to come in that this formidable league were arming for a joint endeavour to expel the hated Roman from their country's soil. Caesar, who rejoined his army in the spring, at once decided to take the offensive ; and once again a pretext for action was afforded him by the opportunity of protecting the Remi—the most southerly tribe of the group who, being most exposed to the Roman advance and hopeful of bettering their position by Roman assistance, had tendered their submission and thus drawn down upon themselves the wrath of their more northerly confederates. Passing through their territory, Caesar crossed the river Aisne and on its further bank found himself faced by an enormous Belgic host, nearly three hundred thousand strong.

Tribal jealousies, however, served to dissipate the unity which alone would have made their strength effective. A few minor successes and an encircling movement made by a loyal Aeduan contingent enabled Caesar to drive them back in disorderly confusion; and tribe by tribe they began to surrender at his approach. Quickly pushing north-westwards towards the English Channel he received the submission of the Suessiones, Bellovaci, and Ambiani; and making his head-quarters at the chief town of the latter, then called Samobriua, now Amiens, he was thence in a position to divide the remaining Belgae on his east from the tribes of Aremorica or Normandy upon his west, and so to deal with each at will.

Very naturally he chose to complete the subjugation of the Belgae first; and their strongest tribe, the Nervii, gave him a tough fight, surprising his legions during the construction of a camp and so nearly involving him in complete disaster that only his personal intervention sufficed to stay the rout. His victory won, however, Caesar treated the survivors with a clemency characteristic of his dealings with all Celts and very markedly contrasting with the severe fate meted out to a neighbouring tribe, the Aduatuci. These folk were reputed to be the descendants of those Cimbri and Teutones who half a century before had been left on the Lower Rhine when their fellows went off campaigning into Southern Gaul. Their stout defence of their fortified capital was accompanied by an act of treachery that gave Caesar an excuse (which he almost certainly welcomed) for selling their entire population into slavery. Such differentiation between tribes of German and of Celtic origin was doubtless intended to convince the latter of the advantages of accepting the Roman protectorate; and up to a certain point it is clear that Caesar's policy had already borne fruit. No hostile movement had as yet declared itself among the tribes of the centre and south-west; and in the coastal district of Aremorica which included the modern Normandy and Brittany, a demonstration conducted by the younger Crassus with the aid of no more than one legion had won the ready submission of some half-dozen tribes, including

the important seafaring folk, the Veneti. It was in the Loire valley, not far from the country of the last-named people, that Caesar chose to station a large part of his troops for the approaching winter. This disposition of his forces reveals the fundamental aim of his masterly strategy; for by thus extending his hold over the entire north-western districts he had completed the encirclement of the tribes of the centre and south-west. Already, after his defeat of the Helvetii, some of these had made overtures of friendship; and, though no formal submission had as yet been offered, all were now so firmly caught between the legions in the north and the province in the south that successful resistance was wellnigh impossible.

In the year 56 a series of operations undertaken by Caesar and his various lieutenants served to complete the work of conquest. But their task was complicated at the outset by the revolt of several tribes which had previously surrendered. Throughout the winter the Veneti had been restive; and, having learnt that Caesar was planning a descent on Britain, they determined to anticipate such interference with their own cross-channel traffic. Accordingly they rallied the neighbouring folk to their assistance, struck up an alliance with the Morini and Menapii, two Belgic tribes of the extreme north-east; and by the treacherous seizure of some Roman officers who had been sent to collect supplies, threw down the gage of war. Thus Caesar who during the winter had been occupied in the administration of his Cisalpine province and in political negotiations of which more shall be said presently, returned in spring to find North-western Gaul in full revolt. Suspecting trouble, he had already given orders for the organization of a fleet which was now assembled at the Loire-mouth under the command of Decimus Brutus. It was no easy matter, however, to hunt the Veneti down among their creeks and islands; but with the aid of a skilful device for the destruction of their rigging, Brutus's flotilla got the better of their resistance; and as an example to others who might meditate rebellion, the survivors were this time treated with extreme severity. In the meantime Sabinus had scattered the forces of their more immediate neighbours;



while Caesar himself marched up across the Seine, and penetrating the forests which lay between that river and Calais, overawed the Morini and Menapii. Still more important, the young Publius Crassus, who had been sent south through Aquitania, was successful in reducing all the tribes of the western sea-board as far as the Pyrenees. With this the subjugation of Gaul was virtually achieved, though, as later events will show, the native spirit of independence was still destined to assert itself in more than one rebellion.

At Rome the significance of Caesar's triumph was fully realized. A profound feeling of relief had been experienced that the progress of barbarian invasion from the East had been definitely checked; and after his brilliant campaign in 57 the unprecedented compliment of a fortnight's celebrations had been decreed in his honour. Meanwhile, however, the effect of his withdrawal from the centre of affairs had proved disastrous. The party struggle had been revived in all its bitterness. Pompey had completely lost control of the situation; and the city had once more become the scene of violent conflict and unscrupulous intrigue. For Caesar himself, as a provincial governor, direct intervention was constitutionally impossible. But some action upon his part was essential; and before we pursue the further fortunes of his Transalpine conquests, we must turn to consider the arrangements whereby he sought to recover for himself and his associates the control of the political world.

#### IV. ROME IN CAESAR'S ABSENCE

It was a bad day for the Republic when Caesar's encouragement had first launched Clodius on a career of violence; but it was a still worse misfortune when his departure for Gaul in the spring of 58 removed the one restraining hand which might have set some limit to the tribune's worst excesses. As it was, the reckless fellow had soon grown too big for his boots. We have seen how he quarrelled with Pompey; and during the later months of his office he apparently had even the impudence to challenge the validity of Caesar's laws. Such folly played direct into

the hands of the senatorial party. Cicero's friends began to agitate on his behalf. Even Pompey himself veered round, regretting his weak acquiescence in the orator's humiliation; and nearly all the magistrates elected for the following year were sympathetic to the proposal of recall. Spinther, one of the new consuls, was prepared to move the motion. Publius Sestius, one of the tribunes, went off post-haste to Gaul to make sure of Caesar's sanction; and meanwhile Milo, another tribune, undertook to organize a gang of gladiators in competition against Clodius. For the latter, even after vacating office, was still powerful; and when towards the end of January, 57, a Bill was introduced for Cicero's reinstatement, his roughs broke up the Assembly. There was talk of prosecuting him for riot; but he snapped his fingers at the threat: and from this time onward street-fighting became an almost daily occurrence. But public indignation was now gathering force; and, when at the beginning of August the Bill was once again brought before the comitia, men poured in from all parts of Italy to pass it. When Cicero landed at Brundisium and travelled up towards Rome, he received a regular ovation from the towns along the route. His vanity was flattered by such tokens of his popularity; and though the compensation paid him for the destruction of his various properties was less than he had hoped for, he enjoyed the luxury of harking upon the retrospect of his year's martyrdom. The only thing to qualify his satisfaction was the pledge which Caesar had extracted from his brother Quintus that he himself would support the cause of the Triumvirate (57).

For the moment, however, the part which Pompey had played in securing his recall was enough to incline Cicero to the resumption of an old alliance; and the two men were now further united by a common antagonism to Clodius's agitations. For that irrepressible scoundrel, though thwarted, was far from silenced; and on one occasion his roughs set on Cicero as he passed along the Sacred Way and hunted him into his house. In the meantime Milo's counter-efforts had not been relaxed; and he still held the threat of prosecution over his rival's head. It is a signal

proof of the government's inability to enforce either law or order that Clodius succeeded not merely in evading the trial but in securing his own election to the aedileship for 56. Thus immune against legal proceedings, he signaled his entry into office by rebutting the charge of riot upon Milo himself. There was once more a free fight round the *Rostrium*; and Clodius, foiled of his prey, turned to vent his spleen on Cicero's other supporter, Publius Sestius. But the trial called forth a notable display of the great orator's powers and his client was unanimously acquitted.

Even so brief an account of this degraded political knock-about will serve at least to illustrate the depths to which public life at Rome had fallen; but at the same time it exhibits in the worst possible light the complete failure of Pompey to execute the part which Caesar had assigned to him. The truth was that, as an active political force, Pompey's influence was as negligible as ever. He still hankered, indeed, after power, jealously conscious that Caesar's Gallic triumphs were rapidly eclipsing his own military prestige; but knowing himself to be effective only in an executive capacity, he had all this while been angling for a chance to resume an active part in the administrations. Directly after Cicero's return, it is true, he had been given an appointment of no small importance. Owing to bad harvests the food-supply had again been causing anxiety. The price of corn had risen to an intolerable level; and on Cicero's own initiative Pompey was voted general controller for five years. But, though he was assigned proconsular power throughout the Empire with no less than fifteen lieutenants to assist him, the further proposal to give him a fleet and an army had been quashed; and Pompey was beyond a doubt most grievously disappointed. In the course of the year 57, however, a situation arose in the East which revived his hopes. Two years before, during Caesar's consulship and largely as a result of Caesar's mediation, Ptolemy Auletes of Egypt had at length obtained the Senate's recognition of his title to the throne; but he had been forced to pay handsomely for Caesar's assistance, and in the attempt to raise the money from his unwilling subjects, he had driven them into exas-

perated rebellion. Forced to quit the country he now fled to Rome, and there elicited from the Senate a promise to reinstate him. It was arranged to entrust the task to the governor of Cilicia; and though Pompey with characteristic reticence would not declare his mind, it was common knowledge that he coveted the post. Strong pressure, however, was brought to bear against such an appointment. Caesar's disapproval would seem to have been certain. A tribune made much play of an oracle said to have been discovered in the *Sibylline Books* forbidding armed intervention in Egypt. Clodius encouraged his claque to shout down Pompey's name; and, if tales were true, Crassus himself was secretly financing these vulgar demonstrations. In the upshot the opposition was successful; and, though the ex-consul Spinther was sent to Cilicia, the restoration of Ptolemy was indefinitely postponed. So Pompey's chance was gone (Spring of 56).

Out of this extremely confused situation there emerged the one patent fact that the unity of the Triumvirate was fast breaking up; and how low its authority had sunk was clearly demonstrated by an attack which was now delivered upon Caesar's Land Act. The re-allotment of the Campanian *ager publicus* had evidently been proving a failure; and in the previous year there had already been talk of its discontinuance. It was a more serious matter, however, when Cicero himself, counting presumably on the support of Pompey, came forward with a motion for repeal. The spring of 56 was now far advanced; but Caesar was still in his Cisalpine province, and he acted swiftly. By the rules of his proconsular office he might not go to Rome; but he could make Rome or all of Rome that mattered to come to him. In April accordingly there assembled at Lucca, the most southerly town within his jurisdiction, all the more prominent politicians of the day—two hundred senators, many magistrates, two proconsuls, and above all, of course, Pompey and Crassus themselves. At a secret interview between the three great 'bosses,' arrangements were arrived at which not merely averted the threatened disruption of their partnership, but virtually determined

that the administration of the Empire for the next half-decade should be divided out between them. Caesar's own command in Gaul was to be prolonged for a further period of five years. Pompey and Crassus were to become consuls for 55 and thereafter were each to receive a similar term of proconsular power, Pompey in Further and Hither Spain, Crassus in Syria, both of which provinces involved the command of an army. How many persons were admitted to the secret of these decisions is uncertain; but plans were carefully laid and serious opposition was evidently not expected. Before rejoining his army in Gaul, however, Caesar undertook that, when election time came on, a certain number of his soldiers should be sent on furlough to the capital. Meanwhile Cicero himself, who had not been summoned to Lucca, was to be given a blunt reminder of his brother's pledge that he would not interfere in the plans of the Triumvirate. He took the hint; and instead of pressing home his attack on Caesar's land law, he retired from politics and henceforth immersed himself—a disappointed man—in literary studies.

#### V. CAESAR IN GAUL, 55-49

How in the remainder of the year 56 Caesar crushed the revolt of the Veneti and through the agency of his lieutenants completed his mastery of Western Gaul, we have described in an earlier section. The winter months he spent, as usual, in his Cisalpine province; and with the spring of 55 he determined yet further to consolidate his position by demonstrations first across the Rhine into Germany and then across the Channel into Britain itself.

A fresh opportunity of posing as Gaul's protector against the German menace—and incidentally of teaching the Germans themselves a proper respect for the frontier—was afforded by an irruption of the Usipetes and Tencteri who in the course of the winter had crossed the lower reaches of the Rhine and moved through the territory of the Menapii into that of the Eburones. Some of the Gauls took advantage of the chance to revolt; and a critical situation called for immediate and, as Caesar felt, for stern measures. He

hurried north, caught the Germans while on trek with their unwieldy caravan, and with an unusual ferocity (which he himself excused on the ground of treachery but which evoked most vehement protests from the righteous Cato) proceeded to exterminate their entire company, trapping their leaders under cover of a parley and putting even the women and children to the sword. A small remnant, escaping to the east bank of the Rhine, found shelter among the Sugambri; and on the refusal of the latter to surrender the refugees, Caesar bridged the river near Coblenz, ravaged their country in a brief campaign, and then returned to organize his projected descent on Britain.

Caesar's character had many sides; and a zest for acquiring information was one of them. In his *Commentaries* there are numerous passages attesting a keen and observant interest in the customs of Gauls and Germans; and there can be little doubt that exploration was not least among the motives which brought him over to Britain. Gallic traders ran a lively traffic with its southern coast; and from these he had learnt something of its potentialities. Probably, like most of the ancients, he formed an exaggerated notion of the island's wealth; and the prospect of enriching his war-chest with either loot or tribute was a consideration not to be neglected. Finally, there was ground for suspicion that Gaul had received help from certain British chiefs; and this connexion, while it gave Caesar an excuse for punitive measures, enabled him also to exploit the divisions which tribal jealousies had sown among them. Before embarking he sent over Commius, a chief of the Belgic Atrebates, to win, if possible, the adhesion of the Trinobantes, then the occupants of Essex and chief rivals to the Catuvellauni whose King Cassivellaunus was reputed the most powerful in the island. In the campaign of 55, however, the lateness of the season prevented more than a bare reconnaissance. Landing near Deal in the face of severe opposition, and beating off attacks upon his camp and forage parties, he advanced little more than ten miles inland, before he was compelled by autumn's approach to return to the Gallic shore. But he had gained experience; and the havoc

wrought by a gale on his transports at their moorings prompted the construction of flat-bottomed boats in preparation for the next year's campaign.

The necessity of dealing with native raiders in Illyria kept Caesar somewhat late in the south; and when he reached Gaul, unrest among the Treveri diverted his attention, so that it was not until July in 54 that he was able to rejoin his fleet at Portus Itius (now Wissant, near Boulogne). A good many merchant adventurers were preparing to make the voyage with him; and his military force this time comprised as many as five legions as well as some loyal Gallic auxiliaries. At the landing no enemy was to be seen and it was not until he pushed some miles inland (which he did on the very night of the disembarkation) that resistance was encountered near the River Stour. His victorious pursuit was interrupted by news of a fresh disaster to his fleet; and the work of beaching and entrenching the ships which had survived the storm lost valuable time. A strong concentration of Britons, led by Cassivellaunus and formidable chiefly for the prowess of their famous scythe-chariots, had first to be defeated—once again on the River Stour—before an advance could be made towards the Thames valley. The Trinobantes of Essex now sent to tender their submission; but the rest of the Britons held firm and dogged the marching column with guerrilla tactics. But they failed to prevent the fording of the Thames at Brentford; and the territory of the Catuvellauni (Hertfordshire) was entered. After a diversion into Essex, Caesar turned to assail their capital, most probably Verulamium, the modern St. Albans; and the fall of his fortress caused Cassivellaunus to sue for terms of peace. Though Caesar had apparently intended to winter his troops in Britain, the situation in Gaul was disturbing; and he was glad to accept the offer of hostages and tribute before taking his departure. He carried large numbers of captives with him; but the payment of tribute was soon discontinued; and the expedition, if not a failure, had no permanent results (54).

On the eve of Caesar's embarkation for Britain an ugly incident had occurred which was destined to produce un-

pleasant consequences in Gaul. Among many Gallic chieftains whom he was planning to take with him as a guarantee for their tribesmen's good behaviour, was a certain Aeduan called Dumnorix; and at the last moment this man had made a bolt for freedom, which promptly led to his pursuit and execution. The news of his fate had worked on the feelings of a people already bitterly resentful of the Roman occupation. The burden of supplying the needs of Caesar's forces was telling on their pockets; and, to make matters worse, the harvests of 54 proved abnormally poor. The shortage not merely increased the natives' discontent; but compelled Caesar to an unusually wide dispersal of his military units, thus inevitably inviting attack on their isolated camps. Feeling somewhat uneasy, he himself delayed his departure for Cisalpine Gaul and it was well he did so. For trouble was brewing. Indutiomarus, chief of the Treveri, whose local influence had been seriously weakened by Caesar's intervention in the previous spring, was secretly stirring up the neighbouring tribes to a general insurrection; and as the firstfruits of his efforts, the Eburones under Ambiorix suddenly attacked the camp of Sabinus and Cotta at Aduatuca. Cut off as they were some fifty miles or so from the nearest Roman contingent, Sabinus decided, despite his colleague's protest, to accept the offer of a safe-conduct thither. On the march they were surrounded in a wooded valley, and all but a very few wiped out. Encouraged by this success the Nervii joined the revolt and attacked the adjacent camp of Quintus, Cicero's brother. A desperate siege followed; till warned of his lieutenant's plight by a plucky Gallic dispatch rider, Caesar hurried across and arrived in the nick of time for the relief. But the harm was done. A Roman legion had been annihilated; and though Caesar himself arranged to spend the winter in Gaul, such a blow to Roman prestige was bound to have its sequel (54-53).

For the moment, indeed, the outlook somewhat improved. Indutiomarus, the ringleader of the whole revolt, in attempting an assault on Labienus's camp not far from the modern Sedan, was severely repulsed and lost his life in the rout. In the next year (53), Caesar by swift movements crushed



disaffected tribes of the north-east, marched down to join Labienus, and then for a second time made the passage of the Rhine to intimidate the Suebi who had been sending assistance to the rebel Gauls. For the rest of the year, wishing to wipe out the stain of Sabinus's disaster, he took it as his principal object to make an example of the Eburones, hunting their chief Ambiorix till he escaped into the Ardennes, and harrying their country with such brutal ferocity that thousands must have starved. By the end of the year the situation was so well in hand that Caesar set out again, as usual, to perform his Cisalpine duties.

But the appearance of tranquillity was only on the surface. The partial success of the rebel movement and even more the severity with which it had been suppressed, had deeply stirred the native spirit of the Gauls. Hitherto the same fatal disunion, which had rendered their conquest possible, had equally nullified their efforts to shake off the yoke; but now there arose a leader whose genius was capable of organizing and maintaining the bid for freedom on something like a national scale. It was in the mountainous region of the Middle South—a district hitherto almost completely tranquil—that Vercingetorix, a young noble of the Arverni, undertook this formidable task. During the early months of 52, while Caesar was still beyond the Alps, secret plans were being laid. Many tribes of Central and Southern Gaul were privy to the plot, among them the Carnutes who were commissioned to lead the outbreak. One winter day they rushed the Roman trade-depôt at Cenabum (now Orleans) and massacred every foreigner they found there. That same night the news reached the Arverni, one hundred and sixty miles away; and, though disowned for the moment by his fellow-tribesmen, Vercingetorix raised the standard of revolt. Many wild spirits joined him; and presently seizing the tribal hill-fortress of Gergovia, he proclaimed himself as king.

While most of the neighbouring tribes still shrank from open action, he coerced the Bituriges of Central Gaul, and by sending his lieutenant Lucterius to watch the Narbonensian frontier, attempted to bar Caesar's passage to his

legions in the north. Forcing his way, however, through the snows of the Cevennes, Caesar won past, concentrated his legions at Agedincum in the upper basin of the Seine, and when Vercingetorix pushed towards him against Gorgobina, swept round through Cenabum, the scene of the late massacre, descended on the Bituriges and laid siege to their capital Avaricum (the modern Bourges). Meanwhile Vercingetorix's tactics had undergone a change. He was a ruthless disciplinarian, torturing and even mutilating to enforce his own authority; and seeing the inevitable superiority of the Romans in the field, he now compelled the Gauls to burn homes, barns, villages and everything in the hope of starving them out. Thus the siege of Avaricum was carried on in the centre of a smoking wilderness, but, though Caesar himself would have been willing to cry off, his men insisted on pressing the assault, which, despite the desperate sorties of the garrison, eventually succeeded. Not a single human being found within the walls was spared.

It was a signal tribute to Vercingetorix's hold upon his countrymen that not even this disaster shook it. He raised fresh troops; kept the rebellion well alive in the region of the upper Seine; and, defeating Caesar's effort to reduce Gergovia, his own tribal fortress,<sup>1</sup> was rewarded for such success by winning the adhesion of nearly all Celtic Gaul, including even Rome's traditional allies, the Aedui, whose patience broke at last under the heavy strain of supplying corn to the legions. It was at Alesia, on territory controlled by this important and central tribe, that he chose to form a strongly fortified base from which by well-planned raids and the wholesale destruction of superfluous grain-stores he endeavoured to wear the enemy down. Never perhaps had Caesar stood in a more critical position. For even his communications with Italy were interrupted; and his infantry were ill-adapted to meet these guerrilla tactics. But he rose to the emergency. German warriors were enlisted from

<sup>1</sup> Here, again, as in the battle with the Nervii, Caesar's generalship erred badly towards foolhardiness. With only six legions and a risk of attack from the Aedui in his rear, he attempted the assault of an impregnable fortress.

beyond the Rhine and formed into an efficient force of mobile cavalry. With their aid he countered his elusive enemy, and driving Vercingetorix back into Alesia, flung the full weight of his legions upon the famous fortress. The approaches to the hill-top being too sheer for a direct assault, vast lines of circumvallation were soon drawn around it, and the garrison was already at starvation-point and had driven out non-combatants to certain death when an enormous levy of confederate Gauls gathered for its relief. Though compelled by their arrival to a fight upon two fronts, the Romans still held firm; and defeating a last sortie in a desperate struggle, determined the garrison's capitulation. To save his fellows' lives Vercingetorix delivered himself up and was sent in chains to Rome where six years later he was to adorn his conqueror's triumph and then die in the dungeon by the Capitol.

With the fall of Alesia and the surrender of its chief the back of the great revolt was broken. In the year 51 it merely remained for Caesar to stamp out the resistance of a few stubborn tribes, such as the Bituriges and the Bellovaci, and to capture one last fortress at Uxellodunum. It was perhaps an evidence of the strain which his nerves had undergone, that when this town surrendered, he ordered the survivors to be turned adrift with their right hands amputated—a crueller fate than death.

From this long tale of havoc, bloodshed and incalculable human misery inflicted on a people whose only crime it was that they loved freedom, it is a relief to turn to measures which did something at least to redeem such horrors by laying the foundations of a new national prosperity. Of the details of these measures we unluckily know little; nor had Caesar many months in which to complete his work. Beyond question, however, his policy was liberal and conciliatory. There were no confiscations of land. According to the old Roman precedent, the tribes were left free in varying degrees to manage their own local affairs and to raise at their own discretion the very moderate tribute which was demanded of them. Roman citizenship was bestowed on many chiefs and other prominent individuals who showed themselves

deserving ; and a legion of Gallic warriors which had been raised during the war was similarly rewarded by enfranchisement. For the rest, every encouragement was given to enlistment in the auxiliary contingents ; and the energies of the wilder spirits thus engaged in the service of their suzerain. Taken as a whole, then, we may fairly judge from what we know of Caesar's policy that he meant Gaul to be absorbed into the imperial organism, not treated as mere material for commercial exploitation. Seeing what was the temper of the age in which he lived, this stands enormously to his credit ; and if it was left mainly to his successors<sup>1</sup> to develop the civilization of this most valuable province, it is at least significant that Caesar's pacification was thoroughly effective and that even during the turmoil of the ensuing Civil War, no effort was made by the Gauls to recover their lost liberty.

#### VI. EVENTS AT ROME, 56-50

Though in this period of aftermath Caesar found the time to compile an official account of his conquests, it seems certain that in doing so his eyes were fixed primarily upon the Roman Public ; and indeed it was scarcely possible that his thoughts should have been elsewhere. For his position was growing critical. The term of his Gallic command was swiftly drawing to a close ; and the situation at home seemed to offer no sure prospect even of personal security, much less of political success. But before we can appreciate precisely what that situation was, we must first pass under review the events of the half-dozen years which followed the famous conference at Lucca.

The elections for 55, at which according to the Luccan programme Caesar's two leading partners were to be chosen consuls, were by their manipulation postponed till after the beginning of that very year—probably in order to allow time for the arrival of the soldiers whom Caesar had pro-

<sup>1</sup> Caesar's policy of enfranchisement was discontinued by Augustus, but revived by Claudius and continued by Galba, Otho, and Hadrian.

mised to send home on leave. When at last the elections took place, the candidature of a senatorial nominee was forcibly prevented amid disgraceful scenes of disorder and bloodshed; and Pompey and Crassus in consequence were returned unopposed. Their next step, as foreshadowed by the Luccan programme, was to secure for themselves the allotment of proconsular commands in Spain and Syria respectively; and since Cato and his senatorials were still intransigent, a Bill to this effect was carried through the Assembly by a tribune named Trebonius. The course of their joint consulship in 55 was comparatively uneventful. Danger of counter-agitation was to some extent averted by a renewed prohibition against the political use of workmen's guilds. Meanwhile the mob was kept in good humour by a magnificent display of gladiators and wild animals held in the new stone theatre which Pompey had erected in the Campus Martius. When the new year arrived, instead of going to Spain as in strict legality he should have done, Pompey postponed his departure. In public estimation he was still 'the Great Man'; and he apparently expected that by remaining on the spot he would be better able to maintain his old—perhaps earn a new—distinction. So he lingered on indefinitely on the outskirts of the city (for as proconsul he was not allowed within its walls), spending much time with his new wife Julia and waiting in his muddle-headed way 'for something to turn up'. It was equally unconstitutional and equally characteristic of the Triumvirs' arbitrary behaviour that Crassus, even before the expiration of his consulship, had hurried off to the East. Conscious, like Pompey, that his star was in danger of eclipse from Caesar's spectacular successes, he had resolved to try his hand—now a little out of practice—at the notoriously repaying game of Oriental conquest. The fabulous riches of Parthia had excited the appetite of this prince among financiers; and before he left Rome, he had decided on a war—a war from which, as he little can have guessed, he was never to return.

The Parthians were by descent a tribe of Scythian nomads, who from their original home near the Caspian had succeeded

during the first half of the second century B.C. in occupying the Mesopotamian portion of the disintegrating Seleucid realm. The descendants of their leader Arsaces had there built up a powerful kingdom, in which the many Greek cities first founded by Alexander enjoyed wide liberties of self-government and commerce. Though from contact with these cities, the Parthians had adopted a debased Hellenic culture, they retained their ancestral quality as fighters, and—not least after the campaign of which we are now speaking—their mounted archers were accounted the most skilful in the world. Their monarchs' policy was, as a rule, aggressive; and since Phraates' offer of an agreed frontier had been unwisely ignored by Pompey, encroachment towards Armenia had been resumed by Orodes, his successor. The recent governor of Syria, Gabinius (the author of the famous Lex Gabinia), had intended a campaign for the suppression of Orodes; but had been diverted by Pompey's private instructions to restore Ptolemy the Piper to Egypt—the performance of which task exceeded the strict limits of his provincial jurisdiction and so exposed him on his return to impeachment for high treason. Meanwhile for the bellicose Crassus no further *casus belli* appeared to be required than the protection of Armenian territory; and on his arrival in Syria in the spring of 54 he set out at once towards Mesopotamia.

During that year he crossed the Euphrates at Zeugma and following it southwards overran and ravaged much of northern Mesopotamia. No serious opposition was encountered; and after wintering in Syria where he spent his time in looking round for loot and stripping the Jewish Temple of its treasures, he set off again in the spring of 53, with an airy confidence which disdained the sage advice of the Armenian King that he should keep to hilly country. Crossing the Euphrates once more he struck out eastward into the plains; and in the neighbourhood of Carrhae he was attacked by immense hordes of Parthian horsemen. His cavalry was far too few to protect the hollow square into which he formed his infantry; and the enemy archers, cantering round at a safe distance, rained down a terrible shower upon their

helpless ranks.<sup>1</sup> Pursuit of such an enemy was unavailing; and the younger Crassus (whom Caesar had released from Gaul to accompany his father) was killed at the head of a charge. Retreat through the night exposed the struggling column to fresh persecutions. Only a tiny remnant, under Cassius the quaestor, escaped; and Crassus himself was treacherously cut down at a parley. When the messengers of the victory reached King Orodes' capital, the *Bacchae* of Euripides was being acted before the court; and at the point when the actor entered who should have held in his hands the head of the mythological Pentheus, he brought in not a dummy, but—with a touch of horrible realism—the head of Crassus himself. Orodes gave him a silver talent for his bright idea. Meanwhile, when safe back in Syria, Cassius promptly rallied what troops he could, and when at length the leisurely Parthians tried to follow up their victory, beat them back across the frontier. There for the time being the situation rested; and though Rome had lost an army, she was fortunate that she had lost no more.

More serious, in the long run, were the political reactions of Crassus's untimely death. For, if the harmony of the Triumvirate had been precarious, a partnership of two, in which the two were obvious rivals, was little likely to prove stable; and in point of fact an event had just occurred to snap a still more vital bond between them. In the autumn of 54 Caesar's daughter Julia, a very charming and tactful lady to whom during their brief married life Pompey showed himself devoted, had died after giving birth to a child; and from that moment there sprang up a coldness between son-in-law and father-in-law which was gradually to develop into a positive antagonism. It was ominously significant that though Caesar offered to marry Pompey's daughter, Pompey declined the arrangement and himself married Crassus's widow.

Meanwhile, however, Pompey's own political position showed little sign of improvement. The trial of Gabinius in 54 was

<sup>1</sup> The success of the archers was largely due to the provision of a special camel corps of ammunition-carriers, which supplied fresh arrows when the normal complement had been shot away.

a severe blow to him; for, though the charge of treason failed, not even the services of Cicero whom he procured as counsel availed to save his protégé from conviction on the score of having taken a bribe from Ptolemy. Uneasy at heart, but less willing than ever to leave the neighbourhood of Rome, Pompey lingered on. Thoughts of a dictatorship seem to have flitted through his head. The growing disorder in the city invited some drastic solution; but, as on the occasion of his return from the East, timidity or indecision held him back from taking the plunge; and he simply used his influence negatively to keep others out of power. It was partly owing to his interference that the election of magistrates for 52 was frequently postponed. Milo, backed by Cicero in the conservative interest, was standing for the consulship, Clodius for the praetorship. Time had done nothing to allay the animosity of these rivals. Canvassing and rioting grew fast and furious. Clashes between their retinues were frequent; and, as a result of the general anarchy, when January arrived no magistrates had actually been elected. The impasse seemed complete, when suddenly the whole political world was thrown into confusion by an untoward incident. Towards the end of the month, encountering one another on the Appian Way near Bovillae, the followers of Milo and Clodius fell to quarrelling. Who took the initiative was never really determined; but blows followed and in the scuffle Clodius was dragged out of a neighbouring inn and killed. His body was carried back to Rome; where the indignant mob took it into the Senate-house and making a pyre of seats and tables, burnt the whole building down. Popular feeling against Milo ran high; and the city was worked up into such a frenzy of disorder that the Senate was forced to pass the ultimate decree, empowering Pompey—still the 'inevitable' man—to levy troops and save the State. So the opportunity he had awaited came at last, and since the city was still without elected magistrates, it was presently decided to appoint him as sole consul. He at once brought in two laws dealing with violence and corruption and providing that Milo's responsibility for the murder should be decided not, as usual,



in the standing courts, but by a special jury, the bribery of which was rendered virtually impossible. During the trial the Forum itself was lined by Pompey's troops; but, even so, the behaviour of Clodius's supporters was so menacing that Cicero, who of course had undertaken the defence, altogether lost his nerve. His failure resulted in the conviction of his client, who went off into exile in Transalpine Gaul. When all was over, Cicero elaborated at leisure a magnificent oration, of which Milo, on receiving a copy, sarcastically remarked that he was glad that circumstances had prevented its delivery; for otherwise he would not then have been enjoying the excellent mullets of Marseilles.

To the conservatives, of course, as Milo's backers, such an issue of the trial was a serious shock. But their position was meanwhile fortified by the increasing certainty that Pompey was now theirs. Every circumstance, indeed, combined to drive this inveterate trimmer into the arms of his old opponents. In the first place, a certain sympathy with Milo's senatorial friends was a natural sequel to his feud with the dead Clodius. It was to the Senate, again, that he owed his own appointment to the consulship; and, finally, if he was to keep himself in power and Caesar out of it, nothing could suit him better than to assume the rôle of the constitutionalist and so force upon his rival the unpopular counter-rôle of the revolutionary. That Pompey should thus have become the accredited champion of the established order was in itself a somewhat anomalous position. For, as a provincial governor, he possessed no legal right to be in Rome at all; and, though toward the end of the summer he did something to regularize his position as sole consul by appointing Metellus Scipio, his own father-in-law, as colleague, he simultaneously arranged that his Spanish command should be prolonged for an additional five years. Constitutional niceties, however, were now utterly lost from sight in the clash of conflicting interests; and, whatever the rights or wrongs of his position, Pompey remained from this time forward the Senate's main bulwark of defence against the self-assertion of their most dreaded enemy, Caesar.

Nevertheless it was on purely technical points of legality that the issue turned in the preliminary skirmishing which was now to precede the final clash of arms. In this political duel it was clear that from the outset the constitutional party, controlling as they did the actual machinery of legislation, had the absent Caesar at an enormous disadvantage; and, as a glance at the circumstances will show, his prospective situation was in fact extremely delicate. The Gallic command, which in February of 54 had been voted him for an additional term of five years, was due to expire probably in March of 49. From that moment he would become a private person; and a private person he must remain until the elections came on in the latter half of the year and he could then hope to secure once more an official position. The interval was not long; but it would be sufficient—and here lay the rub—for his enemies to impeach him for any of the more dubious acts of his Gallic campaign, and so to crush him utterly.

There remained, however, one loophole. It was the normal practice, and a practice which had never been disputed, that a provincial governor should be left to carry on his functions until a successor should arrive to relieve him; and since the only magistrates available for succession to Caesar's province would be the magistrates actually in office during the year 49, none of them would manifestly be in a position to relieve him until their own term expired at the end of it. Till then it would therefore be open to Caesar to stay on in Gaul, and provided that he could secure his election to the consulship of 48, pass direct from one post to the other, avoiding the dangerous interval of vulnerability. But such an arrangement was only possible on two conditions: first, that he should be allowed special dispensation to stand for office in his absence; and second, that nothing were meanwhile done to upset the usual practice in regard to provincial governorships or compel him to relinquish his Gallic command at its strict termination in March. It was precisely against the fulfilment of these two conditions that the legislation of his opponents was now directed. At the Luccan conference it would appear that Caesar had

stipulated for some arrangement whereby he should have special dispensation for an absentee candidature; and in the year 53, with the approval of Pompey, a Bill to that effect had been passed on the initiative of all ten tribunes conjointly. But what, under the uncertain and disorderly conditions of 53, Pompey had found it convenient to approve, Pompey the all-powerful consul of 52 found it equally convenient to throw overboard; and he proceeded to enact a law reasserting the necessity of a personal candidature; then with typical indecision and as though to avoid an open breach, he added a vague clause waiving this rule in cases where dispensation had previously been granted. At the same time, however—adopting a suggestion which had already been put forward and which was intended to discourage men from seeking office simply with an eye to some fat provincial plum—he passed another law whereby pro-magisterial commands were only to be assigned *after a lapse of five years from the holding of a magistracy*. This meant, of course, that such posts as now fell vacant would have to be filled up by previous magistrates of five or more years back; and much against his will Cicero himself was compelled to undertake the uncongenial duty of leaving Rome to govern Cilicia. But it also meant that, when the crucial year of 49 arrived, there would be plenty of men available to take over the Gallic command, and that Caesar therefore would be superseded immediately on the expiration of his term in March.

This was bad enough in all conscience; but worse was to follow. For at the close of 52 when Pompey and Metellus resigned the consulship, one of the two new consuls, a certain Claudius Marcellus, proved to be a bitter opponent of Caesar. He soon showed his colours by challenging the legality of Caesar's grant of citizen-rights on the Transpadane town of Comum; and, though tribunes acting in Caesar's interest vetoed his motion of repeal, he engineered a test-case by arresting an inhabitant of Comum who was on visit to the capital, and having him flogged upon no better pretext than to prove Caesar's grant invalid. This petty insult, so grossly and so brutally conceived, was however no more than a foretaste of Marcellus's hostile intention; and

in September he brought forward a proposal that Caesar should be definitely suspended at the end of his original term. Pompey, still nervous of pushing the quarrel to extremes, objected; and the question was put off for decision until March of the following year (50).

But the sands of time were running out; and, if an adverse decision was to be averted, Caesar had not many months in which to act. Hitherto his hands had been so fully occupied with Vercingetorix's revolt that he can have paid little attention to the controversy which was raging around his future fate. But at least he must have realized the imminence of his danger. At Rome the magnitude of his triumphs, the known prowess of his army, and above all perhaps, his ruthless conduct of the Gallic campaigns, had merely served to increase the nervousness and suspicion with which he was regarded. The memory of the Sullan Terror was still vivid in many minds; and it is little wonder that his opponents were determined to snuff out his career at the first possible opportunity. Cato, for one, made no secret of his intention to prosecute for high treason. If, therefore, the proposal of Marcellus should be passed into law, trial, conviction and exile stared Caesar in the face; and, if he had not previously decided what course he should pursue on his return from Gaul, he must now have begun to realize that there was no room in Rome for an independent Senate and for Caesar too. Even in other minds than his the feeling had been growing that the present nerveless and incomplete régime required the direction of some semi-official head. At this very moment Cicero was engaged in writing his treatise, on *The Commonwealth*, in which he seems to have envisaged the advantages of an 'uncrowned monarch' wielding a salutary influence such as the great Africanus had enjoyed in the years that followed Zama.

It is probable, indeed, that Pompey was the man of whom Cicero was thinking; but meanwhile Pompey's vague ascendancy as 'princeps' of the State must have already suggested to the mind of Caesar what opportunities of power were awaiting a man more resolute and clear-headed than Pompey. He himself had now at his back an army trained in

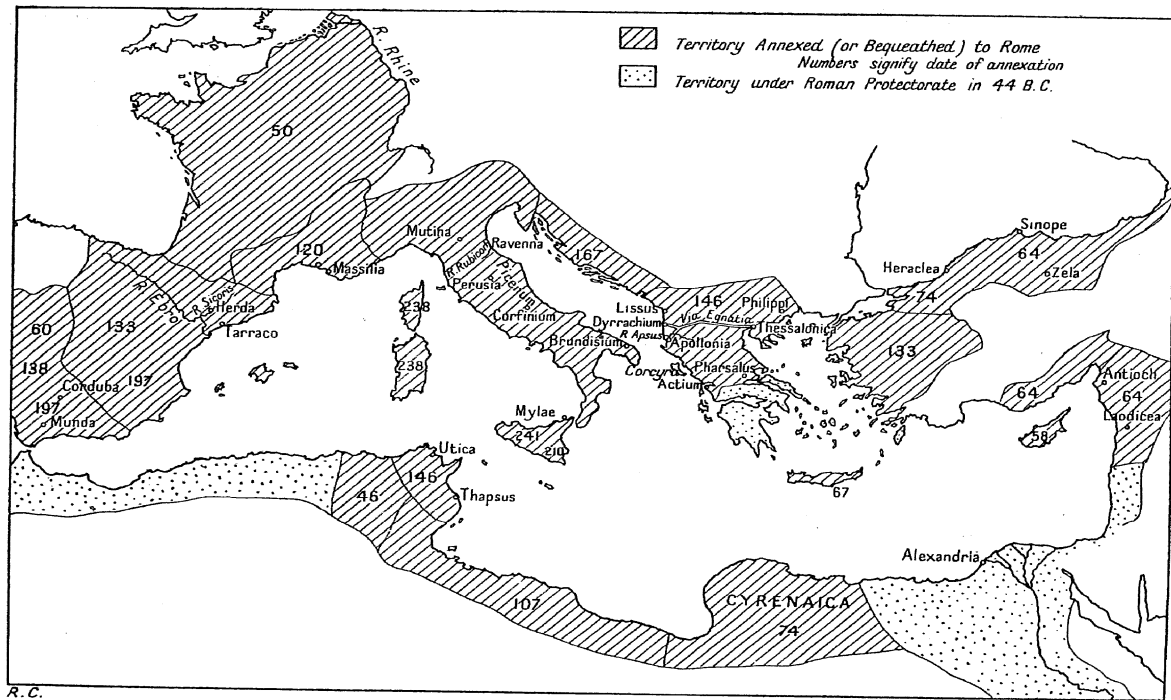
the hard school of Gallic warfare and whole-heartedly devoted to his leadership. At Rome, even after ten years' absence, he was still the hero of the mob; and since his rival's legions were far away in their Spanish province, there was nothing to prevent him from marshalling his forces in Cisalpine Gaul, and descending upon an unguarded Italy to impose his will—perhaps without even a struggle. Nevertheless it was not Caesar's habit to be hasty when patience might yet serve; and, while continuing to manœuvre for position, he still strove to achieve his goal through constitutional channels, and though determined to have his way, he was prepared, as we shall see, to go almost any length to avoid an appeal to arms.

## CHAPTER XIX

### CAESAR'S TRIUMPH AND DEATH

#### I. THE CULMINATION OF THE QUARREL

**S**INCE the time of the Gracchi the tribunate had never regained the high position to which they had raised it. Nevertheless, as the spokesmen of others greater than themselves, many tribunes of the first century had played an important part in politics; and it was through such an agency that Caesar now determined to push his case at Rome. Among the tribunes elected for the year 50—in which fell to be made the fateful decision about the termination of his Gallic command—was a certain C. Scribonius Curio, an unscrupulous young adventurer of remarkable debating powers who had hitherto taken the senatorial side. Like many others of his class, however, Curio had piled up enormous debts and by undertaking to meet these liabilities (which are said to have reached the fantastic figure of half a million pounds), Caesar engaged the young man's services upon his own behalf. The arrangement was a secret one; but, though Curio at first posed as an independent champion of the popular cause and even made some parade of an impartial policy, there can be no question that he was all the while acting on the instructions of his absent paymaster.



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XIII. ROMAN EMPIRE IN 44 B.C., ILLUSTRATING CAMPAIGNS OF CIVIL WAR

Confident, then, in the constitutional weapon of this lieutenant's power of veto, Caesar himself was content to await developments and made no overt move. When requested by the Senate to contribute troops for an expedition against Parthia, he not merely surrendered the legion thus demanded, but gave back a second which Pompey had previously lent him at the crisis of the Gallic revolt. Meanwhile the all-important decision, which was to have been taken upon March 1st, was postponed through the intervention of the consul Aemilius Paullus, who was also not above suspicion of having received a *quid pro quo*.

During the course of the next few months several proposals were put forward offering some prolongation of Caesar's proconsular command; but none gave him the immunity which he desired against the threat of prosecution that hung over his head. So Curio blocked them all, and himself suggested a compromise—which he knew well enough that Pompey would never accept—whereby *both generals should resign simultaneously*. At the beginning of December a motion to this effect was actually adopted by an overwhelming vote of the Senate; and, powerless though such a motion was to compel his premature retirement, it had the effect (as its author had foreseen) of placing Pompey in a most awkward dilemma. Apprehensive, therefore, lest their great ally should defy the order and desert their cause, the more reactionary section of the House resolved to pin him down. A scare had been put about that Caesar was already preparing for a march on the capital; and on the strength of this fiction the consul Marcellus demanded that Pompey should be entrusted with the defence of the State. Failing to carry his point, he rushed off to the great man's house outside the city walls, and melodramatically thrusting a sword into his hands, commissioned him then and there to take command over all military forces in Italy. Unauthorized as it was by either Senate or Assembly, this lunatic gesture could carry no real sanction. Yet Pompey accepted the commission, and promptly gave orders for a general levy. Cicero, lately back from his Cilician province, had it from his own lips that war was inevitable.

Events now moved rapidly. On December 21st—the day on which his tribuneship expired—Curio left Rome and fled to Ravenna where he expected to find his chief all ready to march. But Caesar did not march. Civil war was still the last thing that he wanted; but if war must come, he was anxious, so far as possible, to have right upon his side. Already, it is true, he could count on widespread backing within Italy itself. The urban mob was enthusiastic for him. The interest of the financial class inclined them the same way; and the propaganda of Balbus and other secret agents had won him many adherents among the younger and more reckless members of the aristocracy. Nevertheless, it must be remembered that the Romans were still a people who set much store upon legality; and even now a false step might have ruined Caesar's cause. So he temporized; sent Curio back to Rome to continue negotiations; repeated an offer to surrender Transalpine Gaul and the majority of his legions on condition of retaining one or both of his nearer provinces till he could enter on the consulship of 48; and succeeded by such means in throwing on the Senate the responsibility of taking the initiative against him. Accordingly the year 49 opened with a series of stormy debates in which Marcus Antonius and Quintus Cassius, two of the new tribunes, continued the rôle which Curio had hitherto played; and when a motion was passed that Caesar must retire on the appointed day or else be treated as a public enemy, it was promptly vetoed by these two obstructionists. Nothing but the passing of the 'ultimate decree' could have the power to override their veto; and on January 7th in an atmosphere of panic the 'ultimate decree' was passed. Antonius and Cassius, protesting against this violation of their sacrosanct prerogative, withdrew and set out for the frontier. So the diplomatic struggle ended in a triumph for Caesar; and by a strange irony it was as champion of the tribunate, that traditional safeguard and symbol of democratic liberties, that he was now to move forward to the great decision in which those liberties were to be for ever destroyed.

On the news of the tribunes' flight and before they even



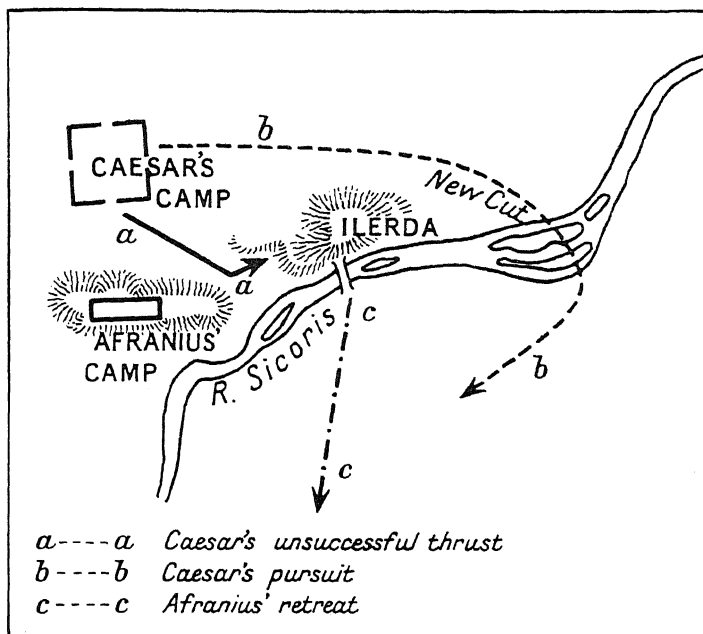
arrived in his camp at Ravenna, Caesar made up his mind. He had now been formally declared a public enemy ; and on January 11th, by crossing the frontier at the river Rubicon, he accepted the challenge. It was a characteristically audacious step. Though he had ordered a concentration of his Transalpine troops, he actually had with him no more than a single legion. But he knew that the two legions which he had recently surrendered and which were still in Italy, could very ill be trusted to take the field against him. He knew, too, that the general levy which Pompey had ordered would have made but little headway and he believed that, if delivered at once, a bold stroke might win him Italy. Such a calculation proved correct. Despairing of an effective defence of the capital, Pompey retired into the south, accompanied by the two consuls and the majority of the Senate. Meanwhile Domitius, who had been appointed Caesar's successor in Gaul, had resolved on an attempt to hold the Central Highlands with a few troops which he had hastily recruited. Caesar, whose reinforcements were now beginning to arrive, moved rapidly down through Picenum, drove Domitius and his army into Corfinium, due east of Rome, and compelled their surrender. His clemency in releasing the captured soldiers was not merely rewarded by their wholesale enlistment under his own banner, but also did much to placate public opinion throughout the country which had expected him to re-enact the brutal excesses of Marius. The situation thus offered Pompey no hope of a rally and he decided to evacuate his troops from Brundisium where the fleet had already been assembled. When Caesar arrived before the town on March 9th, half the Pompeian forces had already sailed, and though he invested it on the land side, he could not prevent the transports from returning a week later to fetch off the second half. But Italy now lay at his feet. Retracing his steps northward he reached Rome at the beginning of April. No opposition was offered and he seized the State Treasury, thus adding some three million pounds to the vast reserves he had accumulated in Gaul. In so doing, it is true, he was obliged to defy the veto of a tribune ; but apart from the public annoyance which this

caused, he was very well received ; and, politically at least, his position was now extremely strong. For with Pompey had departed all the staunchest champions of the Republican cause. Even Cicero himself was presently to follow them ; and meanwhile the remnant of the Senate which had remained behind was easily cowed. So the reins of government passed automatically into Caesar's hands ; and it only remained to improvise an effective administration. To this end he took swift measures, assigning to Marcus Lepidus the control of the city, to Antony the defence of Italy, and to Curio and other lieutenants the task of securing the vital corn-provinces of Sicily and Sardinia. Thus Caesar himself was left free to prosecute the campaign.

## II. THE CIVIL WAR TO PHARSALIA

The strategical outlook was more problematic. In addition to the ten legions already at his disposal Caesar, of course, had ample means of recruiting as many more as he needed ; and his financial resources enabled him to undertake immediately the construction of a fleet. But meanwhile Pompey was in command of the seas and could utilize this advantage to consolidate his forces and strike wherever he pleased. Indeed, apart from Italy and Sicily, the whole Mediterranean lay at his disposal. Spain was still officially his province and was held by his legions. Marseilles also had declared for him ; and Domitius, though generously released after his capture at Corfinium, elected to make it his base from which to assert, if possible, his command over Gaul. Africa was secured by the loyalty of its governor Atius Varus, who with the aid of the Numidian King Juba defeated Curio's attempt to seize this valuable source of supplies. Most important, and perhaps most serviceable of all, there was the Greek peninsula and behind it the East, Pompey's own special preserve, the scene of his earlier triumphs and an almost inexhaustible reservoir of men, money and ships. It was doubtless these last considerations, as well as its convenient situation for the recovery of Italy, that determined Pompey's selection of Macedonia—rather than of Spain or Africa—as the area in which to effect his concentration. But such

concentration was bound to take time; and since many even of the troops which had been brought from Italy were little better than raw recruits, some months would be required to bring them to efficiency. Though Pompey himself worked hard, he was very ill-supported by his senatorial associates,



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XIV. PLAN OF ILERDA

who were undisguisedly jealous of his ascendancy; and such lack of cohesion undoubtedly did much to delay the progress of his preparations.

For Caesar, on the other hand, time was a vital factor; and, as we have already seen, his genius lay precisely in rapidity of movement and decision. By reason of his central position, moreover, he was at liberty to deal with the enemy piecemeal; and he not unnaturally decided to strike first

at the Pompeian army in Spain. Leaving Rome on April 5th he arrived a fortnight later before Marseilles ; and, since the inhabitants' determination to oppose him was now further stiffened by Domitius's arrival, he could ill afford to ignore this threat to his communications. So he hastily ordered a fleet of galleys to be constructed up the Rhône and commissioned Trebonius and Decimus Brutus to invest the town by land and sea before himself pushing on to his true objective in Spain. The main body of his troops had already preceded him thither, and crossing the Pyrenees, had engaged the Pompeian forces which, under the joint command of Afranius and Petreius, were concentrated at Ilerda, on the west bank of the Sicoris, a tributary of the Ebro. No sooner had Caesar arrived than he resolved on an attempt to cut in between the enemy's encampment and this fortress-town with the idea of severing them from its bridge communication with the eastern bank. For once, however, his men's enthusiasm badly overshot the mark. For the initial surprise failing, the reinforcements pressed their charge so hotly up the steep slopes towards the fortress that their ranks got perilously bunched in the pocket of a ravine and could only extricate themselves with heavy loss. This failure cost Caesar dear ; for, whereas their hold on the town-bridge allowed the Pompeians to forage freely on the eastern bank, the collapse of his own bridges during a sudden spate prevented the arrival of his convoys and brought him dangerously near to starvation. The emergency was met, however, by improvising coracles and constructing a new bridge some miles up-stream, which enabled his cavalry to scour the eastern bank and so in turn deny the enemy their indispensable supplies. Their plight very soon compelled them to a carefully planned retreat, not as might be expected, due westwards from Ilerda, but first across the town-bridge to the eastern bank of the Sicoris and then by fetching a compass southwards, to a point upon the Ebro where pontoons were being constructed, and so to more favourable country in that river's rear. They failed to reckon, however, with the speed of Caesar's pursuit ; for, by splitting the swollen stream of the Sicoris into several fordable channels, his engineers just

managed in the nick of time to complete an alternative crossing much nearer than the up-stream bridge; and his infantry, though forced to wade breast high, very soon recovered touch with the enemy's retirement and eventually headed them off in a narrow defile on the line of their retreat to the Ebro. Their surrender precipitated the voluntary capitulation of the troops of the Further Province, which Varro, the famous savant, vainly strove to hold true to Pompey. So by the end of September Caesar was once more back at Marseilles, and in time to receive the submission to which after a stubborn resistance the joint efforts of Trebonius and Brutus had compelled its inhabitants. Here (as likewise in Spain) Caesar displayed a clemency which the somewhat treacherous behaviour of his opponents scarcely merited; and while confiscating part of her territory, he allowed the ancient township to retain her privileged position of autonomy.

By the masterly brilliance of this summer's campaign Caesar had won the West. He now set out for Rome, and pausing at Placentia to quell an ugly mutiny among his troops, arrived early in December. He had been appointed in his absence to act as dictator for the holding of the elections; and he now accepted—or rather assumed—the consulship for 48 with a certain Publius Servilius, an ex-aristocrat, for his colleague. This done, he only stayed long enough in the city to arrange for the enfranchisement of his old protégés the inhabitants of Transpadane Gaul, and to avert a threat of widespread bankruptcy by the expedient of allowing debtors a remission equivalent to past payments of interest and a revaluation of their assets at a pre-war level. An army of twelve legions (seven alone of which were at full strength and ready for action) had meanwhile been sent ahead to Brundisium and on the last day of the year 49 he himself arrived at the port.

The enemy against whom Caesar was now to pit his strength for the mastery of the world were more imposing in numbers than in quality. In addition to his nine legions—five brought from Italy, four drawn from eastern provinces—Pompey had managed to collect a heterogeneous host of auxiliary contingents, including Cretan bowmen, Thracian slingers,

Syrian horse-archers, Galatian, Cappadocian and other cavalry. The work of concentration and training—for many of his legionaries, as we have said, were little better than raw recruits—was carried on at Thessalonica, but in the early days of 48 Pompey set out by the great Egnatian high-road for the Epirot coast in anticipation of Caesar's attempt to land there. Meanwhile the Adriatic was completely controlled by his fleet, which in early autumn had defeated Dolabella and the squadron hastily improvised on Caesar's orders, and which now, strongly reinforced by vessels collected from Egypt and elsewhere, was distributed in five patrols under the general command of Bibulus. For Caesar therefore the outlook was not promising. He could count at most on a dozen available warships; and for his transports to attempt with no better escort to run the gauntlet of so formidable a cordon might have seemed the height of madness. Fortunately, however, the sheer improbability of a mid-winter crossing somewhat lulled the vigilance of the patrols; and on January 5th Caesar landed his seven legions safely some twenty miles north of Corcyra. Sending back his fleet of transports to fetch further reinforcements which were expected at Brundisium, he pushed north towards Dyrrhachium, on which Pompey, too, was marching. Forming as it did the western terminus of the solitary high-road across the wild hill-country between Macedon and Epirus, it was essential to Caesar's purpose, if he was to push his advance eastwards, to seize this key-position. But he just failed to win the race; and, Pompey getting there first, the situation settled down into a temporary stalemate. Throughout the three following months the two armies lay encamped, facing each other across the river Apsus some thirty miles south of Dyrrhachium. Delay suited Pompey's plans, allowing a gradual accumulation of his forces. But to Caesar it was trying in the extreme, cut off as he was from provisionment by sea and unable to secure the safe passage of fresh legions which were waiting at Brundisium under Antony's command. Impatience at one time drove him, so the story goes, to put out in an open rowing-boat to fetch them over in person; but, a gale rising, the crew lost nerve and insisted on turning

back. Then suddenly one day towards the end of March sails were sighted; and Antony's flotilla passed cruising along shore in full view of both armies, but finding it impossible to land in the high wind, disappeared into the north. At this the stalemate ended. Pompey cautiously withdrew to the neighbourhood of Dyrrhachium which contained his depôt of supplies and could not be left unguarded. Caesar, making a détour inland, joined hands with the new arrivals who had disembarked at Lissus further north. Though unable to provoke a pitched battle in the field or to force the neck of the almost impregnable peninsula on which Dyrrhachium stood, he now swiftly seized the strategical initiative, first cutting in between Pompey's army and their supply-base in the town, then with singular audacity pinning them to the coast by a regular system of investment. That so large a force should have allowed itself to be thus blockaded by another of half its size seems to argue a singular timidity on the part of its commander; and it can hardly be disputed that Pompey himself was conscious of his antagonist's superior genius in the field. In his defence, however, it should at least be said that his troops were no real match for the keen and seasoned veterans of the long Gallic campaign; and it may well be that Labienus, who had deserted to his side at the outset of the war, had warned him against the risks of premature engagement. Be that as it may, his situation was far from intolerable; for, with the command of the sea, he could easily revictual by water. Caesar, on the other hand, found it hard to support his troops upon the surrounding country-side, the more so since the raids of the numerous enemy horse much plagued his foragers. So it was partly in self-defence that he now undertook to surround the entire Pompeian camp with a line of entrenchments. Occasional sallies and a system of counter-vallation much interfered with its progress; and he was gradually compelled to a prolongation of the line out of all proportion to his strictly limited man-power. The form it assumed was an enormous semicircle a good fifteen miles in length and consisting of two parallel earthworks designed to meet attack from without as well as from within. By midsummer it

was practically finished—but not quite; for where the southern tip of the semicircle met the shore, it had been intended to construct a cross-work covering the gap between the two parallel lines and so acting as a defence against a possible landing; and this cross-work was incomplete. Pompey learnt of the oversight from a couple of Gallic deserters; and since his horses and baggage mules were suffering terribly for lack of fodder, he resolved on a last attempt to break the blockade at this vulnerable point. One day early in July the attempt was made. The legionaries from the camp assailed the inner work. One landing party rushed the gap; another, disembarking further south, attacked the outer work from open country. The defenders, taken simultaneously on front and flank and rear, were routed. Caesar made a desperate but ineffectual effort to retrieve the situation; then realizing that now his whole plan of blockade was ruined, he accepted failure and withdrew to Apollonia, some forty miles down coast.

Nevertheless the abandonment of the blockade had this good effect at least that it restored mobility of manœuvre to both belligerents; and in point of fact it was Pompey who moved first. In the course of the summer his father-in-law Scipio Nasica had set out from Thessalonica to bring up reinforcements along the Egnatian Way; but half-way across, near Heraclea, he had been held in check by Caesar's lieutenant Calvinus. Pompey now marched eastwards to Scipio's assistance; and Calvinus was therefore in danger of being caught between the two converging armies. Apprised of this fresh development Caesar immediately changed the whole direction of his strategy. Striking south-east from Apollonia and threading the passes of the central mountain ranges, he picked up Calvinus who escaped south to join him, and then descended into the upper end of the great Thessalian plain. Though this involved a wide departure from his Adriatic base, there was no longer much advantage in clinging to the sea which he could not command; and the fertility of the new district set him free from all anxiety about commissariat problems. Here, too, there seemed better prospect of compelling Pompey to the decisive engage-



ment which for the past six months he had successfully evaded. That he would respond to Caesar's lead rather than attempt an invasion of Italy seemed wellnigh certain; and sure enough, after joining forces with Scipio, Pompey followed southward into Thessaly, and there took up his position on a hill-top near Pharsalia.

Even so, pitched battle was not, it would seem, any part of Pompey's intention. He still meant to play a waiting game and to wear his enemy down by harassing tactics for which the immense preponderance of his cavalry gave ample opportunity. His plan was foiled, however, by the impatience of his senatorial associates. Though they had appointed him commander-in-chief, they much resented his authority and made no concealment of their contempt for his dilatory strategy. As the days passed and the battle which Caesar persistently offered was as persistently refused, their murmurs grew. Even Labienus joined the chorus; and at last Pompey was goaded into taking the fatal plunge. On the 9th of August it was observed that his army had ventured much further than was usual from the shelter of its camp. In noting its dispositions, Caesar saw how while its right wing rested on the protecting bank of the Enipeus' river-bed, its left wing which enjoyed free scope for manœuvre on the plain contained the massed strength of its cavalry contingents. In shrewd anticipation of an outflanking movement, he therefore arranged to confront it with such cavalry as he himself possessed; but realizing their inadequacy—for the enemy horse outnumbered them by seven thousand to one thousand—he further reinforced his threatened flank with a body of eight cohorts drawn from his third-line troops and held back in reserve against the probable failure of his cavalry. All fell out as he foresaw. For, while his two first lines of infantry engaged the Pompeian front, his cavalry was overwhelmed and forced gradually backward. This was the signal to throw in the reserve cohorts. They charged; and using their javelins for thrust instead of throw, not merely succeeded by these unusual tactics in stemming the onrush of the enemy horse, but soon had it in full flight. The Pompeian flank was thus in its turn threatened; and, bringing up his

third-line supports, to clinch the issue of the wavering battle-line, Caesar pressed the victory home. The enemy camp was carried that same afternoon; and next day a wholesale surrender of the defeated army followed. Pompey himself had fled at the storming of the camp; and riding to Tempe, there embarked on a passing merchant ship and escaped by way of Cyprus to Egypt.

### III. THE CIVIL WAR: SECOND PHASE

Old services he had rendered to Ptolemy the Piper encouraged Pompey to anticipate a welcome in Egypt; but the Piper himself had died three years before; and his son and daughter, Dionysius and Cleopatra, had fallen out over their joint inheritance. Cleopatra had been expelled, and raising an army in Syria, had returned to Egypt to reassert her claim. The issue still hung in the balance, when Pompey arrived off Pelusium and demanded asylum. The young prince and his advisers had no wish to become entangled in the Roman leaders' quarrels; and it was decided that Caesar's favour had best be purchased by encompassing the death of his rival. So Pompey was invited ashore; but as he stepped out of the boat which had been sent out to fetch him, he was stabbed in the back and fell dead.

Meanwhile Caesar was following hard on the fugitive's tracks. He perhaps hoped even now to effect a reconciliation with the man who, after all, had been married to his daughter and was for many years his close friend. However that may be, it was a sincere shock to his feelings when the embalmed head of the murdered man was presented to him by an obsequious Egyptian courtier. It is recorded that he wept. But, though the immediate object of his mission was cancelled by this discovery of Pompey's fate, Caesar decided to stay on for a while in Egypt. He was in sore need of money; and the large sum promised him ten years before by the young Ptolemy's father had never been paid up. He therefore undertook the somewhat delicate task of adjudicating between the two royal claimants. But his impartiality, as it proved, was not above suspicion. For he fell in love with Cleopatra and thus alienated her brother's supporters. His

position grew precarious. The troops he had with him numbered at most four thousand men. The mob of Alexandria very deeply resented his pretensions to dictate; and there were ugly demonstrations of nationalist hostility. Worse still, Achilles, one of the leading courtiers, brought up the army from Pelusium; and Caesar soon found himself blockaded in the royal palace, where he detained under his charge not merely Cleopatra, but her brother too. All winter fierce fighting continued through the streets and suburbs, but Caesar contrived to fortify one quarter of the town, and what was even more important, to keep control over a harbour entrance, thus enabling a legion which he had summoned from Asia Minor to join him in the city. So, in spite of extreme peril, he managed to hold on; and at last relief of a more effective sort arrived. For meanwhile a certain Mithridates of Pergamum—reputedly a son of Rome's old enemy—had been commissioned to bring an army overland from Asia Minor and Syria; and in the spring of 47 he appeared on the banks of the Nile. Thus reinforced Caesar defeated the Egyptian in a pitched battle in the Delta; and since the young Ptolemy whom he had recently set free in hopes of placating opposition, perished in the fighting, he was left free to settle Cleopatra on the throne. It was no doubt a congenial task; for Caesar was very human and he spent three precious months in arranging for the settlement of the beautiful girl's kingdom before he could tear himself away.

It was indeed high time for him to go. For during his nine months' stay in Egypt the world had not stood still; and apart from the growing danger of a serious Republican rally, an awkward situation had arisen in Asia Minor. There Pharnaces, the son and heir of the great Mithridates, who had been left in possession of his father's realm of the Crimea, had seen his opportunity and invaded Pontus. Cappadocia and Lesser Armenia had been overrun; and the army of Calvinus, who had been set in charge of Asia Minor, defeated. Leaving Alexandria in July (47) Caesar marched through Syria and encountering Pharnaces at Zela in Central Pontus won a crushing victory. His famous dispatch, 'I came, I saw, I conquered', was a not inappropriate summary of the

campaign; and it probably conveyed the hint—which doubtless was intended—that he was not to be trifled with. In September he was on his way home to Italy.

The somewhat confused situation which he had left behind him in his haste to follow Pompey into the East had during his absence resolved itself along more or less simple lines. The victory of Pharsalia, decisive though it was, had left much work to be done by his lieutenants. Cornificius had held Illyria against a remnant of the defeated enemy which made good its escape from the battle. Vatinius undertook to secure the command of the Adriatic, and the Pompeian fleet, after a severe reverse, had retired upon North Africa. Since the overthrow of Curio's ill-starred expedition that province had remained unmolested in its allegiance to the Senate; and it now became the inevitable rallying-point of the Republican cause. Scipio and Labienus had crossed over from Greece and made their head-quarters at Utica. Cato and other die-hards, after first sailing east in the wake of Pompey, also found their way thither; and the nucleus of a considerable army was already being formed with the assistance of the Numidian king Juba.

Meanwhile in quarters where Caesar's ascendancy was well assured, the effects of his prolonged absence were disquieting. Quintus Cassius, whom he had left behind to govern Further Spain, was irritating both troops and provincials by his outrageous self-assertion and extortion; and the seeds of insubordination thus sown were later destined to bear an unhappy harvest. In Italy, too, there were symptoms of unrest. Though on the news of Pharsalia the Senate had conferred on Caesar the consulship for five years, unlimited dictatorship and (if one authority is to be trusted) tribunician power for life, the immediate task of domestic administration fell to Marcus Antonius whom Caesar in his dictatorial capacity appointed his Master of Horse. The post proved no sinecure. Financial chaos still reigned. Political adventurers took the opportunity to fish in troubled waters; and in the absence of his chief Antony's authority lacked weight. No sooner had he deposed Caelius, who as praetor had been playing fast and loose with Caesar's debt-laws, than Dolabella

as tribune began to do the same and actually proposed to suspend the payment of rents. Another tribune opposed him and faction fights raged in the city until Antony was at length compelled to intervene with armed force and spill much blood in quelling a riot in the Forum. Worse still, the troops which had been brought back from Thessaly and quartered in Campania were clamouring for their prize-money and their discharge. Antony could do nothing with them; and when towards the end of September (47), Caesar landed at Tarentum, he came not a day too soon.

The scene of his meeting with the mutinous legions is historic. They were in no very pleasant temper; and when he went out to their encampment in the Campus Martius—for they had left Campania for Rome—he did so at some personal risk. But when they crowded round him in confident expectation that he would accede to their requests, it was only to receive the curt reply that they were dismissed the service. The magnetic quality of Caesar's hold over his men was never more convincingly displayed. In an instant they were on their knees imploring him to take them back again; and he relented, well knowing that they might still be needed. A few weeks were devoted to the settlement of financial difficulties which were relieved by liberal measures concerning debt and rent; and then he was ready for the African campaign. Realizing the weariness of his sorely-tried veterans he employed in the main new regiments, and in the last days of 47 he set sail from Lilybaeum where preparations had gone forward, and landed at Hadrumetum, some distance south-east of Utica.

He won no swift or easy victory, for by now the enemy had raised a very large, though heterogeneous, force; and their ally, Juba of Numidia, furnished a powerful cavalry contingent. The food of the country, too, was in their hands, leaving Caesar entirely dependent upon overseas supplies; and though he was able to call in the assistance of two Mauretanian princes as a counterpoise to Juba, he could at first do little more than hold his own. Happily, however, the Pompeian fleet failed to use its opportunity against his communications, and by and by his veteran

troops came over. In spring he marched to attack the town of Thapsus on the eastern side of Utica; and Scipio, who had been appointed the Republican commander-in-chief, moved down to its assistance. Outside the walls of the city took place the decisive battle of the campaign (April 6, 46). The enemy was routed and in the fierce pursuit thousands were butchered, including a large proportion of their leaders. Labienus, Varus and a few others escaped to Spain where we shall hear of them again. Cato, who meanwhile had been left in charge of Utica, despaired of further resistance. With a philosophic composure which befitted his Stoic professions, he first read and then re-read Plato's celebrated dialogue on the immortality of the soul, then drew his sword and stabbed himself mortally in the breast. He was not a great man. His crabbed adherence to the strictest tenets of the Stoic faith made him obstinate, pedantic and unpractical. He made a parade of independence which sometimes took the absurd shape of a quite gratuitous rudeness. He enjoyed shocking public opinion; and, as an exponent of the simple life, went so far as to appear on the judicial bench without either shoes or shirt on. Nevertheless, in an age when all standards and principles were in a state of complete flux, this staunch upholder of the old régime stood like a rock among shifting tides; and his name came to be identified in a unique degree with the Republican cause for which he died; so that freedom-loving Romans of a later epoch looked back with sentimental admiration upon what they regarded almost as his martyrdom.

'The winning cause the Gods espoused, the losing—Cato,' wrote the rebellious young Poet Lucan in the reign of Nero; and that was the typical verdict of posterity.

Caesar was now beyond dispute the master of the world. Yet even so his campaigning days were not quite over. After Thapsus he returned to Rome; and from July to December of 46 he was engaged in initiating that vast work of reform by which he purposed to revive the prosperity and remodel the institutions of his country. But the last remnants of opposition had still to be stamped out. Africa indeed had been cleared, and the Numidian Kingdom of the

rebel Juba was divided up, being in part apportioned to a Roman adventurer named Sittius who had organized a Mauretanian force in the Caesarian interest, and in part reconstituted as a province called New Africa. But meanwhile in Spain, as we have already said, the surviving Pompeian leaders had managed to secure a temporary refuge. The Further Province, as it so happened, was in a restless state. The misgovernment of Quintus Cassius had set every one by the ears. There had been a mutiny among the soldiers; and though Lepidus, the governor of the Nearer Province, had intervened in 47, not even the removal of Cassius had availed to quieten things down. So, when Labienus and Varus arrived in company with Pompey's two sons—Gnaeus and Sextus,—they found revolutionary material ready to their hand. The troops which feared reprisals for the recent mutiny came over to their side. A large force of provincials was enlisted; and many Pompeian veterans who had been set free after their surrender near Ilerda also flocked to the rebel standard. Caesar's lieutenants on the spot proved unable to cope with the rising; and in December of 46 he himself was compelled to leave Rome for the seat of the trouble.

That winter's campaign was of the bitterest. The weather was severe; supplies were hard to come by; and the enemy, with the ruthlessness of despair, committed horrible atrocities which were duly repaid in kind. The fortified cities of the South and West were nearly all in Pompeian hands; and when at length Caesar's successes began to incline the town-folk to his side, it was plain that the end was near. In a desperate effort to decide the issue, the enemy accepted battle at Munda not far from Corduba and were completely overwhelmed. Labienus fell in the fighting. Of the other leaders Sextus Pompeius alone eventually survived. He lived to lead, after Caesar's death, a strangely adventurous career, maintaining himself in Sicily as a sort of pirate chief, preying upon Roman shipping with a strong fleet he had collected, and playing an ingenious hand in the confused politics of the Second Civil War until in 36 he was finally crushed by the young Octavian.

## IV. CAESAR'S REFORMS

The all-powerful dictator who undertook on his return from Africa—and resumed after the interruption of this Spanish campaign—the task of reorganizing the entire fabric of imperial government was a very different man from the consul of 59 whose year of office had proved so singularly barren of genuinely constructive reform. Nor was it merely that the dictator possessed the power which the consul previously had lacked, of carrying his measures through to completion. For, if one thing is more certain than another, it is that the intervening decade of his Gallic command had proved a turning-point in the whole development of Caesar's character. In that development, as we have seen, practice and theory advanced always hand in hand. Action invariably stimulated thought; and the problem of imperial administration which he encountered in governing Gaul must have suggested a wider survey of the manifold problems of his age. At a distance from the capital, too, he was able to review these problems with a detachment which may in some degree account for his extraordinary breadth of vision; and when he came at length to set his hand to the task which he must assuredly have seen to lie ahead of him, he seems to have brought to it a mind already determined on the major issues. On no other hypothesis is it possible to account for the speed of his decisions; and, even so, the amount of work which he accomplished in these few brief months remains astonishing. But Caesar's brain was abnormally active. During his last journey to the Spanish front it is recorded that he found leisure to compose a grammatical treatise, a pamphlet in criticism of Cato, and a poem on the 'Journey' in which he was actually engaged. This intellectual fertility was controlled and strengthened by a disciplined habit of concentration; and though his health was clearly weakened by the strain of incessant campaigning, and he seems himself to have been conscious that he had not long to live, Caesar's creative powers showed no visible deterioration. Fortunately, too, all danger of political obstruction could now be entirely discounted. As dictator he had ample powers for



administrative action. Through the censorial functions which were voted him for life, the composition of the Senate was placed entirely in his hands; so that a House well packed with his chosen partisans was inevitably obsequious; and when he found it convenient, as he often did, to employ either Senate and Assembly as the medium of his legislative reforms, his Bills were invariably accepted as a matter of course.

Most unhappily our knowledge of Caesar's various measures is in many respects fragmentary and is derived from scattered sources. It follows that their chronological sequence must be in part conjectural; but this is of little real consequence; nor need we be at pains to distinguish between reforms belonging to the interval between his African and Spanish campaigns, and those belonging to the subsequent period of seven months which elapsed between his return to the capital in September (45) and his death in March (44).

It was significant of the precision and thoroughness of Caesar's whole mental outlook that one of his first reforms was a reorganization of the Roman Calendar. The ancient system, based on the religious tradition of an agricultural and unscientific people, was clumsy in the extreme. By its reckoning the year consisted of twelve lunar months, totalling 355 days; and the discrepancy between this and the true solar cycle was rectified by the intercalation of an extra month at the end of February in every second year—a correction which, however, still left the reckoning faulty and required from time to time a further readjustment by the College of Pontiffs. The pontiffs of late years had neglected their duty. Endless confusion had arisen; and so serious was the dislocation of business that some drastic change was called for. So Caesar invoked the assistance of Sosigenes, a Greek astronomer of Alexandria; and the result was a reformed calendar, which, with a slight modification introduced by Pope Gregory in 1582, survives to the present day. Amongst other changes the official year which previously had begun with March henceforward began with January; and the seventh month which under the old system had been called Quintilis, and in which he himself was born,

was subsequently rechristened in Caesar's honour with the name which it now bears.

Such a reform was no doubt trifling ; but the same instinct for systematization which inspired it was now to be applied in more important fields ; and it was equally characteristic of Caesar's other measures that instead of tinkering with what was past repair, he sought always to strike at the very root of the mischief. One of the most urgent needs of the day, as we have frequently insisted, was to restore a healthy tone to the demoralized society of Rome itself—the luxurious spendthrifts of the ruling caste no less than the pampered idlers of the proletariat. The self-indulgence of the rich has baffled most reformers and Caesar was not in this respect more successful than the rest. He adopted an expedient—common enough in ancient times—of promulgating sumptuary laws. Strict limitations were set upon ostentatious attire, upon the cost of funerals and above all upon the epicure's dining-table. Market inspectors were even appointed to confiscate prohibited delicacies ; but, as is commonly the fate of such measures, the legislation very soon became a dead letter.<sup>1</sup> Meanwhile the abuses of the corn-dole called for more thoroughgoing treatment. From a return supplied by the tenement landlords, Caesar ascertained that no less than 320,000 persons were in receipt of free allowances. He at once cut down the number to 150,000, which in future was to be regarded as a statutory limit, vacancies caused by death being filled up by the praetors, no doubt upon proof of genuine need.

But such a system of poor-relief, though doubtless necessary if starvation was to be avoided, was no real cure for Rome's deep-seated malady ; and recognizing that a more radical solution must be sought in genuinely constructive measures, Caesar endeavoured in various ways to furnish productive

<sup>1</sup> Another of Caesar's enactments, which forbade citizens between the ages of twenty and forty to absent themselves from Italy, was presumably aimed against a restless habit of travel, and in particular, of travel to what he may have considered the demoralizing centres of Hellenistic culture. Strict attention to public duties at home was more desirable than superficial study at Rhodes or Alexandria.

occupation for the surplus populace. In the first place, within the capital itself he planned an ambitious scheme of new construction. During his governorship of Gaul, a new Basilica had been completed through his munificence on the south side of the Forum; and now there was to be a new Senate House, a Temple of Mars, a theatre on the side of the Capitoline Hill, and some public libraries. A portion of the Tiber which was liable to overflow its banks was to be recanalized; and the Campus Martius given over to an extensive building scheme. All these works, had Caesar lived to carry them out, would have employed a huge army of labourers; and outside the city other operations were in contemplation for the draining of the valuable Pomptine marsh lands and of the Fucine Lake.

For, in the second place, it was an even more important part of Caesar's purpose to revive Italian agriculture. He found farms for his veterans partly upon estates confiscated from his late political enemies, partly by legitimate purchase and always, so far as we can judge, without violating the rights of existing ownership. Furthermore, to encourage the employment of free labour, he enacted that on ranches one citizen should be engaged for every two slave-herdsmen. Nevertheless, in the light of past experience, it is difficult to suppose that Italian farming could prosper greatly in the face of overseas competition; and, though Caesar may have hoped to assist home-growers somewhat by his reimposition of the 5 per cent. duty on imports, it is clear that he did not pin his faith on an agrarian revival alone. His third expedient therefore looked not so much to Italy as to the Empire as a whole. With comprehensive breadth of vision he saw that trade was the foundation on which imperial prosperity must be built; and like Caius Gracchus before him, he realized that Rome's active co-operation in the commercial organism must take the place of fiscal plunder and financial exploitation. It was with this end in view that he arranged not merely for a deepening of the harbour-basin at Ostia, but also for the digging of a ship-canal through the Isthmus of Corinth. Next, colonization was planned on a vast scale. In part, no doubt, its purpose was to relieve the congested

population of Rome and Italy ; but it is abundantly clear that the settlements which he arranged and which are said to have furnished homes for some 80,000 persons, were planted for the most part on sites commercially advantageous. Corinth, for instance, was resettled with freedmen, drawn from Rome and for the most part, doubtless, of Hellenic origin. Carthage was to be rebuilt ; and many other colonies were founded, ranging from Tarraco and Hispalis (or Seville) in Spain, to Heraclea and Sinope on the southern shore of the Black Sea. Meanwhile veteran legionaries were given allotments at Narbo and Arles in Southern Gaul. Other settlements were to be planted in Africa. Nor did even the death of the promoter prevent this vast scheme of emigration from being largely carried out.

It was no doubt an important purpose of such outposts that they should serve, as the old citizen or Latin colonies had served in Italy, to promote the Romanization of the districts in which they were planted. Certainly it was an essential part of Caesar's whole conception to knit the Empire together in the bonds of a political unity ; and, as in Italy during the time of the Republic, so in the Empire, too, the process of Romanization was to be accompanied by a progressive extension of the franchise. Individual grants of citizenship Caesar liberally bestowed where merit met his eye. Gauls, Spaniards and even freedmen's sons were drafted into the Senate itself ; and doctors, teachers and other professional foreigners whose services to culture had won his approbation, were singled out for special favours. But it was, above all, by the enfranchisement of provincial communities that he sought to achieve his end.

Many Spanish towns which had embraced his cause during the campaign of Munda, and probably all the towns of the old Transalpine Province, received a grant of full citizen rights. Sicilian towns meanwhile were given the half-franchise or so-called ' Latin ' rights, and there can be little doubt that this was regarded as a step towards the complete privilege. His premature death, it is true, cut short all Caesar's plans ; but if we are at all able to gauge his ultimate intention, it would seem that the Empire was gradually to

be converted into a homogeneous whole ; and Roman rights and Roman institutions were to be spread outwards to the dependencies as these in due course might show themselves deserving of promotion.

In the light of such a possibility it is a peculiarly fortunate accident which has preserved for us one detailed example of Caesar's urban legislation. In 1732 a brass tablet was unearthed at Heraclea in South Italy which almost unquestionably dates from the period of his dictatorship. Among its curiously miscellaneous contents—for some of its clauses deal with the control of traffic and the upkeep of streets at the capital itself—there are included regulations for the local self-government of other towns. One clause provides for a census of free inhabitants on the same basis as the census held at Rome. Another defines the qualifications for holding municipal office or serving in the municipal senate. A third allows for the amendment of the municipal statutes after a stated interval and presumably in harmony with the statutes operative at Rome. The obvious conclusion to be drawn from the *Lex Julia Municipalis*—as the tablet is commonly called—would appear to be that the institutions of the imperial city were to be made the model for Italian towns at any rate and almost certainly for provincial towns as well. The charter of a Caesarian colony founded at Urso in South Spain reveals, it is true, a not unnatural divergence, in that freedmen were here to be admitted to the local magistracies ; but such an adaptation to provincial conditions is, after all, an additional evidence of Caesar's desire to assimilate the native population to the citizen-body proper ; and it is almost impossible to doubt that a cautious but steady advance towards political unification would have been the guiding principle of his imperial policy. What at any rate seems clear is that he viewed the provinces no longer as mere vassals of Rome's rule, but in some real sense as partners of the Roman Commonwealth. It is evidence of his good will that in Asia Minor, and almost certainly in Sicily too, he abolished the old bad system of tax farming by fixing their liabilities at a lump sum in lieu of tithe ; and it would seem further that as a prelude to a complete fiscal reorganization,

he made preliminary arrangements for a general census of provincial properties and populations—a measure which Augustus was destined eventually to carry out.

Knowing as we ourselves do the subsequent history of the Principate, we must of course beware of reading back into Caesar's first hasty improvisations either motives or principles which in reality belong to the more mature stages of its development. Nevertheless, when we consider the actual trend and probable intention of his various policies, it is scarcely possible to escape the conclusion that in almost every sphere his mind was moving along lines which, even if neglected by his more immediate successors, were sooner or later adopted by Emperors of a subsequent age. Thus, in the matter of the legal code—to take a further example—he was not, it would seem, content merely to supplement existing statutes, as he did, for instance, by strengthening the penalties for treasonable violence or prohibiting the formation of the much-abused workmen's clubs. There is evidence for supposing that he intended to go much further than this and that he had it in mind to overhaul completely the cumbersome and antiquated code which, formed as it had been by an age-long accumulation of laws and precedents sometimes contradictory and frequently overlapping, stood greatly in need of scientific revision and co-ordination. But he did not live to carry out the project; and, urgent though the need was, no adequate attempt was made to meet it until the famous Digest of Justinian was drawn up over five centuries later.

But, be that as it may, there was one vital respect in which, above all others, the statesmanship of Caesar served to determine the future character of the Imperial system. For it established an autocracy naked and undisguised, unequivocally concentrating all reins of government in the hands of a single man; and though Augustus, warned by its temporary failure, made the experiment of sharing his responsibilities with the Senate, this so-called dyarchy proved so unworkable that both he and his successors were more and more driven to revert to the example of Caesar's absolutism. True, the powers which Caesar himself assumed were due in the first instance more to practical necessity

than to any constitutional theory; but they were not for that the less complete. It is impossible to exaggerate the revolutionary character of the change. Though the Republican régime was never formally repealed and its ancient institutions were for the most part outwardly observed, its essential spirit—the spirit of freedom—was dead. The sovereign authority had passed away for ever from the *Populus Romanus*; and henceforward, in fact if not as yet in theory, the ultimate appeal in all things was to 'Caesar's judgement-seat'. We have already shown how the legislative functions of both Senate and Assembly had been reduced to a mere formality. Though the *comitia* still voted for the election of annual magistrates, Caesar's 'commendation' of candidates permitted no real liberty of choice. He appointed men, moreover, at his own discretion to provincial and other posts; and his promotions were often made with complete disregard for the traditional sequence of offices. The actual constitutional titles under which he chose to veil his wholly unconstitutional power were not really of much consequence except as a concession to the Romans' innate passion for political formalism. After rejecting the Senate's offer of a ten-years' consulship—which he apparently regarded as too cramping an adherence to Republican precedents—he accepted a life-tenure of the dictatorship with full censorial and tribunician powers; and what perhaps was most important of all, proconsular authority throughout the Empire.

This last function was in reality the keystone of Caesar's whole position. For it gave him control over the military forces of the State; and, just as he had won his way to power as commander of the legions, so it was as commander of the legions—the 'Imperator' as the Senate obligingly designated him<sup>1</sup>—that he continued to exercise it. Nor can there be much doubt that Caesar's own conception of his sovereignty was based in some degree upon the model

<sup>1</sup> 'Imperator', originally a title given by the soldiers to their general after a victorious engagement, seems now to have taken on the meaning of 'wielder of the *Imperium*' or holder of chief executive authority.

of those military despotisms which were so striking a feature in the history of the East. The rumour, sedulously exploited by his detractors, that he intended to take the title of 'Rex', is most significant. For Caesar must have known well enough how utterly repugnant was such a title to the Roman mind; and if, as is probable, the rumour was not ill-founded, it would seem that he meant to adopt it first in the Eastern provinces rather than within Italy itself. It may well be that the example of Alexander, whose career he very greatly admired, appealed to him as a suitable precedent to follow. For, after all, nearly one-half of the Empire over which he himself was to rule consisted of Levantine countries which had once been a part of Alexander's Empire, and in many of which a military despotism was the only form of government that the inhabitants really understood. What seems certain is that Caesar's eyes were closely fixed upon the East, and that, while hastening on his plans for the settlement of the West, he was all the time preparing for a gigantic expedition of Mesopotamian conquest. The problem of the Imperial frontiers was evidently much in his mind. There is some evidence that he entertained a project—by no means unnatural in the conqueror of Gaul—of pushing forward the European boundary to the line of the Danube and beyond the Rhine. Meanwhile, whatever may have been his eventual programme, we know that at the beginning of 44, he was mobilizing an unprecedented force of sixteen legions and that later in that year he was planning to set out for a campaign against Parthia. Some think that he intended to remain for many years in the East; and making Alexandria or even Troy (which was now to be rebuilt) his more or less permanent head-quarters, to rule there with a pomp and majesty such as might well befit his new conception of world-monarchy, but would very ill consort with the freedom-loving atmosphere of the old imperial capital.

How far a certain element of megalomania was beginning to reveal itself in Caesar's plans, we can scarcely gauge with any certainty, for the simple reason that those plans never matured. There is one circumstance, however, which, to our modern eyes at least, must suggest that the experience



of universal power was in some degree disturbing the balance of his judgement—his desire to be regarded as a god in his own lifetime. Now, little though we ourselves can ever really appreciate the attitude of the ancient world towards such a claim, there are yet one or two considerations which must be borne in mind. In the first place, among Mediterranean peoples and more especially among Levantine peoples, there was a widely held belief that in some sense or other the divine might find a habitation not merely in the heroes of legendary belief, but in the actual flesh and blood of living personages. Thus the Ptolemaic Kings, for instance, were regarded as gods by virtue of their royal office; and Alexander, seeking to exploit the superstitious reverence which the world of his day accorded to phenomenal success, demanded divine honours from even his Greek subjects. In Italy, too, we must remember that the border-line between natural and supernatural was very ill-defined. From the earliest times the 'numen' of the deity had been conceived as dwelling in material objects; and in the domestic cult of every family the father, besides officiating as priest, was looked upon as the personification of the 'Genius' of the home. This idea that a human being could represent in his own person the 'Genius' of family or race was destined to play an important part in the later development of Empire Worship; and it was no doubt with a view to enhancing the dignity of his house that Caesar undertook to erect a temple to 'Venus Genetrix', who as mother of Aeneas and so grandmother of Iulus, the traditional ancestor of the Julian gens, might be held to have transmitted some portion of her divinity to her descendants. But Caesar went further than this. He allowed one image of himself to be carried in procession along with the statues of the other gods. He had a second placed in the shrine of Quirinus (or Romulus), the deified founder of the Roman race. In planning the construction of his residence on the Palatine Hill, he arranged that it should carry a pediment or gabled front, which was the recognized feature of religious architecture. Finally, if one ancient authority is to be trusted, the title of Jupiter Julius was to crown this extraordinary endeavour to pose

as a divine personage among men. It may well be that in such a policy Caesar was consciously following the example of his chosen prototype, Alexander the Great; and from a practical point of view the idea of thus consolidating his supremacy cannot be dismissed as wholly fantastic, when we remember that Augustus was acclaimed a god even by his contemporaries and that nearly all the subsequent emperors were automatically deified at death. As yet, however, Roman society was ill prepared for the acceptance of so unfamiliar a doctrine. The extravagance of Caesar's claim clearly came as a shock to the more conservative minds and the ill-judged haste with which he pressed it must have in some degree accounted for the revulsion of feeling which led to the formation of the fatal conspiracy.

#### V. THE MURDER OF CAESAR

It would clearly be ridiculous to suppose that Caesar's autocracy was generally unpopular at Rome. He was a master of state-craft and from the first had taken considerable pains to placate opposition. Warned by the terrible example of his uncle Marius, he had behaved with singular generosity towards his political opponents. Even Marcellus, who had so flagrantly insulted his protégés of Comum, had escaped a very natural revenge; and though in some cases it had required the advocacy of Cicero to plead the cause of exiled Republicans, Caesar's readiness to let bygones be bygones came as a surprise to his worst enemies. Meanwhile the favour of the urban mob was easily won with the aid of the vast financial resources which his conquests had brought him. After the campaign of Thapsus and again after the crowning victory of Munda he held triumphal celebrations of unprecedented splendour. The spoils of the Gallic and other wars were paraded through the streets; and amongst the captives who followed Caesar's car Vercingetorix marched, clad in black, to his death in the Capitoline dungeon. Largess was distributed with lavish prodigality to every member of the proletariat. Twenty thousand tables were laid for citizen diners. Plays and other spectacles were organized. Wine

flowed freely ; and bullion was brought in wagon-loads for distribution to the veterans of the legions.

But, great as was the enthusiasm which such liberality aroused among the common folk, there remained a small section which could neither forget nor forgive ; and beneath the fulsome adulation with which both Senate and officials approached the man who had destroyed their liberty, a careful observer might have noted an undercurrent of bitter resentment.

Nor, once his power was well established, can Caesar be said to have paid overmuch heed to the susceptibilities of those around him. The heads of his offence were many. In view of the low opinion which most Romans held of foreigners in general and of Levantines in particular, we can well understand the scandal that was caused when Cleopatra arrived at the capital (bringing with her an infant child whose name Caesarion was sufficient indication of its parentage) and was duly installed in Caesar's private house on the Janiculum. There were fresh signs of annoyance when, on the death of a consul on the last day of the year, Caesar appointed one of his nominees to fill the office for the few remaining hours. 'No one lunched while Caninius was consul,' wrote Cicero to a friend, 'but, think this funny or not, it brings one near to tears.' When one day Caesar held an audience of the Senate in the portico of the temple he had built to Venus Genetrix, he received them seated—and once more tongues wagged. Towards the end of January 44, a crowd meeting him on the Appian Way raised the cry of 'King' ; and it did little to mend matters when two tribunes, who arrested the ringleader, were summarily deposed from their office. A fortnight or so later Antony took the famous step—immortalized by Shakespeare—of offering Caesar a crown. He rejected the offer ; but his assumption of a purple robe lent colour to the common talk that King he meant to be. At the same time such efforts to assert a dignity, which during his absence from the capital had not been difficult to maintain, were now in a large measure neutralized by the familiarity of his presence. Even the mob, which was so ready to cheer, was also quite ready to

scoff. Jibes went round about the dictator's baldness ; and a ribald song was sung at the expense of his newly appointed provincial senators :

Caesar led the Gauls in triumph—  
To the Senate House he led—  
So the Gauls took off their trousers,  
And put togas on instead.

Caesar had a sense of humour and could afford to take these pleasantries in good part, but there were other symptoms more serious. Friends told him his life was in danger, yet he resolved to make a gesture and dismissed his bodyguard.

One of the chief problems which he had to meet in establishing his government was the difficulty of finding subordinates whom he could really trust. Most men of decent character or position had taken the Republican side during the Civil War and had suffered either death or disgrace. Of his own followers the greater part were bankrupts or adventurers, men of small repute. So in making his appointments Caesar was often forced to choose between men whom no one respected and men whose loyalty was, to say the least, ambiguous. In one important instance he had preferred the latter alternative. Marcus Junius Brutus belonged to one of the oldest and most highly honoured of Roman families. After Pharsalia he had submitted ; but he was no friend of Caesar's and it was mainly to enlist upon his side of a man of such illustrious and influential standing that Caesar selected him to govern Cisalpine Gaul and there to command the defence force of the Italian frontier. Brutus was of a harsh uncompromising nature. He had married Cato's daughter and, like Cato, was an enthusiastic student of philosophy. As evidence accumulated that the Republic was being destroyed past all prospect of recovery, he began to associate himself with others who worked for Caesar's death. Amongst the confederates were Trebonius, Caesar's governor of Asia, Decimus Brutus, a relative of Marcus, Casca, Cimber, and C. Cassius Longinus, the chief engineer of the plot. Cicero, though not committed or consulted, had expressed his approval of tyrannicide.

On the 15th of March—the famous Ides—a meeting of the Senate had been arranged in a hall adjoining the Pompeian Theatre in the Campus Martius. It was nearly noon when Caesar himself arrived. As he entered, some one placed in his hands a scroll in which was contained full information of the impending plot. The throng about the doors was such that he could not easily unfold the scroll and he passed in with it unread. When he was seated, Cimber approached him with a petition for the recall of an exiled brother, and, as though in supplication, seized his hands. The other accomplices pressed round; and, when Caesar tried to rise, Casca stabbed him in the back. Then all in a frenzied scuffle drove their daggers home. The murdered man wrapped his cloak about his head and fell, pierced by no less than three-and-twenty wounds, at the feet of Pompey's statue.

One fact remains to be recorded. It was unquestionably Caesar's purpose that his autocracy should not die with him. Shortly after his return from his last Spanish campaign he had made a will, the contents of which were not disclosed until after his murder; and by it he bequeathed his name and his vast fortune to a great-nephew Octavius, the grandson of his sister Julia. No doubt he had detected promise in the character of the lad; but Octavius (or Octavianus as he became on entering into his heritage) was barely eighteen years of age at the time of Caesar's death, and physically at least, very far from strong. As it so happened, moreover, he was in Illyria at the moment of the murder engaged upon preparations for the coming Parthian campaign.<sup>1</sup> His life was therefore not threatened by the conspirators and he survived to re-establish, under his more famous title of Augustus, the autocracy which his great-uncle must almost certainly have intended to bequeath to him. The precedent of a hereditary monarchy was not the least contribution which Caesar made to the building up of the Imperial System.

<sup>1</sup> Octavius was apparently to be left behind in Italy as Caesar's 'Master of Horse' or representative during the projected Oriental campaign, and this fact alone makes tolerably clear what Caesar's ultimate intentions were.

## CHAPTER XX

## ROMAN LIFE AND CHARACTER

## I. WOMEN, FREEDMEN AND MYSTERY RELIGIONS

**A**N epoch that witnessed the swift and irretrievable collapse of an ancient political system could hardly fail to bring with it a corresponding change of thought and manners. Indeed, as we have already pointed out in a preceding chapter, the intellectual and moral revolution which resulted from Rome's absorption of Hellenic influences was in a large degree responsible for the changed relation between the individual and the State whereby alone the constitutional revolution was itself made possible. During these years, in fine, it is not too much to say that the Roman character was thrown into the melting-pot; and this fact is of itself enough to endow the period with a more than common interest. It would be a mistake no doubt to attribute to it the same ferment of ideas which went on in Periclean or post-Periclean Athens. For, as is obvious, the ideas which moved the Romans were not original, nor in any case were ideas capable of taking a very profound hold upon their eminently practical minds. Nevertheless, in a time of such insecurity and stress, when the conventional standards of conduct and belief had almost completely broken down, men were more and more compelled to strike out along fresh lines; and it would have been surprising if no new movements of thought or manners had not disclosed themselves. In point of fact, the generations which saw the last of the Republic and the beginning of the Empire displayed a liberality and even an originality of outlook unique in the history of Rome; and in this closing chapter a few words must be said about the social, literary, and other developments of this interesting transitional period.

One such development concerned the status of women. We have already had occasion to remark that the position of women in Italy compared very favourably with that of women in Greece. The traditionally high standards of home life ensured that the Roman's wife should exercise a con-

siderable authority within the family circle; and the influence of high-born ladies over their husbands and their sons unquestionably did much to sweeten the atmosphere of even political life. On the other hand, it must be remembered that in the eyes of the law at any rate, a woman possessed no independent personal status. Indeed, established custom prescribed that throughout her life she must remain under the tutelage of some male. By the very ancient form of religious marriage known as *confarreatio*, a bride passed automatically into the power—or, as the technical phrase was, the *manus*—of her husband; that is to say, he possessed over her an authority so complete that in theory at least he was entitled to put her to death; and even as late as the reign of Nero there was an interesting occasion on which a husband arraigned his wife before an informal court of his friends on the charge of having embraced some unorthodox foreign cult. From very early days, however, there had been alternative forms of marriage involving no religious sanction and imposing on the wife no such complete subjection to her husband's authority. One obvious advantage of these forms lay in the fact that the wife's property, instead of passing into her husband's possession, was retained at her own disposal subject to her father's tutelary powers. After the Punic Wars when so many males were killed, women had frequently become the owners of considerable estates; and owing to a natural reluctance to allow such property to pass out of the family, the non-religious forms of marriage became increasingly popular; and the institution of the *manus* more or less died out.

Marriage, in short, became a mere business contract; for at no period were love-matches the custom at Rome, where the parent's power of disposing of a daughter's hand was by long tradition paramount. So from the second century onwards, when, side by side with this tendency to dispense with religious marriage-ties, the growth of foreign influences produced a relaxation of all moral standards, it was an inevitable consequence that divorces should become increasingly common. No side of social life, indeed, was more discreditable than the callous readiness with which husbands

discarded their wives without apology or pretext. Even Cicero himself, after thirty years of apparently harmonious marriage, divorced Terentia to marry a rich young heiress ; and his only reason seems to have been that during his absence at the time of the Civil War she had been insufficiently attentive to his interests.

But, if women were often treated thus outrageously, it was also a natural consequence of such developments that they more and more tended to assert their own independence ; and so a step was taken, though not perhaps a very salutary step, in the direction of female emancipation. For during the last generation of the Republican era we encounter ladies of good family, such, for instance, as the notorious Clodius's no less notorious sister Clodia, who formed the centre of a 'fast' society, keeping young men, like the poet Catullus, dangling round her and playing fast and loose with their affections at her whim. Wits and scandal-mongers, as well as lovers, were drawn into the circle of such women. Sempronia, the mother of Decimus Brutus, wrote poetry and danced—an accomplishment most ill-suited to the stern old notions of female decorum. Politics were discussed and plots hatched in her *salon*, which included many of Catiline's young satellites. The unwholesome influence of these and other charmers did much to debase the moral and social standards of the day ; and one of the chief problems with which Augustus found himself faced was how to combat the growing licence that their bad example had engendered. Even the imperial household itself was seriously affected ; and under the early emperors the ladies of the court exercised a pernicious influence which in earlier times would have been unthinkable.

Another element in society, though scarcely so prominent, produced an effect perhaps even more undesirable. During the period of Roman expansion, as we have frequently remarked, the population of the Metropolis had steadily grown more mixed and cosmopolitan ; and it now included perhaps 200,000 persons of servile status, a large proportion of whom were either Greeks or Hellenized Orientals indispensable to the financial, educational or cultural activities of a Roman aristocrat's household. For such nimble-witted



folk the process of emancipation or promotion was normally swift ; and many freed-slaves or their sons had quickly risen to positions of some importance. It was not, indeed, until the period of the Early Empire that freedmen were permitted to fill high posts in the government. But we have seen already what dangerous powers were wielded by Sulla's favourite Chrysogonus. The names of such upstarts now begin to appear with greater and greater frequency in the literature of this and of the succeeding period ; and there is ample evidence that they were freely admitted to the social entertainments of the great, at which their ready wit and varied accomplishments were considered a valuable asset.

That a general decline in the standards of propriety and taste inevitably accompanied the advancement of this alien element at Rome, goes indeed without saying. But there was another and in some ways a beneficial result of their presence which deserves special mention here. The spread of Greek culture in Levantine countries had not destroyed, though it had sometimes done much to liberalize, the religious beliefs of their inhabitants. The Jews had not ceased to worship Jehovah or the Egyptians their native gods ; and Jews and Egyptians, when they came to Italy, brought their cults along with them. Of the former, as the evidence of the New Testament proves, there was a considerable community at Rome ; but the general contempt and hatred in which their race was held put a curb on proselytism. With the Egyptians it was otherwise ; and the cult of their goddess Isis made a strong appeal to some Western minds. At a time when the forms and beliefs of the traditional religion were failing to satisfy the needs of men and women sorely perplexed by the miseries and uncertainties of life, this mystical creed of the East seemed to offer a welcome prospect of some surer hope. For proclaiming as it did the immortality of the soul and dictating, however crudely, some expiatory method of relief for the sins of a guilt-ridden conscience, it supplied in some degree those spiritual elements which the orthodox and official creeds of Greece and Rome so strangely lacked.

The mythological background on which this cult was

based centred round the conception of a deity incarnate among men. It told how the goddess Isis wandered in human form through the countries of the world, gathering the fragments of the corpse of her husband Osiris who had been murdered by a wicked brother on account of his love for human kind. To those who were initiated into the mysteries of the cult—by rites of baptism, fasting, and in final climax, by ecstatic vision in the cell of the darkened shrine—it gave the assurance that Osiris would befriend them in the world beyond the grave and deliver them from the clutches of devouring demons. All this was something very different from the imported mythology of Greece, according to which the life of the underworld was at best but a shadowy and comfortless affair, a pitifully pale reflection of the full-blooded activities of earth. True, the appeal of Isis worship was somewhat similar to that of the Eleusinian mysteries which from time to time drew many Romans on pilgrimage to Greece; and its ceremonial was certainly less crude than the wild orgiastic rites of the Great Mother which, as we have seen, had been admitted to a more or less recognized place by the side of Rome's official religion. Nevertheless, when it first made its appearance about the time of Sulla, filtering in, apparently, by way of Puteoli, the chief port of Levantine traffic, the new Egyptian cult soon aroused the suspicion of the authorities by whom secret associations for whatever purpose were always regarded with profound distrust. Women, even of the fashionable class, were attracted in large numbers; and the encouragement thus given to ideas of female licence, and even, it was thought, to downright immorality, was not long allowed to go unchallenged. In 58 the altars which had been set up on the Capitol were officially destroyed. In 53 further action was taken against private attempts to keep the cult alive; and in 50 one of the consuls took a personal hand in the demolition of the forbidden shrines. But in spite of all these persecutions the worship of Isis survived. Under the Empire it grew apace; and at its side appeared other cults from the East, notably that of the Persian Mithras which attained a great vogue among the legionaries. The presence of Orientals and

especially of Jews within the capital itself familiarized the populace to some extent with the more mystical forms of religion; and thus the ground was prepared—as neither Roman orthodoxy nor philosophic speculation could ever have prepared it—for the introduction and propagation of the Christian Faith.

## II. LITERATURE OF THE PERIOD

As even a superficial study of early Christianity will show, it was chiefly, if not exclusively, among the obscurer and poorer classes that these imported religions first won their way. The educated were more inclined to seek guidance or consolation in philosophy, and according to their taste or temperament embraced the tenets of the Epicurean or the Stoic schools. Concerning the steady growth of these and other Hellenic influences at Rome, enough has already been said in a preceding chapter; but it remains here to add something about the literature in which they found expression during the last half-century of the Republican period.

Nothing certainly is more astonishing than the enthusiasm with which the Romans, once the least literary of peoples, took to writing. Most of the leading men appear to have tried their hand at it. Many were virtually bilingual; and Lucullus, we are told, once undertook for a jest to compose a history of the Marsi in Greek or Latin verse according as a cast of lots should determine. The potentialities of the native tongue, as a vehicle of expression, were very quickly developed; and to judge by the few extant letters of Cicero's correspondents, the standard of style was high. This is the more remarkable, since most of the writers were men of affairs rather than students proper; and professional authors, such as were Horace, Vergil, or Ovid at a later epoch, were still comparatively rare. On the whole, therefore, it was characteristic of the period that men wrote primarily because they had something which they wished to say rather than because they merely wished to write; and compared with the studied lucubrations of the Imperial epoch, the Republican literature is fresh in ideas and spontaneous in expression.

Not the least notable example of these qualities was the great masterpiece of Lucretius (97–53 B.C.), ‘De Rerum Natura’, or as we might say, ‘On the Universe’. Never perhaps was more unpromising material moulded, or rather transmuted, into poetry. To explain on Epicurean principles the atomic composition of all existence and hence to establish the certainty that souls no less than bodies must be dissolved at death, such was the bare outline of the argument whereby Lucretius sought to expose what appeared to him the disastrous illusions of religious belief. Occasional crabbed and even cacophonous passages are the inevitable result of this attempt to express in hexameter verse ideas more properly appropriate to a scientific handbook. But the similes, analogies and other descriptive interludes by which such ideas are illustrated or reinforced, serve to flood the poem with a quality of beauty so astonishingly vivid and romantic that one feels much of it might well have been written but yesterday. Lucretius’s picture of sheep ‘cropping the dew-spangled turf on the hill-side’, of happy laughing rustics making their picnic meal under a tree beside the stream, or of the jealous lover who detects on his mistress’s lips the dying smile that was meant for another—all these leave an unforgettable impression on the mind of the reader.<sup>1</sup> But most of all does he reach the heights of poetic inspiration when, with the triumphant conviction of his strange philosophy, he pours scorn on the pitiful delusions of mankind who shrink in baseless and craven superstition from the peaceful oblivion of the grave,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mr. E. V. Rieu’s little *Book of Latin Poetry* (Methuen) gives an excellent selection of the best passages of Lucretius and other poets.

<sup>2</sup> This passage translated into English hexameters may illustrate:  
Wherefore man made shift to ascribe unto Gods the dominion  
Over all things create. Then said he, Their seat is in Heaven;  
For that in Heaven he saw the Sun to roll and the Moon roll,  
Moon, Day, Night, and Stars in the night, grim Constellations,  
Flames in the night-sky wandering, and wingéd fiery cressets,  
Cloud-wrack and Sunshine, Snow, Rain, Hailstorm, Whirlwind and  
Thunder,

Crash of the rending bolt and muffled moan of the Tempest.  
Woe for the pitiful sorrows of man who herein hath discernéd  
God’s hand, and tokens withal, saith he, of a baleful displeasure.

or when he describes the sublime serenity of the seer's vision in which 'the soul's terrors flee away and the walls of the world roll back', and the reality of all things in heaven and earth and under the earth are laid open to the view. Beside the relentless march and solemn splendour of these passionate outpourings in which every word still vibrates with the vehement earnestness of their first utterance, even the melodious cadences of Vergil's verse are apt to sound a trifle artificial and unreal.

Though it seems a very far cry from this grim prophet of pessimism to his worldly young contemporary Catullus (87-54), yet there is something equally refreshing, though of course infinitely less serious, about the sweet and simple sincerity of the latter's lyrics. Catullus's life was not perhaps a very reputable one; and he wasted much misplaced affection on the notorious Clodia, the 'Lesbia' of his poems; but when he set pen to paper, sheer beauty was the result, and a beauty so natural and unaffected that all later Latin love-poetry seems laboured by comparison. No writer, certainly, of any age ever surpassed the playful tenderness of the elegy on his mistress's Dead Sparrow, or the wistful pathos of his 'Hail and Farewell' composed after a visit to his brother's grave-side in the distant Troad, or this delightful picture of the lovers' reckless bliss<sup>1</sup>—

Let us live, Lesbia, and let us love;  
Nor care one straw how others lend an ear  
To old men's gloomy gossiping. Above  
The suns may set and rise again. But here,  
When our brief day is over and night come,  
'Twill be a long, long slumber in the tomb.

So give me, dear, a thousand kisses blest,  
A hundred more, another thousand yet.  
Then, when our lips ten myriad times have pressed,  
We will confuse their number and forget,  
Lest we should count or others envious grow  
To see how kisses in such plenty blow.

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<sup>1</sup> Translation by J. Banbury.

In Catullus, as in Lucretius, we feel indeed that the true Italian genius was bursting at last from its sheath of Hellenic pupildom into a blossom of rare native loveliness. True, Lucretius borrowed his ideas and Catullus his metres from the Greek; but the magic of their artistry lies in something peculiar to the Latin tongue. Not merely are they both complete masters of their medium, but they express their ideas and feelings with a spontaneous freedom which no subsequent poet was quite able to recapture. For with the passing of the Republic there comes a change, bringing with it a sense of constraint, one might almost say of repression. It is as when a stream gushing and sparkling in its earlier reaches, falls into the more deliberate and unadventurous course of a well-canalized river.

In prose the development during this period was equally remarkable; and here, too, it is first to be noted that much of the work done had a practical rather than a literary aim as its primary intention. Thus the celebrated scholar Varro (116-27 B.C.) who, as we have seen, took a prominent part in affairs during the Civil War, wrote an important treatise on Agriculture. His main interest, however, was in history, and he left a book of forty-one volumes on Roman Antiquities, besides a treatise on the Latin Language which is our earliest extant authority on its grammar. Biographies and memoirs were common. Leading men, like Sulla, were anxious to leave a reliable account of their achievements; and there was, as has been said, a political motive behind Caesar's compilation of his Gallic Commentaries as well as of his Civil War. The strictly practical spirit in which he undertook the task was highly characteristic of the national genius, and thus served to produce a style which, perhaps more than any other, displayed the essential qualities of the national tongue. It is a model of restrained, direct and lucid statement, in which a severe economy of phrase, coupled with a unique mastery of logical arrangement, endow even its bald narrative with an admirable sense of strength and purpose. For a more deliberately artistic but less convincing style we must go to Caesar's contemporary and protégé, the historian Sallust (86-35 B.C.). He, too, played a

part in politics, and wrote largely with a view to exposing on the one hand the weakness of the senatorial rule in his 'Jugurthine War', and on the other hand to defending Caesar's reputation in his 'Catilinarian Conspiracy'. Against his undoubted tendency to place effect before accuracy must be set a very remarkable gift for brilliant epigram and lively variety of construction which exercised a considerable influence on Tacitus and other later writers.

Now, while narrative style was thus wavering between straightforward simplicity and a more studied artistry, the exponents of rhetoric were similarly divided. Some who in the popular Assembly had chiefly to deal with the limited intelligence of the proletariat, tended towards imitation of the unadorned severity of such famous Attic speech-writers as Lysias. Others who, like Cicero's rival Hortensius, practised before the educated jurors of the upper class, held by the more florid Asiatic model which was taught in the Rhodian schools of oratory. In these schools Cicero himself studied; but in politics, as we know, he was anxious to hold the balance between the two opposing parties; and so too, when his style was formed, it struck a judicious mean between the two extremes, avoiding the dry severity of the one, but allowing only so much of the verbosity of the other as would serve to amplify and modulate the flow of his sentences. No more powerful instrument of rhetorical appeal was ever devised than the Ciceronian period. To read or, better still (even in our hybrid pronunciation), to hear the steady rise and fall of its resounding cadences, as it moves forward with the smooth accuracy of a machine to the nicely calculated rhythm of its triumphant close, is to realize that in this field at least the Latin language stands supreme. Cicero lacked, indeed, the sincerity and depth of feeling which we find in Demosthenes; but the scope of his appeal is far more various, and he could play on the emotions of a mob or a jury with pathos or sarcasm or whatever sentiment he pleased. It was the same width of compass, in the range of his interests no less than in the variety of his expression, which made him the inimitable letter-writer that he was; and behind all one is conscious of a

personality, if not perhaps in the highest sense great, yet singularly genuine, refined and lovable. Take him for all in all, his standards of duty, friendship, kindness and public spirit are scarcely to be distinguished from those which we should call a gentleman's—in many respects, one is almost tempted to add, a Christian gentleman's. Few certainly in the ancient world strove more persistently to found their daily conduct on a reasoned view of life; and, though not a really original thinker, Cicero did much to bring the best principles of Greek philosophy into line with the practical problems of a Roman citizen's life. After his retirement from politics, he wrote numerous treatises on 'Conduct (de Officiis), on Religion (de Natura Deorum), on Friendship (de Amicitia), and other kindred subjects. Though, strictly speaking, he belonged to the sceptical school of thought which took its name from the New Academy at Athens, and which denied that any existing system had arrived at absolute truth, he nevertheless held himself free to rank one theory as more *probable* than another and inclined, if anything, to the Stoic view of life. In his self-appointed task of interpreting Greek thought for Roman minds, he certainly succeeded brilliantly; and in the process he evolved a precise and formal terminology such as the Latin tongue had not hitherto possessed, and which was destined to form a basis for the work of subsequent philosophers. Thus Cicero's rôle, as well in language as in thought, was to remodel the heritage which Rome had received from Greece into something essentially Roman in its quality; and he may be held to represent, as did perhaps no other single man, the cultural union of the two racial characters, blending the intellectual agility of the Hellene with the moral earnestness of the native Italian stock. Henceforward the Roman mind was to run no longer in leading-strings. It had attained to the independence of maturity.

### III. ARCHITECTURE OF THE PERIOD

Apart from her literature and her institutions perhaps the most enduring monument of Rome's greatness lay in her architecture; and before concluding our survey of the Repub-



lican epoch, it will be well to say something on this head, and incidentally on the home and daily life of the average citizen.

With the rapid increase of its population, the city itself had of course increased in area. Caesar, we know, was contemplating an extension of the official boundary or *pomerium*; and on the evidence of some regulations he made about the repair of roads it seems certain that building had by now crept out along the more important highways for a mile or so outside the actual walls. In spite of this the state of congestion inside must still have been extremely unwholesome where the poverty-stricken masses were abominably housed in the great tenements or *insulae* run up by capitalist landlords in the low-lying and less desirable districts. The residences of the rich stood for the most part on higher ground. The Palatine was an aristocratic quarter. Pompey, Quintus, the brother of Cicero, and Atticus his friend had houses on the adjacent eminence known as the Carinae; and the Esquiline was soon to be popularized by Maecenas who there laid out a mansion and a garden beyond the circuit of the old Servian vallum. More and more, meanwhile, as the importance of Rome grew, the complexity and bustle of life grew with it. The mere mechanical task of feeding the swollen population was tremendous; and by Caesar's time the traffic nuisance had become so serious that he prohibited the passage of wagons through the streets at night. For the aristocracy, at any rate, the pressure of the daily round became increasingly exacting. For, though interest in politics declined and attendance to public duties was notoriously slack, social and other claims were numerous. At dawn a crowd of callers, composed chiefly of lower-class 'clients' or dependents, would gather round the rich man's door, and much time was spent in giving these an audience. His forenoon was spent in the Forum, where, if free from senatorial or other official duties, he would transact financial business, pick up the gossip of the day and, if, as was common, he practised as an advocate, plead in the courts. Very often such activities engrossed much of the afternoon as well; so that it became the fashion to take a hurried lunch and siesta about the

middle of the day and postpone the chief meal or *cena* until three o'clock or later. A bath and some exercise were generally considered the indispensable prelude; and a hearty appetite was certainly needed to do justice to the extremely substantial fare. For the upper-class Roman was a heavy and too frequently a gross eater, in this noticeably differing from the more abstemious Greek. The absence of good lighting arrangements encouraged an early bedtime; but the more educated, if not given to deep drinking, enjoyed the opportunity of conversation; and a continuous round of dinners made some call on the intellectual powers as well as on digestions. Amid these varied occupations, too, such men as Cicero found time for much writing and reading; and, though to the modern notions the day's routine may not appear particularly arduous, many certainly found it so; and the chance of an occasional escape was welcomed by those who could afford the luxury of keeping a country-house. Cicero possessed half a dozen villas in various parts of Italy; and he often writes to friends residing in the neighbourhood of Naples which was already becoming a favourite resort of the aristocracy. A growing attention to domestic comfort was symptomatic of the times; and in these country-seats, even more than in town-houses (where space was naturally precious), there was a tendency to cater for every need. Rooms were provided for siesta and retirement and galleries for walking in sun or shade; and, though heating arrangements were as yet almost unknown, bathrooms were often attached to the more important houses. The furniture and decoration of the rooms was increasingly elaborate. Frescoed walls were popular and acquaintance with Hellenic art encouraged a taste for collecting *objets d'art*. Copies of famous statues were much in demand; and there was an abundant supply of Greek craftsmen who readily emigrated to Italy from Alexandria or elsewhere. For the graphic or plastic arts Rome could, therefore, rely on foreign labour, so that not merely was little native skill at any time developed, but the absence of any real aesthetic sensibility among the patrons led to a sad deterioration of workmanship among the copyists, whose hasty and slipshod methods have given us for the

most part mere vulgar travesties of the exquisite originals. Most architects, too, were almost certainly drawn from Hellenistic centres ; but, though as was natural, they brought their style along with them, the buildings they set in Rome assumed, as we shall see, a type increasingly distinctive of Roman taste and character.

The last epoch of the Republic showed a marked renewal of activity in the construction of public monuments. Sulla had large ideas ; and with the vast resources he had acquired in his eastern campaigns, he undertook to inaugurate, in fitting fashion, the new era which he believed himself to be founding. His main work was the restoration of the Temple of Jove on the Capitoline Hill. During the riotous days of the Marian anarchy the quaint old Etruscan building of the Tarquins which was largely made of wood, had fallen a prey to fire ; and on its site was now erected a far more splendid edifice in which marbles brought from Attica were employed with great decorative effect. Sulla's knowledge of Greece had familiarized him with the achievements of Hellenic and Hellenistic architects ; and under his instructions the styles which they employed were freely adapted to the needs of Rome. Besides various temples which he caused to be erected in other parts of the city, he built on the slopes of the Capitol overlooking the Forum an enormous block—still extant—which was designed to hold the public records and other official documents, and was known as the Tabularium ; and in this he employed the device of arched colonnades, adorned with engaged columns of the foliated Corinthian order.

Sulla's example set a precedent for other victorious generals ; and Pompey utilized the spoils of his Oriental conquests to construct a temple, and a theatre in the Campus Martius. But all these achievements paled into insignificance before the splendour of Caesar's conceptions. To his successor Augustus belongs, it is true, the chief credit of having changed the face of Rome ; but for this, as for much else, Augustus was greatly indebted to the inspiration of his uncle's initiative. Caesar's building operations were actually begun while he was still in Gaul, no doubt with a view to

keeping himself well before the public eye ; and when the Civil War was over, they were of course carried on towards completion. Of his improvements in the Forum—the building of a new Basilica and a new Senate House—we have already spoken ; but their importance was no more than secondary to his principal design. Seeing that the Forum was inconveniently small and in other ways undesirable as the meeting-place of the turbulent Comitia Tributa, he contemplated its removal to the Campus Martius where, in point of fact, the old-fashioned Centuriate had always been accustomed to meet. From one of Cicero's letters we have an interesting reference to the scale of the reconstruction thus involved. A marble-roofed enclosure was to be erected for the Tribes and to be surrounded by a lofty colonnade a mile from end to end ; and the cost of the whole scheme was estimated at a figure equivalent roughly to six hundred thousand pounds. With a view to making a more convenient and more dignified passage between the Forum and the Campus, Caesar further proceeded to purchase and demolish the house-property on the north side of the Capitol and the Curia, and in the space thus cleared to lay out an open square or Forum flanked on three sides by pillared porticoes, in the centre of which stood his temple dedicated to Venus Genetrix. Several of the later emperors followed Caesar's example in constructing similar Forums in other parts of the city ; and such systematic planning, though imitated in the first instance from Hellenistic cities, became henceforth an integral feature of the Roman builders' method. With the architectural developments of the final Republican epoch the type was, in fact, set for the succeeding centuries. The style employed, though Greek in its essential forms, took on a distinctive character of its own. The three traditional orders—Doric, Ionic and Corinthian—were used in various combinations and often more for decorative than for genuinely constructive purposes. Rough stone or even brick was the normal material, marble being principally utilized as a veneer ; and, as time went on, the employment of concrete (which in Republican times is found in the roofed colonnades of the Tabularium) facilitated the

erection of those soaring vaults which are the crown and glory of the Empire's noblest masterpieces. The carved detail, as was but natural, was very much more coarse than the exquisite craftsmanship of Greece; and the fact that Roman builders aimed chiefly at a general effect of dignified mass and solid masonry was wholly in keeping with the peculiar genius of the national character. The enduring quality of their handiwork—as of their institutions—has stood the test of time; and in almost every country where the Roman set his foot the architectural monuments he left behind still bear triumphant witness to his virile energy and patient constructive skill.

#### IV. THE ROMAN CHARACTER

During this transitional period, therefore, we may say in conclusion, the national character, though profoundly modified was, not fundamentally changed. The Roman, when Hellenized, remained the Roman still. His debt to the new culture was, it is true, incalculable; and without the intellectual stimulus and discipline which Greece opportunely supplied, he would have lacked the mental equipment whereby alone he was enabled to govern successfully the Mediterranean World. Yet had he, on the other hand, been ready to sink his distinctively Roman qualities and become, as it were, a Greek, then it seems equally certain that he never could have held it. For, as history had proved not once but many times, the Greeks were too volatile, too critical of their own institutions, too distrustful of one another, to keep an empire long together. Even the political development of their individual states was chequered by recurrent crises of revolutionary change. For them it was impossible to exist without experimenting; and their experiments were for the most part radical, involving sudden alternations between oligarchy and democracy and even despotism. How widely different was the Romans' way! Uncritical and unimaginative, they plodded forward with deliberate caution, accepting change indeed when new conditions either within or without might force such change upon them, but always preferring compromise to any violent break with the past,

and so building up on the old foundations, as it were, a patchwork edifice, in which practical convenience rather than preconceived theory dictated the successive additions.

It was then the peculiar genius of the Roman people that they could thus adapt themselves to new circumstances or absorb the ideas which they received from others, without in any way losing their own identity. The Republic remained essentially the same Republic, through all the vicissitudes of oligarchic or democratic preponderance. The Empire remained essentially the *Roman* Empire, even when its citizen-body had been extended to include the men of every race, Spaniards and Britons no less than Macedonians or Jews. So too, as we have seen, having taken from Greece her styles of writing and building, the Romans were able to evolve from these a literature and an architecture essentially their own. But, what was still more important, though they experienced to the full the disturbing and disintegrating influence of her critical philosophies, their morale was not fatally undermined and in the coming era, along with much that was brutal, coarse and unpleasing in their character, they preserved also in large measure those same sterling qualities which had been responsible for their greatness in the past. They retained, for instance, their extraordinary tenacity which, through all the strain and stress of their internal dissensions, had never allowed them to lose either a war or a province. They retained their high tradition of disciplined loyalty to the common weal, so that even under a Caligula or a Nero, the Empire somehow held together. They retained, too, in relation to the subjects of that Empire, their unusual capacity for tactful adjustment and their willingness to live and let live.

Such an attitude of tolerance—due partly perhaps to a certain mental inertia, partly to a nice knack of adaptability, and partly to a just appreciation of the rights of man—had the effect of making them incomparable rulers. No other race in history has understood so well the handling of conquered peoples; and, while they knew how to refrain from needless interference, the Romans knew also how to impose upon even the most refractory the systematic orderliness of

their own national institutions. From the cultural civilization which they received from Greece and which they in their turn passed on to the provinces of the West, those institutions gained indeed a new precision and coherence ; but when all is said, it was *the Roman faculty for organizing life*, far more than the Hellenic subtlety of thought and taste, which served to transform for ever the destinies of Europe. For, if to Greece we owe in a large measure our artistic and literary forms, our methods of reasoning and, in the last resort, our science, the influence of Rome's political and legal codes—to say nothing of her language, her engineering and her architecture—may be traced on every hand. So our debt to the *aesthetic and theoretic* genius of the one ancient people is balanced or rather supplemented by our even greater debt to the *practical* genius of the other ; and in no sphere perhaps is the contrast between their respective contributions more significantly displayed than in the evolution of the Christian Church. The theological conceptions of the Church's creed were formulated and clarified by processes of thought derived directly or indirectly from the logical systems of Greek philosophy. But the ecclesiastical organization which gave to Christianity at once its unity and its permanence was unquestionably the outcome of the Roman people's political experience ; for it was modelled upon the machinery of government to which, on the failure of the Republic, that experience had finally led them.

In sum, through all the history of Europe's past and present, the twin threads of our classical inheritance are inextricably interwoven. Without either Greece or Rome our whole outlook upon life would be something very different from what it is ; and according to the bias of personal temperament or of the age in which we live, we incline to draw our inspiration from the one or from the other in varying degrees. Where men seek to solve the problems of existence by an intellectual effort to understand more fully the mysteries of their own selves or of the world around them, there, consciously or unconsciously, they are following in the wake of the Greek pioneers of thought ; and such effort will tend inevitably to produce the old result—a reasoned

distrust of traditional beliefs and conventions, an opposition of the individual judgement to the dictates of authority, and a reaching forth to fresh and often disturbing experiment for the enlightening or improving of the world. Where, on the other hand, they prefer the more secure, but less adventurous guidance of some well-established system of discipline and habit, where the moulding of character is held of more importance than the unfettered exercise of intellectual powers, where, above all, the independence of the individual is kept in strict subordination to the claims of community or state or church, there—sometimes to our advantage, and sometimes to our bane—breathes the spirit of Ancient Rome.

## CHAPTER XXI

## EPILOGUE

**T**HE events which occurred between the murder of Caesar in 44 and the battle of Actium in 31 B.C. seem rather to belong to the story of the Principate than of the Republican period proper. For, though with the death of the man who had dethroned it, the Senate might naturally have been expected to resume its sovereign power, it in fact did no such thing; and even if Brutus and Cassius had won the day on the battlefield of Philippi, it seems certain that sooner or later some military leader would have arisen to gather into his hands the reins which the Republican Government had already proved itself incapable of wielding.

Nevertheless it will be convenient in this concluding chapter to sketch the sequel to the fatal Ides of March and to show how the man who had been appointed heir to Caesar's private fortune contrived by a skilful use of his opportunities to make good his further claim to Caesar's political ascendancy.

## I. FROM CAESAR'S MURDER TO PHILIPPI

No sooner had their blow been struck, than the conspirators discovered to their surprise that it aroused no popular



enthusiasm. Their victim had been a universal favourite with the urban mob. The city was crowded with his discharged veterans ; and alarmed by the symptoms of public disfavour, the assassins retired into the security of the Capitol. In such a state of uncertainty it was not difficult to see what opportunity awaited any man bold enough to seize the initiative of leadership ; and here lay Antony's chance. He was not, it is true, a man of steadfast character. He was notoriously self-indulgent, an associate of loose-livers, much given to strange fits of indolence and stormy outbursts of passion. But he was possessed of an abundant, if somewhat erratic, energy. He had diplomatic skill, a ready tongue and much military experience ; and, what was still more important, he had been Caesar's right-hand man and was now in occupation of the consulship. Though badly scared at the moment of the murder, he soon came out of hiding, and took over from Caesar's widow not only her husband's papers but his fortune in ready cash, amounting, it is said, to many hundred thousand pounds. With a show of conciliation he induced the Senate to vote a general amnesty to the murderers, while at the same time confirming Caesar's acts. Then at the dead man's funeral on March 20th he threw down the gage by the famous harangue which Shakespeare has immortalized. There was a riot in the Forum. Attacks were made upon the houses of the chief conspirators ; and Brutus and Cassius were forced to flee into the country.

Antony now seemed to have the game well in his hands. The conspirators were discredited. The Senate was cowed. The provinces were held by Caesar's own nominees ; and with the exception of Decimus Brutus who with a force of three legions controlled Cisalpine Gaul, few of these could be expected to come out as staunch Republicans. To secure an army of his own was, of course, Antony's first requirement ; and while getting his fellow-consul Dolabella appointed to Syria, he himself procured the command of Macedonia and thus of the legions which had been concentrated in that province for the coming campaign against Parthia. Meanwhile in Italy itself he was voted a bodyguard and busied himself in collecting a formidable host of veterans. Thus, when

in September of 44 Brutus and Cassius took ship for the East, Antony seemed complete master of the situation and in a strong position to deal faithfully with Decimus Brutus in Cisalpine Gaul.

But, though Antony can scarcely at first have taken him very seriously, a rival had in fact already appeared in the field. On the news of his uncle's murder, the boy Octavian had rejected friends' advice to set himself at the head of the Macedonian legions and return to seize the power in Italy. Young as he was—for he was not yet nineteen—he already possessed something of that extraordinary astuteness and patient opportunism which eventually enabled him to consolidate the supreme authority of the Principate. He saw clearly that a premature attempt at self-assertion would almost certainly lead to failure, and that, until he could make himself better known and win a following, he must walk with extreme wariness. Returning to Rome in April 44, he claimed the bequest to which he was entitled under Caesar's will. Antony, who was rapidly to dissipate the money in luxurious self-indulgence and the purchase of armed supporters, refused his demand; but by selling the property which came to him under the will, Octavian realized sufficient funds to pay out of his own purse the donations which Caesar had bequeathed to the Roman populace. In this shrewd bid for popularity Antony must have recognized a challenge; but, though relations between the two were very strained, no open breach occurred until autumn. Octavian then left Rome and went to Campania where he, too, proceeded to enlist a force of veterans. Luck favoured him; and by the promise of higher pay, he actually succeeded in enticing to his side two out of the four legions which Antony had ordered over from Macedon for use against Decimus Brutus.

As the year wore on, there was therefore every prospect of a three-cornered struggle between Antony, Brutus and Octavian; but it was obvious that, when the moment came, Octavian would be compelled to throw his weight upon one side or the other, nor was it very hard to foresee on which side it would be. The issue was joined in the last month

of the year. Antony had already arranged that the Gallic provinces should be transferred to him in place of his Macedonian command—though he did not relinquish the Macedonian legions. So it was with a certain show of right that he demanded Brutus's surrender of the Cisalpine garrison force; and when Brutus naturally refused, proceeded to blockade him in Mutina.

Then all at once the Senate, which had hitherto been cowed by Antony's presence, was stirred into activity by the vigorous incitements of Cicero. The aged orator, though approving the Ides of March, had hung for a while irresolute. After setting out at one time to take ship for Greece, he had been driven back by adverse winds and returned to Rome. He now emerged from his long retirement to resume once again the senatorial leadership; and in a series of powerful speeches (which, in imitation of Demosthenes' famous orations against the King of Macedon, he entitled his 'Philippics') he inveighed with increasing vehemence against 'that monster' Antony. This sudden revival of senatorial independence gave Octavian his chance. He encouraged the overtures of Cicero, who fancied he had found in the boy a pliant tool, and accepting the rôle of constitutional champion, was given formal commission to enlist more troops with pro-praetorian rank. He then moved north to Ariminum, when early in 43 he was joined by Hirtius, one of the new consuls. Thence the two marched together to the relief of Brutus at Mutina, soon to be followed in April by the other consul Pansa with a large army of raw recruits. In an attempt to intercept the arrival of these reinforcements Antony brought on a general engagement near Forum Gallorum and was severely handled. A week later he suffered complete defeat and fled westwards across the Alps. Then he joined Lepidus, formerly Caesar's Master of Horse and now holding the position of governor in the old Narbonensian province. Though with considerable hesitation, Plancus, the governor of northern Gaul, threw in his lot with them.

While Decimus Brutus was engaged upon the task of following up the enemy whose escape he might well have prevented by a more prompt pursuit, Octavian struck out upon a differ-

ent tack. He saw that, whichever way the campaign might terminate, his own services would no longer be of much account to the victor; and he therefore proceeded to play his cards with characteristic subtlety. Both Hirtius and Pansa having fallen in the recent fighting, he demanded his own election to the consulship, and by a sudden march on Rome, left the Senate no alternative but to comply. Cicero, finding himself thus duped by the boy whom he had thought to manipulate, fled from the city. Octavian was for the moment master of Rome and though he could scarcely hope to hold it, the astuteness of his new move was soon to become manifest. For it had raised him at a stroke to the very forefront of affairs, and had made him a political force with which even Antony and Lepidus would be bound to reckon. He had already got into correspondence with these recent foes; and when in the autumn of 43, after defeating and killing Decimus Brutus, they re-entered Cisalpine Gaul at the head of seventeen legions, he was able to strike a bargain. The three leaders met on an island in a tributary of the Po near Bononia; and the upshot of their discussions was that they resolved to constitute themselves a new Triumvirate 'for re-establishing the commonwealth'. A motion confirming them in this title—thus giving it the character of an official appointment in contrast to the purely personal coalitions of the previous decade—was proposed by an obliging tribune and passed through the Comitia. It was further arranged that Antony and Octavian—the one as governor of Transalpine and Cisalpine Gaul, the other of Sicily and Africa—were to undertake the campaign against Brutus and Cassius. Lepidus, while technically to be governor of Spain, was to control Italy in their absence.

The standards of public life were by this time so degraded, the transformations of the political scene so kaleidoscopic and his own position so perilous that we can readily excuse Octavian for this sudden and cynical *volte-face*—to which indeed there was no possible alternative but retirement. It is not so easy to excuse its sequel. For it was with his acquiescence, if not with his approval, that a proscription was now decided on. The outlawry of his uncle's assassins had already

been proclaimed at his own request when he assumed the consulship ; but what his two colleagues now demanded was the wholesale destruction of political opponents. This hideous barbarity—even more deliberate and cold-blooded than Sulla's Reign of Terror—was partly dictated by financial needs ; for the sale of confiscated properties was intended to meet the Triumvirs' lack of ready cash ; and when its proceeds proved insufficient, recourse was had to enforced levies upon the fortunes of wealthy ladies. But among the three hundred senators and two thousand knights whose names were on the lists, many owed their fate to nothing more than the meanest motives of revenge. Such a one was Cicero whose ' Philippics ' had naturally drawn down on him the special wrath of Antony. The old man was at his country-house at Tusculum when the bad news arrived. He made his way to the coast and embarked for Greece, but storms forced him to land again in Campania and he took shelter in his house at Formiæ. On the approach of Antony's minions his slaves placed him in a litter and attempted flight, but in vain. His head and the right hand with which he had penned the ' Philippics ' were cut off and carried to Antony who, to the disgust of all decent folk, had them nailed to the Rostrium. It was no very pleasant reflection that, if the coming struggle between the Conspirators and the Triumvirs should go in favour of the latter, this was apparently the man who would be master of Rome.

What meanwhile Brutus and Cassius had been doing in the East must now be briefly considered. Both, as we have seen, left Italy in the autumn of 44. Brutus, after a short stay at Athens where he attended lectures on philosophy, proceeded to Illyria, the garrison troops of which were made over to him by the sympathetic governor. With these he was able to oppose the landing of Antony's brother Gaius who early in 43 was sent over to take charge of Macedonia ; and though legally he himself had no claim to that province, his occupation was approved by the Senate. Meanwhile in the Further East Cassius had been equally successful. He went first to Syria which, as we have seen, had been assigned to Dolabella, Antony's fellow-consul for 44.

There as a champion of the Republic he had little difficulty in winning over its legions ; and when early in 43 Dolabella came out East and, having murdered Trebonius the governor of Asia, and taken possession of that province, proceeded against Syria, managed to shut him up in Laodicea and after a long siege overpower him. Asia Minor being thus secured into the bargain, the whole eastern half of the Empire was in the hands of the Republicans. Brutus moved across the Hellespont to make contact with Cassius ; and the two spent some months in reducing Rhodes and some refractory native communities.

But the sands were running out. The Triumvirate was by this time well established ; and Brutus and Cassius knew that its forces must soon be set in motion against them. Their own resources both by land and sea were already considerable. Cassius had collected a large fleet ; and between them they held command over some nineteen legions. They counted, too, on the co-operation of Sextus Pompeius, the old Republican leader. Since his defeat at Munda three years previously, Sextus had maintained himself as a free-lance in the western Mediterranean ; and on the renewed outbreak of civil war had been enlisted in the service of the Senatorial cause. Descending upon Sicily he had overrun most of the island, and, attracting to his standard large numbers of pirate adventurers, had actually defeated an expedition which Octavian sent against him. Thus, what with the activities of this irresponsible buccaneer and of the squadrons sent by Cassius to patrol the Adriatic, the army of the Triumvirs found it no easy matter to make the passage into Macedon ; and when at length they arrived there in the summer of 42, they were under the constant threat of having their communications cut and reinforcements and supplies denied them. It was their obvious policy, therefore, to bring the enemy to battle with the utmost speed ; and marching along the Egnatian Way they confronted the armies of Brutus and Cassius in the neighbourhood of Philippi.

In both the quality and number of their troops the Triumvirs held a certain superiority ; but they found some difficulty in forcing an engagement, and when at length they did so,

the issue was inconclusive. In the course of the action, however, Cassius, driven to premature despair by the rout of his own contingent, committed suicide; and Brutus, now left in sole command, seems to have yielded to the impatience of his officers, and forsaking the wiser strategy of delay, he accepted in mid-November a decisive test. It ended in the crushing defeat of his army, and he himself, realizing that the end had come, induced a comrade to kill him. The noble sincerity of his character has been somewhat obscured by the unfounded supposition that, having been a real friend of Caesar, he was guilty of black treachery in joining the ranks of the conspirators. The truth is that patriotic motives alone dictated his course; but he was too much of an idealist—and we may add, too much of an aristocrat—to compete on equal terms with men like Antony or to understand the mentality of the Roman mob. His dream of a restored Republic was scarcely more practical than Cato's; and had it come into being, he would certainly not have been the man to save it from the inevitable shipwreck.

## II. FROM PHILIPPI TO ACTIUM

A partitioning of the Empire between the Triumvirs was the natural sequel to their victory. Lepidus, the weakest and least stable of the three partners, was now thrust into the background and eventually relegated to the unimportant command of Africa. The other two re-shuffled the provinces to suit their own convenience, and apparently came to some sort of understanding about their respective spheres of action. Antony was to take control of the East, and he moved to Asia Minor where he proceeded to wring yet further funds out of the luckless natives. There, too, by an accident which altered his whole career, he fell in with Cleopatra, and captivated by her charms, followed her to Alexandria.

Meanwhile Octavian, who had been suffering much in health, went home to Italy and there undertook to deal single-handed with the manifold problems of the West. Chief among these was the settlement of the discharged legionaries, who insisted on receiving lands in the richest parts of Italy. Thousands of honest yeomen were driven from their farms to

make way for them ; and amongst other sufferers were the three young poets, Horace, Propertius and Vergil—the last of whom, thanks to the intervention of powerful friends, was subsequently reinstated. The unpopularity of the evictions fell of course upon Octavian ; and his embarrassment was unscrupulously exploited by Antony's wife Fulvia and his brother Lucius. It has been suggested that Fulvia was anxious at all costs to bring her husband home out of Cleopatra's reach ; but it is at least as likely that Lucius' avowed desire for a Republican restoration was honestly the motive of their intrigue. What is certain is that the two made a dead set upon Octavian, on the alleged ground that the evictions had not received Antony's sanction, and hoping to reap the advantage of the general discontent, pushed the quarrel to open war. Lucius actually seized Rome ; but was driven out by Octavian's capable lieutenant Agrippa and then blockaded in the Umbrian fortress of Perugia, where at the outset of 40 B.C. he was compelled to surrender. So ended what proved to be the last war fought on Italian soil for more than a century to come.

It was not until this trouble was over and done with, that Antony himself appeared upon the scene. Having squandered the funds which he had undertaken to raise for the remuneration of the discharged veterans, he was probably not sorry to learn of his colleague's difficulties in providing them with land. Relations between the two were certainly strained. Report said that Antony was even in correspondence with Sextus Pompeius whom it was Octavian's business to crush ; and when later in the year 40 he landed at Brundisium, it looked almost as though the final clash between the two great rivals had come. Saner counsels, however, prevailed. Despite the recent outbreak Octavian had greatly consolidated his power in Italy. All the best men in Rome, such as Agrippa the soldier and Maecenas the great patron of letters, were rallying round him ; and it was largely through the intervention of Maecenas and others that the widening breach was now temporarily healed. By the convention of Brundisium their separate spheres of East and West were definitely assigned to the two Triumvirs ; and to cement



the agreement Antony, whose wife Fulvia had just died, took in marriage Octavian's sister, Octavia. She was a worthy lady; and for some while her influence did much to keep her erratic husband straight.

While Antony sailed off to Athens which during the next three years he made his head-quarters for the direction of the East, Octavian resumed his interrupted task of resettling the West. The most urgent part of it was the suppression of Sextus Pompeius, who, through his control of the seas, was even holding up the corn-supplies of the capital. It is an extraordinary sidelight on the naval weakness of the imperial government that in order to keep this impudent corsair quiet, the Triumvirs actually ceded him in 39 not merely Sicily and Sardinia, but the Peloponnese too. The truce did not last, for he soon broke his bargain; and Octavian's captains in attacking him lost most of their fleet either in the action or by shipwreck. The renewal of Sextus' blockade brought Rome to the verge of starvation; and Octavian undertook fresh preparations on an enormous scale. Hundreds of ships were built; and to provide a secure harbour for the training of the crews, Lake Avernus, near Naples, was connected with the sea by the digging of a canal. Additional ships were lent by Antony; and in 36 Octavian and Agrippa, assisted by Lepidus from Africa, descended upon Sicily and after some reverses brought Sextus to bay off Mylae, where with the aid of a new form of grappling-iron, they succeeded in defeating him. The pirate chief himself escaped to eastern waters, and next year was caught and killed by Antony's lieutenants. Meanwhile Lepidus, who on the morrow of the battle had attempted to seize Sicily for himself, was formally deposed from his place in the Triumvirate; and Octavian was left free at length to pursue his policy of reorganization unimpeded. The settlement of his veterans was finally accomplished. Brigandage in Italy was put down; and the creation of a regular police force—so long overdue—was undertaken in earnest. Agrippa was sent across the Alps to arrange affairs in Gaul; and a beginning was made with the consolidation of the north-eastern or Danubian frontier, by a campaign against the Pannonians in 35 B.C.

By such statesmanlike measures Octavian was, in fact, laying the foundations of the vast imperial policy which he was ultimately to consummate as Emperor.

Meanwhile Antony on his part was for once shouldering his responsibilities with something like a sustained effort. His main trouble lay with the Parthians who had taken advantage of the Civil War and of the Triumvirs' preoccupation of the last few years to overrun Syria and then, finding a valuable leader in Quintus Labienus, son of Caesar's old turn-coat lieutenant, to push even further west and cross the Taurus mountains into Asia Minor. The man whom Antony now sent against them was a certain Ventidius Bassus whose romantic career had raised him first from slave to mule-contractor for provincial governors, then under the patronage of Caesar whose quick eye discerned his merit, to a series of promotions which in 43 had culminated in the consulship. Now by swift strokes he cleared the Parthians out of Asia Minor, and in the next year (38) by a signal victory won at Gindarus, not far from Antioch, succeeded in clearing them out of Syria too. It was felt, however, that the disgrace of Carrhae had still not been sufficiently avenged; and Antony, who now discarded the services of this too successful lieutenant and assumed the command of the campaign in person, was apparently encouraged by the internal dissensions of the Parthian ruling house to contemplate a vast scheme of Oriental conquest. His invasion of Mesopotamia with a huge force of eighteen legions took him first through the southern borders of the friendly Armenian monarch, then across the basin of the upper Tigris against Phraaspa, the hill capital of north-east Media. But the loss of his siege-train, which the enemy surprised, made the reduction of this fortress impossible; and his army was obliged to retreat, harassed by the pursuit of the dogged enemy and suffering terrible privations among the Armenian snows. One further expedition was undertaken in 34 to punish the defection of the Armenian king; but by now the spell of Cleopatra, whom he had frequently been visiting, had taken a firm hold on Antony; and all the energy had gone out of him.

He settled down in Alexandria, yielding himself to the

luxurious habits of the Egyptian court, and lavishing domains upon his mistress and titles on her children after the style of some Eastern despot. Finally he ended by ordering his wife Octavia home from Athens, divorcing her and marrying Cleopatra. The affront to Octavian was unforgivable. In 32 the appointed term of the Triumvirate expired. It had become known at Rome that Antony in his will had bequeathed portions of the Empire to Cleopatra's sons; and at last the Senate, weary of the farce, declared war on Cleopatra.

Antony was not loath to take up the challenge; and in point of fact, by the autumn of 32 he had already advanced with his queen as far as Greece in preparation for an invasion of Italy. But finding that all the home-ports were strongly held, he elected to spend the winter on the Aetolian coast. His great armada of five hundred galleys considerably outnumbered the smaller, though swifter, vessels which Octavian could bring against him; and on land he could count on an enormous army over a hundred thousand strong. When, however, in the spring of 31, Octavian and Agrippa crossed the Adriatic against him, a distinct lack of cohesion revealed itself in his unwieldy host; and several of his vassal allies went over to the enemy. He made the fatal mistake, too, of allowing his fleet to be blockaded inside the Ambracian Gulf behind the promontory of Actium. His supplies ran short. His land-forces were immobilized; and eventually he decided to fight his way out of the gulf for a retreat on Egypt. On September 2, 31, the two fleets met in the final struggle of the civil war. The impatient Antonian captains were drawn out into the open where Agrippa's swifter vessels were able to encircle them. Foreseeing defeat, Cleopatra ordered her personal squadron of sixty galleys to run for it; and so the rout began. Antony and a few ships escaped in the wake of the queen; but the rest were either destroyed or captured; and the land army soon surrendered.

Some trouble over the disbandment of his legions necessitated Octavian's return to Italy, and it was some months before he followed the fugitive pair to Egypt. Outside Alexandria Antony still showed fight; but the defection of

a part of his army led to the surrender of the city. A message falsely reporting Cleopatra's death drove the unhappy man to make away with himself; and despite an interview with Octavian in which he promised her good treatment, the queen also resolved to die. It is said that she had been in the habit of making experiments with various poisons on condemned criminals, and as a result of her investigations she chose the bite of an asp as the least painful form of death. It stands to Octavian's credit that she was laid, according to her wish, in the tomb with her great lover.

The Senate's deliberate policy of declaring war on Cleopatra and not on Antony had been intended to pave the way for annexation; and Octavian did not quit Egypt until he had taken effective measures to organize this new and most lucrative addition to the Empire. In 29 he returned to Rome to celebrate a threefold triumph for his successes in Pannonia, his victory at Actium and his conquest of Egypt. There, on the threshold of his true career, we must take our leave of this extraordinary man, still young in years but old in experience. At an age when most boys have not as yet left school, he was called upon to face the hazards and problems of a life-and-death struggle with men to whom mercy, justice and honour had no meaning at all. The ordeal had emphasized rather than altered the natural disposition of his character. It had taught him to watch and wait with superb self-mastery and then, when the moment came, to strike and to strike hard. It had taught him to suppress all outward exhibition of his feelings under a mask of cold reserve. It had taught him to know men. Above all, it had fitted him for his peculiar task of building up by cautious compromise, patient adjustment and a matchless talent for political organization the most enduring machinery of imperial administration that the world has ever seen. Nevertheless in all that he did there was little or nothing which can be called truly original. The creative qualities of his uncle were not his; and, if Julius Caesar must be accounted the greatest product of the Roman stock, it may fairly be said that Octavian was more typical of its national genius.

# CHRONOLOGICAL TABLES

## I. IMMIGRATIONS

- c. 2000. Italian tribes cross Alps and settle round Northern Lakes.  
c. 1500. Italians push southwards into Umbria, Latium, etc.  
c. 900. Etruscans settle in Etruria and Western Umbria.  
From 800 onwards, Greeks found colonies in Sicily and S. Italy.

## II. ROME UNDER THE KINGS

- \*753. Foundation of Rome by Romulus from Alba Longa.  
\*715-673. Numa Popilius (Sabine), traditional founder of religious institutions.  
\*673-642. Tullus Hostilius (Latin) destroys Alba Longa.  
\*642-617. Ancus Martius (Latin) bridges Tiber and founds Ostia.  
\*616-579. Tarquinius Priscus (Etruscan) makes war on Latium.  
\*578-535. Servius Tullius (Etruscan ?) builds wall: Constitution by 'classes'.  
\*535-510. Tarquinius Superbus (Etruscan) completes Temple on Capitol.  
510. Expulsion of Tarquin, who summons aid of fellow-Etruscans.  
496. Defeat of Lars Porsenna at Lake Regillus.  
(\* These dates are purely traditional.)

## III. THE EARLY REPUBLIC

<i>External</i>	<i>Internal</i>
494.	Secession of plebs to Sacred Mount: creation of tribunes.
493. Roman alliance with Latin League.	
c. 480. Volscian War (Coriolanus)	
477. War against Veii: battle of <i>Cremera</i> .	
474. Etruscans defeated at <i>Cumae</i> .	
c. 460. War against Aequi (Cincinnatus)	

<i>External</i>	<i>Internal</i>
451.	Decemviri begin tabulation of Laws.
450.	Decemviri (Appius Claudius) deposed.
449.	Valerio-Horatian Laws: rights to plebeians.
445.	<i>Lex Canuleia</i> : permitting inter-marriage of Orders.
431. Aequi defeated at <i>Mt. Algidus</i> .	
396. Capture of <i>Veii</i> by Camillus.	
390. Rome sacked by Gauls.	
376.	Lician proposals: violent strife results.
367.	Lician proposals become law: one consul plebeian, etc.
360-50. Gallic Invasions.	
287.	<i>Lex Hortensia</i> gives plebescita authority of law.

## IV. CONQUEST OF ITALY

- A. First Samnite War (343-41): Rome intervenes in Campania to aid *Capua*.
- B. Latin War (340): Latius and Campanians defeated at *Vescriis*: end of League.
- C. Second Samnite War (327-04): Rome intervenes at *Naples*: defeated at *Caudine Forks* (321): founds *Luceria* and is defeated at *Lautulae* (315): *Via Appia* begun (312): Samnites joined by Marsi (308): peace (304).
- D. Third Samnite War (299-290): Romans capture *Bovianum* (298): defeat Samnites and Gauls at *Sentinum* (296): found colony at *Venusia* (291).
- E. War with Pyrrhus (282-75): Pyrrhus defeats Romans at *Heraclea* (280): and at *Ausculum* (279): crosses to Sicily (278): returns and is defeated at *Beneventum* (275): *Tarentum* surrenders (272).
- F. Extension of citizenship: civitas given to Latium: to Sabines (268): half-franchise, to Campania and S. Etruria: Greek cities of South become free allies: rest of Italy, *Socii*.
- G. Foundation of colonies: *Ardea* (442): *Setia* (382): *Sutrium*, *Nepete* (383): *Antium* (338): *Anxur* (329): *Fregellae* (328): *Luceria* (314): *Saticula* (313): *Interamna* (312): *Sora* (303): *Alba* (303): *Carsioli* (302): *Narnia* (299): *Sinuessa* (296): *Venusia* (291): *Hatria* (289): *Sena* (283): *Ariminum* (268): *Paestum* (273): *Beneventum* (268): *Cremona*, *Placentia* (218): *Bononia* (189): *Parma*, *Mutina* (183): *Aquileia* (184).

(N.B.—Latin Colonies in italics.)

## V. FIRST PUNIC WAR (264-41)

- A. *Romans gain hold on Sicily*: seize *Messana* and defeat Hiero and Carthaginians (264): joined by Hiero (263): defeat Hanno at *Agrigentum* (262).
- B. *Romans gain control at sea*: defeat Carthaginians off *Mylae* (260): off *Ecnomus* (256): send Regulus to Africa (256): where he is defeated (255): capture *Panormus* (254).
- C. *Romans' failure at sea*: fleets wrecked (255 and 253): defeat off *Drepana* (249): siege of *Lilybaeum* foiled by tactics of Hamilcar Barca (247).
- D. *Romans' final effort*: new fleet built: Catulus wins victory off *Aegates Islands* (241): Carthaginians compelled to evacuate Sicily and pay large indemnity.

## VI. BETWEEN THE WARS

239. Annexation of *Sardinia* (made province with *Corsica*, 227).
232. C. Flaminius parcels out *Ager Gallicus*.
229. Illyrian Queen Teuta's pirate lieutenant Demetrius defeated.
228. *Corcyra* and strip of coast brought under Roman protectorate.
- 226-22. *Gallic invasions*: Romans defeat Gauls at *Telamon* (225): capture *Mediolanum* (222): carry *Via Flaminia* to *Ariminum* (220).
- 237-219. *Carthaginian conquest of Spain*: Hamilcar overruns southwest (237-29): Hasdrubal founds *New Carthage*: under pressure from Rome and Massilia, undertakes not to cross Ebro (226): Hannibal attacks *Saguntum* (219).

VII. SECOND PUNIC WAR

<i>Spain, Africa, etc.</i>	<i>Italy.</i>	<i>Sicily and Macedon.</i>
218. Hannibal leaves New Carthage (May).	Battles of <i>Ticinus</i> and <i>Trebia</i> (Dec.).	Sempronius' army returns from Sicily.
217. Naval repulse of Carthaginians at Ebro.	Battle of <i>Trasimene</i> : Hannibal enters Apulia: Fabius, as Dictator, avoids open battle.	
216.	Battle of <i>Cannae</i> : <i>Capua</i> , etc. join Hannibal.	Philip of Macedon invades Illyria.
215. Carthaginian attack on Sardinia: Hasdrubal repulsed at Ebro.	Hannibal attempts to win port at <i>Naples</i> .	Philip's alliance with Hannibal.
214. Hasdrubal recalled to Africa: Romans capture <i>Saguntum</i> .		
213.	Hannibal captures <i>Tarentum</i> .	<i>Syracuse</i> besieged by Marcellus.
212.	Romans blockade <i>Capua</i> .	Carthaginians aid <i>Syracuse</i> .
211. Scipios defeated on <i>Baetis</i> .	Hannibal's dash on Rome: <i>Capua</i> reduced.	Marcellus captures <i>Syracuse</i> .
210. P. Scipio arrives in Spain.		Rest of Sicily reduced.
209. Scipio takes <i>New Carthage</i> .	But Hasdrubal escapes towards Italy.	
208. Scipio defeats Hasdrubal at <i>Baecula</i> .	Hasdrubal defeated at <i>Metaurus</i> .	
207. Scipio defeats Carthaginians at <i>Iliipa</i> .	Hannibal at bay in <i>Bruttium</i> .	
206. Scipio captures <i>Gades</i> .	Scipio (consul) prepares invasion of Africa.	Rome makes peace with Philip.
205.		
204. Scipio lands in Africa: besieges <i>Utica</i> .	Mago driven from <i>Liguria</i> : Hannibal recalled.	
203. Scipio defeats Syphax and Gisco.		
202. Battle of <i>Zama</i> .		



VIII. EXTENSION OF EMPIRE

- A. *Conquest of Cisalpine Gaul, etc.*  
 (i) Defeat of *Insubres* (196): defeat of *Boii* (191): colony at *Aquileia* (181).  
 (ii) Conquest of *Liguria* (180).
- B. *Spain*. Divided into Hither and Further Province (197): insurrection quelled by Cato (195).
- C. *Second Macedonian War* (200-196).  
 Philip defeated at *Cynoscephalae* (197): Flamininus proclaims freedom of Hellas (196).
- D. *War with Antiochus of Syria* (192-190).  
 Antiochus invades Greece (192): defeated at *Thermopylae* (191): retires to Asia Minor and is defeated at *Magnesia* (190): Volso attacks *Galatians* (189).
- E. *Third Macedonian War, etc.* (172-167).  
 (i) Perseus (successor to Philip in 179) defeated at *Pydna* by Aemilius Paullus (168).  
 (ii) Macedon split into four (167): 1,000 Achaeans deported to Rome (167).  
 (iii) Revolt of Andriscus quelled by Metellus (148): Macedon becomes a province (146).  
 (iv) *Corinth* sacked by Mummius: Greece under Macedonian governor (146).
- F. *Third Punic War* (149-146)  
 153. (i) Commission of Cato to settle between Carthage and Massinissa (153).  
 149. (ii) Death of Cato: Romans attack *Carthage*.  
 147. (iii) Scipio Aemilianus (consul) sent out to *Carthage*.  
 146. (iv) Capture and destruction of Carthage. Africa becomes province.
- G. *Spanish Wars*  
 179. Governorship of T. Sempronius Gracchus.  
 171. Latin colony at *Carteia*: natives protest against extortion.  
 154. Revolt of Lusitanians.  
 153. Revolt of Celtiberians partially quelled.  
 150. Treachery of Galba prolongs revolt.  
 148. Rising of Viriathus.  
 143. Revolt encouraged by Viriathus's success.  
 140. Treaty repudiated by Caepio: murder of Viriathus.  
 141. Siege of *Numantia* begun.  
 138. D. Junius Brutus quells revolt.  
 137. Mancinus forced to surrender.  
 133. Scipio Aemilianus takes *Numantia*.

- H. *Asia Minor*. Attalus III of Pergamum bequeaths kingdom (133) : made Province (128).
- I. *Transalpine Gaul*. Campaign against Allobroges and Arverni (125) : formation of Gallia Narbonensis (122) : colonization of *Narbo* (118).

## IX. PERIOD OF THE GRACCHI

- A. *Tiberius Gracchus*. Tribune : land reforms : seeks re-election and is murdered (133).
- B. *Interval*. Scipio champions Italians, death (129) : expulsion of allies from Rome (126) : F. Flaccus proposes Italian enfranchisement (125) : revolt of *Fregellae* (125).
- C. *Caius Gracchus*. Returns from Sardinia (124) : tribune (123) : second tribunate and visit to Carthage (122) : death (121).
- D. *Senatorial Reaction*. Land Commission dissolved (118) : squatter-tenants allowed free possession (111) : equestrian juries not upset.

## X. RISE OF MARIUS

- A. *Jugurthine War*
- (i) Senate adjudicates between Adherbal and Jugurtha : Jugurtha seizes *Cirta* (112) : Bestia sent out but makes peace (111).
  - (ii) Albinus's surrender (110) : Metellus makes headway and attacks *Zama Regia* (109).
  - (iii) Marius elected consul for 107 : secures Eastern Numidia (107) : advance against *Mauretania* (106) : capture of Jugurtha by Sulla (105).
- B. *Cimbrian War*
- (i) Previous disasters : Carbo defeated by Cimbri at *Noreia* (113) : Silanus defeated in Transalpine Gaul (109) : Cassius Longinus defeated by Tigurini near *Tolosa* (107) : Caepio and Manlius annihilated at *Arausio* (105), but Cimbri make for Spain.
  - (ii) Marius on return from Africa reorganizes Roman army (104-102).
  - (iii) Marius defeats Teutones and Ambrones at *Aquae Sextiae* (102) : but Cimbri and Tigurini invading Italy from north-east drive back Catulus on *R. Athesis*.
  - (iv) Marius defeats Cimbri at *Vercellae* on Raudine Plain (101).
- C. *Internal affairs and Marius's fall*
- (i) Piracy in East induces M. Antonius to annex Cilician coast (103).
  - (ii) Revolt of Sicilian slaves (sequel to revolt of 134-31) led by Tryphon (104) : finally suppressed by Aquilius (100).

- 100 (iii) Marius, consul for sixth time, outshone by Saturninus and Glaucia, who, desiring re-election, seize Capitol and are killed (100).  
 98 (iv) Marius leaves Rome.

XI. RISE OF SULLA

A. *Social War*

- (i) Expulsion of Italians from Rome (95).  
 91. (ii) Italian hopes roused by Drusus's programme: revolt follows his death.  
 90. (iii) Samnites penetrate *Campania*: Marsi overwhelm Rutilius: Marius takes command: siege of *Asculum*: Lex Julia placates waverers.  
 89. (iv) Sulla's successes in *Campania*: Lex Plauta Papiria gives franchise to individual Italians: rebels capitulate except at *Nola*, etc.

B. *Sulpicius and Marius*

88. (i) Sulla blockades *Nola*: is given command against Mithridates.  
 (ii) Sulpicius, championing enfranchised Italians, offers command to Marius.  
 (iii) Sulla marches on Rome: flight of Marius.  
 87. (iv) After strengthening Senate Sulla sails for East.

C. *Mithridatic War and Marian Reaction*

Mithridates of Pontus annexes Paphlagonia (105): seizes Cappadocia (96): ousted (92): invades Bithynia and Roman province (88): sends Archelaus to Greece, where Athens under Aristion rises against Rome (87).

*Eastern Front*

87. Sulla lands in Greece and reduces  
 86. Athens: defeats Archelaus at *Chaeronea*.  
 85. Defeats Archelaus at *Orchomenos*: Fimbria drives Mithridates into Pergamum.  
 84. Sulla imposes terms on Mithridates: overcomes Fimbria: returns to Greece.

*Italy*

Cinna and Marii seize Rome: massacres.  
 Marius dies: Cinna in control of Rome.  
 Democrats prepare to resist Sulla.  
 Cinna murdered by troops.

D. *Sulla's Return*

83. Sulla wins South Italy: democrats retire into the north.  
 82. Democrats held in north by Pompey and Crassus: younger Marius besieged at *Praeneste*: Samnites' dash on Rome: battle of *Colline Gate* (Nov.).  
 81-80. Sulla dictator. Reactionary Constitution: retires (79): dies (78).

## XII. RISE OF POMPEY

A. *Risings of Lepidus, Sertorius and Spartacus*

- (i) Lepidus's *coup* defeated by Catulus : Pompey gets Spanish command (77).
- (ii) Sertorius tries to secure Spain for Marians (83) : driven to North Africa : leads Lusitanian rising : reinforced by Lepidus's lieutenant Perpenna (77).
- (iii) Pompey reaches Spain (76) : Sertorius murdered (71) : Pompey returns home (71).
- (iv) Slaves rise under Spartacus (73) : overcome by Crassus (71) : remnant cut up by Pompey (71).
- (v) Consulship of Crassus and Pompey (70) : Sullan constitution annulled : Trial of Verres (70).

B. *Pirates and Mithridatic War**Mithridates*

- 75. Claims Bithynia which Nicomedes bequeaths to Rome : supported by Tigranes of Armenia.
- 74. Lucullus and Cotta proceed against him.
- 73-2. Mithridates driven from kingdom: flees to Tigranes
- 69. Lucullus takes *Tigranocerta*.
- 68. Lucullus abandons march on *Arxtaxata*.
- 67. Senate orders supersession of Lucullus.

*Pirates*

Expedition of Servilius Isauricus.

Expedition of Metellus.

Lex Gabinia gives Pompey command : pirates suppressed.

C. *Pompey and Cicero*. Appointed under Lex Manilia (66).*Pompey*

- 66. Mithridates flees to Crimea : dies (63).
- 65. Tigranes submits : Pompey in *Caucasus*.
- 64. Gabinius in Syria : Pompey at *Jerusalem*.
- 63. Settlement of East.
- 62. Pompey returns to Italy and disbands army (Dec.)

*Italy*

Riots in Rome : Catiline plots with Piso.

Plot fails : Catiline's trial for extortion.

Rullus's Land Bill : Rabirius's trial.

Cicero defeats Catilinarian conspiracy.

Manlius and Catiline killed (Jan.) : Clodius's profanation of Bona Dea (Dec.).

D. *Julius Caesar*

Born (102) : escapes Sullan massacres (82) : serves in East (81) : returns to Rome (78) : studies in Rhodes (75) : elected Pontifex, returns to Rome (74) : quaestor in Further Spain (68) : aedile (65) : Pontifex Maximus (64) : praetor (62) : pro-praetor in Further Spain (61).

XIII. RISE OF CAESAR

A. *Caesar's Consulship* (59)

- 60. (i) Equites dispute contract for Asia: *concordia ordinum* breaks down: FIRST TRIUMVIRATE, Pompey, Crassus and Caesar: Caesar elected consul for 59.
- 59. (ii) Caesar consul: ignores Bibulus: confirms Pompey's acts and settles veterans.
- 58. (iii) Clodius procures Cicero's exile: Cato sent to Cyprus: Caesar goes to Gaul.

B. *Period of Caesar's Gallic Wars* (58-49)

- | <i>Gaul</i>   | <i>Italy, etc.</i>   |
|---|--|
| 58. Caesar rounds up <i>Helvetii</i> : drives <i>Suebi</i> (Ariovistus) beyond Rhine.   | Clodius in control.  |
| 57. Subdues <i>Belgae</i> : sells <i>Nervii</i> as slaves: Crassus invades <i>Veneti</i> .  | Cicero recalled (autumn): Pompey food-controller: Ptolemy in Rome.   |
| 56. Brutus subdues <i>Veneti</i> : Crassus overruns <i>Aquitania</i> : conquest complete.   | Clodius aedile: disunion of Pompey and Crassus: conference at <i>Lucca</i> .   |
| 55. Caesar defeats <i>Usipetes</i> : pursues across Rhine: reconnoitres <i>Britain</i> .  | Pompey and Crassus consuls: Cicero retires: Gabinius restores Ptolemy.   |
| 54. Second invasion of Britain: <i>Cassivellaunus</i> overcome. Indutiomarus of <i>Treveri</i> heads revolt: <i>Eburones</i> under Ambiorix ambush Sabinus and Cotta. | Pompey gets Spanish command for five years but stays in Rome: Crassus invades North Mesopotamia: winters in Syria: death of Julia. |
| 53. Caesar crosses Rhine: hunts Ambiorix.   | Crassus's disaster at <i>Carrhae</i> .   |
| 52. Vercingetorix of <i>Arverni</i> leads revolt: Caesar besieges <i>Avaricum</i> and <i>Alesia</i> .   | Milo kills Clodius at <i>Bovillae</i> : Pompey sole consul: law of provinces.  |
| 51. Caesar captures <i>Uxellodunum</i> : completes settlement of Gaul.  | Cicero in Cilicia: Marcellus works against Caesar.   |
| 50. Caesar cedes two legions to Pompey.   | Curio negotiates at Rome: retires (Dec.).  |
| 49. Caesar crosses <i>Rubicon</i> (Jan. 11): reduces Domitius at <i>Corfinium</i> (March): reaches Rome (April).  | Ultimate decree, Jan. 7: Antony and Cassius flee to Caesar: Pompey sails East.   |

## XIV. CIVIL WARS

*Italy, Spain, Africa*

49. Caesar defeats Afranius at *Ilerda*: *Massilia* surrenders: Valerius secures *Sardinia*: Curio secures *Sicily* but is killed by *Varus* in *Africa*.
48. C. Rufus promulgates debt laws.
47. Dolabella suppressed by Antony: Spain restive under Q. Cassius: Caesar quells legions (Sept.): reaches *Africa* (Dec.).
46. Defeats Pompeians at *Thapsus* (April): returns to *Rome* (July): goes to *Spain*.
45. Defeats Pompey at *Munda* (March): Sext. Pompeius escapes: Caesar returns to *Rome* (Sept.).
44. Preparations against *Parthia*: death (March 15): Octavian arrives (April): Antony besieges D. Brutus at *Mutina* (Nov.): Cicero's 'Philippics'.
43. Antony defeated by Octavian and consuls: joins Lepidus in *Gaul*: Octavian consul: Triumvirate, Antony, Lepidus, Octavian: Proscription: death of Cicero.
42. Sextus Pompeius in *Sicily*.
41. Octavian settles veterans: L. Antonius besieged in *Perusia*.
40. Fall of *Perusia*: Compact of *Brundisium*.

*Sicily, Greece and East*

- Pompey organizes army in *Macedonia*: Dolabella defeated by Pompeian fleet.
- Caesar lands in *Epirus* (Jan.): blockades Pompey at *Dyrrhachium*: battle of *Pharsalia* (Aug.): Pompey killed in *Egypt*: Caesar in *Alexandria*.
- Caesar gets upper hand at *Alexandria*: defeats Pharnaces at *Zela*: Pompeian fleet, defeated by Vatinius, retires to *Africa*.
- Brutus occupies *Macedon*: Cassius goes to *Syria*.
- Dolabella kills Trebonius: is defeated by Cassius: Brutus joins Cassius in *Asia*: coerce *Rhodes*, etc.
- Brutus and Cassius defeated at *Philippi*.
- Antony settles East: joins Cleopatra in *Egypt*.
- Parthians overrun *Syria*.

*Italy, Spain, Africa*

- 39. Bargain with S. Pompeius.
- 38. Octavian attacks Pompeius :  
is defeated.
- 36. Pompeius crushed : Lepidus's  
revolt.
- 34. Octavian subdues *Dalmatia*.
- 32. War declared on Cleopatra.
- 31.
- 30. Mutiny of Veterans in Italy.

*Sicily, Greece and East*

- Ventidius defeats Parthians.
- Ventidius defeats Parthians at  
*Pacorus*.
- Antony invades Parthia.
- Antony with Cleopatra.
- Antony winters in Greece.
- Battle of *Actium* (Sept.).
- Octavian in Egypt : death of  
Antony.

XV. CONSTITUTIONAL

*Magistrates*

- 509. 2 consuls (?=praetors) :  
quaestors : pontifex.
- 494. 2 tribuni plebis : soon  
raised to 10.
- 449.
- 444. Military tribunes instead of  
consuls—as often dur-  
ing next 80 years.
- 443. Censorship created for en-  
rolment, etc.
- 367. *Licinian Law* : one consul  
plebeian : creation of  
praetor for justice : 2  
aediles.
- 350. Plebeian first censor : prae-  
tor (337) : priest (300).
- 327. *Pro-consular* power for  
Campanian War.
- 311. Duo-viri navales instituted.
- 287.
- 242. Praetor peregrinus insti-  
tuted.
- 241.
- 227. 2 additional praetors for  
Sicily and Sardinia

*Senate and Assemblies*

- Servian Constitution* adopted :  
comitia centuriata supreme :  
curiata ceremonial.
- Comitia tributa elects tribunes.
- Valerio-Horatian Law* : sanctions  
plebescita (i.e. resolutions of  
comitia tributa).
- .
- Lex Hortensia* : Plebescites have  
force of law : power of popular  
Assembly grows.
- Centuriata reorganized more  
democratically.
- Punic War weakens power of  
Assembly and Senate becomes  
supreme.

*Magistrates*

180. *Lex Villia* regulates cursus honorum.  
 153. *Lex Aelia* gives religious ban on assembly.  
 139.  
 133, 123. Gracchi assert power of tribunate.  
 88.  
 81. Tribunate degraded by Sulla: who adds 2 praetors, thus providing 10 pro-magistrates.  
 70. Tribunician power completely restored.  
 67-6. Tribunes used by Pompey to gain command through popular vote.

*Senate and Assemblies*

- Secret ballot in Comitia.  
 Senate's ultimate decree exercised.  
 Sulla adds 300 equites to Senate.  
 Sulla gives Senate complete control of legislation and administration.  
 Assembly's power recovered.

## XVI. JUDICIAL

- (i) *Lex Valeria de provocatione*. Appeal to Assembly (509).  
 (ii) XII Tables adopted by *Valerio-Horatian Law* (449).  
 (iii) Creation of praetor (367): praetor peregrinus (242).  
 (iv) *Quaestio de Repetundis* created by *Lex Calpurnia* (149): courts *de vi* and *de majestate* added subsequently.  
 (v) Juries transferred to equites (123): restored to senators by Sulla, who adds courts *de peculata*, *inter sicarios*, *de falsis* (82).  
 (vi) Juries shared between senators, equites, tribuni aerarii (70).  
 (vii) Caesar reorganizes procedure (59): abolishes tribuni aerarii (46).



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